

**From Origins to Flourishing: Buddhism in the Jingxiang 荊襄
Region (300–600 CE)**

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Abbreviations

BQNZ — T2063 *Biqiuni zhuan* 比丘尼傳 (*Biographies of Buddhist Nuns*)

BZ — T2050 *Sui Tiantai Zhizhe dashi biezhaun* 隋天台智者大師別傳 (*Biography of the Great Master Zhiyi of Tiantai in the Sui Dynasty*)

CSZJJ — T2145 *Chu sanzang jiji* 出三藏記集 (*A Compilation of Notes on the Translation of the Tripiṭaka*)

FYZL — T2122 *Fayuanzhulin* 法苑珠林 (*The Pearl Forest in the Dharma Park*)

FZTJ — T2035 *Fozutongji* 佛祖統紀 (*The Chronicle of Buddha and Patriarchs*)

GCJTJ — T1892 *Guanzhong chuangli jietan tujing* 關中創立戒壇圖經 (*Illustrated Scripture of the Ordination Platform in Central China*)

GHMJ — T2103 *Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明集 (*Expanded Collection on the Propagation and Clarification of Buddhism*)

GSZ — T2059 *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 (*Biographies of Eminent Monks*)

GQBL — T1934 *Guoqing bailu* 國清百錄 (*The Hundred Records of Guoqing*)

HHS — *Houhanshu* 後漢書 (*Book of the Later Han*)

HMJ — T2102 *Hongmingji* 弘明集 (*Collection on the Propagation and Clarification of Buddhism*)

J. — *juan* 卷 (fascicle)

JSSGL — T2106 *Ji Shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* 集神州三寶感通錄 (*Collected Record of Miracles Relating to the Three Jewels in China*)

LDSBJ — T2034 *Lidai sanbao ji* 歷代三寶紀 (*Records of the Three Treasures Throughout the Successive Dynasties*)

- LGZ — T1898 *Lüxiang gantong zhuan* 律相感通傳 (*The Records of the Miraculous Responses to the Manifestations of the Vinyana*)
- MSZ — X1523 *Mingsengzhuan chao* 名僧傳抄 (*Biographies of Renowned Monks*)
- MXJ — *Mingxiangji* 冥祥記 (*Records of Signs from the Unseen Realm*)
- SSJ — *Soushenji* 搜神記 (*In Search of the Supernatural*)
- TPGJ — *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (*Extensive Records of the Taiping Xingguo Period*)
- T — *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經, ed. J. Takakusu and K. Watanabe, Tōkyō, 1924 – 1934.
- X — *Manji shinsan dainihon zokuzōkyō* 已新纂大日本續藏經, ed. T. Kawamura, Tōkyō, 1975 – 1989.
- XGSZ — T2060 *Xu Gaosengzhuan* 續高僧傳 (*Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*)
- YWLJ — *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (*Classified collection based on the Classics and other literature*)
- YJQQ — *Yunjiaqian* 雲笈七籤 (Seven Lots from the Bookbag of the Clouds)
- YZ — *Yuquansi zhi* 玉泉寺志 (*The Monography on the Yuquan Temple*)

Ch. — Chinese

Skt. — Sanskrit

Chronology

Qin	221 – 206 BCE
Han	206 BCE – 220 CE
Three Kingdoms	221 – 280
Jin	265 – 420
Southern Dynasties	420 – 589
Liu Song	420 – 479
Qi	479 – 502
Liang	502 – 557
<i>Emperor Wu</i>	502 – 549
<i>Emperor Yuan</i>	552 – 555
Hou Liang (Western Liang)	555 – 587
Chen	557 – 589
Northern Dynasties	386 – 581
Northern Wei	386 – 534
Western Wei / Eastern Wei	535 – 556 / 534 – 550
Northern Zhou / Northern Qi	557 – 581 / 550 – 577
Sui	581 – 618
<i>Emperor Wen</i>	581 – 604

Introduction

This thesis examines the history of Buddhist penetration into the Jingxiang 荆襄 region, spanning from its origins to the early years of the Sui Dynasty (581–618). The region- also referred to as Jingchu 荆楚 or Jingzhou 荊州 in historical sources- straddles the middle reaches of the Han and Yangtze Rivers, the borderland between north and south China during the period of division (220–589). I embark on this study of the Jingxiang region with the following question in mind: Is it useful, or constructive, to examine the history of Chinese Buddhism through the lens of a theoretical framework that views Chinese Buddhism as the result of a protracted encounter between Indian Buddhism and Chinese civilization, that led to the Sinification¹ of Buddhist teachings and practices?² The Sinification of Buddhism has always been a vital subject for the study of Chinese Buddhism³ However, China is a complex that consists of distinct cultural regions, and studies based on the “Sinification” paradigm have tended to overlook the relationships not only between different nations, but also different regions, social strata, and genders in the history of Chinese Buddhism.⁴ In light of this problem, how should we appropriately reconstruct the process of the indigenization of Buddhism in medieval Chinese society? A regional study of Buddhism might provide us with fresh insights into this question.

By tracing the life trajectory of monks and nuns who were once active in the region, this thesis endeavors to delineate the process of Buddhist development in the Jingxiang region from the vantage point of its local regional religious history, while concurrently engaging in a dialogue with larger historical and religious issues at the imperium-wide level. The study

¹ Some scholars distinguish “Sinification” from “Sinicization,” the former referring to Chinese militarian, institutional and cultural exaptation and the latter to Buddhism. See Michel Strickmann (1982) and John R. McRae (2006): 45–72. In most cases, however, these terms are used synonymously.

² In *Coming to Terms with Chinese Buddhism*, Robert Sharf (2005) argues that the notion of an encounter between India and China may be historically and hermeneutically misleading.

³ Wing-tsit Chan (1958): 107–116; Arthur F. Wright (1985); Erik Zürcher (2007).

⁴ John Kieschnick (2011): 259–273.

defines the period investigated from the third century to the early seventh century as the interregnum between two unified empires: the Qin-Han and the Sui-Tang. During this period, known, the Jingxiang region, situated on the borderlands between the southern and northern regimes, experienced a significant rise in political and military importance. Indeed, academic attention to this region is largely owing to these political and military vicissitudes that took place in this time.⁵ From a religious studies perspective, most modern scholars of Chinese religion have approached the region with a view to examining its Buddhist or Daoist traditions, often focusing on one to the exclusion of the other.⁶ However, Buddhism did not emerge in a religious vacuum. Therefore, this study, which focuses on the development of Buddhism in the Jingxiang region, will also examine its indigenous religious elements such as Daoism, mountain gods, and local tutelary spirits to provide a more comprehensive historical account.

Recent fieldwork in the region, which I conducted in 2023, reinforced the necessity of a non-sectarian approach. As I entered the Yuquan 玉泉 Temple, the most well-visited temple in the region, I was struck by the presence of two side halls flanking the main hall. To the left was the Patriarch's Hall, enshrining five revered patriarchs from various sects, each of whom had profound connections with the Yuquan Temple.⁷ This arrangement is particularly distinctive, as most modern Chinese Buddhist temples are dominated by a single sect lineage. The other hall to the right, the Hall of the Guardian Temple Deity, enshrines Guan Yu 關羽, the protector of Buddhist monasteries. Not far from the Yuquan Temple stands a handsome building called the Temple of Emperor Guan, reportedly erected by monks of the Yuquan Temple. A stone stele monument marks where Guan Yu manifested himself. The various religious monuments in these

⁵ Andrew Chittick (2009); Li Wencai (2000): 11–16.

⁶ Chen Zhiyuan (2019); Sun Qi (2018); Zhang Weiran (2000); Ouchi, Fumio (1986): 32–49.

⁷ As the description table on the right side of the door states, they are Master Chengyuan 承遠 (712–802) of Pure land sect, Master Hongjing 弘景 (634–713) of Vinaya sect, Master Zhang'an 章安 (561–632) of Tiantai sect, Master Huairang 懷讓 (677–744) of Chan sect, and Master Yixing 一行 (683–727) of esoteric Buddhism.

temples attest to the multiplicity of religious influences that were felt in this region, warranting a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to an investigation of its Buddhist development.

1. The Jingxiang Region

The Jingxiang region is defined in this thesis based on the present Xiangyang 襄陽, Jingzhou 荊州,⁸ Wuchang 武昌,⁹ and their environs, straddling the middle reaches of the Han and Yangtze Rivers and located mainly in the modern northern Hubei province. The region's landscape is characterized by alluvial plains and mountainous areas, including the Xiangyi 襄宜 Plain, the Suizao 隨棗 Corridor, the Jiangnan 江漢 Plain, and the Jing 荊 Mountains, where the Chu 楚 culture, a highly developed agricultural civilization, flourished long before Buddhism arrived.¹⁰ To better understand the cultural and religious circumstances that Buddhists confronted and contested in the area during the pre-Tang time, I will briefly introduce the region's religious practices, demographics, and political development.

First, as repeatedly stated in the dynastic historical records, people in the Jingxiang region attached great importance to the matters of sacrifice and believed in ghosts and sorcery.¹¹ A local chronicle written by a native named Zong Lin 宗懷 (501–565), *Jingchu suishi ji* 荊楚

⁸ The ancient Jiangling 江陵 city is located in the present Jingzhou.

⁹ The present Wuhan 武漢, at the confluence of the Han and Yangtze rivers.

¹⁰ The rich archaeological discoveries of the Bronze Age testify to the prosperity of the Chu culture and indicate earlier interactions with the Central Plain region. See: Wang, Guangao (1988); Chen, Beichen (2019).

¹¹ “People in the Chu region believe in witchcraft and ghost, think highly of excessive worship. 信巫鬼,重淫祀。” in “Treatise on Geography.” *Hanshu*, J.28, p. 1666; “Treatise on Geography.” *Suishi*, J.31, p. 897.

歲時記, documents many of the daily activities of the yearly festivals. It offers a glimpse into the daily life and local cults of the region, which the court official ritualists degraded as illegal or excessive worship. For example, the God of Silkworm was sacrificed at the main door of people's residences with bean porridge on the fifteenth day of the first month,¹² and that evening, the goddess Zigu 紫姑, also known as the Goddess of the Latrine, would be welcomed into the house for the harvest divination.¹³ The natives were thus polytheists and showed great interest in divination related to agricultural production. Such a religious atmosphere assisted the entry and acceptance of Buddhism, an alien religion to the locals. Furthermore, these practices shed light on why Buddhist pioneers often employed magical tricks and augury spells to win people's faith.

Second, the region's demographic composition was diverse and highly variable throughout the period of division (220–589). As a transitional area between North and South China, the Jingxiang region was a transportation hub that linked the central plain or Inner Pass, *Guanzhong* 關中, to South China and the Shu 蜀 region (present Sichuan province). The region underwent at least five large waves of immigration resulting from wars and riots in the north.¹⁴ The new labor and religious practices that immigrants brought with them shaped the economic and cultural landscape of the region. As commonly agreed, Buddhism initially entered China through eastern Central Asia and Southeast Asia in the early first century and grew in coastal China and Han cities like Luoyang 洛陽 and Nanyang 南陽 (in the present Henan province), which were directly contiguous to the Jingxiang region.¹⁵ However, after the fall of the later

¹² Zong Lin and Tan Lin (1999): 40.

¹³ Zong Lin and Tan Lin (1999): 43.

¹⁴ The first migratory wave can be dated back to 190, when Dong Zhuo 董卓 (d.192) sacked Luoyang and relocated the capital to Chang'an 長安. See Lu Xiqi (2019): 198–205. For studies on the changing population in Jingzhou during the six dynasties, see Li Hu (1999): 291–319.

¹⁵ The map of Buddhism during the late Han period (25–220) shows that the cities in the Jingxiang region were not influenced by Buddhist teachings, as opposed to the adjacent Nanyang and Luoyang Zürcher (1959: 41,60);

Han, these cities suffered from political disorder and warfare. Devastation, both natural and man-made, forced inhabitants to escape to the south, and a significant portion of the population resettled in the Jingxiang region.¹⁶ Several cases in the biographical records of monks tell of eminent monks who came from the relocated northern clans.¹⁷

Multiple ethnic groups scattered throughout the mountainous regions heavily impacted the dynamics of political and military tension between the hostile regimes. The official records frequently label these ethnic groups as *man* 蠻 “savages” or “southern barbarians” and haphazardly divide them into two groups, namely Jingyongzhou 荆雍州 *man* and Yuzhou 豫州 *man*, according to their location.¹⁸ However, they were the indigenous people of the region who most consistently opposed the government’s administration and refused to pay taxes and corvees.¹⁹ Regrettably, our knowledge of their religious beliefs and practices is minimal. The few shreds of evidence from Daoist scriptures allude to a strand of conversion to *Tianshi Dao* 天師道, (“the Church of the Heavenly Master”).²⁰ The Buddhist monk Lu Fahe 陸法和 (d. 558), the most renowned *man* chief, once led a military force aiding the Liang prince Xiao Yi

See also Sen, Tansen (2012): 11–27.

¹⁶ Yan, Gengwang (2005): 58.

¹⁷ GSZ. J.7, “the Biography of Shi Sengche”: “He is originally from Jinyang county of Taiyuan, was orphaned at youth, and resided (*yuju* 寓居) with his brother at Xiangyang. 本太原晉陽人。少孤,兄弟二人寓居襄陽。”. *Yuju* implied that he was an immigrant. T2059.50.370c3–4; GSZ. J.8, “the Biography of Shi Senghui: “His family name was Huangfu 皇甫, originally from Chaona 朝那 of the Anding 安定 county (in present Gansu), the descendant of Mi 謚 (215–283). His forebears took refuge in Xiangyang.” T2059.50.378b17–18; XGSZ, J.17, “the Biography of Shi Zhiyi”: “The ancestor of the patriarch of the Tiantai school took shelter in the region during the beginning of eastern Jin. 有晉遷都。寓居荊州之華容焉。”. T2060.50.564a18–19.

¹⁸ *Nanshi*, J.79, pp. 1980–82.

¹⁹ For the origin and formation of the *man* ethnic group in medieval China, see Lu Xiqi (2011).

²⁰ Also known as the Way of Five Pecks of Rice. Goossaert, Vincent, Stephen Bokenkamp and Chi Tim Lai (2021). For the *man* people’s Daoist tendencies and engagement, see Sun, Qi (2018): 124–29. Alberts, Eli (2006).

蕭繹 (508–555, r.552–555)’s claim for the throne. In any case, we should remain aware that the *man* people were volatile factors during the period of division in terms of regional politics and military conflicts between the northern and southern regimes.

Third, as this research covers the long-term historical development of the region, from the period of division to the reunification under the Sui, it is necessary to briefly describe the region’s political geography and the shifting of political centers. Based on previous studies, the Houjing Disturbance 侯景之亂 (548–552) and the subsequent insurrections and wars (555–561)²¹ that reshaped the region’s political landscape might be considered a turning point.²² Before this period, the economic and political centers of the region were situated in the Xiangyang, Jiangling, and Xiakou 夏口 areas, namely the Xiangyi plain and the Suizao corridor. The region was successively under the reign of the Eastern Jin (317–420), Liu Song (420–479), Southern Qi (479–502), and Liang (502–557). Afterward, it shifted to Wuchang areas, namely, the middle drainage basin of the Yangtze River. The Jingxiang region was controlled by three competing regimes: the West Wei-Northern Zhou (535–557, 557–581) occupied Xiangyang, Hou Liang (555–587) centered on Jiangling, and Chen (557–589) controlled Wuchang until the Wendi of Sui annexed the opposing regimes and reunited the country in 589. However, the ostensible political antagonism did not hinder the exchange of and interactions with Buddhist teaching; instead, it provided more than one choice for Buddhists who sought imperial patronage and protection when facing crises under an anti-Buddhist regime. In particular, when the Buddhist community in Xiangyang was frustrated by the Northern Zhou suppression of Buddhism (572–578), several monks retreated to the territories of Chen and Hou Liang.

As previously discussed, during the early medieval period, political upheaval, population migrations, and the emergence of mountain-dwelling *man* tribes appear to be the prevailing

²¹ The short-lived reign of Yuandi of Liang, Xiao Yi (508–555, r.552–555), centered at Jiangling, was annexed by West Wei in 555. It caused dramatic destruction to the area and dissembled it into three regimes.

²² Shi Quan (2004): 252–92.

themes in this region. How did Buddhists find their way to blend into such a heterogeneous society? The answers to this question are significantly constrained by the historical sources that are available to us.

2. Sources

Biographies of Buddhist monks and nuns are the foremost cardinal sources from which to glean information, and the main sources for this genre are the *Gaosengzhuan* 高僧傳 (T2059, “*Biographies of Eminent Monks*”, hereafter GSZ) composed by Huijiao 慧皎 (497–554) of the Liang period and the *Xu Gaosengzhuan* 續高僧傳 (T2060, “*Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*”, hereafter XGSZ) attributed to the Tang scholar-monk Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667). These two masterpieces encompass 85 biographies of monks and mention 122 monks by name, who learned, practiced, and preached from the third to the early seventh centuries in the Jingxiang region.²³ Apart from Huijiao and Daoxuan, the Buddhist historian Sengyou 僧祐 (445–518) and his disciple Baochang 寶唱 (fl.5thc.) compiled respectively *Chu sanzang jiji* 出三藏記集(T2145, “*Compilation of Notes on the Translation of the Tripiṭaka*”, hereafter CSZJJ) and *Mingsengzhuan* 名僧傳²⁴ (X1523, “*Biographies of Renowned Monks*”, hereafter MSZ), which preserved biographies of foreign translators and famous monks of the time. The reliability of these accounts cannot be taken for granted, however, and only a comparative study of monks utilizing different works can presume to avoid the “teleological trap” of studies that

²³ Appendices II and III contain biographical data about them, including their lifespan, origins, discipleship, ordination, kinship, and patronage.

²⁴ *Mingseng zhuan* was compiled by Baochang, some portions preserved in the Meisōden shō 名僧傳抄 X1523 compiled by Shūshō 宗性 (1202–1278).

consider China had only one historical trajectory.²⁵ That said, the primary focus of my investigation is not the historicity of the monks' lives but rather the motivations and intentions concealed within the various narratives, as well as the processes of biography formation and alteration in later circulation. Nevertheless, I aim to scrutinize all relevant narratives since they present potential influences on the development of Buddhism in the region under study. Thus, I endeavor to trace the mainstream of Buddhist teaching prevailing in the Jingxiang region by focusing on important figures who garnered substantial attention from Buddhist historians, while also paying attention to the discrepancies and contradictions that emerge from a reading of various historical accounts to shed light on the undercurrents that lie beneath the conventional historical framework.

Buddhist historians undoubtedly possessed religious biases and were intent on propagating their faith when composing these biographies of eminent monks. Thus, supplementing an examination of these documents with the works of secular historians and inscriptional records is necessary for a thorough historical inquiry. The local writing in biographical and geographical format is perhaps the first source where one might look for information about prestigious native clans, local elites, mountains, and river landform.²⁶ As far as we know, nine versions of the *Jingzhou ji* 荊州記 (“Records of Jingzhou”) were composed in the fourth and fifth centuries. Regrettably, most of them are no longer extant, and only a compilation of reassembled text by Qing scholars is accessible to us. However, precious textual legacy pertinent to Buddhist activities and establishments can also be found in a biography of former illuminaries in Xiangyang, titled *Xiangyang qijiuzhuan* 襄陽耆舊傳, and in a voluminous literature compilation encompassing inscriptions on stelae, epitaphs, poems, and verses composed by native literatus, titled *Xiangyang silüe* 襄陽四略. In addition, the *Hubei jinshizhi* 湖北金石志,

²⁵ Hugh R. Clark (2018): 295–314.

²⁶ The term “local writing” refers to “texts which are expressly local in their geographical scope, instead of claiming to be universal (i.e., covering all known places), and which deal with the people, customs, history, and/or natural features of a clearly delimited geographical area.” Andrew Chittick (2003): 36–37.

a compilation of inscriptions on stone and bronze tablets that emerged in Hubei province, provides insight into Buddhist Dharma assemblies and fast ceremonies, including a microhistory of several collective events: the stele of Qifa 啟法 Temple and the stele of Xingguo 興國 Temple are excellent examples. Finally, the standard dynastical history books contain biographies of imperial family members, literatus, and anchorites, who ardently participated in Buddhist dissemination as patrons, adherents, and practitioners. Probing into their interaction with the Buddhist community can help us to comprehend the role Buddhism played in the political and cultural development of the region.

The sources I utilized in this thesis are largely a miscellaneous collection of historical records attributed to authors from the sixth and seventh centuries. Within this literary legacy, the boundaries between the religious and secular and between Buddhism and Daoism are fluid and ambiguous. Particularly evident was the intertextuality of Buddhist and official biographical literature. This study is consequently structured into two sections: the first part (chapters one and two) provides a chronological exploration of the dissemination and evolution of Buddhist teachings in the region, while the second part (chapters three and four) delves into the interactions between Buddhism and other religious traditions from a textual and a geographical perspective.

Chapter One examines the early stages of Buddhist development in the Jingxiang region, focusing on the routes of infiltration, the expansion of the Dao'an 道安 (312–385) group, the translation enterprise, and the prevailing meditation practices. The arrival of Dao'an at Xiangyang ushered a new epoch of growth within the Buddhist community and integrated the region into an extensive network of Buddhist centers, among which the most prominent were Chang'an 長安, Jiankang 建康, Chengdu 成都, and Mount Lu 廬山. Newly translated scriptures, techniques of meditation, and foreign input of expertise were delivered to the region through this network. The main purpose of the chapter is to trace this movement and shed light on its protagonists, namely, monks and nuns and their patrons and followers.

The second chapter begins by delineating the evolution of Buddhism in the region under

the patronage of the Liang princes, who facilitated a regional cultural transformation. Buddhism, as a part of the repertoire of genteel culture brought from Jiankang by the princes and their entourages, was instrumental in fostering local intellectual activities such as composing, compiling, and editing texts and book collections. After outlining this history, the chapter turns to the political unrest and anti-Buddhist politics that developed in the region in the second half of the sixth century and ultimately led to the great destruction of Buddhist communities, forcing native monks to travel to Yecheng 鄴城 (modern Linzhang 臨漳 in Hebei province) and Jiankang. By the beginning of the Sui period (581–618), the north and south Buddhist traditions were beginning to converge owing to the backflow of learned monks in the region. By analyzing the connections between the Jingxiang region and other study centers in both the north and south, we can gain a clearer picture of the characteristics of synthesis and inclusive Buddhist development that took place during this time. Finally, the last section of the chapter is devoted to a micro-historical study of a native Dharma assembly. This study is founded on a meticulous examination of a stele inscription that allows a detailed depiction to emerge of the resurgence of Buddhism within a local society during the pro-Buddhism rule of the Sui state.

Chapters Three and Four, which constitute the second part of the thesis, complete the picture of Buddhist development in the region by examining the popular religion in which Buddhism was immersed. Accordingly, Chapter Three focuses on the formation of the local cult of Yang Hu 羊祜, a local governor who became a tutelary god in popular religion. The narratives revolving around Yang Hu in both Buddhist and secular literature shed light on the interaction between Buddhism and this cultic deity. As a tool of religious propagation, the cult of Yang Hu was integrated into Buddhist didactic stories, demonstrating the localization of Buddhism in the region. Chapter Four concentrates on the religious landscapes in the periphery of Jiangling city: an islet in the middle of the Yangtze River named *Baili* 百里 (a Hundred *li*), the Mount Qingxi 青溪 and the Mount Yuquan 玉泉. Semi-retired officials, substantive anchorites, and solitary Daoist practitioners were aboriginal residents of the area long before Buddhist encroachment in the fourth and fifth centuries. The chapter focuses on the rise of

Buddhist monasticism in the mountains and the challenges with which Buddhists had to contend in their struggle for recognition and social standing. It traces the interwoven relationship between Buddhism and other religious forces, including mountain gods, spirits, and Daoism, and aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the Buddhist's living conditions and environment during the early medieval times.

Part 1 A Historical Survey

Chapter 1 Precursors, Communities and Campaigns (300–500)

The present study probe into the dissemination of Buddhism in the Jingxiang region, from its origin to the reunification of China under the Sui Dynasty. The first question we must address is how and when Buddhism penetrated this region. Apart from a few material evidence found in the tomb, which shows the Buddhist influence on the burial objects and tomb decorations in the early third century.²⁷ The circumscribed written sources that are available present unconnected and incoherent fragments of the protracted process of infiltration. In this section, I will review this evidence in an attempt to present a clearer depiction of the development of Buddhism in the region.

1. The Embryonal Period: Earlier Travelers

1.1 Zhi Qian 支謙 in Wuchang (222?–229)

Biographical records indicate that the first Buddhist group appeared in the Jingxiang region in Wuchang (the present Ezhou 鄂州), gathered around an Indo-Scythian monk Zhi Qian,²⁸ who was driven away from Luoyang at the end of the second century due to warfare. As previously discussed, large immigrant waves from the central plain to the south were a recurring event in the region during the period of division, continuously bringing a massive influx of labor forces and cultural resources. Thus, we can assume that the early Buddhist influence on the region mainly came from the central plain cities, such as Luoyang.

Wuchang, the capital city of Eastern Wu (222–280) from 222 to 229, was a confluence point for the first Buddhist pioneers in the region. Due to his erudition and excellent language

²⁷ Xiangfan Municipal Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology (2010): 4–20; Luo Shiping (2012): 10–26.

²⁸ CSZJJ, J.13, “the Biography of Zhi Qian”, T2145.55. 97b14–c18.

skills, Zhi Qian gained the sovereign's favor, and Sun Quan 孫權 (182–253) appointed him as the tutor of the crown prince. From 222 to 253, Zhi Qian devoted himself to translating Buddhist scriptures.²⁹ According to CSZJJ, two Indian monks, Wei Qinan 維祇難 (Skt. Vighna) and Zhu Jiangyan 竺將炎 var. Lüyan, joined Zhi Qian at Wuchang in 224 and brought a foreign version of *Faju jing* 法句經 (T210, Skt. *Dharmapada*, Pāli. *Dhammapada*), a collection of phrases comprising the basic teachings of Buddhist morality. As the preface to *Faju jing* in CSZJJ indicates, this text had already been translated and transmitted by a certain Ge 葛 in seven hundred verses.³⁰ However, this translation was not satisfying. With assistance from Zhi Qian, Vighna completed a more comprehensible translation of the text.³¹ When the court moved to the new capital, Jiankang, in 229, this group of monks appears to have relocated there, probably because of their orientation towards the highest strata of society, the government, and the court. Their initiatives to promote Buddhist doctrine and translate scriptures appear to have had no impact on other cities in the region, as far as we can tell from the sources available.

1.2 Qi Yu 耆域 (Skt. Jīvaka)

After Zhi Qian had been active in the region in the 220s, we find some clues of Buddhist influence on a garrison located on the main road to the central plain, Xiangyang. This strategic city played a central role in the military conflicts between the northern and southern regimes at the time. It was a vital gate guarding the northern border of the Chu state long before the first unified empire, Qin (221 BC–207 BC), was established.³² As pointed out by Yan Gengwang,

²⁹ For the study on Zhi Qian, see Zürcher (1959): 48–51; Inaoka, Seijun (1985): 17–19. Nattier (2008): 115–148.

³⁰ A translation of the text was ascribed to An Shigao. Zürcher (1959) argues that “the tradition which attributes a translation of this work to An Shigao seems apocryphal” (47).

³¹ For the discussion about the authorship of the translated *Fajujing* contained in the Taisho cannon see Nattier (2008): 115.

³²HHS, “the Treatise of Jun guo 郡國志,” J.4, an annotation from Li Xian (655–684). p. 3481.

one of the three main transportation lines connecting North and South China traveled from the Inner Pass area southeastwards and from the He Luo 河洛 (central plain) area southwestwards to Wan 宛 (modern Nanyang in Henan province). Then, along the Bai River 白河 basin, the path traveled southwards to Xiangyang. From there, one could head to the middle reaches of the Yangtze River drainage basin along the Han River basin.³³ This road also bore witness to the peregrination of foreign Buddhists who arrived in China in the Canton region and attempted to reach the central plain. Among them was Jīvaka.

The Indian *śramaṇa* Jīvaka was highly praised in the Buddhist narrative tradition for his supernatural powers and pharmaceutical knowledge. Accounts of his legendary performances were collected in MSZ and GSZ under the category of *shenli* 神力 (“miraculous power”) or *shenyi* 神異 (“thaumaturgy”). When Sengyou reviewed the trajectory of Buddhist development in China, he noted that at the beginning of the reign of Wudi of Jin (236–290, r.266–290), Jīvaka illuminated the traces of miraculous power.³⁴ However, GSZ reports that Jīvaka first arrived at Luoyang at the end of the rule of Huidi of Jin (259–307, r.290–307).³⁵ On his route to Luoyang, he passed through Xiangyang, where he performed supernatural acts. According to his travel itinerary, he set off on his journey to China along the seacoast, from India to Vietnam, then to Canton, and from there heading north, arriving in Xiangyang sometime during the transition between the third and fourth centuries. An anecdote about his mysterious acts is recorded in GSZ:

As [Jīvaka] arrived at Xiangyang, he attempted to cross the [Han] river by boat. The boatman looked at the ragged clothing of this Indian *śramaṇa* contemptuously and refused to take him across the river. When the boat reached the northern shore, Yu had already crossed [the river]. When he moved forward, he saw two tigers with drooping ears and tails in his way. Yu with his hands stroked the tigers’ heads. Then the tigers moved out of

³³ Yan Gengwang (2007): 1039.

³⁴ HMJ, J.14: “晉武之初機緣漸深。耆域耀神通之跡。”。T2102.52.96a4-5.

³⁵ Zürcher (1959:67) dates Jīvaka QiYu’s arrival in Luoyang to 306.

his way and left. The spectators from both shores formed a vast crowd.

既達襄陽。欲寄載過江。船人見梵沙門衣服弊陋。輕而不載。船達北岸。域亦已度。前行見兩虎。虎弭耳掉尾。域以手摩其頭。虎下道而去。兩岸見者隨從成群。³⁶

Using magic and wielding power over ferocious animals to convert illiterate masses was a common tactic during the early infiltration of Buddhism into China. The most notable example is Fotu Deng 佛圖澄 (232–348), who earned imperial sponsorship from the Jie 羯 rulers of Later Zhao (319–351) by such means.³⁷ Jīvaka's influence on the Jingxiang society was relatively trivial, though his magic directly appealed to the commoners, which paved the way for the ensuing Buddhist missionaries in the region. His passage through the region evinces that, as a transportation hub, the region witnessed the Buddhist infiltration from two directions: the southern Canton region and northern central plain and the Luoyang areas. However, before the troubles of the *yongjia* era (304–317) and the exodus to the south, the region could not yet economically support the monastic groups and Buddhist facilities. Therefore, we only find evidence of sporadic Buddhist travelers who entered Chinese territory from the Canton region and briefly stopped in the region en route to Luoyang and probably also Jiankang.³⁸

1.3 Zhu Fahui 竺法慧

Apart from its close connection with the central plain and Canton regions, Xiangyang was

³⁶ GSZ, J.9, “The Biography of Qi Yu.” T2059.50.388a17–c5. In MSZC, only the title of the biography is extant. X1523.77.349a4–5. Unless otherwise noted, all translations appearing in this dissertation are original to the author.

³⁷ Zürcher (1959): 181–83.

³⁸ Kang Senghui is conventionally considered the first Buddhist propagandist to reach southern China. He came from the Canton region and arrived in Jiankang in 247. Thus, the influx from the Canton and Vietnam region has a long tradition. Especially in the period of chaos and wars in northern China, the connection between India and China relied heavily on this southern route. For more about the Buddhist migration from the Jiao-Guang region, namely Vietnam and the Canton region, to the central plain during the Period of Division, see He Jingsong (1989): 69.

influenced by travelers from the Inner Pass area at the same time. According to GSZ,³⁹ a native of the Inner Pass by the Dharma name of Zhu Fahui initially practiced in Mount Song 嵩 under the instruction of a foreign monk, Futu Mi 浮圖密. In 343, Zhu Fahui arrived in Xiangyang and resided at the Yang Shuzi 羊叔子 Temple.⁴⁰ It was said that his conspicuous abilities included fortune-telling, weather forecasting, and invisibility. In contrast to Zhi Qian, who was oriented toward the upper class, Zhu Fahui seemed to connect with farmers in the fields and manifest the Dharma's power through sorcery and divination. Before the anti-Buddhist local governor Yu Yi 庾翼 (305–345) executed him out of envy, Zhu Fahui foretold that there would be a violent storm three days after his death. His prediction was confirmed by a fierce storm that cost many lives. This story became a topos in the Buddhist narrative tradition, serving as evidence for the Dharma. It was added to the Buddhist encyclopedia in the Tang time.⁴¹

Another character appended to the biography of Fahui by the name of Fan Cai 范材 earned a living by telling fortunes on the market under the guise of being a *śramaṇa*. Later, he embraced the teaching of Zhang Ling 張陵.⁴² This story implies that the Daoist influence from the Shu region commingled with Buddhism and proliferated among the lower classes of the society.

Although piecemeal and largely unconnected, the preceding analysis of historical records allows us to sketch a preliminary picture of the early Buddhist penetration of the region as follows: Approaching the end of the second century, political disorder and turbulence resulted

³⁹ GSZ, J.10, "the Biography of Zhu Fahui." T2059.50.389a17–b5.

⁴⁰ The courtesy name 字 of Yang Hu (221–278), a famed local governor of Xiangyang and a tutelary deity. Narratives with Buddhist characteristics ascribed to him are found in both secular and Buddhist historiographical traditions. This issue will be discussed in chapter 4. Here, the temple named after Yang Hu's courtesy name implied the Buddhist adaptation to the local religious circumstance.

⁴¹ FYZL, J.97, T2122.53.1003c11–28.

⁴² Zhang Ling (34–156) is credited as the founder of the Way of the Five Pecks of Rice sect of Daoism. Fan Cai as a Daoist practitioner will be discussed in chapter 4.2.

in wars and destruction in the central plain, compelling a significant number of people to migrate to the south. Buddhism appeared in the Jingxiang region during this transition period. Refugees flooded into the region, including Zhi Qian. Zhi Qian's group associated with the court as they briefly moved through the region. In the first half of the fourth century, the Indian monk, Jīvaka, and Inner Pass native, Zhu Fahui, left their marks on the traffic intersection of Xiangyang. Their supernatural performances intrigued the ordinary people and set a stage for the ensuing Buddhist missionaries, Dao'an (312–385) and his fellows. Before Dao'an's time, the region had never accommodated any systematic, organized monastic group in large numbers. Thus, I shall regard the time before Dao'an as the embryonal period of Buddhism in the region. In contrast, the arrival of Dao'an sparked the initial propagation of Buddhism, which I will unfold in the following paragraphs.

2. The Period of Expansion: Dao'an and His Group

Dao'an is a pivotal character in the history of Chinese Buddhism and has been extensively studied by modern scholars.⁴³ Thus, we are well-informed about his life and academic accomplishments. Tang Yongtong concludes: "Dao'an made a great contribution to translating, expounding doctrines, establishing monastic disciplines, and preserving sūtras."⁴⁴ His arrival in Xiangyang began a new era of Buddhist development in the region. It enabled the initial expansion of Buddhist teaching and practice, and his legacies have sustained monastic institutions in the region for centuries. From 365 to 379, he resided in Xiangyang and Jiangling. In the following section, I will discuss the relocation and expansion of the saṃgha led by Dao'an, as well as its long-lasting ramifications on the region, by reconstructing the distribution map of the related monastic establishments and their Buddhist activities.

⁴³ In chronological order, some of the most influential monographies on Dao'an are Tang Yongtong. "Chapter 8." *The History of Buddhism in Han, Wei, Jin and Northern and Southern Dynasties*. (1938); Ui Hakuju. *A study on Shi Dao'an*. (1956); Zürcher, Erik(1959); Fang Guangchang. *Dao'an Pingzhuan*. (2004).

⁴⁴ Tang Yongtong (2011): 109.

2.1 The Tanxi 檀溪 Temple

In the Song and Yuan periods, the compilers of local gazetteers attributed fifteen temples in Xiangyang to Dao'an.⁴⁵ This attribution may be exaggerated, as the earlier sources only mention one temple by the name of Tanxi, or “Tan Brook.” I will examine these sources to offer a glimpse of the historical vicissitudes of the temple, which was embellished with legends and stories revolving around Dao'an, up to the early seventh century.

As Fang Guangchang's meticulous study indicates, from 349 onwards, Dao'an spent most of his time as a refugee and a wanderer, avoiding warfare and hiding in the mountains.⁴⁶ He was eventually invited by Xi Zaochi 習鑿齒 (fl. 317–384), a personage of Xiangyang, and settled in Xianyang with his four hundred⁴⁷ followers in late 365. They were initially accommodated in a temple named Baima 白馬 (“white horse”), holding the same name as the legendary temple in Luoyang that traditionally symbolized the beginning of Buddhism in China. Metaphorically, this Baima Temple also marked the beginning of Dao'an's preaching in the region. Shortly afterward, a generous benefactor, Zhang Yin 張殷, donated his former residence to build a temple for Dao'an; this building became the Tanxi Temple. According to the biography of Dao'an in GSZ, the driving impulse behind building a new temple was the lack of living space in the Baima Temple. Dao'an's group was probably the largest monastic group in the region, so the new temple needed to accommodate a large number of monks. Reportedly, the wealthy locals raised funds for the construction. The establishment of the Tanxi Temple could thus be interpreted as a warm welcome from the local upper class, the educated, and the affluent.

Regarding the location of the Tanxi Temple, *Shuijing zhu* 水經註 (“The Commentary on the Water Classic”) alludes:

⁴⁵ *Songyuan fangzhi congkan* (1990): 936.

⁴⁶ Fang Guangchang (1999): 145–74.

⁴⁷ Or five hundred, according to Sengyou's in CSZJJ, “the biography of Dao'an”. T2145.55.108a1–109b9.

The Mian River [modern Han River] flows north of the Tan brook, named Tanxi water. On its riverbank is located the temple of the śramaṇa Shi Dao'an, which is named after the brook. On the yang [northern] side of the brook, there are the former residences of Xu Yuanzhi and Cui Zhouping. [Nowadays, it is] all well inhabited ... The brook flows by the city northwards [into the Mian River]. Previously, Liu Bei was framed up by Jingsheng [Liu Biao]. He rode the horse[named] Dilu to escape towards the west but fell into this brook. [The brook] flows westwards for over one *li* before it empties into the Mian River.

沔水:又北逕檀溪。謂之檀溪水。水側有沙門釋道安寺。即溪之名。以表寺目也。溪

之陽有徐元直。崔州平故宅。悉人居……溪水傍城北注。昔刘备为景升所谋。乘的

頗馬西走。墜于斯溪。西去城里餘。北流注于沔。⁴⁸

From this record, we learn that the Tan brook flowed by the west side of the city wall, and along the brook was an old residential area. The temple was built in the city's vicinity and had easy access to water supplies and inhabitants, who would be potential Buddhist adherents.

The Tanxi Temple was spacious, equipped with over four hundred chambers, and adorned with various exotic Buddhist icons donated by the emperor of Former Qin, Fu Jian 符堅 (338–385, r.357–385). An exact description of the icons is preserved in GSZ: a foreign seated Buddha statue in “European sitting pose” with golden leaf appliqué, seven *chi*⁴⁹ tall; a gilded seated Buddha statue; an image of Maitreya Buddha weaved in beaded threads; a Buddha image embroidered with golden threads; a waved image.⁵⁰ When the Dharma assembly was held at the temple, the monks displayed Buddha images and decorated the temple with hanging banners, evoking profound veneration in the viewers.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Li Daoyuan and Chen Qiaoyi (2007): 663.

⁴⁹ *Chi* 尺 is a measurement of length. 1 *chi* = 24.5cm, seven *chi* ≈ 1.7m.

⁵⁰ GSZ, J.5, 「符堅遣使送外國金箔倚像，高七尺，又金坐像、結珠彌勒像、金縷繡像、織成像各一張」 (T2059. 50.352b13–15)

⁵¹ GSZ, J.5, 「每講會法聚，輒羅列尊像，布置幢幡，珠珮迭暉，烟華亂發。使夫昇階履闥者，莫不肅焉盡

The most significant event in the Tanxi Temple was the casting of a copper Buddha statue. Various stories were generated from the statue in the later Buddhist literature, in which historical facts blended with myths and legends. The biography of Dao'an in GSZ contains the earliest extant account of the statue. Scholars have pinpointed that Huijiao organized accounts of Dao'an's life in an ahistorical way, which accounts for difficulties in sorting them in chronological order. Nevertheless, focusing on the facilities of the temple, I determine the following historical facts: First, Dao'an received ten thousand *jin*⁵² from the prefect of Liangzhou 涼州, Yang Hongzhong 楊弘忠, whose name cannot be found anywhere else, for casting a *chenglupan* 承露盤⁵³ ("dew receiver"). But Fatai 法汰, a close fellow of Dao'an who dwelled in Jiankang at the time, had already taken on the task, thereupon, Dao'an requested to cast a statue using this copper. Notably, a dew receiver is a component of a pagoda, thus implying that a pagoda was established in the temple at the same time.⁵⁴ Furthermore, a *śarīra* was claimed to have been propitiously discovered in the topknot of an antique foreign Buddha statue, which was most likely enshrined in the pagoda. Second, the statue was said to be six *zhang* 丈⁵⁵ in height and to illuminate the hall completely in the evenings. Later, mysteriously,

敬矣。」(T2059. 50. 352b15–17)

⁵² 1 *jin* 斤 = 500g.

⁵³ In the Buddhist context, a *chenglupan* 承露盤 is a metal circle at the top of a pagoda. However, it is also mentioned in the dynastic records as a palace facility for worshipping immortals. See *Shijisuoyin* 史記索隱: 三輔故事曰「建章宮承露盤高三十丈，大七圍，以銅為之。上有仙人掌承露，和玉屑飲之」p.459.

⁵⁴ GSZ, J.9, 「虎於臨漳修治舊塔，少承露盤。澄曰：「臨淄城內有古阿育王塔，地中有承露盤及佛像，其上林木茂盛，可掘取之。」即畫圖與使。依言掘取，果得盤、像。」(T2059.50. 385b22–25)

⁵⁵ 1 *zhang* 丈 = 254cm.

it walked to Mount Wan 萬, seen by the whole town.⁵⁶

Notably, the earlier biographies of Dao'an in MSZ and CSZJJ do not mention the statue. Instead, Daoxuan included an informative passage about the statue in his collection of the auspicious *Ganying* 感應 (“stimulus and response”)⁵⁷ stories, *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* 集神州三寶感通錄 (hereafter JSSGL), a work reportedly completed in 664.⁵⁸ Since Sengyou and Baochang never mention the statue, the evidence implies that the consecration of the golden statue in the Tanxi Temple was initiated after their time. Huijiao only briefly mentioned the wonder of the statue that appeared on Mount Wan without precise dates, whereas Daoxuan depicts the establishment and miracle of the statue in great detail:

During the reign of the Xiaowu emperor of the Eastern Jin, in the third year of *ningkang* [375], on the eighth day of the fourth month, the prestigious Master Shi Dao'an casted a gilt bronze statue of the Buddha Amitâyus, eight *zhang* in height, [placed] in the temple at the west of the city. The following winter, the statue was fully decorated. When the commander of the Jin army and inspector of Yongzhou Xi Hui was first stationed in Xiangyang [in 392]⁵⁹, he praised and supported the welfare [of the people]. The statue wandered around the Mount Wan at night and left a footprint on a stone. The religious practitioners and worldly men of the villages and cities all hastened to come at the same time to watch. They were astonished and took it back to [the temple] to give offerings to it. Again, the same evening [the statue] went out of the temple gate, and the crowd was startled and surprised. Therefore, Hui changed the temple name to Jinxiang “golden statue”.

東晉孝武。寧康三年。四月八日。襄陽檀溪寺沙門釋道安。盛德昭彰。聲振宇內。

於郭西精舍鑄造丈八金銅無量壽佛。明年季冬嚴飾成就。晉鎮軍將軍雍州刺史郗恢

之創莅襄部。贊擊福門。其像夜出西萬山。遺示一跡印文入石。鄉邑道俗一時奔赴。

⁵⁶ GSZ, J.5, T2059.50.352b7–13.

⁵⁷ For more about *Ganying*, see Sharf, Robert (2005). Sharf writes, “Kan-ying 感應 is the principle underlying the interaction between practitioner and Buddha- the supplicant is said to ‘stimulate’ or ‘affect’ (kan) the Buddha, an action that elicits the Buddha’s compassionate response (ying).” (120). The *Ganying* stories constituted an important Buddhist literature genre in the early medieval time, usually rendered in Chinese as *Ganying yuan*.

⁵⁸ A study on this collection sees Landry, Nelson (2023).

⁵⁹ When Zhu Xu resigned from his position in Xiangyang, Xi Hui became his successor in 392. See “the Biography of Xi Hui,” *Jinshu*, p. 1805; “the biography of Zhu Xu.” *Jinshu*, p. 2134.

驚嗟迎接還本供養。復以其夕出住寺門。眾咸駭異。恢乃改名金像寺⁶⁰

Daoxuan continues the narrative of the auspicious statue in the Liang time. Emperor Wu of Liang (464–549, r.502–549) granted a pedestal for the statue in the third year of the *putong* era (522). A stele was established to celebrate this donation and was extant in Daoxuan's time. It is credible that the Tanxi Temple thrived throughout the southern dynasties until it was destroyed during the Buddhist suppression campaign in Northern Zhou. Evidence was found on stele inscriptions, namely the Tanxi Temple meditation chamber stele of Liang 梁檀溪寺禪房碑⁶¹ and the Qifa temple during the Sui Dynasty.⁶² The former stele mentioned that in the twenty-fifth year of *yuanjia* (448) of Song, a monk from the western region built a meditation chamber to the east of the pond. Later, in the fourth year of *tianjian* (505) of Liang, Emperor Wu granted him the land on the west side of the pond for living. Shi Huichao 釋惠超 (474–526) was said to have received meditation training there in his youth.⁶³ Furthermore, from the stele of Qifa temple, we learn that the Tanxi Temple was renamed Qifa in the Tang period.⁶⁴

From the southern dynasties to the Tang period, the temple initially built for Dao'an repeatedly appears in Buddhist literature and inscriptional records. As the heritage of Dao'an, the temple witnessed the rise and fall of Buddhism in the Jingxiang region.

⁶⁰ JSSGL, J.2, T2106.52.414c19–26.

⁶¹ *Xiangyang silüe*, p. 301.

⁶² The stele of the Qifa temple will be discussed further in Chapter 2.4.

⁶³ XGSZ, J.6. “The biography of Shi Huichao.” He joined the monastic discipline at the age of seven (481) in the Tanxi temple under the guide of Huijing 惠景, the superintendent monk of Jingzhou in the early *putong* era (520–527). 「七歲出家住檀溪寺。為惠景弟子。景清恒平簡雅有器局。普通之初總州僧正。」 (T2060.50.475a19–21).

⁶⁴ For the detailed argumentation, see Chapter 2.4.

2.2 The Changsha 長沙 Temple and the Shangming 上明 Temple

Dao'an and his monastic group expanded their settlement area from Xiangyang to Jiangling, the region's capital city, by constructing a temple named Changsha. The temple was initially the residence of Teng Han 滕含,⁶⁵ the prefect of Changsha County. When he donated his residence to the sangha to transform it into a temple, he requested that Dao'an send a monk as the abbot. Dao'an entrusted his disciple Tanyi 曇翼 to manage the construction matters.⁶⁶ Afterward, the temple became a vital connection point between Xiangyang and Jiangling for Dao'an's group. In 378, when the emperor of Former Qin, Fu Jian, launched a military campaign against Eastern Jin, Xiangyang was besieged. Among those who struggled to flee Xiangyang, many headed to Jiangling. Tanyi, Tanhui 曇徽, Fayu 法遇, the brother Huiyuan 慧遠 (334–414), and Huichi 慧持 (337–412) were major members of the Dao'an group who took refuge in the Changsha Temple. During this military turmoil, Tanyi left the Changsha Temple for Shangming and reportedly constructed eastern and western Shangming temples to shelter the monks from the Changsha and Siceng 四層 temples in Jiangling during Fu Jian's attack.

Shangming was a military stronghold on the southern Yangtze riverbank and the military defensive headquarter of Jingzhou, which was relocated from Jiangling after 377 due to military pressure from Fu Jian's force.⁶⁷ In any case, after Dao'an was taken to Chang'an in 379 by Fu

⁶⁵ The Teng clan had converted to Buddhism generations before. The conversion can be traced back to his grandfather Xiu 脩. The long-term office in the Lingnan area resulted in the conversion to Buddhism. See Chen Zhiyuan (2019): 113.

⁶⁶ The date of the construction is disputed. Yang Weizhong (2017: 227) dated it in 377, while Chen Zhiyuan (2019:112) argued that it occurred in 371.

⁶⁷ *Jinshu*, "The Biography of Huan Chong 桓沖 (328–384)", pp. 1948–53. He was the chief commander and prefect of Jingzhou from 377 to 384. Moreover, he moved the military headquarter from Jiangling to Shangming to enhance Eastern Jin's defense strength and move the emphasis from the north side of the Yangtze River to the south side. Very likely, Tanyi led the sangha in the Changsha Temple to move to Shangming, seeking military

Jian's army, the Buddhist community in Xiangyang became fugitives in Jiangling and Shangming and maintained an active and thriving community. Tanhui formed a worship center of Dao'an at the Shangming Temple, paying homage to the master's portrait. Moreover, the eastern Shangming Temple developed into a significant Buddhist center throughout the southern dynasties and Sui dynasty and was known as the Hedong 河東 Temple during the Tang dynasty. Regarding the layout and scale of the monastery, Daoxuan recorded in his work, *Lüxiang gantong zhuan* 律相感通傳 (hereafter LGZ):

“The Hedong Monastery of Jingzhou was quite large. [...] Since the Jin, Song, Qi, Liang and Chen Dynasties, there had been tens of thousands of monks. [...] The pagoda in front of the hall was established by (Liu) Yiji, Qiao King of the Song Dynasty,⁶⁸ and statues were molded inside. The Maitreya of the eastern hall was created by craftsmen of the thirty-three heavens. There were many golden–bronze statues in west hall, treasure curtain, flying fairy, bead canopy and ornate decoration were all created by craftsmen of the heaven of the Four Heavenly Kings. [...] The monastery was five-story buildings, all with seven-bay structure. There were a total of ten other compounds varying in size; both the compounds of *pratyutpanna* and *vaipulya* were the most gorgeous decoration.”⁶⁹

At the time of Daoxuan, the temple had survived for over three hundred years. It was the greatest temple among all big temples in the eastern river basin and was beautiful.⁷⁰ This account is predicated on the description from Daoxuan's confidante, Master Chong 嵩 of the Ci'en 慈恩 Temple, who once learned and trained there.

Returning to the topic of the Changsha Temple, Tanyi, the abbot of the temple, played an essential role in establishing the authority of the temple and promoting Buddhist teachings by

protection.

⁶⁸ The text writes 宋譙王義季, which is ahistorical. Liu Yiji was enfeoffed as Hengyang 衡陽, not Qiao 譙. He was stationed in Jingzhou as the prefect from 439 to 444. Liu Yixuan, the King of Nan Qiao, was his successor. See “The Biography of Hengyang wenwang Yiji.” *Songshu*, J.62, pp. 1653–56.

⁶⁹ This translation is from He, Liqun (2014): 212.

⁷⁰ LGZ, T1898.45.878a18–20.

using his extraordinary devotion to recall 招致 *śarīra* and statues. A *śarīra* emerged in the Changsha Temple in response to his sincere prayers. It was preserved in a golden vase, emitted five-colored light at night, and illuminated the entire room. The advent of the Buddha statue, allegedly constructed by the legendary King Aśoka (r.ca. 273–232 BCE), was also a good omen.

The statue became a topical subject in JSSGL. However, Daoxuan's narrative varies from the records in the earlier biographies of MSZ and GSZ. Daoxuan dated the advent of the statue to 350, which is evidently ahistorical. As stated previously, Tanyi accompanied his master to Xiangyang in 365 and then to the Changsha Temple around 377, when war was impending. The narratives in MSZ are quite similar to those in GSZ, and both state that the miracle appeared in the nineteenth year of the *taiyuan* era (394)⁷¹:

Yi always sighed with regret that although the temple was established and the monks were sufficient, statues and images were still lacking. [He also thought that] the holy statues created by King Aśoka all attracted auspicious omens and were to be found in all directions. Why was it that they did not react and that it was impossible to call one of them to come. In reaction to these ideas [Tanyi] concentrated all his energy to earnestly and sincerely pray for a response. On the eighth day of the second month in the nineteenth year of the *taiyuan* era [394], there suddenly was one single statue appearing north of the city-walls with a splendid appearance and flashing in the sky. At that point a crowd of the monks of the Baima temple first went there to collect the statue but could not move it. Upon this Yi went there to pay homage to [the statue] and told the others: “[The statue] must be one of the statues of King Aśoka, which is bestowed upon our Changsha temple.” Then he ordered three disciples to hold the statue, easily lifting it, and moving it back to the temple. The religious practitioners and the worldly men all headed to [the temple]. The road was filled with carriages and horses.

翼常歎寺立僧足。而形像尚少。阿育王所造容儀。神瑞皆多。布在諸方。何其無感。

不能招致。乃專精懇惻。請求誠應。以晉太元十九年甲午之歲二月八日。忽有一像

現于城北。光相衝天。時白馬寺僧眾。先往迎接。不能令動。翼乃往祇禮。謂眾人

⁷¹ MSZC, 「永和十九年二月八日夜。忽有像現城北。」 (X1523.77.352c20–21). Here *Taiyuan* must be mistaken for *yonghe*, because the *yonghe* era is twelve years in total.

曰。當是阿育王像。降我長沙寺焉。即令弟子三人捧接。飄然而起。迎還本寺。道俗奔赴。車馬轟填。⁷²

This narrative indicates the competitive relationship between monasteries and the victory of the Changsha Temple in the competition for this holy statue. Interestingly, a Kaśmīri monk sojourned at the temple later and confirmed that the statue was an authentic Indian exotic. As a sign of the transference of sacred hallmarks from India to China, the statue added authority and sacredness to the temple, making it the most important temple in the region. This sacred icon attracted the attention of monarchs, including the renowned Buddhist Emperor Wu of Liang and his great-grandson, Emperor Ming (542–585, r.562–585) of Hou Liang, who both venerated the statue at their inner palace.

Furthermore, when Fayu resided at the Changsha Temple, he reportedly lectured on various sūtras and instructed over four hundred monks. The saṃgha, dispersed from Xiangyang, was revived at the Changsha Temple on an even larger scale. The saṃgha kept in contact with Dao'an, who was in Chang'an at the time, as well as Huiyuan's group in Lushan.⁷³

2.3 The Zhulin 竹林 Temple

Zhulin (“bamboo grove”) was a favorable name for a temple found in several places across China.⁷⁴ The Zhulin Temple in Jiangling was established under the sponsorship of a certain Liu

⁷² GSZ, J.5, “the Biography of Shi Tanyi”. T2059.50.355c28–356a7. Subsequent citations of Taishō Canon texts will give abbreviation and page numbers only (e.g., GSZ, p. 379b23–c5) unless cited for the first time, in which case full information will be provided.

⁷³ Zürcher, Erik (2007): 199.

⁷⁴ In Jingkou 京口 or Zhufang 朱方 (the present Zhenjiang 鎮江), near Nanjing. See GSZ, J.8, “the Biography of Shi Huici 釋慧次”, p. 379b23–c5; GSZ, J.13, “the Biography of Shi Daohui”, p. 414a4–10. On Mount Guankou 灌口 in Sichuan, see XGSZ, J.25, “the Biography of Shi Daoxian”, p. 651a5–c3.

Zun 劉遵, a military commander.⁷⁵ Huiyuan instructed his disciple Tanshun 曇順 to go to the Zhulin Temple for the initiation of construction. If we take this account from GSZ as credible, the temple must have been built before Huiyuan's death in 416. Tanshun initiated a dharma center and Buddhist residence in Jiangling. Tanyong 曇邕, another disciple of Huiyuan, left Lushan for Jiangling after the master departed and spent the rest of his life at the Zhulin Temple. To some extent, the teaching of Huiyuan in Lushan was continued at the Zhulin Temple and exerted significant influence on the Buddhist landscape in the region. The most representative example is Shi Senghui 釋僧慧 (408–486), the superintendent monk of Jingzhou during the early Qi period. He was a direct disciple of Tanshun and joined the monastic life at the Zhulin Temple in his youth. At the age of twenty-five, he could already lecture on the *Nirvana sūtra*, the *Lotus Sūtra*, *Shizhu* 十住 (“sūtra on the ten stages”), *Jingming* 淨名 (Skt. *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*),⁷⁶ and *Za apitan xinlun* 雜阿毘曇心論 (Skt. *Samyuktābhidharma-hṛdaya-śāstra*).⁷⁷ Moreover, he specialized in *Lao Zi* 老子 and *Zhuang Zi* 莊子 and befriended the

⁷⁵ The name was probably mistaken in GSZ, as we were unable to find a Liu Zun in the position of Nanman xiaowei 南蠻校尉. Liu Zunkao 劉遵考 (392–473), a younger clan brother of Liu Yu 劉裕 (363–422, r.420–422), was in the tenure of *Nanman xiaowei* from 426 to 428. See *Songshu*, “the Biography of Liu Zunkao.” pp.1480–83. However, Liu Zunkao was too young to donate a temple and requested that Huiyuan send a disciple to organize the construction matters.

⁷⁶ Another name for the bodhisattva Vimalakīrti, *Jingming* refers to the scripture *Weimojie suoshuo jing* 維摩詰所說經 (T475), most likely Kumārajīva's rendition. Huiyuan thoroughly studied it and conducted a commentary on it: *Weimo yiji* 維摩義記 (T1776).

⁷⁷ This scripture was first translated into Chinese in 434 at the Changgan 長干 Temple in Jiankang by Saṃghavarman 僧伽跋摩.

renowned native hermits Zong Bing 宗炳 (375–443)⁷⁸ and Liu Qiu 劉虬 (438–495).⁷⁹ His disciple Sengxiu 僧岫 was also renowned as an assiduous Buddhist scholar.

In conclusion, the first large-scale monastic group in the region, instructed by Dao'an, significantly shaped the Buddhist landscape, and their social networks were deeply entrenched in the local society. Newly established temples formed rudimentary Buddhist practice centers in Xiangyang and Jiangling. The regional political and military conflict resulted in a flow of individual monks and the instability of monastic groups, but it also regenerated new Buddhist gathering places at Shangming and Mount Lu. The loss of the religious leader Dao'an did not eliminate the group from the region; instead, it facilitated a visible social network that extended from Xiangyang and Jiangling to Mount Lu, fostering the initial growth of Buddhism in the region during the second half of the fourth century. During the first half of the fifth century, the region was characterized by foreign influx and centered on scriptural translation and meditative practices, which I will elucidate below.

3. Translation Forum at Jiangling

The Jingzhou prefecture consistently drew considerable attention for the political and

⁷⁸ He was a zealous Buddhist advocate and associator of Huiyuan's community in Mount Lu. It is not surprising that he maintained a good relationship with Senghui. For the life accounts of Zong Bing, see *Songshu*, J.93, "the Biographies of Hermits", pp. 2278–78; *Nanshi*, J.75, pp. 1860–61. Walter Liebenthal (1952: 378–96) partially translated his work *Mingfolun* ("Exposition of Buddhism") and other writings.

⁷⁹ He was a noted layman and shared the same provenance with Zong Bing. Residing at Jiangling, Xishazhou, or Xiwangshazhou, he conducted a commentary on the *Lotus Sutra* and held lectures on Buddhist teachings. See *Nanshi*, J.50, "the Biography of Liu Qiu", pp. 1248–49. A brief account of his life is included in *Guang Hongmingji*:

"A letter to Liu Qiu, the hermit of Jingzhou 與荊州隱士劉虬書", attributed to the prince Jingling 竟陵 of Qi,

Xiaoziliang 蕭子良. He demonstrated that kindness would not be rewarded and the denotation of sudden enlightenment. 述善不受報。頓悟成佛義, T2103.52.233a10–11.

military deployment of the Liu Song Dynasty (420–479). After the uprising of Xie Hui 謝晦 (390–426)⁸⁰ against Emperor Wen was quelled in 426, the royal family members perpetually occupied the region. Liu Yixuan 劉義宣 (415–454), the sixth son of Liu Yu (363–422, r.420–422), the King of Nanqiao, was appointed as the prefect of Jingzhou in 444, at the age of thirty-three.⁸¹ Due to Liu Yixuan’s devotion to Buddhism, his governance (444–454) ushered in a period of burgeoning Buddhist activities in the region, especially translating scriptures. In the following section, I will investigate the translation activities centered on the Xin 辛; var. 新 Temple,⁸² led by the Indian monk Guṇabhadra 求那跋陀羅 (394–468), with support from his Chinese assistant, Fayong 法勇. By analyzing Guṇabhadra’s social network, I endeavor to shed light on the new Buddhist scriptures and thoughts that flowed through the network at the time and identify the cultural connections and intellectual exchanges between Jiangling and the capital city, Jiankang.

To begin with, I introduce the protagonist of this section, Guṇabhadra. The Buddhist historian Sengyou, his disciple Baochang, and Huijiao each dedicated a biography to Guṇabhadra, sharing a high similarity in content, in CSZJJ, MSZ,⁸³ and GSZ, respectively. My investigation into the life of Guṇabhadra is predominantly based on these primary sources. I will pay particular attention to the discrepancies between the texts, which might imply interpretations and amendments on the part of the later Buddhist historian Huijiao, and the complicated intertextual relationships between these three texts.

⁸⁰ He was a major general of the Liu Song court. Emperor Wu (Liu Yu) of Liu Song entrusted him to assist his successor, the young Emperor Liu Yifu (406–424), whom the assisting ministers eventually deposed.

⁸¹ *Songshu*, J.68, “the Biography of Yixuan.” pp. 1798–1807.

⁸² The temple’s name is written as 新 (“new”) in CSZJJ, J.14, p. 105c17.

⁸³ A work considered to be completed by Baochang. It was lost in China but preserved in Japan by a Japanese monk, Zong-xing 宗性, who transcribed it in 1235. See Hsieh Hsien-Yi (2019): 121–60; *Fojiao dacidian* (2002): 551.

All three biographers agree that Guṇabhadra was born in mid-India (Skt. *Madhyadeśa*), learned five sciences (Skt. *pañca-vidyā*)⁸⁴ in his youth, and was versed in astrology, mathematics, medicine, and incantation. However, in MSZ, there is no mention of his Brahmin family background, which was quite hostile to Buddhism and even caused his departure from home.⁸⁵ His initial motivation for converting to Buddhism, which was inspired by the influential Sautrāntika *śāstra*, *Apitan zaxin* 阿毘曇雜心,⁸⁶ is also omitted. In general, MSZ contains minimal information about his life in India; only the most essential part of his early ecclesiastical education is included. Most importantly, in all three biographies, it is recorded that Guṇabhadra discarded the “Hīnayāna” teaching and converted to Mahāyāna Buddhism, which earned him the sobriquet Moheyan 摩訶衍 or Mohecheng 摩訶乘 (Skt. Mahāyāna).⁸⁷ He spent years studying and preaching in Ceylon, from where he eventually embarked on his journey to China.

Guṇabhadra arrived in Guangzhou 廣州 in the year 435. Baochang provides a more precise date and residence for Guṇabhadra in Guangzhou, namely, from the spring to the winter of 435 on Mount Yunfeng 雲峯. The prefect of Guangzhou, Wei Lang,⁸⁸ sent a memorial to Emperor

⁸⁴ The five fields of learning were grammar and linguistics; skills and crafts, such as mathematics; medicine; logic and epistemology; psychology, self-development, and self-understanding. *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism*, [http://www.buddhism-dict.net.emedien.ub.uni-muenchen.de/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id\(%27b4e94-660e%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net.emedien.ub.uni-muenchen.de/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id(%27b4e94-660e%27)). Accessed on April 5, 2022.

⁸⁵ CSZJJ, J.14, p. 105b21–22; GSZ, J.3, p. 344a9.

⁸⁶ The text is preserved in the Chinese Buddhist canon titled *Za Apitan xinlun* 雜阿毘曇心論. (Skr. *Samyuktābhidharmahrdaya*), T1552.28.869c3.

⁸⁷ For a thorough study of Guṇabhadra’s school affiliation, see Willemen, Charles (2013): 33–41. He concludes: “Guṇabhadra was a Sautrāntika brahmin, familiar with avadāna literature and with āgamas. He was familiar with non-Vaibhāṣika Abhidharma and with the latest developments within Sautrāntika circles (ālayavijñāna and tathāgatagarbha, Sukhāvātī). His Mahāsāṅghika background in India had made him a true believer of the buddha-nature idea, a true ekayānist. He even may have compiled the Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra himself.” (41).

⁸⁸ In the three biographies, this name was erroneously written as 車朗. According to *Songshu*, Wei Lang should be in the prefect position this year. *Songshu*, J.5, p. 82.

Wen to report Guṇabhadra's arrival. Shortly afterward, he was escorted by the imperial envoy to the capital and settled down at the Qihuan 祇洹 Temple.

Guṇabhadra then stayed in China until the end of his life, thirty-three years in total. We shall divide his life in China into three periods: 1) the first nine years (435–444) in Jiankang, associated with Huiguan 慧觀, Huiyan 慧嚴 (363–443), and Baoyun 寶雲 (376–449), engaging in the enterprise of translation; 2) the ensuing decade (444–454) in Jiangling, patronized by Liu Yixuan, the King of Nanqiao, during which he continued to translate scriptures with his assistant Fayong; 3) the last fourteen years (454–468) spent in Jiankang. My focus is on his stay at Jiangling. However, investigating his social networks in Jiankang can contribute to a comprehensive picture of his monastic and scholastic career in southern China, as well as the geographical and cultural circumstances of the fifth-century Buddhist spread, which radiated from the political center to the borderland.

3.1 Associates in Jiankang (435–444)

First, I will briefly review the Buddhist monastic milieu in the early Liu Song period. On the one hand, the ruling elites intentionally utilized Buddhism to legitimate their state and routinely sponsored Buddhist establishments and academic projects.⁸⁹ On the other hand, a large-scale influx of itinerant monks from northern India, especially from Kaśmīr (Jibin 罽賓), was burgeoning.⁹⁰ Many foreign monks who came to China were warmly welcomed and accommodated by the native Buddhist communities and the royal house. Among this wave of “missionaries,”⁹¹ the translator and meditation master Dharmamitra 曇摩蜜多 (356–442) from

⁸⁹ We must be aware that “the Jiankang court did not yet prioritize the Buddhist repertoire in legitimating the throne.” See Chittick, Andrew (2020): 275.

⁹⁰ Zürcher, Erik (2012). “Although in the time most of the monks’ provenience was northern Indian, they often reached China by sea, which started from southern India and Ceylon. Therefore, the new expertise from there should also be taken into consideration” (14).

⁹¹ Zürcher argues that the term “missionary” hardly applies to the early foreign monks who traveled to China in the early medieval time because “in most cases, the role these foreign masters played in the actual formation of

Kaśmīr arrived at the Shu in 424, sojourned in Jiangling for a short time, then traveled to Jiankang and settled at the Qihuan Temple, where Guṇabhadra later lived.⁹² In 431, another foreign monk, Guṇavarman 求那跋摩(367–431), a descendant of the Jibin ruling clan, also reached Jiankang and dwelled in the same temple.⁹³ He had initially roamed through Ceylon and the Dupo kingdom 閼婆國,⁹⁴ where he received the highest treatment and became the national master 國師. At the insistent invitation of Emperor Wen of Song and two outstanding figures of monastics, Huiyan and Huiguan, he traveled with merchant ships to Guangzhou. Two years later, the Indian monk Saṃghavarman 僧伽跋摩, who was fully conversant with the Vinaya texts and specialized in *Apitan zaxin* 阿毘曇雜心,⁹⁵ arrived in Jiankang. Most likely, Saṃghavarman and Guṇabhadra knew each other personally, as they both associated with Huiguan and Baoyun and shared a royal patron, the King of Pengcheng 彭城, Liu Yikang 劉義康 (409–451). In addition to these three foreign masters, there were associates and followers of Kumārajīva 鳩摩羅什 (344–413) in Chang'an headed toward the south. Among them were the Indian monk Buddhābhadda 佛馱跋陀羅 (359–429) and his over forty disciples, who were expelled from Chan'an by native monks. At the invitation from Huiyuan, they first took refuge

Chinese Buddhism appears to be less decisive and less substantial than we would assume it to be at first sight". Zürcher (2012): 25.

⁹² GSZ, J.3, pp. 342c25–343a1. In the following subchapter, I will discuss his meditation tradition and its far-reaching ramifications on the region.

⁹³ GSZ, J.3, p. 340a15.

⁹⁴ A kingdom located in modern Indonesia, roughly in Java and Sumatra Island. According to Shen Yue 沈約 (441–513), the kingdom was named 呵羅單國 and occupied Dupo island 閼婆洲. The kingdom actively maintained diplomatic relations with the Song court. The king sent gifts to the Song court in 430 and a letter 表 to Emperor Wen in 433. *Songshu*, J.97, p. 2381.

⁹⁵ GSZ, J.3, p. 342b12.

in Mount Lu for a year, then moved to Jiangling in 412; from there, Buddhabhadra acquainted himself with Liu Yu and traveled with this new patron to the Daochang 道場 Temple in Jiankang. Thus, we can conclude that at the time of Guṇabhadra's arrival, there was a well-developed foreign monk association, avid sponsors, and native assistants in the capital.

Next, we shall thoroughly examine two of Guṇabhadra's associates, Baoyun and Huiguan. The earliest extant account of the life of Baoyun is contained in CSZJJ.⁹⁶ We have no information concerning his origin and clan. Allegedly, he was a native of Liangzhou and began his journey to the western region in the early *long'an* era (397–401) of Eastern Jin. During his travels, he encountered the Faxian 法顯 (337–422) expedition group and Zhiyan 智嚴 (305–427) in Zhangye 張掖 (present Gansu province). Afterward, they traveled to Dunhuang 敦煌, spent a summer retreat together, and then went their separate ways. Baoyun's journey took him to the kingdom of Puruṣapura 弗樓沙國 (present Peshawar in Pakistan),⁹⁷ and he resolved to return with his companions Huida 慧達 and Sengjing 僧景. From the scarce and scattered records, we glimpse his social intercourse and overseas experience, which facilitated his translation work in Jiankang. According to Sengyou, Baoyun was highly praised for his extraordinary Sanskrit language skills and knowledge and was equal to another noted contemporary translator, Zhu Fonian 竺佛念. Sengyou briefly reported Baoyun's return to Chang'an without a date, only mentioning that he followed Buddhabhadra, practicing meditation. Here, one question arises: How were these two acquainted? Incidentally, at the

⁹⁶ CSZJJ, J.15, p. 339c25–27. In modern scholarship, Laura Lettère (2020:259–74) has conducted a brief examination of Baoyun's life.

⁹⁷ *Gaoseng Faxian zhuan* 高僧法顯傳 *The Biography of Eminent Monk Faxian*: 「法顯等五人隨使先發。復與寶雲等別燉煌。...慧達一人還於弗樓沙國相見。而慧達寶雲僧景遂還秦土。」 (T2085.51.857a14–15, 858c6–7). For an annotated English translation of this text, see Legge, James. “Chapter 1” and “Chapter 12.” *A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms*. 1886. For a thorough study of Faxian and a translation of this text in German, see Deeg, Max (2005).

invitation of Zhiyan, Buddhabhadra traveled together with him to China. As previously mentioned, Zhiyan and Baoyun once encountered each other on the way to India and were travel companions. Thus, the three of them probably journeyed back to China together, and, in the meantime, Baoyun became Buddhabhadra's direct disciple. An account of a Dharma debate with Kumārajīva, held in the palace of the crown prince Yao Hong 姚泓 (388–417) of Later Qin (384–417), further supports this assumption. It records the dialogue between Kumārajīva and Buddhabhadra, concluding with the statement, "At that time, Baoyun interpreted this word but did not understand the connotation."⁹⁸ This statement clearly illustrated that Baoyun was Buddhabhadra's accompanying translator during the debate. Later, during the exile of Buddhabhadra from Chang'an, Baoyun was probably among the forty disciples who traveled with him to the south, since Sengyou alluded that Baoyun returned to Jiankang along with Buddhabhadra and resided at the Daochang Temple.⁹⁹ At this point, we can create a relatively straightforward image of Baoyun: a bilingual Chinese monk who took discipleship under the foreign meditation master Buddhabhadra, was acquainted with the native monks Faxian and Zhiyan, and went on a pilgrimage to India.

Unlike the bilingual Baoyun, who verbally rendered foreign languages into Chinese in the process of translation, Huiguan, another assistant of Guṇabhadra, was a scribe. Therefore, Sengyou did not establish a biography for him. We can only find his biography in the *Yijie* 義解 category of GSZ.¹⁰⁰ Most perplexing are the contradictory accounts concerning Huiguan in GSZ.

First, let us undertake a brief survey of the narration of Huiguan's life in the major biography. He bore a notable family name, Cui 崔 of Qinghe 清河 (in the present Hebei

⁹⁸ GSZ, J.2: 「時寶雲譯出此語,不解其意」 p. 335a14.

⁹⁹ CSZJJ, J.15: 「俄而禪師橫為秦僧所擯。徒眾悉同其咎。雲亦奔散。會廬山釋慧遠解其擯事。共歸京師安止道場寺」 p.113a15–18.

¹⁰⁰ The distinguished exegetists and doctrine experts were assigned to this category in GSZ.

province), which indicates his noble origin and good family education¹⁰¹. Roughly at the age of twenty, he became a monk and traveled around to study. In his later years, he stayed on Mount Lu and learned from Huiyuan. After hearing that Kumārajīva was in Chang'an (late 401), he went to him. Among distinguished Buddhist scholars in Chang'an, he was comparable to Sengzhao 僧肇 (384–414), an outstanding disciple of Kumārajīva known for specializing in solving difficulties.¹⁰² During his stay in Chang'an, he wrote *Fahuazongyao xu* 法華宗要序 (“The Preface to the Essentials of the *Lotus sutra*”) which received enthusiastic approval from Kumārajīva. After Kumārajīva's death, Huiguan traveled to Jingzhou and propagated the thoughts of the *Lotus sūtra*. There, he was venerated by the prefect Sima Xiuzhi 司馬休之 (d.417), and the latter established a temple named Gaokui 高愷 for him. Shortly afterward, he met his next patron, Liu Yu, in Jiangling in the year 415. Liu Yu appreciated Huiguan and granted him an association with his nine-year-old son, who would later take the throne. To a large extent, the successful monastic career of Huiguan in the Song period was based on his early interaction with the imperial family. These two emperors were his long-term patrons. Later, he returned to the capital city and settled down at the Daochang Temple. His sojourn in Jiangling was relatively brief, but it is evident that he earned a good reputation in the region and, most significantly, obtained imperial patronage for the rest of his life.

The account of Huiguan's return to Jiankang is cursory and undated. However, it underscores that he was versed in Buddhist doctrines and the Chinese philosophical classics *Lao Zi* and *Zhuang Zi*, which were the focus of the intellectual fad in the south. Therefore, he was highly esteemed and integrated into the elite circle in the capital. Wang Sengda 王僧達 (423–458) and He Shangzhi 何尚之 (382–460), socialites of the time, were both his fellows.

Apart from these accounts in the major biography, some significant aspects of his life are

¹⁰¹ The Cui clan in the Qinghe County is a significant aristocratic family in the medieval China, See Xia Yan (2004), Patricia Ebrey (1978).

¹⁰² GSZ, J.7, “the Biography of Shi Huiguan”: 「精難則觀、肇第一。」 p.368b12.

noted in other sections of GSZ, which were suspiciously absent and inconsistent with those in the major biography. First, Huiguan, with Huiyan¹⁰³ and Xie Lingyun 謝靈運 (385–433),¹⁰⁴ revised the newly arrived *Da niepanjing* 大涅槃經, which was translated in Liangzhou by Tan Wuchen 曇無讖, or *Dharmakṣema* (385–433).¹⁰⁵ Huiguan edited the text and provided new chapter divisions and titles, a significant doctrinal contribution.¹⁰⁶ This information appears in the biography of Huiyan but is absent in Huiguan’s biography.

Second, there are ambiguous accounts about his stay in Jiangling and his discipleship under the meditation master Buddhabhadra. The biographies of Buddhabhadra in both GSZ and CSZJJ explicitly mention that the disciple Huiguan left Chang’an with Buddhabhadra, dwelled in Jiangling when Liu Yu launched a military campaign against Liu Yi 劉毅 (d.412) and quartered there in 412. The biographies also contain an anecdote about how they made acquaintance with Liu Yu. The end of the story suggests that Liu Yu invited them to the capital and accommodated them in the Daochang Temple.¹⁰⁷ However, the major biography of Huiguan in GSZ never mentions the discipleship or interaction with Buddhabhadra and omits his motivation for moving to the capital. Furthermore, the meeting with Liu Yu reportedly occurred in 415, when Liu Yu led the army against Sima Xiuzhi. These two military campaigns dominated by Liu Yu happened in close succession; thus, it is possible the later story collectors and Buddhist historians were confused and derived different versions of their acquaintance. This discrepancy confirms that Huijiao compiled various sources and narrative traditions without considering their differences. In addition, another record in the biography of a Kaśmīri

¹⁰³ GSZ, J.7 “the Biography of Shi Huiyan”, p. 367b18; Liebenthal, Walter (1955): 287.

¹⁰⁴ *Songshu*, J.67, “the Biography of Xie Lingyun.” pp.1743–79.

¹⁰⁵ Chen, Jinhua (2004): 215–63.

¹⁰⁶ For the diffusion and revision of the *Nirvana Sūtra* (northern vision with 40 *juan*) from north to south, see Tang Yongtong (2017): 485–89. The revision with 36 *juan* is known as the southern version, which was edited by Huiguan, Huiyan, and Xie Lingyun, based on Dharmakṣema (385–433) ’s translation, the so-called northern version.

¹⁰⁷ GSZ, J.2, “the Biography of Buddhabhadra.” p. 335b21–29.

Vinaya master, Vimalākṣa 卑摩羅叉, a teacher and collaborator of Kumārajīva, provides us with vital information about Huiguan's engagement with Vinaya texts in Jiangling. Vimalākṣa left Chang'an after Kumārajīva's death (413) and resided in the Shijian 石澗 Temple of Shouchun 壽春 (in present Anhui province). Shortly afterward, he spent a summer retreat in the Xin Temple and lectured on the *Shisong lü* 十誦律 "Ten Recitations Vinaya." Huiguan must have been present for these lectures and recorded all monastic regulations he expounded in two *juan*. This Vinaya work was circulated in Jiankang and was highly praised by the time of Huijiao.¹⁰⁸

Finally, according to CSZJJ, the earlier account of Zhu Daosheng 竺道生 (355–343), Daosheng went to Kumārajīva for studying, together with Huirui 慧叟 (371–438) of the Shixing Temple,¹⁰⁹ Huiyan of the Dong'an Temple, and Huiguan of the Daochang Temple. However, in the biography of Daosheng in GSZ, Huiguan's name is missing. It is difficult to judge whether Huijiao erased Huiguan from this group intentionally or whether his name was simply lost in the circulation of the text.

Nevertheless, the major biography of Huiguan and the biography of Baoyun confirm their collaboration in translation and deep friendship. It is difficult to determine whether their friendship began when they followed Buddhābhaddra in Chang'an. However, we can certainly state that Huiguan was one of the most influential figures in the Jiankang saṃgha in the early Song period. He deliberately fostered an open Buddhist community that warmly integrated newcomers and successfully earned unwavering support from elites and the imperial family.

In summary, Baoyun and Huiguan were both competent and respectable monks in the Jiankang saṃgha when Guṇābhaddra arrived. Baoyun, with his extraordinary Sanskrit language expertise and close relationship with foreign monks, such as Buddhābhaddra, Saṃghavarman,

¹⁰⁸ GSZ, J.2, "the Biography of Vimalākṣa." p. 333c4–12.

¹⁰⁹ GSZ, J.7 "the Biography of Shi Huirui", p. 367a29–b13. Sengrui and Huirui have been generally accepted as the same monk. See Ōchō Enichi (1942): 203–31; Wright, Arthur F. (1957): 272–92; Furuta, Kazuhiro (1969): 31–49.

and the native monks who had overseas experiences, including Zhiyan and Faxian,¹¹⁰ was an ideal assistant for translation work and the best associate to help Guṇabhadra acculturate to the new surroundings and integrate into the community. The well-connected Huiguan, who had imperial support and esteem from noble intellectuals, mainly partook in the translation project as a scribe. His sophisticated Chinese language skills and philosophical expertise ensured the quality of the translated texts.

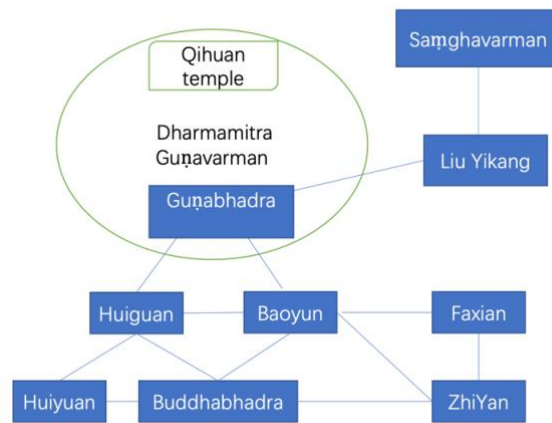


Fig. 1.1. Guṇabhadra's core associates in Jiankang

3.2 Translations in Jiangling (444–454)

As discussed above, when Guṇabhadra arrived, he was embraced by the Jiankang monastic community and associated with the core figures. In 444, one of his royal patrons, the King of Nanqiao, Liu Yixuan, requested he move to Jiangling. Thereafter, he was accommodated in the Xin Temple, to which the prince added several new rooms for him. The Xin Temple emerged as a vital Buddhist center in the Jingxiang region, and dozens of sūtras were translated there with the support of Guṇabhadra's disciple Fayong, who acted as his accompanying interpreter.

Sengyou established a biography for Fayong in CSZJJ, and the later historian Huijiao conducted a repetitive and parallel biography in GSZ. Interestingly, Huijiao addressed Fayong

¹¹⁰ Baoyun, Faxian, Huiguan, and Buddhahadra collaborated on translation projects in the Daochang Temple after Faxian returned to Jiankang. For the connection between Faxian and Baoyun, see Glass, Andrew (2008):189–97.

as Shi Tanwujie 釋曇無竭, a Chinese transliteration of a foreign name, and additionally said “here [he was] called Fayong,” while Sengyou directly addressed him as Fayong. This nuance implies that the later Buddhist historian tended to render Fayong in a foreign guise. Nevertheless, he did travel to India. It is said that once Fayong heard that Faxian and Baoyun had visited the Buddha’s land, he resolved to travel to India as well. In the first year of the *yongchu* era (420), he gathered a group of twenty-five monks, including Sengmeng 僧猛 and Tanlang 曇朗, and set off on the journey to the west. Reportedly, he dwelled in Kaśmīr for several years and learned Sanskrit writing and speaking. His acquaintance with Guṇabhadra was not explicitly mentioned in his biographies, though Guṇabhadra’s biography overtly refers to Fayong as a disciple and interpreter during his stay in Jingzhou.¹¹¹ Moreover, they took the same route from southern India to Guangzhou.

It is noteworthy that Fayong brought a Sanskrit version of *Guanshiyin shouji jing* 觀世音受記經 back to China with him and later translated it.¹¹² This text was still circulated in the capital by the time of Sengyou. However, his journey to the west was not made with the intention of requesting a new sūtra but was merely a pilgrimage to the Buddha’s land. Notably, he only brought a particular Mahāyāna text which promoted the cult of *Guanshiyin* 觀世音 (Skt. *Avalokiteśvara*).¹¹³ His biography records that the manifestation of *Guanshiyin* saved him from danger many times on his journey. This text was a talisman to him, protecting him from harm. Incidentally, it was also recorded that Guṇabhadra survived thirst by chanting the name of *Guanshiyin* on the way back to China by sea. Fayong and Guṇabhadra shared a belief in

¹¹¹ GSZ, J.3, p. 344b10.

¹¹² The text is preserved in the Chinese Buddhist canon with the title *Guanshiyin pusa shoujijing* 觀世音菩薩授記經, one fascial, T371.12.353b10. Sengyou recorded this text in CSZJJ and remarked that Dharmarakṣa 竺法護 also translated it with the title *Guangshiyin dashizhi shoujuejing* 光世音大勢至受決經. T2145.55.9a5.

¹¹³ Regarding the cult of *Guanshiyin* in medieval China see Hou, Xudong (2009): 1105–78.

Guanshiyin and experienced its efficacy on their way to China.

Regrettably, few words remain regarding the translation progress and participants in the Xin Temple. Sengyou and Baochang never directly addressed Fayong as an assistant participating in the translation. However, immediately after enumerating the texts translated by Guṇabhadra, Huijiao mentions that Fayong had always been his interpreter. It seems that Fayong contributed to the translated works by interpreting Guṇabhadra's words, considering Guṇabhadra's limited Chinese language skills. An intriguing story about his poor Chinese language skills is preserved in all three biographies. It was shared with the Buddhist encyclopedic compilation *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 (T2122 “*The Pearl Forest in the Dharma Park*”, hereafter FYZL) compiled in 668 by monk Daoshi 道世(596–683) in the early Tang period:

The King of Nanqiao was about to request him to lecture on the Avatamsaka and other sutras. However, Tuoluo who pondered that he had not yet mastered Chinese, felt ashamed and miserably for many days. Therefore, he worshiped and repented day and night, begging for mysterious responses. Then he dreamt that there was a person in white, holding a sword and carrying a human head, coming to him, and saying: “Why are you worried?” Batuo [Guṇabhadra] told him the matter in detail. [He] replied: “There is not much need to be troubled.” Thereupon [he] used his sword to replace [Batuo's] head and set a new head for him. [Then] he asked him to turn his head and said: “[Do you] feel any pain?” [Batuo] replied: “No pain.” He suddenly awoke and was delighted. The following morning, when he expounded doctrines, he was fully fluent in the Chinese language. Thereupon he held the lecture.

譙王欲。請講華嚴等經而陀羅自忖未善漢語。愧歎積旬。即旦夕禮懺請乞冥應。遂夢有人。白服持劍擎一人首。來至其前曰。何故憂那。跋陀具以事對。答曰。無所多憂。即以劍易首更安新頭。語令迴轉曰。得無痛耶。答曰。不痛。豁然便覺。心神喜悅。旦起言義皆備領漢語。於是就講。¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ CSZJJ, J.14, T2145.55.105c20–26.

This mysterious story reflects the language dilemma that foreign monks suffered in China. Thus, we know that their active contribution to the translated scriptures should not be overstated.

3.3 Records of the Translated Texts

Sengyou listed the translated texts created by Guṇabhadra in his biography, as in a catalog for newly collected sūtras, vinayas, śāstras in CSZJJ.¹¹⁵ In the catalog, thirteen texts are attributed to Guṇabhadra:¹¹⁶

1. *Za ahan jing* 雜¹¹⁷阿鎧經 *Samyuktāgama*, T99, fifty *juan*.
2. *Dafagu jing* 大法鼓經 *Mahābherīhāraka*, T270, two *juan* (brought out in the Dong'an Temple).
3. *Shengman jing* 勝鬘經 *Śrīmālāsīmhanāda*, T355, one *juan* (brought out in Danyang 丹陽 County). The full title of this text is *Shengman shizi hou yicheng dafangbian fangguang jing* 勝鬘師子吼一乘大方便方廣經.¹¹⁸ Huiguan composed a preface to this text, which indicates that this translation event was sponsored by the prince of Pengcheng, Liu Yikang, in 436. Baoyun was the interpreter, and Huiyan and

¹¹⁵ CSZJJ, J.2, 新集撰出經律論錄第一; CSZJJ, J.14, “the Biography of Guṇabhadra”.

¹¹⁶ In the Taishō canon, there are thirteen texts listed, but in the Song, Yuan, and Ming editions, there is one more: *Xianzaifoming jing* (three *juan*) 現在佛名經三卷.

¹¹⁷ In Taishō edition: 新.

¹¹⁸ This sūtra is one of the primary early Mahāyāna texts that taught the theories of (1) innate enlightenment in the form of the tathāgatagarbha 如來藏; (2) the One Vehicle 一乘; (3) the possession of permanence 常, bliss 樂, identity 我, and purity 淨 by the Dharma-body 法身. See <http://www.buddhism-dict.net.emedien.ub.uni-muenchen.de/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=勝鬘經>. Accessed on Aug. 2, 2022.

hundreds of monks as editors participated in the event.¹¹⁹

4. *Bajixiang jing* 八吉祥經, T430, one *juan* (brought out in Jingzhou in 446). A postscript of this text was collected in CSZJJ, which denotes that Liu Yixuan was the chief donor 檀越 (Skt. *Dānapati*). However, in the Taishō edition, it was erroneously ascribed to Saṃghabhara 僧伽婆羅(fl.506–520 or 524 in Jiankang).¹²⁰

5. The *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* 楞伽阿跋多羅寶經, T670, four *juan* (brought out in the Daochang Temple).

6. *The (Mahāyāna) Aṅgulimālīya-sūtra* 央掘魔羅經, T120, four *juan* (brought out in the Daochang Temple).

7. *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing* 過去現在因果經, T189, four *juan*.¹²¹

8. The *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra* 相續解脫經, T678, two *juan* (brought out in the Dong'an Temple). The full title of this text in the Taishō canon is *Xiangxu jietuo di boluomiliaoyi jing* 相續解脫地波羅蜜了義經.

9. *Diyi wuxiang lue* 第一義五相略, one *juan* (brought out in the Dong'an Temple).¹²²

¹¹⁹ CSZJJ, J.9: 「請外國沙門求那跋陀羅。手執正本口宣梵音。山居苦節通悟息心。釋寶雲譯為宋語。德行諸僧慧嚴等一百餘人。考音詳義以定厥文。」 T2145.55.67b2–5.

¹²⁰ In the Taishō canon, *Foshuo bajixiang shenzhou jing* 佛說八吉祥神呪經 (T427) is attributed to Zhi Qian, which might be the same text but a different translation. See Fang Guangchang (2014): 91–93.

¹²¹ This is the life story of the Buddha. For textual studies of the text, see Radich, Michael (2018):1–41; Lettere, Laura (2019):117–52. Lettere argues that the text was probably translated without the support of skilled interpreters, with which I disagree.

¹²² In the later catalog, Fajing 法經 and Fei Zhangfang 費長房 recorded the title 第一義五相略集 (T2034.49.92a12) or 第一義五相略經集 (T2146.55.144a22). The text seems to be an anthology.

10. *Shi liushi'er jian jing* 釋六十二見經, one *juan* (lost).
11. *Nihuan jing* 泥洹經(Skt. *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*), one *juan* (lost).
12. *Wuliangshou jing* 無量壽經(*The Amitāyus Sutra*), one *juan* (lost).
13. *Wuyouwang jing* 無憂王經¹²³, one *juan* (lost).

Apart from four texts (10, 11, 12, and 13), which were allegedly translated in Jiangling and had already been lost by Sengyou's time, most of Guṇabhadra's works can be identified with the texts preserved in the Taishō canon. If we pay particular attention to where the translation process was conducted, it becomes clear that different records following their transmission were haphazardly amalgamated into the CSZJJ.

Guṇabhadra's biography in CSZJJ enumerates eight texts that were translated in the Xin Temple: *Wuyouwang jing*, *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing*, *Wuliangshou jing*, *Nihuan jing*, *The (Mahāyāna) Āṅgulimālīya-sūtra*, *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*, *Diyiyi wuxiang lüe*, and *Bajixiang jing*.¹²⁴ GSZ includes all the same texts, as well as one additional text, *Xianzai foming jing*.¹²⁵ Thus, we can confirm that the biography of Guṇabhadra in GSZ largely resembles that in CSZJJ, neglecting minor rephrasing.

However, comparing this list with the catalog in CSZJJ, there are contradictions regarding

¹²³ Wuyou wang, worry-free King, is a literal translation of the King Aśoka (r. ca. 273–232 BCE). Yin Shun argued that the Wuyouwang jing was likely miscompiled into the *Za ahan jing* before the time of the Liang dynasty, aiming to maintain the latter in a full 50 *juan* format. 「大抵本經在梁代以前，已經缺少了兩卷（次第也已經倒亂），或者就以求那跋陀羅所譯的《無憂王經》，編入充數，於是《雜阿含經》保有五〇卷，而《無憂王經》卻被誤傳為佚失了。」 (CBETA 2021.Q2, Y30, no. 30, pp. b001a12–b002a2).

¹²⁴ CSZJJ, J.14: 「即於新寺出無憂王過去現在因果各一卷無量壽一卷泥洹央掘魔相續解脫波羅蜜了義第一義五相略八吉祥等諸經。」 T2145.55.105c17–20.

¹²⁵ GSZ, J.3, p. 344b6–10. *Xianzai foming jing* was listed in the Song, Yuan, and Ming editions of CSZJJ, but not in the Taishō edition.

the location of translation, namely texts No.6 (Daochang), No.8 (Dong'an), and No.9 (Dong'an). This confirms that there are discrepancies and inconsistencies in CSZJJ; in particular, the information about the translated texts in the catalog does not conform with the information in the biography. Thus, there must have been at least two or more streams of narratives and documentation in circulation when Sengyou compiled CSZJJ.

Nevertheless, Baochang's MSZ contains a comprehensive and detailed record of the translation activities pertaining to Guṇabhadra in Jiankang and Jiangling:

The King of Pengcheng, [Liu Yikang], and the King of Nanqiao, [Liu] Yixuan both regarded him as a teacher. A crowd of monks all requested him to bring out scriptures and assembled mounts of exegetical scholar-monks in the Qihuan Temple. At first, they brought out *Za ahan jing* [Skt. *Samyuktāgama-sūtra*] in fifty *juan*. Then, in the Dong'an Temple, [they] brought out *Fagu jing* [Skt. *Mahābherihāraka*] in two *juan*, *Xiangxu jietuo jing* [Skt. *Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*] in two *juan*, and *Diyi wuxiang lue* in one *juan*. Later on, he translated *Shengman jing* [Skt. *Śrīmālāsīmhanāda*] in one *juan* in Danyang commandery. Moreover, [he] brought out *Yangjue jing* [Skt. *(Mahāyāna)Aṅgulimālīya-sūtra*] in four *juan* and *Lengqie jing* [Skt. *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*] in four *juan* in the Daochang Temple. [There] were over seven hundred monks [participating in the translation]. [Among those], Baoyun interpreted [the scriptures], and Huiguan wrote them down. Previously, from the twenty-third year of the *yuanyia* [reign period] (446) onwards, the King of [Nan]qiao was stationed in Jingzhou, [Guṇabhadra] was requested to move there as well and dwelled in the Xin temple. New halls and rooms were built [for him]. Thereupon [he] within the temple brought out *Wuyouwang jing* [the Sutra of King Aśoka] in one *juan*, *Bajixiang jing* in one *juan*, *Guoqu xianzai yinguo* in four *juan*, *Wuliangshou* in one *juan* and *Nihuan* in one *juan*. In total, thirteen kinds of scriptures and seventy-three *juan*.

彭城¹²⁶譙王義宣置¹²⁷師事焉。眾僧共請出經。於祇洹寺。集義學諸僧。初出雜阿含經五十卷。又於東安寺。出法鼓經二卷。出相續解脫經二卷。第一義五相略一卷。

¹²⁶ 城下高僧傳有王義康丞相南六字。

¹²⁷ 置作並。

後於舟¹²⁸楊郡。譯出勝鬘經一卷。又於道場寺。出央掘¹²⁹四卷。楞伽經四卷。眾七百餘人。寶雲傳譯。惠觀執筆。辨章文義妙會。¹³⁰先自元嘉二十三年。譙王鎮荊洲。請與俱行。安憩辛寺。更立殿房。即於寺內。出無憂王經一卷。八吉祥經一卷。過去現在因果四卷。無量壽一卷。泥洹一卷。凡十三部。合七十三卷。¹³¹

As the references above demonstrate, Baochang, as the direct disciple of Sengyou, based his list on the catalog compiled by Sengyou in CSZJJ, and further identified that texts No.7, No.11, No.12, and No.13 were translated in Jiangling, while the later biographer Huijiao adopted the information directly from the biography created by Sengyou without further investigation. As Baochang announces in the preface of MSZ, he devoted himself to gleaning information that was overlooked by his master, Sengyou.¹³² The added confirmation of the translation location evinces his initial motivation, although no further references were mentioned. It does not give us the confidence to affirm that Baochang's accounts are more reliable than the others. However, it explicitly reveals that the catalogs and biographies in CSZJJ were separately received and transmitted to later Buddhist historical writings. This implies the possibility that the biography section of CSZJJ was added later in circulation, though we still need more evidence to confirm it. In the case of Guṇabhadra, there are at least

¹²⁸ 舟疑丹。

¹²⁹ 掘下疑脫經字。

¹³⁰ 辨章文義妙會 is an uncompleted sentence.

¹³¹ MCZC, X1523.77.351a18-b3.

¹³² XGSZ, J.1, "the Biography of Baochang": 「律師釋僧祐。道心貞固高行超邈。著述集記振發宏要。寶唱不敏。預班二落。禮誦餘日招拾遺漏。」 p.427c7-9. Compared to CSZJJ, Baochang expanded the number of monks and classified monks into seven categories. See Hsieh Hsien-Yi (2019): 127-35.

two narratives regarding his translation activities in Jiankang and Jiangling, which derive from CSZJJ and were respectively accepted by Baochang and Huijiao.

	CSZJJ		MSZ	GSZ
Place	Catalog	Biography		
Qihuan		No. 1	No. 1	No. 1
Dong'an	Nos. 2, 8, 9	No. 2	Nos. 2, 8, 9	No. 2
Daochang	Nos. 5, 6		Nos. 5, 6	
Danyang	No. 3	Nos. 3, 5	No. 3	Nos. 3, 5
Xin (Jingzhou)	No. 4	Nos. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13	Nos. 4, 7, 11, 12, 13	Nos. 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13; No. 14 ¹³³
No place mentioned	Nos. 1, 7. Lost: Nos.10, 11, 12, 13			

Fig. 1.2. Records of the translated texts

3.4 Involvement in Politics

The translation forum held by Guṇabhadra in the Xin Temple was sponsored by Liu Yixuan and fell apart along with the prince's reign due to a failed claim for the throne in 454. The ten years of patronage to Guṇabhadra had facilitated the process of translation and the dissemination of Buddhist teachings in the region. What did the prince expect from this? In other words, aside from Buddhist expertise and knowledge, were there some other characteristics and talents Guṇabhadra possessed that attracted the prince's favoritism? One might wonder what kind of role Guṇabhadra played in Liu Yixuan's governance of Jingzhou.

In Guṇabhadra's biography, several details allude to his considerable supernatural powers:

¹³³ No.14 refers to *Xianzai foming jing* in three *juan*. It is included in the Song, Yuan, and Ming editions of CSZJJ.

the ability to foresee the future and perform successful rituals for rain. As mentioned before, he was excellent at casting spells. All his biographies grant him credit for successfully praying for rain in 464.¹³⁴ Furthermore, two anecdotes about his interaction with Liu Yixuan were collected in his biographies, and Baochang documented them in the most detail:

At the end of the *yuanjia* era (424–453), the King of Nanqiao always had strange dreams. Guṇabhadra replied that calamity would befall the capital, and less than one year later, Liu Shao instigated a *coup d'état*.

元嘉將末。譙王¹³⁵屢有恠夢。跋陀答以京都將有禍亂。未及一年。而二凶¹³⁶構逆。¹³⁷

At the beginning of the *xiaojian* era (454–456), the King of Nanqiao conspired an uprising. As Baochang recounts:

[Guṇabhadra]’s face was shadowed with misery. But before he could say something, the King of Nanqiao inquired about the reason. [Guṇabhadra] keenly contested for [abolishing the conspiracy]. He then broke out in tears and left, saying: “There is certainly no hope [for winning], [I], this poor priest, cannot follow [you].” Yixuan asked: “For what reason does my dharma teacher deem that the undertaking of his disciple will not be successful?” [He] replied: “Your majesty is named Yixuan (‘propagate righteousness’). You should assist with ‘righteousness’. Now to lead an army and to turn against the one whom you follow is not righteous. How should you be able to win?” Considering the populace’s feelings and faith in him, Yixuan compelled him to drift down together with him [the river to Jiangzhou]. Passing by Jiangzhou, they met with Zangzhi. Zhi asked: “Master, looking at [your] disciple’s troops, what do you think about them?” [He] replied: “They just look

¹³⁴ This drought was recorded in the *Songshu* and caused a dramatic loss of lives for which Emperor Xiaowu was blamed. See, *Songshu*, J.31, p. 912. In GSZ, the drought was wrongly dated as occurring in the sixth year of the *daming* era (463).

¹³⁵ A character Nan 南 was left out of the copy.

¹³⁶ 元凶 was wrongly transcribed as 二凶. *Yuanxiong gouni* 元凶構逆 is a conventional expression that refers to the *coup d'état* plotted by Liu Shao 劉劭 (424–453) in 453. He was the eldest son of the Emperor Wen of Liu Song. As the crown prince, he murdered his father because the latter was about to depose him.

¹³⁷ MSZC, p. 351b8–9.

like amassed ink.”

跋陀顏容憂慘。而未及發言。譙王問其故。跋陀陳爭墾切。乃流涕而出。曰必無所翼。貧道不容扈從。義宣問曰。法師何故謂弟子舉事不成。答曰大王名義宣。當以義濟。今興兵犯從非義也。何以能剋。義宣以其物情所信。乃逼與俱下。過江洲。見咸質。¹³⁸質問曰。法師觀弟子軍容何如。答曰。猶如聚墨耳。¹³⁹

Setting aside the dramatic characterization of Guṇabhadra as a dream interpreter and a proponent of righteousness, these tales imply that Yixuan considered him a vital consultant on his health since, as previously mentioned, he was proficient in medicine and sorcery. Guṇabhadra traveled along with the army, even when he was reluctant. He likely performed a particular function as a symbol of Buddhist protection for the military campaign, which could bring the army faith and spiritual strength.

At the request of Emperor Xiaowu (430–464, r.453–464), the rival of the King of Nanqiao, Guṇabhadra was captured after the loss of the battle of Mount Liang 梁 and received high treatment from the emperor. Rather than being executed as a traitor, his patron shifted from the King of Nanqiao to Emperor Xiaowu. He was not involved in plotting the rebellion but was only a religious symbol in the military campaign. All three biographers (Sengyou, Baochang and Huijiao) proclaim his innocence: He stayed ten years in the region, and every letter between him and the King of Nanqiao was in records. There was no word about military affairs.¹⁴⁰ Thus, the Buddhist historians were eager to clear him of any suspicion. However, his gratitude to the King of Nanqiao was demonstrated when he boldly requested permission from Emperor

¹³⁸ The name Zang Zhi 臧質 (400–454) was mistaken for 咸質. He was the prefect of Jiangzhou and assisted and plotted the rebellion of Yixuan.

¹³⁹ MSZC, X1523.77.351b9–15.

¹⁴⁰ GSZ, J3: 「初跋陀在荊十載。每與譙王書疏無不記錄。及軍敗檢簡無片言及軍事者。」 p. 344c8–10; CCZJJ, J14, p. 106a18–20; MSZC, p.351c3–5.

Xiaowu to burn incense for three years in his remembrance.

In summary, notwithstanding his inadequate Chinese language skills, the Indian monk Guṇabhadra was able to form a mutually beneficial relationship with his royal patrons due to his magic capabilities and medical expertise. Despite his endeavors to avoid war and political infighting, he was inextricably tied to the military campaign as an emblem of Buddha's blessing. Besides, Guṇabhadra moved to Jiangling from the capital city Jiankang as a member of King Nanqiao's consultant and spiritual mentor, which generated an intellectual exchange tunnel between the cultural center and the borderlands. Moreover, it facilitates the circulation of new scriptures and thoughts that his translation project initiated in Jiankang was carried on in Jiangling.

4. Kaśmīri meditation tradition

In the early fifth century, translation activities thrived in the region due to the foreign influx and political support, and meditation practices were permeated as well. Foremost, a Kaśmīri meditation tradition was brought to China by Buddhahadra (359–429).¹⁴¹ It was initially disseminated in Buddhist centers of northern China- Chang'an, Guzang 姑臧, and Pingcheng 平城¹⁴²- then transmitted to southern China and the Shu region.¹⁴³ In the dynamic diffusion of this meditative practice, the Jingxiang region emerged as a thriving meditation center at the crossroads between southern and northern China. Buddhahadra and his group of disciples, including Huiguan and Baoyun, resided in Jiangling after leaving Chang'an in 415. In the following section, I outline the development of the region's meditation traditions in the fifth

¹⁴¹ Yinshun (1978): 616–28.

¹⁴² Chen, Jinhua (2014):101–29; Yinshun (1961): 6–9.

¹⁴³ Yan Genwang (2005) pinpoints that, due to the opposition between the northern and south regimes, Liangzhou, the monk from Hexi 河西, and west region chose to first go to the Shu region,northwest of Yizhou 益州 and the Mount Min 岷 area, then travel to Jiangling and Jiankang (132).

century and their connections to two other Buddhist centers, Chengdu and Jiankang.¹⁴⁴

4.1 Influx of Kaśmīri Meditation Masters

Apart from Buddhabhadra, several meditation masters arrived in China from Kaśmīr, or, generally speaking, the western region, and promoted meditation. These eminent transmitters of Kaśmīri meditation traditions roamed between the political and cultural centers of Chang'an, Jiankang, and Chengdu and often passed through Jiangling and sojourned for a short time. During the *long'an* era of Eastern Jin, the Kaśmīri meditation master Dharmayaśas (Tanmoyeshe 曇摩耶舍 or Faming 法明) arrived in Guangzhou by sea. He was an intensive practitioner of austerities, living in solitude on mountains for years. Due to his extraordinary knowledge of commentaries on the Vinaya, he earned the appellation Dapiposha 大毘婆沙, “the great *vibhāṣā*.” Although there is no direct evidence indicating his affiliation with the meditation tradition of Buddhabhadra, Huijiao explicitly notes that at the age of fourteen, Dharmayaśas was familiar with Foruoduoluo 弗若多羅 or Buruoduoluo 不若多羅 (Skt. *Punyatāra*), who was a Sarvāstivādin patriarch preceding Buddhasena (Fotuoxian 佛駄先 or Fodaxian 佛大先), the direct master of Buddhabhadra.

After his several years' stay in Guangzhou, Dharmayaśas resided in Chang'an from around 406 until the end of the 410s.¹⁴⁵ To escape from the war in Chang'an from 416 to 417,¹⁴⁶ he likely took refuge in Jiangling. After, he settled down at the Xin Temple, where he promoted

¹⁴⁴ Chen, Jinhua has conducted a seminal study on the evolution of the Kaśmīri meditation tradition in southern China, focusing on the connections between the Jingchu 荆楚 region (including Hunan and Hubei provinces) and Jiankang. See Chen (2014):171–202.

¹⁴⁵ Chen (2014) presumes that Dharmayaśas met Buddhabhadra in Chang'an, and they belong to the same meditation tradition (184–85). However, in the biography of Dharmayaśas, as for his activities in Chang'an, Huijiao only mentions his contribution to the translation of *Shelifo Apitan lun* (A Treatise of Abhidharma [Preached] by Śāriputra; Skt. Śāriputrābhidharma[śāstra]) and left no words on his engagement in meditation. He must have been in Chang'an until the translation was completed in 414.

¹⁴⁶ The period when Liu Yu led the army to defeat the Later Qin regime and occupied Chang'an for a short time.

meditation practices. It was said that over three hundred people went to him seeking meditation practices. At the time, the achievement of the meditation manifested in a magical power, *Shentong* 神通. Huijiao recounted a number of enigmatic anecdotes to demonstrate the supernatural power that Dharmayaśas had attained through meditation.

Once, Dharmayaśas was sitting in meditation with a closed door, and suddenly five or six *śramaṇa* entered his room. It sometimes appeared that the *śramaṇa* 沙門 flew to the top of a tree. In most cases, there was more than one *śramaṇa*.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, he allegedly communicated with spirits while disguising himself as an ordinary person. Contemporary opinion unanimously held that he had achieved the stage of sainthood, namely *arhat*. Sometime during the *yuanjia* era, he returned to the west, and afterward, his whereabouts were unknown.¹⁴⁸

Dharmayaśas was the first Kaśmīri meditation master who propagated meditation in Jiangling for over a decade and instantly attracted hundreds of followers.¹⁴⁹ Very little is known about his meditation techniques or training methods. However, his disciple Fadu 法度 was noted as an extreme Hinayanist, claiming one should exclusively learn Hinayana doctrines, which might be derived from Dharmayaśas. Unlike Buddhahadra's meditation practice, which absorbed both the local Kaśmīri and Indian traditions,¹⁵⁰ Dharmayaśas's meditation seemed to favor the former.

¹⁴⁷ GSZ,J1:「又嘗於外門閉戶坐禪，忽有五六沙門來入其室。又時見沙門飛來樹端者，往往非一」p. 329c12–14.

¹⁴⁸ GSZ,J1:「常交接神明，而俯同矇俗，雖道迹未彰，時人咸謂已階聖果。至宋元嘉中，辭還西域，不知所終。」p.329c14–16.

¹⁴⁹ Chen (2014) states that Buddhahadra was the first promoter of meditation in the region based on the stay and popularity of Buddhahadra in the region (184). However, there is no explicit reference to his meditation practice in Jiangling in the source.

¹⁵⁰ Yinshun, *History of Chinese Chan Buddhism*:「佛陀跋陀羅（覺賢）的禪學，含有兩個系統：一、罽賓（北方）的漸禪，是佛大先（即佛陀斯那）所傳的。二、天竺（南方）來的頓禪，是達摩多羅所傳的。」(CBETA 2021.Q2, Y40, no. 38, p.205).

Another contemporary Kaśmīri master who facilitated the prevalence of meditation practices in the region was Dharmamitra (356–442); also known as Tanmomiduo 曇摩蜜多 or Faxiu 法秀). Accounts of his life are preserved in CSZJJ, MSZ, and GSZ, which attach importance to him in translating meditation texts and transmitting empirical practices. He was a native of Kaśmīr and spent his early time there learning from excellent masters. Acquiring extensive knowledge about sūtras, he particularly specialized in meditation.¹⁵¹ He trekked over the desert to Kucha (Qiuci 龜茲), Dunhuang, and Liangzhou, where he established meditation halls to promote meditation practices. His unwavering resolution led him to southern China, where he first sojourned in Shu, then turned to Jingzhou in 422 or 424.¹⁵² He built a meditation pavilion in the Changsha Temple, one of the most important temples in Jiangling, and prayed for relics for days. The recompense for his dedication was a grain of relic, which illuminated the room and boosted the faith of his followers and disciples.¹⁵³ According to Baochang, he stayed in Jiangling from 422 to the early *yuanjia* era, at least three years before he traveled to Jiankang and dwelled in the Zhongxing Temple. Later, he moved to the Qihuan Temple, where he translated two contemplation sūtras: *Puxianguan jing* 普賢觀經 (T277, “*The Samantabhadra Contemplation Sutra*”) and *Xukongzang guan* 虛空藏觀 (T409, “*The Meditation on Ākāśagarbha Bodhisattva Sutra*”),¹⁵⁴ the two texts devoted to the visualization

¹⁵¹ GSZ, J.3: 「屢值明師，博貫群經，特深禪法」 p.342c10–11.

¹⁵² In MSZ, it is recorded that he arrived at Jiangling in 422; in CSZJJ and GSZ, he is reported to have arrived in 424.

¹⁵³ GSZ, J.3: 「常以江左王畿，志欲傳法，以宋元嘉元年展轉至蜀，俄而出峽，止荊州，於長沙寺造立禪閣，翹誠懇惻，祈請舍利。旬有餘日，遂感一枚，衝器出聲，放光滿室，門徒道俗，莫不更增勇猛，人百其心。」 p.342c24–343a1.

¹⁵⁴ MSZC: 「譯普賢觀經一分。虛空藏觀一分。」 p.355b7–8; CSZJJ, J.2: 「觀普賢菩薩行法經一卷(或云

of two Bodhisattvas, Samantabhadra and Ākāśagarbha. One of his most significant contributions to the dissemination of meditation in Jiankang was establishing a meditation center based on the upper Dinglin 上定林 Temple in Mount Zhong 鍾 in the vicinity of Jiankang, where the direct master of Sengyou took discipleship under him.

Contemporary with Dharmamitra, another meditation master, Kālayāśas (Jianglang yeshe 薑良耶舍), arrived in Jiankang in the early *yuanjia* era from central Asia. He translated two contemplation sūtras: *Guan yaowang yaoshang erpusa jing* 觀藥王藥上二菩薩經 (T1161, “Visualization of the Two Bodhisattvas, the King of Medicine and the Superior Physician”) and *Guan wuliangshou jing* 觀無量壽經 (T365, “Sutra of the Meditation on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life”).¹⁵⁵ After years promoting meditation at the Daolin pure abode (Skt. *vihāra*) on Mount Zhong, he went to Jiangling and to Chengdu in 432 or 442.¹⁵⁶ His stay in Jiangling can hardly be dated; we only know that he died there at the age of sixty. However, his route in southern China indicates the connection between Jiankang, Jiangling, and Chengdu in meditation transmission. His commitment to propagating meditation attracted numerous disciple-fellows, as Huijiao describes in his biography. Notably, nuns greatly respected him and longed for his instruction. He instructed two nuns in Jiankang and Chengdu, whose biographies were found in *Biqiuni zhuan* 比丘尼傳 (T2063, “Biographies of Buddhist Nuns”, hereafter BQNZ) conducted by Baochang.

普賢觀經下注云出深功德經中)虛空藏觀經一卷(或云觀虛空藏菩薩經)禪祕要三卷(元嘉十八年譯出或云禪法要或五卷)五門禪經要用法一卷右四部。凡六卷。宋文帝時。罽賓禪師曇摩蜜多。以元嘉中於祇洹寺譯出。」 p.12b27–c5.

¹⁵⁵ For the study of “contemplation sūtras” or “virtualization sutras,” see Yamabe, Nobuyoshi (1999).

¹⁵⁶ The biography in GSZ records his travel to Chengdu in 442 (*yuanjia* 19), while in *Biqiuni zhuan*, it was dated to 432 (*yuanjia* 9): 「元嘉九年有外國禪師薑良耶舍。入蜀大弘禪觀。」 p.945c21–22.

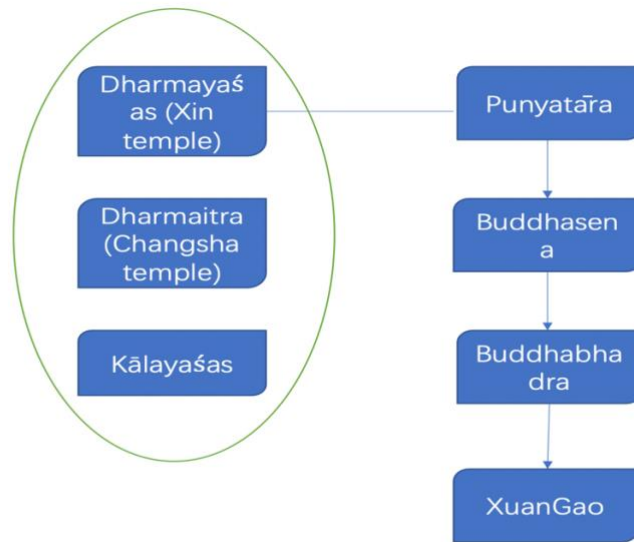


Fig. 1.3. The first generation of the Kaśmīri meditative traditions in the region

To summarize, at the beginning of the fifth century, the Jingxiang region witnessed a sharp rise in meditation practice brought about by the foreign meditation masters Dharmayaśas, Dharmamitra, and Kālayaśas. They promoted meditation methods derived from Kaśmīr and central Asia. Their academic affiliations are not entirely clear; there is no evidence suggesting that they should be conflated into one meditation transmission lineage. Nevertheless, Dharmamitra and Kālayaśas were devoted to propagating visualization meditation for the contemplation of buddhas and bodhisattvas. If the visualization sutras they translated in Jiankang and its vicinity did not spread to the Jingxiang region, the practical training methods did. Therefore, I consider Dharmayaśas, Dharmamitra, and Kālayaśas the first generation of the Kaśmīri meditative traditions in the region, although they left no famed disciples to continue their lineage.

One exception is the meditation lineage derived from Xuangao 玄高 (402–444), a disciple of Buddhabhadra.¹⁵⁷ Although Xuangao never resided in the region, his disciples were very active and influential there. In the next section, I will investigate the social network and

¹⁵⁷ Xuangao's discipleship under Buddhabhadra is a disputable issue that has attracted significant attention from scholars. Xu Wenming's study (2000:101–10) confirmed this discipleship.

meditation practices of Xuangao's disciples Xuanchang 玄暢, Sengyin 隱, and Sengyin 印.

4.2 Xuanchang (414–484) and His Disciples

Before examining the activities of Xuanchang and his disciples in the region, let us consider his early years and discipleship under Xuangao. According to his biography in GSZ, Xuanchang was born in Jincheng 金城 (present Lanzhou, Gansu province). At a young age, his family was slain by barbarian bandits. After miraculously surviving this disaster, Xuanchang renounced the secular life and moved to Liangzhou, where he served Xuangao as his instructor before faithfully following Xuangao from Liangzhou to Pingcheng.¹⁵⁸ The political and religious conflicts at the Northern Wei court resulted in the execution of Xuangao by Emperor Taiwu, Tuoba Tao 拓拔燾 (408–453, r.424–452), in 444, two years before the latter instigated a large-scale suppression of Buddhism.¹⁵⁹ A mysterious tale preserved in Xuangao's biography in GSZ indicates that among his disciples, Xuanchang received special treatment and high expectations from Xuangao:

[When Xuangao was executed,] the disciple Xuanchang was in Yunzhong, six hundred *li* away from the Wei capital [Pingcheng]. One morning he all of a sudden saw a man who told him of the tragedy [the execution of Xuangao], and gave him a horse, which could run

¹⁵⁸ In 439, when the Northern Wei annexed Northern Liang, Xuangao was invited to Pingcheng, the capital of Northern Wei. Wei Shou 魏收 (507–572) reported that a more significant number of people from the Liang state were relocated to Pingcheng, including monks. *Weishu* 魏書, “*Shilaozhi*”: “太延中涼州平。徙其國人於京邑。

沙門佛事皆俱東。象教彌增矣。” p. 3032.

¹⁵⁹ Multiple factors lead to the execution of Xuangao and the following proscription of Buddhism during the reign of the Taiwu Emperor. According to GSZ, Xuangao conducted the ritual of Jin guangming, confession, for the crown-prince Huang. It caused the emperor to distrust Huang and consider Xuangao a member of Huang's political faction. Additionally, a fervent Daoist advocator, Cui Hao 崔浩, abetted the emperor in the execution of Xuangao. Liu Shufen (2008) argues that the fundamental reason for the execution was the emperor's distrust of the Liangzhou monks since the monks had assisted in defending Guzang when Northern Wei besieged it (32).

six hundred *li* a day. Thereupon he raised his whip and returned, arriving in the capital at night. He was sorrowful and heartbroken when he saw his master was already dead. On this occasion he wailed together with his disciple-fellows: “Now that the Dharma is extinguished, whether it can be revived or not. [We] beseech you, our master [Heshang] to sit up if it can thrive again. The virtue of our master is not the one of ordinary people. [You] certainly must enlighten [the future of the Dharma].” As he finished his words, [Xuan] Gao slightly opened his eyes. The colour returned to his face, and his whole body sweated. His sweat was highly fragrant. Shortly afterward, he sat up and said to the disciples: “The great Dharma reacts to the reforming influences and rises and falls according to karma. Its rise and fall depend on the traces [of those who govern], a principle which has constantly been transparent. But I think that you all will react [to the situation] just like me soon, and only Xuanchang will be able to escape to the south. After your death, the Dharma will rise again. Cultivate your mind well so that you do not have to regret.” After finishing these words, he lay down and expired.

弟子玄暢時在雲中。去魏都六百里。旦忽見一人告之以變。仍給六百里馬。於是揚鞭而返。晚間至都。見師已亡。悲慟斷絕。因與同學共泣曰。法今既滅。頗復興不。如脫更興。請和上起坐。和上德匪常人。必當照之矣。言畢。高兩眼稍開。光色還悅。體通汗出。其汗香甚。須臾起坐。謂弟子曰。大法應化。隨緣盛衰。盛衰在迹。理恒湛然。但念汝等不久復應如我耳。唯有玄暢當得南度。汝等死後。法當更興。善自修心。無令中悔。言已便臥而絕也。¹⁶⁰

Setting aside the hagiographical narratives and miracles, the resurrection of Xuangao glorified him as an advanced Buddhist practitioner who possessed the supernatural power to return to life after death. Moreover, it made him a prophet-like master and implicitly granted Xuanchang, the sole survivor, the right to carry on his lineage in the south. This story might be a retrospective narrative favored by Xuanchang if it is not shaped by himself or his affiliated disciples to proclaim his authority on the meditation tradition, which can trace back to Buddhahadra.¹⁶¹

¹⁶⁰ GSZ, J.11, “the Biography of Xuangao.” p. 398a13–23.

¹⁶¹ For the Xuangao’s discipleship under Buddhahadra see Xu Wenming (2000): 101–10.

The trajectory of Xuanchang's life developed just as his master had foreseen. The year after his master was executed (445), he traveled over mountains and water for almost three months, fleeing to Jiankang. The duration of his stay in Jiankang was presumably from 445 to 453. Regarding his multiple talents and versatility, Huijiao wrote: "[He] thoroughly mastered sūtras and Vinaya and deepened into the essence of meditation. His predictions were always confirmed. His expertise extended from Classics to literature. As far as secular skills and abilities were concerned, he rarely lacked knowledge."¹⁶² These skills helped Xuanchang form a densely connected network within the aristocracy.¹⁶³ According to his biography in GSZ, Emperor Wen thought highly of Xuanchang and invited him to be the mentor of the crown prince, but he refused. Once the coup conspired by the crown prince occurred in 453, people became aware of Xuanchang's ability to foresee the future. Then, he left Jiankang for Jiangling and resided at the Changsha Temple, where Dharmamitra built a meditation pavilion.¹⁶⁴ According to the biography of Juqu Anyanghou 沮渠安陽侯¹⁶⁵ in CSZJJ, sometime between 457 and 464, Xuanchang solicited a foreign *śramaṇa*, whose name was translated into Chinese as Gongde Zhi 功德直, for the translation of *Nianfo sanmei jing* 念佛三昧經 (T414) and

¹⁶² GSZ, J.8: 「洞曉經律，深入禪要，占記吉凶，靡不誠驗。墳典子氏，多所該涉。至於世伎雜能，罕不必備。」 p.377a15–18.

¹⁶³ He was an expert on the Avatamsaka and Sanlun, and closely befriended the noted lay Buddhist scholar Zhou Yong 周顒 (d.485), who composed the inscription for his memorial tablet. Vande Walle, Willy (1979):282.

¹⁶⁴ GSZ, J.8, "the Biography of Xuanchang": 「及太初事故，方知先覺。自爾遷憩荊州。止長沙寺。」 p.377a3–b21.

¹⁶⁵ His name is Juqu Jingsheng 沮渠京聲 (d.464), a cousin of Juqu Mengxun 沮渠蒙遜 (368–433, r.401–433), the king of Northern Liang 北涼.

Pomo tuoluoni 破魔陀羅尼 (T1014).¹⁶⁶ In the catalog of the newly collected sūtras, Vinaya, and treatises in CSZJJ, the translation was dated 462.¹⁶⁷

After Xuanchang left Jiankang around 453, his activities were mainly based on the Changsha Temple in Jiangling, the Dashi 大石 Temple, and Qixing 齊興 Temple in the Shu region until he was invited to Jiankang and died there in 484. Meanwhile, his disciple Faqi 法期 and the nun Huixu 慧緒 were acquainted with him and received his meditative instructions.

Faqi

The account of Faqi's life is found in GSZ. He was a native of Pi 郫 (adjacent to present Chengdu) and was raised by his elder brother, as his parents died very early. At fourteen, he left home and followed Zhimeng 智猛 (d.453), a renowned pilgrim and translator, to pursue meditation practices. As reported in the biography of Zhimeng in GSZ, he entered the Shu region in 437 and died in Chengdu around 453. Moreover, since Zhimeng had been to Kaśmīr, he must have been aware of the prevailing meditation practice or even a practitioner. Thus, Faqi's early period of study and practice was already linked to the diffusion of Kaśmīri meditation. Later, he was determined to follow Xuanchang, with whose meditation practice he was familiar. I tentatively suggest that he met with Xuanchang in the Shu region around 453 to 479. The following records from GSZ and BQNZ provide some evidence:

¹⁶⁶ CSZJJ, J.14: 「時有外國沙門功德直者。不知何國人。以宋大明中(457-464)遊方。至荊州寓禪房寺。

沙門玄暢請其譯出念佛三昧經六卷。及破魔陀羅尼。停荊歷年。後不知所移。」 p.106c16-19.

¹⁶⁷ CSZJJ, J.2: 「念佛三昧經六卷(宋大明六年譯出或云菩薩念佛三昧經)破魔陀羅尼經一卷(或云無量門破魔陀羅尼經大明六年譯出)右二部。凡七卷。宋孝武時。西域沙門功德直至荊州。沙門釋玄暢請於禪房譯出。」 p. 13a16-19.

1. The record in Xuanchang's biography in GSZ shows that at the end of the Liu Song Dynasty (479), he sailed to Chengdu and initially resided at the Dashi Temple, where he painted sixteen deva images, including the hidden track vajras.¹⁶⁸
2. Faqi's biography only mentions that he met Xuanchang afterward, and when Xuanchang went down to Jiangling, he followed him there.¹⁶⁹ Here, the decisive word is “xia jiangling” 下江陵, which literally means “down to Jiangling.” It only geographically makes sense if he set off from Shu, the upper basin of the Yangtze River, since Jiangling is located in the middle reaches. Moreover, this is not the only case in which “xia jiangling” is used to indicate the way from the Shu region to Jiangling particularly.¹⁷⁰
3. Huixu's biography in BQNZ briefly states that when Xiao Yi 蕭嶷 (444–492) was appointed as the prefect of Jingzhou in 479, Xuanchang moved from Shu to Jingzhou.¹⁷¹

Considering these clues, Faqi likely met Xuanchang in the Shu region and followed him back to Jiangling in 479 at the latest, if they had not met during Xuanchang's earlier visit to Shu, which left no extant record. Faqi had an exceptional talent for meditation, as Xuanchang praised him.¹⁷² He was said to achieve nine of the “Ten Gates of Contemplation” 十住觀門,

¹⁶⁸ GSZ, J.8: 「迄宋之季年，乃飛舟遠舉，西適成都。初止大石寺，乃手畫作金剛密迹等十六神像。」 p. 377a29–b2. *Jingang miji* 金剛密迹 refers to the deva-guardian of Vairocana. In Chinese: *Jingang miji* or *Jinganglishi* 金剛力士.

¹⁶⁹ GSZ, J.11: 「後遇玄暢，復從進業。及暢下江陵，期亦隨從。」 p. 399a26–27.

¹⁷⁰ An instance found in GSZ, J.11. “Zhicheng left home to become a monk at the Pei temple in Shu...later he went eastwards down to Jiangling” (402b12–15). Chen Jinhua assumes that Faqi met Xuanchang in Jiankang and followed him to Jiangling, which is untenable because of the meaning of “xiajiangling.” Chen (2014:188), footnote 54.

¹⁷¹ BQNZ, J.3: 「齊太尉大司馬豫章王蕭嶷。以宋昇明末出鎮荊陝。知其有道行迎請入內。備盡四事。時有玄暢禪師。從蜀下荊。」 T2063.50.944a8–10.

¹⁷² “Thus, as he was praised by Xuanchang, ‘To the west, I have crossed the desert; to the north, I have stepped on

only lacking the lion-like strenuous *samādhi*.¹⁷³ He died in the Changsha Temple at the age of sixty-two. Thus, as Xuanchang's most accomplished disciple in meditation, Faqi spent his life mainly in the Shu region and the Changsha Temple in Jiangling, which reveals the strong connection Xuanchang formed between the Shu region and Jiangling. Furthermore, the nun Huixu spread Xuanchang's meditation method to the noble ladies in Jiangling and, later, in Jiankang. Next, I will elaborate on the dynamic development of this trend.

Nun Huixu (430–499)

Huixu entered monastic life at the age of eighteen at the Sanceng 三層 Temple in Jiangling. She was recognized as an extraordinary practitioner by both the secular and Buddhist societies and strictly upheld the precepts and conducted good deeds. The most reputable nun in the region, Yin 隱, made her a companion in the summer retreat, where they practiced meditation according to the *Banzhou sanmei jing* 般舟三昧經(T418, *Pratyutpanna Samādhi Sutra*). Sometime between 472 and 478, when Shen Youzhi 沈攸之(d.478)¹⁷⁴ was the prefect of Jingzhou, he implemented compulsory redundancy in the monastic community. Huixu thus took refuge in

the desolate places; to the east, I entered the Xia Yu's cave (in Kuaiji) and to the south, I searched around Mount Heng and River Miluo. I have only seen this person with a particular gift for meditation all over these places! 吾自西涉流沙,北履幽漠,東探禹穴,南盡衡羅,唯見此一子,特有禪分”, GSZ, p.10.399a29–b2. Chen Jinhua (2014:187), footnote 55.

¹⁷³ *Shizi fenxun sanmei* 師子奮迅三昧 Skt. *simha-vijṛmbhita-samādhi*. It was described in *Wumen chanjing yaoyongfa* 五門禪經要用法(T619), translated by Kaśmīri meditation master Dharmamitra during the Song *yuanjia* era.

¹⁷⁴ Shen Youzhi was a vital politician and general at the Song court. He served five emperors of Song and died in the uprising against Xiao Daocheng (427–482, r.479–482), who had Emperor Houfei 後廢 assassinated and established Southern Qi. “The Biography of Shen Youzhi.” *Songshu*, J.74, pp. 1927–43.

Jiankang until the proscription was lifted in 478. The following year, when Xuanchang returned from Shu to Jiangling, she sought tutelage under him and deepened her knowledge of meditation.

In contrast to monks, nuns can easily access the social circle of court ladies and female royal family members. The wife of the King of Yuzhang, Xiao Yi 嬖 (444–492), was attracted by Huixu's reputation and invited her to the residence for meditation practices. Xiao Yi was known as a fervent lay Buddhist, and upon returning to the capital from Jiangling in 480, she invited Huixu to accompany her to Jiankang. The King of Yuzhang established a temple for Huixu in the east field of his residence, named Futian 福田. Baochang's record attests to the intimate friendship between the ladies in Jiankang and notes that Huixu had apparently held *chanzhai* 禪齋 (“abstinence for meditation”) in the private residence and had even been invited to live there.¹⁷⁵

4.3 Political Engagement

As discussed above, Xuanchang left Jiankang sometime after 453. Then, he was mainly active in Jiangling and the Shu region. Based out of the Changsha Temple, he continued the meditation tradition of Xuangao. When the sangha faced existential crises, he encouraged politicians to suspend the suppression of Buddhism in the region. As reported by Daoxuan:

The inspector of Jingzhou, Shen Youzhi initially did not believe in the Dharma and resolved to cut down the number of monks and nuns. In one single temple, the Changsha Temple, out of more than one thousand monks several hundreds were due to return to laydom. They were all frightened and old and young all wept. The Buddha statue [in the temple] did not stop sweating for five days. When someone brought this to the attention of Shen [Youzhi], he summoned the noble dharma-master of the temple Xuanchang and asked him about the reason. [Xuan] Chang said: “The holiness of Buddha is not remote. No obscurity is non-understandable. The past, future, and present buddhas all think of each other. Isn't it that the present Buddha communicated with other buddhas to enquire about your disbelief in Buddhism? Therefore, there was this response.” [Shen Youzhi] asked which sutra it was

¹⁷⁵ BQNZ, J.3, “the Biography of Shi Huixu”, p.944a8–15.

based on. Chang replied that it was the *Wuliangshou Stura*. [Shen] Youzhi fetched the sutra to look for it and was filled with extraordinary joy. And he immediately stopped to reduce [the number of monks and nuns].

荊州刺史沈悠之。初不信法沙汰僧尼。長沙一寺千有餘僧。應還俗者將數百人。舉

眾遑駭。長幼悲泣。像為流汗五日不止。有聞於沈。沈召寺大德玄暢法師訪問所以。

暢曰聖不云遠。無幽不徹。去來今佛。佛佛相念。得無今佛念諸佛乎。欲請檀越不

信之心。故有斯應。問出何經。答出無量壽經。悠之取經尋之殊悅。即停沙汰。¹⁷⁶

Although Daoxuan's narrative aims to underscore that the mysterious response of the statue verified the perceivable power of Buddha, it is noticeable that Xuanchang played a decisive role in reconciling conflicts between the secular and Buddhist worlds. It would be reasonable to assume that his well-developed social skills and astute political acumen qualified him as a successful mediator. Evidence shows that he deliberately ingratiated himself with the newly established Qi state to profit from imperial favoritism. The dynastic history records that Xuanchang built a temple on Mount Qihou 齊後. The initial construction was concurrent with the enthronement of Emperor Gao of Qi. It was considered an auspicious sign and included in the *Treatise on Auspicious Omens* (*Xiangrui zhi* 祥瑞志) in the *Book of Southern Qi*.¹⁷⁷ This event was depicted in detail in Xuanchang's biography in GSZ:

On the twenty-third day of the fourth month in the first year of the *jianyuan* [era, 479] of the Qi dynasty, a pagoda was built, and a temple named Qixing (Rise of the Qi-Dynasty), was established. It was precisely when Taizu [Emperor Gao] of Qi received the heavenly mandate. Time rightly corresponded to the occurrence in human life. At that time, Fu Yan was stationed in Chengdu in the West. Admiring Chang's charm and character, Fu Yan treated him as his teacher. After establishing the temple, Chang addressed Yan in a letter, saying: "This poor priest [I] dwelled in Jingzhou for years, growing old and accumulating illness. I am tired of the tumultuary mundane world. Thus, I moved to the Min region and chose this mountain as my residence. It is located in the east of Guangyang, thousands of

¹⁷⁶JSSGL, J.2, T2106.52.415c12–20.

¹⁷⁷ *Nanqi shu*, J.18, p. 352.

*steps*¹⁷⁸ away from the city.... I initiated the temple's construction on the twenty-third day of the fourth month of last year. When I visited here last winter, it was precisely the day when His Majesty rose like a dragon. I have heard that when someone's Way is matched with *Taiji* (Supreme Ultimate), the auspicious omens spontaneously appear. When someone's *de* 德 (virtues) is equivalent to the two standards [Yin and Yang], divine responses will always manifest themselves. Therefore, the *Hetu* and *Luoshu*¹⁷⁹ reflected as auspicious omens for the Zhou 周, the mysterious stone revealed the sign of Jin.¹⁸⁰ I dare to say that the verification on this mountain cannot have been anything else than an auspicious response to [the heavenly mandate] bestowed on the emperor of Qi. The benefactor [Fu Yan] sincerely devoted himself to the state, which resulted in the manifestation of destiny. One may not lose his aspiration; how can one forget his course? [I] compose a prayer, *Shanzan* (mountain hymn), to release my humble devotion.

以齊建元元年四月二十三日。建刹立寺。名曰齊興。正是齊太祖受錫命之辰。天時人事。萬里懸合。時傳琰西鎮成都。欽暢風軌。待以師敬。暢立寺之後。乃致書於琰曰。貧道栖荆累稔。年衰疹積。厭毒人誼。所以遠託岷界。卜居斯阜。在廣陽之東。去城千步....以去年四月二十三日創功覆簣。前冬至此。訪承爾日。正是陛下龍飛之辰。蓋聞道配太極者。嘉瑞自顯。德同二儀者。神應必彰。所以河洛晒有周之兆。靈石表大晉之徵。伏謂茲山之符驗。豈非齊帝之靈應耶。檀越奉國情深。至使運屬時徵。不能忘心。豈能遺事。輒疏山贊一篇。以露愚抱。¹⁸¹

It is evident that Xuanchang intentionally catered the story to legitimize the new potentate who replaced his predecessor by military force. Successfully recognized as a good sign for the

¹⁷⁸ Bu 步 is a unit of measurement.

¹⁷⁹ *Hetu* 河圖 (“river diagram”) and *Luoshu* 洛書 (“*luoshu* square”) are essential parts of Chinese mythology. Supposedly, it was a sign that the heavenly mandate shifted from the Shang dynasty to the Zhou dynasty.

¹⁸⁰ *Jinshu*, J.3, p. 55. In the third year after the establishment of Jin, a black stone carved with white characters was reportedly found in Dichi 氏池 County.

¹⁸¹ GSZ, J.8, “the Biography of Shi Xuanchang.” p.377b6–21.

new dynasty, the temple received one hundred households for labor and supplies.¹⁸² Accordingly, Xuanchang enhanced his influence in the local government. His contemporary, Shi Senghui 釋僧慧 (408–486), the superintendent monk of Jingzhou in the early Qi period, had always ridden palanquin to lectures, thus earning the sobriquet “bald official” 禿頭官家. Xuanchang was considered equivalent to him, and they were regarded as “two prominent persons in dark cloth.”¹⁸³ In the early Qi period, Xuanchang constantly drew the attention of the members of the royal family: the crown prince of Wenhui 文惠, Xiao Changwei 蕭長懋 (458–493), the noted prince of Wenxuan 文宣, Xiao Ziliang 蕭子良 (460–494), Xiao Yi, the Jingzhou prefect of the time, and even foreign sovereigns, such as Tuyuhun 吐谷渾 (in the present Qinhai and Gausu province). The invitation letters from the capital came one after another. Xuanchang resolved to travel and eventually died of illness shortly after turning sixty-nine.

To summarize, Xuanchang, the principal disciple of Xuangao and the only survivor of Xuangao’s meditation group in Pingcheng, according to the biography in GSZ, won renown as a meditation master in southern China. He was active in the Jingxiang and Shu regions, where he promoted meditation practices for roughly thirty years. Among his outstanding disciples, Faqi continued his teachings in Jingzhou, while the nun Huixu disseminated his teachings to the court ladies and popularized them in the capital. Xuanchang’s successful monastic career demonstrates that the saṃgha was inextricably interwoven with political fluctuations. We can hardly ignore his political engagement during the regime transition, which brought him tangible benefits and statewide fame.

¹⁸² GSZ, J.8: 「勅蠲百戶以充俸給。」 p. 377b26-27.

¹⁸³ GSZ, J.8, “the Biography of Shi Senghui.” 「黑衣二傑」 p.378b17–c3.

4.4 Other Meditation Masters

Apart from Xuanchang's meditative practice prevailing in the region, there was another particularly active branch of Xuangao's lineage, namely Sengyin 僧隱 and the meditation group centered on the Pipa 琵琶 temple in Jiangling. As a native of Longxi 隴西 (in the present Gansu province), Sengyin received his early monastic training at eight and took the complete set of precepts at twelve. Attracted by the prestige of Xuangao, he sought tutelage under him in Liangzhou, thoroughly studied the methods of meditation, and deeply grasped the essence of Vinaya.¹⁸⁴ It remains unclear whether he followed Xuangao to Pingcheng or not. We only know that after Xuangao was executed in 444, Sengyin managed to trek to the Shu region and, from there, drifted down the river to Jiangling. Initially, he resided at the Wuceng 五層 Temple. Afterward, he moved to the Pipa Temple, where he studied with Sengche 僧徹 (d.452), a prominent disciple of Huiyuan. The aristocrats enjoyed the meditation and celebrated him as an authoritative master who gave instructions about monastic precepts. Although details about the meditative methods and practices that Sengyin performed and promoted remain unclear, it is underlined in GSZ that he specialized in Vinaya and meditation. Thus, Sengyin's meditation practice was characterized by strictly upholding the monastic precepts, and it is conceivable that some of his fellows and disciples were recognized as Vinaya masters. Zhicheng 智稱 (430–501) is a telling example.

The details of Zhicheng's life were meticulously recorded in his *xingzhuang* 行狀, or “account of conduct,” a concise biography often prepared shortly after a person's death by intimate friends or renowned literati.¹⁸⁵ The text was collected into *Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明集 (T2103, “*Expanded Collection on the Propagation and Clarification of Buddhism*,”

¹⁸⁴ GSZ, J.11, “the Biography of Shi Sengyin.” 「學盡禪門，深解律要。」 p. 401b19–c4.

¹⁸⁵ Twitchett (1961):95–114.

hereafter GHMJ) by Daoxuan and attributed to the court historian Pei Ziye 裴子野(460–530).¹⁸⁶ Another account of his life is preserved in GSZ, which basically coincides with *xingzhuang* in content but is more succinct. Based on the biographical accounts, we can get an idea of his monastic training experiences and achievements.

On the one hand, he is portrayed as an influential Vinaya master who diligently propagated the *Shisong* 十誦 “Ten Recitations Vinaya”¹⁸⁷ at Jiankang and Wuxing (in the present Zhejiang province).¹⁸⁸ To some extent, the prevalence of *Shisong* in southern China did credit to Zhicheng since he lectured it over forty times. Concerning contemplation and the Vinaya, he asserted: “Concentrating on the mind results in traces. Only if the traces are well-examined is the mind upright. Promoting the Path 道 entails conduct. Only if conducts are well-examined is the Path preserved. *Li* 禮 is the priority to harness the people. Only if attaching importance to Vinaya can one hinder evils and lead to kindness.”¹⁸⁹

On the other hand, his early mentors were all meditation masters, and they left an indelible imprint on his approach to becoming a Vinaya master. As reported by Huijiao, at the age of seventeen, Zhicheng served in the army, following the general Wang Xuanmo 王玄謨 (388–

¹⁸⁶ *Liangshu*, J.30, “the Biography of Pei Ziye.” pp. 441–44. He was a critical court historian who lived in southern Qi and Liang. His grandfather Yin 駟 and great-grandfather Songzhi 松之 are both noted historians. In his later life, he converted to Buddhism, upholding the precepts and being vegetarian.

¹⁸⁷ The Vinaya text of the Sarvāstivāda school was translated into Chinese by Puṇyatāra and Kumārajīva.

¹⁸⁸ GHMJ, J.23: “The master related to *Shisong* held over forty lectures from Wuxing 吳興 to Jiangye. He dedicated eight commentaries to it, with simplified words to demonstrate the regulations. It circulated among scholars and was celebrated as an unprecedentedly excellent work. 法師之於十誦也。始自吳興迄于建業四十有餘講。撰義記八篇。約言示制。學者傳述。以為妙絕古今。” T2103.52. 269b23–25.

¹⁸⁹ GHMJ, J.23: 「常謂攝心者迹。迹密則心檢。弘道者行。行密則道存。安上治人莫先乎禮。閑邪遷善莫尚乎律。」 p. 269a6–11.

468), who led the vanguard against Northern Wei in 450. After suffering and surviving the brutality of war, he resolved to seek refuge in the monastic life and took the five precepts from Master Zong 宗公¹⁹⁰ in the Nanjian 南澗 meditation chamber. Sometime during the *daming* era (457–464), he met the meditation master Yin 印 at the capital, about whom I will discuss more later, shortly after his return to the Shu region. In 465, Zhicheng was formally ordained at the Pei 裴 Temple in Chengdu. According to the accounts of his life, he was a gifted novice: at the age of thirty, he began to read Buddhist scriptures, was fully ordained six years later, and after three years of formal training, he was already able to preach sermons four times along with his master. At some point, he traveled to Jiangling and learned meditation and Vinaya from the masters Yin 隱 and Ju 具.¹⁹¹ His sojourn in Jiangling ended in the political upheaval of 466, and he fled to the capital. Jiangling, a middle knot between the Shu region and the Jiankang area, had witnessed the formation of a friend circle, including the native masters Yin and Ju, Zhicheng of the Shu region, and the esteemed Vinaya master Faying 法穎 from the capital.¹⁹² Zhicheng was later introduced and integrated into the Jiankang saṃgha by Faying.

As for the early influence and meditation practice that Zhicheng received from his early mentor, the meditation master Yin 印, we first need to find out who exactly Yin was. Two monks bearing the Dharma name Sengyin could be identified as the meditation master Yin. The biography of the first is found in GSZ with the title “Shi Sengyin, the Zhongxing temple in the capital of the Qi time 齊京師中興寺釋僧印.” However, this biography seems incongruent with

¹⁹⁰ Of whom we only know his name. Since he resided in a meditation chamber, he was most likely a meditation master.

¹⁹¹ A renowned Vinaya master in the region. The account of the latter was appended to the biography of Sengyin. They were close fellows.

¹⁹² GHMJ, J.23: 「于時具隱二上人。先輩高流鳳鳴西楚。多寶穎律師。洽聞溫故，翰起東都。法師之在江陵也。稟具隱為周旋。及還京雒以穎公為益友。」 p. 269a18–21.

the description of Yin in Zhicheng's *xingzhuang*, who was a meditation master coming from the Shu region and a mentor of the emperor; instead, he was an expert on the *Lotus Sūtra* and a native of Shouchun 壽春 (in present Anhui province). Another possibility is a disciple of Xuangao, whose biography is entitled “Shi Sengyin, the great temple of Chang'an of the ‘Pseudo-Wei’ time 偽魏長安大寺釋僧印” in MSZ.¹⁹³ Baochang reported:

“He cultivated the contemplation of Mahāyāna. The realm he reached qualified him to be a leader in meditation teaching. He was strict in maintaining [the purity of] his deeds and words [lit. “body and mouth”], thoroughly upholding pure precepts. He once instructed meditation to a bhikṣu in Jiangling. The bhikṣu later learned a lot from him. Sengyin told him, “What you, a senior master, are now learning will bring forth some extraordinary views [in front of your eyes]. If these views are attained, you will be able to be reborn into Buddha- realm¹⁹⁴ according to your wish.” *He constantly practiced [what he had learned from Sengyin], and as expected, he encountered extraordinary responses 異應. He informed Yin about this. Yin admonished him: “This method is meant to be practiced in the future; if misfortune befalls you, you will lose your life.” This monk readily accepted it by saying: “I have always wished to be reborn in the West.” After encountering the response, someone encouraged him to go [for a rebirth] into the Tuṣita heaven. After pondering and hesitating for quite a while, this monk made a decision at the third watch [11 p.m.–1 a.m.], saying, “I was determined to go to the Tuṣita.” After saying this, he lay down. When his fellow disciples got up to look at him, they found that he had passed away.”¹⁹⁵*

As implied in the story, Sengyin's meditation methods aimed at being reborn into Buddha-

¹⁹³ In the biography compiled by the monks who lived in southern China, such as Sengyou, Huijiao, and Baochang, the northern regimes were referred to as Pseudo 偽, such as 偽秦 for the later Qin and 偽魏 for the Northern Wei.

¹⁹⁴ 往生 here means to be reborn into a buddha-realm, instead of being reborn into the Tuṣita heaven, as Chen interpreted.

¹⁹⁵ The translation is from Chen Jinhua (2014:186), but several sentences in the middle remained untranslated. I added my translation of the following sentences marked in italics: 修之不已，果值異應，即以告印。印戒之曰：

此法乃將來美事，然脫不幸大命應終。此僧欣然曰：由來願生西方，得應之後。

realms but were not exclusively aimed at the Tuṣita heaven. At the end of the story, the monk must consider and decide into which Buddha-realms he wishes to be reborn. However, to him, it seems better to be a living *arhat* than to be reborn after death. His interaction with Xuangao can be found in Xuangao's biography in GSZ:

At that time, there was a certain Fan (Brahma) monk Yin from the Western Sea, who also studied with Gao. His aspiration was narrow, and his capacity was small. He thought that learning little was enough in order to say that he had attained the status of an *arhat* and that he had suddenly reached all the gates of meditation. Gao on seeing this secretly exerted his divine power to enable Yin to in the meditative concentration to view the infinite world in ten directions, where all Buddhas preached different ways of the Dharma. Yin spent a whole summer searching for what he had seen but until the end was not able to exhaust it. Only then he knew that the water of meditation has no bottom and felt a deep sense of shame and fear.

時西海有樊僧印。亦從高受學。志狹量褊。得少為足。便謂已得羅漢。頓盡禪門。

高乃密以神力。令印於定中。備見十方無極世界。諸佛所說法門不同。印於一夏尋

其所見。永不能盡。方知定水無底。大生愧懼。¹⁹⁶

Although there is no direct evidence proving that Sengyin had been to the Shu region and was an emperor's mentor in meditation, the biography explicitly indicates that he was a meditation expert who was once active in Jiangling, which had a strong connection to the Shu region concerning meditation practice and Buddhist teaching. Therefore, the disciple of Xuangao, Sengyin 印, is likely the same monk who had been active in the Shu region and led a meditation group there.

¹⁹⁶ GSZ, J.11, p. 397b28–c4.

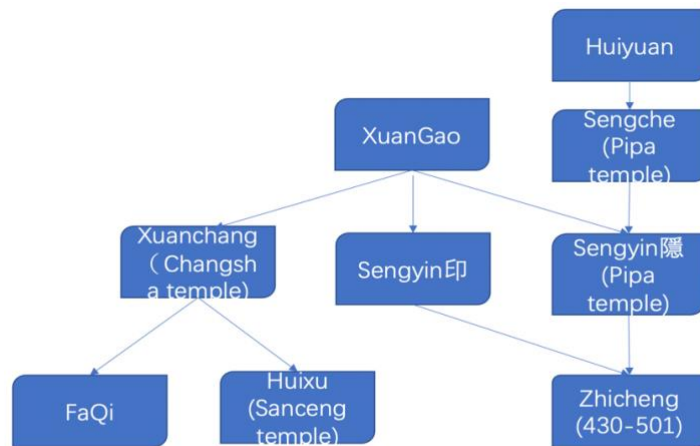


Fig. 1.4. Meditation lineages in the region

To summarize, the meditation group established by Sengyin 隱 at the Pipa Temple in Jiangling and the one led by Sengyin 印 in the Shu region were connected through the pivotal monk Zhicheng, a leading Vinaya master of his time, who conveyed his expertise to the people of the capital of Jiankang and its periphery. This meditative practice derived from Xuangao juxtaposed upholding monastic discipline and practicing meditation for rebirth in the buddha-realms.

Chapter 2 Advocators, Suppression, and Revival (500–600)

As the previous chapter indicated, the dissemination of Buddhism in the Jingxiang region during the fifth century was facilitated by the work of Buddhist translators, among whom the foremost was the Indian monk Guṇabhadra, along with the widespread tradition of meditation derived from Kaśmīr. Both campaigns obtained attention and support from the imperial houses: in the form of patronship in the case of Guṇabhadra and Prince Liu Yixuan and legitimization of the newborn regime in the case of Xuanchang. The ease and alacrity with which these alliances were formed vividly evidences the intricate and intertwined relationship between Buddhism and royal houses, which unremittingly occupied the central stage of Buddhist propagation in the sixth century.

In this regard, Xiao Yan 蕭衍, known as Emperor Wu of Liang (464–549, r.502–549), the creator of the Liang dynasty (502–557), must not be overlooked.¹⁹⁷ Highly relevant to my investigation of the Jingxiang region is that Xiao Yan initially aggregated military power at the Xiangyang garrison, and his early followers were natives of Xiangyang and Jingzhou.¹⁹⁸ To some extent, the Jingxiang region was the cradle of the prosperous Liang state; thus, in this period, unprecedented importance was attached to the region, politically and militarily, but also culturally. The fighting men who stemmed from influential provincial clans were rewarded for their military merits with higher positions at the court or in pivotal military garrisons in the course of establishing the new Liang state. Thereupon, the Jingxiang region became closely connected with the central government. After the rapid downfall of Liang Wudi's reign in 549, the local men at the court exerted their influence on the imperial affairs, resulting in the

¹⁹⁷ Abundant academics dedicated to the studies of Emperor Wu of Liang from various perspectives. For the major studies dealing with Liang Wudi's relationship with Buddhism see: Suwa Gijun (1997): 11–228; De Rauw, Tom (2008); Janousch Andreas (1999): 112–149, (2016): 255–296; Chen Jinhua. (2007): 13–29; Zhou Yiliang (1997); Yan Shangwen (1999).

¹⁹⁸ According to Andrew Chittick's (2009) observation, there were three cliques that supported Xiao Yan's eventual elevation to the throne: the Xiangyang group, the Jiangling group and the Jiankang group (79–89). For Xiao Yan's military ascendant see Zhang Jinlong (2016): 444–494.

Jiangling-based reign of Emperor Yuan of Liang, Xiao Yi 蕭繹 (508–555, r.552–555), who was stationed at this borderland for nearly eighteen years and ruled for three years at Jiangling.

The present chapter deals with the development of Buddhism in the sixth century- a significant period in the history of Buddhist China that bore witness to the dissemination of newly translated scriptures by Kumārajīva, which were dispersed from Chang'an to the vast southern areas of China. In this process, the Jingxiang region became a “transitional zone” between north and south China. Regardless of political antagonism and geographical barriers between various rival regimes, monks in the region had been always attracted by Buddhist teaching and ventured to travel to the flourishing Buddhist centers. By tracing their life trajectory, it is possible to gather clues about the transmit routes of texts and teachings. Drawing largely on the biographical data of monks, this chapter will focus on three issues: first, the relationship between the Liang royal house and Buddhism in terms of the cultural transformation of local society in the region; second, the transmission of ideas from other Buddhist centers to the Jingxiang region during this period; and third, the ideological role that Buddhism played in the reunification of China after a period of division and the political usage of Buddhism in the early Sui Dynasty.

1. Political Ambiance

Before examining Buddhist development in the sixth century, this chapter will address the political vicissitude and political culture that characterized the Jingxiang region during this period. In 498, Xiao Yan was assigned to Xiangyang, and only four years later he ascended to the throne with the backing of Xiangyang's fighting men and a military alliance with Jingzhou. Aside from several attempts to recover the northern land and intermittent skirmishes with the northern regimes, the reign of Liang Wudi (Xiao Yan) was a relatively peaceful and prosperous epoch in the history of Southern dynasties (420–589). Its prosperity is evidenced not only by his personal engagement with Buddhism, which earned him the moniker “the Bodhisattva Emperor” 菩薩天子- a universal sovereign who transcends secular and religious divides, but

also by his efforts at institutional reform, which were aimed at creating a better system of governance.¹⁹⁹ Aside from his munificent investment in Buddhism, other important aspects of his role as an emperor and a well-versed literatus include his role in revitalizing the Confucian institutions and education system during his reign. As Tian Xiaofei pinpoints, “During the Liang we begin to see a new criterion for evaluating people—the possession of wen 文: scholarly and literary accomplishments.”²⁰⁰ The cultural legacy of Liang consists in his compilation, cataloguing, and annotating of secular and religious texts as well as the imperial and private book collections. Liang Wudi and his sons were major advocates and even practitioners of these scholarly endeavors, through which the genteel court ushered in a cultural transformation of the entire Jingxiang region.

The unexpected and rapid downfall of Liang Wudi’s reign in 549 was a fatal blow to half a century of peace and prosperity. The ensuing political turbulence and fratricidal wars over the throne, which threw the state into turmoil, ultimately doomed the Liang Dynasty. Following the death of Liang Wudi in 549, his third son and the heir apparent, Xiao Gang 蕭綱 (503–551, r.549–551), was enthroned by the usurper Hou Jing 侯景 as the nominal ruler. However, his seventh son, Xiao Yi, stationed at Jiangling, overtly refused to recognize the puppet reign of Xiao Gang, and summoned an army to eliminate Hou Jing and rescue the capital city. In 552, five months after Xiao Gang was murdered by Hou Jing, Xiao Yi’s army quelled the disorder caused by Hou Jing and executed the latter. Near the end of the year, Xiao Yi ascended to the throne at Jiangling, being unwilling to move back to the former capital, Jiankang, which was utterly devastated by Hou Jing’s army. This Jiangling-based regime lasted for three years until it was overthrown by Xiao Yi’s nephew Xiao Cha 蕭詧 (519–562, r.555–562) under the aegis

¹⁹⁹ For the political use of Buddhism by Emperor Wu of Liang see: Tom De Rauw (2008). Andreas Janousch (2016). For the comprehensive study on Liang Wudi see Zhou Yiliang, “Liang Wudi and his Time” in *weijin nanbeichao lunji* (1997); Yan Shangwen, *Liang Wudi* (1999); Tian Xiaofei, *Beacon Fire and Shooting Star* (2007):15–77.

²⁰⁰ Tian Xiaofei (2007): 47.

of the West Wei army. Xiao Yi's demise at Jiangling gave way to his nephew assuming the title of emperor of Liang and initiating a rump state of Liang, which remained in existence for thirty-three years, although it was manipulated by West Wei and later by Northern Zhou and Sui. Liang Wudi's empire fell apart rapidly after his death, and later historians attributed its downfall to his indulgence of Buddhism. However, the primary blame must lie with the hostility between his sons and consequent diffusion of military power, which led to a procrastination in the rescue of the capital city when it was besieged by Hou Jing. The aftermath of Hou Jing's usurpation culminated in the division of the Jingxiang region into three rival regimes: West Liang (555–587), Northern Zhou (557–581), which was succeeded by Sui (581–618), and Chen (557–589). The political circumstances of the Jingxiang region in the sixth century were thus very changeable and fluid, and this tumult shaped the multidimensional development of Buddhism at the time.

During the reign of Liang Wudi, the governors of the Jingxiang region were exclusively selected from the imperial family. The following section will focus on two of these governors: Xiao Gang and Xiao Yi. Particular attention will be given to their contributions to the Buddhist monastics and their relationship with several eminent monks in the region; however, the various roles they occupied, and the syncretic characteristics of their religious adherence must also be borne in mind since these factors may aid in understanding the culture and context in which Buddhist communities tried to assimilate for the purpose of gaining resources. The main question here addressed is the following: If Liang Wudi was a superb sovereign in both the spiritual and political realms, as he is most often portrayed, what role did his sons, the provincial governors play? How did they react to the religio-political propaganda program when they served in the borderland, far away from the capital but directly touching the frontier to the northern regimes?

2. The Princes of Liang and Cultural Transformation

2.1 Xiao Gang and His Time in Xiangyang

Xiao Gang was born of Lady Ding Lingguang 丁令光, a native of Xiangyang, in the tenth month of 503. At the age of three, he was enfeoffed as the King of Jin'an 晉安. From six years old onwards, he started to perform his duty as a prince, being appointed to military garrisons, first the Stone Fort 石頭城, close to the imperial capital, and later, when he reached his twenties, to the garrison at Xiangyang, far west of Yongzhou in Liang territory. He was stationed at Xiangyang garrison for six years (523–530), during which he returned to the capital once for his mother's funeral, which occurred in 526. According to reports, he formed a good relationship with his half-brother Xiao Yi, who was younger by five years, since their mothers got along well. In the last four years of his stay in Xiangyang, Xiao Yi was stationed at Jiangling. He and his half-brother had shared interests in literature and philosophy and exchanged their opinions through letters. Unsurprisingly, their main philosophical interest lay in the Daoist classics *Lao Zi* and *Zhuang Zi*. As John Marney states, "The cultured gentleman of the Six Dynasties period was expected to be learned in the Confucian tradition, to be adept in Daoist-oriented metaphysical discourse, and, especially during Liang times, to be *au courant* with trends in Buddhist scholarship and patron of Buddhist art and literature."²⁰¹ Accordingly, Xiao Gang and Xiao Yi both received a formal education in their youth that strictly followed the Confucian tradition, Xiao Yan selecting their tutors from among well-known, illustrious scholars. The members of the Xiao family were also fond of attending lectures on classics from the Daoist tradition, as witnessed by Yan Zhitui 顏之推 (531–591), a long-term retainer of Xiao Yi and a native of Jiangling:

"Coming to the Liang period, this tendency (of Taoist discussion) again flourished. The

²⁰¹ John Marney (1976):118.

Lao Zi, *Zhuang Zi*, and *Zhou Yi* were called the Three Schools of Mysticism (Taoism) which the emperors Wu (r.502–549) and Jian-wen (r.550–551) personally lectured on and discussed. Zhou Hongzheng (496–574) was appointed to assist in promoting the great interest by establishing the instruction throughout the capital and other cities; he gathered more than a thousand students-truly a splendid result. The (emperor) Yuan- Di (r.552–554) in Jiang [- ling] and Jing [- zhou]!) was also fond of discussing these works. He summoned students, lecturing to them in person so earnestly that he lost sleep and forgot to eat, keeping it up from night through to morning, until extreme fatigue and intolerable grief led him to give up his teaching. At that time, I had the honor to attend some lectures and heard myself the voice and ideas of His Majesty; but being stubborn and dull by nature, I did not like them very much.”²⁰²

The Liang imperial family promoted the revival of *Xuanxue* 玄學 (“Dark Learning”) and *Qingtán* 清談 (“pure conversation”). Xiang Gang conducted two exegetical works on *Zhuang Zi* and *Lao Zi*. He also compiled a Buddhist scripture excerpt in two hundred and twenty *juan* (fascicles), titled *Fabao lianbi* 法寶聯璧 (“*Linked Jades of Dharma Treasures*”), which is no longer extant. However, Baochang’s biography in XGSZ mentions that after its completion, Xiao Gang requested that Baochang edit it.²⁰³ Moreover, Xiao Yi wrote a preface to *Fabao lianbi* and appended a name list of 37 officials who attested to its circulation and popularity. Very plausibly such a voluminous work was accompanied by sophisticated literary entourages, which most likely included Yu Jianwu 庾肩吾, Liu Xiaowei 劉孝威, Jiang Boyao 江伯搖, Kong Jingtong 孔敬通, Shen Ziyue 申子悅, Xu Fang 徐防, Xu Chi 徐摛, Wang Yong 王囿, Kong Shuo 孔鑠, and Bao Zhi 鮑至. This group of people had an elegant appellation: Scholars of the Lofty Studio (Gaozhai Xueshi 高齋學士). The most significant impact that Xiao Gang exerted on the Xiangyang cultural ambiance was the salon culture he brought from the imperial capital. The above-mentioned scholars were its major advocates and participants.

²⁰² Teng (1968): 70.

²⁰³ XGSZ, J.1: 「及簡文之在春坊。尤耽內教。撰法寶聯璧二百餘卷。別令寶唱綴紕區別」 p.426c12–14.

According to a statement in the biography of Yu Jianwu, the prominent activities of the scholars of the Lofty Studio produced excerpts and copies of multitudinous texts.²⁰⁴ Such large-scale gathering and editing of classic texts had never previously been undertaken in this martial-based garrison. Furthermore, a cluster of literati converged on Xiangyang that committed themselves to the writings composed for temples. These literary creations are devoted to the Jinxiang 金像 Temple and Pingdeng 平等 Temple, composed by Liu Xiaoyi 刘孝儀, a brother of Liu Xiaowei, represent the epitome of these monumental works.²⁰⁵ It is noteworthy that the Jinxiang Temple was originally established by Dao'an and accommodated a mysterious statue of Buddha Amitâyus.²⁰⁶

Although only fifteen years old, Xiao Gang had already contributed to the discourse on Two Satya (*erdi* 二諦; Two Truths) and the concept of Dharmakāya (*fashen* 法身; the Dharma Body) under the auspices of his elder brother Xiao Tong 蕭統(501–531) at Mystery Garden (*xuanpu* 玄圃) in the capital. We have no testimony to any such Buddhist discourses or lectures given by him in Xiangyang. His Buddhist devotion shows a rather votive approach. A particularly elaborate discourse is the “Vow to be Donor to All Temples” 請為諸寺檀越疏, preserved in *Guang Hongmingji*.²⁰⁷ The temples he sponsored included the Taiping Temple at Wudang 武當 Mountain and those in the region: Wangchu 望楚, Baita 白塔, Tong'an, 同安,

²⁰⁴ *Nanshi*. J.50.p.1246.

²⁰⁵ The texts preserved in the Song compilation YWLJ, entitled Liang Liu Xiaoyi Jinxiangsi wuliangshou foxiang bei 梁刘孝儀雍州金像寺无量寿佛像碑 (the stele of the buddha Amitâyus statue at the Jinxiang Temple in Yongzhou by Liu Xiaoyi of Liang). J.76, no.34. Another text entitled Liang Liu Xiaoyi Pingdengchaxia Ming 梁刘孝儀平等刹下銘 (the inscription on the pagoda at the Pingdeng Temple by Liu Xiaoyi of Liang). J.77. no.16.

²⁰⁶ I have discussed the Jinxiang temple, which originally named Tanxi, situated on the west skirt of Xiangyang garrison. See the precious chapter.

²⁰⁷ GHMJ, J.28, p. 325b6–18.

Xishan 習善, Yanming 延明, Toutuo 投陀²⁰⁸, Upper Fengling 上鳳林, Lower Fengling 下鳳林, and Guangyan 廣嚴. His discourses offer us an overview of the Buddhist establishments in the region at the time. At the end of his vow, he articulated that the bliss generated from his donation would be bestowed on his father, Emperor Wu of Liang, and his brother, the crown prince Xiao Tong. From these words, along with the fact that the majority of lay Buddhists at the time were not fully dedicated on doctrine, we can assume that his own conversion to Buddhism was rather superficial and based on the notion of retribution and reward. Without a doubt, his fealty to the Buddhist community was bound up with family affection. To mourn the death of his mother, he patronized the construction of two temples and made copies of the *Prajñāpāramitā* sutra with his own blood.²⁰⁹

Within the local Buddhist community, Xiao Gang's primary contacts appear to have been with those monks possessing supernatural power in quelling ferocious animals and spirits. This can be inferred from the biography of Shi Facong 法聰 (d.559) and Shi Daomu 道穆 in XGSZ, both of whom are portrayed as mountain dwellers and magicians. Notably, Xiao Gang appealed to Facong for assistance when the people were in distress due to catastrophic damage caused by tigers. In response, Facong is reported to have held a ceremony to convert tigers to Buddhism and ordered his disciples to tie a piece of cloth on the head of the tigers. Seven days later, the tigers returned to Facong, who after feeding them, untied the cloth. According to the record, Xiao Gang established a fast for Facong's performance and the problem of tigers was solved.²¹⁰ His association with Facong revealed that a monk with extraordinary magic ability could easily gain the attention of the authorities and provide service to the government. Facong's fame soon

²⁰⁸ It also was written as 頭陀寺. A literary man from the Langya 琅琊 Wang 王 clan named Jin 巾 composed a refined text for the stele erected at the temple in the Qi time. The text is preserved in *Wenxuan* 文選. J.59. The temple is situated at Xiakou, see Wei, Bin (2021): 93–118.

²⁰⁹ FYZL, J.100. p. 1025b26–c1.

²¹⁰ XGSZ.J.16. p. 555c12–16.

reached the Emperor Wu of Liang, who entrusted his son Xiao Xu 蕭續 (504–547) to escort Facong to the capital. Although Facong never moved into it, a temple named Chanju 禪居 (“meditation dwelling”) was established for him, which he set aside for lay people to inhabit. Eventually, Xu Chi carried out the imperial order to build a temple named Lingquan 靈泉 (“Spiritual Spring”) on Mount Sangai 傘蓋 in Xiangyang, nearby the Baima Spring, where Facong originally constructed his meditation hut. Until the time of Daoxuan, the meditation hut was located in the temple, later renamed as Jingkong 景空. Apart from tigers, other animals such as the five-colored carp, white turtle, white deer, and white sparrow also appear to have had spiritual connections with Facong, depicting him as an intermediary between nature and humankind. Thus, it is little wonder that he was also portrayed as a rainmaker.

The mountain dweller Shi Daomu was said to have been associated with the lay Buddhist and semi-hermit Liu Qiu (438–495).²¹¹ Xiao Yi erected a dharma platform for him at the top of the mountain and invited his brother Xiao Gang to compose a eulogy for him. Similar to Facong, Daomu reportedly possessed the ability to call for rain and summon the mountain deity. His biography in XGSZ bears witness to the tension during this time between native religion, which included rituals performed with blood sacrifices, and Buddhist dogma. To reconcile this conflict, Daomu converted the tutelary mountain god to Buddhism. It is reasonable to assume that Xiao Gao and Xiao Yi were following the directive set by the Buddhist community, which aimed to eradicate the primitive religious traditions that were native to the region since the attitude of Liang officials towards blood sacrifice was quite negative. The emperor Wu of Liang officially banned it from inclusion in the official state sacrifices.

Prince Xiao Gang’s role in Liang politics can be summarized as follows: He acted as a military commander of the provincial army and a cultural representative of the imperial capital. However, as Andrew Chittick has correctly observed, the violent and combative customs at

²¹¹ Liu Qiu stemmed from one of the most influential local clans and migrated from Nanyang. His scions enjoy his reputation in literature. For their involvement in the politics of Liang see Chapter 4. “*Baili zhou*”.

Xiangyang sharply contradicted his genteel upbringing. Thus, he held a bias against local culture and a distaste for the region.²¹² Nevertheless, it is indisputable that he and his entourages brought capital culture to the borderland, which must have exerted a profound influence on the local society. It would appear that the region underwent a cultural transformation whereby the salon culture and the influx of a cluster of intellectuals from the capital challenged and molded local customs and ways of life. Buddhism was part of this cultural repertoire they brought with them. Xiao Gang was deeply immersed in Buddhist philosophy and partook in the discourse led by the imperial house, but his understanding of Buddhism was largely restricted to the concept of cause and effect with its concomitant notion of tangible reward and punishment. At the same time, it is also evident that with his patronage, the Buddhist community and establishments began to prosper.

2.2 Xiao Yi and His Time in Jiangling

After Xiao Yan overturned the state of Qi, he took over the imperial harem as well. Xiao Yi, five years younger than Xiao Gang, was born of Lady Ruan 阮, who was a concubine of the preceding emperor, the Emperor of Qi. The impregnation of Lady Ruan was cast in mystery: According to *Nanshi*, she dreamt of the moon falling into her belly and was thereupon with child. Additionally, a spiritual connection to Buddhism was revealed to Xiao Yan in his dream. He saw a monk (with an incense burner and one eye closed) who told him he would be born into a royal family. Indeed, Xiao Yi lost one eye when he was thirteen years old. Curiously, these mysterious narratives around Xiao Yi only appear in *Nanshi*. It is well-known that the dynastical history of Liang, *Liangshu*, is largely based on official documents and annals, whereas the later work *Nanshi* is attributed to private historians, including Li Yanshou 李延壽 and his father Li Dashi 李大師 (570–628), both of whom tended to be absorbed with mysterious stories and folklores. Important to this investigation, however, is that their narratives

²¹² Andrew Chittick (2009): 106–109.

clearly signify Xiao Yi's inclination toward Buddhism.

At six years of age, Xiao Yi was enfeoffed as King of Xiangdong 湘東. In 526, at the age of eighteen, he was placed in Jiangling in charge of civil and military affairs of six prefectures. He governed Jingzhou for thirteen years and was then reassigned to Jiangzhou, a prefecture adjacent to Jingzhou, for six years. In 547 he returned to Jiangling with extensive political experience and considerable power, occupying nine prefectures of military control. When the capital city was besieged by Hou Jing two years later, Xiao Yi received a distress signal from his father. Instead of rescuing him, Xiao Yi opted to battle against his nephews, the sons of former Crown Prince Xiao Tong. His father starved to death and Xiao Gang succeeded to the throne; however, Xiao Yi refused to acknowledge it and kept the news of his father's death a secret from his army. He embarked on his own ambition of extinguishing the rivals seated directly in front of him: Xiao Cha in Xiangyang and Xiao Yu 蕭譽 (d.550) in Changsha, both of whom were sons of Xiao Tong. With the military support of the local fighting men and the southern barbarian army led by the monk Lu Fahe 陸法和 (d.558), his attempt at the throne succeeded. Xiao Yu in Changsha was destroyed by his retainer Wang Sengbian 王僧辯 (d.555), who also quelled the chaos caused by Hou Jing and executed the latter in the third month of 552. While Xiao Gang was murdered by Hou Jing and Xiao Cha was chased away by his Army. Seemingly Xiao Yi was the ultimate winner of this internal unrest.

However, the Liang state never recovered from the destruction wreaked by Hou Jing. When Xiao Yi ascended to the throne as Emperor Yuan of Liang in the eleventh month of 552, the political center shifted to Jiangling situated in the Jingxiang region. The core advocates of the new regime were members of two cliques: fugitive officials from Jiankang and elites from local prestigious clans. On the issue of resettling the capital, the "Jiankang group" stood for the old capital, and they blamed its opponents when the new capital, Jiangling city, was sacked by the Western Wei two years later in 554. Xiao Yi's rule as emperor was thus rather ephemeral, but as governor of Jingzhou, he grew his roots in the region for seventeen years and even constructed a newborn regime with the help of native people. The tragic end of his short-lived

reign was brought about by his own tactical errors. In the winter of 554, his nephew Xiao Cha assisted the Western Wei army in sacking the city and capturing him. Eventually, he was executed by Xiao Cha, his old rival. The fall of the Jiangling-based regime broke up the Jingxiang region into three territories.

Book Collecting and Literary Pursuits

Xiao Yi contributed not only to the Buddhist community but also to the local intellectual culture. As a well-versed literatus with considerable versatility, he devoted himself to transplanting the refined culture of Jiankang to the rough frontier region. Buddhism played a crucial role in his cultural and literary engagement in the area, even though his focus was on Confucian institutions and the provincial school system. Nevertheless, given his personal predilection for Daoist classics, which he shared with his half-brother Xiao Gang, and his determination to lecture on *Lao Zi* to the very last day of his rule, his religion must undoubtedly be characterized by hybrid.

Xiao Yi is portrayed as a voracious reader and an assiduous writer. He intermittently worked on his masterpiece *Jinlou Zi* 金樓子 (“*The Master of the Golden Tower*”) throughout his life. The latest records in *Jinlou Zi* are dated to the last year of his life.²¹³ The book belongs to the tradition of Master Literature (*zishu* 子書), but is no longer extant as a whole, and reconstructions of this lost book by Qing scholars provide the only possible access to it. These reconstructions are located in Chinese encyclopedias. In his book, a chapter dedicated to his passion for collecting books provides us with precious insight into the intellectual and manuscript culture of the region as well as the process of book transmission.²¹⁴ His book collection numbered eighty thousand. Most of his volumes, aside from those he received as

²¹³ Zhong Shilun (2004).

²¹⁴ For the English translation of “book collecting” chapter see: Tian Xiaofei (2014): 311–13.

presents and those he purchased, were hand-written copies taken from other private libraries. Apparently, the elites from native clans were the major book collectors. The privileged Liu 劉 clan, Yue 樂 clan, Zong 宗 clan, and Yu 庾 clan all had their private family library. Members from these families served Xiao Yi as advisors and assistants. Thus, Xiao Yi had the opportunity to access to their treasured collection. Alone from the libraries of Liu Zhilin 劉之遴 (478–549) and Yue Yanchun 乐彦春, Xiao Yi gathered five thousand *juan* (fascicles) copies of books. Not only the content of the books provides important insight into this period, but the calligraphy and style of the copies is fascinating. Some books appear to have been copied several times over by different personages in various periods. For instance, the copies made during the *yuanjia* era (424–453) and Western Jin (265–316) eras are especially valued. Xiao Yi's collection encompassed Confucian classics, philosophical Daoist classics, histories, literature, and medical treatises.

Book collections in temples were also added to his private collection. The Changsha Temple at Jiangling, the Toutuo Temple at Xiakou, and the Donglin Temple at Mount Lu are all mentioned in Xiao Yi's records. In particular, the Changsha Temple was equipped with a collection of sutra 经藏, and Xiao Yi obtained copies of four different kinds through the monk Fajing 法京, an illustrious monk of his time and abbot of the temple.²¹⁵ In addition, the superintendent monk of Jingzhou, master Fachi, presented him with a batch of sutras, and from the monk Huiyan 慧琰 of the Zhaoti 招提 Temple at Stone Fort, he received exegetical commentaries and prefaces of sutras. From the lay people of Zhang Wan 張綰 (492–554)²¹⁶, Xiao Yi acquired a copy of the *Biographies of Eminent Monks*. However, the collections from temples and individual monks were more expansive as they included not only Buddhist

²¹⁵ XGSZ.J.16. p. 556b15–29.

²¹⁶ Zhang Wan, son of Zhang Hongce 張弘策(456–502). *Liangshu*, “the Biography of Zhang Wan”, pp.503–05; *Nanshi*, p.1389.

scriptures but also practical manuals of divination and guides on *yin-yang* and *fengshui*. The copies he obtained from the monk Tanzhi 曇智 of the Toutuo Temple, for example, included books on *yin-yang*, divination, and prayer, as well as geomantic omens. This extensive compilation of esoteric subject material attests to the functional service monks provided in medieval society and the far-ranging interests of Xiao Yi. He also attached importance to books on calligraphy and obtained several copies from the monk Zhibiao 智表 of the Donglin Temple. In sum, the records he kept on his private book collection indicate that Xiao Yi's interactions with educated monks gave him access to a vast compendium of resources, all of which attest to his multifaceted interest in Buddhist forms of knowledge and the multiple function of Buddhist institutes in local medieval society.

Aside from collecting books, Xiao Yi and his entourage also had an interest in the patronage of Buddhist monasteries and the lives of monks. One of his bosom friends, Pei Ziyue (469–530)²¹⁷, who stemmed from a family of historians, wrote a book entitled *Zhongseng zhuan* 眾僧傳 (“*Biographies of many monks*”) in twenty *juan* (fascicles), and in the last years of his life he converted to Buddhism and spent the rest of his days eating only wheat and vegetables. When he died, Xiao Yi dedicated an epitaph to him. Xiao Yi was also fond of collecting rubbings of inscriptions on the stone stelae and stupas. He wrote a preface to his compilation *neidian beiming jilin* 內典碑銘集林 (“*A collection of inscriptions on stele and stupa in Buddhist literature*”), which is preserved in *Guang Hongmingji*. In this preface, Xiao Yi stated: “Since my youth I have been fond of literature; this complex grows deeper when I am older. I was absorbed in Buddhist literature and looked over literary texts. In past years, I have been collecting and composing them.”²¹⁸ His interest in Buddhist texts was spurred by his literary inclinations but also by the societal circumstances of his upbringing. His office in Jingzhou was staffed with literary men with Buddhist knowledge, his secretary Yu Xiaojing being a telling

²¹⁷ *Nanshi*, J.33, “the Biography of Pei Ziyue”, pp.865–67; *Liangshu*, J.30, pp.441–44.

²¹⁸ GHMJ.J.20: 「余幼好彫蟲長而彌篤。遊心釋典寓目詞林。頃嘗搜聚有懷著述」 T2103.52.245a8–9.

example. Yu Xiaojing 虞孝敬 assembled a compilation of excerpts of Buddhist scriptures, titled *Neidian Boyao* 內典博要, in thirty *juan* (fascicles) ²¹⁹and the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* in six *juan*.²²⁰ After the fall of Xiao Yi's regime, Yu Xiaojing took refuge in the central plain and joined the sangha, where his devotion lay.

To generate good karma and avoid retribution, people from all strata of society tended to donate cash or land to established temples and thus supply the various Buddhist communities that existed during this time period. Xiao Yi was one of these generous patrons of Buddhist establishments. For example, encouraged most likely by his mother, a faithful lay Buddhist, he composed a piece of inscription for the pagoda at the Liang'an 梁安 Temple in Jiankang, a temple funded by his mother. It is mentioned in *Jinlou Zi* that his mother also sponsored the construction of Chanlin 禪林 Temple and Qihuan 祇洹 Temple in Jingzhou. With respect to his own involvement with the sangha, we find two accounts in XGSZ that give evidence of his association with two meditation monks, Shi Huicheng 釋惠成 and Shi Facong.

As previously mentioned, Shi Facong dwelled in Xiangyang and was associated with Xiao Gang when the latter was stationed there from 523 to 530. Not only portrayed as a supernatural intermedia between the human world and animals, Facong was a persistent book collector, who spent all alms he received on assembling a collection of Buddhist scriptures with bibliographical records and comments. His collection surpassed three thousand *juan* (fascicles). As a preeminent monk in the region, he and Xiao Yi shared literary interests, although nothing is mentioned of their exchanges in this regard. However, in 549 when the Emperor Wu of Liang died, Xiao Yi donated one of his residences to establish a temple, Tiangong 天宮 (Heavenly Palace), in the name of his father, and he invited Facong to reside there. Facong spent the rest

²¹⁹ XGSZ, J.1: 「湘東王記室虞孝敬。學周內外。撰內典博要三十卷。」 p.426b8–9.

²²⁰ Both works are not extant anymore. We only find the title in both Buddhist and secular catalogues in the seventh century. *Suishu*, “*Jingji zhi* 經籍志”, p.975.

of his life practicing meditation in this temple, which remained in existence until Daoxuan's time.

Huicheng, who began his monastic life in the Shizhu 十住 Temple in Jingzhou and studied in Jiankang in his early years, was another monk who received support from Xiao Yi. On his return to his hometown, Huicheng stopped at Mount Lu where he met Zhiyi 智顗 (538–597). The master of Zhiyi, Huisi 慧思 (515–577), was sojourning at Mount Lu at the time of Huicheng's arrival, and Huicheng took the opportunity provided by their chance occurrence to embark on training in the art of contemplation under his discipleship. After fifteen years of practice, Huicheng left Huisi and resettled in Zhijiang 枝江, where he constructed a temple named Chanhui 禪慧 (“wisdom of meditation”). Xiao Yi financially supported him in building a main hall and erecting a stone stele for him in the inner palace. Receiving imperial support, Chanhui Temple grew to become one of the major meditation centers in the region.²²¹

Transfer of Icons to Jiangling

From the sparse account we have of master Huicheng and Facong, it is possible to conclude that Xiao Yi as the governor of the region paid particular attention to the most distinguished and scholarly monks due to the cultural and political circumstances of the Liang era. His interest in Buddhism focused on philosophical debates and literature rather than on rituals and practices. He composed epitaphs for several preeminent monks of the time and wrote inscriptions dedicated to Buddhist pagodas or statues.²²² Moreover, Xiao Yi had a strong faith in the bliss of Buddhist icons. He worshipped statues of Buddha and gathered them at Jiangling as the emblem of protection over his reign.

The Buddhist statuary played a significant role in the infiltration of Indian Buddhism into China. King Aśoka's legendary building of the eighty-four thousand stūpas shaped Buddhist

²²¹ For the development of meditation practices in the region see the previous chapter.

²²² The extant Buddhist texts composed by Xiao Yi are preserved in YWLJ.

Asia in terms of iconography and religious establishment.²²³ To imitate King Aśoka, campaigns periodically emerged in the early medieval time whereby stūpas were constructed and relics were enshrined in Buddhist temples. Several statues relating to King Aśoka appear in medieval Buddhist narratives and myths. According to the Tang monk Daoxuan,²²⁴ two statues associated with Aśoka were erected in the region, which evidence the importance of kingship in the time of Liang. The first statue was originally located at Fameng 發蒙 Temple in Jizhou 吉州. Reportedly, it was nine *chi*²²⁵ in height and emerged from a deep pond. The inscription on the statue indicated that it was cast by the fourth daughter of King Aśoka. In 544, Xiao Yi reinstalled the statue at Jiangling and returned it to Jizhou two years later.²²⁶ The second one was stored in the Changsha Temple at Jiangling, a temple established by Dao'an's disciple Tanyi, who is discussed in the previous chapter. The statue was escorted to the capital Jiankang during the reign of Wudi of Liang. However, when Xiao Yi ascended to the throne at Jiangling, he ordered the statue to be transferred to Jiangling and enshrined inside his palace. Another statue, the King Udayana Sandalwood Image 優填王栴檀像, was transferred to Jiangling from Jiankang at the same time.²²⁷ It appears very likely that Xiao Yi gathered the most sacred Buddha images of his time to secure and legitimate his newly founded reign based in Jiangling. The King Udayana Sandalwood Image was later consecrated at the Daming Temple by the emperor Ming of Hou Liang, Xiao Kui 蕭歸 (542–585, r.562–585), a temple established near his father's graveyard to guarantee the posthumous fortune of the latter.

²²³ Shi Zhiru (2014): 83.

²²⁴ The relevant accounts appear in XGSZ and JSSGL.

²²⁵ 1 *chi* = 24.5cm.

²²⁶ See the record in XGSZ, p. 507c2–16.

²²⁷ The image was a tribute presented by Rudravarman (r.514–550), a usurper and the last king of Funan 扶南, to the Liang court in 519, immediately after Emperor Wudi conducted his first great assembly of bodhisattva ordination. see Zhu Xu (2023): 1–16.

2.3. Concluding Remarks

Buddhism entered a peaceful and prosperous period in the first half of the sixth century. On the one hand, both Xiao Gang and Xiao Yi, dispatched from the imperial capital, brought their individual enthusiasm toward literary creations and religious engagements to the Jingxiang region, thus fostering a cultural transformation of the frontier region. Their intellectual entourage was composed of native and court elites who engaged in editing, compiling, and collecting literature. Such large-scale intellectual activities were unprecedented in the area.

On the other hand, from the emperor Wu of Liang to his son Xiao Yi and great-grandson Xiao Gui, the monarchs of Liang attached great importance to Buddha's images and considered them as emblems of protection over the realm. Worshiping Buddhist icons constituted an indispensable aspect of the political and religious agenda during the Liang dynasty. These images and icons not only proclaimed the legitimation of the new state but also gave blessing to the fortune of imperial ancestors after death, thus serving multiple functions in state affairs. Jiangling-based regimes brought religious sources to Jingzhou, which paved the way for the thriving of Buddhism during the second half of the sixth century and the early seventh century.

Daoxuan's record of the establishment of a precept platform at Mount Zhongnan 終南 in 667 attests to the prosperity of Buddhism during this period. Out of thirty-eight masters, thirteen of the Vinaya masters came from Jingzhou and participated in the event. The record indicates that three precept platforms were established in Jingzhou: in the Changsha Temple, Daming Temple, and Siceng Temple. Daoxuan remarked on the fact that "in southern China, there are over three hundred precept platforms, while in the north none of those has been left. Buddhism has thrived in the South for five or six hundred years without interruption; it all relies on the precept platform."²²⁸ Indeed, southern China preserved the essence of Buddhism without

²²⁸ GCJTJ,J1:「今荊州四層、長沙二寺剎基下，大明寺前湖中，並是戒壇。以事覈論，自渝州已下，江淮之間，通計戒壇三百餘所；山東、河北、關內、劍南，事絕前聞，經傳不錄；故使江表佛法，經今五六百

suppression from the states, whereas statewide destruction of Buddhism occurred twice in the northern regimes. However, the Jingxiang region is situated on the boundary between north and south. The local monks longed for the Buddhist teaching prevailing at study centers on both sides, and after studies for several years, most of them returned to the region bringing with them the fashionable thoughts of the time. Although Buddhism in the south and the north became differentiated by an emphasis on different texts and ways of practice, the confluence of both streams of teaching met in the Jingxiang region.

The following section will elaborate on the transmission of ideas across borders among West Liang (555–587), Northern Qi (550–577), Northern Zhou (557–581), and Chen (557–589). In the second half of the sixth century, the Buddhist center in the north was Yecheng, the capital city of Northern Qi, while in the south, it was still Jiankang.

3. Connections to Buddhist Centers and the Transmission of Ideas

3.1. Pengcheng (Modern Xuzhou 徐州)

The indigenous monks of the Jingxiang region were well-informed of the newest Buddhist texts and ideas, which were brought out of India by Kumārajīva and prevailed in Chang'an and the Inner Pass area. Once the north fell to chaos in the early fifth century, the translation works of Kumārajīva were dispersed from Chang'an to the Huai River basin area. The *Chengshi Lun* 成實論 (T1646, “*Treatise on Establishing Reality*,” Skt. *Tattvasiddhi*), a treatise attributed to the Indian monk Harivarman (fl. 250–350), which was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva in his later years,²²⁹ gained great attention from Buddhist scholar-monks. Shouchun 壽春

年，曾不虧殄，由戒壇也！」 T1892.45.814a7–11.

²²⁹ Kimura (1986) indicated that Kumārajīva completed the translation in 406, but then Tanying, the scribe during the translation process, revised and supplemented the part on the five skandhas in 412.

(modern Shouxian 壽縣) and Pengcheng became study centers for this treatise.²³⁰ As a “transitional zone” between the north and south, the Jingxiang region was the first recipient of the influx of Buddhist thought emanating from Pengcheng, where scholars focused on the study of the *Chengshi Lun*.

Pengcheng had, and continues to have, a long tradition of Buddhism dating back to the first century. According to a well-known story, Liu Ying 劉英 (d. 71), the king of Chu, based in Pengcheng, worshiped Buddha.²³¹ He is known as the first Buddhist adherent from the imperial family in the Buddhist history of China. After the death of Kumārajīva in 413, his disciples fled from Chang’an one after another.²³² Pengcheng had been one of their shelters, and Daorong 道融 and Sengsong 僧嵩 both resided there. The Baita (White Stupa) Temple²³³ became one of the study centers of the *Chengshi Lun*. As the mid-sixth century work *Weishu* relates, in 495 Emperor Wen (467–499, r.471–499) of Northern Wei visited the Baita 白塔 Temple and traced the lineage of the study on *Chengshi Lun*: Kumārajīva transmitted the work to Master Sengsong 僧嵩, from whom it passed to Master Sengyuan 僧淵, then to Master Daodeng 道登, and Huiji 慧紀. The emperor was fond of the text and thereupon visited the temple.²³⁴

²³⁰ For the dissemination of the studies on the *Chengshi Lun* see Tang Yongtong (2017): 585–594;683–84.

²³¹ *Houhanshu*. J.42.p.1428.

²³² Chang’an in the time was in distress because of successive warfare. In 417 Liu Yu’s army restored Chang’an and terminated the reign of Later Qin (384–417). In the following year, Chang’an was occupied by the king of the *Xiongnu* Helian Bobo 赫连勃勃 (381–425, r.407–425).

²³³ Tang Yongtong (2017): 459–60.

²³⁴ *Weishu*. “*Shilaozhi*” J.114: (太和)十九年四月，帝幸徐州白塔寺。顧謂諸王及侍官曰：「此寺近有名僧嵩法師，受成實論於羅什，在此流通。後授淵法師，淵法師授登、紀二法師。朕每玩成實論，可以釋人染情，故至此寺焉。」 pp.3039–40.

The promotion of the *Chengshi Lun* by Emperor Wen of Northern Wei led to great popularity in its study, and, being a major study center, Pingcheng attracted monks from the Jingxiang region.²³⁵ Tandu 曇度 (d.489), a native of Jiangling, learned from Sengyuan at the Baita Temple and became a specialist in the text. His fame reached the Emperor Wen of Northern Wei, who invited him to the capital Pingcheng for lectures. His students in Pingcheng amounted to ten thousand, and his commentary on *Chengshi Lun*, titled *Chengshilun dayishu* 成實論大義疏 (“*On the Great Meaning of Chengshi Lun*”), circulated in the north. Tandu spent the rest of his life at Pingcheng and never came back to the Jingxiang region. However, the monk Huiqiu 慧球 (431–504) from the Zhulin Temple at Jiangling also studied *Chengshi Lun* from Sengyuan, and he returned to the region in his thirties. Thanks to him, the tradition of exegetic studies (義學 *yixue*) of Buddhist texts in the Jingxiang region was parallel to that in the capital Jiankang. In 501, Huiqiu was promoted to be the superintendent monk of Jingzhou monastics.

3.2 Yecheng of the Northern Qi

During the second half of the sixth century, the capital city of Northern Qi became a Buddhist hotspot in northern China under the aegis of the imperial family Gao.²³⁶ As Daoxuan wrote: “As the Qi state thrived, the Buddhist teaching bloomed. The large-scale monasteries in the capital city roughly numbered four thousand, accommodating about eighty thousand monks and nuns. There were over two hundred lectures with over ten thousand audiences. Thus, worldwide outstanding figures were gathered there.”²³⁷ According to Daoxuan, Buddhism reached its climax under the rule of Northern Qi and Liang.²³⁸ The most influential Buddhist

²³⁵ Shouchun in present Anhui province was another center of *Chengshi Lun* studies. It had strong impact on the Jiankang scholastic Buddhism.

²³⁶ For the Buddhist sites and studies at Yecheng during the Sixteen Kingdom and northern Dynasties see He Liqun (2019): 1–20.

²³⁷ XGSZ.J.10. p. 501b13–16.

²³⁸ XGSZ.J.15. “Since Buddhism spread to the East, it has been propagated for generations. When it comes to its

scripture at the time was *Shidijing Lun* 十地經論 (T1522, Skt. *Daśabhūmikasūtra-śāstra*), written by Vasubandhu and translated into Chinese by Bodhiruci and others in 508.²³⁹ The text extensively expounded on the “Ten Stage” chapter of the *Huanyan Sutra* 華嚴經 (“*Flower Ornament Sutra*”), thus facilitating the in-depth study of the *Huanyan Sutra*, which led to the formation of the Huanyan school.

Unlike the various sectarians from different schools who predominated in later eras, the monks in the sixth century were open to various Buddhist texts and teachings. The monk Zhirun 智閏 (540–614) serves as an example. He was a native of Xiangyang who was attracted by the Buddhist prosperity at Ye and traveled there in his early twenties. According to his biography in XGSZ, at the time he arrived at Ye, the ten superintendent monks were very active, and their teachings flourished. He learned the *Shidijing Lun* from Tanzun 曇遵, a disciple of Huiguang 慧光,²⁴⁰ and *Sifen Lü* 四分律 (“*Vinaya of the Four Categories*” Skt. *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*) from Huiguang. Apart from these texts, he also studied the *Huayan Sutra* and the *Nirvana Sutra*. From the account of his studies at Ye, we gain a glimpse of the inclusive and diverse Buddhist academic atmosphere that prevailed in the area. As an erudite and informed Buddhist scholar, Zhirun was dissatisfied with the teachings that circulated in the north but was fascinated by the

best time, it must be the time of Liang and Qi. 且夫佛教道東.世稱弘播.論其榮茂.勿盛梁齊” p. 548c22–23.

²³⁹ Ratnamati 勒那摩提 and Bodhiruci 菩提流支 both brought the scripture to the Northern Wei capital Luoyang but have discrepancies in the interpretation of the text. It develops into two schools of Dilun studies: the northern lineage Bodhiruci–Daochong; the southern lineage Ratnamati–Huiguang–Fashang–Huiyuan. For the translation of the *Shidijing Lun* and its dissemination see Tang Yongtong (2017): 698–03.

²⁴⁰ The core figure of Buddhist community in Ye and the direct disciple of Ratnamati 勒那摩提. Regarding to ten prominent disciples of Huiguang, we are not sure who it refers to. But Daoxuan mentioned monks once learned from Huiguang by name: Sengfan 僧范, Daoping 道憑, Fashang 法上, Huishun 惠順, Lingxun 靈詢, Sengda 僧達, Daoshen 道慎, Anlin 安廩, Tanyan 曇衍, Tanzun 曇遵, Fenggun 馮袞, Tanyin 曇隱.

Sanlun study in the south. He was instructed and enlightened by Zhibian 智辯, a *Sanlun* specialist and advocator affiliated with the Changgan 長干 Temple at Jiankang. From Ye to Jiankang, he absorbed knowledge from the most advanced Buddhist teachings and fashionable scriptures. He eventually returned to the Jingxiang region and cultivated a new generation of native monks, including Zhibi 智拔 (572– 640) and Huileng 慧稜 (575– 640), both of whom became known as *Sanlun* masters.

Zhirun can be identified as one of the forerunners of the Jingxiang monastics due to his propagation of the studies of three treatises (*Sanlun* 三論): The *Zhong lun* 中論 (*Madhyamaka-śāstra*), the *Shiermen lun* 十二門論 (*Dvādaśanikāya-śāstra*) by Nāgārjuna 龍樹, and the *Bai lun* 百論 (*Śata-śāstra*) by Nāgārjuna's disciple Āryadeva 提婆. These three treatises belong to the philosophical tradition of Indian Madhyamaka doctrine and make significant contributions to the logic of emptiness. In parallel with the revival of *Xuanxue* 玄學 (“Dark learning”), which was promoted by the royal family of Liang, as previously discussed, this tradition catalyzed the studies on perfect wisdom (*prajñā*) and the debates on emptiness, and the afore-mentioned treatises, all translated by Kumārajīva in the early fifth century, gained great popularity in south China during the Liang and Chen time.

3.3 Jiankang of the Chen

According to Tang Yongtong, the study of *Chengshi Lun* first came to the center of the scholastic forum at Jiankang in the Song and Qi times, and in the time of Liang the revival of *Sanlun* studies led to fierce disputes between *Sanlun* and *Chengshi* advocators-disputes based not on sectarian bias but rather on doctrinal discrepancies.²⁴¹ By the time of Liang Mount She 攝, situated on the outskirts of Jiankang, came to be the center of *Sanlun* teaching. The reclusive

²⁴¹ Tang yongtong (2017): 585.

Sanlun devotees at the mountain include monk Senglang 僧朗 and Sengquan 僧詮, as well as lay Buddhist Ming Sengshao 明僧紹 and Xiao Shisu 蕭眎素.²⁴² In 558, the *Sanlun* master Falang 法朗(507–581), also known as Daolang 道朗, stepped out from his reclusive mountain life and took up residence at the Xinghuang 興皇 Temple located outside of Jianyang 建陽 gate in Jiankang city. Under the aegis of the imperial family of Chen, Falang came to the spotlight among the Jiankang monastics. Thirty-two years of peace and prosperity ensued for the Chen state, ensuring the restoration of Buddhist establishments that had been destroyed or damaged during times of war.

In contrast to the political situation in the Chen state, the emperors of West Liang, manipulated by the northern regimes, occupied only Jiangling and its peripheries. Although they were all adherents of Buddhism, the doctrinal studies at Jiangling were not comparable to those in Jiankang, which was a more attractive learning center for local monks. The Tang monk Daoxuan conducted biographies of three preeminent monks who studied at Jiankang during the Chen time and later propagated the *Sanlun* studies in the region. The first monk was Shi Luoyun 釋羅雲 (541–616), who joined the sangha at the eastern Shangming Temple.²⁴³ As his biography states, the gist of the Three Treatises²⁴⁴ had not yet been promoted in the Jiankang region. Therefore, Shi Luoyun made the great resolution of disseminating their profound meaning. He went to Jiankang at the age of sixteen years and took discipleship under Falang at the Xinghuang Temple. After Falang passed away in 581, he actively propagated what he

²⁴² Tang yongtong (2017): 617–19. *Nanqi shu*, J.54, “the Biography of Ming Sengshao”. pp.927–28; *Liang shu*, J.52, “the Biography of Xiao Shisu”, pp.762–63.

²⁴³ The temple was built by Dao’an’s disciple Tanyi and grew to the most significant Buddhist center in the region. see Chapter 1.

²⁴⁴ The three treatises include: the *Zhong Lun* 中論 (Madhyamaka-śāstra), the *Shiermen Lun* 十二門論 (Dvādaśanikāya-śāstra) by Nāgārjuna 龍樹, and the *Bai Lun* 百論 (Śata-śāstra) by Nāgārjuna’s disciple Āryadeva 提婆.

learned from Falang. He returned to the area in 589, when the Chen state was annexed by the Sui, and dwelled at Longquan 龍泉 (“Dragon Spring”) Temple in Xiangyang, where Huizhe 慧哲 (538–597) another disciple of Falang resided. Daoxuan reported that Luoyun led five hundred disciples and that one of them defeated a noted local Daoist in a disputation. Luoyun held more than four lectures on the Three Treatises and four sutras²⁴⁵ at the hall built by Dao’an and enlarged by Tanyi in the eastern Shangming Temple.²⁴⁶ The master Song 嵩, one of Luoyun’s disciples who studied at the Ci’en 慈恩 Temple in Chang’an, was well acquainted with Daoxuan, having known him for many years. From him, Daoxuan obtained firsthand information about the temple: “During the Jin, Song, Qi, Liang and Chen time, the temple accommodated over ten thousand monks. In the early Sui time, there were three thousand and five hundred noted monks and thousands of lay Buddhists. [...] fifty-three monks led the lecturers on the way, all of whom achieved sainthood. Each of them led a thousand monks. The rest consisted of over five hundred minor-masters. Forty-nine Ten Recitations Vinaya masters²⁴⁷ all obtained sainthood. The meditation masters of both Hinayana and Mahayana traditions amounted to over eight hundred, and of those, two hundred and forty-four obtained sainthoods.”²⁴⁸ These numbers reflect the multiplicity of Buddhist teaching prevailing during this time.

²⁴⁵ The four sutras refer to the *Nirvana Sutra*, the *Huayan Sutra* (T278), the *Lotus Sutra* (T262), and the *Dapin bore jing* 大品般若經 (T223, *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*).

²⁴⁶ XGSZ, J.9. “The Biography of Shi Luoyun”. p. 493b1–3.

²⁴⁷ *Shisong lü* (*Daśa-bhāṇavāra-vinaya*) a Vinaya text from Sarvāstivāda school, which was translated into Chinese by Puṇyatāra 弗若多羅 and Kumārajīva.

²⁴⁸ LGZ, 僧徒常有數萬人。陳末隋初。有名者三千五百人。淨人數千。[...] 當途講說者五十三人。得其聖果。各領千僧。餘小法師五百餘人。十誦律師有四十九人。得聖果。大小乘禪師八百餘人。其得聖果者二百四十四人。T1898.45. 877c29–878a1; 878a9–12.

Fa'an 法安 is another example of a native monk who studied under Falang and disseminated Buddhist doctrine. He resided on the islet in the middle of Yangtze River near Jiangling city and brought the teaching of Madhyamika back to the Jingxiang region.²⁴⁹ Luoyun and Huizhe were core figures promoting the teaching of *Sanlun* in the region. Huizhe's disciples amounted to over three hundred and fifty, all of whom were competent masters who led their own disciples and followers. However, claiming that they belonged to the school of *Sanlun* would be an anachronism as there was no *Sanlun* school at the time. These monks were not exclusively devoted to a study of the Three Treaties but were also learning popular sutras such as the *Nirvana Sutra*, the *Huayan Sutra* (T278), the *Lotus Sutra* (T262), and the *Dapin bore jing* (T223 *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*). From the accounts Daoxuan provided, no indication is given of their doctrinal affiliations. Instead, they show a robust practice of doctrinal study and exposition of the sutras and other texts being conducted in the frontier area. The native monks studied at Jiankang and brought with them the latest knowledge and explanations of treatises and sutras, which largely were translated by Kumārajīva.

3.4 Concluding Remarks

In summary, an overview of the life trajectory of native monks in the Jingxiang region clearly illustrates that the monastics were closely associated with Buddhist centers in both north and south China. In the early fifth century, when the study of *Chengshi Lun* came to the center of doctoral debates and studies, they were strongly influenced by the monks in Pengcheng, a center of Buddhist activity that was comparable to Jiankang. However, once Buddhism began to bloom at the capital city of Northern Qi, native monks traveled there for the newest texts. The *Shidijing Lun* and *Sifen Lü* became popular. The Xiangyang monk Zhirun obtained both texts and immersed himself in the teaching of *Sanlun* at Jiankang. Finally, in the Chen period, as the *Sanlun* studies derived from Mount She began to flourish at Jiankang, the native monks from the region eagerly learned from the master Falang at the Xinghuang Temple and

²⁴⁹ XGSZ, J.9. "The Biography of Shi Fa'an". p. 493c3–19.

established a new trend of studying the Three Treatises and four sutras. Shi Luoyun and Shi Huizhe were core advocates of this regimen of doctrinal study, and the Longquan Temple and eastern Shangming Temple were its main study centers.

4. The Revival of Buddhism under the Reign of Emperor Wen of Sui: A Case Study on the Dharma Assembly at the Qifa Temple in 602

Emperor Wen of Sui (541–604, r.581–604), commonly referred to in the sources as Wendi, occupies a particular position in the history of imperial China and the annals of Chinese Buddhism. He was portrayed as a supreme *pusa tianzi* 菩薩天子 (“Bodhisattva Son of Heaven”)²⁵⁰ and a wheel-turning king (Skt. *chakra-vartin*), the ideal Buddhist monarch, by both secular and Buddhist historians. As soon as he took the throne, he eagerly pursued policies favorable toward Buddhism to rehabilitate the Buddhist clergy and establishments from the dramatic destruction that had taken place during the Northern Zhou persecution (574–578). His reversal of the proscription was a wise expedient to reconcile the discontents within the new empire²⁵¹ and pacify the Buddhists and their lay adherents. The “calculated and selective”²⁵² revival of Buddhism instigated by Wendi culminated in a series of religiopolitical campaigns, including three relic distributions during his last reign in the *renshou* era (601–604). The relationship between Buddhism and politics in Sui time has attracted much attention from modern scholars.²⁵³ These scholars have reached a consensus on the intention of Emperor

²⁵⁰ *Suishu*, J.81, p. 1827; *Beishi*, J.94, p. 3137.

²⁵¹ Tsukamoto Zenryū analyzed the discontents among the southerners after the Sui triumphed over Southern China (1975): 147–159.

²⁵² Arthur F. Wright used these two words to point out Wendi’s political intention of using Buddhism as ideological means to pursue great power and universal dominion (1957): 93.

²⁵³ The most seminal work is from Yamazaki Hiroshi (1942): 331–345. In his later work, he dated the starting point of Wendi’s pro-Buddhist policy to the installment of the “Bodhisattva monk” (1967): 35–43. Furthermore, Arthur F. Wright (1978) conducted the most influential study on the history of Sui in English. Chen Jinhua (2002) offers a new perspective on the study of Buddhism in the Sui period by taking an individual monk, Tanqian, as a case study to depict a more precise and detailed picture of the implementation of Wendi’s religious policies.

Wen's Buddhist politics, determining that he utilized Buddhism as an ideological tool to unify the ethnic groups, cultures, and diverse areas of his vast empire.²⁵⁴ However, the actual effect of this centralized government strategy on individuals and local societies still needs to be examined to provide us with a more coherent picture. In this section, I offer a case study contributing to this endeavor.

In light of the previous studies on significant events and campaigns plotted by the imperial court, my investigation focuses on a Dharma assembly organized by a Buddhist lay association, the Chanlin 禪林 (“meditation grove”) Yi 邑, for commemorating a deceased local governor in the Jingxiang region. By contextualizing this single event within a broad historical context- the prosperity of Buddhism promoted by Wendi -we can better understand the efficacy and impact of the use of Buddhism as an ideological device in the provincial society.

Despite the abundance of extant documents from dynastical histories and Buddhist literature, the picture of local Buddhist communities' daily activities remains unclear. Fortunately, old manuscripts, epitaphs, epigraphs on steles, and Buddhist statues provide many tangible examples of brief biographies of individual monks, organizational structures of local Buddhist associations and monastic administrations, and such organizations' zealous worship activities.²⁵⁵ Nevertheless, dealing with these “special” materials is very challenging. There is a risk of being limited by the fragmented information from these materials and confined to reconstructing a single historical event or figure without a glimpse of the prevailing historical and social circumstances. Admittedly, it is an intractable problem to contextualize an endemic event within the narratives of significant historical events and courses because of the different narrative stances presented by local records and official documents. Based on the inscription of the Qifa Temple and relevant transmitted documents, I conduct a case study to search for clues

²⁵⁴ Wright (1957): 71–104; Chen Kenneth (1964):199–201. Chen Jinhua elaborated on this movement's international aspects in responding to a series of expansionist adventures during the *renshou* era (2002): 5.

²⁵⁵ For more about local Buddhist associations and their activities based on manuscripts and epigraphs, see Hao Chunwen (1998); Liu Shufen (1993):497–544; Hou Xudong (2018).

to link a perhaps seemingly random event with a nationwide campaign and depict historical Buddhist events from a micro-perspective.

First, I will give a concise overview of the circumstances of Buddhism in the Jingxiang region under Wendi's reign. Then, I will analyze the content of the inscription on the stele of Qifa Temple and discuss the relevant issues into which we may glean some insight.

4.1 Rehabilitation of Buddhist Clergy and Establishments

On the seventh month of the first year of the *kaihuang* era (581), Wendi launched a temple construction project in four cities that were previously the sites of his father's duty stations, namely Xiangyang, Jiangling and Suizhou 隨州 in the Jingxiang region, and Jinyang 晉陽 in Tongzhou 同州.²⁵⁶ It is conceivable that this imperial sponsorship would facilitate the revival of Buddhism in the area. On the one hand, Buddhism had become intertwined with Chinese ancestor worship by generating new scriptures and ritual practices in early medieval times.²⁵⁷ This project demonstrated Wendi's religious enthusiasm and, at the same time, set a moral example for his subjects to value filial piety. His devotion to pursuing fortune for his departed father corresponded to the popular trend of donating Buddhist statues for the posthumous happiness of parents.²⁵⁸

On the other hand, the imperial edict issued for establishing temples on behalf of his father

²⁵⁶ LDSBJ, J.12. In the introduction to *Zhongjing Fashi* 眾經法式, Fei Zhangfang mentions the precise month and year of this construction project, p. 107b29–c15. However, in Daoxuan's later account of the imperial edict from Wendi, it remained undated. See GHMJ, J.28. Title: *Suiwendi wei taizu wuyuan Huangdi xingxing sichu lisi jianbei zhao* 隋文帝為太祖武元皇帝行幸四處立寺建碑詔 (The Imperial Edict from Wendi of Sui to Establish Temples and Steles at Four Places where Taizu Emperor Wuyuan Abided). p. 328a5–b7.

²⁵⁷ For the relationship between Buddhism and ancestor worship in medieval China, see Stephen F. Teiser (1988).

²⁵⁸ Honoring the departed parents with rites for their fortune (*zhuifu* 追福) was a prevalent practice among the populace throughout the fifth and sixth centuries, according to the inscriptions on the Buddhist figurines found in northern China. See Hou Xudong (2018):275–288.

contains an overt political intention:

[When] the clan of Wei²⁵⁹ was about to decline, [Wendi's father] devoted himself to statecraft. [When] the [Royal] House of Zhou²⁶⁰ rose suddenly, he redressed and assisted [them] with one heart. Throughout tribulation for two generations, [he] laid the foundation of our empire, just like Yu of Xia, who served Tang [Yao] and Yu [Shun], and Emperor Xuan of Jin who assisted Han and Wei.²⁶¹ ... Previously [Yu of] Xia even inscribed [his merits] on the mountain because [he] dredged rivers. It is said that during the Zhou Dynasty [the king] itinerated [the kingdom] and engraved what he heard on stones. That emperors and kings document [their] deeds have already a long tradition. [We] should certainly establish one temple, respectively, in Xiangyang, Suizhou, Jiangling, and Jinyang, erecting steles and extolling virtues so that we make sure that these precious places will be strong and majestic and will never collapse just as emptiness never does and that we propagate its prosperity for a time as long as that of Heaven and Earth.

魏氏將謝躬事經綸。周室勃興同心匡贊。間關二代造我帝基。猶夏禹之事唐虞。晉宣之輔漢魏。 [...] 昔夏因導水尚且銘山。周日巡遊有聞勒石。帝王紀事。由來尚矣。其襄陽隨州江陵晉陽。並宜立寺一所。建碑頌德。庶使莊嚴寶坊比虛空而不壞。導揚茂實同天地而長久。²⁶²

Based on the above edict, we can determine that his father's legacy was compared to the legendary sage-king Yu 禹 and Sima Yi 司馬懿 (179–251); both their descendants replaced the former dynasty they served, and the ensuing dynasties were successfully granted legitimacy in the Chinese historiographical tradition. Moreover, it asserts that the merits and achievements of his father laid the foundation for his newly established empire. In this regard, we can safely conclude that extolling his father's glorious merits was a political scheme to legitimize his

²⁵⁹ Wei refers to the northern Wei Dynasty (386–535).

²⁶⁰ Zhou refers to the northern Zhou Dynasty (557–581).

²⁶¹ Han Wei refers to the Eastern Han Dynasty (25–220) and Cao Wei Dynasty (220–266).

²⁶² GHMJ, T2103.52.328a9–12; 328b2–6.

monarchy, which was an urgent concern after receiving abdication from the Emperor Jing of Northern Zhou five months previous. Therefore, we can identify this large-scale temple reconstruction project as a proclamation of the legitimization of his new empire under the guise of his Buddhist zeal and Confucian filial piety.

Concerning the name of these temples, Daxing guosi 大興國寺, the nomenclature overtly implied Wendi's political ambition. As is well known, Daxing 大興 ("great thrive") was his first title. After he acceded to the throne, he instigated a construction plan of a new capital city, which he named Daxing, and gave a hall in his royal palace the same name. The reinstitution of religious facilities was part of this plan as well. In the newly planned capital, official Buddhist and Daoist administrations called Daxing shansi 大興善寺 and Xuandu guan 玄都觀, respectively, censored and instructed on religious issues in the country. In contrast to Daxing shansi, which has drawn significant attention from scholars,²⁶³ the Daxing guosi has been neglected or undervalued. Here I intend to shed light on the development of this regional temple in the Jingxiang region and its function corresponding to Daxing shansi, the central national temple.

The date of the construction of the Daxing guosi in the four cities remains ambiguous. Fei Zhangfang's records from the Sui period date the construction to the first year of the *kaihuang* era (581) without mentioning the name of the temples. In contrast, Falin 法琳 (571–636), a noted Buddhist apologist in the early Tang period, alluded to the Daxing guosi being established in Suizhou and Jinyang in the fourth year of the *kaihuang* era (584) but left no word about the temples in Xiangyang and Jiangling. Notably, the temple in Jinyang was originally named Bore 般若 Temple and was the birthplace of Wendi; later, he renovated it and renamed it as Daxing

²⁶³ Yamazaki Hiroshi thoroughly investigated the development of Daxing Shansi and underlined its characteristics and functions as a national temple.

guosi.²⁶⁴ The Daxing guosi in Xiangyang and the one in Jiangling were also known in the sources by the names of Xiangzhou Daxing guosi and Jingzhou Daxing guosi, respectively. Two anecdotes about these two temples are contained in the biographies of eminent monks composed by Daoxuan in the early Tang period:

1. [Shi Mingdan] bore an imperial decree to escort relics to the foundation of the Shang Fenglin temple (Upper Phoenix grove temple) in Xiangzhou. [The temple] was decorated in the Liang dynasty, and in the early Sui time, it was spacious and bright. Tall forests bridged the valleys and connected courtyards [of the temple]. Pine trees and bamboos shone upon each other; stones in springs resonated with each other. From the town's houses, [one] could see the temple from a distance and the feeling of liveness arose. There were people who visited [it]. They all forgot to turn back. One day when Emperor Wen [was still] a hidden dragon²⁶⁵, he happened to go there to pay his homage and prayed for great protection. Once he took the throne, to pursue the afterlife fortune of the departed, [he] always visited the temple yearly and made generous offerings. Moreover, he changed the name [of the temple] to Daxing guo temple (Temple which raises greatly the state).

[釋明誕]有勅召送舍利于襄州上鳳林寺基趾。梁代雕飾。隋初顯敞。高林跨谷連院。松竹交映。泉石相喧。邑屋相望。索然閑舉。有遊覽者皆忘返焉。文帝龍潛之日。因往禮拜。乞願弘護。及踐寶位。追惟往福。歲常就寺。廣設供養。仍又改為大興國寺。²⁶⁶

2. During the *renshou* era, [Shi Huizui] by decree escorted relics to the Daxing guo temple at the Longqian (Hidden Dragon) Dharma site in Jingzhou. In the past when Emperor Wen²⁶⁷ was a minister he happened to pass by this temple and met a *śramaṇa*. They formed a deep friendship. At that time, [Emperor Wen] thought highly of him and could not estimate his words. After [Emperor Wen] rose like a dragon, he cherished the memory of their old times and issued an imperial decree to recruit him. [but the monk] had already

²⁶⁴ *Bianzheng Lun* 辯正論, J.3: 「開皇四年奉為太祖武元皇帝元明皇太后。以般若故基造大興國寺焉。」

T52.2110.508c25–27.

²⁶⁵ The hidden dragon is a metaphor indicating that Wendi had not yet ascended to the throne.

²⁶⁶ XGSZ, J.26, p. 668c14–19.

²⁶⁷ *Suigao* is an abbreviation of *Sui Gaozu*, the temple name of Emperor Wen.

passed away. Thereupon, on the emperor's order the temple he once dwelled in was rebuilt, and his former chamber was decorated. Therefore, [this temple] had complimentary names: *xingguo* (prosper the country) and *longqian* (hidden dragon). These were all from the imperial decree out of the emperor's particular intention.

[釋慧最]仁壽年中。勅遣送舍利于荊州大興國寺龍潛道場。昔者隋高作相。因過此寺遇一沙門。深相結納。當時器重不測其言。及龍飛之後追憶舊旨。下詔徵之。其身已逝。勅乃營其住寺。彫其舊房。故有興國龍潛之美號也。並出自綸言。帝之別意。²⁶⁸

Certainly, due to his indelible experiences in these two temples, Wendi bestowed special treatment on them after his enthronement. The ritual practice performed at Xiangzhou Daxing guosi for the departed implies that this temple was likely initially built for his father, which is consistent with Fei Zhangfang's records. Afterward, it was renamed, along with other temples in 45 prefectures across the country.²⁶⁹ Carrying on countrywide temple construction in the name of Daxing guosi was not a small project. It involved not only erecting new temples but also restoring, redecorating, and renaming extant temples. For example, the Daxing guo Temple in Jinyang was initially called Bore. The renaming of the Daxing guo Temple in Xiangzhou, which was originally named the Upper Phoenix Grove 上鳳林 Temple, and of the Daxing guo Temple in Jingzhou, which was explicitly mentioned in the emperor's edict, was clearly a result of the emperor's intention.

To reconcile Fei Zhangfang's records with Falin's statement, we may presume that at the beginning of the *kaihuang* era, Wendi intended to demonstrate his authority and legitimacy by

²⁶⁸ XGSZ, J.10, p. 507b14–20.

²⁶⁹ In *Bianzheng Lun*, Falin wrote that the Daxing guosi was established in all 45 prefectures that Wendi had passed through before he ascended the throne. 始龍潛之日。所經行處四十五州。皆造大興國寺 T2110.52.509a24–25.

ordering the construction of four temples in the provincial regions in the name of his father's credits and merits. Afterward, during the launch of the large-scale construction plan in 45 prefectures, some of these temples' names changed to Daxing guosi. This standardization of provincial temples brought local Buddhist communities and associations under centralized control. The name of Daxing guosi indicated that these 45 temples were official temples, which were in the service of imperial affairs and the local administration of Buddhists. In addition, the idea of standardized control is supported by inscriptional records on the stele that was erected to celebrate the establishment of the Daxing guo Temple in Xiangyang. This stele, titled Xingguo si bei 大興國寺碑, ("the stele of the Great Xingguo Temple") was collected into *Jigulu mu* 集古錄目, a bibliographical record of stone and metal inscriptions compiled by a scholar of the Song period.²⁷⁰ Regrettably, the content of this inscription no longer exists. However, we know from Zhao Mingcheng 趙明誠 (1081–1129), another well-known antiquarian of the Song period, that the names of eighteen local officials who contributed to the construction of the temple were engraved on the backside of the stele.²⁷¹ The author of the engraving was Li Deling 李德林 (532–592), a historian and Director of the Secretariat 內史令, and it was inscribed by Ding Daohu 丁道護, whom I will discuss later. Evidently, the imperial court attached importance to this stele by choosing the highest literary talent of the time to compose the text and a man of highly sophisticated calligraphy skills to inscribe it.

Furthermore, Fei Zhangfang's account provides us with a detailed picture of the observances held in these official temples in the Jingxiang region: "On the national anniversary

²⁷⁰ Ouyang Fei 歐陽棐. *Jigulu mu*. Chinese Text Project:

<https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=en&file=91381&page=94&remap=gb#兴国寺碑> (Accessed on Aug.16.2021).

²⁷¹ Zhao Mingcheng. 李德林. Chinese Text Project:

<https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=en&file=2020&page=139&remap=gb#兴国寺碑> (Accessed Aug.16.2021).

of the death of [Wendi's father], suspending all the government affairs, a vegetarian feast would be held, and Buddha statues would be made for circumambulation. Holding the Eight-Gate precepts and repenting one's misbehavior, [they] venerated his divine spirit."²⁷² The Buddhist ritual practices performed in these temples were likely supported by the local government and held by the abbots of the temple. We can further assert that these abbots were representatives of the central government in charge of religious affairs in the region. Two previously mentioned monks, Shi Mingdan and Shi Huizui, were entrusted with the imperial mission of carrying relics to the temple and stood for the religious intention of the sovereign. Monks of this kind would be the organizers and hosts of such events.

4.2 The Renshou Relic Distribution Campaign in the Region

With this foundation regarding the restoration of the Buddhist clergy and establishments in the region, we can now undertake a closer investigation of their functions and effects during the relic distribution campaigns implemented during the *renshou* era (601–604), the second and last ruling period of Wendi. As former scholars have wisely pointed out, the relic distribution campaigns were “a series of deliberately planned, heavily politicized propagandistic events aimed at, among other things, depicting Sui Wendi as a universal ‘Buddhist monarch’ on the model of Aśoka.”²⁷³ There were three relic distributions and enshrinements in 601, 602, and 604, respectively. These campaigns have been thoroughly examined by several scholars.²⁷⁴ However, I will focus on the impact of these campaigns on the Jingxiang region in terms of the religious and political milieu.

²⁷² LDSBJ, J.12: 「所以每年至國忌日。廢務設齋造像行道。八關懺悔奉資神靈」 T2043.49.107c13–15. For

a study of the Eight-Gate precepts, see Funayama Toru (1995): 52–65, 67. “Zaoxiang xingdao 造像行道” indicated a kind of Buddhist practice, in which the practitioner walks in a circle around a Buddha figure. Liu Shufen pinpointed that this practice prevailed in northern China during the fifth and sixth centuries and generated a great demand for Buddhist statues (1993): 531.

²⁷³ Chen Jinhua (2002): 86.

²⁷⁴ For a detailed examination of these campaigns, see Chen Jinhua (51–62); Yamazaki (1942): 331–345.

First, let us briefly consider the process of this series of religiopolitical dramas. The first time the relics were distributed to 30 prefectures began on *renshou* 1.6.18.²⁷⁵ When the imperial decree was issued, the relics were synchronously enshrined in pagodas on *renshou* 1.10.15. During the second relic distribution campaign, the relics were escorted to 51 prefectures,²⁷⁶ beginning on *renshou* 2.1.23. The same procedures were carried out, and the enshrinements were synchronized with the birthday of Buddha, *renshou* 2.4.8. Finally, in the last year of *renshou*, temples were established in 30 prefectures,²⁷⁷ and relics were distributed by the imperial order.²⁷⁸

The first and second relic distributions were well documented in *Sheli ganying Ji* 舍利感應記 (Account of the [Miraculous] Stimulus and Responses Related to the Relics) composed by Wang Shao, one of the designers and promoters of these campaigns.²⁷⁹ Daoxuan quoted the accounts in his works *Guang hongming Ji* 廣弘明集 and *Ji Shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* 集神州三寶感通錄. My investigation into the implementation of these campaigns in the Jingxiang region is based mainly on these primary sources and the biographies of some eminent monks who participated in these campaigns. Their activities were well documented in XGSZ, another significant contribution from Daoxuan, containing relevant information about the last distribution.

In total, six relics were disseminated to the Jingxiang region. In 601, Shi Mingdan led his

²⁷⁵ These numbers signify the eighteenth day of the sixth month of the first year of the *renshou* era. The following dates are marked in the same way.

²⁷⁶ GHMJ, J.17, p. 217a25–b1. Chen Jinhua (2002, p. 60) indicates that there were actually 55 prefectures involved.

²⁷⁷ XGSZ, J.18, “The Biography of Tanqian 曇遷.” p.573c12–14. The number of the involved prefectures is precisely recorded in Tanqian’s biography but is approximated in Hongzun’s biography.

²⁷⁸ XGSZ, “The Biography of Shi Hongzun 釋洪遵”; “The Biography of Shi Juelang 釋覺朗.” J.21, p. 612a23–24.

²⁷⁹ According to Jinhua Chen’s study on Tanqian, Tanqian cooperated with Wang Shao to promote these campaigns (2002):66–67.

team to escort a relic to the Daxing guo Temple in Xiangzhou (modern Xiangyang). At the same time, Shi Fazong 釋法總²⁸⁰ sent a relic to the Zhimen 智門 Temple in Suizhou (modern Suizhou). Next, during the second relic distribution in 602, the Jingcang 景藏 Temple in Anzhou 安州 (modern Anlu 安陸) and the Daxing guo Temple in Jingzhou (modern Jingzhou 荊州)²⁸¹ each received relics. In the last year of *renshou* era (604), Shi Yancong 釋彥琮 (557–610), a renowned Buddhist translator, led a missionary team with a relic to the Fangle 方樂 Temple in Fu Zhou 復州 (modern Tianmen 天門), while Shi Zhifan 釋智梵 carried a relic to the Baoxiang 寶香 Temple in Yingzhou 郢州 (modern Wuhan 武漢).

As we can see from this arrangement, Xiangzhou and Suizhou were first considered ideal places for the relics, probably due to the special relationship the cities held with Wendi's father and his own experience, as previously discussed. Interestingly, when these relics were enshrined and worshiped, it was reported that auspicious omens and mysterious phenomena appeared in the region. In the following passage, I intend to analyze records from XGSZ to reveal the religious atmosphere shaped by the enshrinement of relics.

According to the biography of Shi Mingdan, an eminent monk who led a team to Xiangzhou during the first relic distribution, when people first laid the foundation for the pagoda, eight more relics and one inscribed stone were dug out from the eastern yard of the Daxing guo Temple. The stone was inscribed, “thirty- six years after the *datong* era, it will start

²⁸⁰ XGSZ, J.10, “The Biography of Shi Fazong.” p. 505c19–25.

²⁸¹ Yamazaki Hiroshi mistakenly took the Kaiyi si 開義寺 in Bingzhou 並州 as the one in Jingzhou, where the relic was enshrined. (1942):336. Chen Jinhuahas adopted this (2002, p. 86, note 108). In fact, Kaiyi si was mentioned three times in XGSZ. The biographies of Shi Zhinian and Shi Huijue all recount that Kaiyi si was located in Bingzhou and was sponsored by Prince Yang Liang 楊諒. The biography of Yancong shows that in the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Gong versions of the canon, Bingzhou is mentioned instead of Jingzhou. Besides, according to *Suishu*, Prince Yang Liang was never positioned in Jingzhou. Thus, the Kaiyi Temple must be in Bingzhou.

with the transformation of *renshou* [era].”²⁸² The reference to the *datong* era, one of the reigning eras of Emperor Wu of Liang (464–549, r.502–549), deliberately connects these two golden ages of Buddhism with fervent imperial patronage.

In addition to the stone inscription, providentially, another inscription occurred on a divine tortoise in Suizhou:

Since the adjutant²⁸³ dedicated it to the throne, its head has always been hidden. It highly drew the attention of Wendi, and he ordered Wang Shao to examine it. In the presence of Wang Shao, the tortoise finally showed its head. Astonishingly, it had eight characters written on its head: ‘the great superior king [will live] eighty-seven thousand years.’²⁸⁴ Furthermore, on its belly was written *wangxing* 王興 (the throne flourishes).²⁸⁵

Aside from the divine tortoise, it was recorded that it rained sweet dew in Suizhou and the masses drank it, and in Anzhou, the temple yard filled with perfume. In Yingzhou, during the last distribution, eight hairy tortoises were found at the eastern river of the pagoda and the pond located on the eastern side of the temple foundation. Moreover, Yancong, on his mission to the Fangle Temple in Fu Zhou, reported to the throne that a relic, a stone reliquary, and a swan appeared in succession. These auspicious omens were reported before the enshrinement and acted as a preview for the performance of enshrinements.

Fortunately, in the biography of Shi Huizui and Yancong, Daoxuan provided a complete account of the mysterious signs on the day of the enshrinement:

²⁸² XGSZ, J.26: 大同三十六年已後。開仁壽之化。T2060.50.668c19–25.

²⁸³ The adjutant might be the assistant official in the missionary team. According to Jinhua Chen’s interpretation of the imperial decree, the team should be composed of four members: a leading monk, who must be both a doctrinal specialist and a proficient preacher, two attendants/assistants, and one “inactive court official with prestige rank” (2002):57.

²⁸⁴ 上大王八萬七千年。The number here is unclear. In XGSZ, it reads as 87,000. In GHMJ, it is seventy million and eighty-eight hundred (Taishō edition) or seventy million and eighty hundred (Song, Yuan, and Ming editions).

²⁸⁵ Chen Jinhua interprets this story of Wangshao and the divine tortoise to mean that “Wangshao very likely served as the ‘inactive court official with prestige title’ in the team” (2002): 67.

1. On the eighth day of the fourth month [602] fog suddenly arose in the courtyard of relics. It then stopped after lunch time²⁸⁶, the sunlight shone brightly. There was a cloud like a canopy, situated in the sky directly above the pagoda. Thus, it drizzled without wetting other places [only the pagoda]. Moreover, it stimulated the wild ducks, cranes and masses of birds flying around the top of the pagoda. And [a piece of] purple color appeared among the clouds taking the shape like a flower torch. In addition, Heavenly flowers rained down, falling like snow in abundance, but unexpectedly never touched the ground.

及四月八日。舍利院內忽然霧起。齋後便歇。日光朗照。有雲如蓋正處塔空。仍下細雨不濕餘處。又感鳧鶴眾鳥塔上飛旋。又見²⁸⁷雲間紫色狀如花炬。又雨天花如雪紛紛而下竟不至地。²⁸⁸

2. On the eighth day of the fourth month [604], the sky was fully [covered with] clouds. It was just after midday; the clouds had all cleared away, but only a few -as round as a canopy- remained over the pagoda. Among all five colors [of light] the wheel of the sun interweavingly and reflect rose brightly. Once the relic was enshrined, the clouds then began to scatter. [Yan] Cong was blissfully touched by these auspicious signs and brought this scene to the attention of the throne. The emperor (Emperor Wen) exulted and [ordered] to make a record of it and preserve it in the imperial archive.

四月八日雲滿上空。正午將下收雲並盡。惟餘塔上團圓如蓋。五色間錯映發日輪。至藏舍利其雲乃散。琮欣感嘉瑞。以狀奏聞。帝大悅錄以為記。藏諸祕閣。²⁸⁹

While the relics distribution campaigns were being conducted, the reports of auspicious signs in provincial places became overwhelmingly common. Interpreting these good portents has served as a vital means of foretelling individuals' fortunes and demonstrating the shift of Heaven's Mandate in dynastical history.²⁹⁰ In the Buddhist context, the appearance of relics and miracles confirmed the effectiveness of the Buddhist faith, the presence of the Buddha, and the

²⁸⁶ Zhai 齋 in the Buddhist context refers to meal.

²⁸⁷ 見同現，顯現，出現。

²⁸⁸ XGSZ, T2060.50.507b20–c2.

²⁸⁹ XGSZ, T2060.50.437b7–29.

²⁹⁰ Lippiello Tiziana (2001).

response to one's devotion. Thus, the traditional understandings of auspicious omens and the Buddhist interpretations of miracles combined to serve one purpose: as Chen Jinhua has pinpointed, "this betrays his [Wendi] thirst for omens as the continual reassurance from Heaven and the Buddha about the legitimacy of his secular power."²⁹¹ In addition, these accounts had positive ramifications for Buddhist adherents; it enhanced their faith and, at the same time, inspired and encouraged those who were unfamiliar with or indifferent to Buddhism. It was a successful religious demonstration in which a mighty, mysterious power was directly exhibited in front of followers. A zealous religious climate then came into being, not only in the political and religious centers but also in the most remote places of the empire, which once were involved in these campaigns. Bearing this in mind when we read an inscription on a stele that was erected roughly eight months after the second relic distribution campaign, we can see that the campaign's effects were still fresh. In the following section, I will offer a micro-perspective to shed light on a local Buddhist congregation reinforcing social solidarity and strengthening the power of Buddhist belief.

4.3 Qifa Temple and the Stele

To begin, a short introduction to the stele of the Qifa Temple is necessary. According to the inscription, the stele was erected on the fifteenth day of the last month in the second year of the *renshou* era (602), and the text was composed by a certain Zhou Biao 周彪. More importantly, it was calligraphed by the noted calligrapher Ding Daohu 丁道護, mentioned previously. Ding Daohu enjoyed a high reputation in the history of Chinese calligraphy, and the Qifa Temple stele is considered one of his representative works.²⁹² Due to his popularity, this piece of the inscription is still available today. Although the original stele no longer exists, a unique rubbing of the stele was produced in the Song period and continually circulated among

²⁹¹ Chen Jinhua (2002:75). There is a long-standing tradition of exploiting auguries and portents to demonstrate the shifting favor of heaven and legitimate a new dynasty or monarch. In the case of Wang Mang of Han, see Michael Loewe (1974):288, 302.

²⁹² Another one is the stele of Xingguo si in Xiangzhou, briefly mentioned above.

antiquarians and calligraphy veterans. The postscript of the rubbing includes the imprint of seals from different collectors who once owned it and their short commentaries. These records provide us with vital information about the circulation of the rubbing and verify its authenticity. Li Zonghan 李宗翰 (1769–1831), a noted calligrapher and literatus of the mid-Qing Dynasty, treasured it among three other famous rubbings: Kongzi miaotang bei 孔子廟堂碑, Mengfashi bei 孟法師碑, and *Shancai si bei* 善才寺碑, which, together with the rubbing of the stele, were known as the “four treasures of Linchuan.” 臨川四寶²⁹³ Somehow, they all fell to Japanese collectors in the late Qing period.

The Japanese politician and appreciator of calligraphy Onishi Yukinori 大西行礼 (fl.1870) eventually obtained the rubbing of the Qifa stele. In 1942, with the assistance of Chinese scholar Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866–1940), the stele was published in Japan for the first time. Afterward, it was republished in the 1960s,²⁹⁴ and this reprinting is the most popular contemporary version. Interestingly, the collection of Yang Shoujing 楊守敬 (1839–1915) included an exact copy of this rubbing, which he probably created by using tracing paper on the original rubbing.²⁹⁵ The shape of the characters is more apparent on the replica with the white background than on the original rubbing with a black background. I have consulted the replica from Yang Shoujing as well as the published version from the 1960s in Japan and endeavor to provide as accurate a transcription as possible. ²⁹⁶

Japanese scholar Ouchi Fumio first noticed the importance of the inscription on the stele.²⁹⁷ He conducted a seminal study on the regional political vicissitudes and the development of

²⁹³ Linchuan is in modern Jiangxi province, Lizong Han’s ancestral home. Here the term refers to himself.

²⁹⁴ Fushimi Cyūkei (1962) wrote an introduction and a transcription of the stele of the Qifa Temple which was appended to the rubbing.

²⁹⁵ Yang Shoujing (1877).

²⁹⁶ See Appendix I.

²⁹⁷ Ouchi Fumio (1988): 63–92.

Buddhism in Jingzhou and Xiangyang from the sixth to seventh centuries. He discussed the importance of the Qifa Temple and characterized it as “the temple of the masses.”²⁹⁸ In light of former studies, I offer a new perspective on interpreting the stele’s inscription and provide translations of several relevant parts.

First, the Qifa Temple deserves to be the subject of much closer scrutiny. Based on the extant documents, its name has been changed three times; its original name was Tanxi, a temple built for Dao’an (312–386) as I have elaborated in the first chapter. The copper statue of Amitâyus at the temple was surrounded by tales of miracles, such as wandering around Mount Wan before returning to the temple.²⁹⁹ Daoxuan collected all the miracles of this kind into his collection JSSGL, which will be discussed later. Filtering out the depiction of inconceivable tales, we can find some critical information about the transition of the temple during the sixth and seventh centuries.

First, the statue of Amitâyus was taken in a procession on Mount Wan in the Jin period when Xi Hui (d.399), the inspector of Yong Zhou, reached Xiangyang. He admired the magical power of the statue and renamed the temple Jinxiang si (golden statue temple).

Second, on Buddha’s birthday in the third year of *putong* (522), Emperor Wu of Liang (464–549, r.502–549) dedicated a gilt bronze lotus pedestal to the statue, cast by the imperial craftsmen in the capital. As the lotus pedestal arrived, a stele was erected to memorialize this significant moment. This stele survived the wars and turmoil during the transitional phase between the Sui and Tang periods. Daoxuan might have consulted it for his writings.

Third, during the proscription campaign against Buddhism launched by Emperor Wu of Northern Zhou (543–578, r.560–578), the temple was destroyed, along with the statue. At the end of the inscription, it was written that the Qifa Temple was restored in the fourth year of the *kaihuang* era (584). The inscription provides details about the restoration, which will be

²⁹⁸ Ouchi Fumio, (2013): 291.

²⁹⁹ GSZ, J.5, “the Biography of Shi Dao’an.” p. 352b12.

discussed below.

4.4 The Content of the Inscription

The text of the inscription applies the conventional format: the main body starts with the names and titles of the author and the calligrapher, presents parallel passages of prose, and concludes with a four-character verse called *ming* 銘. A list of the donators and the date of the establishment are attached to the main body, and the name of the stonecutter who engraved the text into the stone is provided at the end. In the following paragraphs, I will analyze the text to elaborate on the motivation for establishing the stele and the ramification of the concurrent Buddhist events.

First, the author retrospectively unfolded the text by narrating the wax and wane of Buddhism in Chinese history and explaining it by availing himself of the Buddhist sense of time and history, the three periods of Dharma,³⁰⁰ and citing a verse from the *Nirvana sūtra*. The author must have been well-versed in Buddhist doctrines and literature. Then, the inscription turns to sing generous and redundant praise of the Sui emperor (Wendi) because he lifted the suppression of Buddhism and dramatically promoted the three treasures. Against the background of the reinvigoration of Buddhism, a native Buddhist association was revived. It was recorded in the inscription:

Thereupon, the three treasures greatly thrived, the Dharma statues (Buddha statues) were all restored. [incomplete sentence]. [The number of] converted people were unlimited. The Kaishi³⁰¹ [named] Jiang Lun, a native of Longquan township of Xiangyang county, Zhang Jian,³⁰² and six other persons, led the lay Buddhists, men and women, who observe the

³⁰⁰ A doctrine that held a strong influence in the teachings of the Pure Land school. The periods are the period of the true dharma, the period of the semblance dharma, and the period of the degenerate dharma. In this context, the author only mentioned the first and second periods to demonstrate bad and good times, promoters, and destructors in the history of dharma dissemination.

³⁰¹ Kaishi usually refers to bodhisattvas or eminent monks in the transmitted documents. However, I assume it literally means someone open to or enlightened by Buddhism. It can be lay Buddhists in this case.

³⁰² Before this name, there is *gu*, which indicates that this person had already passed away when the text was composed.

five precepts and the nine fasts, all together to establish the Chanlin (“Meditation forest”) Yi (community), and to build a poṣadha hall. [They] invited monks to circumambulate all day without stopping. The pure Bodhisattva precepts and the eightfold observance were never absent.

於是大興三寶。法像畢脩。紹□□众。度人無限。襄陽縣龍泉乡宿□開士蔣纶。故張鑒等士六人。率五戒士女。九斋清信。共造禪林邑。为布薩堂。请僧行道。六时不廢。菩薩淨戒。八關无闕。

There are several issues in this passage that deserve more discussion. First, the number of founders of this organization is disputable. It is hard to determine the meaning of the characters 士 and 卅 in the works of Japanese scholars.³⁰³ However, if we take these characters to mean thirty-six, the claim does not match the list of names at the end. I prefer to read it as Shi 士, a respectful epithet for lay Buddhists, as Jiang Lun was addressed as Kaishi 開士. It is much more reasonable to believe that Shi 士 is an abbreviation of Kaishi 開士 in this context. Moreover, if we interpret the text in this way, eight lay Buddhists, including Jiang Lun and Zhang Jian, founded the association and were regarded as the masters of Yi 邑主. This tallies with the number of masters of Yi that is enumerated at the end of the text.

Second, the name of the hall that the members of Yi built together was *Busa* 布薩 (Skt. poṣadha).³⁰⁴ The name implies that under the guidance of monks, they held Buddhist ceremonies and observances, specifically circumambulation (Ch. *xingdao* 行道)³⁰⁵ Bodhisattva precepts,³⁰⁶ and eightfold observance. In other words, this *Busa* hall was the gathering place

³⁰³ Ouchi Fumio (1988) and Fushimi Cyūkei (1962) read it as a *sa*, which means thirty.

³⁰⁴ This name failed to be deciphered in the Japanese transcription.

³⁰⁵ *Xingdao* literally means “practice the path.” However, it can also refer to a particular Buddhist practice in which the practitioners walk around a statue or buddha-related object and chant.

³⁰⁶ In China, bodhisattva precepts came to be taken by laypeople and monks alike as a means of affirming their acceptance of the ideals of Mahayana Buddhism and, in many cases, to establish a karmic connection with the

for members of the Buddhist association, comprised of lay Buddhists and supervised by a monk or monks.³⁰⁷ This structure is comparable with the association of this kind in northern China³⁰⁸ but was scarce in southern China. Xiangyang is located on the boundary between the north and south. Therefore, it had easy access to trends from both sides.

Lastly, it is not articulated that this Buddhist association restored the Qifa Temple. However, the end of the inscription states that the temple was rebuilt in the fourth year of the *kaihuang* era (584), and this Yi was founded and established as the *Busa* hall in the same period. Therefore, I presume that the *Busa* hall is a part of the primitive restoration of the Qifa Temple in the early *kaihuang* era.

Next, the text continues by praising the contribution of the inspector of Xiangzhou, Wei Shikang 韋世康 (530–597), who inspected the temple in the eighth year of the *kaihuang* era (588). That year, the superior order commanded that small-scale Yi be incorporated into big temples 上苻悉撤小邑,入于大寺. This hints at the situation of the Buddhist revival in the early *kaihuang* era, which is to say that voluntary associations prevailed among the masses, and the government was eager to rearrange them. According to the inscription, as the governor of Xiangyang, Wei Shikang restored the “golden statue,” established by Dao’an and destroyed by a certain Murong Zhe 慕容哲, and consecrated a stone with a footprint of the statue³⁰⁹ at the western hall of the Qifa Temple. When we take the political attention paid to Buddhism at the time into account, we may believe that his devotion to the temple arose from his personal religious preferences and his duty as a governor. The Buddhist organizations and establishments demanded support from native Buddhist associations, such as Chanlin Yi, to restore and reorder temples. With cooperation between the local administration and Buddhist organizations, Buddhist collective events and assemblies could be made possible.

particular teacher who administered the precepts to them.

³⁰⁷ The monk or monks were usually called Yishi.

³⁰⁸ Hao Chunwen provides plenty of historical records on the members of the Yi association and analyzes their functions in the group (2006): 134–148.

³⁰⁹ It was recorded that the statue walked on Mount Wan and left traces on a stone.

Fortunately, in this part of the text, the author alludes to the location of the temple, which helps us to identify the temple with the aforementioned Tanxi Temple:

[Wei Shikang] saw this pure abode. Adjacent to the busy residential area, but the temple was very quiet and secluded. Its gate faced a crossroad. Gazing north into distance, [there was] the bay of the wandering goddess³¹⁰. In the back of the hall, [there were] sacred forests. Gazing south into distance, [there was] the peak of the Xianglu (incense burner) Peak³¹¹. In the east, it invited the brook of Dilu [to flow through]. In the west, it led to the road to Wuhou (Martial Marquis) temple. Upwards, it connected with the Feng ridge, which stretches out to the high mountain ranges. It was beside the dragon pond.

見此精廬。地側諠塵。而伽藍幽靜。門臨交道。北望遊女之隈。堂負神林。南眺香爐之鼎。東引的廬之溪。西通武侯之路。上連鳳嶺。綿亘峴嶒之山。傍接龍水。

Notably, the brook of *Dilu* refers to the Tanxi brook, and the temple of Wuhou³¹² is located in Longzhong, which is west of the Tanxi temple. The description of the location indicates that the Qifa Temple is a restoration of the Tanxi or later Jinxiang Temple. We are not sure whether the location ever changed, but it is roughly in the same area. It is an ideal place to build a temple because it was well connected with the residence block and a water source.

Later in the text, the author wrote a significant amount about Dao'an and the "golden statue" he built. Apart from the date of destruction and the name of the destructor,³¹³ the rest of the

³¹⁰ *Younü* is the legendary goddess of the Han River. In this context, it refers to the Han River.

³¹¹ Xianglu Peak, one of the most iconic landmarks of Mount Lu, is celebrated for its association with Li Bai 李白's famous poem, Viewing the Waterfall at Mount Lu 望廬山瀑布.

³¹² Wuhou 武侯 refers to Zhuge Liang (181–234), who spent his early years in hermitage at Longzhong before joining Liu Bei's cause in 207.

³¹³ In the inscription, the date is the fifth month of the fourth year of the *jiande* era (575), and the destructor is a former military official, Murong Zhe. Daoxuan and Daoshi mistook the year for one year earlier (574). See Ouchi Fumio (1988, p. 80). The destructor was named Murong Zhe in the inscription but Zhangsun Zhe 長孫哲 in Daoxuan and Daoshi's records.

information basically aligns with the records in the biography of Dao'an in GSZ and Daoxuan and Daoshi 道世 (596–683)'s accounts of the “golden statue”.³¹⁴ A noteworthy difference is that the inscription only mentions that as the statue was pulled down, people found a three-line inscription marking the year of the establishment. However, in Daoxuan and Daoshi's records, this account dramatically blends with the divination power of Dao'an, asserting that he had predicted the statue would be destroyed one hundred eighty years after its construction, which was thus verified by its destruction.³¹⁵

After the narratives concerning Dao'an and the golden statue, the inscription mentions a dharma master, Fageng 法亘, rather abruptly. It says that he resided at the Qifa Temple and portrays him as a specialist in the Daoist regimen and Vinaya and Abhidharma. He probably played a role as *Yishi* 邑師 (“the instructor of the Yi community”) in the Chanlin Yi and expounded doctrines to the members.³¹⁶ The following few sentences deliver vital information about the motivation of this congregation and its large-scale involvement:

The Xiang area occupies twelve townships. [There are] monks and nuns from fifteen monasteries, Daoist priests from eastern and western temples, and thousands of commoners and officials. Due to the duke's immaculacy and ascetic practices, the rites of [his] funeral ceremony [adhere to] the principle of no animal killing. What are the vegetables? They are merely bamboo shoots and reed sprouts. Buddhist and Daoist temples undertake mourning observances for pursuing his afterlife fortune within their spaces. The principal market minister led men and women to cease trade for one day. [Students] from various prefectural schools and county schools in several towns and areas all grip the shaft [of the carriage or] pull the rope attached to the bier.

襄部居城一十二鄉。僧尼一十五寺。道士東西兩館。民吏數千。以公潔清戒業。祭奠之禮。理不害牲。其藪惟何。笋蒲而已。寺館則當寺當館。設齋追福。大市令丞。

³¹⁴ JSSGL, J.2, p. 414c24; FYZL, J.13, p. 384b21.

³¹⁵ JSSGL, J.2, p. 415a12–16.

³¹⁶ My interpretation is based on the sentence in the text: 資黃精之智。洞赤髯之解。詮釋言理。

率佇貽³¹⁷士女。一日罢市。諸乡諸方。州學縣學。并攀輶挽紼。³¹⁸

Given that thousands of local populaces and officials participated in this congregation for mourning a deceased former governor of Xiangyang, I believe that it brought a profound religious affectation to the region and mitigated conflicts between natives and outlanders and the poor and the rich. Individuals were equalized under the shelter of religion as the Buddhist doctrines proclaim that all men are equal. This idea is politically constructive for governing a land like Xiangyang, which contains a great variety of religions and immigrant groups.³¹⁹ Buddhism played a role as a binder to stabilize and strengthen society. Notably, Wei Shikang only governed Xiangyang from 587 to 589.³²⁰ He was clearly a promoter and follower of Buddhism, as he restored the golden statues in the Qifa Temple and abstained from blood sacrifice. He died in his tenure as the prefect of Jingzhou in 597. The text implies that a mourning ceremony³²¹ was held in memory of him because of his good deeds to Buddhism. Moreover, it further alludes that on the following day, a tremendous assembly was held:

On the following day, a great gathering of the faithful was held and dharma masters were invited to preach. The fourth offspring of the duke Fusi, the assistant minister extraordinary of the Ministry of Revenue, and the fifth offspring Fujiang reached the... [incomplete sentence] ritual, [they] attended the mourning arriving here. [When they] saw their father's former subjects and old officers from the past they wailed and cried and were deeply moved, almost unable to contain themselves. Thereupon, at the place of the assembly, [they] donated twenty-four pieces of their father's apparel, ornaments, and personal effects and paid cash to the temple to accomplish this dignified observance.

³¹⁷ 佇貽 doesn't make sense in this context. 佇 means wait, gather; 貽 means give gift, left and remain.

³¹⁸ 輶 *Zhou* and 紼 *fu* hint at the carriage and the rope attached to a bier. It indicates a ceremony for mourning the departed.

³¹⁹ In the previous chapter, I have provided a subchapter describing the social and religious background of the region.

³²⁰ *Suishu*, J.47, "the Biography of Wei Shikang." pp. 1265–1267.

³²¹ *Zhai* has multiple meanings, such as vegetarian feast, abstinence, and a general term for Indian religious ceremonies. In this context, it evidently refers to a mourning ceremony for Wei Shikang.

遞日建无遮大會。并請法師講說。公第四息民部员外侍郎福嗣。第五息福弊。昆季二人。至性口礼。侍喪届此。見父平昔前民故吏。號啕感慟。殆不自勝。乃於大會之所。舍父衣資服翫廿四件。并見錢付寺。成此尊儀。

The biography of Wei Shikang in *Suishu* documents that Fusi 福嗣 was his second son and Fujiang 福弊 was his youngest son.³²² It is hard to explain the contradiction between the inscription and the transmitted document. It seems that the handed-down texts are fluid and changed in the course of transmission.

Finally, the last part of the main body of the inscription listed four government officials: Zongguan Dajiangjun Qianjingong 總管大將軍千金公 (“the chief commander, great general, and Qianjin Duke”), Zhangshi Qiandonggong neishusheren Nanyang Zhao You 長史前東宮內書舍人南陽趙祐 (“the assistant, former secretary of the eastern palace, and native of Nanyang named Zhao You”), Fushudadudu Hongnong Yang Shizheng 府屬大都督弘農楊士政 (“the military chief commander, Yang Shizhen, and a native of Hongnong”), and Xiangyang Xianling Yang Xun 襄陽縣令楊詢 (“the county magistrate of Xiangyang, Yang Xun”). These people were the incumbents of the government in Xiangyang, who attended the tremendous equal assembly.³²³

These names and titles imply some information about the political situation in Xiangyang at the time. First, the chief commander is hard to identify without a name. As far as the

³²² Fusi was captured by Yang Xuangan 楊玄感 (571–613) and persuaded to join the rebellion against emperor Yang of Sui, which caused his execution by the emperor after he fled to Luoyang. Fujiang died in warfare at Luoyang during the rebellion of Yang Xuangan in 613.

³²³ Ouchi Fumio mistook them for the officials who supported rebuilding the temple (1988, p. 84). In general, he assumes that the motivation to erect this stele is in memory of the reestablishment of the temple. This assumption somewhat unfounded.

dynastical records mention, there was only Quan Jingxuan 權景宣³²⁴ carrying the title of Qianjin Duke, and he was the chief commander of Jingzhou in 566. It is probably his heir, Ruzhang 如璋, who inherited his title, but our knowledge is limited to Ruzhang. Second, two persons with the same family name of Yang might be relatives of Yang Su 楊素 (544–606), the most powerful politician at the time, who was once positioned in the Jingxiang region in 589 for a short time. Yang Xun appears in *Suishu* as the uncle 從叔 of Yang Su,³²⁵ and Yang Shizhen's ancestral home is in Hongnong, the same as Yang Su. In 602, another uncle 從父 of Yang Su, Yang Wenji 楊文紀, took the position of the chief commander of Jingzhou. Considering the family ties among the high officials in the Jingxiang region, it is possible that the congregation mourning a former governor of Xiangyang and Jingzhou was a joint event for the whole region, which was contrived and sponsored by the family.

The following four-character verses in the inscription extoll the beauty of the assembly and the glorious deeds of the donors. The bereavement of the two filial sons is emphasized, and people in the region all bore this loss gravely, which attests that this Dharma assembly's motivation or initial purpose was mourning Wei Shikang.

Another important aspect we should consider is the attached list of the members of the Yi. This list provides us with information about the structure of the Buddhist association of this kind in the region. There are five titles in the list that I will discuss: *Shidizhu* 施地主, *Fenghuang zhu* 鳳凰主, *Yizhu* 邑主, *Chazhu* 刹主, and *Zhongzhu* 鐘主.

Shidizhu and *Yizhu* are common and understandable titles, referring to the people who donated land to the temple and the founders or managers of the Yi, respectively.³²⁶ Nevertheless,

³²⁴ *Zhoushu*, J.28, "the Biography of Quan Jingxuan." p. 479.

³²⁵ *Suishu*, J. 70, "the Biography of Li Mi." p. 1626.

³²⁶ For the study of the Yi leaders, Hao Chunwen dedicated a table for all the titles in the Yi. *Yizhu* is the most common. *Zhongzhu* and *Shidizhu* are also mentioned. However, *Fenghuang zhu* is not recorded. See Hao Chunwen (2005: 136–138).

it is very confusing that the names of *Yizhu* were written separately in two lines, implying differences between these two groups.³²⁷ Since we know from the main text that Zhang Jian 张鉴 had already passed away at the time, we may assume that the second line of the *Yizhu* were former masters, and the number of masters always remained at eight. *Cha* and *Zhong* are Buddhist-related objects: pagoda and bell. Therefore, *Chazhu* and *Zhongzhu* were the donors of them. There is no reference for *Fenghuang zhu*, and its meaning is hard to decipher. For the leader Jiang Lun 蒋纶, his grandfather's position as a county magistrate of Huarong 华容 and the assistant of the prefect of Jingzhou was emphasized. This shows that the leaders of Yi were reputable people who came from the upper class of society. They might not have held positions in the local government, but they were influential and respectable natives in the region and could make connections between religious and political powers and the commoners. Yi was an energetic unit of society in the sense of bringing people together in the name of belief.

4.5 Concluding Remarks

The research presented in this section elucidates the Buddhist revival under the reign of Sui Wendi (581–604) in the Jingxiang region. From the restoration of Buddhist lay groups and establishments to the large-scale involvement of the nationwide relic distributions campaign, this revival shows the implementation of a religiopolitical drama plotted by the central government in a provincial region. Examining an assembly in 602, eight months after the enshrinement of relics in the region, we see a great equal assembly in memory of a deceased governor. To some extent, the assembly was inspired and encouraged by the festive religious atmosphere formed by the relic distribution campaigns. The local lay Buddhist associations,

³²⁷ Line 1: *Yizhu* 邑主 Jiang Lun 蒋纶, Qin Jian 卿鉴, Zhang Shen'er 张神儿, Que Gong'er 却公儿, Ni Zhuzu 倪主足 Li Ci 李祠, Wu Gong'er 吴公儿, Min Qiao 旻乔. Line 2: *Yizhu* 邑主: Zhang Jian 张鉴, Mao Ya 毛雅, Zhu Yan 朱彦, Zhao Sheng 赵盛, Ruan Xin 阮信, Zhao Shuo 赵硕, Li Zhi 李智, Liu Yuan 刘愿. See Appendix I, underlined.

clergies, and officials cooperated in setting up a dramatic event on this occasion, in which the Buddhist doctrines and faith were disseminated and the concrete image of the officials as the representatives of the central administration in the local society infiltrated the hearts and minds of the people.

Due to the dearth of material regarding the Jingxiang society's local culture in early medieval times, our knowledge about endemic activities and organizations is somewhat limited. However, thanks to this inscription from the Qifa Temple stele, we can make some connections between the macro-historical narratives and micro-local narratives based on this local event.

Part 2 Assimilation and Contestation

The present chapter constitutes the second part of this study, which focuses on the interactions between Buddhism and indigenous religions such as Daoism and the local worship of mountain gods and tutelary deities. On the one hand, such interaction can be observed in the form of intertextuality in Buddhist texts and secular writings. In the first section, by historically contextualizing the formation and promotion of the cult of Yang Hu, I will demonstrate the cult's correlation to the appropriation and representation of the historical figure of Yang Hu in Buddhist literature. On the other hand, when we restrain our scope to a certain geographical area, the multiplicity of the religious landscape unfolds before our eyes. Thus, in the second section, I will investigate the diverse religious environment in the mountains in the vicinity of Jiangling, the political center of the region. This study contributes to a holistic picture of the burgeoning monasticism in the mountainous area in the fifth century.

Chapter 3. Recasting a Local Deity with Buddhist Characteristics: The Evolution of the Cult of Yang Hu

“Human affairs recede with each generation;
Their goings and comings from past and present.
Rivers and hills retain their wondrous traces,
Allowing us to climb and gaze far.
When water ebbs, Fish-weir Isle emerges;
As the weather turns cold, Dream Marsh thickens.
Lord Yang's stele stands here still;
Upon reading it, tears stain our lapels.

人事有代謝，往來成古今。江山留勝跡，我輩復登臨。水落魚梁淺，天寒夢澤深。羊

公碑尚在，讀罷泪霑巾。”³²⁸

This poem was written by Meng Haoran 孟浩然 (689–740),³²⁹ a significant poet of the Tang dynasty and a native of Xiangyang. The poet visited Mount Xian 峴,³³⁰ located about two and a half *li* south of the Xiangyang garrison and read the commemorative stele for Lord Yang in tears. Lord Yang, namely Yang Hu (221–278), the primary focus of this chapter, was a highly praised governor of the Jingxiang region during the early Western Jin dynasty (266–316). The monument Zhuilei Bei 墜淚碑 (“stele for shedding tears”) was built to honor him.

The cult of Yang Hu originated from the Jingxiang region in medieval times and thrives to the late imperial time³³¹. It is noteworthy that, apart from the Jingxiang region, belief in Yang Hu is also prevalent in Taishan 泰山, Yang Hu’s ancestral home, and several places in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces.³³² This expansion probably began in the Song dynasty, akin to other local cults, including the cults of Wenchang 文昌³³³ and Guan Yu 關羽³³⁴. However, the dissemination of this belief is not the focus of this chapter. Instead, I aim to closely examine the formation of the cult of Yang Hu in the Jingxiang region and the various representations of Yang Hu as a historical figure in Buddhist literary narratives. This analysis intends to illustrate the interactions between Buddhism and local beliefs within the relevant historical context. When discussing the *interactions* between Buddhism and indigenous religious culture, rather than perceiving the two as personalized agents that can actively “influence” or “utilize” each other,

³²⁸ *Quan Tangshi*.J.160. p.1644. The translation is from Owen, Stephen (2013): 22–26.

³²⁹ For the study of Meng Haoran and a brief history of Mount Xian, see Kroll Paul (1981): 34–38.

³³⁰ This mountain is one of the most important places of interest in Xiangyang, which has attracted literati and poets. For the literary conventions of Mount Xian, see Wu Jie (2015): 165–188.

³³¹ The temple for Yang Hu and Du Yu 杜預 was newly reconstructed as a tourist sightseeing on the foot of the Mount Xian in recent years. However, the cult of Yanghu has extinguished in the present Xiangyang area.

³³² Tian Chengjun (2004): 53–55; (2012): 11–16.

³³³ Kleeman Terry (1993): 45–75.

³³⁴ Ter Haar Barend (2017).

I will treat them as distinctive repertoires of cultural resources made and used over time by many agents.³³⁵ In this case, I consider the cult of Yang Hu an influential religious element in the cultural environment of the Jingxiang region, which was a vital cultural resource for the repertoire of Buddhism. Therefore, the figure of Yang Hu constantly appears in Buddhist texts with increasingly apparent Buddhist characteristics. Analyzing the literary rendering of Yang Hu in both Buddhist and secular literature can offer us a new perspective on the dynamics of different religious forces in the local community.

First, I will reconstruct the life of the historical figure Yang Hu and his political career, personal charisma, and fame in the Jingxiang region. Next, I will examine the formation of the Yang Hu cult in Xiangyang and Jiangling, two major cities in the area. Furthermore, I will unravel the salient role its patrons and adherents played throughout the evolution of the cult, from revering a local tutelary divinity to becoming officially authorized sages and worthies worship. Lastly, I will thoroughly investigate the embellishment of images of Yang Hu in Buddhist literature and venture to provide some explanations for the emergence of these deviations at a specific historical point to improve our understanding of the popularization of Buddhism in local societies during the Tang time.

1. From Historical Figure to Divine Being

Yang Hu lived during the Three Kingdoms period (220–280) and died before the founder of the Western Jin dynasty (266–316), Sima Yan 司馬炎 (r. 266–290), reunited China in 280. Our most important historical source on Yang Hu's life is the *Jinshu* 晉書 (“the Book of Jin”), compiled in 646 by several officials commissioned by the imperial court of the Tang dynasty (618–907).³³⁶ In 220, one year before Yang Hu was born, Cao Pi 曹丕 (r. 220–226) ascended

³³⁵ I adopted this understanding of religion from Robert Ford Campany. He addressed it on several occasions: (2012): 273; (2003); (2012): 99–141.

³³⁶ “Only for less than three years was *Jinshu* presented to the throne. Such dramatic efficiency of the *Shiguan* (“the Historiographers’ Bureau”), also left all the earmarks of hasty amalgamation, and it is indeed a great mixture

to the throne after Emperor Xian of Han 漢獻帝 (r.189–220) abdicated, marking the beginning of the Wei dynasty. However, Yang Hu's family were not core proponents of the new regime. Plausibly due to a marital relationship with the Kong 孔 family,³³⁷ the descendant of Confucius, his family was disconnected from politics under the Cao imperial family's rule. At twelve years of age, Yang Hu lost his father, and his uncle, Yang Dan 羊耽, took on the responsibility of educating him. He exclusively devoted himself to “pure conversation” and literary accomplishments throughout his adolescence, showing no political ambitions. Cao Shuang 曹爽 (d. 249) was a former confidant of Emperor Ming of Wei, Cao Rui 曹叡 (r. 227–239), and had been appointed to be the regent on the latter's deathbed. When Cao Shuang attempted to recruit Yang Hu, he refused.³³⁸ However, the Yang clan had been an ally of the Sima clan for generations. Yang Hu's elder sister, Yang Weiyu 羊徽瑜 (d.278), married Sima Shi 司馬師 (208–255).³³⁹ Moreover, his cousin Yang Xiu 羊琇,³⁴⁰ a son of Yang Dan, was a companion of Sima Yan's since their boyhood. When Sima Zhao 司馬昭 (211–265),³⁴¹ Sima Shi's brother,

of variegated pieces of information.” Chen Shih-Hsiang (1953): 2–4; For the study on the compilation of *Jinshu*, see Tang Xing (2020): 115. For a seminal study of the official institution of history writing in Tang, see Twitchett, D. (1992): 1–30.

³³⁷ The former wife of Yang Hu's father was the daughter of Kong Rong 孔融 (153–208) -ranked among the Seven Scholars of Jian'an, a group of representative literati of his time. He was a political opponent of Cao Cao 曹操 (155–220), who eventually executed his whole family on various charges. For further information, see “Biography of Kong Rong” in *Houhanshu*.J.70, pp.2261–2280.

³³⁸ Xu Gaoruan (2013: 23–25) interpreted Yang Hu's rejection of Cao Shuang's offer as an expedient to keep himself out of the conflict between the Sima faction and the Cao imperial family. Yang Hu was supposedly critical of the arrogation of power from the Wei state.

³³⁹ Sima Shi was posthumously entitled Emperor Jing of Western Jin when Sima Yan ascended the throne. *Jinshu*. J.2, pp.25–31.

³⁴⁰ *Jinshu*. J.93, pp.2410–2411.

³⁴¹ Sima Zhao, the father of Sima Yan, was posthumously entitled Emperor Wen of Western Jin. *Jinshu*. J.2, pp.32–45.

took control of the Wei state from his brother as the Great General, the thirty-five-year-old Yang Hu initiated his political career by assuming a privileged position at the inner palace. On the one hand, Yang Hu was a crucial strategist for the faction of Sima, and Sima Yan enfeoffed three thousand households to him as a reward for his contribution to the establishment of Jin.³⁴² On the other hand, considering his association with eminent figures in society during his early youth, he enjoyed high prestige among the distinguished scholars of his time- those who possessed a high reputation and faculties but did not stem from a high aristocrat clan as he did.³⁴³

In the early years of Western Jin, the new emperor, Sima Yan, yearned for the reunification of China after over eighty years of division and turbulence. The Sun 孫 clan, who had governed the rich and vast land south of the Yangtze River for generations, was the only obstacle in his way. Forty- eight years old at the time, Yang Hu was at the pinnacle of his power as a supervisor of the Imperial Secretariat (Ch. *shangshu tai* 尚書台).³⁴⁴ In 269, Sima Yan entrusted Yang Hu with the arduous task of preparing for the expedition to the south starting from Xiangyang and, to this end, put him in charge of the southern frontier, namely the Jingxiang region. Yang Hu accomplished outstanding achievements during his eight-year tenure in office in Jingzhou.

First, his benevolent rule convinced some military leaders from the Wu state to join his side and earned him high regard among people on both sides. As mentioned previously, he was not only a military commander but also an outstanding scholar. His politics highlighted the

³⁴² Yang Hu played a crucial role in Sima Yan usurping the power of Wei in terms of military control. He was forty-five years old and in charge of the imperial army as Zhong Lingjun 中領軍, defending the imperial palace. See Xu Gaoruan (33–38).

³⁴³ Jiang Lijuan (2010) dedicated a tentative study of Yang Hu's family history and identified the Yang clan as a high aristocrat clan since the late Han time.

³⁴⁴ Yang Hu was *Shangshu youpuye* 尚書右仆射, a vice minister who was responsible for imperial affairs. *Shangshu Tai* had already been upgraded to a central imperial executive administrative institution in the Jin dynasty. It was thus located in the imperial palace, close to the emperor. However, the staff was no longer the emperor's private secretary; instead, they carried on the imperial affairs and inspected other administrations. See Zhu Zongbing (1990): 175–118. However, Yang Hu only stayed in this vital position for one year; therefore, his appointment to Jingzhou could also be seen as frustration and a turning point in his political career.

principles of Confucianism, such as winning the people over by virtuous action instead of by force, harboring supreme loyalty to the throne, and loving the people as his own children. He was an ideal governor for both the people of the Jingxiang region and for those under the brutal rule of Sun Hao 孫皓 (r.264–280) and, therefore, earned the honorific title “Lord Yang” (Ch. *yanggong* 羊公) As for his concrete contributions to the region, according to his biography in *Jinshu*, he was primarily dedicated to local education and agriculture, which people highly praised.³⁴⁵

Second, he built up a military base in Xiangyang with sufficient supplies and warriors to support the southern campaign.³⁴⁶ Xiangyang was well-known as a critical point for crossing the Yangtze River and marching towards the south. Around 275, Yang Hu submitted a memorial to the throne displaying his military strategies and the feasibility of conquering the Wu state.

Lastly, he nominated a competent successor for his position to fulfill his aspiration of reunification. One year after he proposed to attack the south, he became seriously ill and requested to return to the capital city Luoyang. In the same year, his sister, Empress Dowager Jingxian 景獻, died, and the bereavement worsened his health. He then recommended Du Yu 杜預(222–285)³⁴⁷ as his successor. Zhang Hua 張華 (232–300),³⁴⁸ the prefect of the Palace Secretariat (Ch. *Zhongshuling* 中書令) and a person who thoroughly understood Yang Hu,

³⁴⁵ *Jinshu*. J.34, p.1014, 1016.

³⁴⁶ “He also was instrumental in having the able military strategist Wang Jun 王浚 (208–285) named regional inspector of Yi Zhou 益州 (modern Sichuan). Wang Jun oversaw the naval campaign against Wu from the upper Yangtze area,” mentioned in Knechtges (2014):1813. It contributes a list of pragmatic references to Yang Hu.

³⁴⁷ He was a great Confucian scholar who specialized in *Zuozhuan* 左傳 and wrote an influential commentary on it. *Jinshu*. J.34, 1025–1033.

³⁴⁸ *Jinshu*. J.36, pp.1068–1077. Zhang Hua and Du Yu strongly supported Yang Hu at the court debate about attacking Wu. Xu Gaoruan goes further to regard them as Yang Hu’s political coalition against Jia Chong 賈充, who actively hindered the plan of conquest of Wu. See Xu Gaoruan (2013): 58–65.

addressed the messages between him and the emperor when Yang Hu was too unwell to present himself before the monarch. His benevolence to the people and contributions to the reunion became the central topos in later literary narratives about him.

Shortly after he nominated Du Yu, Yang Hu died in Luoyang without an heir. He was given the posthumous title of Grand Tutor and Palace Attendant, a prestigious position he was thought to have deserved when he was alive.³⁴⁹ Later literary conventions usually used the titles “Grand Tutor Yang” (Ch. Yang Taifu 羊太傅) and “Lord Yang” to refer to Yang Hu. Notably, two of Yang Hu’s nephews disobeyed the order of Emperor Wu of Jin to be Yang Hu’s heir. Three years after his death, one of his nephews, Pian 篇, was willing to be his heir, the Marquis of Juping 鉅平.³⁵⁰ This lineage remained unclear during the Western Jin dynasty. We can only find one further reference to it in the *Jinshu*, which denoted that Emperor Xiaowu 孝武 (r.372–396) of Eastern Jin granted Faxing 法興, a descendant of Yang Hu’s brother, the title of Marquis of Juping. However, Faxing was an ally of Huan Xuan 桓玄 (369–404), a notorious usurper whose illegal regime was overthrown in 404. At that point, the fiefdom of Marquis of Juping was confiscated. The extermination of Yang Hu’s descendants allowed a cult of non-kin local people to come into being rather than remaining a cult of ancestral worship.³⁵¹

³⁴⁹ According to the interpretation of Xu Gaoruan, Yang Hu failed in the political battles against Jia Chong and was pushed aside from the central government. Nevertheless, his biography in the *Jinshu* merely documented that he gained a reputation due to his humbleness and the celebrities at court all recommended him as an imperial assistant, which, in this case, earned him the position of Palace Attendant. But the emperor appointed Yang Hu to the southern borderland. See *Jinshu*. J.34, p.1019.

³⁵⁰ In 264, when Sima Zhao was in power, Yang Hu was bestowed with the Viscount of Juping. In the early years of the *xianning* era (275–279), the emperor Wu of Jin attempted to enlarge Yang Hu's fiefdom and honored him with the Marquis of Nancheng 南城 commandery. However, he modestly declined to have more households, only accepting the title of Marquis.

³⁵¹ It is noteworthy that, not only in this case, a person who has no descendants has the potential to be a deity. For example, the widely popularized cult of Guan Yu and Jiang Ziwen 蔣子文 known as Jiang Shen; both had no posterity. It seems that in medieval times, ancestral worship and local cults had clear boundaries.

2. The Formation of the Cult of Yang Hu

The cult of Yang Hu developed after his death. In the following section, I will delineate the course of the cult's development from two perspectives: the provincial society and the central government.

First, according to Yang Hu's biography in *Jinshu*, in the chilly winter of 278, Emperor Wu of Jin personally attended Yang Hu's funeral and granted him the burial place adjoining the imperial mausoleum, ten *li* away from the capital city. The final resting place of Yang Hu played almost no role in the formation of the cult, which was instead influenced by the place he governed for eight years, namely the Jingxiang region. This shows that the local society initiated the worship of Yang Hu.

Let us take a closer look at the advent of Yang Hu as a deity. It is recorded that on the day the grievous news of his death came, the people of the region ceased to trade and began to wail and weep bitterly on the street. Even the frontier men of the Wu state wept for him. Thereupon, the masses of Xiangyang county established a temple, erected a stele on top of Mount Xian, and offered sacrifices to Yang Hu four times each year, one specific day each season.³⁵² This ritual marked the beginning of the cult of Yang Hu in this region.

2.1 State Administration

Concerning the administration, we only know that two years after Yang Hu died, Emperor Wu of Jin eventually triumphed over the Wu state and reunified China. He sent an internuncio to inform Yang Hu's spirit of this victory at Yang Hu's *miao* 庙. Here, we must pay particular attention to the term *miao*, which can refer to an ancestral shrine or a sacred place for offering sacrifices to local deities.³⁵³ In this context, I argue that this imperial envoy went to the burial

³⁵² The recordings did not provide more details about this sacrificial ceremony. However, it is confirmed that there was a ritual site to sacrifice to Yang Hu, and the masses initiated it. See *Jinshu*.J.34, 1022.

³⁵³ Tian Tian (2015: 334–353) discussed the construction of buildings for state sacrifice during the Qin and Han

place of Yang Hu near the capital city, where a shrine for him must still have existed, rather than to the temple on top of Mount Xian. Two arguments support my assumption: first, it would have been more practicable and convenient to complete this assignment if the destination were close to the capital city. Another, more convincing argument is that at the time, the central government had not sanctioned the temple in Xiangyang as an official sacrificial place for Yang Hu because, as pointed out before, this temple was constructed following the wishes of the populace. Therefore, as all the extant documents attest, in the time of Jin, the cult of Yang Hu centered on Yang Hu's temple on top of Mount Xian and could only be recognized as a local cult devoted to a hero or worthy person enshrined by the local inhabitants.

Furthermore, when we take a broader view of the religious landscape of the Jingxiang region, we find that Yang Hu is not a unique case. Instead, there is a long-standing tradition of deifying governors by establishing a temple to offer sacrifices to them. For instance, under the reign of Emperor He 和 (r.88–167) of the Eastern Han, a benevolent prefect of Jingzhou known by the name of Wang Zixiang 王子香 was posthumously worshiped as the King of White Tiger (Ch. *Baihu* 白虎) and received offerings at the temple the populace erected for him in Zhijiang 枝江 county.³⁵⁴ Another notable example is the commemorative inscription for Zhuge Liang 诸葛亮 (181–234) in his former residence, which is attributed to the same author as the “stele for shedding tears,” Li Xing 李興. In the later period, the cult of Zhuge Liang, known as Marquis Wu, prospered in the region. Generally speaking, worship of this kind shared a similarity with the sacrifices to former worthies, which were part of the state sacrificial system in the time of Jin.³⁵⁵ In both instances, the supernatural entities were formerly humans who

period. She indicated that *miao* in this time mainly refers to imperial ancestral temples. The cases in which it refers to temples for divine beings are sporadic. Both types are defined by interior architecture in closed spaces.

³⁵⁴ See the discussion of a partial catalog of local temples and the interactions with Buddhists and Taoists during the Six Dynasties in Miyakawa, Hisayuki (1939): 21–38.

³⁵⁵ See *Jinshu*, *Lizhi* 禮志 (“the treatise of rituals”): “Starting from the second year of the *zhenshi* era when

eventually became divine due to their good deeds and virtues. Nevertheless, the difference overtly shows that the sovereign promoted the cult of former worthies 先聖. In contrast, the cults of Yang Hu and Zhuge Liang were limited to the native inhabitants of the local society.

Regarding the reception of the cult of Yang Hu on the state and local levels throughout the Jin and Tang periods, it is necessary to determine what the throne's attitude was towards this overwhelming growth of local beliefs. A few imperial edicts can help us grasp fragments of the historical scenario. In the second year of the Song reign (421), Emperor Wu issued an edict to ban licentious cults (Ch. *yinci* 淫祠):³⁵⁶

The licentious cults mislead common people to squander money and were dismissed by former codes. It is appropriate to include them in the following [list] of shrines and temples, that are removed. The shrines of the former worthies and those erected for one's merits and morals are not covered by this regulation.

淫祠惑民费财。前典所绝。可并下在所除诸房庙。其先贤及以勋德立祠者。不在此

例。³⁵⁷

Notably, shrines for former worthies and temples erected for commemorating one's meritorious deeds and morality were exempted from this ban. That is to say, the cult of Yang Hu was differentiated from the licentious cults, although the central government did not authorize it.

Other evidence shows that the successors of later dynasties continued this treatment of the cults of worthies and heroes. In the second year of the *daye* era (605), Emperor Yang of Sui promulgated a decree stating:

emperors or crown princes lectured on classics, they would sacrifice to Confucius and Yan Hui". So here, the former Sage mainly refers to Confucius in the Jin time, p.599.

³⁵⁶ Both in Chinese and English, this has been addressed by many academics. The authorities did not mandate cults of this kind, unlike state sacrifice. Western scholars translated this term as excessive, promiscuous, licentious, or improper cults. For studies on the shifting connotations, see Tsai Tsung-Hsien (2007): 203–232; Lei Wen (2005):269–294; Kleeman (1994): 185–211.

³⁵⁷ *Songshu*, p.57.

Since ancient times, there have been worthies and *Junzi* [men of noble characters] who were able to establish a reputation, erect morality, assist rulers in rectifying the time, [conduct] rich benefits and extraordinary merits, and benefit others. [We] should certainly erect shrines [for them] and offer sacrifices [to them] at fixed times. The place of [their] grave hills is not allowed to be trampled. The officials should consider making regulations, thereby to corresponding to my will.

其自古以来贤人君子。有能树声立德。佐世匡时。博利殊功。有益于人者。并宜营立祠宇。以时致祭。坟墓之处。不得使践。有司量为条式。称朕意焉。³⁵⁸

As evidenced by this imperial edict, the Sui emperor honored the former worthies by constructing shrines and identifying their sacrifices as part of the convention of the state observance. This recognition was a milestone in the authorization process of the cult of worthies of Yang Hu's kind, although we do not have a list of exact names to attest that the cult of Yang Hu was included. However, the name Yang Hu did appear in the official ritual code for the first time when Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 of Tang launched a ritual reform during the *tianbao* period (742–755).³⁵⁹ Along with Zhang Hua, Yang Hu was considered a sub-recipient of the sacrifices offered to Emperor Wu of Jin in Luoyang.³⁶⁰ As Lei Wen has pinpointed, this was a part of Emperor Xuanzong's ambitious project to reinforce the divine might of the emperor through ritual amendment.³⁶¹ Nevertheless, the cult of Yang Hu profited from this religiopolitical campaign and ascended to the state sacrificial system.

2.2 Local Society

Taking the official cooptation of the cult of Yang Hu into consideration, a question arises:

³⁵⁸ *Suishu*, p.66. This decree was entitled as the imperial decree to honor the tombs and shrines of the former worthies in *Quan Sui wen* (1999): 46.

³⁵⁹ For more detailed discussions of the new ritual politics during the *tianbao* reign, see Lei Wen (2009): 80–84.

³⁶⁰ *Tang Huiyao*, Vol.1.1935. p.431.

³⁶¹ Lei Wen has pointed out that the salient change of this reform is that not only the mythological god-kings, like three sovereigns and five emperors, were enshrined but also the founders of former dynasties. It implies that, in the view of emperor Xuanzong, the historical emperors are equal to the legendary demigods. The sacrifices to the former emperors shift the focus from god-kings to the deceased emperors.

what role did the people in the provincial society play in the evolution of the cult of Yang Hu? The relevant activities in the Jingxiang society deserve meticulous scrutiny, through which we can obtain a glimpse of the religious interactions between the local community and the state.

The various events linked to reconstructing and renovating the steles dedicated to Yang Hu are described in later collections of the inscriptions. From the Song dynasty onwards, official scholars paid increasing attention to old inscriptions, although their primary interest was calligraphy. Thanks to this interest, we can see the purported earliest accounts of the inscriptions of the *Zhuileibei* in the collection of Zhao Mingcheng 趙明誠 (1081–1129).³⁶² Furthermore, a cluster of native scholars in the Qing dynasty (1636–1912)- Chen Shi 陳詩 (1749–1826), Zhang Zhongxin 張仲炘(d. 1913), and Yang Shoujing 楊守敬(1839–1915)- devoted themselves to collecting and redacting the inscriptions on stone tablets and ancient bronzes in the region. In addition to material evidence, the dynastic history books bear witness to the cult of Yang Hu in the Jingxiang region. Based on these rare materials, I will shed light on the dynamic development of the cult of Yang Hu from the Southern dynasties to the early Tang period.

From the Southern dynasties (420–589) to the late Tang period, the temple atop Mount Xian was continuously restored, and commemorative ceremonies were held there. According to Yang Shoujing's commentary, the original tablet of the *Zhuileibei* from the Jin time was lost, and he transcribed the text from a rubbing of the stele reconstructed in the fourth year of the *hongzhi* era (1491) in the Ming dynasty. This is the oldest version we have access to in terms of the content of the inscription. However, through the ongoing restoration, it is entirely plausible that the text remained roughly the same because the content of the inscription provides no new information about Yang Hu beyond the narratives of all extant accounts. Thus, we should instead focus on the records of the reconstruction events. Although all the original inscription texts are inaccessible to us, the authors' names can be found in the comments from

³⁶² *Shike Shiliao Xinbian*. Vol.1.13, 1979.p.8811.

the collectors of the inscriptions (see Table 3.1), providing hints to the upholders of the worship of Yang Hu in the local society.

Table 3.1. Records of steles dedicated to Yang Hu

Time	Title	Collector	Comments
Northern Song	<i>Jinshilu</i> 金石錄	Zhao Mingcheng (1081–1129)	1. Reestablished the stele of Yang Hu in the ninth month of 544. 2. Modification of the <i>Zhuileibei</i> : Liu Zhilin 劉之遴 composed it, and Liu Ling 劉靈 wrote it in the regular script in the Liang time. ³⁶³
Southern Song	<i>Yudi beiji mu</i> 輿地碑記目	Wang Xiangzhi 王象之 (1163–1230)	1. Modification of the <i>Zhuileibei</i> : The Grand Master of Ceremonies, Liu Zhilin, composed it in 544. Currently, it is on the backside of the stele of Yang Hu. 2. The stele of Lord Yang and the modified <i>Zhuileibei</i> : reconstructed by Li Jingxun 李景遜 on the top of Mount Xian in the ninth year of the <i>dazhong</i> era in the Tang dynasty (855). 3. The stele of the Three Lords Temple in Jiangling. ³⁶⁴
Qing	<i>Hubei jinshi tongzhi</i> 湖北金石通志	Chen Shi (1749–1826)	The stele of Lord Yang, written by Li Xing 李興, was hard to read for a long time. It was rewritten during Liang's <i>datong</i> era and rebuilt in the <i>dazhong</i> era

³⁶³ *Shike Shiliao Xinbian*. Vol.1.13, 1979.p.8811.

³⁶⁴ *Shike shiliao xinbian*, Vol.1.24, p.8546.

			of the Tang period. It was again engraved in the <i>jingyou</i> era of the Song period, and the people in the Yuan time copied and carved it again. The extant version was reestablished in 1501(弘治十四). ³⁶⁵
Qing	<i>Hubei jinshizhi</i> 湖北金石志	Zhang Zhongxin (d. 1913)	The inscription is recorded here based on the one in 1491(弘治四年). ³⁶⁶
Qing	<i>Xiangyang jinshizhi</i> 襄陽金石志	Wang Wanfang 王萬芳(1849–1903)	The <i>Zhuileibei</i> was erected and named by Du Yu. The stele of Lord Yang is not the <i>Zhuileibei</i> . ³⁶⁷
Qing	<i>Hubei jinshizhi</i> 湖北金石志	Yang Shoujing (1839–1915)	1. Rebuilding the <i>Zhuileibei</i> : The inscription of the stele was lost. According to a rubbing of the stele, which was set up in 1491(弘治四年), [Yang Shoujing] record the text here. It was newly carved in the <i>datong</i> era of Liang because the old one was fragmentary. The backside of the stele documented this event. The Cavalier Attendant of Liang, Yu Yuanwei 庾元威, composed the text. ³⁶⁸ 2. Modifying the <i>Zhuileibei</i> : Liu Zhilin composed the text; Liu

³⁶⁵ *Shike shiliao xinbian*, Vol.3.13, pp.14–16.

³⁶⁶ *Shike shiliao xinbian*, Vol.1.16, p.11935.

³⁶⁷ *Shike shiliao xinbian*, Vol.3.13, p.396.

³⁶⁸ *Difangjinshizhi huibian*. Vol.63.p.157.

			<p>Ling wrote it in the regular script in the ninth month of 544.</p> <p>3. The stele of the Three Lords Temple: A certain Lü Yin 呂譚 (712–762) considered Tao Kan 陶侃, Yang Hu, and Du Yu as Three Lords and built one temple for them.³⁶⁹</p>
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As all comments indicate, there are at least two inscriptions dedicated to Yang Hu: The *Zhuileibei*, and the *Yanggongbei* (“the stele of Lord Yang”) or *Yanghubei* (“the stele of Yang Hu”). A geographical scripture from Li Daoyuan 酈道元 (d. 572) first mentioned that the stele of Lord Yang was located to the east of the southern city gate of Xiangyang, next to the steles for Du Yu and Liu Yan, which were erected by students.³⁷⁰ The *Zhuileibei*, as mentioned before, was established by the commoners of Xiangyang on the top of Mount Xian.³⁷¹ Later, these two stelae were merged when Liu Zhilin recomposed the text on the *Zhuileibei* in 544. We do not know whether the stele of Lord Yang in front of the southern city gate remained after this merging. However, we learn from Wang Xiangzhi’s note that the stele on top of Mount Xian encompassed two parts in the Song period. The front side was the stele of Lord Yang, and the backside was the *Zhuileibei*. From the nomenclature of these two stone tablets, we can infer that the stele of Lord Yang contained his biography, accounted for his life, and emphasized his political career and deeds. In contrast, the *Zhuileibei* poetically extolled his contributions to the Jingxiang society and benevolence to the local people. It is credible that this stele survived until Li Jingrang (d. 857)³⁷² renovated it in 855. Another conspicuous event, according to Wang

³⁶⁹ See *Chinese Text Project*, URL: [湖北金石志四 page 41 \(Library\) - Chinese Text Project \(ctext.org\)](http://www.ctext.org/湖北金石志四_page41) (Accessed on Dec.08.2020).

³⁷⁰ Li Daoyuan. Annotated by Chen Qiaoyi: *Shuijingzhu jiaozheng*, J.28, p.663.

³⁷¹ The present Yang-Du Temple is located on southern suburban of the old Xiangyang city. Back to the Jin period, one stone stele erected in front of the south city gate; another one was atop the Mount Xian, which is situated at the south of the city as well.

³⁷² Wang Xiangzhi either mistook Li Jingrang as Li Jingxun or deliberately avoided using “rang”. Because in the biographies of Li Jingrang in *JiuTangshu* and *XinTangshu*, he was nominated as the prefect of Xiangzhou in the

Xiangzhi, is that in the late Tang period, Lü Yin built a temple in Jiangling, the Three Lords Temple, for Tao Kan, Yang Hu and Du Yu. The record from a local chronicle in the Ming dynasty shows that this temple was located in the western part of Jiangling city,³⁷³ implying that the cult of Yang Hu was still thriving but had also been integrated into other cults of local deities. The cult was no longer limited to Xiangyang; it had expanded to Jiangling, the provincial center of the Jingxiang region.

The authors who participated in rebuilding Yang Hu's stele are recorded as Li Xing of Jin, Yu Yuanwei³⁷⁴ of Liang, and Liu Zhilin (478–549) of Liang. Regrettably, we know little about the earlier two, but fortunately, there are biographies of Liu Zhilin in *Nanshi* and *Liangshu*.³⁷⁵ Liu Zhilin came from a renowned clan in the Jingxiang region and was an assistant to three successive governors of Jingzhou: Xiao Hui 蕭恢 (d. 526), Xiao Yi ³⁷⁶ (from 526 to 539 in tenure of the prefect of Jingzhou), and Xiao Xu (from 539 to d. 547 in tenure of the prefect of Jingzhou). Wang Xiangzhi's record mentions that at this time, Liu Zhilin's title was the Grand Master of Ceremonies, a significant position in the central administration. In other words, the proponents of the cult of Yang Hu were not only the local populace but also the provincial governors and literati.

It is also important to note that the central government only appointed the local governor prior to the Sui period; the governors themselves staffed the local administration. During the Southern dynasties, the prefects of Jingzhou were all princes and close kinsmen of the emperor.

dazhong era, the time of his tenure (847–857) is consistent with the year of the reconstruction (855). See *Jiu Tangshu*, J.137, p.4891. On the other hand, the name Li Jingxun was not recorded in any extant writing. Therefore, I argue that this should be Li Jingrang instead of Li Jingxun. During his tenure in Xiangyang, he renewed the stele on the top of Mount Xian and probably even held a commemorative ceremony.

³⁷³ *Damingyitongzhi*, J.26.p.941.

³⁷⁴ Two other Buddhist steles in the Jiangxi region and three literary works were attributed to him. See Yang Shoujing, *Hubeijinshizhi*, in *Chinese Text Project* (2020) Url: <https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=en&file=29917&page=46&remap=gb> (Accessed on Dec.08.2020). *Suishu*, J.34.1011–1012.

³⁷⁵ *Liangshu*, J. 40. pp.572–574; *Nan Shi*, J.40. pp.1249–1252.

³⁷⁶ For Xiao Yi (508–555) and his time in the region see Chapter 2.2.

They usually not only took up the office with their personnel from the capital city but also recruited local celebrities to gain local support. This was a win-win way for the provincial rulers to respect the local beliefs and earn the majority's endorsement and indoctrinate their ruling ideology, such as loyalty, obedience, devotion, and the ethics that most local divine beings represented. Therefore, it is understandable that the local governors took part in the worship of Yang Hu.

Another instance demonstrates that the local governors intentionally attached importance to local cults to advocate the central authority's reigning ideology. In the sixth year of the *kaiyuan* era (718) of the Tang Zhang Yue 張說 (667–730), the great commander-in-chief of Jingzhou composed a prayer for the sacrificial ceremony to Yang Hu:

Previously there was a shrine for Yin Zhongkan at the northwestern corner of the Prefectural City of Jingzhou. When I came to my office, I then extended the hall and established a temple for Yang Shuzi. After the statue was completed, we sacrificed to it. It was on a day of the first month of the wu wu year, the sixth year of the *kaiyuan* era (718). The chief clerk of the great commander-in-chief of Jingzhou, the Duke of the duchy Yan, a certain Zhang of Fanyang [commandery], sincerely dispatched the Adjutant of Merit, Shen Congxun, a native of Wuxing commandery, to boldly inform the two [tutelary] gods of Jingzhou, Yang and Yin of the Jin time: I learn that the way of conducting oneself is benevolence and righteousness. Benevolence is the priority of filial piety. Righteousness is the core of loyalty. Lord Yin was a dutiful son. Lord Yang was a devoted subordinate. [Their] deeds are rooted in the Jin state and [their] goodness is bestowed to the people of Jing [zhou]. To not let their merits down, [we] established these [temples], allowing them to be neighbors. Although the lofty demeanor of both is old, the two temples are new. All hundreds of Junzi admire them [as if] looking up to a high mountain with reverence, offer fragrant incense in time and serve this solemn sacrifice with great respect. I beg you to partake of this sacrifice.

荊州府城中西北隅。旧有殷仲堪祠。某到官。广其堂。立羊叔子庙。像成而祭之。

維开元六年歲次戊午正月日。荊州大都督长史燕国公范阳张某。谨遣功曹参军吴兴

沈从訓。敢昭告于晋羊殷二荊州之神：我闻立人之道。曰仁與義。仁者孝之先。義

者忠之主。殷公为孝子。羊公維忠臣。行植晋国。德施荆人。不孤其美。是建为邻。

双凤虽舊。二庙維新。凡百君子。高山仰止。馨香以時。敬恭明祀。尚飨。³⁷⁷

In 718, Zhang Yue was promoted for the first time since his political frustration in opening the *kaiyuan* era. When he arrived, the first thing he did was expand the local temple and erect a statue for Yang Hu. A sacrificial ceremony for the local gods held there. In the prayer, he highlighted benevolence 仁 and righteousness 義 as moral bases and exalted Yang Hu and Yin Zhongkan for their corresponding deeds. He likely intended to set up ethical role models for the populace and concurrently indoctrinate them with the idea of being loyal and faithful to the state. It is reasonable to believe that the cult of Yang Hu also functioned to enhance the solidarity and stability of the local society and was thus exalted by the local government and even central authority.

To summarize, Yang Hu was divinized by the local populace in the early Jin period. Moreover, the cult of Yang Hu continuously thrived throughout the Jingxiang region and was promoted by the local elites and officials of the Southern dynasties. The cult presumably became a part of the state sacrificial convention during the Sui time and further emerged in the official sacrificial code during the Emperor Xuanzong of Tang's ritual reform during the *tianbao* era. On the one hand, we can see that states' efforts aimed to co-opt and control local cults. On the other hand, the evolution of the cult of Yang Hu facilitated transregional growth and Buddhist representations of Yang Hu, which I will elaborate on in the following paragraphs.

³⁷⁷ WYYH, Vol.6. p.5241.



Pic.3.1. the Temple for Yang Hu and Du Yu in present Xiangyang

3. The Figures of Yang Hu in Buddhist Narratives

As the cult of Yang Hu prevailed in the local society, fascinating anecdotes about him were concurrently generated and circulated among the people. We can hardly determine the sources of this hearsay, which was recorded by elites fond of such stories (Ch. Haoshizhe 好事者)³⁷⁸ and gathered into their collections. These compilations constitute a popular literary genre of the time, namely “accounts of anomalies” (Ch. *zhiguai* 志怪).³⁷⁹ Among the extant *zhiguai* corpora, we can find the earliest miraculous narratives about Yang Hu in *Soushenji* 搜神記 (“*In Search of the Supernatural*”, hereafter SSJ), composed by Gan Bao 干寶, a historian at the court of Emperor Yuan of Eastern Jin (r.317–322):

³⁷⁸ *Haoshizhe* is originated from Mengzi. See *Mengzi zhushu jiejing* J.9.1815. p.172-1.

³⁷⁹ I adopted the translation of *zhiguai* from Campamy (1996). For the holistic study of the *zhiguai* genre, see Li Jianguo (1984). He argued that this literary genre derived from historiography; Lu Xun (2006):29; Tang Lin, and Gjertson (1989), (1981): 287–301.

“When Yang Hu was five years old, he asked his old wet nurse to get him the little gold ring he used to play with. “You never had such a plaything, child,” she replied. The lad then went to the hollow mulberry in the east garden of their neighbor Mr. Li. It was searched, and the ring was found. Mr. Li was very surprised: “This was a plaything of my dead son. How did you happen upon it?” The wetnurse told him the whole story, and he was greatly saddened by it. People at the time found it extremely strange.”³⁸⁰

As we know from the preface of SSJ, which was adopted in the biography of Gan Bao in *Jinshu*, Gan Bao clarified that the reason he collected supernatural tales was to illuminate the veracity of the deities and supernatural.³⁸¹ Furthermore, he was deeply influenced by the personal experiences of his brother and his father’s maid, who both maintained that they had encountered death. These stories piqued his interest in the supernatural and became the impetus for writing SSJ. Gan Bao merely recorded the story of the five- year- old Yang Hu without further comment or explanation. The last sentence of the report indicates that Gan Bao’s source for this story was probably the hearsay of his contemporaries. He staunchly adhered to the Confucian principle of writing- narrate rather than create- which was also the orthodox tradition of Chinese historiography in his time. Nevertheless, his personal preference for Buddhism must be considered when examining why he incorporated this tale into his collection.

Contrary to Gan Bao, the later literatus Wang Yan 王琰 embellished this story in his work, *Mingxiangji* 冥祥記³⁸² (“*Records of Signs from the Unseen Realm*”, hereafter MXJ), written and compiled during the early Liang period. Before I compare Wang Yan’s narrative with Gan Bao’s, it is necessary to offer a common understanding of the *zhiguai* genre within the scope of intellectuals at the time. Interestingly, both SSJ and MXJ were recorded in the *Jingjizhi* 經籍志 (“*Treatise on Literature*”) of the *Suishu*,³⁸³ as well as the *Jiutangshu* (“the *Old Book of*

³⁸⁰ The translation text is from DeWoskin, Kenneth J. Crump, James Irving, (1996):179. I corrected the translation of Yi 詣 from “pointed out” to “went to”.

³⁸¹ *Jinshu* J.82. pp.2149–2151.

³⁸² Company (2012) provided an annotated translation of the text.

³⁸³ *Suishu*, J.33, p.980.

Tang”)³⁸⁴ and the *Yiwenzhi* 藝文志 (“*Treatise on Literature*”) of the *Xintangshu* (“*the New Book of Tang*”).³⁸⁵ Regrettably, MXJ was lost afterward. Notably, the former two treatises place SSJ and MXJ in the miscellaneous biographies 雜傳 section of the Shibu 史部 (“Section of Histories”). However, the latter assigned them to the fiction section in the “Records of Masters” 子錄. This difference in categorization shows that until the Song time, the *zhiguai* genre was understood as historical record rather than fiction.³⁸⁶ Therefore, if we adopt this attitude and treat the records from the *zhiguai* genre as such, we will not be surprised or critical of the historians in the early Tang period. They incorporated many records and stories from the *zhiguai* genre into the *Jinshu*, including the abovementioned story about Yang Hu.³⁸⁷

Let us return to Wang Yan’s depiction of Yang Hu’s supernatural power in MXJ. We can only access this story from two primary sources. The first is a Buddhist encyclopedia FYZL, compiled in 668 by monk Daoshi 道世(596–683). The latter is a secular compilation, *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (“*Extensive Records of the Taiping Xingguo Period*”), compiled in the early Song dynasty. In modern academia, Lu Xun 魯迅 (1881–1936) reconstructed the story in his compilation *Guxiaoshuo gouchen* 古小說鉤沉, which is the primary text I reference in this discussion:

During Jin, there lived one Yang Hu, styled Shuzi, a native of Taishan. He was a noted minister under Western Jin and was known throughout the country. When he was four, he asked his nursemaid to get the ring he had played with before. She said: ‘You never had such a thing. How could I get it?’ He said: ‘I was playing with it by the east wall. I dropped it among the mulberry trees.’ The nursemaid said: ‘Then you can go and look for it yourself.’ He replied: ‘But this is not the same residence as before. I do not know where it is.’ Later he went out through the gate and walked about to look around, heading east. The

³⁸⁴ *Jiutangshu*, J.46, p.2005.

³⁸⁵ *Xintangshu*, J.59, p.1540.

³⁸⁶ Campany R.F has pinpointed this in his book *Signs from the unseen realm* (2012:13).

³⁸⁷ The later historians, such as Liu Zhiji (661–721) of the Tang and Zhao Yi (1727–1814) of the Qing, were all critical of *Jinshu* adopting many anormal accounts.

nursemaid followed him. When he reached the home of the Li family, he entered the compound, went to the east wall among the trees, and picked up a small ring. Members of the Li family were shocked and resentful. They said: ‘Our son previously owned this ring. He loved to play with it. He died suddenly at age six. After he was gone, we did not know where the ring was. It was our son’s possession. What do you mean by taking it?’ But Hu had taken the ring and run away with it. Mrs. Li thereupon made inquiries about it. The nursemaid told all that the boy had said. Mrs. Li was both happy and sad. She then sought to have Hu return to them as her son. The administrator of Li mediated this matter, and then she gave up.

晉羊太傅祐。³⁸⁸字叔子，泰山人也。西晉名臣，聲冠區夏，年五歲時。嘗令乳母取先所弄指環。乳母曰。汝本無此。於何取耶。祐曰。昔於東垣邊弄之。落桑樹中。乳母曰。汝可自覓。祐曰。此非先宅。兒不知處。後因出門游。望遙而東行。乳母隨之。至李氏家。乃入至東垣樹中探得小環。李家驚異曰。吾子昔有此環常愛弄之。七歲暴亡。亡後不知環處。此亡兒之物也。云何持去。祐持環走。李氏逐問之。乳母既說祐言。李氏悲喜遂欲求祐還為其兒。里中解喻然後得止。³⁸⁹

Wang Yan’s version details how Yang Hu found the ring, Mrs. Li’s reaction, and the solution to this problematic case when Mrs. Li asks for Yang Hu to be her son again. At the story’s opening, Wang Yan elaborately introduces Yang Hu to his audience, a sophisticated technique for unfolding a story. By comparing this to SSJ, we can see that Wang Yan was a better storyteller and more adept at capturing the audience’s attention. Depicting the occurrences in great detail enables the audience to become immersed in the story and be convinced of its authenticity. Aside from the common topos of Yang Hu being aware of his

³⁸⁸ 祐 was mistaken as 祐 in FYZL of Taishō Canon.

³⁸⁹ The translation is from Campany (2012). I amend two points. 1. *Lishi* here refers to the hostess of the *Li* family rather than Members of the *Li* family; 2. *Lizhong jieyu*, from my understanding, means that this case was solved by the administrator of the *Li*, a local administrative unit. Campany translated: The matter was discussed in the village for a while; later, the talk died down. (73–74).

past life, MXJ contains two other brief stories about him, one showing overt Buddhist embellishments:

When Hu grew up, he often suffered from head colds. A doctor wanted to administer treatment. [Hu] said: “When I was three days old, my head faced a window behind me. I could feel the wind blowing on the crown of my head. In my mind, it bothered me, but I could not yet speak at the time. Since the illness originated so long ago, there is no way to cure it now.”

祐年長。常患頭風。醫欲攻治。祐曰吾生三日時。頭首北戶。覺風吹頂意甚患之。

但不能語耳。病源既久。不可治也。

Later, when Hu served as commander-in-chief in Jingzhou and defense commander in Xiangyang, he deliberately donated extra teaching rooms to the Wudang Temple. When someone asked him the reason, he made no reply. Later, during a confession and repentance ceremony [of his actions], he said: “In my previous life I committed multiple errors, due to establishing this temple I was saved. Therefore, my offerings to this monastery are more generous than others.”

祐後為荊州都督。鎮襄陽。經給武當寺。殊餘精舍。或問其故。祐默然。後因懺悔。

敘說因果。乃曰。前身承有諸罪。賴造此寺。故獲申濟。所以使供養之情。偏殷勤重也。³⁹⁰

All three tales were attributed to Wang Yan and cited by Dao Shi in the *Ganying yuan* 感應緣 of the *Suming* 宿命 section in FYZL.³⁹¹ These sources should be approached with

³⁹⁰ The two translation texts are from Campany (2012). However, at two points, my understanding of the text differs 1) he deliberately donated extra teaching rooms to the Wudang temple. 2) I committed multiple errors; due to establishing this temple, I was saved. Therefore, my offerings to this monastery are more generous than to others. Here is Campany's translation: 1) he made a series of significant donations to several monasteries on Mount Wudang; 2) I have inherited the many sins I amassed in my former lives. Therefore, I am making donations my utmost priority to try to save me. (74).

³⁹¹ FYZL, T53.2122.J.26. Each section of FYZL ends with the tales of karmic causes of miraculous events, which always correspond to the main topic of the section. Teiser points out that these verifications of karmic laws are culled from various Chinese sources and usually narrate events that occurred on Chinese soil. Teiser (1985):109–128; Other studies of FYZL see An Zhengxun (2003); Chen Yuzhen (1992):233–266.

caution because we cannot confirm whether Dao Shi transcribed them exactly from Wang Yan or purposefully modified them in light of his Buddhist devotion. Consequently, we may learn more about Dao Shi's writing purpose than Wang Yan's from these stories. However, MXJ was appropriated in FYZL in many cases, which, at the very least, shows their close connection. As Wang Yan made clear in the preface of MXJ, he aimed to persuade readers to become devout Buddhists.³⁹²

In addition, Lu Xun labeled MXJ as the auxiliary material to Buddhist teaching,³⁹³ and Cao Daoheng and Sun Changwu agree that MXJ is closely related to *Changdao* 唱導, a Buddhist ritual to expound Dharma.³⁹⁴ Therefore, I interpret the stories about Yang Hu as a production of Buddhist didactic literature. As mentioned earlier, Yang Hu was a renowned role model and an indigenous divine being, making him an ideal figure for the protagonist of Buddhist sermonic stories.³⁹⁵ By reframing scenarios from Indian stories in their new narratives, Chinese Buddhists indigenized Indian Buddhism to bridge the cultural gap and gain more native followers. This combination of Indian narrative strategies and indigenous elements characterizes the Chinese Buddhist didactic literature. It is quite probable that Buddhists first produced miraculous stories about Yang Hu during the Jin period to validate and promote the concept of reincarnation through cyclical existence. Later, in the early Tang dynasty, as the worship of Yang Hu was incorporated into the state sacrificial system, these miraculous tales inevitably came to the minds of both official and Buddhist historians, particularly the authors of the *Jinshu* and Dao Shi, while compiling Yang Hu's biography. As we can see, only one out of the three miraculous stories of Yang Hu were fully adopted in his biography in the *Jinshu*:

When [Yang] Hu was five years old, he asked his nursemaid to bring him the golden ring

³⁹² Company (2012): 12.

³⁹³ Lu Xun (2006): 29.

³⁹⁴ Cao Daoheng (1992): 26–36; Sun Changwu (1992): 116–118.

³⁹⁵ Liu Huiqin (2009: 116–119) compares the story of Yang Hu in *Mingxiangji* with the story of a little boy in Śrāvastī from the *xianyujing* (Skt. *Damamūka-nidāna-sūtra*) and concludes that the former borrowed the plot from the latter.

he used to play with. The nursemaid said: “You never had such thing”. He then went to his neighbor Mrs. Li’s [house] and fetched it (the ring) on the mulberry tree near the east wall. (Mrs. Li), the owner, was startled and said: “This is a thing which my deceased son once lost. Why are you taking it away!” The nursemaid told Li all [what Hu had told her before]. Mrs. Li was grieved and lamented. People at the time found it strange and said that Mrs. Li’s son must have been a former incarnation of Hu.

祐年五歲。時令乳母取所弄金環。乳母曰。汝先無此物。祐即詣鄰人李氏東垣桑樹中探得之。主人驚曰。此吾亡兒所失物也。雲何持去。乳母具言之。李氏悲惋。時人異之。謂李氏子則祐之前身也。³⁹⁶

Except for an additional comment stating that Yang Hu was a son of the Li family in a previous life, the narrative is identical to the one in SSJ. This story, “Yang Hu Knew the Ring 羊祐識環” seems to have been quoted quite frequently. For instance, it was mentioned in the dynastical records, *Bei Qi shu* 北齊書 and *Suishu*, which were both completed in the early Tang period.³⁹⁷ This is probably because the dynastical records of Jin, *Jinji* 晉紀 from Gan Bao, was one of the primary sources for the *Jinshu*.³⁹⁸ Gan Bao plausibly utilized the exact text about Yang Hu in SSJ and *Jinji*.

Although the sources limit our insight into the integration of Buddhism and the local cult in practice, the literary narratives of this figure by Buddhists and non- Buddhists cast light on the intertextuality of Buddhist and secular literature. Buddhist authors were from the same intellectual milieu as secular authors and drew on common knowledge to explicate new and intricate doctrines. It is not a coincidence that the thriving of the local cult of Yang Hu on both provincial and state levels and the appropriation of the narratives of Yang Hu in both official and Buddhist historiographies occurred concurrently in the early Tang period. I suggest that Buddhists deliberately recast Yang Hu with Buddhist characteristics as Buddhist propaganda.

³⁹⁶ *Jinshu*, J.34, p.1024.

³⁹⁷ Both books were completed in the *zhenguan* era (627–649) of the *Tang*.

³⁹⁸ Zhao Yi (130).

The literary device of elaborately employing a famed persona from indigenous culture is fully apparent in the writings of a much later Buddhist historian, Zhipan 志磐 (1220–1275), the author of *Fozutongji* 佛祖統紀 (T2035, “*The Chronicle of Buddha and Patriarchs*”, hereafter FZTJ).³⁹⁹ Zhipan went one step further and openly claimed that Yang Hu was a Buddhist practitioner:

Daily, Yang Hu, the Commander-in-Chief of Jingzhou, made offerings at a monastery on Mount Wudang. There was somebody who asked for the reason. [Yang] Hu replied: “I frequently committed various errors in my previous life. However, I received many benefits from the establishment of this monastery. So, my enthusiasm in presenting offerings particularly focuses on this place.”

Commentary: The *Jinshu* reports: “Yang Hu knew that in his previous life, he was a son of the Li family and that he had been able to fetch a golden circlet, which he played with. Therefore, when the preceding passage states that he founded this monastery in a former life, this should allude to the life before his later one. Within the world, the retribution of sinfulness and blessedness is unfailing. Does it not enable us to see things like a mirror? That [Yang] Hu knew about his previous life is in Buddhism called super knowledge of the past lifetimes of oneself and others”. [Yang] Hu was [thus] possibly an accomplished Buddhist who appears in this world.

荊州都督羊祜。日供給武當山寺。有問其故。祜曰：前身多有諸過。賴造此寺故獲中濟。所以供養之情偏重於此。

述曰：《晉書》言。羊祜識前身是李氏兒。能取所弄金環。今此言前身造此寺者。蓋前身之前身也。世間罪福果報不差。可不知鑒。祜能知前身者。佛教謂之宿命通。

祜蓋學佛有得現身世間者。⁴⁰⁰

The content of this story derives from Wang Yan’s MXJ preserved in FYZL. The

³⁹⁹ For the study of *Fozutongji*, See Jan Yün-hua (1963): 61–82; Jülch, Thoms (2019):1–12.

⁴⁰⁰ The translation of this paragraph is from Jülch, T. (2019). I only interpreted the last sentence differently. Here is Jülch’s translation: Only because [Yang] Hu had studied Buddhism; he received his present body in the world (120–121).

commentary from Zhipan alludes to the story “Yang Hu Knew the Ring” in *Jinshu* and attempts to explain and resolve the discrepancy between the two stories. In the end, Yang Hu is portrayed as a patron of the Wudang Temple, and an accomplished Buddhist bestowed with the power to know one’s past lives.

However, I strongly suspect that historical facts cannot confirm the authenticity of Yang Hu’s Buddhist faith. First, when investigating his kinship ties and social networks, one finds that there is no mention of Buddhists or lay Buddhists in Yang Hu’s immediate surroundings, suggesting that he had minimal direct contact with Buddhism. Second, we must consider that his official biography stated that he was a scholar who was exceptionally versed in *Li* and *Lao Zi*. These works were the typical fare for literati who participated in *qingtan* (“pure conversation”) about Dark Learning. There is a lack of concrete proof that Buddhist thoughts and Dark Learning were mutually influential in the Wei and early Western Jin dynasties. Third, the only extant text that casts Yang Hu as a Buddhist is Zhipan’s work, completed much later than the other sources mentioned earlier. No other surviving record does this. Considering that *Jinshu* is known for collecting anecdotes and miracle stories, we can infer that any documents referring to his preference for Buddhism would not have been overlooked. If there were such stories about Yang Hu, they would most likely be recorded in the *Jinshu* or other works from the *zhiguai* genre. Thus, Zhipan’s assumption is farfetched based on the historical evidence.

Ultimately, the above scrutiny of both Buddhist and secular works of literature concerning the narratives of Yang Hu demonstrates that Buddhist authors endeavored to appropriate the popular local cult by recasting the image of Yang Hu with Buddhist characteristics. Furthermore, the anecdotes about Yang Hu that appeared in the *zhiguai* genre served as didactic story retellings to expound abstruse doctrines and testify to the authenticity of cyclical rebirth and karmic retribution in the Buddhist tradition. Intertextuality within narrative literary traditions blurs the line between the profane and religious realms. Nonetheless, when we examine a particular geographical region in detail, the distinctions between religious traditions such as local cults, Daoism, and Buddhism become even more fluid and overlapping. In the following section, I will illustrate this by examining the multidimensional religious landscape in the

mountainous region bordering Jiangling.

Chapter 4. Practicing in Mountains and Forests: The Religious Landscape in the Environs of Jiangling

In China, mountains and forests are of paramount importance in people's religious lives, regardless of which tradition they follow. The Jing Mountains are arguably a defining mountain range of the Jingxiang region and are the feature the region is named after. The Jing Mountains are located in the contemporary northern Hubei province and encompass a chain of mountains situated between the Han and Yangtze Rivers. In this mountainous area, Mount Qingxi and Mount Yuquan have been prominently inhabited by religious practitioners since early times. Moreover, the two major Yangtze tributaries, the Zhangshui 漳水 and Jushui 沮水, emanate from the area, meeting and eventually pouring into the Yangtze River at Zukou 沮口 in Zhijiang county, where ninety-nine islets were reportedly formed in the middle of Yangtze River in the medieval time. Among those islets, the largest was *Baili* ("hundred *li*" 百里洲), which is where the administration office of Zhijiang was once seated.⁴⁰¹

In the early medieval time, the cultural and religious landscape of this mountainous and riverine area was dynamic and diverse, shaped by the denizens comprised of *man* (southern barbarians) people, practitioners in pursuit of immortality and longevity, Buddhist ascetics, sophisticated retired literati, and hermits. The mountain and islet dwellers often gave the impression that they were secluded from the outside world, but substantively, they had various interfaces with the political center in Jiangling.⁴⁰² In the following passages, such interactions

⁴⁰¹ *Shuijingzhushu*: "The former administration office was in Juzhong 沮中, later was relocated on the *Baili* islet...

from the county westward to Shangming, eastwards to Jiangjin, there were ninety-nine islets." (1989):2854–55.

⁴⁰² As Thomas Michael (2016: 32) writes: "When Confucians chose to live outside of society, they did so with fanfare and to make a political statement about the government authority under which they lived and that they felt was not up to their moral and critical standards." It evidences in the biographies of hermits in dynastical histories, the performance of reclusion often attracted particular attention from the government and earned them either a position at the court or moral authority. Conversely, the emperors, and governors desire to coax the hermits back to government service as a symbol of the legitimacy and virtue of their regimes. It may explain that a place nearby

will be the subject of scrutiny. I will delineate the development of religious facilities as well as the contestation and cooperation between different traditions in this area by analyzing the biographical accounts of the relevant figures who were once active there. The central question of this investigation is when and how Buddhists started to encroach into the Mount Jing area and what kind of situation they had to confront and overcome.

To better understand the historical context of the tendency to practice in mountains and forests, we will take a quick glimpse at the deep-rooted mountain worship and early Daoist initiatives on the mountains, which aimed to obtain longevity and transcendence.

Mountains held a significant place in Chinese religion long before Buddhism reached China. The sacrifices to march-mounts or sacred peaks (*yue* 岳) may go back as far as the Shang dynasty (1600–1046 BC).⁴⁰³ In the mythic geographical compilation *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (The Classic of Mountains and Seas),⁴⁰⁴ mountains represent a realm apart from ordinary human existence, and they stand as an intermediate zone between the human and spiritual realms, allowing for the transit of individuals or spirits. The hybrid nature of the mountain's inhabitants, both creatures and spirits, is a clear indication of its situation as a place between two realms.⁴⁰⁵ However, regardless of the monstrosities and vicious spirits, people desired to enter this mysterious arena for various reasons, as indicated by the notable Daoist alchemist Ge Hong 葛洪 (283–343) in his celebrated work *Baopuzi neipian* 抱朴子內篇: “Of all those who compound drugs for the sake of [pursuing] the Way, as well as those who dwell in hiding to

the political center often favored by them, such as Mount Zhongnan adjacent to Chang'an, Mount Song adjacent to Luoyang, Mount She adjacent to Jiankang. On this point see: Matthew V. Wells (2009:71–72); Bauer, Wolfgang (1981: 166–168).

⁴⁰³ Kleeman Terry F. (1994: 226–38) demonstrated the changes of “four march-mounts” sacrifice to “five march-mounts” during the late Warring States and Han time.

⁴⁰⁴ Most academics concur that the initial core of the work, namely the first five chapters, evolved over several centuries throughout the Warring States and the Han. On the text, editions, and major studies, see the article by Riccardo Fracasso (1993): 357–367.

⁴⁰⁵ Lewis, Mark Edward (2012): 288–290. For the study on strange creatures from the *Shanhaijing* see: Strassberg, Richard E. (2002).

escape from disturbance, there are none who do not enter the mountains. 凡為道合藥及避亂隱居者，莫不入山。”⁴⁰⁶ The text continues with meticulous instructions for those who resolved to enter the mountains chasing the floral, mineral, or transcendent treasures hidden therein. Notwithstanding the occasional mountain visitor offering sacrifices to the mountain gods and solitary practitioners in search of rare herbs and raw materials for concocting elixirs, mountains were unfrequented by humans by the late Han time.

As scholars have noted, however, this situation dramatically changed in the fourth and fifth centuries, as Buddhist and Daoist monasticism grew in the mountains, forming a pivotal cultural phenomenon in the history of Chinese religion.⁴⁰⁷ This migration formed a new mountain landscape dotted with Daoist and Buddhist establishments. Tsuzuki claims that the earliest Daoist monastery *guan* 館 was established by the emperor Ming of Liu Song (439–472, r.466–472) to accommodate recluses and recruit them to the service of the monarch.⁴⁰⁸ A piece of evidence contained in *Daozang* 道藏 stands as testimony to her assertion: “Shizong, the emperor Ming of the Song [dynasty], opened up mountains in order to treat the Perfected with propriety. He ordered the building of monasteries in order to summon the secluded and retired. 宋世宗明皇帝，開嶽以禮真。命築館以招幽逸。”⁴⁰⁹ Encouraged by support from the Ming emperor, a Daoist *guan* was erected in the western outskirt of Jiangling, and the Jingxiang region underwent state-wide construction of Daoist *guan*. Accordingly, investigating the religious landscape in the periphery of Jiangling city can contribute to a holistic picture of the rise of monasticism in the mountainous area during the fifth century.

⁴⁰⁶ The translation is from Knechtges, David R (2012): 4.

⁴⁰⁷ Wei Bin (2019):4; Hisayuki Miyagawa (1964):279–288; Yan Gengwang (2005):83–193; Tsuzuki Akiko, Fu Chenchen transl. (2009):226–246; Sun Qi (2014).

⁴⁰⁸ Tsuzuki Akiko (234–36). Chen Guofu (1963:267) suggests that the origin of the Daoist *guan* is the hut or cottage built beside caves by the individual mountain practitioners, who actually resided inside the caves.

⁴⁰⁹ I have benefited from the translation in Stephan Peter Bumbacher (2000):336–37. For the original Chinese text see Chen, Guofu (1963):497.

Buddhist encroachment began in the suburban and mountainous areas in the western suburb of Jiangling city, proceeded to the islets in the middle of the Yangtze River, then went northward to Mount Qingxi and Mount Yuquan. Based on the extant sources, Mount Qingxi earned the initial favoritism of mountain dwellers, even though it was farther from the Jiangling city than Mount Yuquan. Thus, I consider Mount Qingxi before Mount Yuquan in my examination.

1. Bailizhou (“hundred li islet”) and others

First, as the transitional area between the Mount Jing area and Jiangling city, the *Baili* islet was home to early religious practitioners and hermits oscillating between worldly affairs and devotional engagement. From the Jiangling city westwards to the Shangming garrison in Zhijiang county, numerous islets were found in the Yangtze River. The native scholar Yang Shoujing enumerated some islets adjacent to Jiangling in his commentary to the *Shuijingzhu*: “the Yangtze River is split into north and south parts by the Meihui islet, then flows by Guxiang, Long, Chong, Bingli, Yanwei islet in sequence.”⁴¹⁰ The famed literatus Luo Han 羅含 (292–372) once held a position in Huan Wen 桓溫 (312–373)’s tenure as the prefect of Jingzhou. To eschew social life as an official, he lived in a thatched hut on one of the islets west of the city, ate the simplest fare, and dressed only in plain cotton.⁴¹¹ The islets were a perfect place for officials who desired to maintain a spirit of lofty remoteness and remain unsullied by public life. Officials of this kind formed a distinctive network of intelligentsia, which influenced the local society regarding politics and religion.

The native personage Liu Qiu (438–495) was a core figure of this group and was said to be hidden on one of the islets west of the Jiangling city, as recounted in the biography of lofty hermits in *Nanqishu*. His biography explicitly states: “He was adherent to high moral principles

⁴¹⁰ *Shuijing zhushu*. J.34. p.2858.

⁴¹¹ *Jinshu*.J.92, p.2403. also, in *Zhugongjiushi* 渚宮舊事(“Reminiscence on the Zhu Palace”). J5.p.7.

and eager to learn in his youth. In order to enter politics, he then lived in reclusion. 少而抗節好學，須得祿便隱。⁴¹² Thus, in his time, being a hermit was a vehicle for inaugurating a political career. However, his period of political engagement was rather short. After retreating from politics, he dwelled on the islet and devoted himself to Buddhism, lecturing on the *Lotus Sūtra* and completing a commentary on it. His coterie of hermits included Zong Ce 宗測 (d. 495), Zong Shangzhi 宗尚之, Yu Yi 庾易 (d. 495), and his clan- man Liu Zhao 劉昭, who were all summoned by local governors many times but refused to serve. Notably, the Zong clan was a prestigious native family that embraced the tradition of eremitism for generations. Zong Bing 宗炳 (375–443), his grandson Zong Ce, and clan- man Zong Shangzhi were identified as privileged hermits in the dynastic historical tradition.⁴¹³ Zong Bing and Zong Ce especially shared a predilection for painting and music, as well as Buddhist devotion. A temple named Yongye 永業 was established in their ancestral residence in Jiangling and included an altar with an image of Buddha painted by Zong Ce. As described in the biographies of Liu Qiu and his fellows, painting, music, knowledge of Daoist dietary practices,⁴¹⁴ and Buddhist devotion were essential qualifications to be a member of this hermit coterie.

Regarding politics, the Liu clan staunchly supported the rise of the Liang dynasty, as Xiao Yan, the founder of Liang, initially garnered power in Jin Zhou and eventually annexed the preceding Qi dynasty. A story contained in the biography of Liu Zhilin (478–549) implies that the Liu family provided food for Xiao Yan when the latter served in Jinzhou as a consultant to Prince Sui of Qi.⁴¹⁵ The story reads:

⁴¹² *Nanqishu*.J.54. p.939. However, in the biography of his son Liu Zhilin in *Nanshi* it articulated that Liu Qiu was hidden on *Baili* islet. p.1252.

⁴¹³ The biography of Zong Ce and Yu Yi find in the biography of lofty hermits of *Nanqishu*.J.54. pp.940–41.

⁴¹⁴ [He] lived in solitary and restrain from grains and consumed *cangshu* and sesame(*huma*). *Nanqishu*.J54. p.939.

⁴¹⁵ The prince Sui, Xiao Zilong 蕭子隆 (474–494) was in office of Jin Zhou from 490 to 494. Xiao Yan served in his military staff stationed in Jiangling at the time.

Initially, Emperor Wu [of Liang] served as a consulting officer in the Jingzhou Prefectural Office during the Qi dynasty. At that time, Zhilin's father Qiu lived in reclusion on the Baili islet. They had heard about each other for a long time. As it happened, the emperor was short on supplements and sent [someone] to Qiu's place to borrow hundreds hu (five pecks) of grains. At that time, Zhilin was at his father's side and said, "Xiao Ziyi [the consulting officer Xiao] is a frustrated gentleman. How is it that he receives raw grains? I wish to give him rice." Qiu accepted [his suggestion].

始武帝於齊代為荊府諮議。時之遯父虬隱在百里洲。早相知聞。帝偶匱乏。

遣就虬換穀百斛。之遯時在父側。曰蕭諮議躋士。云何能得春。願與其米。

虬從之。⁴¹⁶

When Liu Qiu disengaged from the bureaucracy, his family members continued to impact local governance.⁴¹⁷ Therefore, the *Baili* islet was a perfect location for him to live since it was close to Jiangling city, allowing him to maintain contact with the political center but also giving the impression that he is an outsider.

Contrary to Liu Qiu, who came from an influential native clan, another noted resident of the *Baili* islet was the humble Daoist priest Fan Cai, as documented in the Daoist biography, *Dongxian zhuan* 洞仙傳 ("Biographies of Grotto-Transcendents").⁴¹⁸ Fan Cai was a native of Langzhong in Baxi, and he lived on the *Baili* islet in Zhijiang county for a long time, cultivating the Way of Taiping.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁶ *Nanshi* J.50. "The Biography of Liu Zhilin". p.1252.

⁴¹⁷ Liu Qiu's two sons Liu Zhilin and Liu Zhiheng, as well as his cousin Liu Tan and their progeny all serve in the government. See *Nanshi* J.50. pp.1249–54.

⁴¹⁸ *Dongxian Zhuan* is a collection of biographies of Daoist masters compiled by an anonymous author probably during the sixth century. The original text is ten *juan* as recorded in the *Suishu*. The text I based on is from the Daoist encyclopedia *Yunjiqiqian* 雲笈七籤 ("Seven Lots from the Bookbag of the Clouds").

⁴¹⁹ It states in *Daoxue zhuan* that he resided in the Fucheng islet in Zhijiang county in the *taiyuan* ear of Song, which is clearly ahistorical since there are no *taiyuan* reign period in Liu Song dynasty. It makes this account less credible.

It is intriguing that Fan Cai drew the attention of Buddhist, Daoist, and official historians, and the accounts survived in *Gaoseng zhuan*, *Daoxue zhuan* 道學傳,⁴²⁰ *Dongxian zhuan*, and *Nanshi*. These accounts offer us several narrative perspectives on this solitary individual.

In the Buddhist narrative, a brief account of Fan Cai's life is appended to the biography of Zhu Fahui, a Buddhist thaumaturgist, and assigned to the category of *Shen'yi* ("miraculous power"). According to GSZ, Fan Cai was a contemporary of Fahui and originally a *śramaṇa* living on divination on the market: "He walked barefoot and wore worn-out cloth no matter summer or winter. His predictions were often verified. Later he retreated from Buddhist teaching and converted to Zhangling's teaching."⁴²¹

The *Dongxian zhuan* agrees that his specialty was divination; "He was as acquainted with events that occurred ten thousand *li* away as he was with his fingers and palm."⁴²² However, the fourth *juan* of *Daoxue zhuan* shows a different depiction. First, instead of a fortuneteller, he is depicted as an elegant and quiet gentleman who did not talk about signs or auspicious omens. Instead, it emphasizes that he had a handsome face, white skin, and beautiful hair, possibly resulting from his special diet: "Sometimes he would carry [his] baggage and beg for food for ten days. He gave up consuming non-glutinous rice, millet, liqueur, and tasty fruits, and only [ate] cooked coarse-grained rice and green-vegetable soup. After having eaten more than a picul, he easily passed ten days [without food]. 或有十日荷擔乞食。口絕粳梁、醪醴。滋味果實。唯麤粟飯。菜羹。食一升許。便過旬日也。"⁴²³ He lived in an extremely simple way

⁴²⁰ A collection of biographies of Daoists is attributed to Ma Shu (522–581). The work is lost by southern Song time. The modern scholar Chen Guofu reconstructed it. My analysis is based on his edition. (459).

⁴²¹ GSZ, J.10: 「時有范材者。巴西閬中人。初為沙門賣卜于河東市。徒跣弊衣冬夏一服。言事亦頗時有驗。後遂退道染俗。習張陵之教云。」 p.389b5–8.

⁴²² YJQQ, J.110, p.2399.

⁴²³ The translation is from Bumbacher Stephan Peter (2000):177. 粳梁 means non-glutinous rice and millet.

Bumbacher's translation omits 梁 millet.

as an ascetic:

“He also had a cottage, but it did not screen [him from] wind and frost. He made [his] bed by means of mulberry faggots, binding straw and inserting it into the space between [the faggots]. He had one empty basket and one earthen bottle, and [after having] filled [it] up, carried [it] over [his] shoulder, [used it as a] pillow, and leant [on it] in order to rest. He knotted together worn-out rough cloth, made nets with strings, wrapped reed– thatch [around himself] and just managed to cover [his] body. [Although] during winter and summer he went barefoot, the [skin of his] feet did not become cracked.”⁴²⁴

Second, it states in *Daoxue zhuan* that he did not change his mind because of the high or humble [status of somebody] nor did he talk with wealthy and honored persons of the secular world.⁴²⁵ In fact, the *Dongxian zhuan* reports that he was once summoned by Emperor Wen of Song and was eventually sentenced to death by him because he predicted that the crown- prince would turn against the throne. The *Nanshi*, by contrast, mentions that he cultivated *lianxing shu* 練形術, the “art of body training,” and predicted the emperor’s death. The King of Jiangxia 江夏⁴²⁶ speculated that Fan Cai might be a transcendent *xian* 仙 or immortal and ordered that his coffin be opened. His head was newly cut open and his back was covered in blood. Emperor Wen of Song heard about this and was disgusted by it.⁴²⁷ In *Nanshi*, this story is considered an evil portent to the coup d’état conspired by the crown prince Liu Shao. It discloses that Fan Cai was a conspicuous Daoist practitioner of the time and that his fame reached the local governor and even the throne.

Although the author of *Daoxue zhuan* endeavored to portray Fan Cai as a pure Daoist master aloof from worldly affairs, other sources note several secular aspects of his life. Nevertheless, he was not the only resident of the *Baili* islet who was surrounded by spectacular

⁴²⁴ Bumbacher (2000): 176.

⁴²⁵ Bumbacher’s translation: nor did he talk with [people] among the vulgar [or] with wealthy and honored persons. (177).

⁴²⁶ The King of Jiangxia named Liu Yigong 劉義恭(413–465) was the prefect of Jinzhou from 429 to 432.

⁴²⁷ *Nanshi*.J.14. p388.

stories and accounts.

Lu Fahe (d. 558) was another noted figure who once resided on the *Baili* islet and Mount Qingxi as a Buddhist hermit. His origin is unclear, but he was presumably from the *man* (southern barbarian) ethnic group because he had the accent of *man* language and summoned an army of eight hundred *man* disciples to assist Xiao Yi (508–555, r.552–555), in pacifying the rebels. Xiao Yi, later Emperor Yuan of Liang, was his pivot patron.⁴²⁸ Reportedly, he established a temple on the *Baili* islet named *Shouwang* 壽王 (“longevity king”).⁴²⁹ After Xiao Yi was enthroned in Jiangling, he was granted the position of the prefect of Yingzhou. According to his biography in the dynastic histories, he commanded a private army of thousands of soldiers, called them disciples, and administrated them by means of magic arts, not law.⁴³⁰ It was quite unique and striking at the time to have an army strengthened with Buddhist belief and guided by a Buddhist. However, he lost the trust of Emperor Yuan of Liang, probably because of the potential threats of his army to the throne. He survived the overturn of the reign of Liang in Jiangling and eventually served at the court of Northern Qi.

In summary, from the fourth century onwards, the *Baili* islet was constantly inhabited by semi-retired officials, lay Buddhists, and Daoist practitioners. The extant accounts related to each group are rare and scarce. However, through the preceding investigation of the biographical records concerning Luo Han, the clique of Liu Qiu, Fan Cai, and Lu Fahe, it is clear that the religious landscape of the area was a multiplicity of different traditions which interacted and intertwined with each other. For example, Liu Qiu and his associates were fond of Buddhist teachings, performed traditional Chinese painting and music, and followed Daoist diets. Moreover, the denizens often overtly announced their intention to withdraw from worldly

⁴²⁸ Lu Fahe was eventually lost trust of his patron, the emperor Yuan of Liang, and capitulated to northern Qi regime in 555 after the fall of Jiangling.

⁴²⁹ *BeiQishu*.J.23p.430; *Beishi*.J.89. p.2944. The biography of Lu Fahe found in *Beishi*, *BeiQishu* and *Zhugong jiushi*.

⁴³⁰ *Beishi*.J.89. p.2943.

affairs and thus hid on the islet. However, despite the guise of reclusion, they were deeply involved in the regional military and politics, as evinced by the case of Lu Fahe. Therefore, the islets area was an intermediate zone between the mundane and substantive eremitic realm and initially reserved space for Buddhist and Daoist individual practitioners in the sphere of the city environment. It was also a steppingstone to the territory of wilderness and remoteness, namely the Mount Jing area.

2. Mount Qingxi

Traveling northward along the Ju River from the *Baili* islet, one approaches the most mountainous area of the Jingxiang region, namely the Jing Mountains, encompassing Mount Qingxi and Mount Yuquan. The *Shanhai jing* reports the primitive imagination of the mountain deities and the sacrificial rituals made to them:

“In appearance, all the deities of these mountains have a bird’s body and a human face. In sacrificing to them, the ritual is: use a single male chicken for the intercessions and then bury it; used a single multicolored oblong jade; for the sacrificial grain, use sticky rice.”⁴³¹

As evidenced, the tradition of mountain worship in the Jing Mountain range held significance since the pre-Han time. The topography of the landscape, intersected by mountains and waters, cast a mysterious atmosphere over the region and attracted Daoist practitioners in pursuit of longevity and immortality. Mount Qingxi⁴³² (“green mountain stream”) appears to have been the first option for them. Mount Qingxi is mentioned in the poem “Wandering as an

⁴³¹ The translation is from Anne Birrell (1999): 88.

⁴³² The present Mount Mingfeng 鳴鳳 in Yuan’an is the historical Mount Qingxi. It is a chain of mountains and a stream flow through the mountains down to the Ju River.

Immortal 遊仙” by the significant writer and Daoist mystic Guo Pu 郭璞 (276–324).⁴³³ The poem reads:

In der grünen, über tausend Klafter tiefen Schlucht (des Ying- Flusses) lebt ein. taoistischer Priester.

Aus den Balken seiner Hütte kommen Wolken hervor; Wind erhebt sich aus deren. Fenster und Türen. Wenn man fragt, wer ist es, der hier wohnt, so heißt es, es sei Kuei-Ku- tzu.

Ich aber sehne mich Hsü Yu zu begegnen (der auch am nördlichen Ufer des ying. flusses leben soll), am Ufer dieses Flusses möchte ich (wie einst er) mir die Ohren waschen (um nichts mehr von der Welt zu wissen).

Da weht plötzlich aus Südwesten ein Wind heran; das früher ruhige Wasser. kräuselt sich Fischschuppenähnlich (und daraus erhebt sich die wunderbar Fee Fu- fei) Sie sieht mich und lächelt mir zu, dabei zeigt sie die wie Jade glänzenden Zähne.

Leider gibt es gerade hier keine Vermittlerin; wen könnte ich wohl beauftragen, jene Fee einzuladen [mit mir umherzuwandern]?⁴³⁴

Guo Pu probably composed this verse during his service under Wang Dun 王敦 (266–324) in Jingzhou from 318 to 324. He was impressed by the towering cliffs of Mount Qingxi, which inspired him to imagine encounters with the ancient hermits Guigu zi 鬼谷子⁴³⁵ and Xu You 許由, as well as the legendary goddess of the Luo River, Fu Fei 宓妃. Guigu zi, in particular, was said to live in reclusion on Mount Qingxi.⁴³⁶ This poem also implies that the mountain had

⁴³³ For a brief biography of Guo Pu and references. See Knechtges, David R.; Chang, Taiping (eds.) (2010): 301–307.

⁴³⁴ Erwin von Zach (1958): 328.青谿千餘仞，中有一道士。雲生梁棟間，風出窗戶裏。借問此何誰？云是鬼谷子。翹跡企潁陽，臨河思洗耳。閭闔西南來，潛波渙鱗起。靈妃顧我笑，粲然啟玉齒。蹇脩時不存，要之將誰使？

⁴³⁵Guigu zi, whose real name is said to have been Wang Xu, lived during the pre-Qin Warring States period. He is recognized as the first teacher specifically associated with the “art of persuasion” and allegedly taught about five hundred students in 378–322 B.C.E. Swearingen, C. Jan (2016): 9.

⁴³⁶TPGJ. J.4, p.25.

already been favorable to Daoist priests and hermits for a long time. The Qing stream emanated from the Lan Spring 濫泉 east of the mountain, flowed past the mountain, and emptied into the Ju River. The spring purportedly was clean and possessed the power of making rain. The *Shuijing Zhu* states:

The diameter [of the spring] reached several *zhang*. Its depth could not be measured. This spring was extremely efficacious and clean. When the scorching sun is relentless, and the gloomy rain time never comes, then throwing filth into it, one will bring about torrential rain. The water source [of the spring] flowed eastwards. Because its origin was in the Qing Mountain, it takes Qing stream as its name. Looking for its source and drifting up the stream, [one] finds a marvel of depth and steepness.

口徑數丈.其深不測。其泉甚靈潔。至于炎陽有亢。陰雨無時。以穢物投之。輒能暴雨。其水導源東流。以源出青山。故以青溪為名。尋源浮溪。奇為深峭。⁴³⁷

The association between the source of the Qing stream and rain has existed for a very long time, and it generated the myth about the *Nāgakanyā* (Ch. *Longnü* 龍女), who was attracted by the sermon delivered by Tang Buddhist apologist Falin 法琳 (572–640),⁴³⁸ a noted mountain-dweller and Daoist practitioner. Thereupon, a shrine for the rainmaker *Nāgakanyā* was erected, as the Ming literatus Yuan Zhongdao 袁中道 (1570–1626) documented.⁴³⁹ However, appropriating the myth of the rainmaker and combining it with the Buddhist monk might have been a later fabrication, as the record is only found in the Ming and Qing local chronicles.

A much earlier local writing, *Jingzhou ji* 荊州記 by Sheng Hongzhi 盛弘之 (fl. 437), depicts the wonderful landscape of the valley the Qing stream flowed through without mentioning the shrine of any kind of rainmaker:

⁴³⁷ *Shuijing zhushu*.J.32. p.2697.

⁴³⁸ Falin resided on the Mount Qingxi in his early time. The myth, to some extent, was fabricated on certain historical facts.

⁴³⁹ Yuan Zhongdao (1982):97.

Thick trees grew on its sides which overlapped in the sky. Towering buildings leaned against the cliffs and always had a tendency to fall. The sound of wind and springs echoed beneath the green woods, while the calls of rock-dwelling apes drifted above the white clouds. Visitors often felt their eyes cannot take in all the sights, and their emotions cannot fully appreciate [the beauty]. Thus, forest dwellers settled down, and travelers who [wander like] clouds found a home for their hearts [here]. Besides the spring there were many simple huts constructed by gentlemen in pursuit of the Way.

稠木傍生。凌空交合。危樓傾崖。恒有落勢。風泉傳響于青林之下。巖猿流聲于白雲之上。遊者常若目不周翫。情不給賞。是以林徒棲託。雲客宅心。泉側多結道士精廬焉。⁴⁴⁰

In other words, by the time of Guo Pu, the stunning scenery and enigmatic spring may have served as the main attractions of the site for solitary hermits seeking seclusion. Solo practitioners and occasional travelers constituted the mountain-dwellers of the time, and only several primitive huts were scattered alongside the spring deep in the mountain valley. Based on the geographical literature and biographies of hermits, this is our limited imagination of the mountain landscape until the early fourth century.

⁴⁴⁰ *daoshi* 道士 is a problematic term in the Weijin time. It refers not exclusively to Daoist priest but could also be Buddhist ascetics. Therefore, in this context I interpret it as the gentlemen in pursuit of Way. *Shuijing zhushu*.J.32. pp.2697–98.



Pic.4.1. the Mount Qingxi

However, as indicated earlier, the situation dramatically changed after Emperor Ming of Song promulgated an edict establishing *guan* to accommodate secluded and retired people. The original intention of this policy relied on the reception of religious personages, mainly Daoist priests, and put them under the state's control. It also formed a new religious landscape of the city and its proximity.

According to the *Daoxue zhuan*, Wang Sengzhen 王僧鎮, a native of Jinshou 晉壽 in Liang 梁 Zhou (in present Sichuan province), erected one monastery named Futang 福堂 (“blessed hall”) in Anlu, Jingzhou,⁴⁴¹ and another named Shenwang 神王 (“spirit king”) in Yingzhou.⁴⁴² As is recorded, “Both were extremely luxuriant and proper. Moreover, in the Hengyue (the Mount Heng or the Southern peak 南嶽), he raised the Monastery of the Nine

⁴⁴¹ It is the present Anlu city, adjacent to modern Wuhan city.

⁴⁴² Yingzhou was instituted in 454 and situated in Xiakou, the present Wuchang.

Perfected (*Jiuzhen guan* 九真館).”⁴⁴³ We know very little about Wang Sengzhen besides his contribution to the construction campaign, which was supported Emperor Ming of Song. Another fragment of the *Daoxue zhuan* implies that Wang Sengzhen was once the head of a state monastery in Jiangling:

Liu Yue, the chief secretary of Jingzhou, asked [the government] to grant the Luo Han residence, west of the city wall below the Qixia tower, to the construction of a monastery on behalf of the state and to retain Wang Sengzhen, a native of Jinshou in Liangzhou, as the abbot.

荊州長史柳悅。啓割城西棲霞樓下。羅含章台為國家造館。留梁州晉壽人王僧鎮為館主也。⁴⁴⁴

The *Jingzhou ji* mentions that the Qixia tower was established by Liu Yiqing 劉義慶 (403–444), King of Linchuan 臨川 of Song, who was once the prefect of Jingzhou (431–439). Moreover, the *Shixing ji* 始興記, attributed to Wang Shaozhi 王韶之 (380–435), reports:

The tower is on Luogong Islet. Below the tower, on the islet, fruit trees and bamboo intertwine their shade, with tall poplars reflecting by the side and lofty phoenix trees towering in front. Although it is [within] the city walls, its charm resembles that of a secluded mountain valley.

樓在羅公洲。樓下洲上。果竹交陰。長楊旁映。高梧前竦。雖則城隍趣同丘壑。⁴⁴⁵

These two pieces of information illustrate that the monastery was situated on the islet west

⁴⁴³ Bumbacher (315).

⁴⁴⁴ Bumbacher’s translation: [when] the Administrator of Jingzhou, Liu Yue, cleared [the area of] Lehanzhang terrace below the Qixi tower west of the city-wall, and set up a monastery for the state, he retained Wang Sengzhen, a native of Jinshou in Liangzhou, and made him head of the monastery. (316).

⁴⁴⁵ *Gujin Tushu Jicheng*, Volume 154. 60. Zhonghua shuju. 1934.

of the Jiangling city, where the literatus Luo Han once dwelled. Probably, the *Luohan zhangtai* was a monument in memory of Luo Han and his former residence. Setting up a state monastery adjacent to the historical site, which was replete with the spirit of lofty remoteness but physically close to the political center, was the first step in institutionalizing the Daoist monastics. However, Daoist monasteries were not only instituted in the environs of the city but also on Mount Qingxi.

Two documents shed light on the Daoist monasteries on Mount Qingxi and testify to the rise of Daoist monasticism in the mountainous area. First, the fragments of *Daoxue zhuan* collected by Chen Guofu contain a brief biography of the Daoist priest Xu Mingye 許明業:

During the *taiqing* (547–549) era of the Liang dynasty, [Xu Mingye] was invited by the Inspector [Xiao Ke], the King of Nanping, to make an excursion to the Shenwang guan, (“the spirit king monastery”), [situated] north of the city, to make offerings there. When turmoil arose, he took the opportunity to enter Qingxi Mountain in Wuchang and establish a monastery there. People from near and far revered and admired him.

梁太清中為州刺史南平王請出城北神王館供養。值亂。因入武昌青溪山立館。遠近
崇仰之也。⁴⁴⁶

As mentioned above, the “spirit king” monastery was constructed by the Daoist priest Wang Sengzhen in the Song period. From this record, we know that it still existed during the Liang time. Xu Mingye left the city and retreated to the mountain because of the warfare caused by Hou Jing from 548 to 552. It is believed that he was with his followers and disciples taking refuge on the mountain. Furthermore, the commoners venerated him largely because of his charity work during the time of turbulence. The record in the *Daoxue zhuan* describes several parts of his deeds: he farmed the land with his disciples and gave the harvest to the poor during

⁴⁴⁶ Bumbacher’s translation: During the *taiqing* period of the Liang dynasty, he was made regional Inspector. The prince of Nanping requested [him] to leave [his reclusion] and to make offerings in the Monastery of the Prince of the Spirits (Shenwang guan) north of the city. A rebellion occurred and because of it he entered Mountain Qingxi in Wuchang and erected a monastery, and [people from] far and near venerated and looked up to him. (266).

the famine, and he distributed donations to the needy and offered medical help to the ill.⁴⁴⁷ The Daoist monastery led by Xu Mingye thus functioned as a social charity in difficult times. This earned fame for the monastery on Mount Qingxi, and Xiao Yi, Emperor Yuan of Liang, later dedicated a panegyric to it.⁴⁴⁸

Second, given that individual Daoist practitioners had dwelled on Mount Qingxi since the Jin time, the rise of Daoist monasteries might be dated earlier than Xu Mingye's time. Evidence from the biography of Shi Daoxian 道仙 or Sengxian 僧仙 in XGSZ indicates that Daoist monasteries had already been common on the mountain by the sixteenth year of the *tianjian* era (517), when the monk Daoxian resided there.⁴⁴⁹ The account of Daoxian's life explicitly demonstrates the interaction between Buddhist and Daoist traditions as well as the local worship of the mountain god. When he came to Mount Qingxi, it was already occupied by the Daoist monasteries, and the belief in a mountain god was deeply rooted in the community of mountain-dwellers. Daoxian availed himself of thaumaturgy to proselytize to people, which was commonly referenced in Buddhist biographical writings.

However, in light of his family origin and social networks, we can see that Daoxian's cooptation and appropriation of religious material on Mount Qingxi relied not only on his Buddhist expertise and personal charisma but also on patronage from the imperial clan. According to his biography in XGSZ, Daoxian was once an affluent Sogdian merchant, traveling between the Shu and Wu regions. Due to his admiration for the meditation master Da,⁴⁵⁰ he sunk all his treasures into the river and entered the monastic life in the Zhulin Temple on Mount Guankou 灌口 (in present Dujiangyan 都江堰, Sichuan). The local prefect and King of Shixing, Xiao Dan 蕭憺 (478–522), venerated him as a private mentor. When Xiao Dan was

⁴⁴⁷Bumbacher (265–66).

⁴⁴⁸ YWLJJ.78, p.1341.

⁴⁴⁹ XGSZ.J.25. "At that time, the Daoist monasteries were high and spacious. The followers were numerous. [Daoxian] was very often berated and filled with worries. p. 651b1–2.

⁴⁵⁰ XGSZ.J.30. "The biography of Shi Mingda", Daoxian's direct master and countryman. He followed his patron Xiao Dan to Jiangling and died there in 516.

appointed to Jingzhou as the prefect in 515, Daoxian went with him. Although Xiao Dan's official term ended four years later, his brother and successor, Xiao Hui (476–526), maintained a close relationship with Daoxian and received Dharma from him. Purportedly, after living on Mount Qingxi for twenty- eight years from 517 to 545, Daoxian returned to the Shu region. It is thus plausible that the initiation of Buddhist monasticism on Mount Qingxi was supported by the royal princes who had clear inclinations toward Buddhism, considering the huge costs and efforts required to build a temple on the mountain.

Three narratives in Daoxian's biography suggest conflict among Buddhism, Daoism, and local mountain beliefs:

1. At that time, the Daoist monasteries were high and spacious. There was a bustling crowd of commoners, who frequently scolded each other, which filled [people] with worries. Xian only remained calm and composed, showing no trace of disturbance. One evening, the Taoist priests suddenly saw a fire breaking out on the eastern ridge. Fearing that the wildfire might harm Xian, they all grabbed water containers and rushed to rescue him, when they saw that Xian was sitting amidst the raging fire, with fierce flames blazing [around him]. All were in awe of [his] divine virtue [manifested] in the fire. The Daoist priest Li Xuezu and others donated their lands and constructed statues. Temple and pagodas were swiftly completed. People from far and near, with nine out of ten households, all converted to the faith.

于時道館崇敞。巾褐紛盛。屢相呵斥。甚寄憂心焉。仙乃宴如。曾無屑意。一夕道士忽見東崗火發。恐野火焚害仙也。各執水器來救。見仙方坐大火。猛焰洞然。咸歎火光神德。道士李學祖等。捨田造像。寺塔欵成。遠近歸信。十室而九。⁴⁵¹

2. Xian once fell ill from fatigue, when he saw a boy in light blue robes emerging from the waters of Qing Stream, holding a bowl filled with fine medicine. He knelt and served it to [Xian]. [Xian] recovered in a moment.

仙或勞疾。見縹衣童子從青溪水出。椀盛妙藥。跪而進服。無幾便愈。⁴⁵²

3. During the *kaihuang* (581–600) era, he returned to the temple on the mountain. The road cleared itself, and the mountain deity swept the path ahead of [him].

⁴⁵¹ XGSZ.J.25. p. 651b1–7.

⁴⁵² XGSZ.J.25. p. 651b13–15.

開皇年中返于山寺。道路自淨。山神前掃。⁴⁵³

From the Buddhist narrative perspective, the monks had always subjugated the encountered opponents, whether they be Daoist priests, the mountain god in the guise of a man, snakes, or officials. These stories mirrored the actual challenges that Buddhist monks had to confront and respond to when they attempted to encroach on a limited space occupied by followers of other traditions. These unbelievable tales were created to proclaim the authority of Buddhism on the mountain.

The earlier Buddhist mountain-dwellers were primarily lone meditation monks, longing for a peaceful place where they would not be disturbed. The establishment of Buddhist temples on the mountain under the patronage of the imperial clan of Liang and Hou Liang (555–587) marked the rise of Buddhist monasticism on the mountain. However, religious life on the mountain was harsh and short of supplies. The monk Shi Faxi 釋法喜, a native of Xiangyang, studied at the temple on Mount Qingxi as a novice. His biography in XGSZ sheds light on the strained circumstances of the mountain life:

[There were] over forty monks at the temple on Mount Qingxi in Jingzhou. [Fa]Xi was a novice and responsible for the supply of the temple. During the day, he would cook and prepare firewood, while at night, he would study and recite the scriptures. Living in the mountains without candles, [he] burned wood for light.

荊州青溪山寺四十餘僧。喜為沙彌。親所供奉。晝則炊煮薪蒸。夜便誦習經典。山居無炬。燃柴取明。⁴⁵⁴

Another example of a local monk is the *ācārya* Cen 岑, who lived at a mountain temple for meditation. It was said that the supplies were always scarce, and the grains could not support

⁴⁵³ XGSZ.J.25. p. 651b29–c1.

⁴⁵⁴ XGSZ.J.19. p. 587a20–b2.

him, so he had to go to the town to beg for water every day.⁴⁵⁵

In summary, Mount Qingxi has been known as a spiritual place secluded from the world since the Jin period. First, the area was inhabited by solitary Daoists in pursuit of longevity and immortality. In the Liu Song period, the rise of Daoist state monasteries in the cities and their environs facilitated Daoist monasticism in the region. Although we cannot exactly date the emergence of Daoist monasticism on the mountain, by the beginning of the sixth century, at least, Daoist monasteries thrived on the mountain. Meanwhile, with the support from local governors, Buddhists strove to influence the mountain area and to claim privilege over Daoists and local beliefs in a mountain god. The Buddhist mountain-dwellers were predominantly meditation practitioners seeking tranquility.

3. Mount Yuquan

Mount Yuquan (“jade spring”) is also known as Fuzhou 覆舟 or Fuchuan 覆船 (“overturned boat”) because its shape resembles an overturned boat. As the local chronicles depicted, it was covered by a unique vapor which is neither smoke nor fog; thus, it was also called Duilan 堆藍 (“heap blue”) Mountain.⁴⁵⁶ The mountain is situated south of Mount Qingxi and adjacent to the seat of the Dangyang 當陽 local government. Aside from Mount Tiantai 天台 in Zhejiang province, it is regarded as one of the most significant sites of the Tiantai school due to the establishment of the Yuquan Temple on the mountain in 593 for the master Zhiyi 智顗 (538–597), the fourth patriarch of Tiantai school and its actual founder.

⁴⁵⁵ XGSZ.J.25. p. 660c19–23.

⁴⁵⁶ *Gujin tushu jicheng*. J.1137. <https://zh.m.wikisource.org/wiki/欽定古今圖書集成/方輿彙編/職方典/第1137卷> (Accessed on Jan, 24.2023).



Pic.4.3. Mount Yuquan

Zhiyi was a native of the region, born into the famed Chen clan, which originated from Yingchuan 潁川 (in the present Henan province). His father served in a high position at the court of Emperor Yuan of Liang, which was seated at Jiangling from 552 to 555. The ill-fated sovereign was annexed by the Western Wei dynasty (535–557) in the north when Zhiyi was fifteen years old, and his parents perished soon after. Then, seventeen- year- old Zhiyi left his hometown and embarked on his monastic career in Xiangzhou 湘州 (in the present Hunan province) under the patronage of his father’s acquaintance, Wanglin 王琳 (526–573), the prefect of Xiangzhou. When Zhiyi returned to his hometown in 593, he was fifty- six years old and once again experienced the destruction of his home country, namely the Chen state (557–589). After a three- year sojourn on Mount Yuquan (593–595), he was summoned to Jinling or Jiangdu 江都 in 595 by the new potentate, Yang Guang 楊廣 (569–618, r. 604–618), at the time the Prince Jin of Sui. He returned to Mount Tiantai the following year and died there one year later. Although his sojourn at the Yuquan Temple was rather short, he completed and lectured two of the three Great Tiantai Treatises there, namely *Mohe zhiguan* 摩訶止觀 (T1911, “*The Great Calming and Contemplation*”) and the *Miaofa lianhuajing Xuanyi* 妙法蓮華經玄義 (T1716, “*Profound Meaning of the Sūtra on the Lotus of the Marvelous Dharma*”). Thus,

Mount Yuquan played an important role in the narrative tradition of the Tiantai school.

Writings concerning Zhiyi are included in *Guaqing bailu* 國清百錄⁴⁵⁷ (T1934, hereafter GQBL) and *Sui Tiantai Zhizhe dashi biezhaun* 隋天台智者大師別傳⁴⁵⁸ (T2050, hereafter BZ), compiled or composed by his direct disciple Guanding 灌頂 (561–632). The XGSZ by Daoxuan also includes information about Zhiyi, but Daoxuan was not a member of the Tiantai sect and thus presents a neutral stance. Furthermore, at a much later time, the Tiantai historian Zhipan (ca.1220–1275) conducted a Buddhist historiography titled *Fozutongji* 佛祖統紀 (T2035, hereafter FZTJ), the construction of which resembles the famed secular history masterpiece *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Grand Historian) from the Han period. From Zhipan’s Tiantai sectarian perspective, the biography of Zhiyi was assigned to the section entitled *dongtu jiuzu ji* 東土九祖記 (“*The Annal of Nine Patriarchs in the Eastern Land*”), while his disciples and fellows were attributed to a biography section entitled *zhizhedachanshi pangchu shijia* 智者大禪師旁出世家 (“*The Hereditary House Derived from the Great Chan Master Zhiyi*”). The choice of monks who were subordinated to Zhiyi’s disciples in this section is very problematic. This section gives the impression that the Buddhist practice on Mount Yuquan was dominated by Zhiyi’s community and overstates his personal influence on the regional Buddhist community; thus, the internal Buddhist development of the mountain area is overshadowed. Indeed, Zhipan’s writing had a far-reaching influence on later works. The *Yuquansi zhi* 玉泉

⁴⁵⁷ A principal source to study Zhiyi and the early Tiantai community. It is a collection of 104 documents compiled by Guanding after Zhiyi’s death and is comprised of Zhiyi’s writings, letters addressed to him, memorial inscriptions and imperial edicts.

⁴⁵⁸ The only extant biography of Zhiyi in a separate text, composed by Guanding. According to the preface of the BL, there were originally three biographies devoted to Zhiyi, respectively written by Falun, Zhiguo, and Guanding. (p.793a21–22). Only Guanding’s work survived, which provides extensive information about Zhiyi’s life. For the most meticulous reading on this work, see Leon Hurvitz (1959): 100–173; Koichi Shinohara (1992): 117–134; Sato Tetsuei (1961): 2–73.

寺志 (*“The Monography on the Yuquan Temple”*, hereafter YZ), compiled during the Qing dynasty (1636–1912), is a telling example. It gleans all the biographies of monks who purportedly once resided at the Yuquan Temple and forms a biography section (*liezhuan* 列傳) for them. Strikingly, these biographies either largely resemble or are identical to those in FZTJ. Hitherto, YZ strongly shaped our knowledge about Buddhism at Mount Yuquan and blurred our insight into the Buddhist development on the mountain before the Tiantai master Zhiyi returned to the Jingxiang region and relocated the Tiantai community to Mount Yuquan in 593.⁴⁵⁹

In the following section, I argue that the depiction of a dominant Tiantai community on Mount Yuquan in Zhiyi’s time is a retrospective sectarian narration. By investigating the biographies of earlier Buddhist mountain-dwellers in XGSZ, I will elaborate on the Buddhist community on Mount Yuquan and its interactive relationship with its counterpart in the Jiangling city. The biographies suggest a rise of Buddhist meditation practice in the mountain area and the retreat of metropolitan monks into the mountains as a result of political turmoil and warfare in the city. They also shed light on the policy of conciliation toward the subjugated southern land, which focused on recruiting prominent monks from southern China and pacifying southerners through religion.

3.1 The earlier Buddhist mountain-dwellers

The biography section of YZ suggests that the earliest mountain-dweller on the mountain was a meditation monk named Pujing 普淨, which is a tendentious claim. It reads: “During the *jian’an* era (196–220) a meditation master Pujing had built a hut on Mount Yuquan.”⁴⁶⁰ The story continues with a myth of the manifestation of Lord Guan, a local deity that I will discuss later. Katama Shigeo asserts that Pujing’s encounter with Lord Guan must be a later

⁴⁵⁹ Katama, Shigeo (1997: 819–36) conducted a seminal study on the Yuquan Temple, it utilized the materials from *Yuquansi zhi* and focus on the narration formed by the Tiantai tradition.

⁴⁶⁰ *Yuquansi Zhi* (1985): 171.

fabrication⁴⁶¹ since the connection between the cult of Guanyu and Mount Yuquan first appears in sources from the mid-Tang period.⁴⁶² After the biography of Pujing, the text skips directly to the Sui period and begins with the biography of Zhiyi. The missing period in between, namely the period before Zhiyi took residence on the mountain, is the focus of my investigation below.

The biographies of monks from XGSZ allow us to understand the early development of Buddhism on Mount Yuquan. Most of the Buddhist mountain-dwellers devoted themselves deeply to meditation practice, thus hiding on the mountain for a tranquil environment. Their biographies are found in the *xichan* 習禪 (“practice meditation”) section in XGSZ with the titles, “The Biography of Shi Fachang 法常 at Jingzhou Fuchuan Mountain During the Hou Liang (550–587) Dynasty,” “The Biography of Shi Falin 法懔 at Jingzhou Yuquan Mountain During the Hou Liang Dynasty,” and “The Biography of Shi Faren 法忍 at Jingzhou Yuquan Mountain During the Hou Liang Dynasty.” Their exact dates of birth and death are unknown, but Daoxuan noted that they lived under the rule of Hou Liang. Thus, we must first consider the secular history of the Hou Liang dynasty and the imperial sponsorship of Buddhism during that period.

The Hou Liang dynasty, conventionally called Xi Liang, was founded by Xiao Cha (519–562, r. 555–562), grandson of the famed Buddhist emperor Liang Wudi (464–549, r. 502–549). Therefore, his regime is considered a rump state of the Liang dynasty. Cooperating with the hostile northern regime of Western Wei, Xiao Cha replaced the opponent court of Liang at Jiangling, led by his uncle Emperor Yuan (508–555). This reduced Hou Liang to a puppet regime controlled by Western Wei and later Northern Zhou (557–581). The reign centered on Jiangling and occupied only the territory of Jiangling and its periphery. It lasted thirty-two years and was ruled by emperors across three generations: Emperor Xuan, Xiao Cha; his son, Emperor Ming (542–585, r. 562–585), Xiao Kui 蕭歸; and his grandson Xiao Cong 蕭琮

⁴⁶¹ Katama Shigeo (1997): 827.

⁴⁶² ter Haar Barend (2017): 28.

(r.585–587). Since the Xiao clan was known for their devotion to Buddhism, it was a triumphant time for the Buddhist community. The treatise *Bianzheng lun* (Treatise Discussing the Correct) is attributed to Falin, the aforementioned native mountain-dweller on Mount Qingxi. It documents the contributions of Emperors Xuan and Ming to the Buddhist community:

Emperor Xiaoming of Liang established temples in Jingzhou by the name of Tianhuang, Zhiqi,⁴⁶³ Daming, Baoguang, Siwang, and so on... The two emperors of Later Liang reigned for thirty- five years at Jiangling. There were one hundred and eight temples. The mountain temples were Qingxi, Luxi,⁴⁶⁴ Fuchuan, Mount Long, Mount Jiu, and so on. The Buddhist rituals [in all temples] were solemn and magnificent, and the temple halls were exquisitely carved. Once [you] saw them, [you] would make up [your] mind to enlightenment and forget to return home. Monks and nuns numbered three thousand and two hundred.

梁孝明皇帝於荊州造天皇陟岵大明寶光四望等寺…後梁二帝治在江陵三十五年。寺有一百八所。山寺有青溪鹿溪覆船龍山葦山等。並佛事嚴麗堂宇雕奇。覩即發心見便忘返。僧尼三千二百人。⁴⁶⁵

Thus, as Falin reported, the temple on Mount Yuquan or Fuchuan existed before Zhiyi arrived there, and the Tianhuang Temple at Jiangling was patronized by Emperor Ming. The temple must have been maintained until the time of Daoxuan since it was depicted in detail in XGSZ:

The former Daoyin [Temple] is the present Tianhuang Temple. There are five rooms, and two mansions built of cypress wood. Zhang Sengyao, the general of the Left Army at the Liang court, personally painted the temple halls. The image of the vairocana buddha due north is awe-inspiring and emanates light sometimes. The five-layer [pagoda] in front of the hall emanates light as well. The portents [signaled both] auspiciousness and ominousness. Thereupon, they are not fully documented. Due to such extraordinary

⁴⁶³ Zhiqi is a classical allusion from the *Shijing* “Classic of Poetry”, which means remembering mother. Thus, this temple is likely built for the emperor Ming’s mother.

⁴⁶⁴ The Song, Yuan, Ming edition record it as Luyuan, while Luxi in the Taisho edition.

⁴⁶⁵ *Bianzheng lun*. p. 503b6–12.

experience, [I] added this record here.

昔日導因。今天皇寺是也。見有栢殿五間兩廈。梁右軍將軍張僧瑤。自筆圖畫。殿其工正北盧舍那相好威嚴。光明時發。殿前五級亦放光明。祥瑞休咎故不備述。由此奇感聊附此焉。⁴⁶⁶

The Daoyin Temple was therefore transformed into the Tianhuang Temple. Thus, we can determine that the monk Shi Huiyao 慧耀 (525–603), a direct disciple of Huisi (515–577), the third patriarch of the Tiantai School, resided in the Tianhuang Temple and practiced meditation there for fourteen years without stepping out of the temple.⁴⁶⁷ With this information in mind, we can now address the Buddhist ascetics and meditators on Mount Yuquan.

First, the monk Fachang once lived in Ye, the capital city of the northern Qi state (550–577). He became famous for lecturing on Vinaya. The sovereign of the Qi regarded him as the state master (Ch. *guoshi* 國師). However, he longed for peaceful life undisturbed by worldly affairs, so he left for Mount Heng and later moved to Mount Yuquan. Daoxuan depicted his lifestyle: “[he] had always lived on begging, wearing plain cotton cloth and dwelling in the forests and mountains.”⁴⁶⁸ Fachang became acquainted with a meditation monk living on the east side of Mount Yuquan and taught him the art of “contemplating the mind” or “mind-observing,” a meditation practice advocated by Huisi. The story reads:

There was a monk named Fayin, [who] lived in the east range of Mount Fuchuan (Yuquan) for a long time. [He] recited the *Fahua* [jing] (“the *Lotus Sūtra*”), the *Weimo* [jing] (Skt. *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sutra*), and the *Siyi jing* (“*Sūtra of the Questions of Viśeṣa-cintibrahma*”) for his daily practice, but he was not yet familiar with mind observation. When [Fayin] later arrived at Songzi he met with [Fa]chang, seeing that he had extraordinary capacities. Thereupon, he returned to seek guidance [from Fachang]. However, [Fachang] remained silent and did not respond. After spending a summer together, [Fayin pleaded for

⁴⁶⁶ XGSZ, J. 25. p. 662a21–b12. In his biography it articulates that he practiced meditation in the Daoyin Temple along with a meditation master Daoyi.

⁴⁶⁷ XGSZ, J. 25. p. 662a21–b12

⁴⁶⁸ XGSZ, J.16. p. 556b1–14.

instruction] in a flood of tears and mucus, so [Fachang] finally revealed the essence of the mind-observing practice.

有僧法隱者。久住覆船山東嶺。誦法花維摩思益以為常業。而未閑心觀。後至松滋見常異操。乃歸而問津。遂默而不對。乃經一夏。涕泗滂沱方示心要。⁴⁶⁹

This story implies that Fachang's visit to Mount Heng was undertaken to take tutelage under Huisi. Fachang likely promoted the meditation practice he learned from Huisi and circulated it through the community on Mount Yuquan, while Huiyao transmitted Huisi's meditation method in the city temple, Tianhuang. Huisi's early influence on the region thus played a prominent role in spreading Buddhist contemplation methods through the area.

Second, the monk Faren, a native of Jiangling, entered monastic life at the Tianhuang Temple. After receiving the full precepts, he upheld the teaching of the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Weimojie jing* 維摩詰經 (T475, Skt. *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sutra*). For the same reason as Fachang, he left the city for Mount Yuquan. His life on the mountain was very harsh and austere. It is depicted in XGSZ:

[Faren] practiced dhūta (austerities) under the cliff, staying alone to observe the truth. For over thirty years, [he] only ate wild fruits, wore hemp garments and worn-out cassocks. [He] was content with his secluded forest and did not strive for help from outside. When his ripe grain was exhausted, he continued eating fruit, never relying on begging. Sometimes he ate only once for seven days, sitting cross-legged pursuing [his] aspiration. Once, he spent (money) for three pecks of rice for the whole summer, restraining himself from consuming it all. [In the end], five liters were still left. Although sleeping alone does not fall within the precepts, he was so frugal and restraint that he acted separately in one single niche. The dungeon where he resided was only large enough to accommodate his body. In the hottest period of summer and the harshness of winter, he never left his dwelling. Thus, in the cold, he did not add extra padding, and in the heat, he did not reduce his clothing. [He] tranquilly upheld the Way and behaved only in the way of wuwei, ("effortless action")⁴⁷⁰. Suddenly, an elephant appeared without reason at the niche and

⁴⁶⁹ XGSZ. J.16. p. 556b14. 操 is a writing error. It should be cao 操 in the context.

⁴⁷⁰ *Wuwei* is an important concept in Chinese statecraft and Daoism. It literally means no-action. Here in this context it refers to the lifestyle of the monk Faren, who simply followed the rule of the nature without doing

stayed for several days. [Fa]ren then fell ill and passed away in the right flank posture (lying on his right side) in a cave north of the temple. He lived for sixty- seven springs and autumns.

巖下頭陀自靜觀理。三十餘年木食麻衣破衲而已。自得幽林。無求外護。升粒若盡。繼以水果。終不馳求。或一食七日跏坐求志。曾於一夏費米三斗。必限自恣。猶盈五升。雖獨宿非入戒科。而儉約一隅別行。所止龕室纔容膝頭。伏夏嚴冬形不出戶。故寒不加絮。熱不減衣。安然守道。無為而已。忽有一象無事至龕。經于數日。忍便現疾。於寺北窟右脇而終。春秋六十有七。⁴⁷¹

From this depiction, we can infer that Faren was a Buddhist ascetic living in a *kanshi* 龕室, which literally means a chamber with a shrine inside. It is a kind of meditation chamber excavated on a stone cliff and is much smaller than a cave(*ku* 窟). This Buddhist construction prevails in northern China; the Yungang 雲岡 cave in Datong 大同 is an excellent example that still exists today. However, the Yuquan Temple was not only for austere, advanced meditators but also for novices, as indicated in the biography of Shi Falin, who entered the Buddhist sangha at the Yuquan Temple when he was fifteen years old. Furthermore, there is evidence that Mount Yuquan was an optimal retreat for metropolitan monks who were tired of the secular world and the city life in the capital Jiangling. Faren is not a unique case; the leading monk of the region, Shi Falun 法論 (fl. 528–606), shared a similar experience.

Initially, Shi Falun lived at the Tianhuang Temple in Jiangling. Presumably due to the fall of the Emperor Yuan's court at Jiangling in 555 and the destruction of the city, he took refuge on Mount Yuquan. He was reportedly versed in the *Chengshi lun* (Skt. *Satyasiddhi- śāstra*) and enjoyed composing prose. His anthology was in circulation but is no longer available. However,

anything to improve his living condition.

⁴⁷¹ XGSZ.J.16. p. 557b29–c12.

the epitaph and inscriptional hymn that he composed for outstanding southern monks- Shi Zhiyun 智雲 of the Huiji 慧日 *daochang*, Shi Zhikuang 智曠 (526–600) of the Kaishan 開善 Temple in Jingzhou, Shi Zhiwen 釋智文 of the Fengcheng 奉誠 Temple in Jiankang, and Shi Baoqiong 釋寶瓊 of the Da Pengcheng 彭城 Temple in Jiankang- are recorded in XGSZ. Moreover, as Zhiyi's countryman and peer, Shi Falun dedicated a biography to Zhiyi, which is regrettably not extant. Although he was hiding in the mountains, his fame attracted Emperor Ming of Liang, who purportedly summoned Falun and granted him high treatment. Contrary to Zhiyi, who left the region for Jiankang and received high treatment from the imperial clan of the Chen state, Falun had been active in the region. After Sui annexed the Chen in 589, indomitable southerners gathered against the invaders. Although several rebellions were quenched in a short time, the Sui court had to resort to pacification policies to maintain the reunification of the country. Coopting the prominent figures of the Buddhist clergy was an expedient measure for pacification. Thus, Falun and Zhiyi, the preeminent monks from the southern land, both drew particular attention from the ruler of the Sui.

At the beginning of the year 590, Emperor Wen of Sui issued a letter to Zhiyi. It clearly shows that the throne was expecting submission and loyalty from the Buddhist community in the south. The letter states:

We [Emperor Wen] hold profound reverence and deep faith in Buddhism. In the past, when during his reign Emperor Wu of Zhou, destroyed Dharma teaching, [we] made a heartfelt vow to protect and uphold it. Upon receiving the Mandate of Heaven, we immediately set about restoring [Buddhism]. Relying on the divine power [of the Dharma], the Wheel of the Dharma turns once again. Sentient beings in all ten directions all received benefit from it. Lately, due to the tyranny and cruelty of the Chen dynasty, the people in the southeast could not endure the misery of forced labor. Therefore, I ordered generals to send out troops to eliminate this scourge for the people. The lands of Wu and Yue have now been cleansed. Both the secular and religious communities are at peace, which greatly aligns with Our wishes. [We] revere the true Dharma and relieve [the suffering of] all living beings. I wish to ensure that the field of merit endures forever and that the bridge [to liberation] remains boundless. Since you, Master [Zhiyi], have gotten rid of the fetter of the mundane world, cultivated yourself, and converted others you will certainly encourage and guide the monastic community to firmly uphold the precepts, and to inspire admiration

in those who see you and generate virtue in those who hear of you. Only [by doing so] will you align with the heart of the great path. This is to fulfill the true purpose of the monastic life. If with one's body one wears the robes of a monastic, but the mind is stained by worldly dust, this will not only lead to all living beings to be left without refuge, but it is also to be feared that the gate to the wondrous Dharma will also face further slander and defamation. Therefore, you should encourage and inspire [monastics], to align with Our intentions. As the spring days grow warmer, I hope your spiritual practice and well-being are flourishing.

朕於佛教敬信情重。往者周武之時毀壞佛法。發心立願必許護持。及受命於天。仍即興復。仰憑神力。法輪重轉。十方眾生俱獲利益。比以有陳。虐亂殘暴。東南百姓勞役不勝其苦。故命將出師。為民除害。吳越之地今得廓清。道俗乂安。深稱朕意。朕尊崇正法。救濟蒼生。欲令福田永存。津梁無極。師既已離世網。修己化人。必希獎進僧伍。固守禁戒。使見者欽服。聞即生善。方副大道之心。是為出家之業。若身從道服心染俗塵。非直含生之類。無所歸依。仰恐妙法之門。更來謗讟。宜相勸勵。以同朕心。春日漸暄。道體如宜也。⁴⁷²

Emperor Wen of Sui thus explicitly expressed his intention to make Zhiyi the inspector and instructor of the saṃgha and exhorted those unbowed southerners. In the same year, he sent his son Yang Guang to station in Jiangdu 江都 (the present Yangzhou 揚州) as the representative of the throne. Yang Guang recruited Zhiyi to Jiangdu, the seat of government in the south. Meanwhile, Falun was also recruited into the Huiji *daochang* (dharma practice center), which was built by Yang Guang to gather southern monks in Jiangdu.

In a letter entitled “A Letter from the King to the Mount Lu,” Yang Guang mentioned that the Huiji *daochang* had been completed and the master Falun had arrived there.⁴⁷³ The letter

⁴⁷² GQBLJ.2. Document No.22. T1934.46.802c11–23.

⁴⁷³ GQBLJ.2. [Yang Guang] established the Huiji *daochang* in the outer fringe of [his] residence to accommodate the meditation master Zhao and his fellows. The master Lun of Jiangling also had arrived from afar. T1934.46.805c29–806a14.

was sent in the year 592 when Zhiyi attended a summer retreat on Mount Lu. Thus, Falun stayed at the Huiyi *daochang* from 592 onwards. At the end of the year 600, Yang Guang became the crown prince. Thereupon, he moved his Buddhist facilities to Chang'an and constructed the Riyan 日嚴 Temple⁴⁷⁴ to resettle monks from the Huiyi *daochang*. Falun was one of them. Moreover, Falun was also appreciated by Emperor Wen during his sojourn in Chang'an. After Yang Guang ascended to the throne in the seventh month of the year 604, he embarked on the construction of the eastern capital Luoyang in 605. This construction project included a plan to build a Buddhist practice center named Huiyi inside the palace. The construction was completed the following year, and Falun was said to be accommodated there. At the time, he was rewarded by Empress Xiao, the daughter of Emperor Ming of Hou Liang and the wife of Yang Guang. Beginning at Mount Yuquan, proceeding to the Huiyi practice center in Jiangdu, then to the Riyan Temple in Chang'an, and finally landing in the Huiyi internal practice center in Luoyang, the trajectory of Falun paralleled that of Yang Guang. It evoked Yang Guang's predilection for the southern monk and his religious policy in favor of the southern saṃgha in general. However, shortly after the resettlement in Luoyang, Falun died at seventy-eight years old. He was granted to be buried in his hometown, the Jingxiang region, in honor of his roughly fifteen-year service for the throne.

The preceding discussion demonstrates the connection between the Tianhuang Temple at Jiangling and Mount Yuquan through the early monastic lives of Faren and Falun. The Tianhuang Temple appears as a meditation practice center inhabited by the disciple of Huisi. This alludes to the influence of Huisi's practice in the Jingxiang region, especially in the provincial capital Jiangling and the peripheral area of Mount Yuquan.

Furthermore, the well-connected southerner Falun enjoyed high prestige at the court of Ming of Hou Liang and the subsequent Sui. When we scrutinize the evolution of his ecclesiastical career, it is obvious that he held a strong connection to the royal families and to the preeminent monks of the saṃgha, although he was originally a reclusive mountain-dweller

⁴⁷⁴ For the Huiyi *daochang* see Yamasaki (1952): 22–35.

on the Yuquan mountain. This reveals that Mount Yuquan was not an isolated world immune to the secular sovereign. On the contrary, during the Hou Liang time, Mount Yuquan was a crucial Buddhist center supplied and sponsored by the imperial clan. The leading monk Falun was accordingly patronized by the ensuing state Sui and functioned as a conciliator to pacify the discontent southerners.

Regarding his influence on the local Buddhist community, we only know of his disciple Faxing 法行, who was portrayed in XGSZ as a mysterious monk possessing fortune-telling abilities. He was eventually executed by Emperor Ming due to his prediction about the doom of Hou Liang. Notably, a mysterious account contained in Zhiyi's biography sheds light on the establishment of the Yuquan Temple:

Whenever [Faxing] traveled to Qingxi, passing by the summit of Fuchuan (Yuquan) Mountain [he] saw springs flowing through lush trees. He would then look back and say, 'Ten years from now, a person of great fortune and wisdom will come to build a monastery here.' When the Wise One [Zhiyi] arrived, it indeed fulfilled the earlier prediction.

每往清溪。路由覆船頂。見泉流茂木乃顧曰。十年之後。當有大福慧人營構伽藍。

及智者來儀。果成先告。⁴⁷⁵

As Shinohara has pinpointed, miracle stories constituted a large part of Buddhist biographies and served as a fundamental source for the compilers.⁴⁷⁶ This account could thus be interpreted as a token that shows the far-reaching and long-standing impact of Zhiyi on the Buddhist narratives about Mount Yuquan. It corresponds to the variations and potential forgeries of narratives preserved in a much later work, FZTJ, which I will demonstrate below.

First, regarding Falun, his biography is subordinated to the *zhizhe dachanshi pangchu shijia* (The Hereditary House Derived from the Great Chan Master Zhiyi). The biography states:

⁴⁷⁵ XGSZ.J.25. p. 658a27–b1.

⁴⁷⁶ Shinohara, Koichi (1988): 119–228.

The meditation master Falun studied on Mount Yuquan, together with Zhiguo from Kuaiji and Falin from Longtian Temple on Mount Zhongnan. They all learned from the Wise One [Zhiyi] and composed biographies of him. However, none (of these biographies) are extant. The Biezhuan composed by Zhang'an [Guanding] is based on the edition by Chan master Zhiji of Guoqing Temple. [Guanding] slightly expanded and revised it, thus it circulated through the world. Although the four masters (Falun, Zhiguo, Falin, and Zhiji) left no deeds to trace, they were all excellent masters who attained the Path in their time. References: the preface to GQBL and the commentary to BZ.

禪師法論。依玉泉學。與會稽智果終南龍田法琳。皆同學智者。並與智者作傳。皆不復存。章安所撰別傳。用國清智寂禪師本。稍加增益遂行於世。此四師雖無事迹可尋。亦皆當時得道英器。見百錄序及別傳注。⁴⁷⁷

It is striking that Zhipan states that the records relevant to Falun, Zhiguo,⁴⁷⁸ Falin,⁴⁷⁹ and Zhiji 智寂 are lost since their accounts all remain intact in XGSZ. The most reasonable explanation for this error is that Zhipan confined his sources to the documents pertinent to the Tiantai school, as evidenced by the references listed at the end of his account. This further confirms that Zhipan held a Tiantai sectarian bias in the compilation of the FZTJ. Moreover, the biographies of Zhiguo, Falun, and Falin in XGSZ do not mention their discipleship under Zhiyi. Although scholars have proposed the possibility that Falin studied under Zhiyi, there is no direct evidence to confirm this claim.⁴⁸⁰ As for Falun, a contemporaneous figure to Zhiyi, the GQBL records that Falun and Huizhuang lectured on the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-sūtra*, consulting Zhiyi's commentary. This implies that Zhiyi's doctrinal explanation had been widely accepted by the Buddhist community and supported by the royal family but provides no insight

⁴⁷⁷ FZTJ.J.9.T2035.49.199c17–21.

⁴⁷⁸ XGSZ.J.30. p. 704b12–c5.

⁴⁷⁹ XGSZ.J.24. p. 636b23–639a7.

⁴⁸⁰ Nakanishi, Hisami (2002: 5–6) enumerates two life periods of Falin during which he possibly encountered Zhiyi since they appeared to be in the same place: 1).in Falin's youth, he traveled to Jiankang where Zhiyi stayed for three and half years (585–588); 2). In 594 Falin lived in reclusion on the Mount Qingxi, where near the Yuquan Temple, which Zhiyi concurrently established. However, I assume that Falin inevitably was influenced by Zhiyi, the great master of his age, but did not necessarily take discipleship under Zhiyi.

into the personal master–disciple relationship between Falun and Zhiyi. It is hard to believe that Falun and Zhiguo, who both gained favoritism from Yang Guang and were recruited into his personal mentor group, would be disciples of Zhiyi, as they were all equally patronized and venerated by Yang Guang in different manners.

The meditation master Shi Daoyue 釋道悅 is another example that betrays Zhipan's Tiantai prejudice in compiling the FZTJ. Comparing the biography of Daoyue in XGSZ to the one in FZTJ, it is clear that Daoyue's life is reformulated in FZTJ. The earlier text, XGSZ, states:

At the age of twelve, [Daoyue] renounced worldly life and received the precepts at Yuquan Temple. [He] was content with living in poverty and led a frugal life. [He] excelled in chanting the *Mahā-prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* and the *Lotus Sūtra*, making their recitation a regular part of his daily practice. Following the prescribed scriptures and precepts, he recited one *juan* daily, and people were all amazed by him. Previously, when the Wise One [Zhiyi] entered Mount Yuquan, there were no bells or chimes. From the source of the spring, [Daoyue] obtained a piece of strange stone. [He] hung it up and struck it, [producing] a pure and clear sound. [Daoyue], at this temple, would recite entire *juan* and strike the chime once. Those who heard it were filled with reverence. Moreover, his recitation sounded like a clear stream creating melodious rhythms. Those who heard it forgot their weariness. Because of this, those who have traversed the seen and unseen worlds often experienced auspicious signs.

十二於玉泉寺出家受戒。安貧苦節。尤能持念大品法華。常誦為業。隨有經戒日誦一卷。人並異之。初智者入於玉泉。未有鐘磬。於泉源所獲怪石一片。懸而擊之。聲響清徹。悅於此寺每誦卷通。扣磬一下。聞者肅然。且其誦聲如清流激韻。聽者忘疲。所以幽明往者屢有祥感。⁴⁸¹

In FZTJ:

At the age of twelve, [Daoyue] devoted himself to the Yuquan Temple, following the Wise

⁴⁸¹ XGSZ.J.25. p. 661c21–28.

One (Zhiyi), and renouncing worldly life to become a monk. He chanted the *Mahā-prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* and the *Lotus Sūtra* as his daily practice. At the time when the temple was first built, there were no bells or chime stones. The master [Daoyue] found a strange stone by the spring source and hung it up. Whenever he completely recited one juan of sutras, he would strike [the stone], and the sound and rhythm it produced were purifying. Those who heard it were filled with reverence. People who could communicate with the unseen world often received auspicious signs from it.

十二投玉泉依智者出家。誦大品般若及妙經。日為常課。時造寺之初未有鍾磬。師於泉源得怪石懸之。每誦經卷通輒扣下。聲韻清徹聞者肅然。幽冥之徒屢獲祥感⁴⁸²

As demonstrated above, the two versions of Daoyue's account are highly similar in formulation and wording. The essential information that Zhipan added in FZTJ is that Daoyue took discipleship under Zhiyi at Mount Yuquan, while Daoxuan only noted that Daoyue and Zhiyi appeared concurrently on the mountain, mentioning nothing of a discipleship. Thus, we can assume that in the narrative tradition of the Tiantai school, subordinating the monks who were already active in the Mount Yuquan area was a literary tool to proclaim the dominant position of Zhiyi in the region. In the case of Falun, Falin, and Daoyue, the lives of these local monks on the mountain were embellished with discipleship under Zhiyi to establish the privilege Zhiyi's teaching enjoyed in the region. This is doubtless a retrospective narration from the later time, as the earlier text, namely XGSZ, offers a completely different picture of the distribution of Buddhist groups in the mountain and Jiangling city.

In summary, before Zhiyi came to Mount Yuquan around 593, the mountain was inhabited by local Buddhist mountain-dwellers: Fachang, Fayin, Faren, Falin 懷, Daoyue, Falun, and his disciple Faxing. The master Falun was venerated by Emperor Ming of Hou Liang and the two emperors of Sui. By analyzing his relationship with the sovereigns, we have determined that the newly established Sui potentates were longing for support from the Buddhist community in the south, and by co-opting the leaders of the saṃgha, they managed to further stabilize their

⁴⁸² FZTJ.p. 198c5–20.

reign over the subjugated southern land.

On the one hand, when we focus on the trajectory of the above-mentioned monks, the interaction between the mountain area and the Jiangling city becomes clear. The Tianhuang Temple at Jiangling witnessed the monks Falun and Faren receive their early monastic training before living in reclusion on the mountain. This implies a connection between the community of Buddhist mountain-dwellers and their counterparts in the metropolis. On the other hand, if we pay attention to the practice method in circulation in the city and its periphery mountain areas, we find that the meditation practice advocated by Huisi from the Heng mountain, south of the Jiangxiang region, thrived. That is to say, before Zhiyi resided in the region, the influence of his master Huisi prevailed. To some extent, this could explain why Zhiyi was warmly welcomed by the local Buddhist community and his residence on Mount Yuquan attracted much attention from the later Tiantai sectarian Zhipan, who endeavored to establish the dominance of the Tiantai school in the mountain area and deliberately included local monks in the group of Zhiyi's disciples.

However, we must still ask: what were the actual historical circumstances Zhiyi would have confronted when he established the Yuquan Temple? The myth about the local tutelary deity Lord Guan assisting with the construction of the temple should come under scrutiny when we attempt to understand the relationship between Buddhism and the local cult. This myth will be the focus of the following section.

3.2 From history to legend: The establishment of the Yuquan Temple



Pic.4.4. the main entrance of the Temple Yuquan

The relationship between Zhiyi and the rulers of Sui is an essential topic when attempting to understand Zhiyi's contribution to the Buddhist community in the Jingxiang region, which climaxed with the establishment of a temple on Mount Yuquan under the patronage of the Sui court. To reconstruct the historical circumstances under which the temple was established, we must meticulously investigate the activities and events related to Zhiyi. The main historical sources we can consult are GQBL, BZ, XGSZ, and FZTJ, which I briefly discussed in the preceding section. The chronicle of Zhiyi's life in GQBL offers us a brief overview of his activities from 589 to 595:⁴⁸³

589: After the Chen state was annexed, Zhiyi headed to the Jing region but stopped on Mount Lu due to a dream.

⁴⁸³ GQBL.J.4. p.823b24–c1.

590: The emperor of Sui (Wendi) issued Zhiyi a letter.⁴⁸⁴

591: Prince Guang invited Zhiyi to Yangzhou (Jiangdu) and received precepts from him in the eleventh month.⁴⁸⁵ Zhiyi was granted the appellation of Zhizhe 智者 (“The Wise One”).

592: Zhiyi went to the Jing and Xiang 湘 regions (the present Hunan and Hubei provinces). Again, he passed by Mount Lu and spent a summer retreat there. Then, he arrived in Tan 潭 (the present Hunan).

593: Zhiyi reached the Jing region to visit his hometown. He established the Yuquan Temple. Guanding heard *Xuanyi* 玄義 (T1716) from him for the first time.

594: Zhiyi lectured on *Mohezhi* (T1911) at the Yuquan Temple.

595: Zhiyi left the Jing region for Jiankang. He conducted a commentary on the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* (T1777) at the request of Prince Guang.

In addition, according to Document No.23 in GQBL, Prince Jun 俊 addressed a letter to Zhiyi to invite him to the Fangdeng 方等 Temple in Anzhou 安州 (the present Anlu 安陸 city in Hubei). The letter reads: “The Fangdeng Temple in Anzhou was established for the emperor [Wen]. It would be great if the Master went there for preaching. [I] have given the order to the relevant institution to dispatch the supplies [for you].”⁴⁸⁶ Prince Jun is known for his devotion to Buddhism and once requested to join the saṃgha. In BZ, this matter is rendered in comparison with Prince Guang’s invitation. The narration indicates that the master had speculated that he may not be able to fulfill the wish of Prince Jun due to the lack of karmic conditions. In contrast, he responded to Prince Guang’s invitation to Jiangdu, stating, “I and the great King (Yang Guang) formed a deep karmic condition. Sailing with the wind I will arrive

⁴⁸⁴ The letter could be found in GQBL, document No.22. I have discussed it in the last section.

⁴⁸⁵ The event of receiving precepts dated on the 23.11.591 was concord with the records in other three sources.

⁴⁸⁶ GQBL.J.2: 「安州方等寺奉為皇帝修立。屈法師向彼行道。甚不可言。已令所司發遣供給。」 p. 802c27–29.

in days.”⁴⁸⁷ Guangding’s intention to form a deep karmic relationship between his master Zhiyi and Yang Guang, the rightful emperor in his time, is thus vividly shown.

All four sources agree that Zhiyi conferred Bodhisattva precepts on Prince Guang in the eleventh month of 591. His following agenda can be represented based on the documents in GQBL.

The twelfth year of the *kaihuang* era (592):

- In the second month, Zhiyi crossed the Yangtze River to the Yanling 延陵 town (in present Zhenjiang), then went to Mount Xixia 棲霞 (nearby Nanjing). From there, he said farewell to Prince Guang.⁴⁸⁸

- In the third month, Prince Guang sent a letter (Document No.30) to Zhiyi, intending to retain him on Mount Xixia.⁴⁸⁹ However, the following document (No.31) shows that Prince Guang eventually let Zhiyi go to Mount Lu. Moreover, at the request of Zhiyi, Prince Guang become the benefactor of the Donglin and Fengding 峰頂 Temples on Mount Lu.

- In the eighth month, the messenger brought news from Mount Lu to Prince Guang announcing that Zhiyi had left for the memorial of his master Huisi on Mount Heng.⁴⁹⁰

- In the eleventh month, Prince Guang sent a letter (Document No.41) asking Zhiyi to return to him. It appears that the messenger was sent to Mount Heng.

The thirteenth year of the *kaihuang* era (593):

⁴⁸⁷ BZ. 「我與大王深有因緣。順水背風不日而至。」 T2050.50.194c13–14.

⁴⁸⁸ GQBL.J.2. Document No.29. p. 804a25–27.

⁴⁸⁹ GQBL.J.2. Document No.30. p. 804a29–b14.

⁴⁹⁰ GQBL.J.2. Document No. 40. p. 806a1–2.

- In the second month, Prince Guang addressed a letter to Jingzhou (Document No.42) asking Zhiyi to join him on the way to the capital city of Chang'an. In the letter, Prince Guan stated, "The dharma event held on Mount Heng has been completed for a long time. The good actions in Jiangling will be accomplished as well."⁴⁹¹

- In the fifth month, the monk Zhisui 智邃 arrived at Chang'an as a messenger to Prince Guang. Based on my interpretation of Document No.43,⁴⁹² comprised of six letters from Prince Guang to Zhiyi, Zhisui carried several important missions. First, Zhisui reported Zhiyi's uncomfortable experience in Jingzhou, by which Prince Guang was astonished. Zhiyi also mentioned this experience in his letter (Document No.65) to Prince Guang in 597. Second, Zhisui brought the construction plan for the temple on Mount Yuquan and was expecting a name from the court, which would symbolize imperial approval and protection of the temple. Third, Zhisui presented a gift to Prince Guang, which was an antique cassock from the time of Emperor Wu of Liang. Lastly, he asked for an inscriptional text for the master Huisi's monument on Mount Heng.

- In the seventh month, as Document No.44 reports, Emperor Wen conferred a name upon the temple. BZ indicates that the original granted name was Yiyin 一音 ("one sound") but was later changed to Yuquan.⁴⁹³

- In the eighth month, as recorded in Document No. 99, Chen Zixiu 陳子秀, a lay Buddhist of the Daoyin 導因 Temple at Jiangling, asked Zhiyi to give lectures on the *Lotus Sūtra*.

⁴⁹¹ GQBLJ.2. Document No.42. 仰揆衡嶽法事久當圓滿。江陵功德復應成就。 p. 806a22–23.

⁴⁹² GQBLJ.2. Document No.43. p. 806b7–9.

⁴⁹³ BZ. p. 195a26–27.

- In the ninth month, Zhiyi received three letters from Chang'an (Document Nos.96, 97, and 45). The first was from Cai Zheng 蔡徵,⁴⁹⁴ the former core official of the Chen state, who was aware of Zhisui's visit and probably entrusted him to bring the letter to Zhiyi. The second was from the monk Tanxian 曇暹 of the Xingguo 興國 Temple; of him, we only know his name. The last letter was from Prince Guang (Document No.45). In addition, the undated Document No. 95, a letter from the former emperor of Hou Liang, Xiao Cong, and the undated Document No. 98, a letter from the monks of Daoyin Temple, were likely written at this time. Document No. 95 expressed Xiao Cong's appreciation to Zhiyi for his effort in building a temple on Mount Yuquan and disseminating Dharma in the region. Document No. 98 is a letter recommending that a monk named Zhen from Shizhu Temple study under Zhiyi. The five documents (Nos. 95–99) indicate Zhiyi was highly praised and welcomed by the local lay and Buddhist communities during his stay at Jiangling, and his influence even reached Chang'an and the elites of the former dynasty.

The fourteenth year of the *kaihuang* era (594):

- In the tenth month, Prince Guang sent a letter (Document No.46) on his way to Mount Tai 泰. The record on the annal of Emperor Wen states that an earthquake occurred in Chang'an that year and the ensuing famine compelled the emperor to move the court to Luoyang for supplies in the eighth month. In the twelfth month, Emperor Wen offered a sacrifice to Mount Tai. Prince Guang participated in all events.

The fifteenth year of the *kaihuang* era (595):

- In the first month, Prince Guang sent a letter (Document No.47) informing Zhiyi that the sacrificial ceremony on Mount Tai had been completed. He was then traveling back to Yangzhou (Jiangdu) and wished for Zhiyi to meet him there.

⁴⁹⁴ For the biography of Cai Zheng see *Chenshu*, J.29.p.391–93.

In summary, Zhiyi's itinerary from 592 to the early spring of 595 was as follows: Jiangdu, Mount Lu, Mount Heng, Jiangling and Mount Yuquan, and finally, Jiangdu (Yangzhou). Along his route, Zhiyi clearly sensed the administration's suspicion of the Buddhist community. In one of his letters to Prince Guang he wrote:

At the Dharma assembly in Jingzhou, there were over a thousand monks in attendance, and three hundred of them were practicing meditation. The local government was on tenterhooks, accusing [the assembly] of violating state regulations. How could they gather a crowd to become a headache for the officials? Therefore, in the morning, they gathered like clouds converging, and by evening, they scattered like rain dispersing. Should there be good sprouts, they did not obtain growth.⁴⁹⁵

於荊州法集。聽眾一千餘僧。學禪三百。州司惶慮謂乖國式。豈可聚眾用惱官人。故朝同雲合暮如雨散。設有善萌不獲增長。⁴⁹⁶

Considering the harsh situation in Jingzhou at the time, Zhiyi needed support from the imperial patrons to restore the Buddhist community. Thus, he sent Zhisui to the capital to present his plan and gain the trust and patronage of the court. His attempt was rewarded with the approval to erect a temple on Mount Yuquan. Furthermore, Prince Guang wrote a letter (Document No.55) to Daxi Ru 達奚儒,⁴⁹⁷ the local governor of Jingzhou, asking him to be the benefactor of the temple. He wrote:

The Chan master, the Wise One (Zhiyi), a man of noble character and high prestige, in recent years, took a detour to bestow the precepts of purity. Now, [He] is restoring the Shizhu Temple in your prefecture and establishing the Yuquan Temple to the west [of Jiangling]. [You] were invited to be the benefactor of both temples. Moreover, I have heard that you all have formed many excellent connections. The Great Vehicle (Mahayana) functioned smoothly and effectively. I deeply rejoice in this.

⁴⁹⁵ The last sentence implied that even when there were gatherings beneficial to the monastics, they had no chance to grow. Zhiyi attempted to complain that the officials enforced the regulation without distinguishing between good and bad.

⁴⁹⁶ GQBLJ.3. Document No.65. p. 809c25–29.

⁴⁹⁷ Daxi is a clan name of the Xianbei people.

智者禪師德尊望重。近年紆道爰授淨戒。今修治彼州十住寺。造立西徂玉泉寺。並見請為檀越。復聞公等多結勝緣。大乘運通。良深隨喜。⁴⁹⁸

As the document indicates, the Shizhu Temple at Jiangling and the Yuquan Temple on the mountain were supplied by the local government. The inscriptional record (Document No.94) on the Yuquan Temple offers us an insight into the process and preparation of the project, which I will elaborate on below.

Document No.94, entitled *Yuquansi Bei* 玉泉寺碑 (“the stone stele of the Yuquan Temple”), was composed by Huangpu Pi 皇甫毘 or 昆 Kun, the magistrate of Dangyang county, where Mount Yuquan was located. The stele was erected to celebrate the completion of the construction project. The text particularly exalted the Sui emperor (Wendi) for the reunification of the state and Prince Guang for pacifying and stabilizing the southern land. It also reveals the substantial donors from the local society:

You are faithful and knowledgeable patrons, accumulating good deeds from which others benefit. Each of you donated a piece of wood or a tile, and with this collective power, the construction progressed dramatically, as if assisted by divine power. After a short period of construction, [the temple] was ready for decoration. After some time, it was completed. Multi-tiered terraces, far-reaching pavilions, halls upon halls, and rooms interlinked-each differently formed for cold and heat (seasons), distinctly arranged for shade and sunlight...The artisans crafted the image with such skill that it shone like a golden mountain, and the sculptors captured its true likeness, serene and radiant as a full moon.

爾乃信心檀越積善通人。咸施一材俱投一瓦。憑茲眾力事若神功。營之不日而成飾矣。經時而就。層臺迴閣複殿連房。寒暑異形陰陽殊制...工圖相好湛若金山。匠寫真容凝如滿月。⁴⁹⁹

⁴⁹⁸ GQBL.J.3. Document No.55. p. 808b20–28.

⁴⁹⁹ GQBL. J.4. Document No.94. p. 820a6-15; p. 820a18–19,

As the above text suggests, the Yuquan Temple was generously constructed and adorned with delicate images and paintings. Moreover, the construction progress was so fast that it invoked people's imagination of being aided by deities. As far as the deities are concerned, it is well-known that the tutelary gods of the mountain, namely Guan Yu and his son Guan Ping 關平, came to be associated with the construction of the temple in FZTJ and a text preserved in *Quan Tangwen*, entitled *Chongxiu Yuquan guanmiao ji* 重修玉泉關廟記 (“A Record on Restoration of the Temple of Guan Yu on the Mount Yuquan”) and composed in 802.⁵⁰⁰ This text is considered to be the earliest document containing the legend of Lord Guan encountering the master Zhiyi on Mount Yuquan.⁵⁰¹ However, the earlier sources BZ, GQBL, and XGSZ contain no reference to the miracle that occurred when the temple was constructed. Guanding, as the direct disciple of Zhiyi, followed Zhiyi to Mount Yuquan and must have personally participated in the project. However, he never mentioned Guan Yu, only a drought caused by the rage of local gods. His story reads:

The place was originally wild and treacherous, [home to] divine beasts and aggressive snakes. As the proverb says, ‘In a den of the three poisons, those who set foot are filled with dread.’ [However, Zhiyi] established a temple in this place without worries. In the spring and summer, there was a drought. The common people all believed it was [due to] the wrath of the gods. Thus, the Wise One (Zhiyi) went himself to the spring's source to dispel this false belief. With his mouth, he himself recited prayers, and with his hands, he waved to dismiss[them]. Wherever he pointed, thick clouds gathered and rolled over the mountains, and a radiant rainbow rose from the spring. Wind and rain poured down, and songs of praise filled the roads.

其地本來荒險神獸蛇暴。諺云。三毒之藪踐者寒心。創寺其間決無憂慮。是春夏旱。百姓咸謂神怒。故智者躬至泉源滅此邪見。口自呪願。手又撝略隨所指處。重雲翬翬籠山而

⁵⁰⁰ *Quan Tangwen*, J.684. p.8875–76. The text was engraved into a stone stele in 1872 and preserved in the present Yuquan Temple in Dangyang.

⁵⁰¹ Wang Jianchuan (2001): 113.

來。長虹煥爛從泉而起。風雨衝溢歌詠滿路。⁵⁰²

The story was also included in Zhiyi's biography in XGSZ. As Daoxuan rendered it:

This place was once wild and dangerous, divine beasts creeping like snakes in the sun. After the construction of the temple, [Zhiyi] faced almost no hardship or worries. This spring there was a severe drought. The common people all believed it was [due to] the wrath of the gods. When Zhiyi arrived at the source of the spring and led the group in reciting scriptures, it immediately caused clouds to gather and rain to pour down. The false beliefs were dispelled on their own.

其地昔惟荒嶮。神獸蛇暴。創寺之後。快無憂患。是春亢旱。百姓咸謂神怒。顗到

泉源帥眾轉經。便感雲興雨霑。虛誣自滅。⁵⁰³

These two versions are highly similar. They imply that building a temple on Mount Yuquan sparked the antipathy of locals, as it metaphorically represented the drought caused by the rage of the god. The god might be the primitive natural god, namely the mountain god or the god living in the source of the spring in charge of making rain, but is not likely to be Lord Guan, since no evidence in the extant sources supports the worship of Lord Guan on Mount Yuquan in Zhiyi's time. The earliest literary allusion to the temple of Guan Yu in the region appears over one hundred years later in a poem by Lang Shiyuan 朗士元 (727–780?),⁵⁰⁴ and the legend that Guan Yu donated land to Zhiyi to establish a temple on Mount Yuquan was first mentioned in the aforementioned text composed around 802. Thus, integrating the local god Guan Yu into the Buddhist narrative of the legendary construction of the Yuquan Temple could be considered a localization of Buddhism. This must have occurred after the late ninth century, and thus is entirely disconnected from the interaction between the Tiantai community and the local society in the late sixth century. Instead, Zhiyi had to confront substantial pressure from the local, deep-

⁵⁰² BZ. p. 195a26–b3.

⁵⁰³ XGSZ.J.17. p. 566c7–10.

⁵⁰⁴ *Quan Tangshi*. J.248. p. 2782.

rooted belief in the mountain god. It seems that there were doubts and rumors about establishing a temple on the mountain, implying the tension between the strength of local belief and the newcomers, namely Buddhist monastics.

Conclusion

The present study has examined the development of Buddhism in the Jingxiang region from its origin to the early seventh century. This period served as an interregnum between two powerful and unified empires: the Qin-Han and the Sui-Tang. The Jingxiang region, strategically positioned on the borderlands between the southern and northern regimes, emerged as a pivotal player in both political and military affairs during this era, and Buddhism- as a foreign religious influence permeating the region- underwent a distinctive process of integration into the local society amidst the turmoil and divisions of the time. The first section of the study traced the chronological development of Buddhist institutions and establishments throughout the fourth to the early seventh centuries. Drawing from a rich array of historical sources- above all, biographies of monks- this section presented a compelling case for the periodization of Buddhism in this region into five phases:

The first phase can be characterized by the sporadic presence of Buddhist travelers en route to the Central Plain or, conversely, refugees from the Central Plain seeking shelter in the vast swath of territory in south China. During this period, a close scrutiny of the lives of three monks led to a significant finding: Prior to the arrival of Dao'an's group in Xiangyang in 365, the region experienced an influx of immigrants from the north, hailing especially from metropolises. These immigrants brought their religious beliefs with them and settled in the area. The foreign monk Zhi Qian and a native of Inner Pass Zhu Fahui are rare instances of Buddhist migration documented in the limited biographical sources available. The fact that these monks seem to be anomalies among the immigrants of the time, or at least in the minority, indicates that during this period, the region did not accord Buddhism significant importance. We can thus define this period as the embryonic stage of Buddhism in the Jingxiang region.

The second phase marks a remarkable proliferation of Buddhist institutions and establishments, a development facilitated by Dao'an and his group in the region. This phase could aptly be described as "the period of expansion." The arrival of Dao'an's group at Xiangyang ushered in a new epoch of Buddhist history in the borderland territory. Reportedly,

Dao'an led a contingent of four hundred monks, a larger assembly than the region had ever accommodated. Native elites and affluent individuals, known for their generosity and hospitality, contributed by donating lands and financial resources to establish temples in pivotal cities and settlements across the region. These included the Tanxi Temple at Xiangyang garrison, the Changsha Temple and the Zhulin Temple at Jiangling city, and the Shangming Temple at Shangming garrison. From the fourth to the seventh centuries, these temples were consistently regarded as major centers of Buddhist study. In particular, the Tanxi Temple and the Changsha Temple housing holy buddha statues and relics drew constant admiration from local governors and imperial houses. Under the guidance of Dao'an, the Buddhist communities expanded from Xiangyang to Jiangling, Mount Lu, the Shu region, and Jiankang, thereby establishing an extensive network that connected the Jingxiang region with other prominent Buddhist centers of the time.

The third phase of Buddhism in this region begins with the foreign influx from India and Kaśmīr- a large arrival of monks who brought with them an emphasis on scriptural translations and meditation practices. With the generous sponsorship of the local governor, Liu Yixuan, the King of Nanqiao embraced the first large- scale translation activities in this area, headquartered at the Xin Temple in Jiangling city. This translation initiative served as a continuation of the translation project in Jiankang. The leading monk Guṇabhadra (394–468), aided by Fayong, Huiguan, and Baoyun, completed at least thirteen translations of sutras, with four of them being carried out in Jiangling, while the Indian monk Guṇabhadra primarily served as a health consultant and religious emblem of protection, avoiding involvement in political turmoil. The translation activities in Jiangling came to an abrupt end around the year 454, which coincided with Liu Yixuan's thwarted bid for the throne.

Nonetheless, the expansion of meditation practices was relatively impervious to the prevailing political circumstances. The Kaśmīri meditation masters Dharmayaśas, Dharmamitra (356–442), and Kālayaśas engaged in meditation within the region during the early fifth century and were instrumental in introducing and promoting visualization techniques for the contemplation of buddhas and bodhisattvas. The practice of meditation flourished at the

Changsha Temple, the Xin Temple, and the Pipa Temple during this era. For example, Xuanchang (414–484), a disciple of Xuan Gao (402–444) from the lineage of Buddhahadra, came to play an important role in the region as a meditation master at the Changsha Temple. His instructions on meditation were perpetuated by his pupils Faqi and nun Huixu (430–499). Another of Xuan Gao's disciples, the master Yin 隱, became part of the meditation community centered at the Pipa Temple. His pupil Zhicheng (430–501) came to be the most influential master of the *Ten Recitation Vinaya* of the time, emphasizing both meditation and adherence to precepts. Lastly, upon examining the itinerary of monks and nuns of this period, we observe a strong interconnectedness among Buddhist communities in the Shu region, Jiangling, and the capital city of Jiankang. Moreover, their geographic mobility was intricately tied to their patrons, as monks and nuns often traveled alongside their benefactors between Jiangling and Jiankang, and vice versa.

The launching point of the fourth phase is the establishment of the Liang state in 502. Being the cradle of the Liang state, the Liang court focused their attention on the region, sparking a significant cultural transformation. Princes Xiao Gang and Xiao Yi introduced the refined culture of the capital, Jiankang, and engaged in intellectual pursuits, including collecting, editing, and compiling scriptures. Under the munificent patronage of the Liang royal house, Buddhist establishments thrived. This era of prosperity continued until the upheaval in 555 when Xiao Yi's Jiangling-based regime was overthrown, resulting in the fragmentation of the region into three territories: the Xiangyang area fell completely under the control of the northern regime, the Jiangling area transformed into Hou Liang, and the Wuchang area came under the rule of Chen.

At this time, the native monks were compelled to depart the region due to the political unrest. Some withdrew to the mountains for seclusion and meditation, while others journeyed to Jiankang, the capital of Chen, and Ye, the capital of Northern Qi. However, the majority eventually returned to their hometown at the beginning of the Sui era. This backflow sparked a convergence of studies on popular scriptures such as *Shidjing-lun* and *Sife-lü* in the north and the studies of *Sanlun* in the south, fostering an open and pluralistic atmosphere for Buddhist

studies in the region.

The final phase of Buddhist evolution in the Jingxiang territory culminated in the time of the Sui, a period marked by political unity and a deliberate effort to establish legitimacy and ideological cohesion through the embrace of Buddhism. Following a period of suppression initiated by the Northern Zhou from 574 to 578, Buddhist institutions and lay communities were reestablished in this borderland region. The inscription of a stone stele at the Qifa temple sheds light on an indigenous Dharma assembly featuring participants from diverse social strata, highlighting the role Buddhism played in constructions of identity within local society.

The second part of this study focused on the appropriation of innate religious sources in Buddhist literature and the encroachment of Buddhist monasticism in the mountainous areas of the region. The evolution of the local cult of Yang Hu in the early medieval period was considered first. As this development reveals, embellishing the local deity with Buddhist characteristics and incorporating them into didactic literature was a common strategy employed by mainstream Buddhists to assimilate into local society and culture- a culture shaped by narratives that were amendable to the localization of Buddhist narratives. The intertextuality of Buddhist and secular literature in term of narratives about Yang Hu manifests the shared knowledge background of both monks and secular historians and writers.

Second, through delving into the biographies of Daoists, hermits, and Buddhists monks and laymen who once lived in the outskirts of Jiangling city and Mount Qingxi, it became evident that the development of Buddhist monasticism in the mountains intersected with deeply ingrained Daoist traditions and beliefs regarding local mountain deities. With the support of imperial patrons, monks such as Sengxian were able to establish a presence on Mount Qingxi alongside Daoist establishments. The dynamic interplay between Buddhism and indigenous beliefs in this area was one of both competition and coexistence.

Third, the practice of monks on Mount Yuquan was examined. Following a period of political turmoil and the destruction of Jiangling city in the mid- sixth century, numerous monks sought refuge on Mount Yuquan where they lived secluded lives. Contrary to the accounts provided by the Tiantai historian Zhipan, who lived during the Song dynasty, the Buddhist

community on Mount Yuquan was comprised only of solitary meditation practitioners and ascetic monks prior to Zhiyi's arrival. As natives of the region and the foremost monks of their time, both Zhiyi and Falun garnered attention from the Sui court. Falun departed from his secluded mountain life on Mount Yuquan to serve under Yang Guang, while Zhiyi, under Yang Guang's patronage, established the Yuquan Temple on the same mountain. A political maneuver employed by Yang Guang and the Sui court coopted the illustrious monks of the recently subjugated south. The construction of the Yuquan Temple took place under these political circumstances, providing a solid foundation for the development of Buddhist monasticism on Mount Yuquan. Later, the convergence of the cult of Guan Yu and the Yuquan Temple demonstrated how Buddhism became localized in the region under different circumstances.


Appendix I

Transcription of the inscription on the Qifa stele

儀同三司樂平縣開國子汝南周彪 撰

州前從事譙國丁道護

若夫恬惓無為，本無變易。名言形有，乃有興亡。故如如不動，蓋波若之滿法；諸行無常，乃涅槃之半偈。是以半滿無方，示頓示漸；正像有法，有成有壞。成則須達布金，壞則婆門毀寶。況乃真君廢教。爰在闡茂之年；建德毀法，當乎敦牂之歲。自四海

別波，九州分長。法橋遄壞。舟舸（）不息。否終則泰，運屬太平。我大隋皇帝之有（膺）世也，至德□功，挺植區寓，鍊石補天，□鑿紐地，拔沉船于巨浪，混六合之同文，拯塗炭於倒懸。□八紘之共軌。南日之南，北陰之北。湯谷初輝。虞淵反景。章亥步不穹。廬（廬）敖所不至。莫不梯山航海，重譯賁王不識之奇，未聞之異。剖心摩踵，獻其方物。萬邦庭賀，史不絕書。四表告祥，府無虛月。於是大興三寶，法像畢脩。紹□□眾度人無限。襄陽縣龍泉鄉宿□開士蔣綸。故張鑒等士（卅）六人。率五戒士女，九齋清信共造禪林邑，為布薩堂，請僧行道，六時不廢。菩薩淨戒，八關無闕。開皇八年（588），歲次戊申。上苻悉撤小邑，入于（干）大寺。時刺史、上開府、吏部尚書、上庸公京兆韋世康，魏司空文惠公之長孫，周高士逍遙公之元子，累代重光，聯□鼎鉉，為行臺僕射。見此精廬，地側誼廬，而伽藍幽靜，門臨交道，北望遊女之隈，堂負神林，南眺香爐之鼎，東引的廬之溪，西通武侯之路。上連鳳嶺，綿亘崢嶸之山。傍接龍水。公乃出晉烈宗之世，前金像寺道安法師所造丈六金銅無量壽像。像身既毀，石趺獨存。并像夜遊萬山。成石靈迹。送寺西堂供□。□（法）師神惟不測，聖實難量。處齋一時，分身二寺。乘一駘驢，日行千里。晉太元四年（379），苻丕之陷擾樊也。法師與習鑿齒俱送長安，秦主歎曰：昔晉氏平吳，利得二陸。今討襄宛，獲一人有半。半當鑿齒，一人謂法師也。所鑄之像，屢有靈異。具記金像之碑。見毀之初，亦有神響。襄州前副防主，開府慕容哲，以周建德四年，蕤賓之月，總率軍士，牽倒不動。哲乃披甲震吼，經時方踣，群功鑿壞，於左腋下人見處有銘三行，記成之年。哲其日得病，至

夕便殞。寺僧法亘法師，資黃精之智，洞赤髯之解，詮釋言理。襄部居城一十二鄉，僧尼一十五寺，道士東西兩館，民吏數千。以公潔清戒業，祭奠之禮，理不害牲。其藪惟何，筭蒲而已。寺館則當寺當館，設齋追福。大市令丞，率佇貽士女，一日罷市，諸鄉諸方，州學縣學。并攀輶挽紼，遞日建無遮大會，并請法師講說。公第四息民部員外侍郎福嗣，第五息福驛，昆季二人，至性口禮，侍喪屆此。見父平昔前民故吏，號啕感慟，殆不自勝。乃於大會之所，舍父衣資服翫廿四件。并見錢付寺，成此尊儀，庶安養寶臺。仙靈不絕祇洹。日殿般若常明，竊以金銅有待，服篋所資，為利易滅。源夫夾綺，無用之用。貪者無心，庶為難朽。總管大將軍千金公，奉上勵勤，率下霜潔，愛惠臨民，卧治自理。長史前東宮內書舍人南陽趙祐，少陽杞梓，儲僚正直，畋漁墳典，藝術多通，贊味襄蕃，明如水鏡。府屬大都督弘農楊士政，四知英襁，七步俊才。夢鳥吞文，珪璋間出。襄陽縣令楊詢，槐棘勁枝，台輔孫姪，選才治劇，綏善肅姦，州縣羣司，并經維治道，相尚勤王，助成福業。彪庸訥，詢諸同志，共建高碑，為銘云爾：

森羅萬象 造化氤氲 形有即俗 色無即真 真俗在物 興滅在人 真君法毀 建德像湮
剥極則復 否終則泰 聖拯導盲 鑽仰繁賴 靈刹金幡 雕堂寶蓋 美九齋 譽五戒 寺講
治 龍鳳為羣 禪宰涑木 慧寫駢文 經維慧命 抽資構造 夾紵是營 摸茲勝寶 寔聖餘身
成創草 方藉妙緣 莊嚴相好 承安聖範 光殿堂 千輪滿耀 七處圓光 如經摩頂 似避真
床 臨江元率 我州前後 德澤滂仁 飛走 荆稟來蘇 襄思去檀 忍化物 行願為首 如何
辭世 遽已 漢曲 若喪慈親 兩雁迭來 四馬蹢躅 如戀佳城 狝蒐踣躅 民吏數千
建齋追福 哀哀孝子 并連季連 傾資嚴饒 天中之天 以申顧復 等施之 維陽寢政 民歌
日理 總讚福田 宰官隨喜 僧祇有量 德音無已

趙勵施地主胡粲 施地主熊浚

鳳凰主宋贊 吳双愿

蔣綸，高祖太尉公親祖荊州長史華容縣令

邑主 蔣綸 卿鑑 張神兒 却公兒 倪主足 李祠 吳公兒 旻乔

刹主 于都 代敬 劉起 吳寶 胡寄生 華寵 黃蛮子 裴坦 趙乘 胡龍 父直閣將軍便
殿主帥 龍土縣令

邑主 張鑑 毛雅 朱彥 趙盛 阮信 趙碩 李智 劉愿

鐘主 劉寶 吳公兒李成 王垂 陳養 張成 俞神寶 趙粲 馮玖 馮提 申黑

大隋仁寿二年岁次壬戌十二月甲戌朔十五

开皇四年四月一日创立此寺 陇西李宝钊

Appendix II

Biographical data from *Gaosengzhuan* (abbr.GSZ, “the Biographies of Eminent Monks”) concerns to the monks once were active in the region. In sum 42 biographies of monks.

N o.	Name	Origin	Teacher /Ordination	Disciple	Peer	Itinerary	Kinship	Patronship	Expertise
1.	Tanmoyeshe 曇摩耶舍 Dharmayaśas (Ch. Faming 法明) (fl.397– 453)	Kashmir		Female lay disciple Zhang Puming 張普明, Eight-five disciples, Fadu 法度	Puṇyatāra 弗 若多羅, Dharmagupt a 曇摩掘多, Daobiao 道 標	Guangzhou (<i>btw.</i> 397– 401, Baisha 白沙 temple) – Chang’an (405– 418) – Jiangling (the Xin 辛 temple, 424–453) – West region		Yao Xing 姚 興 (366– 416, r.394– 416) Yao Hong 姚 泓 (388– 417)	毘婆沙律 <i>Piposha lü</i> <i>Samantapāsādikā</i> (T 1462, K937) Translation: <i>Chamojing</i> 出差摩 經. 1juan. <i>Shelifu</i> <i>apitan</i> 舍利弗阿毘曇. 30 juan. (T1548).
2.	Fadu 法度	Nankang 南康	Dharmayaśa s	Nuns: Fahong 法弘, Puming			Son of merchant		Sanskrit and Chinese language. (accompany translator of Dharmayaśas)

				普明,					
3.	Bimoluocha 卑摩羅叉 Vimalākṣa	Kashmir			Kumārajīva, Huiguan 慧 觀	Kucha – Chang’an (406) – Shouchun (Shijian temple,413)– Jiangling– Shouchun			<i>Shisong lü</i> 十誦律 (“Ten Recitations Vinaya”)
4.	Fotubatuoluo 佛馱跋陀羅 (358–429) Buddhabhadra	Kapilava st-u in North India	Buddhasena Fodaxian 佛 大先	Huiguan, Baoyun 寶雲	Sengqiedadu o 僧伽達 多, Zhiyan 智嚴 Kumārajīva, Faye 法業 Faxian 法顯 (d. <i>btw.</i> 418– 423)	Kashmir– Pamir– Vietnam–Qingzhou (Shandong province) – Chang’an– Mount Lu – Jiangling – Jiankang	Descendan t of King Amritodan a 甘露飯 王, merchant family	Yao Hong (388– 417) Liu Yu 劉裕 (363– 422, r.420– 422) Meng Yi 孟 顗 Chu Yuzhi 褚 裕之(318– 424)	Master of Vinaya and meditation. Translated 15 sutras in 117 <i>juan</i> , including the 60 <i>juan</i> of the <i>Huayan jing</i> (418), the <i>Guanfo sanmei hai jing</i> 觀佛 三昧海經 (T643), <i>Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya</i> 摩訶僧祇律 (T1425, the Indian text brought by Faxian), <i>Mahāparinirvāṇa- sūtra</i> 大般泥洹經(T

									376), <i>Xiuxing fangbian chanjing</i> 修行方便禪經(T 618)
5.	Shi Faxian 法顯 (d. <i>btw.</i> 418– 423)	Pingyang 平陽 of Shanxi 山西	Buddhabhadra		Travel companions : Huijing 慧景, Daozhen 道整, Huiying 慧應, Huiwei 慧暉	Chang'an (399) – Pamir– Indian – Sinhala Kingdom 獅子国 – Qingzhou (Shandong province) – Jiankang (the Daochang Temple) – Jiangling (the Xin temple)			Buddhist pilgrim and translator. Collaborated with Buddhabhadra in the translation of <i>Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya</i> , <i>Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra</i> and <i>Za apitanxin (lun)</i> 雜阿毘曇心
6.	Tanmomiduo 曇摩蜜多 (354– 442?) Dharmamitra	Kashmir		meditation master Da 達禪師		Kucha – Dunhuang (built temples)– Liangzhou – Shu (424) – Jiangling (the Changsha Temple) – Jiankang (the Zhongxing Temple, the Qihuan Temple)– Mao County		Meng Yi 孟顗 the empress (405–440) of Song Wendi,	Meditation master. Translated meditation manuals: <i>Chanjing</i> 禪經, <i>Chanfayao</i> 禪法

						(construct stupa) – MountZhong (433– 442, Upper Dinglin Temng, Dingling Temple)		the crown prince Liu Shao (424– 453), the princesses	要, <i>Puxianguan</i> 普賢 觀 and <i>Xukongzangguan</i> 虛空 藏觀
7.	Jiangliangyesh e 量良耶舍 Kālayaśas (fl. 424– 442)	West region		Baozhi 寶誌, Senghan 僧含		Jiankang (424)– MountZhong (the Zhulin Temple) – Jiangling – Shu (442) – Jiangling (the Xin Temple)		Meng Yi 孟 顗 the emperor Wen of Liu Song (407– 453, r.424– 453)	Meditation master. Versed in Vinaya. Translated <i>Guan</i> <i>wuliangshou jing</i> 觀 無量壽經 (T446) and <i>Guan yaowang</i> <i>yaoshang erpusa jing</i> 觀藥王藥上二菩薩經 (T 1161)
8.	Qiunabatuoluo 求那跋陀羅 Guṇabhadra (393– 468)	central India		Fayong 法勇	Huiyan 慧嚴 Huiguan 慧	Sinhala Kingdom 獅子国 – Guangzhou (435) – Jiankang (the Qihuan Temple) –Jiangling (the	Brahman family converted his parents to	Liu Yikang (409– 451) Liu Yixuan (415– 454) The Xiaowu	Translator. For his translated work see Chapter 2.

					觀	Xin Temple)– Jiankang (the Zhongxing Temple)	Buddhism.	emperor of Liu Song (430– 464, r.453– 464)	
9.	Shi Dao'an 釋道安 (312– 385)	Changshan 常山 (Hebei province)	FoTucheng 佛圖澄, Zhu Faji 竺法濟, Zhi Tan 支 曇	Fahe 法和, Fayu 法遇, Huiyuan 慧遠, Yanhui 曇 徽, Tanyi 曇翼, Huiyong 慧永	Zhu Fatai 竺 法汰, Sengxian, 僧先, Daohu 道護, Minjian 敏 見, hermit Wang Jia 王 嘉 Zhu Sengfu 竺僧 敷 of the	Ye 鄴– Huoze 濩澤– Mount Feilong 飛龍山 (with Sengxian and Fatai) – MountTaihang 太行 and MountHeng 恒 山–Jizhou (the Shoudu Temple 受都寺)– MountQiankou 牽口山– Mount Wangwu 王屋 and MountNüxiu 女休 (351) – Luhun 陸渾–	Wei 衛 clan. Confucian intellectual family	Xi Zaochi 習 鑒齒 Fu Jian 符堅 (338– 385, r.357– 385) Yang Hongzhong 楊弘忠, Xi Chao 郗 超 (336– 378)	Conducted commentaries, catalog, prefaces of sutras. Led a translation forum in Chang'an. The greatest scholar monk of his time.

					Waguan Temple; foreign translators: <i>Sengjiatipo</i> 僧伽提婆 Tanmonanti 曇摩難提 and Sengjiabach en-g 僧伽跋澄	Xinye 新野– Xiangyang 襄陽–Chang’an (the Wuchong Temple 五重寺)			
10.	Zhu Fatai 竺法汰 (320–387)	Dongguan 東莞		Tanyi 曇一 Tan’er 曇二	Daoheng 道恒 Dao’an	Xinye – Yangkou (Jingzhou)– Jiankang (the Waguan Temple)		Jianwen emperor of Jin (320–372, r.371–372) Xie’an 謝安, Wang Qia 王洽,	<i>Lao Zi, Yi jing, Fang guangjing</i> 放光經 (T221)

								Wang Xun 王珣 (349– 400)	
11.	Shi Sengxian 釋僧先	Jizhou 冀 州 (Hebei province)	The master Yuan of Changshan 常山淵公		Daohu Dao'an	Mount Feilong 飛龍山 (351)– Jiankang (with Fatai)– Xiangyang			
12.	Shi Sengfu 竺僧輔	Ye 鄴 (Hebei province)				Huoze 獲澤(with Dao'an)– Jingzhou (the Shangming Temple)		Wang Chen 王忱 (d.392) the Inspector of Jingzhou	Vow to be reborn in the Tuṣita Heaven, Pure land belief
13.	Shi Tanyi 釋 曇翼	Qiang 羌人	Dao'an		Sengwei 僧 衛	Shu – Xiangyang (the Tanxi Temple)– Jiangling (the Changsha Temple, the Shangming Temple)		Teng Han 滕 含	Vinaya
14.	Shi Fayu 釋 法遇		Dao'an	Over four hundred		Xiangyang – Jiangling (the Changsha Temple)		Ruan Bao 阮 保 (the prefecture chief of	

								Yiyang 義陽)	
15.	Shi Tanhui 釋曇徽	Henei 河内 (Henan province)	Dao'an			Xiangyang– Jingzhou (the Shangming Temple)			<i>Libenlun</i> 立本論 <i>Liushizhigui</i> 六識旨歸 Formed worship of Dao'an at the Shangming Temple
16.	Shi Huiyuan 釋慧遠 (334–416)	Yanmen 雁門 (Shanxi province)	Dao'an	Liu Yiming 劉遺民(352–410), Lei Cizong 雷次宗(386–448), Zhou Xuzhi 周續之(377–423), Bi Yingzhi 畢穎之, Zong Bing 宗炳(375–443),	Fayong 慧永 (the Xiling Temple) Huiyi 慧義, Sengqietipo 僧伽提婆 (in 391 retranslated <i>Apitanxin</i> and <i>Tridharmaka</i> 三法度論) Tanmoliuzhi	Xiangyang – Jingzhou (373, the Shangming Temple)– Mount Lu (the Longquan Retreat)	Family name Jia 賈 Brother Huichi, Maternal surname: Linghu 令狐	Huan Yi 桓伊 (Established the Donglin Temple for him) Ruan Bao 阮保	Six Confucian classics, <i>Lao Zi</i> and <i>Zhuangzi</i> , Call for rain, recite <i>Hailongwang jing</i> 海龍王經 The <i>Sangfujing</i> 喪服經 <i>Essentials of Da zhidulun</i> 大智度論 (20 <i>juan</i>) the <i>prajñāpāramitā</i>

				<p>Zhang Laimin 張萊民, Zhang</p> <p>Jishuo 張季碩,</p> <p>Huibao 慧寶,</p> <p>Fajing 法淨</p> <p>Faling 法領</p> <p>Tanyi 曇邕</p> <p>Sengji 僧濟</p> <p>Fa'an 法安</p> <p>Huiyao 慧要</p> <p>Tanshun 曇順</p> <p>Tanxian 曇詵</p> <p>Shi Daowang 釋</p>	<p>曇摩流支</p> <p>Fashi 法識</p> <p>Xie Lingyun</p> <p>謝靈運</p> <p>(385–433)</p> <p>Kumārajīva</p> <p>Buddhabhadra</p>				<p>般若 sutras</p> <p><i>Shamen bujing</i></p> <p><i>wangzhe lun</i> 沙門不</p> <p>敬王者論</p>
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				道汪					
17.	Shi Huichi 釋 慧持 (337– 412)	Yanmen 雁門	Dao'an	Daohong 道泓, Tanlan 曇蘭	Huiyan 慧巖 Senggong 僧 恭(monk superintende nt of Shu) Sengqietipo 僧伽提婆	Xiangyang – Shangming Temple – Mt. Lu– Jiankang (the Dong'an Temple)– Mt. Lu – left for Shu (399)– Jingzhou – Shu (the Longyuan Retreat)– Pi county 陴縣 (405) – the Longyuan Temple	Brother Huiyuan Aunt Daoyi 道 儀	Wang Xun 王 珣 (349– 400), Fan Ning 范寧 (?339– ?401), Yin Zhongkan 殷 仲堪 (d.399), Huan Xuan 桓玄 (369– 404) Mao Qu 毛璩 (d.405)	Versed in literature and history, Devote to spread Vinaya. Lectured on the <i>Lotus Sutra</i> and <i>Abhidharma 毘曇</i> Edited the <i>Zhong'ahan jing</i> 中阿含經, translated by <i>Sengqietipo</i> 僧伽提婆 Lectured on <i>Abhidharma</i> .
18.	Shi Tanyong 釋曇邕	Inner Pass 關 中	Dao'an Huiyuan	Tanguo 曇果	Sengjian 僧	Chang'an (ordained by Dao'an)– Mount Lu– Jingzhou (the Zhulin	Family name	Served in Fu Jian's army (383)	Messenger between Huiyuan and Kumārajīva

		(Shaanxi province)			鑒 of the Daochang Temple in Jiankang	Temple)	Yang 楊		Subjugated the Mt.ain god.
19.	Tanshun 曇順	Huanglong 黃龍 (Hubei province)	Kumārajīva Huiyuan		Huiyuan's pupils: Tanshun 曇詵 Fayou 法幽 Daoheng 道恒 Daoshou 道授	Chang'an– Mt. Lu– Jiangling (the Zhulin Temple)		劉遵 (488–535) built the Zhulin Temple	
20.	Fazhi 法智		Huiyan of the Dong'an Temple in Jiankang		Master Ya 雅公	Jiankang– Jiangling			The <i>Chengshi Lun</i> , The full and short version of <i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i> 大小品般若
21.	Shi Huiguan	Qinghe (Hebei)	Huiyuan Kumārajīva		Shi Huixun	Qinghe – Mt. Lu– Chang'an –	Prestigious	Sima Xiuzhi	<i>Lao Zi</i> and <i>Zhuang Zi</i> The Ten Recitations

	釋慧觀 ⁵⁰⁵ (d.?424–454?)	province)			釋慧詢 (374–458) of the Changle Temple in Jiankang	Jingzhou(ca.413)– Jiankang (the Daochang Temple)	s Cui 崔 clan of Qinghe	司馬休之 (d.417) built Gaoli 高悝 Temple for him; Emperor Wu of Liu Song (363– 422, r. 420– 422); Emperor Wen of Liu Song (407– 453, r.424– 453)	Vinaya 十誦律 Works: <i>Bianzong lun</i> 辯宗論, <i>Lun dunwu</i> <i>jianwu</i> 論頓悟漸悟 Shiyu xun 十喻序
22.	Shi Tanjian 釋 曇鑒	Jizhou 冀州	Zhu Daozu Kumārajīva	Sengji 僧濟 Huiyan 慧嚴	Sengyuan 僧 願 Shi Daohai 釋道	Chang'an – Jiangling (the Xin Temple)			Vow to be reborn in the Tuṣita Heaven, <i>Shulun</i> 數論

⁵⁰⁵ For the discrepancies and contradictions in the account about Huangan in GSZ, see Chapter 1.

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23.	Shi Sengche 釋僧徹 (381–452)	Xiangyang	Huiyuan		釋僧莊(the Shangming Temple, specialized in the <i>Nirvana Sutra</i> and <i>Shulun</i> 數論)	Xiangyang– Mt.Lu– Jiangling (after 416, the Wuceng Temple, the Pipa Temple)	The Wang 王 clan of Taiyuan	Liu Yikang (409– 451), Xiao Sihua (400– 455), Liu Yixuan (415– 454)	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i> 般若
24.	Shi Famin 釋法愍	Northern		Sengdao 僧道	僧宗 (the Linghua Temple of Shixing county)	Jiangxia (the Wuceng Temple) – Jiangling – Changsha (the Lushan Temple)		Anti-Buddhism: Xie Hui 謝晦 (390– 426)	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i> 般若 <i>Shulun</i> 數論 Works: Commentary on <i>Da Daodijing</i> 大道地經

									<i>Xianyan lun</i> 顯驗論
25.	Shi Daowen 釋道溫 (396–465)	Anding 安定 (Gansu or Ningxia province)) Refuge in Xiangyang	Huiyuan Kumārajīva		Monks at the Zhonggong Temple: Sengqing 僧慶 (specialized in <i>Sanlun</i>), Huiding 慧定(the Nirvana sutra, <i>abhidharma</i> 毘曇), Sengchong	Xiangyang – Mt.Lu – Chang’an – Xiangyang (the Tanxi Temple) – Jiangling– Jiankang (the Zhongxing Temple ⁵⁰⁶)	Family name Huangfu 皇甫, the descendant of Huangfu Mi (215–282)	The emperor Xiaowu of Liu Song (430– 464, r.453– 464) Official position: The monk superintendent of the capital (457– 464)	<i>Mahāyāna sūtras</i> 大乘經 <i>Shulun</i> 數論

⁵⁰⁶ The Zhongxing Temple renamed as Tian’an Temple in 460 because of an auspicious miracle appeared. And a statue of Samantabhadra bodhisattva embellished in the temple in the name of Dowager empress Lu. Daowen engaged or even instigated this religious political propaganda.

					(<i>Shulun</i> 數 論)				
26.	Shi Tanbin 釋 曇斌 (d.?473– ?476)	Nanyang (Henan province)	Daowei 道 禕 Sengye 僧業 (<i>Shisong</i> Vinaya), Jingling 靜 林(the <i>Nirvana</i> <i>sutra</i>), Fazheng 法 珍(the <i>Nirvana</i> <i>sutra</i> and		Tanji 曇濟 Tanzong 曇 宗	Jiangling (the Xin Temple)–Jiankang– Wu County–Jingxiang region– Jiankang (454, the Xin’an Temple, the Zhuangyan Temple)	Family name Su	Yuan Can 袁 粲 (420– 477) Liu Jingsu 劉 景素 (452– 476)	

			<p><i>Shengman jing</i>, <i>Skt.Śrīmālā-sūtra</i>)</p> <p>Faye 法業 <i>(Avataṃsaka – sūtra, Zapitan xin lun)</i></p>						
27.	<p>Shi Tandu 釋曇度(d.488)</p>	Jiangling	<p>Sengyuan 僧淵(the <i>Chengshi Lun</i>)</p>	Over one thousand pupils		Jiangling– Jiankang– Pengcheng– Pingcheng	Family name Cai 蔡	The Xiaowen emperor of the Northern Wei (467–499, r.471–499)	Work: <i>Chengshilun dayi shu</i> 成實論大義疏
28.	<p>Shi Xuanchang 釋玄暢 (416–484)</p>	Jincheng (modern Lanzhou)	<p>Xuangao 玄高 (402–444) (Liangzhou)</p>	<p>Faqi 法期</p> <p>Nun Huixu 慧緒(429– 499)</p>	Shi Senghui 釋僧慧 (the monk superintendent of Jingzhou after in 479)	Jincheng– Liangzhou– Pingcheng– Jiankang(445)– Jiangling(the Changsha Temple)– Chengdu (the Dashi Temple) – Mt.Qihou (ca.479 the Qixing Temple)– Jiankang(the Linggen	Secular name Zhao Huzhi 趙慧智	The emperor Wen of Liu Song (407–453, r.424–453), Fu Yan 傅琰 (d.487)	<p>Meditation master, Edicted the <i>Nianfo sanmei jing</i> 念佛三昧經, translated at the Changsha Temple by Gongdezhi 功德直</p>

						Temple)			The three treatises (<i>Sanlun</i>) the <i>Avataṃsaka-sūtra</i> (<i>Huayan jing</i>) Divination
29.	Shi Senghui 釋僧慧 (408– 486)	Anding 安定, Refuge in Xiangya ng	Tanshun (the disciple of Huiyuan)		Zong Bing 宗炳 (375– 443) Liu Qiu 劉 虬(438– 495) Shi Huichang 釋 慧敞	Xiangyang– Jiangling (the Zhulin Temple)	Family name Huangfu 皇甫, the descendan t of Huangfu Mi (215– 282)	the monk superintende nt 僧正 of Jingzhou after 479	<i>Lao Zi</i> and <i>Zhuang Zi</i> Lectured on the <i>Nirvana Sutra</i> , the <i>Lotus Sutra</i> , the <i>Shizhu Sutra</i> , the <i>Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa-</i> <i>sūtra</i> and the <i>Za</i> <i>apitan xinlun</i> .
30.	Shi Huilin/Huiqiu 釋慧琳/球 (431– 504)	Fufeng 扶風 (Chang’a n)	Daoxin 道馨 of the Zhulin Temple in Jingzhou		Huidu 慧度 or Tandu 釋 曇度(d.488)	Jiangling (the Zhulin Temple)– Changsha (the Lushan Temple)– Jiankang– Pengcheng– Jingzhou	Family name Ma 馬	The monk superintende nt of Jingzhou after 501	Meditation master The <i>Chengshi Lun</i>

31.	Qi Yu 耆域	Indian		Zhu Faxing 竺法行	Qi Shemi 耆闍蜜	Indian– Vietnam– Guangzhou – Xiangyang – Luoyang (the Manshui Temple ca.306) – West region		Teng Yongwen 滕永文	Incantation, medicine, magician
32.	Zhu Fahui 竺法慧	The Inner Pass	Futu Mi 浮圖密 (Mt.Song)	Fazhao 法照	Fan Cai 范材	Xiangyang (343 the Yangshuzi Temple)		Executed by 庾翼 (305–345)	
33.	Shi Hui'an 釋慧安				Huiji 慧濟 Senglan 僧覽 Fawei 法衛	Jiangling (the Pipa Temple) – Xiang 湘	Slave		Caused miracles
34.	Shi Senghui 釋僧慧				Shi Huiyuan 釋慧遠 of the Changsha Temple,	The Zhiqi 陟屺 Temple (erected by Liu Qiu 劉虬)– Xiang 湘 zhou (modern Hunan	Family name Liu 劉		Caused miracles.

					Liu Qi 劉虬 (438– 495) Baozhi 保誌	province)– Jiangling			
35.	Shi Huitong 釋慧通					Shouchun – Jiangling			Caused miracles.
36.	Shi Faqi 釋法 期	Shu	Zhimeng 智 猛 (Meditation training) Xuanchang (416– 484)		Falin 法林 of the Lingqi Temple, Shi Daoguo 釋道果 of the Longhua Temple	Shu – Jiangling (the Changsha Temple)	Family name Xiang 向		Meditation master
37.	Shi Fawu 釋 法悟 (411– 489)				Daoji 道濟	Wuchang, the Mt. Fan (the Toutuo Temple)	Six sons all were monks		<i>dhūta</i> 頭陀 practices(austerities) the <i>Lotus sutra</i> ,
38.	ShicHuiyou		Vimalākṣa			Jiangling (the Xin Temple)			Vinaya master Work: <i>Shisong yishu</i>

	釋慧猷		卑摩羅叉 (the <i>Shisong</i> Vinaya)						十誦義疏
39.	Shi Sengyin 釋僧隱 (fl.5 th c.)	Longxi (Gansu province)	Xuangao (404– 444) Huiche 慧徹 of the Pipa Temple		Vinaya Master Cheng 成 and Ju 具 of the Shangming Temple	Longxi– Liangzhou– Pingcheng– Shu – Jiangling (the Pipa Temple)	Buddhist family, Li clan of Longxi	Liu Xiuyou 劉休祐(445– 471) Liu Jingsu 劉 景素 (452– 476)	the <i>Lotus sutra</i> , he <i>Vimalakīrti– nirdeśa– sūtra</i> the <i>Shisong</i> Vinaya
40.	Shi Zhicheng 釋智稱 (429– 500)	Hedong, refuge in Jingkou 京口	Master Zong 宗 of the Nanjian Temple, Yin Master of the Pei Temple in Shu Faxian 法獻 of the Dingling Temple	Sengbian 僧辯 Cong 聰 Chao 超	Huishi 慧始 Shi Sengzhi 釋僧志 of Hangzhou Master Yin 穎公 of the Xingguang Temple	Jingkou– Jiankang– Shu (the Pei Temple)– Jiangling (the Shangming Temple)–Jiankang (the Dinglin Temple)– Abbot of the Qixia Temple– Jingkou – Jiankang (the Anle Temple)	Pei 裴 clan of Hedong county	蕭子良(460– 494)	the <i>Shisong</i> Vinaya Lectured on shorter and full version of the <i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā– sūtra</i> Work: <i>Shisong yiji</i> 十 誦義記

41.	Shi Fagong 釋 法恭	Yongzhou (Xiangyang)			Senggong 僧 恭	Jiangling (the Anyang Temple)– Jiankang (the Dong'an Temple)– Jiangling (in between 465– 471)	Family name Guan 關	The emperor Wu, Wen and Ming of Liu Song, Liu Yiji 劉義季 (415– 447)	Austerities practices Veggie
42.	Shi Tanguang 釋 曇光	Kuaiji (Zhejiang province)				Jiangling (the Changsha Temple)– Jiankang (the Lingwei Temple)– Pengcheng		Liu Yiji 劉義季 (415– 447) Liu Chang 劉昶 (436– 497)	Five Confucian classics Poetry and verse Divination and mathematic

Appendix III

Biographical data from *Xu Gaosengzhuan* (abbr. XGSZ, “the Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks”) concerns to the monks once were active in the region. In sum 43 biographies of monks.

No.	Name	Origin	Teacher /Ordination	Disciple	Peer	Itinerary	Kinship	Patronship	Expertise
43.	Shi Huiji 釋 慧蹟 (580– 636)	Jiangling	Master Yin 隱(the <i>Nirvana Sutra</i> , the <i>Lotus Sutra</i> and the <i>Sanlun</i>) Meditation master Ying 應		Jizang 吉藏 <i>Prabhākaramitra</i> 波頗蜜多 羅(arrived at Chang’ an in 626)	Jiangling–Chang’an (the Qingchan Temple) – the Mt. Zhongnan (ca.618)– Chang’an (bwt.618– 626, the Yanxing Temple)	Family name Li 李	The Emperor Taizong of Tang (598– 649, r.626– 649)	Calligraphy, Identify antiques, literature, Lectured on the <i>Huayan sutra</i> , <i>Nirvana sutra</i> , the <i>Dazhidu Lun</i> , the <i>Shedacheng Lun</i> , the <i>Zhong Lun</i> and the <i>Bailun</i> . Participated in the translation activities during the <i>zhenguan</i> (626– 649) era of Tang. Works: Preface to <i>Banruo deng lun</i> . 般若 燈論(Skt. <i>Prajñāpradīpa</i>)
44.	Shi Daozong 釋 道宗	Jiangling			Fabi 法敝 of the Yanxian Temple 延賢寺(fl.503)	Jiangling (the Waguan Temple)– Guangzhou			
45.	Shi Huichao	Xiangyang	Huijing 惠景 of the		Zhixiu 智秀,	Xiangyang–	The	Granted the	Participated in the translation of

	釋惠超 (475– 526)		Tanxi Temple, the monk superintendent of Jingzhou in 520, the meditation master Sengchong 僧崇, Sengshou 僧受, Fachang 法常, Zhizang 智藏, Huijing 慧集		Sengqiepoluo 僧伽婆羅 (* <i>Samghabhara</i>)	Jiankang (<i>bwt.</i> 483–498, the Linggen Temple) –Xiangyang –Xiakou	Wang Clan of Taiyuan	title of Shougung scholar 壽光學士, Xiao Yaxiu 蕭雅秀 (475– 518) Xiao Bing 蕭昺 (477–523) ; the monk superintendent 僧正 of Jingzhou after 520	<i>A'yuwang jing</i> 阿育王經 at the Zhengguan 正觀 Temple, Meditation, Vinaya
46.	Shi Sengqian 釋僧遷 (495– 573)	Wu County 吳郡	Lingyao 靈曜, Daoze 道則 of the Mt. Zhong.		Huiyan 慧琰 of the Zhaoti Temple,	Mt. Zhong–Jiankang–Jiangling (the Dabao Retreat 大寶精舍)	Family name Yan 嚴	Wang Xi 王錫 (499– 534), Emperor Wu of Liang (464–549, r.502–549), Emperor Ming of XiLiang (542–585, r.562–585) The monk	the <i>Lotus Sutra</i> , the <i>Nirvana Sutra</i> , the full version of the <i>prajñāpāramitā</i> Sutra.

								superintendent of Jingzhou 僧 正	
47.	Shi Huishan 釋慧善(d. btw.566– 572)					Jiankang (the Qixuan 栖玄 Temple)– Jiangling–Chang’an (ca.555, the Chonghua 崇華 Temple)			The <i>Apitan xinlun</i> The <i>Dazhidu Lun</i> 大智度論 Work: <i>Sanhua Lun</i> 散花論
48.	Shi Luoyun 釋羅雲 (542– 616)	Songzi 松 滋	The Eastern Shangming Temple, Falang 法朗 of the Xinghuang 興皇 Temple, Master Geng 亘 of the Fuyuan 福緣 Temple	Five hundred disciples, Chun 椿, Shen 詵, Cheng 澄, Qi 憇	the meditation master Zhi 陟 of the Qichan 栖禪 Temple	Shangming – Jiankang(the Xinghuang Temple) – Jiangling (ca.589,the Longquan Temple)	Family name Xing 邢,Four brothers were all monks	Wang Shiji 王 世積 (d.599)	The three treatises, <i>sanlun</i> 三論
49.	Shi Fa’an 釋法安 (fl.6 th c.)	Zhijiang county	Falang 法朗 of the Xinghuang Temple, The Cheng 成 meditation master			Zhijiang– Jiankang(the Xinghuang Temple) –Jiangling (the Dengjie Temple)	Family name Tian 田		The three treatises and four sutras: the <i>Nirvana Sutra</i> , the <i>Huayan Sutra</i> , the <i>Lotus Sutra</i> , and the <i>Dapin bore jing</i> (<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā- sūtra</i>).
50.	Shi Huizhe 釋慧哲	Xiangyang	Falang 法朗 of the Xinghuang Temple,	Three hundred	Qiong 瓊 of the Jianchu Temple, Baoqiong 寶瓊 of	Xiangyang– Jiankang(the	Family name		<i>Sanlun</i> the <i>Nirvana Sutra</i> ,

	(538–597)			disciples, Huipin 惠品, Facan 法粲, Zhichong 智嵩, Fatong 法同, Huirui 慧璿, Huileng 慧楞	the Pengcheng Temple, Hongzhe 洪哲	Xinghuang Temple) – Xiangyang (the Longquan Temple)	Zhao 趙		
51.	Shi Falun 釋法論 (d.ca.604)	Nan county 南郡				Jiangling (the Tianhuang 天皇 Temple)– the Mt. Yuquan–Yangzhou (the Huiji 慧日 Temple) –Chang’an (the Riyan 日嚴 Temple) –Luoyang (the Huiji Temple)	Family name Meng 孟	Emperor Ming of XiLiang (542– 585, r.562– 585), Emperor Yang of Sui (569– 618, r.604– 618)	Confucian and the Dark learning. Literature Work: <i>Bieji</i> 別集 (8 juan)
52.	Shi Huikuang 釋慧曠 (534– 613)	Xiangyang	Cheng 澄 of the Baoguang Temple, Zhendi 真諦 (Skt. <i>Paramârtha</i>)	Zhiyi	Sengzong 僧宗, Kai 愷, Zhun 准, Yun 韻, Faxuan 法 宣	Jiangling (the Baoguang Yemple) – Jiankang (the Lüxing Temple)–the Mt.Lu– Xiangyang (in 583,	Family name Cao 曹, grandfath er: Cao	Yang Jun 楊俊 (571– 600), Emperor Yang of Sui (569– 618, r.604–	Vinaya, <i>She dacheng Lun</i> 攝大乘論 <i>Dacheng weishi Lun</i> 大乘唯識論 <i>Jingu guangming jing</i> 金鼓光明 經

						the Bianxue Temple, the Xingguo Temple)– the Mt. Qixia	Liangzong 亮宗 and father Cao Ai 藹 serviced in the Liang government	618)	
53.	Shi Zhirun 釋智閏 (540– 614)	Xiangyang	Tanzun 曇遵 Huiguang 慧光 Zhibian 智辯	Zhiba 智拔 (572– 640), Huileng 慧稜 (575– 640)		Xiangyang – Ye – Jiankang (the Changgan Temple) – Xiangyang – Yangzhou (the Huiji Temple)–Chang’an (the Chanding 禪定 Temple)			<i>Shidijing lun</i> 十地經論 <i>Sifen lü</i> 四分律 <i>Sanlun</i> the <i>Huayan Sutra</i> the <i>Nirvana Sutra</i>
54.	Shi Huizui 釋慧最	Yingzhou 瀛州 (Shandong province)				Ye– Jiankang (ca.577) –Chang’an (the Guangming Temple) –Xiangyang (Da xingguo Temple)– Jizhou (the		Note: Escort relics to Jingzhou and Jizhou during the <i>renhsou</i> era (600–604)	

						Fameng Temple) – Chang'an			
55.	Shi Huileng 釋慧稜 (575– 640)	Xilong 西隆	Shi Zhirun 釋智閏 (540– 614), the Vinaya master Dan 誕 of the Tanxi Temple, the master Ming 明		Hao 蒿 Chang 昶 of the Gantong 感通 Temple, Zhiba (572–640),	Xiangyang (the Tanxi Temple)–Mt. Mao– Xiangyang (ca.618)– Shu–Anzhou	Family name Shengtu 申屠	Li Yun 李恂 (d.674)	<i>Sanlun</i> the <i>Lotus Sutra</i> the <i>Nirvana Sutra</i> the full version of the <i>prajñāpāramitā</i> sutra 大品般若
56.	Shi Zhiba 釋智拔 (572– 640)	Xiangyang	Shi Zhirun 釋智閏 (540– 614), Shi Huizhe 釋慧哲(538– 597) Jizang 吉藏 (549– 623)	Fachang 法長 of the Fanyun Temple		Xiangyang – Chang'an – Xiangyang	Family name Zhang	Li Yun 李恂 (d.674)	<i>Sanlun</i> the <i>Lotus Sutra</i>
57.	Shi Huiyu 釋慧瑜 (562– 640)		Jiuku 救苦 of the Changsha Temple			Jiangling (the Changsha Temple)– Mt. Yuquan – Jingzhou (in 636, the Shengjue 勝覺 Temple)	Family name Cen 岑		<i>Sanlun</i> the full version of the <i>prajñāpāramitā</i> sutra 大品般若 meditation
58.	Shi Huirui 釋慧璿 (571– 649)	Xiangyang	Master Ming 明 of Mt. Mao (<i>sanlun</i>), Master Xuan 懸 and Bu 布 of Mt. Qixia, Master Yuan of the Dalin Temple			Xiangyang –Mt. Mao –Mt. Qixia – Dalin 大林 Temple– Xiangyang (the Guangfu 光福 Temple) – the	Family name Dong	Li Yun 李恂 (d.674) Li Shen 李慎 (628– 689)	<i>Sanlun</i> the <i>Nirvana Sutra</i> the full version of the <i>prajñāpāramitā</i> sutra 大品般若 the <i>Huayan Sutra</i> <i>Yulanpen jing</i> 孟蘭盆經

						Longquan Temple			Call for rain
59.	Shi Huitiao 釋慧眺 (560?–639)	Xiangyang	Shi Huizhe 釋慧哲 (538–597)		Vinaya master Tai 汰	Xiangyang –northern China –Xiangyang (the Shenzu Temple)	Family name Zhuang 莊		<i>Shulun</i> 數論 From Hinayana convert to Mahayana. Lectured on the <i>Huayan sutra</i> .
60.	Shi Facong 釋法聰 (d.559)	Nanyang				Mt. Wudang, Mt. Song –Xiangyang (Mt. Sangai 傘蓋)– the Chanju 禪居 Temple– Jiangling (the Tiangong 天宮 Temple)	Family name Mei 梅	Xiao Gang (503–552, r.549– 551), Xiao Yi (508– 555, r. 552– 555)	Meditation master Call for rain. Tame tigers
61.	Shi Zhiyuan 釋智遠 (559– 571)	Xiangyang	Fajing 法京 of the Changsha Temole, Sengchuo 僧綽 of the Longguang 龍光 Temple		Huihao 慧曷 of the Xin'an Temple Huizhan 慧湛	Jiangling (the Changsha Temple) – Jiankang (the Longguang Temple)– the Puming Temple – Mt. Zhong (the Kaishan Temple)	Wang clan of Taiyuan	Xiao Zhengli 蕭正立(fl.6 th c.) built the Puming 普明 Temple	Meditation master
62.	Shi Fajing 釋法京	Jiangling		Zhiyuan 智遠 (595– 571)	Zhiyuan 智淵 Fatai 法泰	Jiangling (the Changsha Temple)	Wang clan of Taiyuan	The monk superintendent in the Xi Liang regime	Meditation master Enlarged the temple
63.	Shi Falin 釋法懷	Zhijiang			Sengjing 僧景 Huicui 惠璀(a disciple of	Mt. Yuquan –Mt. Lu, Mt. Wutai, Mt. Heng	Family name		Meditation master The Lotus Sutra,

					Huisi)	etc. – Mt. Yuquan	Yan 嚴		The <i>weimojie jing</i> (Skt. <i>Vimalakīrti- nirdeśa- sūtra</i>) The <i>Dazhidu Lun</i>
64.	Shi Huicheng 釋惠成	Liyang (Hunan province)	Huisi		Zhiyi Vinaya master Chang 常	Jiangling (the Shizhu Temple)– Jiankang – Jiankang–Mt. Lu – Mt. Heng (Huisi)– Zhijiang (the Chanhui Temple)	Family name Duan	Xiao Yi (508– 555, 552– 555)	Meditation master
65.	Shi Fachang 釋法常				Fayin 法隱	Ye – Jiangling –Mt. Yuquan			Meditation master The <i>Lotus Sutra</i> The <i>Nirvana Sutra</i>
66.	Shi Faren 釋法忍	Jiangling				Jiangling (the Tianhuang Temple) – Mt. Yuquan			Meditation master The <i>Lotus Sutra</i> The <i>Weimojie jing</i> Practice austerities
67.	Shi Huiyi 釋慧意 (d.ca.581)	Linyuan 臨原		Huixing 慧興	Huiming of the Mt.Xiancheng, the meditation master Fayong of the Kaihuang Temple, Viyana master Quan 全, Cen Zheli 岑闍梨, Zhixiao 智曉 Tai 汰, Hao 昊 Chun 純	Northern Zhou – Xiangyang (the Jingkong 景空 Temple)			Meditation master
68.	Shi Huiming 釋	Changsha (Hunan	Meditation master Neng 能 of the	Huilang 慧朗	Daoist priest 孟壽 Huixiao 慧曉	Changsha– Mt.Xiancheng(Hubei	Family name		Works: <i>Dapin yizhang</i> 大品義章, <i>Rongxinlun</i> 融心論, <i>Xiangxuanfu</i>

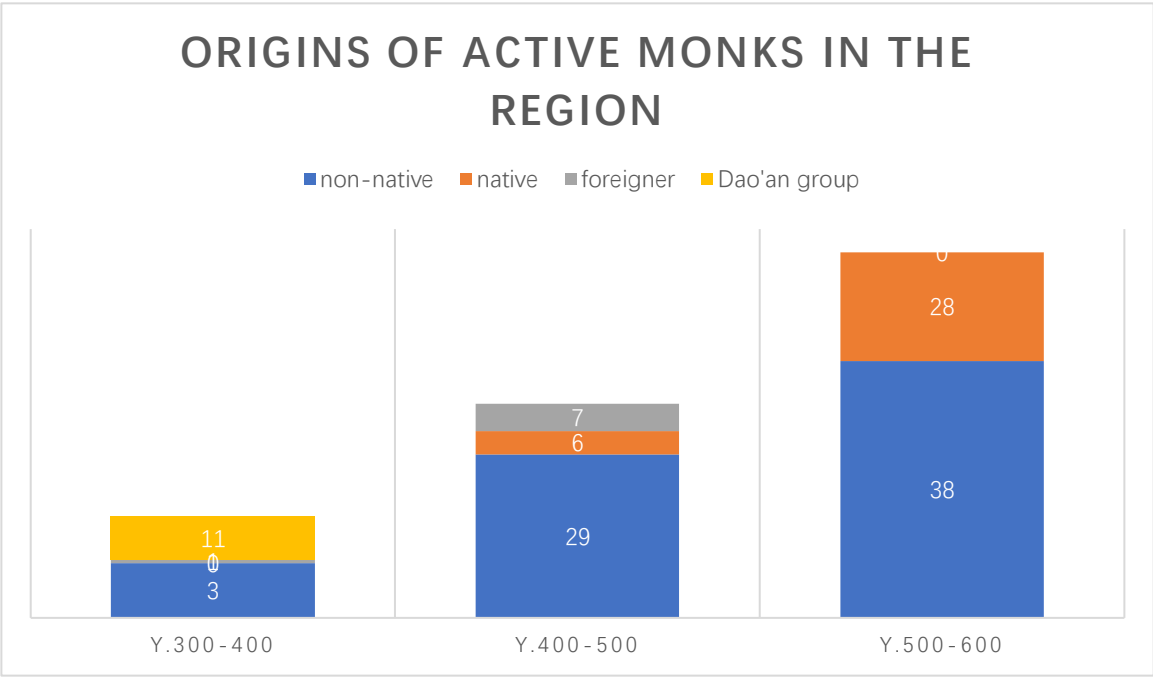
	慧命 (531–568)	province)	Guoyuan Temple, meditation master En'guang 恩光 and Xianlu 先路.		Fayin 法音	province) the Shanguang Temple	Guo, a descendant of Confucian scholar Guo Qi 郭琦		詳玄賦
69.	Shi Faxi 釋法喜	Xiangyang	Meditation master Yuan 顥			Mt. Qingxi	Family name Li		Meditation master <i>The Lotus Sutra</i>
70.	Shi Zhiyi 釋智顗 (538–597)	Huarong (Hubei province)	Faxu 法緒 of the Guoyuan Temple, Shi Huikuang 釋慧曠 (534–613), Shi Huisi 釋慧思 (515–577)	Thirty–two disciples including Zhiyue 智越 and Guanding 灌頂	Huicheng 惠成 of Zhijiang, Falin 法琳	Jiangling –Changsha (the Guoyuan 果願 Temple)– Mt. Daxian– Mt. Dasu (Huisi) – Jiankang (the Wanguan Temple)– Mt. Tiantai– Jiankang (the Guangzhai Temple)– Mt. Lu– Mt. Heng– Jingzhou (the Yuquan Temple)– Yangzhou– the Shicheng Temple	Family name Chen, Father Chen 陳 Qizu 起祖	Emperor Xuan of Chen (530–582, r.569–582) Yang Guang (569–618, r.604–618)	Works: <i>Jingming shu</i> 淨名疏, <i>Fahua shu</i> 法華疏, <i>Zhiguanmen xiuchan fa</i> 止觀門修禪法
71.	Shi Faxian	Jiangling	Baomin 寶冥 of the			Jiangling (the Siceng	Family	Li Shen 李慎	Meditation master

	釋法顯 (577– 653)		Siceng 四層 Temple, Zhiyi 智顗, Mingzhi 明智, Chengyan 成彥 Xihao 習皓, Master Xin 信 of Qizhou 蕪 州(Hubei province)			Temple)– Mt. Shuangfeng 雙峯 (master Xin)	name Ding 丁	(628– 689)	
72.	Shi Xuanshuang 釋玄爽 (431– 504)	Nanyang	Master Xuan 璇 of the Longquan Temple, Master Xin 信 of Qizhou		Ai'ming 藹明,Lengfa 稜法, Huipu 惠普 of Famen Temple in Xiangyang	Mt. Shen – the Longquan Temple – Mt.Shuangfeng – Nanyang	Family name Liu 劉		Meditation master
73.	Shi Sengrong 釋 僧融 (fl.502)					Mt. Lu (the Donglin Temple)– Jiangling			Fortuneteller, exorcist
74.	Shi Huijian 釋慧簡		Shi Falun 釋法論 (d.ca.604)			Mt. Yuquan– Dangyang city		Executed by the Emperor Xuan of Xi Liang (519– 562, r.555– 562)	Fortuneteller
75.	Shi Daomu 釋道穆	Songzi			Sengzhan 僧展 Seng'an 僧 安	Mt. Shen 神		Liu Qiu 劉虬 (438– 495) Che Zhui 車綴, Xiao Yi (508– 555, r. 552–	Subjugated and proselytized the Mt.ain god.

								555)	
76.	Shi Zhikuang 釋智曠 (526–600)	Xinfeng 新豐 of Jingzhou			Shi Falun 釋法論 (d.ca.604)	Mt.Siwang (the Kaishan Temple)	The Wang Clan of Taiyuan	Served in the Army of Xiao Yi	From Daosim convert to Buddhism
77.	Cen zheli 岑闍梨				Shi Huiyi 釋慧意 (d.ca.581) Huixiao 慧曉	The Chanju Temple, Xiangyang (the Mt.Sangai)	Family name Yang		Meditation
78.	Shi Daoyue 釋道悅	Zhaoqiu of Jinzhou			Zhiyi	The Yuquan Temple		Zhang Jianzhi (625– 706)	The <i>Lotus Sutra</i> , Meditation
79.	Shi Huiyao 釋慧耀 (525– 603)	Xiangyang	Master Ming, Huisi		Daoyi 道懿 of the Daoyin 導因 Temple, Zhiyi	Xiangyang – Mt.Heng–Jiangling (the Daoyin Temple)– the Neihua Temple	Family name Qi 岐		Meditation
80.	Shi Huiyin 釋慧因	Qinhe (Hebei province)	Master Xian 賢			Shu– Jiangling (the Kaisheng Temple)			Vinaya and meditation master the <i>Lotus Sutra</i>
81.	Shi Fashi 釋法施	Wudang				Baling 巴陵(modern Yueyang, the Xian'an 顯安 Temple)– Jiangling			Practice austerities
82.	Shi Fayun 釋法運	Changlin of Jinzhou	Shi Zhikuang 釋智曠 (526– 600)			Jiangling (the Kaisheng 開聖	Family name	Xiao Xian 蕭銑 (583– 621)	Tamed tigers

						Temple)– the Longgui 龍歸 Retreat	Deng 鄧		
83.	Shi Daoxian 釋道仙	Kangju 康居	Shi Mingda 釋明達 (462–516)		Daoist priest Li Xuezu 李學祖	Xincheng, Mt. Niutou – Mt. Guankou (the Zhulin Temple)–Mt. Qingxi (517)	Merchant family from central Asia	Xiao Dan 蕭憺 (478– 522), Xiao Hui 蕭恢 (476– 526)	Meditation Call for rain
84.	Shi Mingda 釋明達 (462– 516)	Kangju 康居			Sengjiu 僧救	Shu –Mt. Niutou 牛頭 (construct temple)– Jiangling (516)		Xiao Dan 蕭憺 (478– 522)	Five Confucian classics Poetry and verse Divination and mathematic
85.	Shi Huida 釋慧達 (524– 610)	Xiangyang				Mt. Tiantai, the Pubu 瀑布 Temple – Jiankang–Yuzhang– Mt. Lu– Jiangling (the Changsha Temple)	Family name Wang		Constructed temples, stupas and buddha statues.

The following bar graph depicts the origins of active monks in the region during different time periods based on the data collected in GSZ and XGSZ. The “foreigner” category encompasses monks from Kashmir, Indian, central Asian and west region 西域. Notably, the total number of monks exhibited a steady increase, paralleled by a rising percentage of native monks, signifying the burgeoning infiltration of Buddhism in the region. In the fourth century, the substantial presence of the Dao'an group is noteworthy, underlining their pivotal role in the Buddhist community. It is compelling to assert that Dao'an and his group laid the foundations for the growth of Buddhism in the region.



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Von den Ursprüngen zur Verbreitung: Der Buddhismus in der Region Jingxiang 荆襄 (300-600 n. u. Z.)

Zusammenfassung

In dieser Arbeit wird die Geschichte der buddhistischen Durchdringung der Region Jingxiang 荆襄 von ihren Ursprüngen bis in die frühen Jahre der Sui-Dynastie (581-618) untersucht. Die Region - in den historischen Quellen auch als Jingchu 荆楚 oder Jingzhou 荊州 bezeichnet - erstreckt sich über den Mittellauf der Flüsse Han und Yangtze, das Grenzgebiet zwischen Nord- und Südchina während der Zeit der Teilung (220-589). Bei den Quellen, die ich für diese Arbeit verwendet habe, handelt es sich größtenteils um eine Sammlung verschiedener historischer Aufzeichnungen, die Autoren aus dem sechsten und siebten Jahrhundert zugeschrieben werden. Innerhalb dieses schriftlichen Erbes sind die Grenzen zwischen dem Religiösen und dem Weltlichen sowie zwischen Buddhismus und Daoismus fließend und uneindeutig. Besonders offensichtlich wird die Intertextualität von buddhistischer und offizieller biografischer Literatur. Diese Studie ist daher in zwei Abschnitte gegliedert: Der erste Teil (Kapitel eins und zwei) bietet eine chronologische Untersuchung der Verbreitung und Entwicklung der buddhistischen Lehren in der Region, während der zweite Teil (Kapitel drei und vier) die Wechselwirkungen zwischen Buddhismus und anderen religiösen Traditionen aus textlicher und geografischer Sicht untersucht.

Kapitel eins beschäftigt sich mit den frühen Phasen der buddhistischen Entwicklung in der Region Jingxiang, wobei der Schwerpunkt auf den Infiltrationswegen, der Ausdehnung der Dao'an-Gruppe (312-385), dem von Guṇabhadra (394-468) geleiteten Übersetzungsprojekt und gängigen Meditationspraktiken liegt. Die Ankunft von Dao'an in Xiangyang läutete eine neue Epoche des Wachstums der buddhistischen Gemeinschaft ein und integrierte die Region in ein umfangreiches Netzwerk buddhistischer Zentren, von denen die bekanntesten Chang'an, Jiankang, Chengdu und Mount Lu sind. Neu übersetzte Schriften, Meditationsweisen und ausländisches Fachwissen wurden über dieses Netzwerk in die Region gebracht. Der

Hauptzweck dieses Kapitels besteht darin, diese Entwicklung nachzuverfolgen und ihre Protagonisten, d. h. die Mönche und Nonnen sowie ihre Patrone und Anhänger, zu beleuchten.

Das zweite Kapitel beginnt mit einer Darstellung der Entwicklung des Buddhismus in der Region unter der Schirmherrschaft der Liang-Prinzen, die einen regionalen kulturellen Wandel ermöglichte. Als Teil des Repertoires an Hochkultur, das die Prinzen und ihr Gefolge aus Jiankang mitbrachten, trug der Buddhismus maßgeblich zur Förderung lokaler intellektueller Aktivitäten wie dem Verfassen, Zusammenstellen und Bearbeiten von Texten und Büchersammlungen bei. Nachdem diese Geschichte umrissen wurde, wendet sich das Kapitel den politischen Unruhen und antibuddhistischen Maßnahmen zu, die sich in der zweiten Hälfte des sechsten Jahrhunderts in der Region entwickelten und schließlich zur großen Zerstörung der buddhistischen Gemeinschaften führten und die einheimischen Mönche zwangen, nach Yecheng und Jiankang zu fliehen. Zu Beginn der Sui-Periode (581-618) begannen sich die buddhistischen Traditionen des Nordens und des Südens aufgrund der Rückkehr von gelehrten Mönchen in die Region anzunähern. Durch Analyse der Verbindungen zwischen der Region Jingxiang und anderen Studienzentren im Norden und Süden können wir uns ein klareres Bild von den Merkmalen der Synthese und der umfassenden buddhistischen Entwicklung machen, die in dieser Zeit stattfand. Der letzte Abschnitt des Kapitels widmet sich schließlich einer mikrohistorischen Studie über eine lokale Dharma-Versammlung. Diese basiert auf einer detaillierten Untersuchung einer Steleninschrift und ermöglicht eine detailreiche Darstellung des Wiederauflebens des Buddhismus in einer lokalen Gesellschaft während der buddhismusfreundlichen Herrschaft des Sui-Reiches.

Die Kapitel drei und vier, die den zweiten Teil der Arbeit bilden, vervollständigen das Bild der buddhistischen Entwicklung in der Region, indem sie die Volksreligion untersuchen, in die der Buddhismus eingebettet war. Dementsprechend konzentriert sich Kapitel drei auf die Entstehung des lokalen Kultes von Yang Hu, einem lokalen Gouverneur, der in der Volksreligion zu einem Schutzgott wurde. Die Erzählungen, die sich sowohl in der buddhistischen als auch in der säkularen Literatur um Yang Hu ranken, werfen ein Licht auf die Interaktion zwischen Buddhismus und dieser kultischen Gottheit. Als Mittel der religiösen Propaganda wurde der Kult des Yang Hu in buddhistische Lehrgeschichten integriert, was die

Anpassung des Buddhismus in der Region zeigt.

Das vierte Kapitel konzentriert sich auf die religiösen Landschaften in der Peripherie der Stadt Jiangling: eine Insel in der Mitte des Yangtze-Flusses namens Baili (einhundert li), die Berge Qingxi und Yuquan. Schon lange vor der buddhistischen Ausbreitung im vierten und fünften Jahrhundert lebten in diesem Gebiet halbpensionierte Beamte, religiöse Einsiedler und einzelne daoistische Praktizierende. Das Kapitel konzentriert sich auf den Aufstieg des buddhistischen Mönchtums in den Bergen und die Herausforderungen, mit denen die Buddhisten in ihrem Kampf um Anerkennung und soziales Ansehen konfrontiert waren. Es schildert die verwobenen Beziehungen zwischen Buddhismus und anderen religiösen Elementen, einschließlich der Berggötter, der Geister und des Daoismus, und versucht, einen umfassenden Überblick über die Lebensbedingungen und das Umfeld der Buddhisten im frühen Mittelalter zu geben.

