

4

One Mountain, Two Traditions: Buddhist and Taoist Claims on Zhongnan shan in Medieval Times.

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INTRODUCTION

What makes a site sacred? I want to consider this question by thinking about how some medieval Chinese authors wrote about the actions of religious people and where they chose to stage some specific dramas of transmission and transformation. The particular place that I have chosen to discuss—the mountain range known as Zhongnan shan 終南山—is, I hope, a suitable topic for this volume because we shall see it partly through the eyes of a Tang monk whose writings Koichi Shinohara has patiently taught us how to appreciate: Daoxuan 道宣 (596-667). I shall argue that the sacredness of Zhongnan shan was not so much dependent on it being a remote and mysterious site as it was on it being a nearby and well-publicised one. Situated only fifty *li* south of the capital Chang'an 長安, the mountain range was visible from the city, and was a second home to many religious figures who were active in the metropolis, not least of them Daoxuan himself, who was known in the later tradition as the “vinaya master of [Zhong]nan shan” 南山律師.

In Tang times it was a cliché that Zhongnan shan offered a backdoor to a prestigious civil service job. The story behind the well-known stock phrase *Zhongnan shihuan jiejing* 終南仕宦捷徑 (“Mount Zhongnan is but a shortcut to officialdom”) goes as follows: Lu Cangyong 盧藏用 (d. 713) received the advanced scholar (*jinshi* 進士) degree but was not initially given an ap-

pointment. He became a hermit on Mount Zhongnan while his brother chose Mount Song 嵩山—another sacred mountain close to the capital—as his site of reclusion. In time, Cangyong did indeed get quite a prestigious job in the Institute for the Cultivation of Literature (*xiuwen guan* 脩文館). During Lu’s time in office, the Taoist Shangqing 上清 patriarch Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (647–735) was once summoned to appear at court. Afterwards, as Sima was preparing to return to his own residence on Mount Tiantai 天臺山, Cangyong stopped him and, pointing to Zhongnan shan, asked, “There are many wonderful places here, why live so far away?” The Taoist replied with the now-famous words, “In my opinion, that is just a shortcut to public office.” While Sima Chengzhen’s remarks may have been aimed at Cangyong in particular, what must have struck a chord with his contemporaries was the idea that by becoming a hermit in this particular place, the hopeful candidate for high office was, in effect, simply nipping up a mountain that was within sight of the court and shouting, “look at me, I’m a recluse!”¹ Those wise men who turned their backs on society were, of course, just those whom the enlightened emperor was supposed to employ.

Let us begin by taking Sima’s words seriously and considering Zhongnan shan as a place in which religious (and cultural) practices were, or were considered to be, highly visible to those who controlled access to power and patronage. If Mount Zhongnan was seen as a well-illuminated stage on which talented literati might parade their wares before the court in the hope of receiving favour, was it also a place where Buddhists and Taoists performed some of their more dramatic practices as a way of presenting their most sacred legends, thus to ensure legitimation and funding? It is, unfortunately, not possible to be entirely certain whether this hypothesis is correct since we do not yet know enough about regular medieval religious practice to be able to put specific types of practice into context. The world of medieval China is like a mountain itself: the vagaries of history conceal much of the mundane base and we only see the loftier peaks fleetingly through the mist.

By focusing only on one aspect of Zhongnan shan’s history, I do not want to suggest that the mountain was only sacred in so far as it was related to the state. That would be absurd. Sima Chengzhen may have appeared somewhat cynical about the place, but elsewhere he wrote that Mount Taibai 太白山, the western peak of the mountains, was the location of the eleventh of the thirty-six lesser grotto heavens, and thus not an insignificant locale in Shangqing cosmology.² Also, there were (and are) plenty of hermits on Zhongnan shan who quietly went about their own business and never had any dealings with politics. Li Bai’s 李白 (701–762) poems about Taibai shan, for example, express the personal epiphanies he felt there, and we may imag-

ine that many medieval recluses had profoundly transformative experiences which were never recorded and publicized.³

The name of a place in medieval China is often a significant clue in understanding how contemporary people regarded it. The name Zhongnan is quite old, and first attested in *Shi jing* 詩經 (Songs Classic, *Maoshi* 毛詩 243). The very name of the range—“terminal in the South”—suggests that it was viewed and written about primarily from the point of view of the city of Chang’an, but it had other names too: Zhongnan 中南 (Central Southern), Taiyi 太乙 (Great Unity) and Taibai 太白 (Great White). The name Taibai shan refers more specifically to a tall peak on the western end of the range in present-day Mei 郿 district in Shaanxi 陝西. A cosmological explanation for the name “Great White” is offered by the tenth-century Taoist author Du Guangting 杜光庭 (850–933). He tells us that the statues found in the Taiqing gong 太清宮 (Palace of Supreme Purity), a Taoist temple founded by Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712–56) in 741, were made of a particularly fine white jade-like stone from Taibai shan.⁴ Du writes as follows in his *Luyi ji* 錄異記 (Record of Marvels):

The essence of the Metal Star (i.e., the planet Venus) fell to the west of Gui peak 圭峰 on Mount Zhongnan, which was consequently named Taibai (another name for Venus).⁵ This essence transformed into a white stone that resembled fine jade. From time to time a purple vapour covered it.

During the Tianbao 天寶 (Heavenly treasure) era (742–56) when the emperor Xuanzong established the ancestral temple of [the emperor of] Mysterious Origin (*xuanyuan miao* 玄元廟) in the residence that he had occupied when he was the prince of Linzi 臨淄, in the Daning quarter 大寧坊 of Chang’an, he wanted to have sculpted an image of Mysterious Origin. A spirit spoke to him in a dream, and said, “In the northern valley of Taibai there is a jade stone which would be appropriate to fetch and sculpt. A purple vapour will appear at the spot where this stone is to be found.” The next day, Xuanzong ordered his retainers to search for the stone in the valley. The people who lived at the base of the mountain told them that for days there had been a purple vapour which had not dispersed. Finally, beneath this spot they dug out the jade stone. They sculpted it into a statue [of the emperor] that was two *zhang* 丈 in height, and also statues of the two perfected, two attendants, and [the two grand ministers] Li Linfu 李林甫 (d. 752) and Chen Xilie 陳希烈 (d. 756), each six *chi* 尺 in height.⁶

I have quoted Du at length because I believe that this passage offers us a way of understanding the function of the mountain. Even at the material level, Zhongnan shan was represented as a place in which essential substances arrived from the heavens and stayed hidden until the time was right for them to be brought forth into the world. When they were located, with some help from a responsive cosmos, they were not left in situ, but carried off the mountain and into the capital where they were used not only for the glory of the religion, but as testament to the power and prestige of the emperor. As with jade-like stone from Venus, so too with humans: Zhongnan shan was a repository of symbolic and cultural capital that could be drawn upon by the state or other powerful institutions.

In this chapter we shall explore literary materials of basically two types: the inscriptional (which is to say public) records of an important Taoist monastery, and the hagiographies of some (perhaps lesser-known) Buddhist figures associated with Zhongnan shan. These materials are quite different in style and intent, and perhaps do not bear sustained comparison, but they will, I hope, allow us some insight into the functions of this particular site as well as the types of claims that were made for the mountain and on the mountain.

LOUGUAN THE “STORIED OBSERVATORY”

Zhongnan shan’s significance as a sacred site that was linked inextricably with legitimation and patronage was partly due to the association of the mountains with the Taoist deity Lord Lao 老君. The history and shifting location of Laozi’s 老子 transmission of his *Daode jing* 道德經 provides an interesting example of how the political centre of gravity affected the disposition of sacred sites and how these sites were written into being.⁷ Early biographies of Laozi such as that found in *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Historian) do not mention the name of the pass where the sage met Yin Xi 尹喜, the Guardian of the Pass (*guanling* 關令), and gave him the five-thousand character classic.⁸ But, as we know from Li You’s 李幽 (ca. 89–140 CE) *Hangu guan fu* 涵谷關賦 (Rhapsody on the Hangu pass), by the time of the Later Han at least, the site of their meeting was located at the Hangu pass in Taolin 桃林 on the eastern side of the Zhongnan range, east of mount Hua 華山 and south of where the Huanghe 黃河 and Wei 渭 rivers meet.⁹ The transmission of the *Daode jing* was thus sited in a plausible place, at a pass that led out of the Central Plain towards less civilised lands, which suited the legend of Laozi’s departure for the West, but from the perspective of the court it was inconveniently located on the far side of the mountains from Chang’an.

Perhaps because of its awkward location, the really productive sacred place in medieval times was not the pass but a monastery known as Louguan 樓觀 “Storied Abbey” or “Storied Observatory” which from fifth century became the leading centre for Taoist activity in North China.¹⁰ The complex was located about thirty-five miles southwest of Chang’an, in the foothills of the Zhongnan mountains, much closer to the centre of power than the Hangu pass. Unfortunately, we have to reconstruct the history of this site from later sources, since no earlier account of the complex exists prior to an inscription of 626, the *Da Tang zongsheng guan ji* 大唐宗聖觀記 (Great Tang Record of the Abbey of the Ancestral Sage), which commemorates honours bestowed upon the temple by the Tang founder Gaozu 高祖 (r. 618–26) in recognition of the early support rendered by the abbot Qi Hui 岐暉 (558–630) during the Tang takeover of the empire.¹¹ In other words, the textual history of the place is intimately tied to the Tang state and the imperial family. The name too was subject to rewriting: Louguan was renamed “Abbey of the Ancestral Sage” in 620 because the Tang imperial house claimed that they shared the surname Li 李 with Lord Lao: he was thus the “ancestral sage” of the emperors.¹² A text of slightly later date than the inscription, *Louguan benji* 樓觀本紀 (Annals of Louguan), is cited in other sources, but is now lost.¹³ The more extensive and developed accounts of the temple date from the Yuan dynasty (1279–1368), when Louguan was operated by the later Taoist Quanzhen 全真 establishment.¹⁴

As Du’s passage on white stones from Venus makes clear, sacred sites on earth derived some of their potency from their correlations with holy places in the sky. The connections between heaven and earth are made explicit in the name of Louguan itself. While the term *guan* to designate a Taoist monastery is conventionally translated by terms such as “abbey” or “belvedere,” in the case of Louguan (the first to be so named) the term retains its sense of “observatory,” since it was claimed as the site of Yin Xi’s astronomical observatory.¹⁵ According to the legend, the site was bestowed on Yin by King Kang of the Zhou 周康王 (r. 1078–1052 BCE) in reward for his services, and it was from there that Yin Xi first detected the mysterious energies emanating from Laozi.¹⁶ He had himself stationed at Hangu pass, where he became Laozi’s disciple, but in the Yin Xi legend the *Daode jing* was transmitted at his own home observatory when he invited the sage to be his guest there.¹⁷

According to the later sources, after Yin Xi, Louguan was home to an extraordinary lineage of Taoist masters, some of them clearly known only to legend. Taoist authors stressed an unbroken lineage of masters who had all occupied the spot. Louguan was thus a place of transmission, but it was also a transmitted place. The key figure, and the first we can think of as a histori-

cal person, is Yin Tong 尹通 (398–499?) who was fortunate enough to have the same surname as Yin Xi. Emperor Taiwudi 太武帝 of the Later Wei 後魏 (r. 424), who had been convinced by the Celestial Master Kou Qianzhi 寇謙之 (365–448) and his prime minister Cui Hao 崔浩 (381–450) to establish a Taoist theocracy, made donations to Yin Tong and commissioned him to construct a place for the performance of Taoist rituals (*zhai* 齋)¹⁸. Yin apparently took swift advantage of the opportunity for patronage, and claimed that his own property was in fact the very observation tower in which Yin Xi had lived, and more importantly, where he had received the *Daode jing*. It was this combination of state recognition and the swift and audacious invention of tradition by Taoists that made Louguan, and thus Zhongnan shan, one of Taoism's most important sites.

By the late 470's about forty Taoists were to be found in residence at Louguan, some of them seeking sanctuary there after the Wei Taoist theocracy collapsed in 450.¹⁹ As we shall see in our Buddhist accounts, Zhongnan shan was a notable place of refuge for those who did not want, or did not need, to flee too far from the capital. Around this time a man called Wang Daoyi 王道一 (fl. ca. 470) took charge of Louguan and brought with him considerable financial resources. He had the buildings repaired and expanded and also sponsored a major collection of Daoist scriptures and ritual manuals, including not just Celestial Master texts but also those of the Shangqing 上清 and Lingbao 靈寶 corpus. The key texts of the Louguan group seem to have begun to be produced around this time. They include *Taishang laojun jiejing* 太上老君戒經 (Precepts Scripture of the Most High Lord Lao) which introduces the five precepts as given by Laozi to Yin Xi; the *Chuanshou jingjie yi zhujue* 傳授經戒儀註訣 (Annotated Explanation of the Transmission Formalities for Scriptures and Precepts) which is an ordination manual based on the *Daode jing*; and the *Xisheng jing* 西昇經 (Scripture of Western Ascension), which lays out a program of practice for attaining the Tao.²⁰ All the texts focus on Yin Xi and his relationship with Laozi and stress his connection with the Louguan site. They are, then, literary productions that emphasize local concerns, although they are far from parochial in terms of their ambitions. The texts seek to effect change on the empire-wide level. As can be seen by the texts devoted to precepts and ordination produced there, Louguan was an important site for the development of a kind of Taoist monasticism modelled after Buddhist prototypes. Thus, proximity to political power did not mean that literary production was aimed only at maintaining patronage; in fact there was considerable creativity applied to religious innovation that had less immediate concerns than just funding Louguan itself.

In the sixth century, Taoists based at Louguan continued to play significant political and religious roles. Wei Jie 韋節 (*zi* Jingsi 精思 496–569), a resident of Mount Hua, was the presiding master at Zhou Wudi's 周武帝 (r. 560–78) Taoist initiation in 567.²¹ Wang Yan 王延 (519–604) was in charge of the imperially-sponsored catalogue of Taoist literature.²² Yan Da 嚴達 (514–609) was the leading figure at Wudi's abbey, Tongdao guan 通道觀, and was a strong supporter of Wudi's ideological project.²³ Louguan probably also provided a place of refuge for Southern Taoists fleeing Liang Wudi's 梁武帝 (r. 502–49) persecution of Taoism.²⁴ Louguan was home to liturgists, scholars and ideologues. Like Mount Zhongnan in general it supported a wide variety of specialists and continued to be a place where traditions intermingled and a kind of state Taoism prospered.

The most important resident of Louguan in the seventh century was Yin Wencao 尹文操 (622–88), a contemporary of Daoxuan, who entered Louguan as novice in 636, and was appointed abbot in 677.²⁵ In 649, when in solitary retreat, he had a vision in which his former teacher told him to go to Taibai shan where he had an encounter with the Tao and a vision of Lord Lao who took the form of a huge nine-coloured image. In 656, Yin moved to Chang'an where Tang Gaozong 唐高宗 (r. 626–49) heaped him with honours. In 677, Gaozong made him abbot of Louguan. In 679, he conducted a large Taoist ceremony in Luoyang 洛陽, during which Lord Lao descended in public. Gaozong later offered him an official position which he declined. Yin's career offers a nice example of a Taoist who initially attracted imperial attention by living on Zhongnan shan and reporting visions of Laozi, the imperial ancestor. It seems that in the seventh century Lord Lao continued to maintain particular and local connections with Zhongnan shan, even if he could also appear in other places.

Although Yin was the last of the Tang Taoist figures from Louguan who was really active in the capital, in the eighth century the court could still look to the site to provide legitimation. In 741, an inscribed jade tablet was excavated from the Hangu pass and, following a dream experienced by Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712–56), a jade statue of Laozi was recovered from Louguan.²⁶ Louguan flourished even in the late Tang: Du Guangting says that in the abbey's complex could be found a veritable archaeological wonderland. According to him—although apparently these marvels had escaped the notice of earlier writers—there were buildings established by such ancient rulers as the legendary King Mu of Zhou 周穆王, Qin Shihuangdi 秦始皇帝 (221–207 BCE) and Han Wudi 漢武帝 (140–87 BCE), as well as an example of the first emperor's calligraphy.²⁷ In Du's time the tradition of writing the site back into Chinese history, and stressing its connections with great rulers was clearly still alive and well.

BUDDHIST CLAIMS TO MOUNT ZHONGNAN

As we have seen, Zhongnan shan was strongly associated with Lord Lao, and this association was pushed heavily and consistently by the Louguan group of Taoists. Since Laozi was the imperial ancestor of the Tang house, there were clear patronage and legitimation implications in claiming these local connections. How did Buddhists respond to this rhetoric? The mountain was not a place associated with a bodhisattva, in the way that Mañjuśrī was thought to reside at Wutai shan 五臺山, but, in the accounts of the divine revelations experienced by Daoxuan, Zhongnan shan does feature as one of the places in China where in the past the Buddha's disciple Mahākāśyapa had preached the dharma.²⁸ We might perhaps consider this revelation a somewhat belated and muted attempt on Daoxuan's part to counteract the strong claim made by Taoists that in some way Zhongnan shan was the mountain of Laozi and Yin Xi.

Actually, the Buddhist claim to Zhongnan seems to have been made in quite a different way. For Buddhist authors, the site was populated, or settled, by human practitioners—both living and dead. They wrote it as a stage on which some of the most heroic dramas of the Mahāyāna literature were adapted to local tastes and resources, then performed and recorded.

The importance of Zhongnan shan in the Buddhist tradition can be seen immediately if we do no more than list some of the more significant figures associated with the place and their traditional affiliations: Daoxuan—Vinaya (*lü* 律); Zhiyan 智嚴 (602–668) and Fazang 法藏 (643–712)—Huayan 華嚴; Xinxing 信行 (541–94)—Sanjie-jiao 三階教; Shandao 善導 (613–81)—Pure Land (Jingtu 淨土); Huian 慧安 (582–709)—Northern school Chan 禪; Huiyuan 慧遠 (597–647, the major disciple of Jizang 吉藏 [549–623])—"Three Treatises" (Sanlun 三論). Not only did major monks live in the many monasteries of Zhongnan shan, but also the mountain was colonised by the special dead. Sanjie-jiao monks, nuns, and laypeople in particular were buried around their leader Xinxing, their epitaphs forming both a visible memorial to their practice and a new site of power close to the capital.²⁹ Sanjie-jiao members also had their corpses exposed to the elements on Zhongnan shan, thus infusing the site with their devoted practice, even in death.³⁰ I do not have the space here even to begin to discuss all these figures and practices, but it would be a poor tribute to Koichi Shinohara that did not discuss Daoxuan.

As a compiler of monks' biographies, Daoxuan shaped definitively the way we see the Zhongnan shan of Sui and Tang times. For him, as for other monks that he wrote about, Zhongnan shan provided a place of refuge in times of political or personal difficulties, and in particular it was a place

where he wrote some of his non-biographical works.³¹ In 626, when Gaozu instituted policies aimed at thinning out the ranks of monks and nuns, Daoxuan left the capital and went into reclusion at Fengde monastery 豐德寺 on the mountain. Around 630, Daoxuan retired to Zhongnan shan apparently in response to the anti-Buddhist policies adopted by the new Tang emperor Taizong 太宗 (r. 626–49).³² In 642, when his mother died, and again in 646, Daoxuan spent time on the mountain. In the summer of 664, Daoxuan left the prestigious capital monastery Ximing si 西明寺 where he was the abbot and went to Jingye monastery 淨業 on Zhongnan shan where he worked on his writing, and on building an ordination platform. In the second month of 667, construction was complete on the first ordination platform in central China and an ordination ceremony was performed there for twenty-seven ordinands that was attended by a number of distinguished monks including Fazang.³³ Daoxuan died in the tenth month of the same year having seen this long-cherished dream realised.

Daoxuan's writings contain many references to Zhongnan shan, including scenes on which he reported in the first person. It was clearly a place that was both familiar and meaningful for him. It would be impossible to survey here all his many references to the mountains, and so I have chosen instead to concentrate on a sequence of biographies from his major hagiographical collection. I would like to explore both how he stages these accounts and discuss his possible motives for doing so.

ZHONGNAN SHAN, SELF-IMMOLATION AND THE *HUAYAN JING*

The section on self-immolators (*yishen* 遺身 “abandoning the body”) in Daoxuan's *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 (Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks, T. no. 2060 [XGSZ]) betrays a notable geographical bias towards stele inscriptions and eye-witness accounts of monks who lived on Mount Zhongnan.³⁴ In fact, in comparison with the earlier *Gaoseng zhuan*, which includes biographies of monks from all over China, both from the North and South, the *Xu Gaoseng zhuan* contains a disproportionate number of biographies of monks whose religious activities centred on Zhongnan shan. Periods in Daoxuan's life spent on the mountain in the 620s and 30s, as well as a sense of disquiet at Taizong's policies towards Buddhism, may have been on his mind as he was compiling these particular biographies ten years or so later.

Out of a total of ten main biographies in the section on self-immolators in the original text of XGSZ, no fewer than five of them lived and died on Zhongnan shan. We shall begin with three of them, Puyuan 普圓 (fl. ca. 560), and two of his disciples, Puji 普濟 (d. 581), and Puan 普安 (530–609).³⁵

In particular, I want to try and focus on the way that Daoxuan represents the reactions of the two disciples to the persecution of Buddhism by Zhou Wudi that began in 574.³⁶ We shall see how he casts self-immolation, combined with devotion to the *Huayan jing* 華嚴經 (*Avatamsaka-sūtra*), as a Buddhist response to government constraints on the practice of the religion. Moreover, the stage on which the drama is set—Zhongnan shan—was not an exotic faraway place, but practically in the government’s backyard. The careers of the self-immolators are thus even more miraculous for being located so close at hand.

Let us begin with Puyuan’s biography. Active around central Shaanxi 陝西 at the beginning of the reign of Zhou Wudi, Puyuan was apparently imposing in stature, refined in manner, elegant in his written composition, and well-travelled. He is presented as having a particular skill in reciting the *Huayan jing*. The biography notes his skill in meditation—when he sat in *samādhi* on his rope seat he was so focussed that he was not aware of the passing of the days. While he occasionally appeared in villages to beg for food, mostly he spent his time practicing meditation in cemeteries (*linmu* 林墓).³⁷ One night, he encountered a powerful and terrifying ghost, which had four eyes and six teeth.³⁸ It was holding a gnarled club in its hands. Puyuan opened his eyes wide without any sign of fear and the ghost withdrew rapidly. Puyuan is thus presented in the first part of the biography as a powerful and autonomous figure who functioned happily outside the support and constraints of the monastery in the dangerous realm of corpses and ghosts that formed the counterpoint to the miraculous purity and power of the mountain.

One day, an “evil person” begged Puyuan for his head. Puyuan was about to chop it off and hand it over, but the other did not dare actually take it, and begged for his eyes instead. Puyuan was willing to gouge them out and give them away. Then he wanted Puyuan’s hand, so the monk lashed his wrist to a tree with a rope. He cut off his arm at the elbow and gave it away. He died by the Fan Vale 樊川, south of Chang’an, where the local villagers could not agree who should get his remains, so in the end they divided his body into several pieces, and built a pagoda for each of them.³⁹ The division of the relics recalls what occurred after the Buddha’s cremation, but must have been a more bloody process, as Puyuan’s body had not been reduced to ashes and bones. It has many parallels with the amateur dissections of the bodies of saints in medieval Europe, described so well by Piero Camporesi.⁴⁰ The competition to secure fragments of the holy body shows how important these relics were to the medieval Chinese, and how taboos on the handling of the corpse could be transcended in the case of these “very special dead.” The enshrining on Zhongnan shan of local heroes who embodied the great

virtues and practices of the Mahāyāna literature shows how the sacred space was filled and infused with sacred bodies. We may perhaps imagine that the relics of Buddhist monks—the bodies of the dead—were intended to compete with the body of the living Tao—the apparitions of Lord Lao, and the mysterious minerals and jade talismans excavated from the mountain.

The biography of Puji, which follows immediately after in XGSZ, highlights the way in which the power of the ascetic combined with the power of the *Huayan* scripture could ward off the depredations of an evil ruler and how that struggle was played out on the Zhongnan stage. Puyuan's disciple Puji was from the northern mountains of Yongzhou 雍州.⁴¹ He lived alone in the wilds of the forest on Zhongnan shan, unafraid of wild dogs and tigers. He cultivated meditation well into his old age, but did not eschew scriptural studies, favouring the *Huayan jing* in particular, like his master. In 574, when Zhou Wudi began his persecution of Buddhism, he moved into the higher peaks of the mountains. There, he made a detailed declaration:

He vowed that if the “images and teachings” (i.e., Buddhism) should flourish, he would relinquish his body in homage [*pūja*]. He cultivated the practices of Puxian 普賢 (“Universal Goodness;” the Bodhisattva Samantabhadra), so as to be re-born in a “most worthy land” (*xianshou guo* 賢首國). At the beginning of the Kaihuang 開皇 reign-period (of Sui Wendi 隋文帝, 581–600), the dharma gate was greatly propagated (i.e., Buddhism was restored) and he considered that his vow had been fulfilled. Then he arranged his own offering. He led a crowd to assemble on the western cliffs of the Tan 炭 valley of Taibai shan 太白山 (the western peak of Zhongnan shan). Loudly pronouncing his great vow he threw himself off and died. People from afar flocked there, filling the cliffs and valleys. They built a white pagoda for him on a high peak.⁴²

Puji's vow and subsequent leap from a cliff provides a vivid example of the way in which the beginning of Sui rule in 581 was probably understood as a momentous and positive event of truly cosmic dimensions for monks in the North who had suffered under Zhou Wudi. In Puji's biography, Zhongnan shan is presented as an uncivilised place of potential danger, full of wild dogs and tigers, yet it also shelters him from Wudi's persecution, provides the means and place for his martyrdom and the commemoration of his acts. The mountain itself becomes an actor in this and related accounts. It holds heroes in readiness—like the white stone from Venus—hinting at their presence until the time is right for them to be used. Louguan gained

patronage for its support of the Tang dynasty. Here, Daoxuan seems to suggest that Buddhist monks are willing to make the ultimate sacrifice to ensure patronage and protection by the state, the Sui in this case.

Beyond the immediate political realities, the story of Puji and its setting in a place that was particularly important for dynastic legitimation—let us recall that Zhou Wudi's Taoist ideologues were also working on the same mountain—suggests that for Daoxuan Buddhist monks were able to influence history in quite profound ways by bargaining with their own bodies. The phrase *xianshou guo* 賢首國 carries within it the sense not only of a Pure Land but also, quite literally “a most worthy state,” i.e., one which propagated Buddhism. Certainly the Sui, at least under Wendi, could be characterised as just such a state.⁴³ I have found no explicit antecedent in the *jātaka* or *avadāna* literature for a bodhisattva giving up his life in exchange for the restoration of the dharma, and we may see Puji's self-immolation rather as a particularly Chinese response to persecution. Yet the Mahāyāna literature contains many narratives of heroic self-sacrifice set in times and places far from medieval China. I would suggest that to perform and to record acts of self-immolation on Zhongnan shan were means of producing bodhisattvas locally, practically at the heart of the empire.

The biography of another of Puyuan's disciples, Puan, was probably included immediately after that of Puji because of the shared connection with Zhongnan rather than for any spectacular act of self-immolation.⁴⁴ His biography is long and packed with miraculous incident. We may suspect then, that Daoxuan was interested in more than just collecting examples of self-immolation. It seems as if, instead, he was attempting to create an extended narrative about miracles and heroes inspired by the *Huayan jing* on Zhongnan shan.

Puan became Puyuan's disciple while still young. Later he studied under “dharma-master Ai 藹”—most likely Jing'ai 靜藹 (534–75), whom we shall discuss below. Although an ascetic by inclination, he mastered the *tripiṭika* and like Puyuan's other disciples he had a particular affection for the *Huayan jing*. He also chanted scriptures and practised dhyāna. The biography describes his attempts to give away his own body, and reveals the presence of the dead on Zhongnan shan:

Also, he cultivated ascetic practices, abandoning his body for the sake of beings. Sometimes he exposed his body in the grass, donating it to mosquitoes and gadflies. Flowing blood covered his body but he had no fear at all. Sometimes he would lie among the discarded corpses, hoping to give himself to wild dogs (*chai* 豺) and tigers. In the hope of giving

himself away while still alive, this is what he prayed for as his fundamental intention. Although tigers and wildcats (*baoyao* 豹) came, they just sniffed at him but would not eat him. He always regretted that his heartfelt vow had not been fulfilled. Alone, he followed the tracks of wild animals, hoping to find one who would eat him.⁴⁵

Again, Zhongnan shan is presented as a place of wilderness and death, through which hungry animals roam among scattered human corpses. It seems almost as if the imagery of the Indian charnel ground has been relocated to Zhongnan shan. The wild animals avoid Puan, perhaps because his body is being saved for a greater purpose. Puan's donation of his body to insects, which might appear to be a bizarre and ad hoc invention, was probably inspired by canonical accounts of King Śibi and others, and was to become a common feature in the biographies of later self-immolators.⁴⁶

When the Zhou persecution began, Puan went into hiding in the deep forest on the western banks of the Pianzi 榧梓 valley of Zhongnan shan. He sheltered dharma master Jingyuan 靜淵 (544–611) and some thirty other renegade monks with him there.⁴⁷ While the monks remained hidden, Puan fearlessly went out to beg on their behalf. The biography thus contrasts Zhongnan as a place of danger with Zhongnan as miraculous sanctuary for the righteous. There is also something strangely satisfying about the idea of monks hiding in mountains that were in sight of their persecutors in the capital.

Zhou Wudi had announced a generous bounty for the capture of monks. When a poor person came to arrest Puan, the monk took pity on him and they went to the capital together, but when they appeared before Wudi, the emperor said that although his laws did not permit monks to be among the people, they should at least be allowed to live in the mountains. This odd little episode does make one wonder a little if Wudi's persecution was quite as severe as Buddhist sources usually presented it. Puan ran into other difficulties, but never hid himself and always managed to escape.

Jing'ai, who was also in hiding, took a more pessimistic view of the saṃgha's fortunes than did Puan. Puan assured him that his miraculous escapes were all due to the power of the *Huayan* scripture and asked him to return to Zhongnan. As we know from Jiang'ai's biography, Puan did not manage to convince him. He disembowelled himself, hung his entrails on the trees and left a long poem written in his own blood in which he lamented his inability to defend the dharma.⁴⁸

When Wendi founded the Sui, Buddhism prospered again and the thirty monks returned to monastic life. Puan alone remained in his mountain dwell-

ing. From this point, the biography is given over to a long series of miracle tales which are recounted at length, are all set in various parts of Zhongnan shan, and apparently have only the miraculous power of the *Huayan jing* in common. They culminate in rather a bizarre episode in which Puan slices the flesh from his buttocks in order to save three pigs from being sacrificed to a local deity.

Why does Daoxuan present us with such a long catalogue of miracles, only the last of which is in any way connected with self-immolation? Perhaps the answer to this lies in Puan's final years. Such was Puan's reputation that in 588 he was repeatedly invited to the Sui capital, where he served as a mentor to the crown prince (presumably Yang Yong 楊勇 before he was replaced as crown prince by Yang Guang 楊廣, [the future Sui Yangdi 煬帝, r. 604–618], in 600).⁴⁹ He resided at the Jingfa 靜法 monastery which Princess Ancheng 安成 (Sui Wendi's older sister) had founded, although the biography says that he preferred to continue to sleep in the Zhongnan mountains.⁵⁰ Given this prestigious connection with the imperial house it is odd that Daoxuan does not mention Puan's affiliation with the Jingfa monastery in the title of the biography, but instead presents him as "a recluse to the south of the capital suburbs."⁵¹ I suspect that this was intentional: Daoxuan wanted to draw the attention of the reader to the fact that Puan was a hero of the Buddhist resistance to the policies of Zhou Wudi and that the real substance of his career lay in the miracles he performed on Zhongnan shan. Puan died at the age of eighty at Jingfa monastery, on Daye 大業 5.11.5 (December 6th, 609). A pagoda was raised for his remains on Zhongnan shan, by the side of Zhixiang si 至相寺.⁵² This biography shows that a "self-immolator" could die of natural causes after a long and eventful life. We must suspect that, as with other biographies in the self-immolation section, Daoxuan wanted to make a point about the necessity of state patronage of Buddhism; he used the Sui as a model example of a Buddhist state and Zhongnan shan as the site of action and commemoration.

There were self-immolators on Zhongnan shan in Tang times as well, but their acts do not appear to carry the same kind of political message as those we have examined above. Fakuang 法曠 (?–633) of Hongshan si 弘善寺 in the capital was a truly serious ascetic like Puan, and also had a considerable reputation for scholarship and memorization.⁵³ He favoured Confucianism in his youth, but later converted to Buddhism. He was a serious student, and did not venture outside the monastery, but his mastery of the *Dazhidu lun* 大智度論 made his teachings popular in the capital. He was a fast learner in recitation and mastered the *Wuliangshou jing* 無量壽經 (Sutra of Infinite Life), which was considered to be particularly hard to recite, in a single day.⁵⁴ His self-immolation was a private affair, and was

apparently inspired by his personal view of the endless cycles of birth and death:

On Zhenguan 貞觀 7.2.21 (April 5th 633), he entered Zhongnan shan. More than forty *li* within the Tan 炭 valley, he took off his robes, hung them on a tree and cut his throat with a knife.⁵⁵ Since he died all alone, no one knew where he was, until the middle of the eighth month, when, after an extended search, his friends found his “Yishen song” 遺身頌 (Eulogy on abandoning the body).⁵⁶

This relatively rare case of private self-immolation, which was attributed to a weariness with *saṃsāra*, throws into relief the public and political cases that characterise Daoxuan’s selection as a whole. Fakuang was a man who was deeply immersed in scriptural knowledge. The *Dazhidu lun* with its many accounts of the heroic renunciation of the body by bodhisattvas, and the *Sutra of Infinite Life* with its message of hope of deliverance from *saṃsāra* and rebirth in the Pure Land may have shown him a path that offered an alternative to endless rebirth. Zhongnan shan offered true seclusion: it could be a lonely place where a body might lie undiscovered for months.

Self-immolation on Zhongnan shan was still occurring even as the XGSZ was being compiled. Huitong 會通 (d. 649) has a short biography that was added after the date of the preface of the collection (645). He led a secluded and ascetic lifestyle in the Baolin 豹林 valley on Zhongnan shan.⁵⁷ When he read the *Lotus Sutra*, he was inspired by the example of the Medicine King (*Yao Wang* 藥王, Bhaiṣajyagururāja), whose self-immolation he vowed to enact for himself. His auto-cremation took place at night; he sat and chanted the *Lotus Sutra* in a niche within the pyre and a light from the heavens entered the flames (in much the same way that the essence of Venus fell on Taibai shan). The presence of this sign shows that Huitong’s death was no act of suicide, but one of miraculous and cosmic transformation.⁵⁸

Huitong’s auto-cremation is presented as an act of devotion to the Lotus Sutra, without any overt political message. Yet, when read in combination with the other biographies of self-immolators on Zhongnan shan, it serves as a reminder that auto-cremation was very much a living tradition for monastics who lived close to the capital. If we consider geography as an important element in the history of self-immolation we can see that a certain area could shape and determine not only local practice but also the empire-wide relationship between state and *saṃgha*.

Was Zhongnan shan a place where self-immolation was particularly common? It might seem so at first glance, but actually I think that this is an illusion caused by the fact that Daoxuan chooses so many accounts from

Zhongnan shan to fill this section of his collection. We know that there were plenty of other cases from other places that he could have chosen instead. Daoxuan chose to stage that particular monastic skill with a close eye to issues of power and the patronage of the saṃgha.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have suggested that some literary stagings of Zhongnan shan can be better understood in relation to contemporary political events in the capital. I have tried to show that location was important (perhaps for different reasons) to practitioners, to authors and to the readers of these texts—especially to those readers who wielded political power. Due to the constraints of space, we have had the opportunity here to review only a relatively narrow selection of texts in order to draw out certain choices made by their authors and compilers. No doubt if we were to look at more examples, our picture would be a good deal more detailed and more complex, but I suspect that the overall concern with legitimation and patronage would still be discernable. We have done no more than sketch what the broad contours of religious practice on the mountain might look like from one perspective.

What makes a sacred site? As we have seen, medieval authors presented Mount Zhongnan as a stage, a charnel ground, a place of danger and death, or somewhere that offered sanctuary and safety in times of persecution. Rarely did it appear to be a neutral location, but rather it was at times cast almost as an actor itself, seeming to participate actively in its own history and that of the empire. It absorbed the special dead and their relics, while exuding dynastic treasures and talismans in the form of heavenly minerals and divine images.

Perhaps it would be too much to claim that individual religious figures on Zhongnan shan were automatically highly visible to the court, as Sima Chengzhen seems to suggest—but we can say they could occasionally appear in the spotlight, especially with the collaboration of a skilled author or compiler. Did the activities of practitioners in the medieval period continue to make Zhongnan shan a sacred place after Chang'an fell and there was no longer a powerful audience nearby? The answer appears to be yes: as Raoul Birnbaum's contribution to this volume shows, Zhongnan shan is still a place where true hermits dwell. They choose to do so, he suggests, precisely because of the traces of those who went before them. Through the activities of humans—whether physical practices or the recording of those practices—Zhongnan shan has been made sacred, and continues to be made so.

ENDNOTES

- 1 *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (New Book of the Tang, 618–907), 225 *juan*, by Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072), Song Qi 宋祁 (998–1061) et. al., 1043–60 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 123:4375; *Da Tang xinyu* 大唐新語 (New Tales of the Great Tang), 13 *juan*, compiled by Liu Su 劉肅 (active 806–820) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), 10:157–58. See Alan J. Berkowitz, *Patterns of Disengagement: the Practice and Portrayal of Reclusion in Early Medieval China* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2000), 138.
- 2 See his *Tiandi gongfu tu* 天地宮府圖 (Diagrams of the Palaces and Storehouses of Heaven and Earth) in *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 (Seven Slips from a Cloudy Satchel), comp. ca. 1028–29 by Zhang Junfang 張君房 (fl. 1008–1029), (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003) 27:613. C.f., Paul W. Kroll, “Li Po’s Transcendent Diction,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106 (1, *Sinological Studies Dedicated to Edward H. Schafer*, 1986), 114.
- 3 The poems are transcribed, translated, and discussed in Kroll, “Li Po’s Transcendent Diction,” 114–16.
- 4 See Edward H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: a Study of T’ang Exotics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), 235; Franciscus Verellen, 1989. *Du Guangting (850-933): taoïste de cour à la fin de la Chine médiévale* (Paris: Collège de France Institut des hautes études chinoises), 49.
- 5 It is interesting to note that Li Bai 李白 (701–762), the poet, was given the names Bai 白 and Taibai 太白 because his mother dreamed that she was visited by Venus on the night he was delivered. See Kroll, “Li Po’s Transcendent Diction,” 113.
- 6 DZ 591. 7.5a–5b; following the translation of Verellen *Du Guangting*, 49. On the background to this temple see T.H. Barrett, *Taoism under the T’ang: Religion and Empire during the Golden Age of Chinese History* (London: Wellsweep, 1996), 63–67 and Victor Cunrui Xiong, “Ritual Innovations and Taoism under Tang Xuanzong,” *T’oung Pao* 82, no. 4–5 (1996): 258–316.
- 7 See Livia Kohn, “Yin Xi: The Master at the Beginning of the Scripture,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 45 (1997): 83–139 and *ibid.*, *God of the Dao: Lord Lao in History and Myth* (Ann Arbor: Center for the Chinese Studies University of Michigan, 1998), 257–58.
- 8 For the early sources on Laozi’s biography, see Robert Ford Campany, *To Live as Long as Heaven and Earth: A Translation and Study of Ge Hong’s Traditions of Divine Transcendents* (Berkeley; Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2002), 426–31.
- 9 Zhang Weiling 張漳玲, “Guanling Yin Xi shenhua yanjiu 關令尹喜神化研究” (Research on the Divinisation of Yin Xi, Guardian of the Pass), *Daojiao xue tansuo* 3 (1990), 30.
- 10 On Louguan see, most recently, Livia Kohn, “The Northern Celestial Masters,” in *Daoism Handbook*, edited by Livia Kohn (Leiden and Boston, Mass.: E.J. Brill, 2000), 285–87, and the sources cited therein.

- 11 For the text, see Chen Yuan 陳垣, Chen Zhichao 陳智超, Zeng Qingying 曾慶瑛 eds., *Daojia jinshi lue* 道家金石略 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1988), 46–48. The text is studied by Otagi Hajime 愛宕元, “Tōdai Rōkan kō Ouyō Shun sen “Dai Tō shūshō kan ki” hi o tegakari toshite 唐代樓觀考——歐陽詢選『大唐宗聖觀記』碑を手掛りとして” (Investigation of the Tang Louguan—with reference to Ouyang Xiu’s stele *Da Tang Zongsheng guan ji*), in *Chūgoku kō dōkyō shi kenkyū* 中国古道教史研究, edited by Yoshikawa Tadao 吉川忠夫 (Kyoto: Kyoto daigaku jimbun kenkyujo, 1992), 275–322. Chen Guofu 陳國符 provides a historical narrative of the crucial events of the Tang conquest as they relate to Louguan, see *Daozang yuanliu kao* 道藏源流考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985 [1963]), 263. Qi renamed himself Pingding 平定 “Peace and Stability” in honour of the Tang succession.
- 12 Otagi, “Tōdai Rōkan kō Ouyō Shun,” 279. It is worth noting in passing that the author of this piece—Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 (557–641)—was also the calligrapher for a memorial inscription for the Buddhist monk Sengyong 僧叢 (543–631), one of the most important disciples of the Sanjie 三階 leader Xinxing 信行 (540–94), who was buried on Zhongnan shan (see Jamie Hubbard, “Chinese Reliquary Inscriptions and the San-chieh-chiao,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 14, no. 2 [1991], 266).
- 13 See the citations in Otagi, “Tōdai Rōkan kō Ouyō Shun.”
- 14 Texts include *Zhongnan shan zuting xianzhen neizhuan* 終南山祖庭仙真內傳 (Inner Biographies of Transcendent Perfected of the Ancestral Halls of Zhongnan shan, DZ 955) by Li Daoqian 李道謙 (1219–96), *Gu Louguan ziyun yanqing ji* 古樓觀紫雲衍慶集 (Collection of Abundant Blessings of Purple Clouds from Ancient Louguan, DZ 957), by Zhu Xiangxian 朱象先 (fl. 1279–1308), and *Zhongnan shan shuojing tai lidai zhenxian beiji* 終南山說經臺歷代真仙碑記 (Inscriptions and Records of the Successive Generations of Perfected Immortals of the Scripture Transmission Terrace of Zhongnan shan, DZ 956) also by Zhu. See Kohn, “The Northern Celestial Masters,” 286 for a discussion of the texts.
- 15 Kristofer M. Schipper, “Le monachisme taoïste,” in *Incontro di religioni in Asia tra il terzo e il decimo secolo d. C.*, edited by Lionello Lanciottii, 208–209 (Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1984); Florian C. Reiter, “Some observations concerning Taoist foundations in traditional China,” *Zeitschrift-der-Deutschen-Morgenlandischen-Gesellschaft* 133, no. 2 (1983): 363–76.
- 16 See Kohn, “Yin Xi,” 92–101.
- 17 The transmission of the *Daode jing* at Louguan rather than at the pass is found in Louguan texts such as *Taishang Laojun jiejing* 太上老君戒經 (Precepts Scripture of the Most High Lord Lao, DZ 784) and *Xisheng jing* 西升經 (Scripture of Western Ascension, DZ 726). See Kohn, “Yin Xi,” 103.
- 18 Chen, *Daozang yuanliu kao*, 264.
- 19 Richard B. Mather, “K’ou Ch’ien-chih and the Taoist Theocracy at the Northern Wei Court, 425-451,” in *Facets of Taoism*, edited by Holmes H. Welch and Anna K. Seidel, 121 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1979).

- 20 On these texts and others of the Louguan group, see Kohn, “The Northern Celestial Masters,” 290–93.
- 21 John Lagerwey, *Wu-shang pi-yao: somme taoiste du VIe siècle* (Paris: Ecole Française d’Extrême-Orient, 1981), 19. See *Lishi zhenxian tidao tongjian* 歷史真仙體道通鑿 (Comprehensive mirror of perfected transcendents who embodied the Tao in successive generations, DZ 296 29.5a–5b), *Zhongnan shan shuojing tai lidai zhenxian beiji* (DZ 956 13a–13b) and *Sandong qunxian lu* 三洞群仙錄 (Record of the flocks of immortals from the three caverns, DZ 1248 13.19a–19b).
- 22 Livia Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao: Debates Among Buddhists and Taoists in Medieval China* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 219. *Yunji qiqian* 85:1922–23.
- 23 Lagerwey, *Wu-shang pi-yao*, 13.
- 24 Michel Strickmann, “A Taoist Confirmation of Liang Wu Ti’s Suppression of Taoism,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 98 (1978): 467–75.
- 25 See Livia Kohn, *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism: a Cross-cultural Perspective* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2003), 79; *ibid.*, “The Northern Celestial Masters,” 289 and Barrett, *Taoism under the T’ang*, 33–34. His life is described in *Da Tang Yin zunshi bei* 大唐尹尊師碑 (Inscription for the worthy master Yin of the Great Tang) by Yuan Banqian 員半千 dated to 717, in *Gu Louguan ziyun yanqing ji*, DZ 957 1.4b-9b; Chen Yuan, et. al., *Daojia jinshi lue*, 102–104; and *Zhongnan shan shuojing tai lidai zhenxian beiji*, DZ 956 16b–17a.
- 26 Franciscus Verellen, “A Forgotten T’ang Restoration: The Taoist Dispensation After Huang Ch’ao,” *Asia Major* 7, no. 1 (1994): 129–31; Charles D. Benn, “Religious Aspects of Emperor Hsüan-tsung’s Taoist Ideology,” in *Buddhist and Taoist Practice in Medieval Chinese Society: Buddhist and Taoist Studies II*, edited by David W. Chappell, 127–28 (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1987).
- 27 *Daojiao lingyanji* 道教靈驗記 (Record of Evidential Miracles of Taoism) DZ 590 3.8a, Kohn, “Yin Xi,” 93.
- 28 *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 14, T no. 2122, vol. 53, 394c; *Lüxiang gantong zhuan* 律相感通傳 T no. 1898, vol. 45, 875c; *Daoxuan lüshi gantong lu* 道宣律師感通錄 T. no. 2107, vol. 52, 437a.
- 29 Hubbard, “Chinese Reliquary Inscriptions.”
- 30 Shufen Liu, “Death and the Degeneration of Life: Exposure of the Corpse in Medieval Chinese Buddhism,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 28 (2000): 18–19.
- 31 On Daoxuan’s life and his time on Zhongnan see Fujiyoshi Masumi 藤善眞澄, *Dōsen den no kenkyū* 道宣伝の研究 (Kyoto: Kyōto Daigaku Gakujutsu Shuppankai, 2002).
- 32 On Taizong and Buddhism see Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T’ang* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 7–11 and Arthur F. Wright, “T’ang T’ai-tsung and Buddhism,” in *Perspectives on the T’ang*, edited

- by Denis Twitchett and Arthur F. Wright, 239–63 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).
- 33 *T. no.* 1892, vol. 45, 807a–19a, especially 816b20–817a15. See John R. McRae, “Daoxuan’s Vision of Jetavana: The Ordination Platform Movement in Medieval Chinese Buddhism,” in *Going Forth: Visions of Buddhist Vinaya. Essays Presented in Honor of Professor Stanley Weinstein*, edited by William M. Bodiford, 78 (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2005).
- 34 Daoxuan drew on four types of material for his collection: 1) oral information from travellers and informants; 2) his own personal experiences and investigations; 3) religious and secular historical documents; 4) funerary inscriptions. These sources are surveyed in Shi Guodeng 釋果燈, *Tang Daoxuan Xu gaoseng zhuan pipan sixiang chutan* 唐道宣《續高僧傳》批判思想初探 [A Preliminary Study Evaluating the Thought of the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* by Daoxuan of the Tang] (Taipei: Dongchu chubanshe, 1992), 51–91.
- 35 XGSZ 27, *T. no.* 2060, vol. 50, 680b23–c10.
- 36 On Zhou Wudi’s suppression of Buddhism see Nomura Yōshō 野村耀昌, *Shubu hōnan no kenkyū* 周武法難の研究 [Research on Zhou Wudi’s Persecution of Buddhism] (Tokyo: Azuma Shuppan, 1968).
- 37 Dwelling in cemeteries is listed as one of the traditional thirteen *dhūtagunas* (austerities). See *Bukkyō dai jiten* 仏教大辭典 [Encyclopedia of Buddhism], Mochizuki Shinkō 望月信亨, revised edition, 10 vols. (Kyoto: Seikai Seiten Kankō Kyōkai, 1954–63), 2335a. While cremation-ground contemplations are extolled in many Buddhist texts, actual references to this practice in China are comparatively rare. On the practice of contemplating corpses in the cremation ground in South Asian Buddhism see Liz Wilson, *Charming Cadavers: Horrific Figurations of the Feminine in Indian Buddhist Hagiographic Literature* (Chicago, IL; London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), esp. 41–76.
- 38 I have been unable to supply this apparition with a name, but see J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China, its Ancient Forms, Evolution, History and Present Aspect, Manners, Customs and Social Institutions Connected Therewith* (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1892–1910) vol. 5, for a survey of traditional Chinese demonology, including descriptions.
- 39 See Kieschnick’s comments on this episode, John Kieschnick, *The Eminent Monk: Buddhist Ideals in Medieval Chinese Hagiography* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1997), 46.
- 40 Piero Camporesi, *The Incorruptible Flesh: Bodily Mutation and Mortification in Religion and Folklore* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 1–46.
- 41 XGSZ 27, *T. no.* 2060, vol. 50, 680c11–681a8. Yongzhou occupied the northern part of present day Shanxi and the greater portion of the north-west of Gansu.
- 42 XGSZ 27, *T. no.* 2060, vol. 50, 680c16–20.

- 43 On the Sui patronage of Buddhism see, most recently, Jinhua Chen, *Monks and Monarchs, Kinship and Kingship: Tanqian in Sui Buddhism and Politics* (Kyoto: Italian School of East Asian Studies, 2002). The extensive literature on this topic (nearly all of it in Japanese) is surveyed in Chen's first footnote, pp. 1–2. Kimura Kiyotaka 木村清孝 briefly discusses Puji's mention of *xianshou guo*, see his *Shoki chūgoku kegon sishō no kenkyū* 早期中國華嚴思想の研究 [A Study of Early Huayan Thought in China] (Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 1977), 57–58.
- 44 XGSZ 27, *T.* no. 2060, vol. 50, 681a9–682b4. See Peter N. Gregory, “The Teaching of Men and Gods: the Doctrinal and Social Basis of Lay Buddhist Practice in the Hua-yen Tradition,” in *Studies in Ch'an and Hua-yen*, edited by Robert M. Gimello and Peter N. Gregory, 284–88 (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1983).
- 45 XGSZ 27, *T.* no. 2060, vol. 50, 681a16–21.
- 46 See Reiko Ohnuma, “Dehadāna: the “Gift of the Body” in Indian Buddhist Narrative Literature,” (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1997), 269.
- 47 Jingyuan's biography is at XGSZ 11, *T.* no. 2060, vol. 50, 511b–512a.
- 48 XGSZ, *T.* no. 2060, vol. 50, 625c–628a. Discussed by Stephen F. Teiser, “‘Having once died and returned to life’: Representations of Hell in Medieval China,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 48 (1988): 433–64 and Jan Yün-hua, “Buddhist Self-Immolation in Medieval China.” *History of Religions* vol. 4 (1965): 252–53. The biography also appears in *Da Tang neidian lu* 大唐內典錄 (Great Tang Catalogue), comp. Daoxuan, *T.* no. 2149, vol. 55, 27c, 331c; *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林, *T.* 2122, vol. 53, 994c–95c (self-immolators section); *Wangsheng xifang jingtu ruiying zhuan* 往生西方淨土瑞應傳 (Biographies of Auspicious Responses of those who were Reborn in the Western Pure Land), by Wennian 文念, and Shaokang 少康 (d. 805), *T.* no. 2070, vol. 51, 104c; *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統記 (Comprehensive Account of the Buddhas and Patriarchs), comp. Zhipan 志磐, active 1258–69, *T.* no. 2035, vol. 49, 358c; *Fozu lidai tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載 (Comprehensive History of the Buddhas and Patriarchs), comp. Nianchang 念常, d. 1341, *T.* no. 2036, vol. 49, 557c–58a.
- 49 See p. 267 of Peter A. Boodberg, “Marginalia to The Histories of The Northern Dynasties,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 4, no. 3/4(1939): 230–83.
- 50 This monastery was located in the Yankang 延康 ward in the southeast part of Chang'an. See Victor Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an: a Study in the Urban history of Medieval China* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies University of Michigan), 309 and Ono Katsutoshi 小野勝年 *Chūgoku Zui Tō Chōan jūin shiryō shūsei* 中国隋唐長安寺院史料集成 (*Compilation of Historical Records about the Temples in Chang'an*) (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1989), vol. 1, 143–44; vol. 2, 146–57.
- 51 XGSZ 27, *T.* 2060, vol. 50, 681a9.
- 52 This monastery was to be closely associated with Zhiyan 智儼 (602–668), the teacher of Fazang.

- 53 XGSZ 27, *T.* no. 2060, vol. 50, 683b20–c17.
- 54 This must refer to the two-fascicle translation of the sutra by Kang Sengkai 康僧鎧, *T.* no. 360.
- 55 This was exactly the same place that Puji had died after leaping from a cliff.
- 56 XGSZ 27, *T.* no. 2060, vol. 50, 683c5–11.
- 57 XGSZ 27, *T.* no. 2060, vol. 50, 683c19–26.
- 58 XGSZ 27, *T.* no. 2060, vol. 50, 683c22–26. This mention of an inscription usually means that the biography was based on it. Given the location, it is likely that Daoxuan had actually seen this one, as indeed he may have seen others on Zhongnan shan.