

PROTECTION OF THE DHARMA

PROTECTION OF THE DHARMA IN DAOXUAN'S  
*CONTINUED BIOGRAPHIES OF EMINENT MONKS*

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the section of *hufa* 護法 (Protection/Defence of the Dharma) in the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 (*Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*, XGSZ for short), compiled by Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667 CE), one of the most prolific and erudite masters of Buddhist *vinaya* in the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) and in the history of Chinese Buddhism. *Hufa* was a new category that Daoxuan added to the Buddhist biographies based on previous biographical collections and has specific historical and religious significance.

Previous studies on Buddhist-state relationship and religious persecutions have covered many figures and cases from the *hufa* section. This study sheds light on both religious persecution and Buddhist biographical writings. While *hufa* could refer to a large range of activities against both external and internal challenges to the Buddhist communities, Daoxuan focuses on Daoism and anti-Buddhist imperial policies as the major threats to Chinese Buddhism. In the thesis, I annotate and summarize all the biographies in the *hufa* section to discuss the patterns of narrative through those biographies. I provide an annotated translation of Daoxuan's *lun* 論 (evaluation) on *hufa*, which reflects Daoxuan's notion of *hufa* as a Buddhist tradition through Buddhist history. The study also looks into examples of *hufa* from other sections of XGSZ to further explore the meaning of protecting the Dharma to Daoxuan and his contemporaries.

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## TABLE OF CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE	
Dharma Protectors from the Northern Regimes to the Sui Dynasty	14
CHAPTER TWO	
Dharma Protectors in the Tang Dynasty	44
CHAPTER THREE	
Daoxuan's Evaluation of <i>hufa</i>	79
CHAPTER FOUR	
<i>Hufa</i> beyond the <i>Hufa</i> Section	97
CONCLUSION	114
BIBLIOGRAPHY	117

## Introduction

The Chinese word *hufa* 護法 could be a literal translation of the Sanskrit word *dharmapāla*, which means the “protector of the Dharma.”<sup>1</sup> In a Buddhist context, it is often understood verbally as “defending/protecting the Buddha Dharma,” and nominally as “a defender/protector of the Buddha Dharma.” In the latter case, it usually refers to a wrathful manifestation of the Buddha or fearsome deities with various spiritual powers, including Brahmā, Indra, vajra warriors, the Four Divine Kings, the Wheel-turning Kings, the Ten *Rākṣasī* and so on.<sup>2</sup>

Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667), one of the most prolific and erudite masters of Buddhist law (*vinaya*) in the Tang dynasty (618–907) and in the history of Chinese Buddhism, must have been familiar with various divine guardians of the Dharma. In many of his writings, such as the *Guanzhong chuangli jietan tujing* 關中創立戒壇圖經 (Illustrated Scripture on the Precepts Platform Established in Guanzhong) and *Shewei guo zhihuan si tujing* 舍衛國祇洹寺圖經 (Illustrated Sūtra of the Jetavana Monastery in the Kingdom of Śrāvastī), Daoxuan depicts those deities as part of the ideal Buddhist world. Yet in the section on *hufa* 護法 (Defense/Protection of the Dharma) in Daoxuan’s *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳 (*Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks*, hereafter XGSZ; T.2060),

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<sup>1</sup> Donald S Lopez and Robert E Buswell, *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014), 927. Nakamura Hajime 中村元, *Bukkyōgo daijiten* 佛教語大辭典 (Dictionary of Buddhist words) (Tokyo: Tōkyō Shoseki, 1985), 502c. Also in *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism*: <http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E6%8A%A4%E6%B3%95>.

<sup>2</sup> Mochizuki Shinkō 望月信亨, *Mochizuki Bukkyō daijiten* 望月佛教大辭典 (Tōkyō: Sekai Seiten Kankō Kyōkai, 1958), 1292b.

most of the eminent monks who had protected the Dharma are ordinary humans without any supernatural power.

### ***Hufa* in an age of decline without the Buddha**

The first time Daoxuan uses the term *hufa pusa* 護法菩薩 (Dharma protector bodhisattvas) in the XGSZ is in the biography of Shi Huiyuan 釋慧遠 (523–593), suggesting that *hufa pusa* described in the “great sutra” must be like Shi Huiyuan.<sup>3</sup> The sutra that Daoxuan refers to is most likely the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* (hereafter “*Nirvāṇa Sutra*”). In the *Nirvāṇa Sutra*, how to protect the Dharma after the Buddha’s parinirvāṇa is one of its main themes, and the term *hufa pusa* appears three times in both the northern and southern versions of the *Nirvāṇa Sutra*, and eight times in the six fascicle version translated by Faxian 法顯 (338–423). The sutra depicts various *hufa* actions, including self-sacrifice, upholding precepts, being vegetarian, and protecting monks who act according to the Dharma.<sup>4</sup>

Medieval Chinese Buddhists not only lived in the post-nirvāṇa era without the Buddha, but they also faced the geographical and temporal gaps between them and the

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<sup>3</sup> T2060.50.490c25: 大經所云護法菩薩，應當如是。

<sup>4</sup> For example, in the chapter entitled *Shouming pin* 壽命品 (Longevity), Cunda indicated that bodhisattvas who protect the Dharma should adhere to the true Dharma and be willing to give up their own lives. (Mark Laurence Blum, *The Nirvāṇa Sutra (Mahāparinirvāṇa-Sūtra). Volume I*, (Berkeley, CA: Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai America, Inc., 2013), 42–43.) In the chapter on the “Nature of the Tathāgata” (*Rulaixing pin* 如來性品), the Buddha claimed that the bodhisattva who protects the Dharma should not eat meat. (Blum, *The Nirvāṇa Sutra*, 110–111.) Later in the same chapter, the Buddha further teaches that bodhisattvas who protect the true-Dharma would regulate and discipline precept-breaking monks even if doing so required the Dharma-protecting bodhisattvas to violate precepts superficially. (Blum, *The Nirvāṇa Sutra*, 187.) In the chapter on “the Adamantine Body” (*Jingangshen pin* 金剛身品), the Buddha allowed protectors of the true-Dharma to take up swords and other weapons to protect the Dharma preachers. (Blum, *The Nirvāṇa Sutra*, 97.)



ancient Indian origins of Buddhism.<sup>5</sup> The gaps, as well as the sense of living in an age of the degenerate Dharma, made it more urgent and difficult to protect the Buddhist tradition and to defend the authenticity of Buddhism.

Buddhists in medieval China had various ways of interpreting and dividing the tripartite temporal division of the Buddha Dharma: *zhengfa* 正法 (True Dharma), *xiangfa* 像法 (Semblance Dharma), and *mofa* 末法 (Final Dharma).<sup>6</sup> For example, in his *Fahua xuanlun* 法華玄論 (Treatise on the Profundity of the *Lotus [Sūtra]*), Jizang 吉藏 (549–623) suggests *xiangzheng* 像正 has multiple meanings and could be divided based on the time, the faith of followers, or the three *yānas*.<sup>7</sup> Chen Jinhua argues that the classification of the Three Ages that Daoxuan opts for in his XGSZ is the 1,000 - 1,000 - 10,000 division.<sup>8</sup> Yet, it is unclear which age Daoxuan believed he was living in. Chen Jinhua argues that, unlike most of his contemporaries who believed they were living under the *xiangfa* age, Daoxuan believed his time was part of the *mofa* age and he referred to that age as *xiangji* 像季 (the end of *xiangfa* epoch) in his preface to the *Sifenlü shanfan buque xingshi chao* 四分律刪繁補闕行事鈔 (An Abridged and Explanatory Commentary on the Four Part Vinaya).<sup>9</sup> Yet,

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<sup>5</sup> Stuart H Young, *Conceiving the Indian Buddhist Patriarchs in China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015), 1–2.

<sup>6</sup> During the period of the True Dharma, Buddhist followers were still able to practice according to the true teachings. During the period of the Semblance Dharma, Buddhist practices and teachings still look good on the surface, but spiritual corruption has started. During the Final Dharma, the actual practice of Buddhism dies out and nobody is able to attain enlightenment. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?6b.xml+id\(%27b6b63-50cf-672b%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?6b.xml+id(%27b6b63-50cf-672b%27)))

<sup>7</sup> T1720.34.450a12–27.

<sup>8</sup> T2060.50.596b1–7. Chen provides an annotated translation in Jinhua Chen, “An Alternative View of the Meditation Tradition in China: Meditation in the Life and Works of Daoxuan (596–667),” *T'oung Pao* 88, no. 4/5 (2002): 337, note 14.

<sup>9</sup> T1840.40.1a9: 逮于像季時轉澆訛.

occasionally, Daoxuan also uses the rather ambiguous expression *xiangmo* 像末,<sup>10</sup> which could be interpreted as a reference to either the end of *xiangfa* epoch or to both the *xiangfa* and *mofa* epochs.<sup>11</sup>

No matter whether Daoxuan believed that he was living in the end of *xiangfa* or in the age of *mofa*, his writings deliver the sense of the decline of the true Dharma and the nostalgia for the flourishing of Buddhism in China in the past. In several of his writings, Daoxuan regarded previous dynasties, especially the Northern Qi Dynasty, as occurring in the *xiangzheng* 像正 age.<sup>12</sup>

Political environment also generated uncertainty and insecurity among Buddhists. Due to the previous political turmoil and the anti-Buddhist persecutions during the Northern Wei and Northern Zhou dynasties,<sup>13</sup> Buddhists in the Sui (581–618) and early Tang Dynasty (618–907) were very sensitive towards the saṃgha-state relationship. The saṃgha-state or saṃgha-emperor relationship might be in tension especially in northern China where large-scale Buddhist persecution occurred twice. Such concerns are addressed in Daoxuan's *hufa* section, as were discussions of defeating Daoists in debates and gaining imperial support. It seems that for Daoxuan, protecting the Dharma

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<sup>10</sup> T1808.40.494a1: 況今像末焉可輕哉義無怠慢; T1899.45.882b14: 泊乎像末之運。

<sup>11</sup> Chen, "An Alternative View of the Meditation Tradition in China.", 338, note 16. In the note, Chen quotes from James Benn, who leaves an open interpretation of *xiangmo* in Daoxuan's evaluation on the chapter of *yishen* 遺身, "Self-immolators" (James A. Benn, "Burning for the Buddha: Self-Immolation in Chinese Buddhism" [PhD. dissertation, The University of California, Los Angeles, 2001], 123, note 131).

<sup>12</sup> Examples include his evaluation on *hufa* (T2060.50.640b23: 通括像正任持), and in the *Sifenlü shanfan buque sui ji jiemo* 四分律刪繁補闕隨機羯磨 (Karman in the Sifenlü [compiled with an Eye] to Deleting the Superfluous and Supplementing the Insufficient [in Vinaya Text] in accordance with Circumstances) (T1808.40.492a16-17: 自慧日西隱, 法水東流, 時兼像正, 人通淳薄。)

<sup>13</sup> The persecution initiated by Emperor Taiwu of the Northern Wei began in 446. The persecution during the Northern Zhou Dynasty started in 573 and ended upon Emperor Zhou's demise in 578. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id\(%27b4e09-6b66-4e00-5b97-6cd5-96e3%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id(%27b4e09-6b66-4e00-5b97-6cd5-96e3%27)))

in his current age was more difficult than before, and there was an urgent need for exemplars.

### Daoxuan and *Hufa*

Daoxuan's family name was Qian 錢. His ancestral household was most likely the Qian family of Wuxing 吳興: a clan who were only rarely mentioned in historical documents prior to the Chen 陳 Dynasty.<sup>14</sup> Fujiyoshi Masumi points out that Emperor Gaozu of Chen Dynasty, Chen Baxian 陳霸先 (503–559), also came from Changcheng County of Wuxing and that marital relationships between members of the Chen imperial family and the Qian family attest to the latter group's aristocratic background.<sup>15</sup>

Daoxuan is regarded one of the most important *vinaya* masters (*lüshi* 律師) in Tang Dynasty. In the *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (Song Biographies of Eminent Monks), Zanning 贊寧 (919–1001) categorized Daoxuan in the section of *minglü* 明律 (*Vinaya* Exegetes). Yet Daoxuan was also a leading Dharma protector, especially when he was staying at one of the imperial monasteries, Ximing Monastery 西明寺. On the fifteenth day

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<sup>14</sup> There are different records regarding the family background and birthplace of Daoxuan. Some historical texts regard him as a person of Dantu 丹徒, such as *Shenseng zhuan* 神僧傳 (Biographies of Divine Monks) (T2064.50.988c12. 釋道宣, 姓錢氏, 丹徒人也), whereas some others regard him as a person of Jingzhao 京兆 (*Shimen zhengtong* 釋門正統 [True Succession of Śākyamuni's teaching] X1513.75.361b14: 道宣字法偏, 京兆錢氏, 母姚夢月貫懷而孕。 *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 [Chronicle of Buddhas and Patriarchs] T2035.49.296c27: 法師道宣, 京兆錢氏). In *Shijia fangzhi* 釋迦方志 (Records of the Regions of Śākyā) compiled by Daoxuan, he refers to himself as “śramaṇa of Fengde Monastery 豐德寺 of Mount Zhongnan-Taiyi 終南太一, Shi Daoxuan of Wuxing 吳興.” (T2088.50.975a3–4.) In the *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (Song Biographies of Eminent Monks), Zanning 贊寧 (919–1001) noted in Daoxuan's biography that Daoxuan was a person of Dantu, but that there was another source that refers to him as a person of Changcheng 長城, which was a county of Wuxing prefecture during the Southern Dynasties. (T1805.40.160a14–20.)

<sup>15</sup> Fujiyoshi Masumi 藤善真澄, *Dōsen den no kenkyū* 道宣伝の研究 (A Study of the life of Daoxuan) (Kyōto: Kyōto Daigaku Gakujutsu Shuppankai, 2002), 61.

of the fourth month in the second year of Longshuo 龍碩 era (May 8<sup>th</sup>, 662), Emperor Gaozong ordered officials to discuss his decree ordering all Buddhist and Daoist monks and nuns to bow to the emperor, empress, crown prince and their own parents.<sup>16</sup> This imperial decree aroused strong resistance among Buddhists in the capital city, and Daoxuan was one of the main leaders.

In the *Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明集 (Expanded collection on the propagation and clarification [of Buddhism]), Daoxuan collected imperial decrees, memorials, and petitions from Emperor Gaozong, officials, and leading monks in the capital. On the twenty-first day of the fourth month (May 14<sup>th</sup>, 662), the monk Weixiu 威秀 (circa. 613–712) of Great Zhuangyan Monastery 大莊嚴寺, together with about two hundred monks in the capital, presented a memorial to the emperor to protest against the decree.<sup>17</sup> Upon hearing it, Gaozong said he would order the court to discuss the issue before making the final decree. Monks gathered at Ximing Monastery to work on petitions together. Following Weixiu's memorial, Daoxuan and other monks presented petitions to Prince Pei (the Governor of Yong Prefecture 雍州牧沛王), Madam Yang (the Lady of Rong 榮國夫人楊氏, Daoxuan sent two petitions to her), and to all the councillors and executive officials of the central government.<sup>18</sup> In both of his petitions to Prince Pei and central government officials, Daoxuan points out that Buddhism in China had been persecuted and Chinese Buddhists had been forced to bow

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<sup>16</sup> T2103.50.284a15–27: 今上制沙門等致拜君親勅。

<sup>17</sup> T2103.50.284a28–c3. 大莊嚴寺僧威秀等上沙門不合拜俗表。

<sup>18</sup> 西明寺僧道宣等上雍州牧沛王論沙門不應拜俗啟 (T2013.50.284c4–25); 西明寺僧道宣等上榮國夫人楊氏請論沙門不合拜俗啟 (T2013.50.284c26–285a22); 西明寺僧道宣等上榮國夫人楊氏請論拜事啟 (T2013.50.290b22–c4); 西明寺僧道宣等序佛教隆替事簡諸宰輔等狀 (T2013.50.285a23–286c9).

to secular authorities at various times, all of which happened under policies that he equated with tyrannical leadership. In his petition to the officials, Daoxuan summarized the history of Buddhism in China since the time of Zhou Dynasty, proclaiming the superiority of Buddhism over Buddhism and praising emperors and officials who had promoted and protected Buddha Dharma from political persecution and Daoist criticism.

Daoxuan's petitions reflect his understanding of the underlying political tensions that had motivated Emperor Gaozong to promulgate his anti-Buddhist decree. Chen Han argues that Emperor Gaozong had a long-term connection with eminent monk Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664) and a good impression towards Buddhism ever since he was the crown prince. Yet since 655, when Wu Zetian 武則天 (624–705) became the empress, Gaozong started to lose administrative control of the central government. Since Wu Zetian and her families were well-known Buddhist patrons, Gaozong issued the decree to combat Wu Zetian's power and to flush out the pro-Buddhist political factions in the court.<sup>19</sup> Prince Pei, the Governor of Yong Prefecture, was Li Xian 李賢 (654–684), the sixth son of Gaozong and the second son of Empress Wu Zetian. He was one of Gaozu's favorite sons. At the age of two, Li Xian was given the title of Governor of Yong Prefecture; and at the age of seven, he was titled "Prince Pei." He was around seven years old when Daoxuan sent him the petition. Lady Rong was the mother of Empress Wu Zetian and was also an important patron of Buddhism at the time. She also had powerful political connections with imperial officials and aristocrats. By

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<sup>19</sup> Chen Han, 陈寒, " 'Zhibai junqin' shijian zhongzhi Xuanzang -- jianlun Xuanzang wannian yu Tang Gaozong, Wu Zetian zhi guanxi '致拜君亲' 事件中之玄奘——兼论玄奘晚年与唐高宗、武则天之关系" (Xuanzang in the Event of 'To Pay Homage to the Emperor and Parents' -- Also on the Relationship between Xuanzang in His Late Years and Tang Gaozong and Wu Zetian)," *Journal of Liaocheng Teachers University*, no. 3 (2002): 64–65.

presenting petitions to Li Xian and Lady Rong, Daoxuan was actually sending messages to Empress Wu. Although Empress Wu did not appear in official documents nor in Buddhist texts regarding the decree and petitions, she and her political supporters, as well as pro-Buddhist officials and nobles in the capital city, played a significant role in the competition between Buddhism and Daoism in Chang'an. In other words, the competition between Buddhism and Daoism at the imperial court level was associated with the political struggle between Wu Zetian (and her supporters) and Gaozong (and the pro-imperial Li officials).

Daoxuan's action in the above incident epitomizes the sort of activity that he promotes in the *hufa* section. At that time (662), Daoxuan had officially finished writing XGSZ. A large part of his petition matches his writing in the *hufa* section and his evaluation on *hufa*. It is clear that for Daoxuan, *hufa* is associated with protecting the Dharma from political suppression and gaining imperial patronage for the saṃgha. As I will demonstrate in the first and second chapters of this thesis, the accounts that Daoxuan collected in the *hufa* section reflect his awareness of the importance of politics in protecting the Dharma. This contention is granted additional weight when one considers that Daoxuan not only praised such monks, but he also defended the Dharma in the same way.

### **About This Study**

Compared to the previous Buddhist biographies compiled by Huijiao 慧皎 (497–544), *hufa* is a new category added by Daoxuan. The inclusion of the *hufa* material seems to be a response to the long-term political turmoil and religious persecution during the

sixth and seventh centuries.<sup>20</sup> Many of the monks in the *hufa* section have been studied as individuals in previous historical and religious studies of the period. In those cases, the section serves as a historical database, from which individual cases and records are drawn to discuss religious persecution, Buddhist-state relationships, as well as the balance of power among political, military, and religious forces.

Figures and cases from the *hufa* section are often seen in studies on Buddhist-state relationships and religious persecutions. For example, in his book *Sectarianism and Religious Persecution in China: A Page in the History of Religions* (1903), J. J. M. de Groot introduced the persecution of Buddhism chronologically and translated various historical texts, relying mainly on government documents. Nomura Yōshō's *Shūbu hōnan no kenkyū* 周武法難の研究 (Research on Zhou Wudi's Persecution of Buddhism) (1968) is a monograph on the persecution of Buddhism in the Northern Zhou dynasty. In recent years, both Zhang Jian's *Sanwuyizong yifo zonghe yanjiu* 三武一宗抑佛综合研究 (A comprehensive study on the suppression of Buddhism of three Wu and one Zong) (2015) and Shi Longdu's dissertation "Buddhism and the State in Medieval China: Case Studies of Three Persecutions of Buddhism, 444-846" (2016) are studies that investigate and compare anti-Buddhist persecution. All the above studies provide detailed discussions on monks in the *hufa* section as well as their petitions and memorials against the background of Chinese political and social history.

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<sup>20</sup> John Kieschnick, *The Eminent Monk: Buddhist Ideals in Medieval Chinese Hagiography* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 9.

In religious studies, research on various sections from the XGSZ has been scarce in English until recently, but includes *The Eminent Monk: Buddhist Ideals in Medieval Chinese Hagiography* by John Kieschnick, and *Burning for the Buddha: Self-Immolation in Chinese Buddhism* by James Benn. Kieschnick has focused on three major patterns in Buddhist biographies: asceticism, thaumaturgy, and scholarship. Benn's book on Buddhist self-immolations has mainly drawn cases from various Buddhist biographies; and it is worth noting that at least one self-immolation case is recorded in the *hufa* section from the XGSZ.

My study on *hufa* will join the scholarly conversation of Chinese Buddhist biographical writings. In this study, I evaluate the *hufa* section as a collection made by Daoxuan, and consider all the monks chosen by Daoxuan as a group. I also discuss Daoxuan's writings and commentarial activities. What did *hufa* mean to Daoxuan? How did Daoxuan, as the compiler and writer, choose and organize his materials to emphasize the criteria of *hufa* to his contemporary and future audience?<sup>21</sup> What are some of the patterns of narrative through the biographies? What is the relationship between the *hufa* section and the rest of the XGSZ? In this thesis, I will continue to return to these questions.

The *hufa* section contains two parts. The first part covers monks from the Northern and Southern Dynasties and the Sui Dynasty. The second part includes monks from the early Tang Dynasty. In the first and second chapters of this thesis, I discuss the two parts

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<sup>21</sup> Alexander Hsu has more discussion on Buddhist anthologies in medieval China in his dissertation. He points out that categories in anthologies are "not just to help the compositor keep track of his work in progress, but ultimately an aide for the work's audience to be able to navigate it". See Alexander Ong Hsu, "Practices of Scriptural Economy: Compiling and Copying a Seventh-Century Chinese Buddhist Anthology" (PhD. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 2018), 74.



separately. Generally speaking, in both parts, most of the monks had protected the Dharma through debate, petition, and/or treatises against external challenges: the Daoists and/or the imperial court. In the first part, confrontations between Buddhists and Daoists were more direct, and the emperors usually acted as the mediator. In the narratives of the second part, Daoists moved to the backstage while the emperors started to criticize Buddhism directly and to punish monks openly.

Chapter Three consists of an analysis and provisional translation of Daoxuan's evaluation (*lun* 論) of the *hufa* section. I choose to treat the evaluation in a chapter rather than an appendix because the writing reflects Daoxuan's understanding of *hufa* beyond the Chinese Buddhist context and is worth discussion before I conclude the thesis. Some of the contents in the XGSZ were collected and compiled by Daoxuan, and may not be his original writing. The evaluation, on the other hand, is more likely to be Daoxuan's own writing and thus speaks more for him than the biographical writings.

The fourth chapter examines monks who were regarded as Dharma protectors by Daoxuan in the other sections of XGSZ. Some of those monks defended Buddhism against external criticisms and political suppression. Others protected the Dharma against internal corruptions, regulated the monastic communities, and punished wrongdoers. A large part of the internal corruption was associated with females in the *saṃgha*.

Although the Chinese term *hufa* is usually and literally translated as “protection of the Dharma,” in this study, I do not translate *hufa* when I refer to the section in the XGSZ. As I will demonstrate in the thesis, the action *hu* 護, while literally being translated as protecting, often involves verbally and physically defending, proselytizing, and regulating. Thus, I

choose to keep the original Chinese term for the title of the section and translate it in specific contexts accordingly.

The primary material for this research will be the *hufa* section, and other relevant sections in the XGSZ. It is difficult to pin down a fixed version of this text, because the process of compiling and editing it lasted for decades after Daoxuan officially completed it and even continued after his demise. Besides the XGSZ, Daoxuan might have also compiled the *Hou xu gaoseng zhuan* 後續高僧傳 (Later Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks), which was gradually combined into the XGSZ by later editors.

In the *Kōshō-ji* 興聖寺 manuscript edition (based on *Kaibao Tripitaka* 開寶藏 (compiled in 971–983), the *Zhaocheng Jin Tripitaka* 趙城金藏 edition (compiled in 1148–1173), and the *Tripitaka Koreana* 高麗藏 edition (compiled in 1011–1082), the *hufa* section contains eleven main biographies. In the editions from the Yuan (1279–1368), Ming (1368–1644), and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties, and the *Taishō Tripitaka* 大正藏 (1922–1932), and *Zhonghua Tripitaka* 中華藏 (1984–present), the *hufa* section has eighteen main biographies. Editions compiled after the Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279), have seven additional main biographies: Shi Daozhen 釋道臻 (circa. 466–557) and Shi Zhixuan 釋智炫 (circa. 488–605) in the first volume of the *hufa* section, and Shi Tanxuan 釋曇選 (531–625), Shi Fatong 釋法通 (died before 627), Shi Hongzhi 釋弘智 (595–655), Shi Daohui 釋道會 (circa. 583–652), and Shi Zhiqin 釋智勤 (586–659) in the second part.

In Guo Shaolin's collated edition, he arranges the early and additional biographies together chronologically.<sup>22</sup> In my writing, I follow Guo's arrangement because it provides a clear timeline of all the monks.

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<sup>22</sup> Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) and Guo Shaolin 郭绍林, *Xu gao seng zhuan* 续高僧传 (Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2014).

## CHAPTER ONE

### Dharma Protectors from the Northern Regimes to the Sui Dynasty

In this chapter, I discuss the first historical stratum of biographies in Daoxuan's *hufa* section. Biographies in the first part cover a period of less than one hundred years, from the division of Northern Wei (386–534) into the Eastern Wei (534–550) and Western Wei (535–557) to the end of the Sui Dynasty (581–618). In these biographies, Daoxuan depicts the external threats and challenges to the Buddhist communities posed by Daoists and emperors, devoting his attention to conflicts between Daoists and Buddhists who were active in the court against the background of political division in northern China.

Livia Kohn has pointed out that major Buddhist-Daoist debates happened in the northern regions more than in the southern areas in the sixth century because northern rulers especially demanded political control over religions and wished to utilize religions and cultures to justify their authenticity and to achieve political and military unification.<sup>23</sup> As a result, most of the debates between Buddhism and Daoism took place at the imperial court, with the emperor serving as both the initiator and the mediator, who was seeking the more persuasive tradition. This type of formal court debate is a notable feature in protecting the Dharma in the northern regimes. As I will demonstrate in the next chapter, such court debates between Buddhists and Daoists are seen less frequently in the biographies in the second part of the *hufa* section, which covers the beginning of the Tang

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<sup>23</sup> Livia Kohn, *Daoism and Chinese Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Three Pines Press, 2001), 106.

dynasty (618–907). Among all the debates and conflicts, the anti-Buddhist persecution in the Northern Zhou Dynasty was Daoxuan’s focus.

The first part of *hufa* section contains eight main biographies and four supplementary ones. In those biographies, Daoxuan focuses on events that happened in and around the city Chang’an, which was the political center of the northern regimes, especially the Northern Zhou Dynasty. It was the place where court debates and major religious persecutions occurred. Accordingly, most of the monks included in the *hufa* section were the heads of the saṃgha and had access to the emperor. Due to the religious persecution and political turmoil during the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the dates of birth and death of most of the monks are unknown, except for Shi Jing’ai 釋靜藹 (534–578), who committed suicide as a protest against religious persecution, and Shi Sengmeng 釋僧猛 (507–588) and Shi Zhixuan 釋智炫 (488–605), who both passed away after the unification of northern and southern regimes under the Sui Dynasty. Furthermore, the biographies of Shi Daozheng 釋道臻 (circa. 466–557) and Shi Zhixuan are not found in the Kōshō-ji Edition, *Zhaocheng Jin Tripitaka*, or *Tripitaka Koreana*. They may have been included by later editors from the *Hou xu gaoseng zhuan* 後續高僧傳 (Later Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks). In my writing, I follow Guo Shaolin’s collated edition, and arrange those two biographies chronologically. Below, I provide annotated summaries of the biographies.

1. The Wei 魏 monk Shi Tanwuzui 釋曇無最 (died after 521) of the Rongjue Monastery 融覺寺 in capital Luo 洛都 (T2060.50.624b22–625a18)

The first confrontation between Buddhists and Daoists recorded by Daoxuan in the *hufa* section can be found in the biography of eminent monk Shi Tanwuzui. Tanwuzui's family name was Dong 董, and he was a native of Wuan 武安 area.<sup>24</sup> Daoxuan may have regarded Tanwuzui's time as the epoch of the Semblance Dharma.<sup>25</sup> At the beginning of the biography, Daoxuan identifies Tanwuzui as “a great master of the Three Jewels and as the impregnable fortress of the Semblance Dharma” (爲三寶之良將，即像法之金湯).<sup>26</sup>

In the first part of the biography, Daoxuan praises Tanwuzui's achievement and fame spread among not only Chinese Buddhists but also people in Central Asia. Tanwuzui chanted *sūtras* and *śāstras* (*jinglun* 經論), upheld the *vinaya* (*lübu* 律部), and favoured the practice of *dhyāna* (*channa* 禪那). He mastered both Daoism and Confucianism (*xuanru* 玄儒), and was especially good at discussing the teachings (*lundao* 論道). Tanwuzui was also good at propagating Buddhism and guiding followers, and had thousands of disciples. He was invited by the emperor to stay at Rongjue Monastery 融覺寺, which was established by Prince Qinghe-wenxian 清河文獻王.<sup>27</sup> Even the Indian

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<sup>24</sup> In the modern Handan 邯鄲 of Heibei 河北 Province. See: <http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000001782>

<sup>25</sup> Or, instead of describing the era itself, Daoxuan might just be comparing Tanwuzui to an impregnable fortress during the age of the Semblance Dharma.

<sup>26</sup> T2060.50.624b23–24. 金湯 (*jintang*) is the abbreviation for 金城湯池 (*jinchi tangcheng*), which literally means metal walls and hot water moat. (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E9%87%91%E5%9F%8E%E6%B9%AF%E6%B1%A0>)

<sup>27</sup> Prince Qinghe-wenxian's original name was Yuan Yi 元悛 (487–520). He was the fourth son of Emperor Xiaowen 孝文帝 (467–499) and the uncle of Emperor Xiaoming. Wenxian was his posthumous title. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/person/?fromInner=A004954>)

*śramaṇa* Bodhiruci (fifth–sixth centuries) praised Tanwuzui when he met him, naming Tanwuzui as the “bodhisattva in the Eastern land” (*dongtu pusa* 東土菩薩), and translating Tanwuzui’s *Dacheng yizhang* (大乘義章, Essays on the system of Mahāyāna) into Sanskrit and sending to Daxia 大夏,<sup>28</sup> where local people also paid homage towards the east to Tanwuzui as a sage.

Tanwuzui’s debate against his Daoist rival Jiang Bin 姜斌 (circa. 471–?) is another focal point of the biography. In the first year of the Zhengguang 正光 era (520), Emperor Xiaoming 孝明帝 (reign. 515–528) of Northern Wei Dynasty invited both Buddhists and Daoists to the imperial court for a vegetarian feast. After the meal, the Palace Attendant Liu Teng 劉騰 (?–523) delivered an imperial order compelling the assembled Buddhists and Daoists to engage in a contest on their principles and teachings. During the contest, Emperor Xiaoming raised several questions centered on one topic: the chronological order and authenticity of Buddhism and Daoism. When the emperor questioned whether the Buddha was alive and teaching around the same time as Laozi, Jiang Bin laid his arguments based on the legend of *Laozi huahu shuo* 老子化胡說 (Laozi’s Conversion of the Barbarians), suggesting that the Buddha was Laozi’s attendant when Laozi was converting the barbarians in the west, and indicating that evidence for this claim could be found in the scripture *Laozi kaitian jing* 老子開天經 (Laozi Opens the Heavens). In response, Tanwuzui criticized Jiang Bin for falsifying the year of the birth of the Buddha,

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<sup>28</sup> Daxia 大夏 was the Bactria region, later controlled by the Indo-Scythians. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000000008>, <http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E6%9C%88%E6%94%AF>).

adding that the Buddha entered nirvāṇa 345 years before Laozi was born. When Jiang Bin inquired the source, Tanwuzui suggested that this information could be found in *Zhoushu yiji* 周書異記 (Supplement to the Zhou History) and *Han faben neizhuan* 漢法本內傳 (Inner record of the Dharma essentials during the Han). When Jiang Bin further challenged Tanwuzui by asking why Confucius did not preserve a record of the Buddha in his accounts of sages, Tanwuzui teased him for his ignorance, suggesting that Confucius kept a record of the Buddha in the middle volume of *Sanbei bujing* 三備卜經 (Divination Scriptures of the Three Prerequisites).

While Tanwuzui and Jiang Bin both had scriptures to support their arguments, Daoxuan recounts that 170 court officials read through all of the scriptures from Jiang Bin's Daoist monastery and found Laozi had never written the *Kaitian jing*. Together, they suggested Jiang Bin was guilty for misleading the assembly. Emperor Xiaoming initially issued the death sentence on Jiang Bin, but ultimately sent him into exile after a plea from Bodhiruci. Because of Tanwuzui's knowledge and fame, the Confucian scholars and court officials all paid homage to him, and took refuge with him. It is apt that Tanwuzui's polemic against these Daoist accusations opens the whole *hufa* section, for the legend of Laozi's conversion of the barbarians is one of the earliest Daoist attempts to demonstrate the antiquity (and thus superiority) of Daoism over Buddhism in China.<sup>29</sup> At the end of his writing, Daoxuan attributed the resurgence of Buddhism to Tanwuzui.

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<sup>29</sup> Christine Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face: Scripture, Ritual, and Iconographic Exchange in Medieval China*. (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008), 7.



The Palace Attendant Liu Teng is not a minor figure in the biography. According to the *Luoyang qielan ji* 洛陽伽藍記 (Records of the Monasteries of Luoyang), Liu Teng founded the Changqiu Monastery 長秋寺, one of the greatest monasteries in Luoyang during the Northern Wei dynasty.<sup>30</sup> The monastery had a three-storey pagoda with golden dew receiver on the top, and a statue of Śākyamuni carried by a six-tusked white elephant.<sup>31</sup> Tang Yongtong points out that since Liu Teng was a Buddhist follower, the court debate was very likely initiated by him, and the triumph of Buddhism over Daoism, as well as the court officials' full support of the Buddhists, is not surprising.<sup>32</sup> Yet the biography does not emphasize the possible court support but focuses mainly on Tanwuzui's reputation and influence as a leading Buddhist master and his defence of the Dharma through debate against Daoists.

2. The Western Wei 西魏 chief superintendent Shi Daozhen 釋道臻 (circa. 466–557) of the Great Zhongxing Monastery 大興寺 of the capital (T2060.50.631b4–b17)<sup>33</sup>

Shi Daozhen's biography is one of the shortest in the *hufa* section. It is not in the *Tripitaka* editions before Southern Song Dynasty, including the Kōshō-ji edition, *Zhaocheng Jin Tripitaka*, and *Tripitaka Koreana*, and is attached at the end of the first

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<sup>30</sup> Yang Xuanzhi 楊衒之, *Luoyang qielan ji* 洛陽伽藍記 (Records of the Monasteries of Luoyang), trans. Shang Rong 尚榮 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2012), 59.

<sup>31</sup> B12n78.383a5–386a3.

<sup>32</sup> Tang Yongtong 湯用彤, *Hanwei liangjin nanbeichao fojiao shi* 漢魏兩晉南北朝佛教史 (History of Buddhism in the Han, Wei, Two Jin, Southern and Northern dynasties) (Beijing: Beijing University, 2011), 300.

<sup>33</sup> This biography is attached at the end of the first volume of the *hufa* section in the *Taishō Tripitaka*. It is not in the Kōshō-ji edition, *Zhaocheng Jin Tripitaka*, nor *Tripitaka Tripitaka*.

part of the *hufa* section in the *Taishō Tripitaka*. This biography was probably in the *Hou xu gaoseng zhuan* 後續高僧傳 (Later Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks) and was included into XGSZ by later editors.

Shi Daozhen's family name was Niu 牛, and he was from the southern part of Chang'an. During the Western Wei Dynasty, the Emperor Wen 文帝<sup>34</sup> honored him as his master, built the Great Zhongxing Monastery in the capital city for him, and patronized him as the *datong* 大統 (chief superintendent) over the monks of the Wei.

It was the time when the Northern Wei split into Western Wei and Eastern Wei, and the Buddhist communities in the region were affected by the political turmoil. Daozhen established rules to regulate monastic life so as to revive the Dharma once he was assigned as the monastic superintendent (*sengtong* 僧統) by the emperor. The imperial court ordered the Great Zhongxing Monastery built for Daozhen, together with hundred *qing* 頃 of paddy fields.<sup>35</sup> Daoxuan may have visited Daozhen's tomb for he notes that Daozhen's tomb still existed around the middle of Zhenguan 貞觀 (624–679) era.

Unlike the previous biography and others in the rest of this part, Daozhen's biography does not involve any debate against Daoists nor the emperor. This might be the reason that his biography was not in the earlier editions of XGSZ. The significance of Daozhen's biography probably falls into the efforts he made to retain Buddhist teachings in a politically difficult situation. Furthermore, Western Wei was replaced by Northern

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<sup>34</sup> Yuan Baoju 元寶炬 (reign. 535–551) was the Emperor Wen of the Western Wei dynasty. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/person/?fromInner=A002048>)

<sup>35</sup> *Qing* 頃 is a measure of area. One *qing* is equal to approximate 6.7 hectares.

Zhou in 557. Given that the anti-Buddhist persecution of Northern Zhou Dynasty is one of the main themes in the *hufa* section, Daozhen's biography could be a testimony to the past glory of Buddhism in the same region.

### 3. The Qi 齊 recluse *śramaṇa* Shi Tanxian 釋曇顯 (died after 559) (T2060.50.625a19–c13)

The biography of the recluse *śramaṇa* Shi Tanxian contains miracle-working and historical inaccuracy, which make it difficult to trace the figures and events mentioned in the biography. Tanxian's origin is unknown. He wandered around the Middle Ye 鄴中 area,<sup>36</sup> staying in various monasteries without a stable dwelling place. Whenever there was a Dharma assembly, Tanxian would go and listen, and was able to uncover the profound and subtle principles. People at the time found him extraordinary yet despised him for his messy appearance. Only Shangtong 上統<sup>37</sup> (495–580) acknowledged Tanxian's lofty insight into the Buddhadharma, and privately funded him to sustain his living.

Daoxuan notes that during the Tianbao 天保 era (550–559),<sup>38</sup> Buddhists and Daoists were competing for superiority. He describes how the Daoist Lu Xiujing<sup>39</sup> 陸修

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<sup>36</sup> *Yezhong* 鄴中 is in modern-day Linzhang 臨漳 County of Hebei 河北 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000001482>)

<sup>37</sup> “Shangtong” refers to Fashang 法上, who was the chief director over the Buddhist order at the time.

<sup>38</sup> This is the first era of Northern Qi Dynasty under Emperor Wenxuan. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/person/?fromInner=A000689>)

<sup>39</sup> The only Lu Xiujing (406–477) I could locate in historical records was active during the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The time does not match Daoxuan's record in Tanxian's biography. I have a discussion on this Daoist figure in this chapter.

靜 absurdly promoted Daoism, regulating complicated and expensive abstinence ceremonies, and aiming to influence the emperor.<sup>40</sup> In the third year of Tianjian 天監 era (504), Emperor Wu of Liang Dynasty 梁武帝 (464–549) cut off support for Daoism. Seeking royal patronage, Lu Xiuqing escaped to Northern Qi together with his disciples, and continued to bribe aristocrats, hoping to promote Daoism there. Emperor Wenxuan 文宣帝 (529–559) was perplexed, and thus ordered all the Buddhists publicly to compete with Daoists.<sup>41</sup> Daoists cast spells to levitate the Buddhist alms bowls and robes. The Buddhist monks, who had never learned magic tricks, could not handle the situation. Shangtong indicated that magic was despised by Confucius, not to mention those who renounced the secular world. Therefore, he suggested letting the lowest monk compete with the Daoists. Tanxian, who occupied the lowest seat, was drunk at the time. He asked people to bring robes and bowls from dharma Master Chou 稠法師 (480–560).<sup>42</sup> None of the Daoists could lift them by means of spells, so they requested an oral debate instead, arguing that Buddhists, who called themselves the inner (*nei* 內), were lower than the Daoists who were the outer (*wai* 外). Tanxian replied, “if that is true, emperors must be petty commoners since they live in the inner palace.”<sup>43</sup> Daoxuan notes that, in the end,

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<sup>40</sup> T2060.50.625a28–29: 屬道士陸修靜，妄加穿鑿，廣制齋儀，糜費極繁，意在王者遵奉。

<sup>41</sup> Tanxian’s biography contains several inconsistencies in terms of time and location. I have a discussion in the following pages. Ang Zou suggests the emperor who ordered the competition was Emperor Wu of Liang Dynasty. Yet Lu Xiuqing had escaped from the Liang and entered Northern Qi at that time, so it should be Emperor Wenxuan of the Northern Qi Dynasty. See: Ang Zou, “The Life of Daoxuan: According to Others and His Own Words” (PhD. Dissertation, Ghent University, 2018), 274.

<sup>42</sup> Sengchou’s 僧稠 biography is in the chapter of *yijie* 義解 (exegetes of righteousness) of XGSZ (T2060.50.553b25–555b24).

<sup>43</sup> T2060.50.625b24: 若然，則天子處內，定小庶人矣。

Emperor Wenxuan announced the Buddhists' triumph over the Daoists. As a result, Lu Xiujing's disciples gave up and begged the monks for refuge. Those who did not follow the imperial order of tonsure were executed. Upon the imperial decree declaring Buddhism the sole truth, all of the people in the state of Qi came to support Buddhism.

There are some inconsistencies in Daoxuan's account. First is the temporal conflict. In the biography, Daoxuan mentions two specific reign periods: the Tianjian era (502–519) of the Southern Liang and the Tianbao era (550–559) of the Northern Qi Dynasty. According to Daoxuan, Lu Xiujing escaped from Liang to Northern Qi soon after 504 CE and had the debate against Buddhists during the Tianbao era. There is about a fifty-year gap between 504 CE to the beginning of Tianbao era, yet this account provides no explanation of what may have occurred during this gap.

Second is the ambiguous identity of the Daoist Lu Xiujing. The only Southern Daoist who was known by that name and has left a historical record is the famous Daoist master Lu Xiujing (406–477) of the Liu Song 劉宋 Dynasty (420–479).<sup>44</sup> This Lu Xiujing's proselytization and achievement in Daoism matches Daoxuan's description in Tanxian's biography, yet he passed away before the Liang dynasty, and it is impossible that he could have fled to the Northern Qi. The Lu Xiujing in Tanxian's biography is probably either a different figure with the same name or a mistake by Daoxuan. In *Fozu*

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<sup>44</sup> Lu Xiujing was a Daoist master active during the Liu Song dynasty (420–479). He received great patronage from the Emperor Ming of the Liu Song and was mentioned in the *Biographies of Eminent Monks* by Huijiao for his debating with monk Daosheng 道盛 (415–?.483). He was quoted by Zhen Luan 甄鸞 in the *Xiaodao Lun* 笑道論 (*Laughing at the Dao*) during the Northern Zhou dynasty, as can be seen in the translation in Livia Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao: Debates among Buddhists and Taoists in Medieval China*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 136. A short biography of Lu Xiujing in English is found in Lindsay Jones, *Encyclopedia of Religion*, vol. 8 (Detroit, Mich.: Macmillan Reference USA, Thomson/Gale, 2005), 5542–5543.

*tongji* 佛祖統紀 (Chronicle of Buddhas and Patriarchs), Zhipan 志磬 (unknown dates, Song Dynasty monk) also pointed out this mistake, suggesting that the Daoist should be Lu Xiujing's disciple.<sup>45</sup>

There are not many historical records on Tanxian outside of Daoxuan's writings. In Bodhiruci's biography in the XGSZ, there is another *śramaṇa* named Tanxian, who collected and compiled teachings of various bodhisattva canons under government order during the Western Wei Dynasty (535–557),<sup>46</sup> but those are clearly two different monks living in different dynasties. Tang Yongtong regards Tanxian as a legendary monk and points out that Daoxuan's account of Tanxian is not quite trustworthy.<sup>47</sup> Despite all of these ambiguities, Tanxian's biography is obviously valued by Daoxuan, for he praises Tanxian again in the evaluation (*lun* 論) of the *hufa* section.<sup>48</sup> This is because, through Tanxian's story, Daoxuan is able to depict not only an individual monk but also a glorious epoch in the history of Chinese Buddhism. With Master Fashang as a Buddhist leader who is able to discover and guide hidden talents, the emperor being a loyal patron of Buddhism, and large groups of heterodox crowds being converted to the true way, Daoxuan is able to portray his vision of an ideal Buddhist state, which grants Tanxian a remarkable position in the chapter on *hufa*.

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<sup>45</sup> T2035.49.357b17–21: 述曰：修靜生於晉末，與遠公遊，屍解於宋之泰始，則說簡寂。自泰始至梁天監，已四十年，不應今日復有修靜。若曰，因梁棄道，自梁奔魏，當云陸修靜之門徒，斯為可信也矣。

<sup>46</sup> T2060.50.429b17–21: 西魏文帝大統中，丞相宇文黑泰，興隆釋教，崇重大乘，雖攝總萬機，而恒揚三寶。第內常供百法師，尋討經論講摩訶衍。又令沙門曇顯等，依大乘經，撰菩薩藏衆經要及百二十法門。

<sup>47</sup> Tang Yongtong 湯用彤, *Hanwei liangjin*, 300–301.

<sup>48</sup> I have a discussion on it in Chapter Three.

4. The Zhou 周 monk Shi Jing'ai 釋靜藹 (534–578) of Recluse Peak 避世峰 at Mount Zhongnan 終南山 (T2060.50.625c14–628a8)

The anti-Buddhist persecution of the Northern Zhou Dynasty is the most important event shared by most biographies in the *hufa* section. The persecution officially started in the third year of the Jiande 建德 era (573), and ended when the Emperor Wu of Northern Zhou Dynasty passed away in 578. In Jing'ai's biography, Daoxuan gives the most detailed narrative on his debate against Emperor Wu and his self-disembowelment. But before that, Daoxuan summarizes Jing'ai's experience in his early life, including his study of the Confucian classics and Daoism, and his reclusive lifestyle.

Jing'ai's family name was Zheng 鄭, and he was a person of Xingyang 滎陽.<sup>49</sup> He probably came from an impoverished aristocratic family and had mastered the classics and histories as a young prodigy. His relatives regarded him as the hope for reviving the Zheng clan. Yet after seeing an illustration of the hells at a temple, Jing'ai decisively broke the secular bond with his family. At the age of seventeen, he renounced the householder's life at Baiguan Monastery 百官寺 with *dhyāna* Master He 和禪師, and later studied *Da zhidu lun* 大智度論 (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra*) with Master Jing 景法師.<sup>50</sup> He travelled in the Northern Qi region, and later retreated to the Song

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<sup>49</sup> In modern-day Henan 河南 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000023194>)

<sup>50</sup> Jinhua Chen has a discussion on the relation among Jing'ai, *dhyāna* Master He, and Master Jing. Chen suggests that Jing'ai was still young to travel far at the age of seventeen, thus the Baiguan Monastery must not be far from Xingyang. Master Jing might be Xuanjing 玄景 (553–606), who was a disciple of Master He. Xuanjing's biography in the XGSZ: T2060.50.569b17–c19. See: Jinhua Chen, "He Chanshi Kao 和禪師考 (Investigation on Dhyāna Master He)," in *Hanchuan fojiao yanjiu de guoqu xianzai weilai* 《漢傳佛

Marchmount 嵩岳. Jing'ai had also travelled around Mount Bailu 白鹿山 (Mount White Deer) to observe teachings of Daoism (*huanglao* 黃老). When he heard that a foreign monk from Tianzhu 天竺 had arrived in Xianyang 咸陽, he secretly crossed the border to visit and study with the monk. Later, Jing'ai retreated to Mount Zhongnan. Daoxuan notes that Tanyan 曇延 (516–588) and Dao'an 道安 (circa. 466–581) once invited Jing'ai to leave the mountain to promote Buddhism, but that he rejected these proposals.

Around 567, the Daoist Zhang Bin 張賓 and former Buddhist monk Wei Yuansong 衛元嵩 (died after 572)<sup>51</sup> presented memorials to the Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou Dynasty, recommending the abolition of Buddhist monasteries. In the fourth year of Tianhe 天和 era (569), Emperor Wu invited more than two thousand famous Buddhists, Daoists, Confucian scholars, and court officials to the court to discuss the superiority between Buddhism and Daoism. Conscious that Buddhism and Buddhists were in danger, Jing'ai decided to defend the Dharma in person. Daoxuan notes that, in Jing'ai's speech to Emperor Wu, he quoted from not only Buddhist scriptures but also various texts and biographies, talking from dawn until noon. Even so, Emperor Wu had made up his mind to abolish Buddhism. Jing'ai further suggested the emperor place a pot of hot oil in front of the court, and throw both the disciples and texts of Buddhism and Daoism into the pot to distinguish the true teaching. The emperor was scared and sent Jing'ai away.

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教研究的過去現在未來》會議論文集 (Proceedings of the Conference “The Past and Present of Chinese Buddhism Research”) (Yilan: Foguang University Buddhist Research Center, 2015), 337–340.

<sup>51</sup> Wei Yuansong's biography is in the *gantong* chapter 感通 (Miraculous Response) of XGSZ (T2060.50.657c6–658a11). Fujiyoshi Masumi has analyzed Wei's biography in Chapter 9 of *Dōsen den no kenkyū* 道宣伝の研究 (A Study of the life of Daoxuan).



When Emperor Wu abolished both Buddhism and Daoism in the third year of Jiande 建德 era (574), Jing'ai realized that the decline of the Buddhadharma was inevitable. He retreated to Mount Zhongnan with more than thirty disciples and built twenty-seven shelters for fugitive monks. In the XGSZ, Daoxuan notes that several eminent monks were in company with, or received shelter from, Jing'ai at the time, including Daopan 道判 (532–615), who buried Jing'ai's relics and built a pagoda after Jing'ai's suicide, and Pu'an 普安 (530–609), who dwelled in the mountains and forests with Jing'ai. Emperor Wu once ordered officials to search for Jing'ai among the mountains and invite him to join the government, but they could not find him. Towards the end of the anti-Buddhist persecution, on the sixteenth day of the seventh month in the first year of Xuanzheng 宣政 era (September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 578), Jing'ai committed suicide by slicing off his flesh and gouging out his own heart.

Compared to Jing'ai's polemic, his self-disembowelment was cited more frequently as an exemplar of martyrdom by later Buddhists. For example, both Yu Chunxi 虞淳熙 (1552–1621)<sup>52</sup> and Zibo Zhenke 紫柏真可 (1543–1603)<sup>53</sup> referred to Jing'ai's action of gouging out his own heart as a precious virtue. Likewise, in the *Fayuan zhulin*, Daoshi also categorizes Jing'ai as a self-immolator.<sup>54</sup> Yet Daoxuan

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<sup>52</sup> *Jingshan zhi* 徑山志. Edited by Du Jiexiang 杜潔祥. In *Zhongguo fosi shizhi huikan* 中國佛寺史志彙刊 (The collection of Chinese Buddhist temple gazetteers), 1st ser., vol. 31 (Taipei: Mingwen shuju, 1980), 0482: 此靜藹所以捧心，而開公得無意乎？

<sup>53</sup> *Qingliangshan Zhi* 清涼山志. Edited by Du Jiexiang 杜潔祥. In *Zhongguo fosi shizhi huikan* 中國佛寺史志彙刊 (The collection of Chinese Buddhist temple gazetteers), 2nd ser., vol. 29 (Taipei: Mingwen shuju, 1980), 0066: 靜藹剗心成大義，法琳張膽建清操。

<sup>54</sup> James A. Benn, *Burning for the Buddha: Self-Immolation in Chinese Buddhism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007), 14.

categorizes Jing'ai in the *hufa* section instead of *yishen* 遺身 (Abandoning the Body), even though the anti-Buddhist persecution of the Northern Zhou Dynasty provides the backdrop for a number of biographies in that chapter as well, including Pu'an, his master Puji 普濟 (circa. 496–586), and his fellow monk Puyuan 普圓 (circa. 520–616).

To discuss the reason of why Daoxuan does not categorize Jing'ai as a self-immolator, James Benn suggests that Jing'ai's self-immolation seems to represent a rather defeatist attitude in comparison to Puji and Pu'an's sacrifices of their bodies, arguing that the latter two monks "showed a much more optimistic spirit".<sup>55</sup> As Daoxuan notes in the beginning of the biography, Jing'ai renounced secular life after seeing an illustration of hell and realizing the impermanence of life. The anti-Buddhist persecution is not the full reason but rather the trigger of his disembowelment. Daoxuan keeps a record of what is said to be Jing'ai's testament written on the stone cliff, in which Jing'ai explained his reasons for abandoning life.<sup>56</sup>

吾以三因緣捨此身命：一見身多過；二不能護法；三欲速見佛輒同古聖。  
(T2060.50.627b21–20)

I abandon this body and life for three causes and conditions: the first is because of realizing this body has too many faults; the second is because of not being able to protect the Dharma; the third is because of being eager to see the Buddha and ancient sages.

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<sup>55</sup> Benn, *Burning for the Buddha*, 82.

<sup>56</sup> Stephen Teiser has a discussion on Jing'ai's death. See Stephen F. Teiser, "Having Once Died and Returned to Life': Representations of Hell in Medieval China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 48, no. 2 (1988): 437–439.

From the perspective of constituting the *hufa* section, I suggest that another reason of Jing'ai being categorized in *hufa* is his death. In Jing'ai's biography, there is a supplementary biography (*fujian* 附見) of the *śramaṇa* Daoji 道積 (unknown dates) from the Prefecture Yi 益州.<sup>57</sup> When Emperor Wu announced the abolition of Buddhism, Daoji, together with seven other fellow monks, prayed and repented in front of a statue of Maitreya for seven days without eating and passed away at the same time. Daoxuan associates Daoji with Jing'ai's biography probably because they both abandoned their lives and bodies as a response to the anti-Buddhist persecution. Zhang Jian has argued that the persecution in the Northern Zhou Dynasty was relatively mild compared to the previous one ordered by Emperor Taiwu of Northern Wei Dynasty, and no monks were massacred by the government.<sup>58</sup> If we take Zhang Jian's argument into account, it is probably important for Daoxuan to include Jing'ai's dramatic death, as well as Daoji's suicide, in the *hufa* section to elevate the severity of the religious persecution. As we will see, Jing'ai's biography is the only one that involves death of monks in the first volume of *hufa* section.

5. The Zhou 周 monk Shi Daoan 釋道安 (died before 581) of the Great Zhongxing Monastery 大興寺 of Chang'an 長安 (T2060.50.628a9–631a3)

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<sup>57</sup> In modern-day Sichuan 四川 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000034805>)

<sup>58</sup> Zhang Jian 張箭. *Sanwuyizong yifo zonghe yanjiu* 三武一宗抑佛綜合研究 (A comprehensive study on the suppression of Buddhism of three Wu and one Zong). Guangzhou: Shijie tushu chubans, 2015, 101–102.

Dao'an is another eminent monk who resisted anti-Buddhist policy in the Northern Zhou Dynasty. Unlike Jing'ai, who shunned contact with the imperial court and the secular world for most of his life, Dao'an was supervising monks and monasteries in the capital, where he had a long-term relationship, and at least two conflicts, with Emperor Wu before the religious persecution.

Shi Dao'an's secular name was Yao 姚, and he was a native of Pingyi 憑翊, Hucheng 胡城.<sup>59</sup> He did not follow any specific masters but went wherever there were Buddhist lectures. Dao'an retreated to Mount Taibai 太白山,<sup>60</sup> studying Buddhist scriptures as well as the histories and classics. He later moved to the Great Zhihu Monastery 大陟岵寺, where nobles, court officials, literati, and Emperor Wu often visited and talked to him.<sup>61</sup>

One time, Dao'an asked Emperor Wu to sit on the ground while he was preaching the Dharma, and invited the emperor to have a vegetarian meal together with him. Emperor Wu refused the invitation, arguing that secular people and Buddhists eating at the same

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<sup>59</sup> Pingyi Hucheng is near the modern-day Xi'an 西安.

(<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000042087>)

<sup>60</sup> In modern-day Shannxi 陝西 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000042007>)

<sup>61</sup> Jinhua Chen has pointed out the difficulty of locating the Zhihu Monastery. There was a Zhihu Monastery being built in both the western capital Chang'an and eastern capital Luoyang. And even in Chang'an, there were two different monasteries: one is called Zhihu Monastery 陟岵寺, one is called the Great Zhihu Monastery 大陟岵寺. See Chen Jinhua 陈金华, "Beichao pusaeng kao: Beizhou, Sui gaichao zhiji yige teyide fomen tizhi 北朝菩萨僧考:北周、隋改朝之际一个特异的佛门体制 (Pusaseng (Bodhisattva-monks): A Peculiar Monastic Institution at the Turn of the Northern Zhou (557-581) and Sui Dynasties (581-618)),” *Foxue yanjiu*, no. 2 (2017): 118–120. Chen's article has a detailed discussion of the history, purpose and function of those Zhihu Monasteries.

The Zhihu Monastery in Chang'an was established during the Western Wei Dynasty under the order of Emperor Wen 文王 (507–556) (釋迦方志 T2088.51.974c13: 周太祖文帝於長安立追遠陟岵大乘等六寺, 度一千人). The Great Zhihu Monastery, in which Dao'an had stayed, was built under the order of Emperor Ming of Zhou Dynasty 周明帝(534–560) (廣弘明集 T2103.52.328a3–4: 令太師晉國公總監大陟岵大陟岵二寺營造).

table violated the precepts. Although Dao'an insisted that Buddhist laws were expedient means, Emperor Wu left without eating, indicating that he felt Dao'an was twisting the Buddha's original teaching and that it was inappropriate for the emperor and monks to sit together. This incident did not yet lead to direct hostility between Dao'an and Emperor Wu, because the emperor later ordered Dao'an to stay at the Great Zhongxing Monastery 大興寺 and continued to treat him with special respect.<sup>62</sup>

Another time, Emperor Wu took an excursion to the southern suburb of Chang'an for a ritual ceremony and ordered religious and secular people to observe his ceremonial chariots and banners. Dao'an refused the imperial order, indicating that participating in the secular ritual ceremony was not an act in accordance with the Dharma. Emperor Wu sighed for a long time. This is one example of how Dao'an upheld the Buddhist teachings.

In the fourth year of Tianhe 天和 era (569), Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou Dynasty invited more than two thousand eminent Buddhists, Daoists, Confucian scholars, and officials to court, to debate the superiority of Buddhism versus Daoism. There was no clear result from the debate.

In 570, the Metropolitan Commandant (*sili dafu* 司隸大夫)<sup>63</sup> Zhen Luan 甄鸞 (unknown date) wrote the anti-Daoist polemic *Xiaodao Lun* 笑道論 (Laughing at the

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<sup>62</sup> This Great Zhongxing Monastery is possibly the one built under the order of Emperor Wen of Western Wei Dynasty for Shi Daozhen. See page 21 of this thesis.

<sup>63</sup> Charles O Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1995), 451.

Dao).<sup>64</sup> Zhen Luan was trained as a Daoist but converted to Buddhism. Although the polemic was written under imperial orders, the outcome was obviously not what Emperor Wu expected, for he was so furious after reading the *Xiaodao Lun* that he had the texts burnt immediately in front of the court. In the same year, Shi Dao'an submitted the *Erjiao lun* 二教論 (Debating the Two Teachings) to Emperor Wu, arguing that the three teachings, Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism, should be categorized as two teachings: the internal teaching, which emphasizes cultivating the mind, is Buddhism; the external teaching, which teaches appearance, is Confucianism. According to Dao'an, Daoism as a philosophical teaching is merely a part of Confucianism. Emperor Wu ordered officials to discuss Dao'an's polemic. No one could refute Dao'an, and the debate between Buddhism and Daoism temporarily ceased. The process of this debate and the whole content of Dao'an's *Erjiao lun* are covered in detail in the *Guang hongming ji*.

In the third year of Jiande 建德 era (574), Emperor Wu announced the abolition of both Buddhism and Daoism, ordering practitioners from both communities to return to secular life. Many Buddhists fled to avoid persecution. Although Emperor Wu invited eminent Buddhists and Daoists to stay and serve as scholars, Dao'an refused and passed away during the Northern Zhou Dynasty. According to *Fozu tongji*, Dao'an refused Emperor Wu's invitation, lamenting and refraining from eating until his life ended.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Livia Kohn has a study on court debate in medieval China and a translation of *Xiaodao Lun* in Livia Kohn, *Laughing at the Tao: Debates among Buddhists and Taoists in Medieval China* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

<sup>65</sup> T2035.49.358c10-11: 沙門道安有宿望，欲官之。安以死拒，號慟不食而終。

In the biography, Daoxuan also highlights Dao'an's filial piety towards his mother. While abandonment of household life was the central idea of Buddhism in India, Chinese Buddhism embraced filial piety to adapt to the Confucian value of family.<sup>66</sup> Furthermore, the mother is usually more important in the parental relationship in Buddhist context.<sup>67</sup> When Dao'an was staying at the Zhongxing Monastery, he brought his mother to stay close to him, preparing food for his mother every morning before going to give lectures. Although there were enough attendants, Dao'an would not allow anyone to help him even with collecting the firewood and drawing water. He stated that since his mother had given birth to him and raised him, only he could support his mother.

While performing filiality to his mother, Dao'an also explains in the *Yixun jiuzhang* 遺訓九章 (Nine Chapters of Transmitted Teachings) to his disciples on how to follow the path of renouncing the household life and how family values were still respected by Buddhists. He suggests that the Buddhist practice of not paying special homage to parents and emperors is not because Buddhists are arrogant but because they treat all beings equally.<sup>68</sup>

卿已出家，號曰道人。父母不敬，世帝不臣。普天同奉，事之如神。稽首致敬，不計富貧。(T2060.50.630a12-14)

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<sup>66</sup> Kenneth Ch'en, "Filial Piety in Chinese Buddhism," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 28 (1968): 81.

<sup>67</sup> R. Alan Cole, *Mothers and Sons in Chinese Buddhism* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1998), 41.

<sup>68</sup> Buddhists in medieval China were criticized as arrogant, for example, by the early Tang Daoist official Fu Yi in his polemic to Emperor Gaozu. See Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 8.

You have left household and are named as the one on the way. Neither pay homage to parents nor serve the worldly emperors. Offer to all under heaven, assisting them as the divine. Bow and show respect regardless of rich or poor.

Filial piety has no direct nor clear connection with *hufa*, yet adds to Dao'an's fame as an eminent monk. By quoting Dao'an's filiality, Daoxuan also provides a response to the external critique of the lack of filial piety in Buddhist teaching and explains the reason why Buddhists should not bow to parents and emperors, which were major debates in the early Tang time.

6. The Zhou 周 monk Shi Sengmian 釋僧勳 of the Yuanguo Monastery 願果寺 of Prefecture Xin 新州 (T2060.50.630b25–631a3)

Shi Sengmian's biography is relatively short compared to Jing'ai's and Daoan's ones. His biography is part of Daoxuan's account of how Buddhists debated against Emperor Wu's anti-Buddhist policy.

Sengmian's family origin was unclear. He resided at the Yuanguo Monastery of Xin Prefecture.<sup>69</sup> When the Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou Dynasty planned to abolish Buddhism, Sengmian travelled to the capital city Chang'an and listed eighteen reasons

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<sup>69</sup> According to the Buddhist Studies Place Authority Database, Xin Prefecture was in modern-day Guangdong 廣東 area. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000031875>) Yet Guangdong area was not under the control of Northern Zhou Dynasty. Sengmian was more likely from Prefecture Xin in modern-day Sichuan 四川 area, northeast of Prefecture Yi 益州, which is modern-day Chengdu 成都. See: Tan Qixiang, 譚其驤, *The Historical Atlas of China* 中國歷史地圖集, vol. 4 (Beijing: China Cartographic Publishing House, 1996), 68.



why Buddhism should not be persecuted. When the Emperor Wu ordered the abolition of Buddhism and monasteries, Sengmian fled and was never heard of again.

The central idea among the eighteen reasons is to refute the legend of Laozi's conversion of the barbarians. The polemic is recorded in several other collections besides XGSZ, including *Lidai sanbao ji* 歷代三寶記 (Record of the Three Jewels throughout Successive Dynasties) by Fei Zhangfang 費長房 (d. after 578),<sup>70</sup> *Da Tang neidian lu* 大唐內典錄 (Record of Buddhist Sources of the Great Tang Dynasty) by Daoxuan,<sup>71</sup> and *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 (A Grove of Pearls in a Dharma Garden) by Daoshi 道世 (circa. 607–684).<sup>72</sup>

#### 7. The Sui 隋 monk Shi Sengmeng 釋僧猛 (507–588) of the Yunhua Monastery 雲花寺 of Chang'an 長安 (T2060.50.631a4–b1)

Shi Sengmeng's biography also belongs to the cluster of Dharma protectors during the Northern Zhou anti-Buddhist persecution chosen by Daoxuan.

Shi Sengmeng's family name was Duan 段, and he was a person of Jingyang 涇陽 of the capital area.<sup>73</sup> During the Western Wei Dynasty, he was invited by the Emperor Wen 魏文帝 (507–551) to teach *prajñā* 般若 in the inner palace. After the Emperor Wu abolished Buddhism, Meng retreated to await the revival of Buddhism. When the Yang

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<sup>70</sup> T2034.49.100c15.

<sup>71</sup> T2149.55.272a16.

<sup>72</sup> T2122.53.1022a27.

<sup>73</sup> In modern-day's Pingliang 平涼, Gansu 甘肅 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000043097>)

Jian, who later became the Emperor Wen of Sui Dynasty, was appointed minister, Buddhism revived. In the second year of Daxiang 大象 (580) era, Sengmeng stayed at the Great Xingshan Monastery 大興善寺 of the capital Chang'an on imperial orders. The monastery was previously named Zhihu Monastery 陟岵寺.<sup>74</sup> He passed away in the eighth year of the Kaihuang 開皇 (588) era and was buried on the east side of the city. Daoxuan indicated that the stele carved for Sengmeng at Yunhua Monastery still existed when he visited the site.

In the biography of Shi Jing'ai, Daoxuan noted that in the fourth year of Tianhe era (569), the Emperor Wu of Northern Zhou Dynasty initiated a court debate involving renowned Buddhists, Daoists, Confucian scholars, and court officials to debate the superiority of Buddhism versus Daoism. Throughout the debate, there was a monk, named Dharma Master Meng 猛法師, who explicitly advised the emperor against the Daoists but failed to change his mind. Nomura Yōshō suggests that Master Meng might be Sengmeng of Yunhua Monastery.<sup>75</sup>

8. The Sui 隋 monk Shi Zhixuan 釋智炫 (r. 488–605) of Xiao'ai Monastery 孝愛寺 of Prefecture Yi 益州 (T2060.50.631b18–632b18)<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> This is an imperial monastery. See Note 61 on page 29 in this thesis for details.

<sup>75</sup> Nomura Yōshō 野村耀昌, *Shūbū honan no kenkyū* 周武法難の研究 (Research on Zhou Wu's Persecution of Buddhism) (Tō Shuppan, 1968), 180.

<sup>76</sup> This biography is at the end of the first part of the *hufa* section in the *Pinjia Tripitaka* and *Taishō Tripitaka*. They are not included in Kōshō-ji Edition, *Zhaocheng Jin Tripitaka*, nor *Tripitaka Koreana*; and they are included in the *hufa* section in *Yongle Northern Tripitaka* and *Qianlong Tripitaka*.

Shi Zhixuan's biography is not in the *Tripitaka* editions before Southern Song Dynasty. Zhixuan's family name was Xu 徐, and he was from Yi Prefecture. When the Emperor Wu of Northern Zhou Dynasty intended to abolish Buddhism and ordered a contest between Buddhists and Daoists, Zhixuan was selected by many Buddhists to debate against the Daoist Zhang Bin. Yet Emperor Wu regarded Zhang Bin's suggestion of killing all the Buddhists as nonsense and decided to question Zhixuan directly.

When Zhixuan indicated that abolishing Buddhism while keeping Daoism was similar to deposing the *di* 嫡 (formal wife/son) with *shu* 庶 (secondary wife/son), Emperor Wu was enraged and left the court debate for he was born by a royal concubine rather than the empress, yet the emperor did not punish Zhixuan but ordered the abolition of both Buddhism and Daoism the next day while offering court positions to eminent clergy of both religions. Zhang Jian argues that the debate between Zhixuan and Emperor Wu reflects the emperor's tolerance of opposite opinions and his justice.<sup>77</sup> Daoxuan's writing, however, tends to emphasize Zhixuan's courage and fame: because of Zhixuan's resistance and critique, Emperor Wu had to abolish Daoism together with Buddhism to show equality; because of Zhixuan's prominence, Emperor Wu tried to recruit him as an official after abolishing Buddhism. Zhixuan rejected and fled to the Northern Qi. After conquering the capital of Qi, Emperor Wu sent envoys to invite Zhixuan again, treating him generously. After Emperor Wu passed, Emperor Wen of the Sui Dynasty 隋文帝 patronized Buddhism. Zhixuan was honored in both the capital city of Chang'an and

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<sup>77</sup> Zhang Jian, *Sanwuyizong yifo zonghe yanjiu*, 112–113.

Luoyang. Later in his life, he missed his hometown and returned to Shu to teach Buddhism. He retreated to Mount Sanxue 三学山 during the Daye era 大業 (605–618), and passed away at age one hundred and two.<sup>78</sup>

Both Zhixuan and Sengmeng in the previous biography are examples of Buddhists who not only went through the Northern Zhou persecution and debated against Daoists or Emperor Wu, but also strived to preserve the Dharma, restored the monastic communities, and gained imperial patronage after the catastrophe.

### Conclusion

The first volume of the *hufa* section reflects the external threats and challenges that northern Buddhists had encountered, and how they protected and promoted Buddhism before the Tang Dynasty. There are two main tropes in these biographies: the first is that almost all the monks were monastic leaders and had close connection with the imperial court; the second is that almost all the biographies involve Buddhist-Daoists debates.

### Political Centers: Emperors and Monks

Daoxuan focuses on *hufa* activities near the political center in the northern area, and his collection of *hufa* monks were all selected accordingly. Most monks were mainly affiliated with imperial monasteries in the capital cities, including the Rongjue Monastery established by Prince Qinghe Wenxian in the Northern Wei Dynasty, the Great Zhongxing Monastery which was built for Daozhen under the order of Emperor Wen of Western Wei, the Great Zhihu Monastery established by Emperor Wen of Northern Zhou,

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<sup>78</sup> Mount Sanxue is near modern-day Chengdu 成都.  
(<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000035338>)

and the Great Xingshan Monastery which was restored in Sui Dynasty based on the former Zhihu Monastery.

Exceptions include Tanxian who was a recluse *śramaṇa* without any monastic affiliation, and Jing'ai who chose to live reclusively among the mountains. Daoxuan associates two monks with monasteries in modern-day Sichuan area: Sengmian who was from Yuanguo Monastery of Xin Prefecture and traveled to Chang'an before the anti-Buddhist persecution; and Zhixuan who was in Chang'an during the Northern Zhou and Sui dynasties but returned to his hometown, Yi Prefecture, in the Sui Dynasty. Yet, based on the biographical content, those monks had also been involved in court debate in front of the emperors.

We may be able to say that most of the monks in the first volume of *hufa* section were influential and prominent in both monastic communities and imperial court. Not only did they have the eloquence and courage to face critiques and defend Buddhism, but they also had the religious and political status to do so.

The map and chart at the end of this chapter demonstrate the geographical distribution of all the monks. I locate them based on the title of their biographies. Some of them had travelled among various monasteries, and the chart provides more details of their other monastic affiliations.

### **North: Buddhists and Daoists**

Focusing on Dharma protectors in the north does not mean that Buddhism did not face rivalries or debates in the south, or that Daoxuan was not aware of these conflicts. While emperors, imperial families, and intellectuals of the southern region were devoted

to Buddhism, discussions and debates were held both inside and outside Buddhist communities.<sup>79</sup> One major theme of the debates was whether or not the spirit exists after the extinction of the body; examples include Huilin's 慧琳 (385–435) *Baihei lun* 白黑論 (Treatise of White and Black), He Chengtian's 何承天 (370–447) *Daxing lun* 達性論 (Treatise on Penetrating the Nature), and Fan Zhen's 范缜 (450–515) *Shenmie lun* 神滅論 (On the Extinction of the Soul). There were also conflicts over interpretations of Buddhist scriptures and concepts in the south, such as the concept of *icchāntika* in the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra*. Daoxuan was certainly aware of Buddhist philosophical debates in the south. In the second volume of the *hufa* section, he recorded a debate between Shi Huicheng and a monk from the left bank of the Yangzi River on whether Buddhahood falls within or outside of the Two Truths. In the *Guang hongming ji*, Daoxuan collected treaties and polemics from Buddhists, Daoists, intellectuals, and imperial decree in both southern and northern regimes.

On the other hand, Daoxuan selected monks and events to explicitly depict Buddhist superiority to Daoism, which was an urgent response to early Tang emperor's patronage of Daoism. The major difference between the Northern Buddhism and Southern Buddhism that influenced Daoxuan's selection of monks in the *hufa* section might be the Buddhist-state relationship. Kenneth Ch'en argues that political conditions in the north were characterized by incessant fighting among the contending kingdoms, and non-

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<sup>79</sup> For example, Yan Yaozhong points out that Emperor Wu of Southern Liang Dynasty was the most enthusiastic Buddhist emperor, and the anti-Buddhist polemic in his time was the strongest during the Southern Dynasties. See Yan Yaozhong 严耀中, *Jiangnan fojiao shi* 江南佛教史 (History of Buddhism in Jiangnan) (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Press, 2000), 106.

Chinese rulers in the north relied mainly upon military power to establish their administration, possessed supreme authority over subjugated people, including Buddhists, after conquering one area.<sup>80</sup> Buddhists in the south faced less critical challenge. Yan Yaozhong argues that debates and conversations in the southern area even stimulated Buddhist adaptation of indigenous Chinese cultures, including Confucianism and Daoism, and avoided accumulation of tension and extreme anti-Buddhist persecutions which happened in the Northern regimes.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Kenneth Ch'en, "On Some Factors Responsible for The Antibuddhist Persecution Under The Pei-Ch'ao," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 17, no. 1/2 (1954): 267.

<sup>81</sup> Yan Yaozhong, *Jiangnan fojiao shi*, 107.



Map. 1 Geographical distribution of monks in the first part of *hufa* section. Source for original map: [https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num\\_car=11572&lang=en](https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=11572&lang=en).

Tanxian was not affiliated with any monastery and is therefore not included in the map. Other monks are mapped as following: 1. Tanwuzui; 2. Daozhen; 4. Jing'ai; 5. Dao'an; 6. Sengmian; 7. Sengmeng; 8. Zhixuan.



Chart 1. Monks in the first volume of *hufa* section

(B = Buddhist/Buddhism, D = Daoist/Daoism, E = Emperors, C = Confucianism)

No.	Name	Dynasty	Monastery Affiliations	Direct Conflict			Education		
				B	D	E	B	D	C
1	Shi Tanwuzui 釋曇無最 (died after 521)	N. Wei 北魏	Rongjue Monastery 融覺寺		√		√	√	√
2	Shi Daozhen 釋道臻 (circa. 466–557)	W. Wei 西魏	Great Zhongxing Monastery 大中興寺				√		
3	Shi Tanxian 釋曇顯 (died after 559)	N. Qi 北齊	無定所 recluse <i>śramaṇa</i>		√		√		
4	Shi Jing'ai 釋靜藹 (534–578)	N. Zhou 北周	終南山避世峰 Recluse Peak at Mt. Zhongnan	√	√	√	√	√	√
5	Shi Dao'an 釋道安 (died before 581)	N. Zhou 北周	Great Zhihu Monastery 大陟謁寺, Great Zhongxing Monastery 大中興寺		√	√	√		
6	Shi Sengmian 釋僧勛 (unknown date)	N. Zhou 北周	Yuanguo Monastery 願果寺			√	√		
7	Shi Sengmeng 釋僧猛 (circa. 507–588)	Sui 隋	Great Xingshan Monastery 大興善寺 (previously Zhihu Monastery 前陟謁寺) Yunhua Monastery 雲花寺			√	√		
8	Shi Zhixuan 釋智炫 (circa. 488–605)	Sui 隋	Xiao'ai Monastery 孝愛寺		√	√	√		

## CHAPTER TWO

### Dharma Protectors in the Tang Dynasty

Although the proscription of Buddhism during the Northern Zhou Dynasty stopped after the death of Emperor Wu, Buddhism did not revive until the Sui Dynasty (581–618).<sup>82</sup> During this period, Buddhism and Buddhists had a notable influence over the Sui imperial family and received substantial patronage. However, the flourishing of Buddhism during the Sui was constrained and hindered by the imperial court again in the early Tang period. As Weinstein points out in his survey of Buddhism under the Tang, this was the first dynasty to give precedence to Daoism over Buddhism.<sup>83</sup> Early Tang emperors insisted that Buddhism be subordinate to the imperial court and Daoism, which caused great tension between the court and Buddhists, especially those elite monks in the capital city of Chang'an.<sup>84</sup> Early Tang Buddhists who had experienced the Northern Zhou religious persecution or learned of it from the elder generation were very sensitive to any religious crisis that could damage the Buddhist-state relationship. Daoxuan's writing in the second volume of the *hufa* section reflects the sense of insecurity among elite Buddhists at the time.

Similar to the accounts up to and including the Sui Dynasty in Chapter One, external challenges posed by emperors and imperial policies remain the focus in the

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<sup>82</sup> Arthur F. Wright, "The Sui Dynasty (581–617)," in *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. Denis Crispin Twitchett, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2007), 76. Tang Yongtong 汤用彤, *Sui-Tang fojiao shi gao* 隋唐佛教史稿 (Sui and Tang Buddhist History) (Wuhan: Wuhan daxue chubanshe, 2008), 1.

<sup>83</sup> Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 5.

<sup>84</sup> For more details, see Stanley Weinstein's study of the first two emperors of the Tang Dynasty in *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 3–27.

second volume as well. Those monks' experiences and perspectives reflect their understanding of the relations between emperors and leading monks from the end of the Southern and Northern Dynasties to the Tang Dynasty. Most of the monks in the second volume had lived through the Sui Dynasty or even the Southern and Northern Dynasties, yet Daoxuan identifies them as Tang monks possibly because they passed away in the Tang.<sup>85</sup> For example, Shi Tanxuan, whose biography is the first one in this volume, had protected monks from Sui military forces but been categorized as a Tang monk.

Daoists remained the major external threat to and rival of Chinese Buddhists, but confrontations between Buddhists and Daoists had shifted from formal court debates to polemics and memorials that they presented to the emperors. Although Twitchett points out that representatives of Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism continued to participate in heated court debates during the early Tang Dynasty,<sup>86</sup> the narratives in the second volume of the *hufa* section focus more on direct conflicts between Buddhists and emperors. It is worth noting that, in the biographies that Daoxuan collected for the first volume of the *hufa* section, no monk is described as being killed by any northern emperors because of their religious dissent — even during the anti-Buddhist persecution of the Northern Zhou.<sup>87</sup> In comparison, in the second volume, monks such as Shi Falin 釋法

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<sup>85</sup> Except Shi Cizang 釋慈藏: a Korean monk who came to Tang from Silla and passed away in Silla after he returned. (T2060.50.639a8–640a8)

<sup>86</sup> Howard J. Wechsler, “T'ai-Tsung (Reign 626–49) the Consolidator,” in *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. Denis Crispin Twitchett, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2007), 217.

<sup>87</sup> In the biographies of northern regimes, the cause of the death for monks is linked to suicide, such as Jing'ai's self-disembowelment and Daoji's hunger strike.

琳 (571–639) and Shi Zhishi 釋智實 (601–638), are described being captured, punished, and expelled by the emperors, and passing away due to torture.

The second volume contains ten main biographies and five supplementary biographies. It is worth noting that five of the main biographies are not present in editions of the text that predate the Southern Song Dynasty (1127–1279). Although these five biographies are included in the XGSZ of Taishō version and attributed to Daoxuan, the pattern of narrative in those biographies is quite different than those found in the others in the *hufa* section. There is no reference to any specific emperors or Daoists, and the depiction of *gantong* 感通 (miraculous response) in several of those biographies is rather noticeable. Although Daoxuan demonstrates his interests in *gantong* among his biographical writings, court debate and polemic writings are the main characteristic of the monks in the *hufa* section, and it is unusual to see an emphasis on miraculous events. Besides questioning the real authorship of those biographies, it is possible that Daoxuan compiled them in a different time.

Below, I examine each of the biographies in the chronological order in which they appear.

1. The Tang 唐 monk Shi Tanxuan 釋曇選 (531–625) of Xingguo Monastery 興國寺, Bing Prefecture 并州 (T2060.50.641a18–c13)

Tanxuan's biography is one of the biographies that is not in the editions that predate the Southern Song Dynasty, and there is no direct debate against Daoists nor emperors. In this biography, Daoxuan keeps a note of Tanxuan's protection of his fellow monks

against social and military turmoil during the Sui Dynasty, and his supervision over outstanding junior monks during the early Tang.

Shi Tanxuan's secular family name was Cui 崔, and he was from Gaoyang 高陽.<sup>88</sup> He had an extensive understanding of scriptures but was well known for his knowledge of the *Nirvāṇa Sutra*, and took protecting the Dharma as his fundamental concern. Tanxuan later stayed at the Xingguo Monastery and was regarded as a great master by local communities.

When Emperor Wen of the Sui Dynasty 隋文帝 (541–604) passed away in 604, Yang Liang 楊諒 (575–605) rose against Emperor Yang. At that time, Xingguo Monastery was occupied by Yang Liang's troops as an armoury. After Yang Liang was defeated by Emperor Yang's general Yang Su 楊素 (545–606), government forces entered the town, gathered all the monks and urged them to surrender any traitors. Some monks argued that they had never hidden any traitors because they dared not to violate the strict imperial law. Yang Su was angered by the monks' speech, and criticized them for being rebellious and not appreciating the emperor's grace. To save the monks from being punished, Tanxuan clarified that there was no connection between the monks and the rebels. He also told them that in an age of Dharma decline, even virtuous monks could not advise secular people, and when rebels gathered together, no one could teach them loyalty and honesty. Thus, Tanxuan argued that monks should be free from blame. Yang Su was persuaded by Tanxuan and released all the monks. Later, at the end of the Daye

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<sup>88</sup> Gaoyang 高陽 is in the modern-day northern area of Baoding 保定, Hebei 河北 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000002258>)

大業 era (618), which was also the transition between the Sui and Tang Dynasties, many wandering monks had no shelter or food due to the military turmoil. Tanxuan ordered monks in the Xingguo Monastery to offer food to guest monks and to allow them to stay.

One of the important cases in Tanxuan's biography is his teaching of Zhiman 智滿 (551–628) and Daochuo 道綽 (562–645). At the beginning of the Tang, the *śramaṇa* Zhiman led the newly built Yixing Monastery 義興寺 with more than three hundred monks,<sup>89</sup> attracting patronage from aristocrats and officials. Tanxuan worried that the size of Zhiman's monastic communities might grow out of control and bring trouble to the Dharma. He went to supervise Zhiman and Daochuo, reading sutras with them and using the examples of “the thieves of Mahāyāna and the evildoers of Maitreya” to warn them.<sup>90</sup> According to the writing in the XGSZ, this event took place before the eighth year of the Wude 武德 era (625). In the biography of Zhiman, Daoxuan noted that in the fifth year of the Wude era (622), Emperor Gaozu ordered that over two thousand monks from Yixing monastery be selected for service in the army to fight against the encroachment of Turkic forces. One of the reasons for his order, as Daoxuan recorded, was “the vigor and bravery of the *śramaṇas* in Mayi 馬邑 (in the northeast of present-day Shuoxian 朔縣, Shanxi).”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Yixing Monastery was in modern-day Taiyuan 太原, Shanxi 山西 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000003778>)

<sup>90</sup> In T2060.50.641c2: 前代大乘之賊，近時彌勒之妖。The “thieves of Mahāyāna” refers to the Mahāyāna Rebellion led by monk Faqing 法慶 in the Northern Wei Dynasty. The “evildoers of Maitreya” possibly refers to several Maitreyan rebellions throughout the Sui Dynasty. See: Erik Zürcher, “‘Prince Moonlight’. Messianism and Eschatology in Early Medieval Chinese Buddhism,” *T'oung Pao* 68, no. 1/3 (1982): 1–75.

<sup>91</sup> T2060.50.583b15–19. For a detailed translation, see Jinhua Chen, “A ‘Villain-Monk’ Brought down by a Villein-General: A Forgotten Page in Tang Monastic Warfare and State-Saṃgha Relations,” in *Behaving Badly in Early and Medieval China*, ed. N. Harry Rothschild and Leslie V. Wallace (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017), 213–214.

Tanxuan's concern over the *samgha*'s engagement in warfare reflects the fact that many monks did participate in violent military activities regardless of other monks' disagreement. Daoxuan's opinion on monk-soldiers appears to be inconsistent in the XGSZ. While he did not express any negative judgment towards Zhiman in Tanxuan's biography, in the biography of another monk Zhishi 智實 (604–638), which I discuss later in this chapter, Daoxuan clearly censured the monk Faya 法雅 (?–629) for his involvement in military activities. There are many additional examples of governmental recruitment of monks into military service.<sup>92</sup>

As we can see, although Tanxuan was wary of anything that could worsen Buddhist-state relations, Daoxuan did not mention any Buddhist-Daoist court debates nor direct conflict between Tanxuan and the imperial court in his biography, which were common tropes in the biographies discussed in Chapter One. Nevertheless, Daoxuan went to visit the monastery where Tanxuan had resided and praised Tanxuan as a *hufa kaishi* 護法開士 (Dharma-protecting enlightened one), suggesting that his actions could encourage Buddhists in the future generation.

## 2. The Tang 唐 *śramana* Shi Fatong 釋法通 (d. before 627) of Xi Prefecture 隰州<sup>93</sup>

(T2060.50.641c14–642a16)

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<sup>92</sup> Chen, “A ‘Villain-Monk’ Brought down by a Villein-General”, 214.

<sup>93</sup> Xi Prefecture is in modern-day Linfen 臨汾 City, Shanxi 山西 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000005918>)

Shi Fatong was from Shilou 石樓, Longquan 龍泉 (in Xi Prefecture). In his early days, he lived in the countryside of Xi Prefecture, where Buddhism had not been spread and monks had not yet visited. Even so, Fatong was disgusted with secular life. Around the end of the Kaihuang 開皇 era (600), Fatong shaved the heads of his two sons, two daughters, and his wife, and placed them in monasteries. After that, he took refuge with Master Ming 明法師 of Tonghua Monastery 通化寺.<sup>94</sup> He travelled among villages in Lan 嵐, Shi 石, Fen 汾, and Xi 隰 Prefectures (all of which are regions in modern-day Shanxi Province) to beg for alms. He usually stayed at lay societies, known as *yiyi* 邑義, and held an additional purification fast in the three long months.<sup>95</sup> At the end of the fast, every household would prepare one plate of food as an offering. It became a tradition and was still performed by itinerant monks in Daoxuan's time.

Once, Fatong travelled to one district and was imprisoned by the county magistrate to prevent him from wandering around. Fatong refused to eat any food but circumambulated inside his cell as he chanted. That night, wild foxes barked, and no one could rest well. The next day, the magistrate ordered his release, but Fatong refused to

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<sup>94</sup> Tonghua Monastery was in Xi Prefecture.

<sup>95</sup> 多置邑義，月別建齋。Yiyi 邑義 is a type of Buddhist lay community that started in the Northern Dynasty and became popular during Sui and Tang times. Laypeople would gather together for purification fast, chanting, copying sutras, and other Buddhist activities. Li Xiaorong 李小榮 argues the *yue* 月 in this sentence means the *sanchangyue* 三長月 [three long months or three whole months of abstinence, the first, fifth, and ninth lunar months, when no food should be taken after noon]. Source from Allan Yi Ding, Charles Muller: [http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id\(%27b4e09-9577-9f4b-6708%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id(%27b4e09-9577-9f4b-6708%27)).

Li Xiaorong also points out that listened to Buddhist lectures was one of the common activities during the fast. Fatong was very likely involving in giving lectures to local laypeople. See Li Xiaorong 李小榮, *Dunhuang bianwen* 敦煌變文 (Transformation texts of Dunhuang) (Lanzhou: Gansu jiaoyu, 2013), 337–338.



leave. After another disturbed night, the county officials and local people were all terrified and begged him to leave the prison. After Fatong left the prison and continued on his way, the county returned to peace. Another time, Fatong was seeking temporary lodging and was bitten by a dog on his shank. The dog died soon after, and Fatong's fame increased. He later passed away at Longquan.

Shi Fatong's biography is also not in the editions that predate the Southern Song Dynasty, even though Daoxuan must have learned about his case before finishing compiling the XGSZ.<sup>96</sup> At the end of the biography, Daoxuan notes that he visited Fatong's son, Senggang 僧綱 (unknown dates), at a temple in Xi Prefecture during the beginning of Zhenguan era (circa. 627). Daoxuan expresses his opinion on Fatong, suggesting that one should ignore the family background and appearance of a master as long as one could receive the teaching from him.

I find this biography quite difficult to fit in the *hufa* section for it does not meet the common criteria we see in other *hufa* biographies. Not only is there no court debate nor emperors being recorded, but his biography depicts miraculous events and centres on local society rather than the capital city. Furthermore, unlike Tanxuan, who was a monastic leader, Fatong was not affiliated with any famous monasteries and could hardly be regarded as an elite monk.

Fatong's biography suggests that Daoxuan's criteria of selecting *hufa* monks might have changed after the official completion of XGSZ. In the commentary at the end of

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<sup>96</sup> Fujiyoshi notes that Daoxuan was travelling and collecting materials for compiling the XGSZ during the early Zhenguan era. See Fujiyoshi Masumi 藤善真澄, *Dōsen den no kenkyū* 道宣伝の研究 (A Study of the Life of Daoxuan), 101–102.

Fatong's biography, Daoxuan notes that the ninety-six kinds of non-Buddhist ways could all be regarded as the path and the seventeen groups are all manifestations of Buddhist teaching.<sup>97</sup> This may refer to Fatong's roving lifestyle and possibly untidy appearance since he was once arrested by the county magistrate. Daoxuan also praised Fatong for proselytizing Buddhism to secular people and for guiding ignorant minds.<sup>98</sup>

3. The Tang 唐 monk Shi Mingshan 釋明贍 (559–628) of the Zhiju Monastery 智炬寺 of Mount Zhongnan 終南山 (T2060.50.632c1–633b2)

Shi Mingshan had experienced the anti-Buddhist persecution of the Northern Zhou Dynasty, lived through the Sui Dynasty, and passed away in the early Tang Dynasty. Daoxuan's biography centres on Mingshan's protection of Buddhism and Buddhists in the Sui dynasty and his positive influence on imperial attitudes towards Buddhism at the beginning of the Tang through his interactions with emperors of the Sui and Tang dynasties.

Shi Mingshan's secular family name was Du 杜, and he was from Shiyi 石邑 of Heng Prefecture 恒州.<sup>99</sup> By the age of fourteen, he had comprehended the classics; by the age of seventeen, he had mastered the histories. Local officials recommended him for an official post, yet he decided to renounce the householder's life. During the anti-Buddhist persecution of the Northern Zhou Dynasty, Mingshan hid in the Eastern County 東郡. At

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<sup>97</sup> T2060.50.642a8–10: 所以九十六部，兼邪正之津途。一十七群，現機緣之化迹。

<sup>98</sup> T2060.50.642a10–11: 弘導塵蒙，攝迷沒之鄙夫。

<sup>99</sup> Shiyi is at modern-day Shijiazhuang 石家莊, Hebei 河北 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000000803>)

the beginning of the Sui Dynasty, he stayed at Fazang Monastery 法藏寺 in Xiang Prefecture 相州.<sup>100</sup> In the third year of the Kaihuang 開皇 era (583), he moved to the Great Xingshan Monastery 大興善寺 to participate in a translation project on imperial orders. In the second year of the Daye 大業 era (606), Emperor Yang of the Sui Dynasty declared that Buddhists should bow to the emperor, as the Daoists were doing. Mingshan, who was the leader of the sangha at the time, refused to bow to the emperor, and led all the monks to argue against the emperor's position on five occasions. Emperor Yang eventually praised Mingshan in front of the court officials, and ordered him to reside at Chanding Monastery 禪定寺.

At the beginning of the Zhenguan era (627), Emperor Taizong invited Mingshan to discuss history, governance, and Buddhism in the inner palace. On Mingshan's suggestion, Emperor Taizong promulgated a decree banning animal slaughter on the sixth day of each third lunar month and ordered local prefectures to build Buddhist temples. Seven temples were constructed at the same time in seven different prefectures. Construction materials and labour were all provided by the central government. Daoxuan attributes this to Mingshan's influence. Later, Mingshan retreated to Zhiju Monastery at Mount Taiyi, and passed away on the twenty-seventh day of the tenth month in the second year of Zhenguan era (November 28<sup>th</sup>, 628). Daoxuan notes that, after the cremation, Mingshan's skeleton remained intact with magnificent purple light sparkling on the skull.

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<sup>100</sup> In modern-day Henan 河南 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000024071>)

In Mingshan's biography, we see direct conflict between monks and the emperor for the first time in the second volume of *hufa* section. Lack of respect to the throne was one of the main criticisms that Buddhists encountered in the early Tang.<sup>101</sup> By citing Mingshan's action in defending the autonomy of the monastic community and Emperor Yang's tolerance to Mingshan and the saṃgha, Daoxuan was probably hoping to provide an example and answer to his contemporary critics.

4. The Tang 唐 monk Shi Huichen 釋慧乘 (555–630) of the Shengguang Monastery 勝光寺 in the capital city (T2060.50.633b3–634c10)

Shi Huicheng came from a family with both government and Buddhist background. In the biography, Daoxuan depicts the patronage Huicheng received during the Chen, Sui, and Tang Dynasties, and his debate against Emperor Gaozu of Tang, who favoured Daoism over Buddhism.

Shi Huicheng's family name was Liu 劉, and he was from Pengcheng 彭城 in Xu Prefecture 徐州. His grandfather and father were both military officials during the Liang and Chen dynasties. Huicheng's great uncle was Zhiqiang 智強 (dates unknown),<sup>102</sup> who renounced the householder's life when he was young, and was appointed as the Great Superintendent of Monks 大僧正 (*da sengzheng*) of Guangling 廣陵 during the Chen Dynasty. Huicheng studied with Zhiqiang when he was twelve years old and decided to

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<sup>101</sup> Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 7, 14.

<sup>102</sup> Zhiqiang's date of birth and death is unknown. Daoxuan mentions him in both Huicheng's and Zhituo's 智脫 (541–607) biographies in the XGSZ.

travel in search of more teachings when he was sixteen. He travelled to Yangdu 楊都,<sup>103</sup> and studied *Chengshi* 成實<sup>104</sup> with Master Zhijiao 智爚 (dates unknown)<sup>105</sup> at Zhuangyan Monastery 莊嚴寺. Tang Yongtong has pointed out that Zhuangyan Monastery was one of the three major centres of *Chengshi lun* studies, aside with Kaishan Monastery and Guangzhai Monastery; although monks from the three monasteries disagreed: monks from the Zhuangyan Monastery followed the teaching that Buddhahood lies outside the Two Truths, while those from the Kaishan Monastery believed the Buddhahood is within the Two Truths (佛果出/不出二諦外).<sup>106</sup>

As his biography indicates, Huicheng at that time held that the teaching of Buddhahood falls outside the Two Truths.<sup>107</sup> At the time of Emperor Wu of the Chen Dynasty 陳武帝 (reign. 557–559), Huicheng debated against a Buddhist master from the left bank of the Yangzi River on whether Buddhahood falls within or outside the Two Truths. The other Buddhist master's name is unmentioned in the biography but he was very likely to be an elite monk at the time, because he used to stay at Kaitai 開泰 Monastery and later moved to Zhihuan 祇洹 Monastery. Both monasteries were in

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<sup>103</sup> In modern-day Nanjing 南京. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000008975>)

<sup>104</sup> Here *chengshi* might refer to *Chengshi lun* 成實論 (*Tattvasiddhi-Śāstra*).

<sup>105</sup> Guo Shaolin notes that the name in the early editions was Zhijue 智爚. See: Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) and Guo Shaolin 郭绍林, *Xu gao seng zhuan*, 943.

<sup>106</sup> Tang Yongtong 汤用彤, *Tang Yongtong dade wenhui* 汤用彤大德文汇 (Collections of Master Tang Yongtong) (Beijing: Husxia chuban she, 2012), 157.

<sup>107</sup> T2060.50.633b13: 乘當時豎佛果出二諦外義。

Nanjing, the capital of the Chen Dynasty. Zhihuan Monastery used to be one of the translation centres of Buddhist scriptures.<sup>108</sup>

While most of the eminent monks in the *hufa* section came from northern regions, Shi Huicheng is the only one from the Southern Dynasties. Unlike the debates on the superiority of Buddhism versus Daoism seen in the northern regimes, the debate between Huicheng and the other Buddhist was centered on the philosophical question of Buddhahood. The two masters actually did not give any direct discussion on the relation between Buddhahood and Two Truths but employed metaphors and examples. As Li Xiaorong points out, the debate itself emphasizes eloquence and sharpness.<sup>109</sup> Huicheng's wisdom and eloquence won him compliments and patronage from the court after this debate.

In the beginning of the Sui Dynasty, Huicheng became Prince Jin's 晉王 household monk and visited the imperial court frequently. When Duke Jin ascended the throne and became Emperor Yang, Huicheng was promoted and received extraordinary imperial patronage. In the fourth year of the Wude era (621) of the Tang Dynasty, Emperor Gaozu invited five eminent monks, including Huicheng, to reside at the capital. Huicheng was ordered to stay at Shengguang Monastery 勝光寺.

In the eighth year of Wude era (625), Emperor Gaozu decreed that Daoism and Confucianism, as the domestic teachings, should be accorded first and second place

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<sup>108</sup> Zhihuan Monastery was built under the order of Fantai 范泰 (355–428), a high official in the Song Dynasty. <http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000009267>

<sup>109</sup> Li Xiaorong 李小榮, *Hanyi fodian wenti ji qi yingxiang yanjiu* 漢譯佛典文體及其影響研究 (Study of the Style of Chinese Translation of Buddhist Scriptures and Its Influence) (Taipei: Wanjuan lou, 2015), 455.

before Buddhism which was the “guest.” Huicheng argued that Buddhists had contributed to the dynasty. Emperor Gaozu, quoting the Daoist Pan Dan 潘誕,<sup>110</sup> suggested that Buddha attained enlightenment upon learning the Dao and thus Daoism was the teacher of Buddhism. Huicheng rebutted, arguing that the Buddha was born before the Zhou Dynasty, more three hundred years before Laozi was born; and that while Buddhism had a long history, Daoist teaching was not popular until the Han Dynasty. Daoxuan recounts that the whole imperial court was fascinated by Huicheng’s speech and no one could argue against him. Unlike court debates recorded in the first volume of the *hufa* section, in which Buddhists and Daoists contended with each other directly, with the emperor as adjudicator, no Daoist appears in Huicheng’s biography. Instead, the Daoist polemic is cited directly in Emperor Gaozu’s speech. This is a common trope in the second volume of *hufa* section, as Daoxuan seems to move the direct Daoist-Buddhist conflict to a emperor-Buddhist debate.

Daoxuan notes at the end of the biography that Huicheng’s nephew, Huizhang 慧璋 (dates unknown), was also a prominent monk.

5. The Tang 唐 monk Shi Zhishi 釋智實 (601–638) of the Great Zongchi Temple 大總持寺 in the capital city (T2060.50.634c11–636b22)

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<sup>110</sup> Pan Dan’s date of birth and death is unknown. He was a Daoist alchemist of Mount Song 嵩山 during the Sui Dynasty. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/person/?fromInner=A006708>)

Zhishi's family name was Shao 邵, and he was from Wannian 萬年 in Yong Prefecture 雍州.<sup>111</sup> He left home at age eleven, staying at the Great Zongchi Monastery. In the beginning of the Wude era (618), Emperor Gaozu invited the three great Buddhist masters, Huicheng 慧乘 (555–630), Daozong 道宗 (563–623), and Bianxiang 辯相 (556–632), to the capital city to discuss Buddhism with around twenty other Buddhist masters in the palace. Zhishi was thirteen years old at the time and sat at the lowest seat. Yet his speech astonished all the monks, officials, and the emperor.

In Zhishi's biography, Daoxuan mainly focuses on two incidents. First is Zhishi's censure on the monk Faya 法雅, who coerced monks to take up military service to fight against the Turks.<sup>112</sup> In the seventh year of the Wude era (624), Faya participated in military activities in the north and recruited one thousand monks to form an army. Since the recruitment was imperially approved, no one dared to oppose Faya. Zhishi, who was twenty-one years old at the time, was deeply afraid that Faya's action might compromise the Dharma and wrote a letter to dissuade Faya. Faya was irritated by Zhishi's letter and sped up the preparation of his army. Zhishi thus criticized and beat Faya in front of the public, claiming he was vanquishing the demon (*xiangmo* 降魔).<sup>113</sup> Faya reported this to the emperor and had Zhishi arrested. Due to the intervention of some officials, Zhishi was granted a pardon and ordered to return to secular life as a punishment, while the one

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<sup>111</sup> In modern-day Xi'an 西安, Shannxi 陝西 Province.  
(<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000042193>)

<sup>112</sup> For a detailed study on this incident, see Chen, "A 'Villain-Monk' Brought down by a Villein-General: A Forgotten Page in Tang Monastic Warfare and State-Samgha Relations", 208–230.

<sup>113</sup> T2060.50.635a15–18.



thousand monks were released back to monastic life. Zhishi had no regrets about what he had done. Later, when Faya was sentenced to death due to his wrongdoing, Zhishi received imperial permission to reenter monastic life. In his study, Jinhua Chen points out that the confrontation between Zhishi and Faya reflects the medieval Chinese saṃgha's inevitable engagement in warfare and the inconsistent attitudes of the saṃgha towards violence.<sup>114</sup>

The second incident led to Zhishi's death. In the eleventh year of the Zhenguan era (637), Emperor Taizong decreed that Daoist clergy should take precedence over Buddhist monks and nuns in all ceremonies and rankings. Zhishi, together with Fachang 法常 (567–645) and nine other eminent monks, presented a memorial to argue that Daoists followed the Yellow Turbans rather than Laozi, and practiced evil trickery. Yet Taizong had already made up his mind and sent an official to announce that whoever disobeyed the imperial decree would face punishment. All the other monks silenced themselves except Zhishi, who was beaten with a heavy stick as punishment and later passed away at Zongchi Monastery at age thirty-eight due to his wounds and subsequent sickness.<sup>115</sup> For the first time in the whole *hufa* section, we see the death of a monk as a direct result of imperial court punishment.

At the end of Zhishi's biography, Daoxuan attaches two supplementary biographies of the monk Puying 普應 (dates unknown) and his teacher Faxing 法行 (dates unknown) from the Zongchi Monastery 摠持寺. Faxing protected and repaired pagodas and temples

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<sup>114</sup> Chen, "A 'Villain-Monk' Brought down by a Villein-General", 208.

<sup>115</sup> Weinstein has a study of the monks' reaction to Taizong's decree of 637, including Zhishi and another monk Falin, whom I discuss later in this chapter. See: Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 16–17.

whenever he saw one in poor condition, and decorated them with paintings. Puying presented two volumes of *Poxie lun* 破邪論 (Treatises on Destruction of Heresies) and several other memorials against the Grand Astrologer 太史令 Fu Yi 傅奕 (555–641), who had previously trained as a Daoist.<sup>116</sup> Puying also provided free food to relieve people from famine during the beginning of the Wude era when all the monasteries were running out of food.

6. The Tang 唐 monk Shi Hongzhi 釋弘智 (595–655) of the Zhixiang Monastery 至相寺 of Mount Zhongnan 終南山 (T2060.50.642a17–643a9)

Shi Hongzhi's biography is a relatively short one in the second part of the *hufa* section. It is also not found in editions that predate the Southern Song Dynasty. In this biography, Daoxuan depicts the monk who had previously practiced Daoism but later promoted and protected Buddhism.

Shi Hongzhi's family secular name was Wan 萬, and he was a person of the Village of Shiping huaili 始平槐里鄉.<sup>117</sup> In the eleventh year of Daye 大業 era (615) of the Sui Dynasty, he was well known for his virtue among the local communities and tentatively became a Daoist. He entered Mount Zhongnan, fasting and practicing the method of ascending to the heavens, which resulted only in a weakened physical body and a scattered mind. Thus, Hongzhi went to the capital, where he met Master Hui 惠法師 of

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<sup>116</sup> For a study on the life of Fu Yi and his official positions, see page 37–40 in Arthur F. Wright, “Fu I and the Rejection of Buddhism,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 12, no. 1 (1951): 33–47.

<sup>117</sup> Shiping huaili is in modern-day Xianyang 咸陽.  
(<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000043253>)

Jingfa Monastery 靜法寺.<sup>118</sup> Master Hui taught Hongzhi to eat food for the maintenance of the physical body and to settle the mind as the true path.<sup>119</sup> Finally, in the first year of Yining 義寧 era (617–618), Hongzhi gave up his Daoist costume, and retreated to the mountains to practice.

Daoxuan notes that at the beginning of the Wude 武德 era (618), Buddhism and Daoism confronted each other. Hongzhi pleaded to be converted to Buddhism. He was allowed to enter the Buddhist community and stayed at Zhixiang Monastery, where he transmitted Buddhist teachings to the monastic and secular communities and provided food for recluses. He strictly followed monastic rules to regulate the community, providing a peaceful shelter for Buddhists. He gave teachings on *Huayan* 華嚴 (*Flower Ornament Sutra*), *Shelun* 攝論 (possibly an abbreviation of *She dasheng lun* 攝大乘論, *Mahāyāna saṃgraha-śāstra*), and so on.

In the biography, Daoxuan praises Hongzhi as the bodhisattva of protection in the age of the decline of the Dharma (*shudai kuanghu zhi kaishi* 叔代匡護之開士),<sup>120</sup> but the reason is not quite clear. There is no mention of any debate or polemics conducted by Hongzhi. His monastic activities, including regulating the saṃgha, giving teachings on Buddhist scriptures, and providing food for the communities, are common in many of the

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<sup>118</sup> The dates of birth and death of Master Hui are unknown. There was an eminent monk Huihai 慧海 from the Jingfa Monastery, but he passed away in 606 and thus could not be the same Master Hui in this biography. (T2060.50.509c23–510c26)

<sup>119</sup> Christopher Jensen reminds me that this note could parallel an episode in the traditional Buddha's biography, in which the Buddha ended the unbearable fast and received milk-rice from the cowherd chief's daughter. See Charles Willemsen, *Buddhacarita: in praise of Buddha's acts* (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2009), 89–90.

<sup>120</sup> T2060.50.642b4–5.

biographies in the XGSZ. The main reason that Daoxuan categorizes Hongzhi in the *hufa* section is probably because Hongzhi's experience could be proof of the superiority and influence of Buddhism over Daoism.

7. The Tang 唐 monk Shi Falin 釋法琳 (571–640) of the Longtian Temple 龍田寺 of Mount Zhongnan (T2060.50.636b23)

Shi Falin's secular family name was Chen 陳, and he was from the Yinchuan 潁川 area.<sup>121</sup> He was born two or three years before the anti-Buddhist persecution of the Northern Zhou. He is one of the most famous monks in the early Tang period for his polemical debates and refutations, which he mounted against Daoists and Emperor Taizong of Tang. His biography and his writings have been studied by contemporary scholars, especially by Thomas Jülch, whose monograph demonstrates Falin's arguments through historical and biographical texts, and provides an annotated translation of Falin's apologetic writings.<sup>122</sup> Therefore, I do not feel it necessary to go into Falin's arguments and apologetics in detail.

In the biography, Daoxuan presents a rather short depiction of Falin's early experience, with the major part of the biography dedicated to Falin's refutations of anti-Buddhist petitions submitted by various Daoists. Falin became a Daoist for about one

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<sup>121</sup> Modern-day Xuchang 許昌, Henan 河南 Province.

(<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000024832>)

<sup>122</sup> Thomas Jülch, *Bodhisattva der Apologetik: die Mission des buddhistischen Tang-Mönchs Falin*, 3 vols. (Munich: Herbert Utz Verlag, 2013). For a shorter study in English, see Thomas Jülch, "In Defense of the Saṃgha: The Buddhist Apologetic Mission of the Early Tang Monk Falin," in *The Middle Kingdom and the Dharma Wheel: Aspects of the Relationship Between the Buddhist Saṃgha and the State in Chinese History* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 18–93.

year during 617 and 618, the transition between Sui and Tang dynasties, describing him as “mastering the School of Confucianism (Ru 儒) on the outside, and studying Daoist (Dan 聃) techniques on the inside” (*waitong rumen, neixi danshu* 外統儒門，內希聃術).<sup>123</sup>

This might be the reason that Falin could base his argument on Confucianism and Daoism. In the fourth year of the Wude era (621), Fu Yi presented his memorial for abolishing Buddhism, listing eleven accusations of damage that Buddhism caused to the state and the family. Falin explicitly rebuked Fu Yi’s memorial and wrote the *Poxie lun* 破邪論 (Treatises on Destruction of Heresies). As seen previously in Zhishi’s biography, a monk named Puying also presented an apologetic writing titled *Poxie lun* against Fu Yi. Jülch points out that the *Poxie lun* written by Puying is lost, and Falin disputed Fu Yi on the basis of Daoist and Confucian sources because he was dissatisfied with the content in those previous arguments, given that they based their counter-argumentation on Buddhist sources.<sup>124</sup> In the biography, Daoxuan quotes several parts from the main text of the *Poxie lun*, and rearranges them into a continuous text.<sup>125</sup> In the texts, Falin compares Buddhism with Daoism and Confucianism, traces the history of Saṃgha-State relationship in China, praises eminent monks of the past, and encourages Emperor Gaozu to protect the saṃgha.

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<sup>123</sup> T2060.50.636c5. *Ru* 儒 is a common name of Confucianism, and *Dan* 聃 is said to be the given name of Laozi. *Men* 門 is one of the formal ways of referring to a school of thought, while *shu* 術 degrades the authenticity of Daoism. Overall, this sentence is probably not a polite way of referring to Daoism.

<sup>124</sup> Jülch, “In Defense of the Saṃgha”, 29.

<sup>125</sup> Jülch categorizes the *Poxie lun* into six independent texts. See Jülch, “In Defense of the Saṃgha”, 30. The quotation Daoxuan refers to in XGSZ: T2060.50.637a16–c9 is from T2109.52.486c17–487b8 (“莊周云 ... 名僧間出”), T2109.52.487c14–15 (“或以神力救世 ... 或通感適化”) and T2109.52.488a12–27 (“及白足臨刃不傷 ... 正當付囑”).

Weinstein points out that Fu Yi's memorial caused debates in the imperial court, where officials were unable to reach any agreement, and Emperor Gaozu issued an imperial decree in the ninth year of Wude era (626) to chastise both Buddhism and Daoism.<sup>126</sup> Daoxuan indicates in the biography that Emperor Gaozu did not follow Fu Yi's petition because of Falin's efforts.<sup>127</sup>

Falin was one of the most prominent monks who protested against the emperor's pro-Daoist edicts in Chang'an. Another polemic of his, *Bianzhen lun* 辯正論 (Treatise Discussing the Correct), was a response against the Daoists Li Zhongqing 李仲卿 and Liu Jinxi 劉進喜.<sup>128</sup> In the thirteenth year of the Zhenguan era (639), the Daoist Qin Shiyong 秦世英 slandered Falin out of jealousy, reporting that Falin denigrated the imperial lineage by criticizing Daoism. Falin was arrested and expelled to Yi Prefecture. He passed away on the way there due to sickness.

Similar to Zhishi, Falin's death was associated with the court punishment and his was initially sentenced to death. Daoxuan did not make a clear connection between Zhishi and Falin, but Weinstein points out that Falin had also participated in the protest against Emperor Taizong's decree of 637 which gave priority to Daoism over Buddhism, and that

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<sup>126</sup> Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 8.

<sup>127</sup> T2060.50.637c16–17: 故奕奏狀因之致寢，遂得釋門重敵，琳寔其功。

<sup>128</sup> Li Zhongqing's and Liu Jinxi's dates of birth and death are unknown. Both were born before or during the Sui Dynasty. Liu Jinxi had given lectures on *Laozi* to the Emperor Gaozu of Tang (reign. 618–626). Thomas Jülch has a detailed study of Falin with a complete translation of the *Poxie lun* and a translation of sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 of the *Bianzheng lun* in German. See Thomas Jülch, *Die apologetischen Schriften des buddhistischen Tang-Mönchs Falin* (München: Herbert Utz Verlag, 2011). For Jülch's English study on Falin and the state-saṃgha relationship in the early Tang dynasty, see Jülch, "In Defense of the Saṃgha", 18–93.

caused him hostility among Daoists and the emperor.<sup>129</sup> In both Zhishi's and Falin's biographies, we see direct and violent conflicts between the monks and Emperor Taizong.

8. The Tang 唐 monk Shi Daohui 釋道會 (circa. 583–652) of Shengzhong Monastery 聖種寺, Mei Prefecture 眉州<sup>130</sup> (T2060.50.642b16–643a9)

Shi Daohui's family name was Shi 史, and he was a person of Jianwei 犍爲 in Wuyang 武陽.<sup>131</sup> He originally renounced the household at Yanyuan Monastery 嚴遠寺 in Yi Prefecture 益州. In order to pursue higher knowledge, Daohui went to the capital for about ten years, broadly studying scriptures, commentaries, and historical texts. Due to the political turmoil, he could not promote the teaching when he returned to Yi Prefecture. When the Tang Dynasty was established, the imperial court planned to conquer the Ba-Shu 巴蜀 area.<sup>132</sup> Daohui appealed to the officials in charge to let him lead his disciples to travel and deliver the imperial message. Daohui was probably wishing to use the diplomatic mission as a chance to spread Buddhism, but his appeal was delayed and could not be realized.

At that time, a Daoist named Song Ji 宋冀 established a new Daoist temple in Longshan County 隆山縣<sup>133</sup> and recruited thirty people. Daohui reported this to the local

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<sup>129</sup> Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 17.

<sup>130</sup> In modern-day Meishan 眉山, Sichuan 四川 Province.

(<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000036573>)

<sup>131</sup> Jianwei is in modern-day Sichuan. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000036703>)

<sup>132</sup> Ba-Shu is in modern-day Sichuan. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000036703>)

<sup>133</sup> Longshan County was established during the Sui Dynasty, in modern-day Meishan area.

(<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000036628>)

official Duan Lun 段倫, changing the Daoist monastery into a Buddhist monastery. The people living in there were all Daoists and were not willing to abide by this policy. Coincidentally, the pacification commissioner (*anfu dashi* 安撫大使) Li Xiyu 李襲譽 (passed away after 641) was patrolling in the same area. Daohui informed Li Xiyu, who later brought soldiers to beat drums and to drive out the Daoist followers. When Daoists were complaining among the streets, Daohui stated that although he could not convert all the Daoist temples under the heaven into Buddhist monasteries, he would not allow this specific one to be taken. Daoxuan notes that the temple that Daohui established still existed at his time.

After Emperor Gaozu passed away, Daohui went to the capital to mourn, and stayed to compile the *Bianzhen lun* 辯正論 (Treatise Discussing the Correct) together with Falin. Later, when Master Huigao 慧高 (547–633) was falsely accused, Daohui investigated the case and was thus captured. He expounded Buddhist scriptures to others in the jail. When the winter came, Daohui wrote a letter to the Inexhaustible Storehouse (*wujin zang* 無盡藏),<sup>134</sup> asking for winter clothes and shoes to protect the other monks in the jail. When Daohui was released and returned back to Yi Prefecture, eminent monks among the capital area all went to see him off.

Daohui's biography is not in the earlier editions of XGSZ, and its pattern of narrative fits the other ones that were absent from earlier editions to a certain degree.

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<sup>134</sup> This might refer to the temple that related to Sanjie jiao 三階教 (Three Stages Teaching) movement. The headquarters of the movement was the Huadu Monastery 化度寺, a charitable lending institution. (Jamie Hubbard: <http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E7%84%A1%E7%9B%A1%E8%97%8F>)



Although Daohui had conflicts against Daoists, the incident happened at the local level rather than the imperial court. Although Daohui had participated in Falin's criticism of Daoists, there is no direct argument between him and the emperor being recorded in the biography. Daohui's activities, including his protection of other monks in the jail, match the tropes in other biographies in the *hufa* section. Yet the lack of direct conflicts at the imperial level might be the reason for Daoxuan to not include this biography in his early editorial stage.

9. The Tang 唐 monk Shi Zhiqin 釋智勤 (586–659) of the Xingguo Monastery 興國寺 of Deng Prefecture 鄧州<sup>135</sup> (T2060.50.643a10–b22)

Shi Zhiqin's family name was Zhu 朱. He entered the monastery during the Renshou 仁壽 era (601–604) of the Sui when the Great Xingguo Monastery 大興國寺 was built. From an early age, Zhiqin kept the protection of the Dharma in his mind. He was blessed no matter what he did. When Zhiqin's mother was sick, he recited the name of Guanyin for her, and all the tree leaves in the backyard manifested the image of the Buddha. The whole family witnessed the phenomenon, and his mother soon recovered. During the military and social turmoil around the end of the Sui Dynasty, Zhiqin stayed to guard the Great Xingguo Monastery by himself. None of the raiders dared to break into the monastery, and all the scriptures and statues were safe. At another time, Zhiqin wore secular clothes temporarily to hide from the soldiers. When he was surrounded by raiders

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<sup>135</sup> Deng Prefecture is in modern-day southern part of Henan 河南 Province.

who were about to kill him, he heard a voice from the sky, telling him to take off the secular clothes. When Zhiqin removed his outer garment and showed his Buddhist robe, the raiders all paid homage to him.

Later, some other supernatural and miraculous responses (*ganying* 感應) occurred when Zhiqin retreated to the northern mountains. During his stay in the mountains, Zhiqin often heard the sound of bells from the valley and discovered a magnificent temple. After he went to pay homage a few times, the temple disappeared. On another occasion, Zhiqin was almost running out of food. Along the path where he walked, there were piles of soil bumping up. The piles of soil rebounded every time when Zhiqin shovelled them. Later, grains appeared from the soil. When Zhiqin dug beneath the pile, he found more than twenty *shuo* 碩<sup>136</sup> of grains, which were larger than ordinary grain. When the Buddhadharma in Deng Prefecture was declining, local monastics and laypeople approached the mountain and invited Zhiqin to protect the Dharma. At the time, Zhiqin experienced (*gan* 感) a dream and decided to come out of the mountains.<sup>137</sup> Later, on his way out of the mountains, the sky suddenly became dark and Zhiqin could not find his way. Two miraculous fire torches appeared to illuminate the road and guide him to the village. Villagers who saw the scene were all astonished.

The last part of Zhiqin's biography is also full of astounding accounts. During the Yonghui 永徽 era (650–655), Zhiqin remained within his chamber without going outside.

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<sup>136</sup> *Shuo* is an ancient Chinese unit of measurement of grain. One *shuo* is close to 100 liters.

<sup>137</sup> Christopher Jensen discusses Zhiqin's emergence from seclusion after the dream, and he translates the verb *gan* as "experiencing". See Christopher Jon Jensen, "Dreaming Betwixt and Between: Oneiric Narratives in Huijiao and Daoxuan's 'Biographies of Eminent Monks'" (PhD. Dissertation, McMaster University, 2018), 75–76.

Whenever he recited the sutras, one divine being would manifest to listen to him. In the fourth year of Xianqing (659) 顯慶 era, Zhiqin rejected the government order assigning him to Ci'en Monastery 慈恩寺 in the capital. On the fourteenth day of the fifth month of the fifth year of Xianqing era (June 27<sup>th</sup>, 660), Zhiqin passed away. One day before he passed away, tree branches inside the monastery all withered and fell apart, and animals and birds lamented among the monastery buildings. On the morning of the sixteenth day, Zhiqin saw the divine being who used to come and listen to his recitation. While the deity paid homage to Zhiqin, Zhiqin told him to stop doing so because other people could not see him. Zhiqin told his disciples to recite the *Dapin jing* 大品經 (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*), and passed away when the chapter on rebirth was finished. His body did not change colour for several days and an extraordinary perfume diffused through the monastery.

Shi Zhiqin's biography is also not in the early editions of XGSZ. It is clear that Daoxuan (or some later editors) compiled this biography in a later time because XGSZ was officially finished in the nineteenth year of Zhenguan era (645), before Zhiqin passed away.

In the biography, Daoxuan mainly depicts miracles as a proof of Zhiqin's religious faith and achievement. There are no religious debates nor monk-emperor conflicts, and all the events happened at local level. Another similar biography in the second part of the *hufa* section is about the monk Fatong of Xi Prefecture (modern-day Shanxi Province). During Daoxuan's travels in the early Zhenguan era for collecting biographical materials,

he mainly visited areas in modern-day Shanxi 山西, Hebei 河北, and Henan 河南.<sup>138</sup> He might have collected Zhiqin's stories at that time but chose not to include it in the XGSZ for it does not match his early criteria of *hufa*.

10. The Tang 唐 State of Silla 新羅國 great monk superintendent Shi Cizang 釋慈藏<sup>139</sup>  
(T2060.50.639a8–640a8)

Shi Cizang's family name was Kim 金, and he was from Silla. His ancestors were descendants of the Sam Han 三韓 (Ma Han 馬韓, Jin Han 辰韓, and Byeon Han 卞韓).<sup>140</sup> Cizang's father's name was Wulin (Ko: Murim) and was the high official in Jinhan. Hoping to have descendants, Wulin prayed to the Buddha and had one thousand Guanyin statues made. After that, Cizang's mother had a dream of a star falling into her bosom and got pregnant. On the eighth day of the fourth month, she gave birth to Cizang. Both religious and lay celebrated it as an auspicious birth.<sup>141</sup> The biography keeps on describing Cizang's wisdom and his loathing of secular life.<sup>142</sup> Cizang renounced the

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<sup>138</sup> Fujiyoshi Masumi 藤善真澄, *Dōsen den no kenkyū* 道宣伝の研究 (A Study of the life of Daoxuan), 107.

<sup>139</sup> Here I spell Cizang's name following the Chinese romanization. As a native Korean, Cizang is Romanized as Jajang in Korean.

<sup>140</sup> Sam Han refers to the three Han of the southern part of the Korean peninsula. It was also used as a general name for the Korean Peninsula. (Charles Muller: <http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E4%B8%89%E9%9F%93>)

<sup>141</sup> Christopher Jensen has translated the first part of this biography. I have referred to his translation in this part. See: Jensen, "Dreaming Betwixt and Between.", 281–282.

<sup>142</sup> Christopher Jensen suggests that the tropes of auspicious birth and "precociously Buddhist child" are very common in XGSZ and familiar to both Buddhist and non-Buddhist Chinese readers at the time. Jensen, "Dreaming Betwixt and Between", 282–283.

householder's life after his parents passed away, living among the mountains and refusing invitations from the imperial court.

In the twelfth year of Zhengguan era (628), Cizang came to the Tang capital city with about ten disciples, and lived at Shengguang separate chapel 勝光別院. He converted a thief who came to steal treasure from the temple, and healed a patient who was born blind. Thousands of people took refuge under him in one day due to his fame. Cizang enjoyed tranquility and thus left the capital city to live among the Zhongnan mountains for several years. In the seventeenth year of Zhengguan era (633), the state of Jinhan sent an envoy to invite Cizang back to teach Buddhism. The imperial court of Jinhan ordered monasteries and branch temples built for Cizang. Cizang regulated the Buddhist communities, teaching them monastic discipline and Buddhist scriptures.

At the end of his record, Daoxuan acclaims Cizang as the Dharma protector bodhisattva (*hufa pusa* 護法菩薩), a title that is granted only to Cizang in the whole *hufa* section, but to several monks in other chapters in the XGSZ (I have a discussion on those monks in Chapter Four). Cizang's biography is distinguishable among all the previous biographies because there was no confrontation between him and any Daoist or other non-Buddhist opponents. In both Silla and Tang, Cizang had received royal patronage to proselytize Buddhism almost without any obstacle.

Many Korean monks were sent to or came to China to study Buddhism during the Sui-Tang period, and Korean Buddhism had a close relationship with Tang Buddhism, especially during the late seventh century due to the Silla-Tang alliance during the Silla-

Tang War.<sup>143</sup> Among those monks, scholars associate Cizang with the *Vinaya* School.<sup>144</sup> At the end of Cizang's biography, Daoxuan keeps a supplementary biography of the Silla monk Yuansheng (Kor. Wonseung) 圓勝 (unknown dates), who was also originally from Jinhan and came to the capital area during the beginning of the Zhenguan era. Yuansheng is obviously also a follower of the *Vinaya* School, for Daoxuan compares him with Cizang, noting that he broadly taught the *vinaya* after he went back to Silla and held the protection of the Dharma as his intention (*hufa weixin* 護法為心).<sup>145</sup>

The biographies of Cizang and Yuansheng reflect Daoxuan's vision of the protection of the Dharma as a Buddhist tradition beyond geographic and ethnic boundaries, as well as the significance of observing the *vinaya* in order to protect the Dharma. At the end of his account, Daoxuan indicates that while previous monks from Silla acquired only scriptural teachings but ignored moral discipline, nowadays those monks could study all the three disciplines (*śīla*, *samādhi*, and *prajñā*; or *vinaya*, *sūtras*, and *śāstras*). According to Daoxuan, that is the demonstration of penetrating the Dharma and protecting the Dharma.

At the end of the biography, Daoxuan declares that Buddhism in his generation was “contaminated in the centre while being pure on the frontier” (*zhongzhuo bianqing* 中濁

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<sup>143</sup> Litian Fang, *Chinese Buddhism and Traditional Culture* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2019), 212.

<sup>144</sup> Fang, *Chinese Buddhism and Traditional Culture*, 213.

<sup>145</sup> T2060.50.640a4. Here I interpret the word *xin* 心 as the initial arousal of the intention to achieve enlightenment (*chufaxin* 初發心), which is probably associated with the path of bodhisattva. In Shi Sengchou's 釋僧稠 biography in the XGSZ, Sengchou mentioned that *hufa weixin* is the bodhisattva vow (T2060.50.554b9–10: 稠曰：菩薩弘誓，護法為心). Besides in Yuansheng's and Sengchou's biographies, the term *hufa weixin* also appears in the biography of Shi Huicheng of the *hufa* section, in which Daoxuan describes Huicheng as *hufa weixin* (T2060.50.634c1).

邊清).<sup>146</sup> In his study on Cizang, Jensen suggests that Daoxuan's account of Cizang casts the Korean monk into a Chinese mode and the narrative could be used to re-centre Buddhism as a Chinese religion from its Indian origin.<sup>147</sup> By sinicising Cizang into the Chinese Buddhist frame and biography, Daoxuan depicts not only a Buddhist exemplar, but also an ideal Buddhist state with supreme Buddhist masters, dedicated imperial patronage, and enthusiastic disciples and followers.

### Conclusion

Half of the biographies in the second part of *hufa* section in the *Taishō* version were not included in the early editions of XGSZ. Therefore, I discuss them separately in this conclusion. In those biographies which were already in the early editions of XGSZ, we could see the patterns of narrative continue from the first volume to the second volume: Daoism remained as the major rival of Buddhism, and religious debates and conflicts happened mainly in the capital city and at the imperial court level. The difference is we see less direct conflict between Buddhists and Daoists, but more between monks and emperors. In those biographies which were not in the early editions of XGSZ, the amount of Buddhist-Daoists conflicts, imperial decree, emperor, and elite monks decreases, while miraculous signs and local events appear more frequently.

### Monks, Emperors, and Daoists

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<sup>146</sup> T2060.50.640a8.

<sup>147</sup> Jensen, "Dreaming Betwixt and Between", 281–283. Janine Nicol also argues the centre in Daoxuan's writing was India and the borderlands were China. See: Janine Nicol, "Daoxuan (c. 596-667) and the Creation of a Buddhist Sacred Geography of China: An Examination of the *Shijia Fangzhi* 釋迦方志" (PhD. Dissertation, SOAS, University of London, 2016), 248.

Monks who were in the early edition of *hufa* section are Shi Mingshan, Shi Huichen, Shi Zhishi, Shi Falin, and Shi Cizang.<sup>148</sup> In their biographies, Daoists are still presented as rivals of Buddhists. Yet direct conflict between monks and emperors, instead of monks and Daoists, moves onto the main stage. Examples include Mingshan versus Emperor Yang of the Sui, Huichen versus Emperor Gaozu of the Tang, Zhishi versus Emperor Taizong of the Tang, and Falin versus the Tang emperors Gaozu and Taizong. We also see severe punishment and death of monks resulting from their resistance to imperial decrees. Although there was no large-scale anti-Buddhist persecution in the early Tang time, there is a clear tension between elite monks and emperors in those biographies.

Based on writing in this volume of the *hufa* section, it was not rare to see monks, such as Zhiman (in Tanxuan's biography) and Faya (in Zhishi's biography), gain imperial favor and patronage through their involvement with or promotion of military service. Daoxuan and other leading Buddhists had to be very cautious about the relationship between the Buddhist monastic community and the state. Yet Daoxuan's attitude towards military service also is inconsistent in the XGSZ. While Faya, who failed to bring imperial patronage to the sangha, was labeled as "evil" and "political underdogs,"<sup>149</sup> monks like Zhiman, who was successful in both serving the court and proselytizing Buddhist teachings, is regarded as an exemplar by Daoxuan in the XGSZ.

### **Daoxuan, *hufa*, and miracles**

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<sup>148</sup> As I have discussed earlier, Cizang's biography is an exception when I talk about the common tropes in the *hufa* section.

<sup>149</sup> Chen, "A 'Villain-Monk' Brought down by a Villein-General", 222.



Monks who were included in the later editions of *hufa* section are Shi Tanxuan, Shi Fatong, Shi Hongzhi, Shi Daohui, and Shi Zhiqin. Their biographies may have been included by later editors from the *Hou xu gaoseng zhuan* 後續高僧傳 (Later Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks).

If Daoxuan did indeed author those biographies, when did he compile them? Why were they not in the early editions of XGSZ? Early in the first year of the Zhenguan era (627), Daoxuan started his travels among various prefectures to study and promote Buddhism, as well as to collect information for XGSZ. For example, in Fatong's biography, Daoxuan indicates that he paid a visit to Fatong's son, who was also a monk in Xi Prefecture, during the first year of Zhenguan era. In Tanxuan's biography, Daoxuan also describes his visit to Tanxuan's temple in Bing Prefecture during the beginning of Zhenguan era. That is to say, Daoxuan had collected Fatong's and Tanxuan's biographical information but did not include them in the original edition of XGSZ.

Furthermore, previous studies suggest that Daoxuan may have travelled around the Sichuan area between 652 and 655 for additional information to compile the *Hou xu gaoseng zhuan* and *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantonglu* 集神州三寶感通錄 (Record of Miraculous Responses to the Three Jewels in China).<sup>150</sup> Therefore, Daoxuan might have compiled some additional biographies, such as Daohui's, during his travels in Sichuan area.

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<sup>150</sup> Chen Jinyuan 陈瑾渊, "Xu gaoseng zhuan yanjiu 《续高僧传》研究 (Studies on 'Xu gaoseng zhuan')" (Ph.D. dissertation, Fudan University, 2012), 145.

Compared to the biographies which were included in the early editions, we see more explicit and long depictions of astonishing phenomena and miracles, especially in Fatong's and Zhiqin's biographies. Most of Daoxuan's works that were associated with miraculous response were finished in his later years. For instance, the *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantonglu* was finished in 664 when Daoxuan was sixty-nine years old. The *Lüxiang gantong zhuan* 律相感通傳 (Narrative of Miraculous Response on Monastic Discipline) was finished in the second year of Qianfeng 乾封 (667) era. Both the *Guanzhong chuangli jietan tu jing* 關中創立戒壇圖經 (Illustrated Scripture on the Precepts Platform Established in Guanzhong) and *Zhongtianzhu sheweiguo zhihuansi tujing* 中天竺舍衛國祇洹寺圖經 (Illustrated Sūtra of the Jetavana Monastery in the Kingdom of Śrāvastī) were finished in 667 before Daoxuan passed away and were full of supernatural phenomena. If Fatong's and Zhiqing's biographies were included in the *hufa* section in the *Hou xu gaoseng zhuan* by Daoxuan, it is possible that Daoxuan regarded divine power and miraculous signs as means of protecting the Dharma later in his life due to his increased interest in miraculous response.

The map on the next page demonstrates the geographical distribution of the monks discussed in this chapter. I locate them based on the title of their biographies, which indicates their major monastic affiliations. Geographically speaking, most of the monks discussed in this chapter were from the northern region. Among the five monks whose biographies were not in the early editions, four were from the local level and were not affiliated with monasteries in the political centre.



Map.2 Geographical distribution of monks in the second volume of hufa section. Source for original map: [https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num\\_car=11572&lang=en](https://d-maps.com/carte.php?num_car=11572&lang=en).

1. Tanxuan; 2. Fatong; 3. Mingshan; 4. Huicheng; 5. Zhishi; 6. Hongzhi; 7. Falin; 8. Daohui; 9. Zhiqin; 10. Cizang. Among them, the monks numbered 1, 2, 6, 8, and 9 are not in the earlier editions of XGSZ

Chart 2. Monks in the second volume of *hufa* section

(B = Buddhist/Buddhism, D = Daoist/Daoism, G = Government (including emperors and/or officials), C = Confucianism)

No.	Name	Dynasty	Monastery Affiliations	Direct Conflict or Interaction			Education		
				B	D	G	B	D	C
1	Shi Tanxuan 釋曇選 (531–625)	Tang 唐	Xingguo Monastery 興國寺	√		√	√		
2	釋法通 Shi Fatong (died before 627)	Tang 唐	<i>śramaṇa</i> , Tonghua Monastery 通化寺			√	√		
3	Shi Mingshan 釋明瞻 (559–628)	Tang 唐	Daji Monastery 大集寺, Fazang Monastery 法藏寺, Great Xingshan Monastery 大興善寺, Zhiju Monastery 智炬寺			√	√		√
4	Shi Huichen 釋慧乘 (555–630)	Tang 唐	Zhuangyan Monastery 莊嚴寺, Shengguang Monastery 勝光寺	√		√	√		√
5	Shi Zhishi 釋智實 (601–638)	Tang 唐	Great Zongchi Temple 大總持寺	√			√		
6	Shi Hongzhi 釋弘智 (595–655)	Tang 唐	Jingfa Monastery 靜法寺, Zhixiang Monastery 至相寺				√	√	
7	Shi Falin 釋法琳 (571–640)	Tang 唐	Longtian Monastery 龍田寺			√	√	√	√
8	Shi Daohui 釋道會 (circa. 583–652)	Tang 唐	Yanyuan Monastery 嚴遠寺, Shengzhong Monastery 聖種寺		√	√	√		
9	Shi Zhiqin 釋智勤 (586–659)	Tang 唐	Great Xingguo Monastery 大興國寺						
10	Shi Cizang 釋慈藏 (n.d.)	Tang 唐	Shengguang sub-monastery 勝光別院, Wangfeng Monastery 王芬寺(新羅)				√		√

## CHAPTER THREE

### Daoxuan's Evaluation of *hufa*

In this chapter, I provide an annotated translation of Daoxuan's evaluation (*lun* 論). In the evaluation, Daoxuan treats *hufa* as a Buddhist tradition through Buddhist history, and traces Buddhist figures temporally and geographically outside of China. Compared to the biographies in the *hufa* section, with which the real authorship is sometimes hard to judge, Daoxuan's evaluation could reflect his notion of *hufa* better.<sup>151</sup>

In the evaluation, Daoxuan advocates the merit of protecting the Dharma and elucidates the transmission of defense of the Dharma as a Buddhist tradition, both chronologically and geographically. He treats the safeguarding of the Dharma as a continued duty of Buddhists, extending from the Buddha's previous life, to the Buddha's time, and into the future. The evaluation consists of three major parts: recollecting *hufa* actions since the Buddha's time to the post-nirvāṇa age outside of China, re-evaluating and recategorizing the *hufa* activities in China from previous biographies, and honoring Dharma-protecting monks recorded in the XGSZ.

#### Traditions of *hufa* outside of China

In Daoxuan's writing, *hufa* is a pursuit that transcends geographic boundaries. The first part of Daoxuan's evaluation covers renowned Buddhist sites outside of China, such as the Vulture Peak, Jambudvīpa, Mount Cock's Foot, Jetavana Park, and the Cave of

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<sup>151</sup> Since Daoxuan collected materials from various sources and compiled them into the biographies, words and phrases in the narratives might or might not be his original words.

Asura. By locating those sacred sites, Daoxuan illustrates an image of the Buddha realm that is guarded by Dharma protectors in all directions. Those former Dharma protectors were exemplars of Chinese Buddhists. For Daoxuan, *hufa* is beyond his contemporary political struggle and religious persecution in China, and should be carried on by future generations as a Buddhist tradition.

Daoxuan starts by describing various *hufa* roles played by the Buddha in his past lives, such as a wheel-turning king or a Dharma preacher [T2060.50.640a9]. He explains that no matter whether the Buddha was ruling the world or guiding living beings, Dharma is the fundamental principle. Daoxuan offers two particular stories of the Buddha when he was a king in the past. The first case is the King Bhavadatta (Youde 有德) from the *Nirvāṇa Sutra*, who took up arms and sacrificed his own life to protect the Dharma preacher Buddhadatta by fighting against evil monks. As karmic retribution, Bhavadatta attained numerous merits and was reborn in the land of the Buddha Akṣobhya.<sup>152</sup> The second case is from the beginning of the “Devadatta Chapter” in the *Lotus Sutra*. In the story, the Buddha claims that he was a king immeasurable *kalpas* ago, but that he abandoned his kingdoms and throne, beating a drum to proclaim that he would be a servant to whosoever could teach him the great teaching of Mahāyāna.<sup>153</sup> In both stories, the Buddha gave up his life or throne as a king for the sake of the Dharma. It seems as if, through those examples, Daoxuan is encouraging support and protection of Buddhism from rulers, with the Buddha himself providing an exemplar of ideal Buddhist kingship.

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<sup>152</sup> Blum, *The Nirvāṇa Sutra (Mahāparinirvāṇa-Sūtra)*, 95ff.

<sup>153</sup> Kumārajīva, *The Lotus Sutra*, trans. Tsugunari Kubo and Akira Yuyama (Berkeley, Calif.: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2007), 179ff.

Daoxuan then identifies various Buddhist figures who protected the Dharma after the Buddha's *nirvāṇa* and before Maitreya's descending to the world as the buddha of the future [T2060.50.640a18]. Many of those figures are not bodhisattvas but *śrāvakas*, such as the nine hundred million who have attained the stage of "no more training is required" (*jiuyi wuxue* 九億無學) and five hundred disciples (*wubai menxue* 五百門學) who followed the Buddha and assembled at the First Council after the Buddha passed away. Although *arhats* are regarded as those who have attained *nirvāṇa* and would not enter the cycle of samsara anymore, Daoxuan refers to the *Śāstra On Entering the Great Vehicle* and emphasizes that the *arhats*, such Piṇḍola and Rāhula, remain in the world to ensure the transmission of the correct teachings after the Buddha entered *nirvāṇa*. Bong Seok Joo has pointed out that, although Xuanzang 玄奘 (600–664) translated the scripture of the living sixteen *arhats* and their duties of protecting the Dharma after the Buddha attained *nirvāṇa*, the actual *arhat*-worship movement did not start until the tenth century.<sup>154</sup> Daoxuan's discussion suggests that not only he but his contemporary Buddhists were familiar with those *arhats* and related scriptures. Besides the *śrāvakas* and *arhats*, Daoxuan also summarizes the acts of Venerable Kāśyapa, Bodhisattva Sāramati, Maudgalyāyana, and Punya as protectors of the Dharma. None of those figures are laypeople.

### ***Hufa* and Buddhism in the earlier time**

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<sup>154</sup> Ryan Bongseok Joo, "The Ritual of Arhat Invitation during the Song Dynasty: Why Did Mahāyānists Venerate the Arhat?" *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 30, no. 1–2 (October 19, 2009): 84–85.

After tracing the tradition of *hufa* outside of China, Daoxuan moves on to those Buddhists in China whose lives had been recorded in previous biographies, especially Huijiao's *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 (Biographies of Eminent Monks) [T2060.50.640b4]. *Hufa* is a new biographic category added by Daoxuan, and he needs to convince his readers that *hufa* is a long-lasting Buddhist activity in China by re-evaluating the pioneers of early Chinese Buddhism and interpreting their activities as protection of the Dharma.

Daoxuan starts this history of Chinese Buddhism by broaching Kāśyapa Mātāṅga 迦葉摩騰 (?–circa.73) and Dharmaratna 竺法蘭 (?–circa.105), who were invited to China by Emperor Ming during the Han Dynasty and were recorded in the category of *yijing* 譯經 (translators of scriptures) in *Gaoseng zhuan*. While Huijiao categorizes those two monks as translators, Daoxuan argues that both the foundation of translation and the premise of proselytization is faith. To Daoxuan, the most significant and fundamental contribution of Kāśyapa Mātāṅga and Dharmaratna was not translating the scriptures but rectifying the heterodox (*xie* 邪) and protecting the true Dharma. Daoxuan then quotes the story of how Daoists Fei Shucan 費叔才 and Zhu Xin 褚信 (both of whom were Daoists during the time of Emperor Ming (28–75) of the Han Dynasty) failed in the contest against Kāśyapa Mātāṅga, claiming that the flourishing of the Buddha Dharma commenced at that time.

After discussing the two non-Chinese monks, Daoxuan turns to Chinese monks, praising both Shi Daorong 釋道融 (circa. 356–455) and Shi Tanshi 釋曇始 (circa. 395–452) as exemplars of *hufa*. Shi Daorong is categorized as an exegete of righteousness in



Huijiao's *Gaoseng zhuan*, yet Daoxuan highlights Daorong's debate against a Brahmin from Sri Lanka as an action that can be defined as *hufa*. Shi Tanshi's biography is in the category of *shenyi* 神異 (divine anomaly) in the *Gaoseng zhuan*, but Daoxuan emphasizes Tanshi's contribution to stopping the anti-Buddhist persecution of Emperor Taiwu of the Northern Wei. Similar to his reinterpretation of Kāśyapa Mātāṅga and Dharmaratna, Daoxuan re-evaluates the two monks as Dharma protectors by highlighting their relevant activities, to prove that *hufa* has been a Buddhist vocation and virtue in China for a long time.

### ***Hufa in the XGSZ***

After summarizing previous generations, Daoxuan moves to the *hufa* monks in his compilation [T2060.50.640b18]. First, he compares policies on Buddhism between Northern Qi Dynasty and Northern Zhou Dynasty, criticizing the imperial Zhou Dynasty for its lack of education and civilization. In contrast, because the whole state solely followed Buddhist teaching, Northern Qi enjoyed a unified and harmonious society. While proclaiming Tanxian as the supreme Dharma protector, Daoxuan names Sengchou and Shangtong as leading monks of Northern Qi Buddhist communities, attributing the flourishing of Dharma to them. Although Sengchou and Shangtong are not included in the *hufa* section, it is obvious that Daoxuan regards their contribution in regulating and leading the monastic communities as a type of *hufa*. Among all the *hufa* activities under the Northern Zhou anti-Buddhist persecution, Daoxuan highlights Dao'an's two polemics presented to Emperor Wu and Jing'ai's self-immolation. While acclaiming Jing'ai's sacrifice, Daoxuan also points out that Jing'ai had strived hard to dispute imperial order,

perhaps because Jing'ai's suicide is rather a pessimistic action and his audacious debate against Emperor Wu is more heroic.

In the summary of Sui Dynasty Buddhism, Daoxuan praises Emperor Wen for his firm and unitary faith in Buddhism. Although Daoxuan recounts the debate between Emperor Yang and Mingshan on whether Buddhists should bow to the emperor, he emphasizes that Emperor Yang in the end praised Mingshan as “the hope of Buddhism.”

In his depiction of *hufa* in the Tang dynasty, Daoxuan names Puying, Huiman, Zhishi, and Falin as exemplars, all of whom had resisted imperial decrees. To Daoxuan, Zhishi and Falin are probably two of the most conspicuous exemplars, for both of them sacrificed their lives to protect the Dharma. It is worth noting that neither Puying nor Huiman has a main biography in the *hufa* section. Puying's supplementary biography is attached at the end of Zhishi's biography, and Huiman's biography is in the chapter of *minglü* 明律 (*vinaya exegetes*).<sup>155</sup>

At the end of his writing [T2060.50.641a7], Daoxuan emphasizes the importance of being willing to abandon one's body and life for the sake of the True-Dharma. While debate skills and knowledge of Buddhism are necessary qualities of a *hufa* monk, the willingness for self-sacrifice provides the fundamental courage for one to protect the Dharma.

What does *hufa* mean to Daoxuan? What are some of the criteria for being categorized as a *hufa* monk? Shinohara points out that the categories in Buddhist biographies sometimes appear to be artificial and do not always match “the contents of

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<sup>155</sup> I have a discussion on Huiman in Chapter Four of this thesis.

the biographies or the self-understanding of their subjects”.<sup>156</sup> Kieschnick also argues that Buddhist biographical category was merely a formal principle of organization and was not how medieval Chinese people thought of monks.<sup>157</sup> Daoxuan was probably aware of the ambiguity and arbitrariness of those biographical categories. By drawing monks from previous biographical collections and from other categories in his own collection and emphasizing those monks’ *hufa* activities in his evaluative writing, he could recap the meaning of *hufa* to a broader range that includes activite. For Daoxuan, *hufa* is clearly not limited to the category of *hufa* in the XGSZ, but a quality that all Buddhists should be able to cultivate regardless of their religious specialities.

Translation of Daoxuan’s evaluation [T2060.50.640a9–641a15]

The Evaluation says: As one can observe, when the excellent one(s)<sup>158</sup> descend(s) [to the world from the Tuṣita Heaven], [he/they] either have three wheels<sup>159</sup> to govern the world or six supernormal powers<sup>160</sup> to lead beings. Relying

<sup>156</sup> Shinohara Koichi, “Biographies of Eminent Monks in a Comparative Perspective: The Function of the Holy in Medieval Chinese Buddhism,” *Zhonghua Foxue Xuebao* (Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal), no. 7 (1994): 484–485.

<sup>157</sup> Kieschnick, *The Eminent Monk*, 14.

<sup>158</sup> Referring to the story of the Buddha, who enters the world as a wheel-turning king or a great teacher. This could also refer to any other buddhas.

<sup>159</sup> *Sanlun* 三輪 (three wheels) may refer to the three turnings of the wheel of the Dharma or the three agents of the Buddha (body, mouth, and mind). (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E4%B8%89%E8%BC%AA>) It may also indicate secular power, referring to the three wheel-turning kings (sometimes four): iron wheel-turning kings 鐵輪王, copper wheel-turning kings 銅輪王, silver wheel-turning kings 銀輪王, and gold wheel-turning kings 金輪王. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?8f.xml+id\(%27b8f49-8f2a-8056-738b%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?8f.xml+id(%27b8f49-8f2a-8056-738b%27)))

<sup>160</sup> *Liutong* 六通 refers to the power of transformation 身通, celestial vision 天眼通, celestial hearing 天耳通, the power of discerning the mind of others 他心通, the power of knowing previous lifetimes 宿命通, the power of extinction of contaminations 漏尽通. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?51.xml+id\(%27b516d-795e-901a%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?51.xml+id(%27b516d-795e-901a%27)))

on the person and the teachings, one defends the Dharma as the root to propagate the teachings. Following both expedients and doctrines, indeed one benefits all and creates a ford [to escape samsara].<sup>161</sup> Hence the *Tripitaka* (*sanzang* 三藏) was established to rescue the drowning ones before they die. This section on *hufa* sets up the righteous principle that has already collapsed. Thereupon, in terms of the marks of [those who] propagate and instruct, the constituents are somewhat numerous. Sometimes they manifest knowledge and subtlety, exhibiting divine boldness. Some demonstrated extraordinary arguments against heterodox assemblies, fluently smashing their unawakened minds. Some manifested the great righteousness at the appropriate time, brilliantly illuminating profound principles. In the case of making use of powerful expedients to assist the Way, Youde 有德 alone dared to speak up.<sup>162</sup> In the case of transmitting implicit teaching, Bianji 遍吉 constantly performs his duty.<sup>163</sup> Thus, striking the *ghanṭā* (*qianchui* 撻搥)<sup>164</sup> on the Numinous Marchmount, the sound announces the support [of the Dharma]. Repeatedly weaving the Dharma in Jambudvīpa, the instruction should solely venerate the vast principle.

[T2060.50.640a18]

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<sup>161</sup> Daoxuan's writing probably means both the expedient means and ultimate truth are streams of the Buddha Dharma, and both would be beneficial and influential like a big river.

<sup>162</sup> Youde is the Chinese name of King Bhavadatta.

<sup>163</sup> Bianji 遍吉 is another name of Samantabhadra bodhisattva 普賢菩薩. See Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667) and Guo Shaolin 郭绍林, *Xu gao seng zhuan* 续高僧传, 972 Note 3. The “Digital Dictionary of Buddhism” notes that: *The Darijing shu* 大日經疏 (T 1796; fasc. 1) defines *samanta* 普 as 'pervading everywhere' 遍一切處, and *bhadra* 賢 as most profound goodness 最妙善. (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E6%99%AE%E8%B3%A2>)

<sup>164</sup> A type of resonant instrument.

[With] the *Śāstra On Entering the Great Vehicle*, the nine hundred million who have attained the stage of [requiring] no more training (*wuxue* 無學) will abide in the Dharma for ten thousand years.<sup>165</sup> (As) the *sutras* and *vinayas* have explained, Bintou 賓頭 and Luohou 羅睺 have not attained nirvāṇa.<sup>166</sup> They (i.e., the *arhats*) all assist [the Buddha] to transform others according to the Way, explaining and awakening those who have not yet heard [the Dharma].<sup>167</sup> [They] purify the deluded thoughts of present-day beings and introduce the true Dharma to the future. As for that, they constantly bring that which is sunken, deficient, and repeatedly contaminated back to flourishing again. Surely this is not merely an ordinary plan? It is indeed because of their powers. [T2060.50.640a22]

Not to mention that Venerable Kāśyapa concentrated his spirit on the peak of Mt. Cock's Foot.<sup>168</sup> Bodhisattva Jianhui 堅慧 (Strength and Wisdom) held his hands upright at the Cave of Asura.<sup>169</sup> They both guide the living beings towards good

<sup>165</sup> The term *wuxue* 無學 refers to *arhats*, the last of the four stages of the *śrāvaka* path. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?71.xml+id\(%27b7121-5b78%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?71.xml+id(%27b7121-5b78%27)))

<sup>166</sup> Bintou 賓頭 and Luohou 羅睺 refer to Piṇḍāra and Rāhula, two members of the sixteen *arhats* who ensure the transmission of the true Dharma after the Buddha entered nirvāṇa. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?53.xml+id\(%27b5341-516d-7f85-6f22%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?53.xml+id(%27b5341-516d-7f85-6f22%27)))

<sup>167</sup> Bong Seok Joo has pointed out that although Daoxuan's contemporary, Xuanzang 玄奘 (600 – 664 CE), translated the scripture of the living Sixteen Arhats and their duties of protecting the Dharma after the Buddha attained nirvāṇa, the actual arhats worship movement did not start until the tenth century. Joo, “The Ritual of Arhat Invitation during the Song Dynasty.”, 84–85.

<sup>168</sup> *Jizu* 雞足 (Kukkuṭapāda) is Mount Cock's Foot, on which Mahākāśyapa is said to have passed away, but where he is still supposed to be living. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?96.xml+id\(%27b96de-8db3-5c71%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?96.xml+id(%27b96de-8db3-5c71%27)))

<sup>169</sup> *Jianhui* 堅慧 refers to Bodhisattva Sāramati, who was born in Central India seven centuries after the passing of the Buddha. He was a member of a *kshatriya* clan. After learning Buddhism, he wrote the *Ratnagotravibhāga-uttaratantra-śāstra* (究竟一乘實性論) and the *Dharmadhātu-aviśeṣa-śāstra* 大乘法界無差別論 (non-differentiation of the Dharma of the great vehicle). (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E5%A0%85%E6%85%A7>)

Yet based on the context here, Daoxuan is more likely referring to the Buddhist master named *Qingbian* 清

deeds, maintain [their physical] body for [saving] the beings, [to wait until] the time when Maitreya descends numinously and takes in his turn to promote [the Dharma] and nurturing [the beings]. Some [of those previous Dharma protectors] break down the trap of craving or turn over the pillar of arrogance. Some thoroughly solve deep/profound doubts or expound and promote the matters of the Way. Their work continues the same as cloud and rain comes one after another. Their merits are as significant as the extensiveness and profoundness of the earth. [T2060.50.640a27]

Thus, Śāriputra was given the honorific name of “great master who revealed the Wheel of Dharma” (*falun zhi dajiang* 法輪之大將), and Upagupta received the honorific title of “future buddha lacking [only] marks” (*wuxiang zhi houfo* 無相之後佛). All the five hundred disciples can be proclaimed as the Supporters (of the Dharma). The marks of their conduct and virtue are all prominent and can be commended as supreme. As for proselytizing at opportune time, explaining the Dharma by opening up the principles and reaching the highest level of spreading salvific [wisdom], there are none higher than Śāriputra. For precisely this reason, establishing the blessed place of Jetavana Park, and clearing away the tall blade of nefarious bandits, relying on Mulian’s 目連 miraculous power and widely performing Funa’s 富那 wise eloquence, those are the conditions of the protection of Dharma.<sup>170</sup> [To protect the Dharma] is precisely all about this. [T2060.50.640b4]

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辯 (or Bhāviveka 婆毘吠伽 in Sanskrit) who lived in a cave, waiting for Maitreya Buddha to come to the world. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?6d.xml+id\(%27b6df8-8faf%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?6d.xml+id(%27b6df8-8faf%27)))

<sup>170</sup> Mulian refers to Maudgalyāyana, one of the ten principle disciples of Śākyamuni. He was famous for his miraculous powers. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?76.xml+id\(%27b76ec-728d-](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?76.xml+id(%27b76ec-728d-)

Ever since the wind of the Way breezed towards the East, it was started with Teng and Lan 滕蘭<sup>171</sup>. Earlier biographies put emphasis on the opening up of the teachings, therefore [the compilers] put these biographies under the category of “Translating the Scriptures.” Yet translating is for those who have faith. Before having faith, one could not proselytize the text. Protecting and supporting the Dharma lies in reforming the perverse. To rectify the perversity would establish the foundation of faith. The scripture has stated that. How could it be in vain? Being the origin of Dao and the mother of virtue, this is the reality of faith.<sup>172</sup> Based on that, one could inspire the unawakened ones, inspiring and transforming them, responding and attending to contemporary minds. Their (Dharma protectors’) emphasis on emptiness manifests their brilliant virtue. Great assemblies are fascinated by what they hear and see. It causes them to bow their head and accept the teaching, respectfully being bathed in the stream of the Dharma. This is not just nominal. Fei Cai 費才 came to an end full of regret besides the altar. Chu Xin 褚信 had his head shaved in the middle of the ritual space.<sup>173</sup> Xianzong 顯宗 awakened to the truth and

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9023%27) Funa refers to Pūrṇa Maitrāyaniputra. He was also one of the ten principle disciples of Śākyamuni and was well known for his eloquence in preaching the Dharma. (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E5%AF%8C%E6%A5%BC%E9%82%A3>)

<sup>171</sup> *Teng* 騰 refers to *Kāśyapa Mātāṅga* 迦葉摩騰, and *Lan* 蘭 refers to *Dharmaratna* 竺法蘭. Both are said to have come to China in 67 CE by invitation of Emperor Ming of the Han Dynasty. Their visiting was traditionally recorded as having been the first transmission of Buddhism into China. (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E8%BF%A6%E8%91%89%E6%91%A9%E9%A8%B0>)

<sup>172</sup> T2060.50.640b7–8: 經陳如是，豈虛也哉？道元德母，信其實矣。The *jing* 經 is very likely referring to the *Dafangguangfo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經 (Buddhāvataṃsaka-mahāvaiṣṭya-sūtra). In the sutra, it says “信爲道元功德母，增長一切諸善法” (in T278.9.433a26 or T279.10.72b18).

<sup>173</sup> The story of Fei Cai (Fei Shucai 費叔才) and Chu Xin (Chu Shanxin 褚善信) is referring to *Han xianzong kaifohua faben neizhuan* 漢顯宗開佛化法本內傳 (Internal record of Dharma texts on Han Xianzong opening the conversion by the Buddha) in *Guanghong mingji* (Expanded collection on the propagation and clarification [of Buddhism]), T52n2103.98c11–99b23. Both Feicai and Chu Xin were

took refuge.<sup>174</sup> Palace attendants gave up their secular lives to enter the Way. A one-time grand event could guide vessels [of Dharma] in millions of generations. For this reason, the radiance of the sun of the Buddha [still] illuminates, and the cloud of Dharma [has] never stopped. Such virtues are good to record, and such words are good to elucidate. [T2060.50.640b14]

Yet biographies from the Ming-Yue 閩粵 area put those eminent examples out of sight, discussing [them] in the [section of] translation.<sup>175</sup> If I may humbly compare, those achievements were largely different. Transforming and educating at a distance is difficult indeed even if one is relying on power. Calculate the merit [of previous Buddhists] and arrange the sequence [of their activities], translation should be prioritized [in the biographies]. Gradually clarify the scriptures and doctrines, and then [one could discuss] the three disciplines.<sup>176</sup> When the [ruler of] Yao-Qin 姚秦 dynasty was obsessed with non-Buddhist teaching, Daorong 道融 reversed [his] arguments. The [ruler of the] Yuan-Wei 元魏 dynasty emphasized nefarious practice, yet Tanshi 曇始 defeated his mighty command. Previous biographies have made it evident that such exemplars should be recorded. [T2060.50.640b18]

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Daoists who failed in their competition against Buddhists monks in 72 CE. (Fei Shucui: <http://authority.dila.edu.tw/person/?fromInner=A002027>; Zhu Shanxin: <http://authority.dila.edu.tw/person/?fromInner=A002011>)

<sup>174</sup> Xianzong 顯宗 is the temple name of Emperor Ming of Han 漢明帝 (28–75).

<sup>175</sup> Min-yue 閩粵 refers to the southern part of modern-day China. Daoxuan was probably referring to Huijiao's *Biographies of Eminent Monks*, because Huijiao was from Zhejiang area. "Them" is plausibly referring to *Kāśyapa Mātāṅga* 迦葉摩騰 and *Dharmaratna* 竺法蘭. Both figures were regarded as Dharma protector by Daoxuan but categorized in the section of "Sutra Translators" in Huijiao's work.

<sup>176</sup> *Sanxue* 三學 refers to the three general aspects or disciplines of Buddhist practice: *śīla* - principle, *samādhi* - meditation, and *prajñā* - wisdom. (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E4%B8%89%E5%AD%B8>)



When it applied to the two reigns,<sup>177</sup> Qi and Zhou, their administrations had different styles. The Gao clan of [Northern] Qi solely elevated the school of the Śākya (*shimen* 釋門), while Emperor Wu of the Zhou persistently promoted and was inclined towards the crowd of Li (*lizhong* 李眾).<sup>178</sup> Therefore, the nefarious evil forcibly conceals the orthodoxy, yet the evil is false while the orthodoxy is penetrating. Disturbing the truth with absurd attempts, yet the truth would be clarified while the fraudulent has to conceal itself. Thus, the Qi family could unify the state, and the people followed their ruling without second thought. Followers of the Śākya filled up the state, and monasteries and pagodas were all over the country. With assemblies numbering two million, their plans and strategies were based on the words of the chief superintendent. Forty thousand of monasteries all arranged under the school of Śākya. It (the flourishing Buddhism in the Qi) manifested *Jambudvīpa*, the realm that transformation happens, and fully supported the true and semblance Dharma. Nothing could be compared with its greatness of the [support] as ladder and vessel [that carry on the Dharma]. Surely this is not the power of Dharma? How could it be only people's words? [T2060.50.640b24]

As for proselytizing to people, Master Xian (*xiangong* 顯公, Shi Tanxian) was the supreme one. He covered and hid his magnificence, mingling with dust. People

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<sup>177</sup> Here Daoxuan was probably applying the Buddhist-state relationship to the Northern Qi and Zhou dynasties.

<sup>178</sup> In this sentence, Daoxuan uses *men* (literally means gate, also translated as lineage, school, sect) to describe Buddhists and *zhong* 眾 (literally means masses, crowd) to describe Daoists. The word choice reveals his disparagement of Daoist groups. Dr. Christopher Jensen suggests to me, given that Li is the surname of the Tang royal family and has putative connection with Daoism being a legitimate religion in the early Tang time, Daoxuan might intentionally emphasize this surname as a veiled political critique.

all despised and ignored him. [His action] could be called “fiercely arousing the Way.” When Fashang 法上 adjusted his robe to face the trouble, he (Tanxian) was drunk and sober at the same time.<sup>179</sup> He obliged Fashang’s repeating words (*leici* 累詞) when he was sober and demonstrated falsity to the evil opponents when he was drunk.<sup>180</sup> Although the esoteric arts of golden casket and jade scabbard could not be told to others, aren’t the extraordinary stratagems of Sun Wu 孫武 and Wu Qi 吳起 worth mentioning?<sup>181</sup> Thus, the moment when he ascended the seat, he shook the mind of all beings. Heterodox assemblies were like hills and their advocating speeches were the same as clouds. Hence, he ceased the malicious atmosphere by merely starting the trenchant argument, putting down the Daoist arts before the court, and announcing sublime words to this world. Therefore, those who talked about immortality threw their bodies in front of the staircase, and those who honoured emptiness<sup>182</sup> received the tonsure at the royal court. [The court] proclaimed the prudent imperial decree, and there were no [longer] two faiths in the country. [T2060.50.640c5]

Although Master Chou (Sengchou 僧稠) was the exemplar of practicing contemplation and Venerable Shang (Fashang) guided the gate of righteousness,

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<sup>179</sup> This refers to the competition between Daoists and Buddhists under the order of Emperor Wenxuan of Northern Qi Dynasty. Fashang was the leading monk at the time, while Tanxian was in the lowest rank among all the Buddhist attendances.

<sup>180</sup> The meaning of *leici* is quite oblique. One possibility is Fashang had ordered Tanxian several times to debate against the Daoists since Tanxian was drunken at the time.

<sup>181</sup> Both Sun Wu (circa. 544–496 BC) and Wu Qi (440–381 BC) were military strategists of the Eastern Zhou period (770–256 BC).

<sup>182</sup> Emptiness here refers to Daoist concept.

those were merits of one generation and could not be compared with the later ones. The Zhou family was from the land of Qin, which was named as the hometown of militarism by generations. A proverb refers to [people there] as jackals and wolves, which I bet is not baseless. They had few cultivations in literacy but fully promoted the practice of physical strength. They considered prophetic words and adopted fabricated techniques. Wei Song 衛嵩 was originally our [Buddhist] inheritor, and Zhang Bin 張賓 was their [Daoist] remaining.<sup>183</sup> They came from different directions but shared the same mind, assisting each other like lips and teeth. They vied to submit memorials to the throne, tactfully quoted rumors, boldly cheated the emperor, buried and eradicated the benevolent era. [T2060.50.640c11]

At the time, people did not regard it as the beginning of woe. When the disaster started to appear, none of the officials had not noticed it. When the fortune of Wangyi 望夷 ended,<sup>184</sup> things collapsed as running flood, and even Heaven had no solution to correct the previous policy. It was too late to regret. The eminent monk Dao'an's 道安 reputation is different from Weisong. His manners and characteristics were as dignified and elegant as the heaven. Since the debate of the two teachings was presented, the non-Buddhist views should have been ceased. Yet because of [the opponents'] sly frauds and petty tricks, his previous efforts were in vain in the end.

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<sup>183</sup> This refers to the debates between Buddhists and Daoists during the Northern Zhou Dynasty. Daoxuan notes in Shi Jing'ai's biography (page 26 in this thesis), Daoist Zhang Bin 張賓 and former Buddhist monk Wei Yuansong 衛元嵩 presented memorials to the Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou Dynasty, triggering the anti-Budhist persecution.

<sup>184</sup> Wangyi 望夷 was the name of a palace of the Qin 秦 Dynasty. It was the place where the second emperor of Qin was killed. Daoxuan may regard it as the beginning of the decline of the Qin and a metaphor of the collapse of the Northern Zhou.

Jing'ai, the eminent sage, confronted this decayed world. He strove to refute and remonstrate, adhering to his pure aspiration [and living among] the steep cliffs. He sighed about the extinction of correct path, expressed his powerlessness in defending the Dharma. Thus, he detached from his body among the pines and rocks, sacrificing his life towards the West.<sup>185</sup> At the time, there were about ten similar cases. If one does not hold the great aspiration of rescuing [beings] at the last phase of the secular world and yet drown in sorrow when witnessing the extinction of the Dharma, how could one abandoned the valued [body] among deep forests. Dedicating the whole life to benefit and rescue [others] is truly praiseworthy and mournful. Taking a close look at various sages through generations, we can see the merits of inheriting and promoting [the Dharma]. Both the sun and moon admire them as exemplary, high mountains respect their upright personalities. I have cited all of them in this account, the perpetuation [of defending the Dharma] will be prosperous. [T2060.50.640c23]

When the Sui ruled the court, they deeply believed in the school of *Śākyamuni* while also adopting the Li house (*liguan* 李館, referring to Daoism) at the same time as accepting secular customs. When the second generation succeed the throne, the policies were the same as the previous reign. While lamenting for the virtue of the semblance Dharma, they inherited the policy that Buddhists should bow to the emperor from the [Liu-]Song dynasty. At the time, Buddhists and laypeople looked at each other sadly. Master Mingshan stood up to resist. Before stating his argument,

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<sup>185</sup> Christopher Jensen suggests me that the original term *xunmin xifang* 殉命西方 here could be a reference to the seek of rebirth in the Pure Land.

some people thought he would say inappropriate words. Once they saw his serious countenance and argument against Emperor Yang's strict decree, all said he brought fatal disaster to his own life, and they trembled and felt uneasy for him. Yet Dan appeared contented, delighted, courageous and graceful. The emperor later said: the school of Śākyamuni has generations [to carry on] (*Shimen zhi youren* 釋門之有人). Since then, the public realized Mingdan was extraordinary. It is difficult to understand a person, and people truly do not know that. Only one person in one thousand years could know the difficulty. I believe this is true. [T2060.50.641a2]

When the royal Tang initiated the dynasty, there were people (Dharma protectors) of a kind in this generation. Puying 普應 placed the seat at the gate of royal palace, and Huiman 慧滿 brought robes to the court.<sup>186</sup> Zhishi 智實 was resolute and heroic, resisting against criticism at a critical moment. Falin 法琳 was righteously indignant, directly spoke [against] the public edict. They lived in a different generation but shared the same personality. They all have practiced what they preached, and their births and deaths are [as great] as the sun. Therefore, they could have their names passed down through millions of generations and inherit the previous sages' great vision. [T2060.50.641a6]

The essentials for working on scriptures and treaties is to pacify the mind. The fundamentals of promoting and protecting the net of Dharma is a truly profound aspiration. With lofty aspirations, one would not care about peril and insult. With

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<sup>186</sup> Both monks were protesting in front of the court against imperial edicts. I have discussed Puying's activity in Chapter Two in Zhishi's biography, and have a discussion of Huiman in Chapter Four.

purified mind, one would not dread severe punishment. [One would] comprehend the three marks (*sanxiang* 三相) are [transforming] like running, and realize the nine realms of existences (*jiuyou* 九有) are not residence to dwell in.<sup>187</sup> If not for the Dharma, one would waste the remaining ages in vain. Therefore, one faces all buddhas with merit and wisdom, regards the appearance and body as abandoned ashes, presents extraordinary strategy to march forward, rouses intelligent debate. As long as the Dharma abides, throwing oneself into the cooking pot is like going back home. As long as one is wise and insightful, dwelling in the defiled age is like a dream. Thus, one would not disappoint the predecessors. Their biographies would leave a trace. Will there be someone who read this yet not encourage oneself with ardent aspiration as high as the empyrean?

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<sup>187</sup> *Sanxiang* 三相 are the three marks of arising (*sheng* 生), abiding (*zhu* 住), and ceasing (*mie* 滅). (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E4%B8%89%E7%9B%B8>) *Jiuyou* 九有 are the nine realms where beings abide. Humans are in the first realm of desire. ([http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id\(%27b4e5d-6709-60c5-5c45%27\)](http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?4e.xml+id(%27b4e5d-6709-60c5-5c45%27)))

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *Hufa* beyond the *Hufa* Section<sup>188</sup>

In the previous three chapters, I demonstrated how the concept of *hufa*, as elucidated in the XGSZ's *hufa* section, centres on Buddhist-Daoist debates and tensions between monks and emperors. I also argued that based on his commentary writing, Daoxuan was aware that the category of *hufa*, and perhaps the other Buddhist biographic categories as well, could not capture the panoramic aspects of the monks belonging to those groups. To carry on these discussions, in this chapter, I discuss the term and concept of *hufa* as employed in the other sections of XGSZ, and how Daoxuan was aware that damage to the Dharma came from both inside and outside of the monastic community.

The first part of this chapter centres on monks from other sections who defended the Dharma against external threats: Daoists criticisms and political suppression. The topic of anti-Buddhist persecutions and polemics through Northern Dynasties to early Tang Dynasty is one of the major concerns of Daoxuan, and fills up his writings in the XGSZ. Besides eminent monks chosen by Daoxuan for inclusion in the *hufa* section, conflict with Daoists or the imperial court is also common among biographies in other sections.

In the second part, I move to precepts and internal corruption within the saṃgha. The term *zhengfa* 正法 is usually translated as “true teaching” or “Dharma”; some scholars also render *zhengfa* as “the Buddha’s dispensation.”<sup>189</sup> Various translations reflect

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<sup>188</sup> Some parts of this chapter come from my term papers of the graduate seminars at McMaster University.

<sup>189</sup> For example, Oskar von Hinüber refers to *zhengfa* as “the teaching”; Anālayo refers to it as the Buddha’s “dispensation”, the “Dharma”, and “the teachings”. See: Oskar von Hinüber, “The Foundation of the

different ways of interpreting the meaning of *fa* 法. That issue, on the other hand, reveals how broad the action of *hufa* could be. In the second part of this chapter, I focus especially on the question of the female as pollution of the Dharma. Through biographies in the XGSZ, we could see that females (in general) and nuns (in particular) were regarded as the sources of pollution and defilement of the monastic community. I suggest we could also read the actions of the Buddhist clergy from the perspective of protecting the Dharma, because, through criticism of females, Buddhist male monastics constantly related the presence of women within the community to the decay of the true Dharma. Within those discussions, I will also explain how external and internal crisis could be intertwined through a close reading of the biography of Shi Huiman 釋慧滿 (589–642).

### ***Hufa* monks beyond the *Hufa* section**

#### **Daoists and Political Opponents**

In the Introduction of this thesis, I have discussed the term *hufa pusa* 護法菩薩 (Dharma-protecting bodhisattva). This term, and another similar term *hufa kaishi* 護法開士 (Dharma-protecting enlightened hero),<sup>190</sup> appears several times in not only the *hufa* section but other sections of XGSZ. In those cases, Daoists and political proscription were usually the main threats that monks had to face.

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Bhikkhunīsaṃgha: A Contribution to the Earliest History of Buddhism,” *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University for the Academic Year 2007, 2008*, 5. Anālayo, “Theories on the Foundation of the Nuns’ Order: A Critical Evaluation,” *Journal of the Centre for Buddhist Studies (Sri Lanka)* 6 (2008): 105, 106.

<sup>190</sup> *Kaishi* means the hero who is enlightened, or who opens the way of enlightenment. It is usually another way of referring to a bodhisattva. (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E5%BC%80%E5%A3%AB>)



One such case is the Sui monk Shi Huiyuan 釋慧遠 (523–593) from Jingying Monastery 淨影寺 of the capital city, whose biography is in the section of *yijie* 義解 (explainer of the meaning).<sup>191</sup> Being titled by Daoxuan as a Sui monk, Huiyuan actually had lived through Northern Qi and Northern Zhou before the political unification of Sui. He had studied under the *vinaya* master Zhan 湛律師 (Sui Dynasty monk) and moved together with him to the city of Ye 鄴,<sup>192</sup> where he continued to follow Fashang 法上 (495–580) before moving back to Gaodu 高都.<sup>193</sup>

In the spring of the second year of Chengguang 承光 (578), the Northern Zhou court planned to abolish Buddhism in Northern Qi's region after conquering it. Huiyuan criticized Emperor Wu of Northern Zhou and listed the consequence of abolishing Buddhism, claiming that not only the emperor would fall into *avīci* hell as a karmic result, but also that his people would suffer in *avīci* hell. Because of Huiyuan's resistance, Emperor Wu postponed his plan. Fashang and other leading monks praised Huiyuan for his courage in debating Emperor Wu's imperial decree, suggesting that the Dharma-protecting bodhisattva described in the great sutra must be like Huiyuan.<sup>194</sup>

Another example in the early Tang Dynasty is Shi Fachong 釋法沖 (595–687) of Faji Monastery 法集寺 of Prefecture Yan 兗州,<sup>195</sup> whose biography is found in the chapter on

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<sup>191</sup> T2060.50.489c26–492b1.

<sup>192</sup> Ye was the capital city of Northern Qi, and present-day Handan 邯鄲. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000001475>)

<sup>193</sup> Modern-day Luoyang 洛陽. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000023831>)

<sup>194</sup> T2060.50.490c25: 大經所云護法菩薩應當如是。I have discussed in the Introduction that the sutra here is very likely to be the *Nirvāṇa Sutra*.

<sup>195</sup> Present-day southwest of Shandong 山東 Province, near northeast of Henan 河南 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000021539>)

*gantong* 感通 (miraculous responses).<sup>196</sup> During the beginning of Zhenguan era, private tonsure was banned by imperial court, and violators would be executed. Fachong vowed to renounce the household life and shaved his head immediately. Daoxuan recorded that at the time many monks fled to Mount Yiyang 嶧陽山 and were short of supplies.<sup>197</sup> Fachong asked the prefecture's governor for food, promising to take the whole responsibility if there would be any government punishment for providing food to the monks.

Besides protecting and supporting monastic communities, Fachong had also censured famous Daoist master Cai Zihuang 蔡子晃 (unknown dates). Cai Zihuang had studied both non-Buddhist and Buddhist teachings in his free time, and was once asked to give explanation of Buddhist scriptures in public. Fachong stopped Cai Zihuang, objecting that Cai was from a non-Buddhist tradition and was teaching Buddhist scriptures for personal fame and benefit. In other words, Cai Zihuang's lecture on Buddhism was not authentic and genuine. Cai Zihuang felt dejected and left the site. The monastic assembly at that time acclaimed Fachong as *hufa pusa*.

In the above two examples, the monks had protected monastic communities from political suppression and degraded Daoists. Those actions are common tropes we could see in the *hufa* section.

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<sup>196</sup> T2060.50.666a3-666c24.

<sup>197</sup> Mount Yiyang was in the northern part of present-day Jiangsu 江蘇 Province. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000009680>)

### Well-educated Elite Monks

A lot of monks in the *hufa* section were monastic leaders in the capital cities. Some of them came from aristocratic families and had received training in Confucian classics and even Daoist knowledge, or military skills before renouncing the household life, such as Shi Jing'ai of the Northern Zhou Dynasty and Shi Huicheng of the Tang Dynasty. Non-Buddhist educational experience ensured those monks' eloquence and versatility in proselytizing Buddhism to and debating against those from different religious and social background.

In other non-*hufa* sections of XGSZ, Daoxuan recorded several Dharma-protecting monks who renounced householder life as court officials. For example, Shi Fachong was born in an aristocratic family, and his father and grandfather had both served for Northern Wei and Northern Qi court. Fachong had a close relationship with Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (579–648), who was a follower of Buddhism and appears frequently in XGSZ, when Fachong was around twenty years old. They two were in such a close friendship that they made a pledge to achieve the fifth level of official rank together. At the age of twenty-four, Fachong received the title of *ying-yang langjiang* 鷹揚郎將 (Commandant of Soaring Hawk Garrison),<sup>198</sup> which was of the fifth rank. At this point, despite his noble and military background, Fachong decided to renounce his life as a householder when he saw his mother reading the *Nirvāṇa Sutra*. He travelled to An Prefecture 安州 and studied

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<sup>198</sup> Soaring Hawk Garrison (*ying-yang fu* 鷹揚府) is the formal designation of garrison units in the garrison militia from 607 to the fall of Sui in 618. It was headed by a commandant (*langjiang* 郎將). See item 8030 and 8031 in Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, 584.

with Master Hao 髡法師 the scriptures *Dapin* 大品, *Sanlun* 三論, and *Lengqie jing* 楞伽經 (*Lankâvatâra-sûtra*).<sup>199</sup>

Another case could be Shi Huijing 釋慧淨 (born in 578), whose biography is in the section of *yijing* 譯經 (Translators of Scriptures), who was from a Confucian family. His uncle Fang Huiyuan 房徽遠 was also a *guozi boshi* 國子博士 (erudite of the imperial academy) of the Sui Dynasty.<sup>200</sup> During the beginning of Daye (605) era, Huijing travelled to the Shiping huaili County,<sup>201</sup> where the county magistrate was inviting Daoists to teach Daoist scriptures before Buddhist lecture at a Buddhist monastery. Huijing openly criticized the inappropriate sequence and reminded the magistrate to invite Buddhist lecturer first. After that, Huijing debated against the Daoist participant Yu Yongtong 于永通 (unknown date) on the authenticity of Buddhism.

Emphasis on Confucian and Daoist learning as an aid to one's knowledge was shared by many elite monks in the Sui-Tang period. In the section of *yijing*, Shi Yanzong 釋彥琮 (566–610) also suggested “penetrating both Confucianism and Buddhism,”<sup>202</sup> and listed eight criteria for Buddhist translators, including knowing various histories, literary works, and classical Confucian scholarship.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> *Dapin* 大品 is probably referring to the *Mahâprajñâpâramitâ-sûtra* 大品般若經. *Sanlun* 三論 is probably referring to three Indian sâstras: the *Madhyamaka-sâstra* 中論, *Dvâdaśanikâya-sâstra* 十二門論, and the *Śata-sâstra* 百論.

<sup>200</sup> Shi Huijing's biography is in T2060.50.441c28–446b28.

<sup>201</sup> Shiping huaili 始平槐里 was in modern-day City of Xianyang 咸陽. (<http://authority.dila.edu.tw/place/?fromInner=PL000000043253>)

<sup>202</sup> T2060.50.439c6: 言通學者。勸引儒流遍師孔釋。

<sup>203</sup> T2060.50.439a24–25: 旁涉墳史，工綴典詞，不過魯拙，其備四也。

Noble family background may also contribute to the monks' interpersonal relationships with court officials and imperial family members who provided patronage and protection to Buddhism and monastic communities. Daoxuan have must understood this concept, as in his own *hufa* action, he had presented petitions to royal family members.

## Precepts and Internal Corruptions

### Precepts and Females

As I have discussed in the Introduction, the term *hufa pusa* is very likely associated with the *Nirvāṇa Sutra*, and upholding precepts is one way to protect the Dharma. In the chapter on the “nature of the Thus-come-one” (*Rulaixing pin* 如來性品), the Buddha taught that bodhisattvas who protect the true-Dharma would regulate the monastic community and discipline precept-breaking monks even if doing so required the Dharma-protecting bodhisattvas to seemingly violate the precepts themselves.<sup>204</sup> In the *Jingangshen pin* chapter 金剛身品 (the Adamantine Body), the Buddha tells the story of King Bhavadatta, who fought with weapons to protect the true-Dharma and precept-keeping monks, and announced that “protectors of the true-Dharma should take up swords and other weapons to serve the Dharma preachers.”<sup>205</sup> Daoxuan must have been familiar with the *Nirvāṇa Sutra* and the importance of precepts in protecting the Dharma. In his evaluation on *hufa*, Daoxuan cites King Bhavadatta as an exemplar of Dharma

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<sup>204</sup> T374.12.400b17–b27. For an English translation, see Blum, *The Nirvāṇa Sutra (Mahāparinirvāṇa-Sūtra)*, 187.

<sup>205</sup> Mark Laurence Blum, *The Nirvāṇa Sutra*, 97.

protector. Daoxuan also quotes the seven punishments for monks who transgressed the Dharma from the *Nirvāṇa Sutra* in his commentary on the *Sifenlü shanfan buque xingshi chao* 四分律刪繁補闕行事鈔 (An Abridged and Explanatory Commentary on the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*):

涅槃盛論七羯磨，後廣明護法之相云：有持戒比丘，見壞法者，驅遣訶責，依法懲治，當知是人，得福無量。(T1804.40.20c18–20)

The *Nirvāṇa* exhaustively discusses the seven *karmans*,<sup>206</sup> then broadly elucidates the aspects of protecting the Dharma, saying: when a dharma-holding *bhikṣu* sees someone who damages the Dharma, he banishes and reprimands [that person], punishing and correcting based on the principles. This person would receive innumerable merit.

In the second part of the *hufa* section, Daoxuan praises Shi Cizang as a *hufa pusa* due to his interpretation and teachings on *vinaya*. He regards another monk Shi Xuanwan 釋玄琬 (563–637) of the Puguang Monastery 普光寺 as *hufa pusa* for the similar reason.

Xuanwan's biography is in the section of *yijie* 義解 (exegetes of righteousness).<sup>207</sup> He had followed Master Tanyan 曇延 (516–588), studied the *Sifen* 四分 (*Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*) under *vinaya* master Hongzun 洪遵 (530–608) and *Shelun* 攝論 (*Mahāyānasamgraha-sāstra*) under *dhyāna* master Tanqian 曇遷 (543–608).<sup>208</sup> After

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<sup>206</sup> A list of the seven *karmans* is in the *Nirvāṇa Sutra*: T374.12.380c22–23.

<sup>207</sup> T2060.50.616a1–617c12.

<sup>208</sup> Hongzun was a master of the *vinaya* school during the Sui Dynasty, being well-known for his teaching on *Sifenlü* 四分律 (*Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*). His biography is in the first part of the chapter of *minglü* 明律 (*vinaya* exegesis) in the XGSZ: T2060.50.571b12–574b6.

studying with Hongzun for three years, Xuanwan was already able to set forth the *vinaya* texts extensively. He led the ordination ceremony every spring, explaining the regulations. In the beginning of the Zhenguan era (627), Xuanwan transmitted bodhisattva precepts to the crown prince and other princes. Daoxuan notes that there were more than three thousand monks and nuns who received the full ordination from Xuanwan, and more than two hundred thousand aristocratic families and their servants took refuge with him. For those reasons, Daoxuan praises Xuanwan as a *hufa pusa*.<sup>209</sup>

The concept of *hufa* in the context of regulating the saṃgha is quite different from its use against Daoists and political threats. In both Xuanwan's and Cizang's cases, Daoxuan depicts their protection and support of the Dharma as upholding monastic rules, regulating monastic communities, giving ordination, and performing religious ceremonies appropriately. Daoxuan regards those actions as *hufa* probably because of the notion of the decline of the Dharma shared by him and his contemporaries. One of the main reasons that caused the decay of the Dharma, according to the Buddha, is the acceptance of females in the saṃgha.<sup>210</sup>

As Heirman has shown, in *Sifen lü biqiuni chao* 四分律比丘尼鈔 (Commentary on the [Part for] Bhikṣuṇīs of the Dharmaguptaka vinaya), Daoxuan argues that while monks are allowed to renounce the monastic training and be ordained later, women are not allowed to return to the monastic community once they renounce the training, because “the mind of women is weak, and they are not capable of promoting the Buddhist path.

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<sup>209</sup> T2060.50.616b3.

<sup>210</sup> Ann Heirman, “Buddhist Nuns Through the Eyes of Leading Early Tang Masters,” *The Chinese Historical Review* 22, no. 1 (2015): 35–36.

They were not allowed [to enter the monastic order] in the first place, ...”<sup>211</sup> Heirman suggests that this probably refers to the time when the Buddha was approached by his aunt Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī and asked for permission for female to go forth as nun, the Buddha rebuked Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī three times.<sup>212</sup> Later, the Buddha explained to Ānanda that:

若女人不得於此正法律中至信，捨家，無家，學道者，正法當住千年。今失五百歲，餘有五百年。 [T26.1.607b8–9]

If females are not allowed to gain faith, to renounce household, to have no house, and to study the way through this true Dharma and vinaya, the true Dharma would last for one thousand years. Now it loses five hundred years and has five hundred years left.

Allowing females to enter the monastic order brings pollution to the community and causes decline of the true Dharma. Such an opinion is shared by both Daoxuan and many eminent monks in the XGSZ. One of the best examples could be the monk Shi Daoji 釋道積 of Fucheng Monastery 福成寺. Daoji was unwilling to accept females into monastic community, and always told his disciples that females is the source of defilement. Daoxuan quotes Daoji, saying “The sagely scriptures often say, the Buddha’s acceptance of female followers caused the decay of the true Dharma (*zhengfa* 正法). Even hearing

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<sup>211</sup> Ann Heirman, “Withdrawal from the Monastic Community and Re-Ordination of Former Monastics in the Dharmaguptaka Tradition,” *Buddhism, Law & Society*, 2018, 190.

<sup>212</sup> Heirman, “Withdrawal from the Monastic Community and Re-Ordination of Former Monastics in the Dharmaguptaka Tradition,” 192, note 75.



their names would pollute the mind. How could one remain unafflicted by facing them?”<sup>213</sup>

Other examples include the Sui Dynasty monk Shi Lingyu 釋靈裕 (518–605) of Yankong Monastery 演空寺 who swore to not give ordination to female followers. Females were allowed to enter Lingyu’s monastery only when there was a sermon, and had to be the last to enter and the first to leave without any delay.<sup>214</sup> The Sui 隋 monk Shi Fachong 釋法充 (501–596) of Huacheng Monastery 化城寺 also admonished monks for allowing women to enter temples, because he claimed that it would destroy the Dharma and cause scandal. Yet other monks did not follow his advice. Fachong lamented that he could not be born in the Buddha’s time and the true teaching could not be practiced. To show his dedication to the true Dharma, Fachong jumped off of the peak of a mountain, swearing that he would have his body and bones crushed into powder in order to be reborn in the Pure Land.<sup>215</sup> As the compiler, although Daoxuan did not include the occasional editorial aside, he must have agreed with those eminent monks.<sup>216</sup>

### **Intertwined Crisis and Anxiety**

Gregory Schopen once said, “[t]he compilers of the various Buddhist monastic codes that we have appear to have been very anxious men” who were “anxious about ...

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<sup>213</sup> T2060.50.696a21–23:聖典常言，佛度出家，損滅正法。尚以聞名污心，況復面對無染。

<sup>214</sup> T2060.50.497b24–29: 女人尼衆，誓不授戒。... 故使弘法之時，方聽女衆入寺，並後入先出，直往無留。

<sup>215</sup> T2060.50.559c6–10: 每勸僧衆，無以女人入寺，上損佛化，下墜俗謠。然世以基業事重。有不從者。充歎曰：生不值佛，已是罪緣，正教不行，義須早死，何慮方土，不奉戒乎。遂於此山香爐峯上，自投而下，誓粉身骨，用生淨土。

<sup>216</sup> Heirman has a detailed study on how early Tang Buddhist masters regarded nuns in “Buddhist Nuns Through the Eyes of Leading Early Tang Masters,” *The Chinese Historical Review* 22, no. 1 (2015): 31–51.

maintaining their public reputation and that of their Order, and avoiding any hint of social scandal or lay criticism”; and “they were anxious about women”.<sup>217</sup> For the same reason, Kieschnick identifies Buddhist clergies who forbade the participation of female followers under the category of “Asceticism,” because writings in the XGSZ “are particularly adamant in emphasizing the sharp lines of division between eminent monks and their female counterparts in the clergy”<sup>218</sup> to avoid suspicions and scandals.<sup>219</sup>

Yet sometimes the female gender is just the surface of the problem. While criticizing females, Buddhist Dharma protectors may also target external crisis that intertwined with the corruption inside of the *saṃgha*. One example can be seen in the biography of the Tang 唐 monk Shi Huiman 釋慧滿 (589–642) of Puguang Monastery 普光寺 in the capital city. Daoxuan categorized Huiman’s biography in the chapter of *minglü* 明律 (*Vinaya* Exegetes), and praised him for his courage of “carrying robes among the assembly of the court” (*zaiyi yu chaowu* 載衣於朝伍)<sup>220</sup> in the evaluation of the *hufa* section, referring to Huiman’s protest in front of the court when Emperor Taizong declared that Daoism should prevail over Buddhism. In Huiman’s individual biography, Daoxuan mainly focuses on Huiman’s two criticisms of precept-breaking nuns. Both cases involve nuns’ engagement with Daoists and imperial families.

The first case happened with nun(s) of the Jixian Monastery, who had statues of Laozi and (Daoist) sages being built, worshiping the statues privately. The nun(s) also

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<sup>217</sup> Gregory Schopen, *Buddhist Monks and Business Matters: Still More Papers on Monastic Buddhism in India* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2004), 329.

<sup>218</sup> Kieschnick, *The Eminent Monk*, 21.

<sup>219</sup> Kieschnick, *The Eminent Monk*, 17ff.

<sup>220</sup> T2060.50.641a3.

extensively invited Daoists to celebrate in the hall. Huiman publicly rebuked them and stopped their activity, reported to the Reverend One 大德,<sup>221</sup> and proclaimed the punishment of expulsion on the nun(s). Huiman also ordered the Daoist statue to be brought back to the Taiyuan Temple, had it recast with the Buddha's characteristics to warn other nuns. Although this case relates to precept-breaking nuns, Daoxuan may have wanted to make an emphasis on the superiority of Buddhism over Daoism as a historical fact, as he quotes a similar case from the Northern Zhou Dynasty to explain Huiman's decision to recast the statues:

昔周趙王治蜀，有道士造老君像，而以菩薩俠侍。僧以事聞，王乃判曰：菩薩已成不可壞，天尊宜進一階官。乃迎于寺中，改同佛相。例相似也。

[T2060.50.618b20–23]

In the past, Duke of Zhao of the Northern Zhou Dynasty was governing the Shu area. There were Daoists who built a statue of Laozi with statues of bodhisattvas attending on the side. Monks reported this incident. The duke judged that, “The [statues of] bodhisattvas have been completed and should not be damaged. The Heavenly Lord could be promoted with one official rank.” Therefore, monks welcomed it to the temple and changed it to the Buddha's appearance. The cases are same.

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<sup>221</sup> I translate 大德 literally as the Reverend One. In the Tang dynasty, the term *dade* 大德 was usually an abbreviation of *lintan dade* 臨壇大德 (the reverend ones who have reached the platform), which referred to the title of worthy Buddhists who were qualified to give ordination. (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/cgi-bin/xpr-ddb.pl?q=%E5%A4%A7%E5%BE%B7>)

By quoting from the Duke of Zhao, Daoxuan has made it clear that the recasting of Daoist statues into Buddhist ones was historically justified, and that Daoism was inferior to Buddhism.<sup>222</sup>

The second case in Huiman's biography involves a nun named Huishang 慧尚, who took away a monastery that belonged to monks. In this incident, the imperial court granted Huishang support and protection. Huishang was from the Zhengguo Nunnery. Daoxuan notes that she was favored by luck and visited the inner palace back and forth (*jiaoxing yishi, gongjin huanwang* 僥倖一時，宮禁還往).<sup>223</sup> When Gaozu of Tang 唐高祖 passed away in the ninth year of Zhengguan era (635), the imperial court decided to set up an ancestral hall for the imperial spirit at Huishang's residential nunnery and moved nuns from the nunnery to Yueai Monastery 月愛寺. The conversion of monastery into nunnery caused complaints among leading monks in the capital. Huiman gathered the three bonds<sup>224</sup> and noble ones for more than two hundred monks from the capital city,

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<sup>222</sup> Due to the lack of information, it is difficult to verify whether or not Daoxuan's example is a real historical case. Yet it is trustworthy that Duke Zhao had ordered Buddhist statues being carved when he was in Shu. Duke of Zhao was Yuwen Zhao 宇文招, the younger brother of Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou Dynasty. He was given the title of Duke of Zhao and appointed as the Command-in-chief of Prefecture Yi during the Baoding era, the first era of Emperor Wu of the Northern Zhou Dynasty. The anti-Buddhist persecution had not started yet at that time, and archeologists have found Buddhist statues in the Shu during this period. According to the note 17 in Dong Huafeng 董华锋 and He Xianhong 何先红, "Chengdu Wanfosi Nanchao Fojiao Zaoxiang Chutu Ji Liuchuan Zhuangkuang Shulun 成都萬佛寺南朝佛教造像出土及流傳狀況述論 (A Survey of the Unearthing and Spreading of Buddhist Statues in the Southern Dynasties of Chengdu Wanfo Temple)," *Sichuan Wenwu* 四川文物 2 (2014), a statue of Aśoka that was unearthed in the Sichuan area has an inscription on the back, indicating it was built under the order of Duke Zhao of Zhao 趙國公招. The statue of Aśoka proves that Buddhism received government patronage under the rule of Duke Zhao in Sichuan area during the early Northern Zhou period.

<sup>223</sup> T2060.50.618b23–24.

<sup>224</sup> 三綱 *Sangang* (the three bonds) refer to the top three directors of a monastery, which usually include the temple head (寺主 *sizhu*) who manages the temporal affairs, the rector (維那 *weina*) who is charged with enforcing rules and maintaining discipline, and the elder or senior monk (上座 *shangzuo*). See: Nakamura Hajime 中村元, *Bukkyōgo daijiten* 佛教語大辭典 (Dictionary of Buddhist words), 571a.

criticized Huishang for taking away the monks' monastery by relying on governmental power, and announced the expulsion of Huishang from the monastic community.

Huishang, on the other hand, complained to both the Eastern Palace and all the court officials. Du Zhenglun 杜正倫, the head of the Household Administration of the Heir Apparent,<sup>225</sup> was sent by the Eastern Palace to rescind the banishment. Huiman insisted that the punishment was made according to principles. Yet, under pressure from the imperial household, most of the monks agreed to rescind the expulsion. Daoxuan notes that Huiman was disappointed by his fellow monks, lamenting the discord in the community.

Several non-Buddhist documents attest to the relocation of Zhengguo Nunnery. The *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 (Institutional History of the Tang Dynasty) indicates that in the ninth year of Zhenguan era (635), the [Zhengguo] monastery was abolished in order to build the ancestral hall of Gaozu.<sup>226</sup> The *Records of Chang'an* says Zhengguo Nunnery was relocated to Chongde Ward 崇德坊 in the ninth year of Zhenguan era, and Gaozu's ancestral hall, Jing'an Palace 靜安宮, was built on the site.<sup>227</sup> Both the documents simply depict the relocation as a result of imperial decree, and neither the monks' disagreement nor the nuns' voice are recorded. In contrast, in Daoxuan's writing, Huiman clearly

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<sup>225</sup> The title 詹事 zhanshi literally means "overseer of affairs". It referred to the head or supervisor of the Household of the Heir Apparent, and sometimes for the Empress. See Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*, 107.

<sup>226</sup> *Institutional history of the Tang dynasty* (Tang huiyao 唐會要) Vol.48: 4: 貞觀九年，廢寺立為高祖別廟。(https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=1984&page=48)

<sup>227</sup> *Records of Chang'an* (Chang'an zhi 長安志) Vol.9: 7: 貞觀九年，徙崇德坊，於此置靜安宮，即高祖別廟。(https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=1001&page=15)

blamed the nun Huishang, referring to her behavior as relying on government power (*yiguan shili* 倚官勢力) and taking away the temple by force (*duo* 奪).<sup>228</sup>

There are not many historical records about the nun Huishang and Zhengguo Nunnery. Yet from our limited sources, we know that the nunnery might have a connection with Emperor Gaozu before the nun Huishang's time. According to the *Records of Chang'an*, there was a temple in the early Sui Dynasty on the original site of Zhengguo Nunnery. The temple was rebuilt as the ancestral hall of Emperor Wen of Sui when he passed away in 605 CE, named as Xiandu Palace 仙都宮, and abolished in 618 CE under the order of Emperor Gaozu of Tang to build the Zhengguo Nunnery for a nun named Mingzhao 明照.<sup>229</sup> The fact that Eastern Palace interfered in Huishang's expulsion suggests there might be a close relation between her and the crown prince, as well as other imperial family members from the Eastern Palace at the time.<sup>230</sup> In Sui-Tang period, it was quite common to see connections between nunneries and imperial or aristocratic families, since most nunneries in the capital city were patronized by emperors, consorts, and royal family members.<sup>231</sup> If Daoxuan's narrative is accurate, Huishang might even have had enough connections to other court officials to be able to appeal to all of them. All the evidence suggest that Huishang was favored by the inner palace and not merely by

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<sup>228</sup> T2060.50.618b28–27: 自佛法流世，未有尼衆倚官勢力奪僧寺者。

<sup>229</sup> *Records of Chang'an* (Chang'an zhi 長安志), Vol.9: 7: “橫街之北大開業寺：本隋勝光寺，文帝第三子蜀王秀所立，大業元年徙光德坊於此置仙都宮，即文帝別廟。武德元年，高祖徙明昭，廢宮立為證果尼寺。”

<sup>230</sup> The crown prince at the time was Li Chengqian 李承乾 (618–645), who was deposed and exiled in 643.

<sup>231</sup> Gong, Guoqiang 龚国强, “Sui-Tang Chang'an cheng fosi yanjiu 隋唐长安城佛寺研究 (Study on Buddhist monasteries in Chang'an in Sui and Tang dynasties)” (PhD. Dissertation, Graduate School of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, 2002), 34.

luck. She and the Zhengguo Nunnery had a long-term connection with the imperial family, and that could be one of the reasons for the imperial household to choose the Zhengguo Nunnery as the site of Gaozu's mourning hall. Yet, to Huiman, and probably Daoxuan as well, the relocation is unacceptable not only because monks had lost their residential monastery and superiority to nuns, but also because of the pressure and intervention from the imperial court.

### **Conclusion**

What does *hufa* mean to Daoxuan? Who was protecting Buddhism and against whom were they acting? In this chapter, I have discussed the meaning of *hufa* through examples of monks and activities in the other sections of XGSZ. Same as the general situation in the *hufa* section, Daoists and emperors or governmental officials appear frequently as hindrance of the proselytization of Buddhism, posing potential danger to the saṃgha.

The corruption of the monastic community brought by female practitioners is another common concern through biographies in the XGSZ. Yet female might not always be the fundamental cause. As in the case of Huiman, the loss of Buddhist autonomy to the imperial court is the real issue that elite Buddhist monks, such as Huiman and Daoxuan, worried about.

## CONCLUSION

What did *hufa* mean to medieval Chinese Buddhists? What purpose did *hufa*, as a categorized section in Buddhist biographical collection, serve for? Through this study, I hope to have shed light on the reason why Daoxuan created *hufa* as a new section in his collection, and to demonstrate three major patterns in Daoxuan's *hufa* narratives.

First, while the action *hu* 護 (protecting/defending) covers a broad range of activities against both external challenge and internal corruption, the *hufa* section focuses solely on the daunting challenge outside of the monastic communities. Daoist criticisms and anti-Buddhist imperial policies were the major external threats to medieval Chinese Buddhist communities according to elite monks such as Daoxuan. Living in early Tang times, monks, especially those who were close to the political centre, were highly sensitive to political, social, and religious crises due to their experiences of the anti-Buddhist persecution of the Northern Zhou Dynasty and the military turmoil and political transition during the end of 6<sup>th</sup> century to the beginning of 7<sup>th</sup> century in both northern and southern China. As Jinhua Chen has pointed out, “the sacred world of the saṃgha existed in constant collusion and collision with secular authority (the state) in early Tang times”.<sup>232</sup> It was in such a political and religious context that Daoxuan created the new section named *hufa* for his biographical work, for he had the sense of urgency to warn the contemporary and future saṃgha members. To establish exemplary Buddhists in

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<sup>232</sup> Chen, “A ‘Villain-Monk’ Brought down by a Villain-General: A Forgotten Page in Tang Monastic Warfare and State-Saṃgha Relations.” 208.



protecting the Dharma against external crisis, Daoxuan's collection of *hufa* monks focuses on their eloquence and courage in public debate and excellent writing skills in presenting polemics, besides the basic criteria of having steady faith in Buddhism.

Second, Daoxuan was also clear that the danger to the saṃgha was not only external. Corruption inside of the Buddhist community also had the potential to damage Buddhism, with females (especially nuns) as one of the major causes of the corruption according to Daoxuan and other Buddhist clerics. In other sections in XGSZ, monks who restricted female Buddhist followers from entering the monastery were also regarded as Dharma protectors by Daoxuan even though they did not participate in religious and political debate. However, internal crisis and corruption are not the focal points in the *hufa* section because Daoxuan designed the *hufa* section as a reminder of the political crisis that Tang Buddhists had to face: namely, the increasing royal patronage of Daoism and suppression of Buddhism.

Third, most of the monks who had protected the Dharma and saṃgha, regardless of whether their biographies are in the *hufa* section or not, were Buddhist clerics from the capital cities. They were the leaders of the Buddhist monastic communities and had connection with the emperors. Weinstein points out that Tang policy towards Buddhism before the An Lu-shan rebellion in 755 was characterized by expedient patronage and increasingly restrictive control.<sup>233</sup> Monks who were categorized or praised as protectors of the Dharma by Daoxuan were those who received imperial patronage directly and stood in the frontier when criticisms came. Biographies of those monks not only served to

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<sup>233</sup> Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang*, 5.

establish models for other Buddhist but also spoke against anti-Buddhist memorials and imperial decrees.

Starting from Daoxuan, not only did *hufa* become a category of Chinese Buddhist biographies, but the criteria for selecting *hufa* monks remained relatively consistent in post-XGSZ biographies: skill in public and/or court debating, firm faith in Buddhism, and enthusiasm and courage in defending the Dharma against external challenges. In the *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (Song Biographies of Eminent Monks), Zanning 贊寧 (919–1001) keeps a record of eighteen main biographies in his chapter on *hufa*. Most of the monks described therein demonstrated prominent courage and eloquence in debating against Daoists and resisting imperial decrees that intended to restrain Buddhist religious autonomy or to disparage Buddhism under Confucianism and Daoism.

Due to the limited space, I have not had the opportunity to exanimate the details of each biography in the *hufa* section in this study. While some monks have been discussed in studies on religious persecution, others have not received enough scholarly studies, especially the seven biographies included in the editions compiled after the Southern Song Dynasty.

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<sup>234</sup> Unless otherwise indicated, all Taishō citations refer to the 2018 version provided by SAT Daizokyo Text Database (SAT 大藏經テキストデータベース): <http://21dzk.1.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT2018/>

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