

A Record of the Tiantai Mountains

**By
Benjamin Brose**

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Committee in charge:

**Professor Jeffrey Riegel, Chair
Professor Michael Nylan
Professor Raoul Birnbaum**

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All photographs and translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

ABBREVIATIONS

FJRM	<i>Zhongguo Fojiao ren min da cidian</i> 中國佛教人名大辭典
TBGB	<i>Tongbai guan bei</i> 桐柏觀碑
TBSZ	<i>Tongbai shi zhi</i> 桐柏史志
TTSJ	<i>Tiantai shan ji</i> 天台山記
TTXZ	<i>Tiantai xian zhi</i> 天台縣志
TWWS	<i>Tang wangwu shan zhong yan tai zheng yi xiansheng miao jie</i> 唐王屋山中岩台正一先 生廟碣
YTTSF	<i>You Tiantai shan fu</i> 游天台山賦

ON THE ROAD TO Tiantai

*Wrapped, surrounded by ten thousand mountains
Cut off, no place to go...
Until you're here, there's no way to get here.
Once you're here, there's no way to go.*

(Yuan Mei [1716-1798]; Translated by J.P. Seaton]

*In the mountains it's cold.
Always been cold, not just this year,
Jagged scarps forever snowed in
Woods in the dark ravines spitting mist.
Grass is still sprouting at the end of June,
Leaves begin to fall in early August.
And here am I, high on mountains,
Peering and peering, but I can't even see the sky.*

(Han Shan [8th century]; Translated by Gary Snyder)

INTRODUCTION

Natural History

Although Tiantai shan 天台山 is often translated “Heavenly Terrace Mountain”, it is more accurately rendered “Heavenly Terrace Range”. Tiantai is not a single mountain, like the sacred sites of Mount Emei or Jiuhua, but rather a vast territory of mountains and valleys. Modern Chinese local gazetteers (*difang zhi* 地方志) equate the Tiantai Range with the entire county of Tiantai. The county is located in the northeast of Zhejiang province and has an area of slightly more than 1420 square kilometers. The county seat, in the city of Tiantai, is located in the eastern portion of a long, triangular valley that bisects the county from east to west. The Three Maos River (San mao xi 三茅溪) is the area’s main drainage and flows out through the northern most point of this valley.

Mountains rise up abruptly on all sides of the Tiantai valley. To the south is a range that gradually grows in elevation before reaching the county’s highest point at Great Thunder Mountain (Dalei shan 大雷山, 1229 meters). A smaller massif forms the western border of the county. Despite the fact that all of these mountains are sometimes identified as the Tiantai Mountains, it is the range in the northeast of the county that has been the center of religious activity for the past 1800 years. These mountains start to rise up just four kilometers to the north of Tiantai City and form a vast and complicated network of peaks and canyons. Flower Summit (Huading 華頂, 1110 meters) is the highest point. The mountains extend northeast out of Tiantai County and into modern

Xinchang 新昌 and Ninghai 寧海 counties¹. There, the range is known as the Shan Mountains 剡山.

The history of the Shan Mountains is as intriguing as that of Tiantai. Although the two areas are divided by administrative boundaries, in early times the Shan and Tiantai Mountains were not separated, as can be seen in a fourth century inscriptions². The modern boundary between these two sites is neither geographically nor culturally distinct and the present focus on the more southerly Tiantai Range is merely one of convenience. The two ranges need to be understood in relation to each other and deserve to be studied together.

The southern part of this long range of mountains, in the northeast of Tiantai County, is the subject of the present study. When reference is made to the Tiantai Mountains, Tiantai Range, or Tiantai shan in this essay, it is in reference to this area of Tiantai County to the exclusion of the counties' southern and western mountains. I make this distinction following literary traditions, such as the *Record of the Tiantai Mountains* (*Tiantai shan ji* 天台山記; hereafter TTSJ), that clearly set the boundaries of the range within three directional gates. The Red Citadel Mountain (Chicheng shan 赤城山), which lies to the north of Tiantai city, is the southern gate of Tiantai. The Stone Citadel (Shicheng 石城) is the western gate and Incense Brazier Peak (Xianglu feng 香爐峰) in Shan County marks the northern boundary. The mountains terminate in the East China

1 In the Tang and before this area was known as Shan 剡 county, and the mountain range therefor bears the same name. In geologic and geographic terms, the two ranges of Tiantai and Shan are in part of a single northeast trending range that continues as far as the Zhou Shan Archipelago 舟山群島 and includes the famous Buddhist mountain of Putuo shan (see Putuo shan zhi 1995: 22-25; I thank David McCraw for bringing this to my attention).

2 The monk Zhi Dun 支遁 in a preface to an inscription speaks of Tiantai as one mountain within Shan County (see Chapter 1).

Sea. With some exceptions, the great majority of historically important sites are found within this area.

The Tiantai Mountains are sometimes referred to as the Paulownia-Cypress Mountains (Tongbai shan 桐柏山). A Tang stele at the site of Tongbai Belvedere 桐柏觀 has this to say about the two names:

Tiantai and Tongbai: the Buddhists (Shi 釋) call it Tiantai, the Daoists (Zhen 真) call it Tongbai. These two [groups] take the same thing and call it by different names but both agree to call it mysterious (*xuan* 玄) and permeated with the Way (*Dao* 道). Since it is like this, how can it be that it is Tongbai and also not Tongbai? Because it is talked in this way, then what is not is what is, and that is simply not the way it should be.³

Fortunately, it is slightly less confusing than that! As mentioned above, Tongbai is the name that Daoists have used to refer to the mountains. Because the range of Daoist activity was limited in geographic scope, the location of the Tongbai Mountains is also limited to a relatively small area. Nearly all of the Daoist establishments located in the Tiantai Mountains over the past 1800 years have been located in or near a gentle basin just to the north of Tiantai Valley. Geographers identify this basin as being in the center of nine mountain peaks, though this is not immediately apparent at the site⁴. In this essay I refer to this area as the Tongbai Basin, which corresponds to the area now occupied by the Tongbai reservoir. The range in general is referred to as Tiantai.

³ *Tang Cui Shang Tongbai guan bei* 唐崔尚桐柏觀碑 in TBXZ 798.

⁴ TBXZ 63.

The Tiantai Mountains are situated in the northeast of Zhejiang province, about 190 kilometers southeast of Hangzhou and 140 kilometers southwest of Ningbo. They have a latitude ranging from 28° to 29°, which is roughly equivalent to the north of Florida in the United States. The longitude spans from 120° to 121°. Because the Tiantai Range is in the south of China and quite close to the East China Sea, it experiences a reasonably mild climate, with high humidity and occasional heat waves in the summer and freezing temperatures infrequently visiting the higher peaks in the winter months. The primary watershed divide runs east-west, through Flower Summit Peak (Huading 華頂) and Old Lady Heaven Mountain (Tianlao 天姥山). The main streams flow to the south, emptying into the larger rivers in Tiantai Valley or drain north towards the backside of the range.

In medieval times as today, most travelers entered the mountains after first passing through Tiantai City in the valley. From here, they would have proceeded north a few kilometers passing the solitary Red Citadel Mountain on their left. The southern portion of the Tiantai Range is characterized by a sedimentary sandstone that is rich in iron. Where the earth is exposed, such as the eastern face of the Red Citadel and the Tongbai 桐柏 Basin, the oxidized iron turns a rusty red. The main trail led visitors up through Guoqing 國清 (Kingdom at Peace) Valley and into the mountains. The trail leading from the mouth of the valley up to the primary watershed divide followed streams lined with old growth pine forests and a hardwood under-story. The wetter canyons and small tributary valleys were covered in thick stands of bamboo mixed with pines further up slope.

In contrast to the sedimentary soils that cover much of the southern side of the range, the northern slopes are composed of metamorphic granite. The interplay of running water and granite has created many of the fantastic rock formations and waterfalls that has earned Tiantai a reputation for exceptional beauty. The deep river pools and abundance of riparian vegetation also provided habitat for otters, fish and other aquatic life.

The Tiantai mountains were home to a large population of tigers as well as two species of leopard. As late as the 17th century whole areas were being abandoned and burned for fear of harboring tigers⁵. There were also wild boar, jackals and Rhesus monkeys. Small bird-eating cats, deer and seron (goat antelope) favored high exposed ridges. Pangolins, small toothless, scale covered animals related to our armadillo, roamed the forest floor along with mongoose, weasels, foxes and badgers. The forests also sheltered dozens of different bird species.

Up around the main ridge, travelers would have found themselves dwarfed beneath groves of giant cypress and cryptomeria trees and overwhelmed by the scent of whole forests of azalea in bloom. Even today, Flower Peak area attracts botanists who come to study the rare and diverse plant-life that still stubbornly survives in the face of rapid development at Tiantai. The long list of medicinal and useful plants and mushrooms that are found in 16th century gazetteers, and clearly well known long before, mark this as a place with healing powers (see Appendix II).

⁵ See Li Chi 33. Sadly, much of the abundant flora and fauna of Tiantai has been lost. The last leopards, tigers and monkeys, to name just a few of the larger mammals, have not been seen since the 1950's. For a summary of rare and endangered animals as well as a list of birds at Tiantai see TTXZ 50-51.

Mythical Origins

Two legends dominate the earliest histories of the Tiantai Range. Both claim ancient origins. The first of these is the legend of Liu Chen 劉晨 and Ruan Zhao 阮肇⁶.

Legend has it that one spring day nearly two thousand years ago, two villagers walked south from their native Shan 剡 county, following streams that led deep into the Tiantai range⁷. They soon became lost and passed nearly two weeks trying to retrace their steps and return home. Starving and close to death, the two caught sight of a peach tree with unusually large fruit high atop a nearby mountain. Liu and Ruan pulled themselves up a narrow ravine and finally reached the tree, gorging themselves on the fruit. They climbed back down into the canyon and, walking to the river for water, noticed a trail of fresh leaves floating on the current. The leaves were followed by a cup filled with hemp seed. Seeing this they were encouraged and thought that a village must be close at hand. So they followed the stream for another couple of miles.

After a time they met with two beautiful girls standing alongside a great stream which seemed to be flowing right out of the middle of the mountain. The two maidens saw Liu and Ruan holding the cup and broke into smiles saying, “Liu and Ruan, what gentlemen, you’ve returned our cup to us!” The men were taken aback. They had never

6 For a study of the origins and influence of this story see Xu Shangshu 許尚樞 1990b. See also TTSFWZ 363-4. This is a classic story that has taken many forms throughout the history of Chinese literature. The primary source is *You ming lu* 幽明錄 by Liu Yiqing 劉義慶. Schafer dates this text as ‘apparently’ sixth century (Schafer:1984). The present version is adapted from a Northern Song edition of the text as found in Xu Shangshu 1990b:183. The physical site of Liu and Ruan’s mysterious passage to a paradisiacal land is still found today in the northern Tiantai Range. It can be found about 6 km to the northwest of Baizhang Crag and is known as “Peach Source, Spring Dawn”(Tao yuan qiu xiao 桃源春曉). Strassberg notes that it wasn’t until 1087 that the local authorities opened a road to the site, planted peach trees and developed the place into a tourist spot, one of the eight famous scenes on the mountain (p.505 n.20).

7 The TTSJ places this story in the mythical Xia dynasty (ca. 21st – 16th centuries BCE).

seen these girls before yet the maidens knew their names and acted as though they had known them for years. The nymphs just grinned, “What took you so long?”

The girls took Liu and Ruan back to their home which had copper tiled roofs above and great big beds with thin curtains below. At the head of each bed were ten servant girls who catered to their every need, feeding them the finest foods and liquors, baskets of peaches and other delicacies. After ten days, the two asked their hostesses they way home. The nymphs answered, “Lords, you have only just arrived, how can you already desire to leave?” Seeing the logic in this, Liu and Ruan stayed on for another six months. But when the leaves began to turn and the birds were heading south they grew homesick and again requested to be shown the path that led out of the mountains. At that time the girls all gathered together for a great party, wished their lodgers well and pointed out the road that would lead them home.

When the two men returned to their native village they were surprised to find that things were not as they had once been. Each sought out his family only to find themselves face to face with their seventh generation of grandchildren. The amazed villagers told the two that they had heard that hundreds of years earlier two men went into the mountains to gather herbs and never returned, but no one knew what became of them. After a short time Liu and Ruan left the village once more and were never heard from again.

The legend of Liu and Ruan raises a number of issues that are central to the history of the Tiantai Range. The first revolves around plants. The two had traveled to the mountains to gather medicinal herbs. The turning point in the narrative comes after Liu and Ruan have consumed magical peaches. The reputation of Tiantai as a place of

healing plants was directly related to its identification as a spirit realm. Like other spiritually charged sites, powerful plants at Tiantai marked the locations of spirit activity. The TTSJ is filled with descriptions of unusual plants at sites where the realms of humans and spirits intersected. Raoul Birnbaum has referred to such plants as “indicators”, pointing out their function of identifying the locus of numinous activity in spiritually charged landscapes ⁸. Unusual animals function in much the same way. The presence of these plants and animals adds legitimacy to the underlying spiritual presence at the site⁹.

Another theme in the legend of Liu and Ruan that is found in much of the literature of the Tiantai Mountains is the representation of water sources as transitional zones. Liu and Ruan follow a stream that appears to be issuing from the heart of the mountain. They are led to a paradisiacal realm inhabited by supernatural beings. The idea that the Tiantai Mountains were filled with gateways that led to parallel worlds where suffering and sickness were unknown pervades literary representations of Tiantai. These spirit worlds were often reached through water sources, particularly at sites of dramatic transition from land to water, such as waterfalls, springs and deep pools. It was a common belief in China that heavenly realms inhabited by spirits existed beneath the surface of sacred mountain sites. These could be accessed through water sources and caves that led deep underground. Along with high peaks, it is these sites and the plants, animals and humans that surround them, that form the sacred ecology of the Tiantai Range.

⁸ Birnbaum 1997.

⁹ Particularly important in the ethno-botany of the Tiantai range the ancient pines that evoke immortality and dense old stands of bamboo. In addition to this there are listed numerous other small herbs and mushrooms which can be found growing near important sites.

Finally, Liu and Ruan successfully cross from the ordinary world into the spirit realm and back again. This transition is central to many of the hagiographies of religious figures living in the Tiantai Mountains. Part of the importance of Tiantai, in the eyes of religious practitioners, was that it was a place where one could gain access to spirits and their teachings. In the pre-Tang Tiantai literature we find people meeting with spirits in the Tongbai Basin, seeing spirits after crossing naturally formed stone bridges, and doing battle with demons up at Flower Peak. There are many more examples.

The legend of Liu and Ruan was written long after Tiantai had begun to be established as an important mountain site. Later generations saw the story as an acceptable account of some of the earliest activity in the Tiantai Range (the retrospective creation of the ancient history of Tiantai is addressed in Chapter 1). What we see in the legend fits into the broader pattern of the representation of Tiantai as a sacred site. Many of the themes found here also run through the extraordinary life stories of other Tiantai figures. The legend of Wang Ziqiao, the second of two main Tiantai origin myths, is another example.

Wang Ziqiao was believed to have been the eldest son of King Ling of the Zhou 周靈王 (r.571-544 BCE). His style was Zijin 子晉. Falling from his father's grace because of his upright behavior, he was disinherited and went to live as a hermit on Mount Song. His biography is included in the *Various Biographies of Immortals* (*Lie xian zhuan* 列仙傳), written in the Later Han (25-220):

He was good at playing the reed flute and making the call of the Phoenix. He wandered about in the regions of Luo 洛 and Yi 伊. He met with the Daoist Fu Jingong 浮近公 and together they climbed Mount Song 嵩山. After more than

thirty years people searched for him on the mountain. He encountered Huan Liang 桓良 and said, ‘Tell my family to wait for me on the seventh day of the seventh month at the peak of Mount Goushi 緱氏¹⁰.’ At the indicated time, he appeared riding on the back of a white crane, halting at the top of the mountain. They gazed at him but were unable to see him clearly. He raised his hands, bade farewell to the people of the time and left. After that, temples were established for him at Mount Goushi and Mount Songgao.¹¹

I treat the development of Wang’s cult in detail in Chapter 1. Wang Ziqiao was later appointed the patron deity of the Tiantai Mountains. He resided in grotto-heaven (*dongtian* 洞天) in Tiantai’s Tongbai Basin. Wang is said to have appeared on a number of occasions to worthy practitioners and came to be the protector of major monasteries at Tiantai. His legend at Tiantai, like that of Liu and Ruan, involves a subterranean heaven inhabited by spirits. Far from being beyond the reach of mortals, these spirits were known for their occasional interactions with the residents of the Tiantai Mountains. Wang Ziqiao’s accessibility and reputation as a wonder worker eventually established him as patron spirit of the Tiantai Range.

The Arhats

In addition to housing the spirit of Wang Ziqiao, Tiantai was also the mountain seat of the Buddhist Arhats. These two spirit traditions defined the sacred nature of the Tiantai Range. All of the major Buddhist mountain centers in China are associated with a resident deity: Wenshu (Manjusri) Bodhisattva at the Wutai Mountains, Guanyin (Avalokiteshvara) Bodhisattva at Mount Putuo, Jiaye (Mahakasyapa) at Mount Jizu, etc.

¹⁰ Mount Guoshi is located in Yanshi 偃師 county, Henan Province

The Tiantai Mountains are home to the arhats (*luohan* 羅漢), a group of Shakyamuni Buddha's disciples, varying in number, to whom he entrusted the protection of his teachings after his death. The scriptural basis for the arhat cult in China was the *Record of the Abiding Dharma Spoken by the Great Arhat Nandimitra* (*Da luohan Nandimiduoluo suo shuo fazhuji*) written sometime between the late 3rd and early 6th centuries and translated into Chinese in the mid-7th century¹². In this scripture, Nandamitri gave a description of the transcendent nature of the arhats as well as the names of sixteen and their respective mountain abodes.

We cannot trace the link between the Tiantai Range and the arhat cult to this scripture because the Tiantai tradition was already well established before the translation of the text in the 7th century. Nandimitra's scripture at most only reinforced existing beliefs. Sun Chuo, whose relation to Tiantai is discussed in Chapter 1, was the first to mention the presence of arhats in the Tiantai Mountains in his *Poetic Essay on Roaming in the Tiantai Mountains* (*You Tiantai shan fu* 游天台山賦) written in the 4th century. The term that Sun Chuo uses for the word arhat, *yingzhen* 應真 (one who resonates with perfection) is suggestive of how early Chinese viewed the relationship between arhats and immortals (*zhenren* 真人: perfected beings). The similarities in their names and the similarities in their characteristics (advanced spiritual practitioners with supernatural powers residing in remote mountain ranges) suggests a belief that the two traditions were really one and the same.

We see this theory played out in the hagiography of Tan You, discussed in Chapter 2. Tan You crossed a naturally formed stone bridge that was known to lead to the

11 *Lie Xian Zhuan* 59. See also Kaltenmark 109-114 for translation into French.

realm of the immortals. But instead of meeting with immortals, Tan You gained entrance into a realm of supernatural Buddhist monks. In fact, aside from the mention of Bodhisattvas and Buddhist monks, everything else in the story of Tan You's crossing of the stone bridge reads like a meeting with immortals. Although Tan You is credited with establishing the Buddhist tradition at Tiantai, there is much in his hagiography that links him with early Daoist traditions as well as the later cult of the arhats. This is especially true of his interactions with tigers and snakes.

Tomb reliefs dating from the 3rd century show immortals next to or mounted on tigers and dragons¹³. It is certain that when Tan You came to the Tiantai Mountains in the 4th century there were substantial populations of both tigers and snakes, but the role they play in his hagiography is more than just peripheral. Tan You settled at Red Citadel Mountain, a small mountain of red sandstone whose many caves were believed to lead to subterranean heavens. When You first took up residence in these caves he was confronted by a pack of tigers which he quickly subdued. Next a swarm of snakes appeared and paid obeisance to Tan You before vacating the cave. Like the immortals pictured in Han tombs, the hagiography of Tan You shows him subduing these dangerous creatures. When tigers and dragons became common motifs in Chinese arhat paintings beginning in the late 10th century, there is little doubt that the imagery was borrowed from images of immortals. The hagiography of Tan You is the first example of a localized tradition of immortals being translated into Buddhist arhats. It may also be a prototype for later images and legends of the arhats.

12 Kent 184
13 Kent 187.

Tan You was from Gansu province which linked him more closely with the traditions of Central Asia and India than with those of China. This may have been one of the reasons later generations identified him with the arhats who were of Indian origin. But there was no explicitly stated link between the supernatural monks that Tan You encountered at the stone bridge and the arhats until the Tang dynasty. The biography of Pu'an (ca.770-843) in the *Song gao seng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 records that at the Stone Bridge, "When the hymn singing began and the fragrant mist rose, first there was a gold-colored bird which came flying, then, in the forest or beside the rocks, Indian monks appeared, some walking, some sitting, some making signs by waving their hands, others even lying at rest in the air. In a wink, there were thousands and tens of thousands of transformations."¹⁴ From at least the Tang Dynasty on, it was established that the Tiantai Mountains were the abode of the arhats.

While the link between Tiantai and the arhats is well established, it was not central to the development of the site and is not the defining feature of the range today. In much of the pre-Song literature that is reviewed in this essay, the arhats play a peripheral role. The TTSJ makes only brief mention of the arhats association with the stone bridge and biographies of famous masters often make no reference to the arhats at all. The prominent role played by resident bodhisattvas at other mountain sites, like the frequent appearance of Wenshu (Manjusri) Bodhisattva throughout the history of the Wutai Mountains, does not have a parallel at Tiantai. Like the many different religious traditions that operated out of the Tiantai Range throughout the centuries, the arhats are one among many spiritual traditions that co-habit the mountains.

14 Translated in Fong 22-23.

Although the arhat tradition at Tiantai has deep historical roots, the identification of the Tiantai Mountains as the dwelling place of the arhats appears to be linked more to the tradition of associating important mountain sites with important deities than to a strong presence of the arhats at the site. It may have been different in the past but at present, with the exception of one bronze shrine at the stone bridge, the one nunnery and seven functioning monasteries place no more emphasis on the arhats than do other temples throughout China. Images of the arhats can be found along the walls of almost every Great Hero Hall (where the monks gather several times a day to recite the liturgy) and many monasteries have a separate hall to house images of the five hundred arhats. There are no more or less images of the arhats at Tiantai than at Mount Emei. While present day pilgrims will be confronted with a barrage of Dizang (Kshtigarbha) Bodhisattva images and ceaseless ceremonies for the dead (whom Dizang has vowed to assist) at Mount Jiuhua, there is no similar focus on the arhats at Tiantai. Today, monks at the stone bridge, the very site of arhat activity at Tiantai, say that the arhats are not a major feature of their lives and practice. There can be no doubt that the cult of the arhats plays an important role in Chinese Buddhism, but aside from the tradition of locating the arhats in the Tiantai Mountains, there has been nothing to suggest that the arhats play a pronounced role at Tiantai.

Historical Origins

According to archeological finds of the last fifteen years, the area of Tiantai County has been inhabited for at least the last six to seven thousand years¹⁵. Primitive stone tools have been unearthed in great concentrations along the valley's main drainage as well as along major streams in both the northern and southern ranges. It was not until after the fall of the Han Dynasty in 220 CE that the residents of the area attracted the attention of a central government. After the Han, the south of China was divided between the regions of Kingdom of Shu, headed by Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220), in the west and the Kingdom of Wu (222-280), headed by Zhu Sunquan 主孫權 (182-252), in the east. Before the capital of Wu was established near modern day Nanjing, this area of China was sparsely populated by non-Chinese tribal groups. Cultural contact was oriented towards Southeast Asia rather than Central Asia, as had been the case in the north. This marked a time of "sinification" in southern China as great stretches of land were opened up for cultivation through burning the vegetation and flooding the land¹⁶. It was during this time that the county of Tiantai (then called Shiping 始平) was first established. Local histories record the founding of the county as occurring sometime between the years of 222 and 231¹⁷.

It was shortly after the establishment of the county that the early Daoist Ge Xuan took up residence in the Tiantai Mountains. The religious history of Tiantai traces its origin back to this event. The period of time spanning from the activity of Ge Xuan, in the early 3rd century, to the writing of the TTSJ in the early 9th century, is addressed in the following chapters.

15 See Jin Zhuming. The Tiantai Mountains lie to the south of the ancient site of Hemudu, thought to be one of the earliest sites of rice cultivation in China. Archaeological digs at the site reveal a highly developed culture occupying the site from at least 5000 BCE Nelson 273-274.

16 Zürcher 43-45.

Overview

This paper deals with the early history of the Tiantai Mountains, from the 3rd to the 9th centuries. I have chosen to concentrate on this time period for several reasons. The first attempt at a comprehensive representation of the Tiantai Mountains comes from Xu Lingfu's writing of the TTSJ in the early 9th century. The events of his record span from the mythical origins of Chinese civilization up until his own day in the Tang dynasty (618-907). In attempting to understand his work I have found it necessary to review many of the mythical and historical figures that appear in his record. Clearly, a paper of this size can not begin to do justice to even a single historic period, let alone six hundred years of activity. Although this paper is loosely organized into three historical periods, it should not be mistaken for a detailed history of the Tiantai Range. At most, I hope that this paper will mark some of the major landmarks in the history of the Tiantai Range. I leave it for another time (or individual) to map out the numerous details of the historical terrain.

All sections are generally centered on the biographies and hagiographies of historic figures. Moving out from that center are cultural themes that have struck me as particularly relevant to each of the three historic periods. Topics such as the role of literature or the effect of patronage are important issues throughout the entire history of a site like Tiantai and are not limited to early or later periods. For this reason, the boundaries of the given themes and the historic periods in which they are situated are not intended to suggest mutual exclusion. It is little more than a stylistic convention.

The theme of the first chapter is the literature of the Tiantai Mountains. A number of questions are taken up in this chapter: When did the Tiantai Mountains begin to appear

17 TTXZ 5.

in Chinese literature? How were the mountains represented in the literature and how did those representations affect the way the range was perceived by pilgrims? What was the relationship of the written word to the landscape? How was literature incorporated into the physical terrain and how was that terrain represented in the literature? To what extent is the traditional history of the Tiantai Mountains tied up with works of literature? How reliable is the information we find in literary sources and, by association, how accurate are the traditional historical accounts? Did different religious traditions apply different modes of representation to the mountains? What does the literature tell us about its authors?

Chapter 2 deals with some of the representations of Tiantai found within the early literature. Through examining the activity some of the early Buddhist figures at Tiantai, I try to identify sites within the landscape that were particularly important to religious figures. In addition to questions revolving around the circumstances of the first Buddhists at Tiantai, a number of other questions are raised: Which areas in the landscape were central to religious figures and why? Were different sites emphasized by different religious traditions? What was the role of humans and their structures within the sacred landscape of Tiantai? What general conclusions can be drawn about the characteristics of a sacred mountain range through examining the hagiographies of local monks?

The final chapter explores the factors leading to the construction of several of the major monastic complexes at Tiantai. Again, this is accomplished through an examination of the biographies and hagiographies of prominent Buddhist and Daoist figures. In this chapter I have focused on the relationship of emperors and local rulers to the construction of Tiantai as a pilgrimage site. What was the nature of that relationship?

How did religious figures draw the attention of powerful political figures? What were the details of imperial patronage? How did the relationship serve the patrons and how did it benefit the religious communities? Did the nature of the relationship change depending on the sectarian affiliation of the religious community? What was the result of extended patronage on the development of the Tiantai Mountains?

There are a number of issues that are conspicuously absent from this paper. The complexity of religious traditions at Tiantai has not been examined in this paper. We know that several different Buddhist traditions (Tiantai, Chan, Esoteric, Pure Land) were found within the same monastic complexes during the Tang and a closer look at their inter-relations might tell us a good deal about medieval Chinese Buddhism. I have also not attempted a doctrinal comparison of the different religious traditions based in the Tiantai Mountains. There do appear to be similarities among the meditation techniques employed by different Buddhist and Daoist traditions at Tiantai and a careful analysis might yield instructive results. Tiantai was one religious center among many in China. It was intimately connected with other centers both in China as well as Korea and Japan. There is a large amount of information about the cultural interchange between the Tiantai Mountains, Korea and Japan. This is an important feature of the Tiantai Range that deserves to be examined in detail. Furthermore, the presence of Indian monks, which I discuss in a peripheral way, is a reoccurring theme in the history of the Tiantai Range and is yet another topic that needs further study.

The history of the Tiantai Mountains does not end in the Tang but continues up to the present day. The wealth of activity and information in the post-Tang area is so great that I have been compelled to limit myself to the early period. These are only a handful of

the many topics that have been left out of this paper due to restrictions of time and space. No understanding of these mountains would be complete without them.

The Record of the Tiantai Mountains

The TTSJ, written by Xu Lingfu in the first half of the 9th century, is noteworthy in many ways. For one, the TTSJ is the first attempt at gathering ecological, historical, spiritual and travel information about the mountains into a single essay. Until the 9th century, the site of the Tiantai Mountains had always functioned as a backdrop against which magical events occurred during the lives of certain individuals. This was where Ge Xuan received the divine texts, where Tan You crossed the stone bridge and Zhiyi did battle with demons. Clearly, a place of great importance but always second in importance to the people who lived there. A shift in perspective took place with the writing of the TTSJ. The lives of a series of important individuals are defined through their relation to the site, rather than site being defined through its relation to important individuals. While it is certain that the reputation of the site and its inhabitants mutually enhanced each other, the TTSJ represents the first time the range itself became the central focus of the literature. This trend would continue and expand after the Tang with larger and more elaborate accounts of the Tiantai Mountains being written. A number of mountain records, travel records, and mountain gazetteers have been produced from the Song up until the present. They all rely to some degree on the TTSJ for source material.

In addition to its being the first attempt at a comprehensive representation of the Tiantai Mountains, the TTSJ is also an early example of a literary genre that was just emerging in the Tang. The mountain record (*shanji* 山記), the genre to which the TTSJ

belongs, differs in style and tone from the travel record (*youji* 游記), whose roots go back at least as far as the Former Han dynasty (206 BCE –8 CE)¹⁸. Travel records, like diaries, recorded the experiences of the traveler as he moved through the landscape. While many emphasize the historical and unusual aspects of the landscape, the writer himself plays a central role. Mountain records also differ from the mountain gazetteers (*shanzhi* 山志) that would begin to appear in the Song dynasty (960-1279)¹⁹. Whereas travel records were characterized by a high degree of subjectivity in the writing, mountain gazetteers strove for an unsentimental objectivity. Here, one could find list of landmarks and their toponyms, temple names and their histories, important figures and their biographies, etc. These were more a compilation of information about a place than they were a literary composition. The TTSJ, and the literary genre to which it belongs, falls somewhere between the travel record and the mountain gazetteer. The author's voice is present but not central as he guides the reader through the landscape. He provides practical information such as the distance between sites, which routes are best avoided and the histories of important landmarks and temples. But the information is in narrative form rather than categorized in lists. The mountain record could function both as a guidebook for pilgrims at the site as well as a vivid description of the landscape and its history for those further away.

It is difficult to know how widely the TTSJ was read in the centuries following its completion. It is certain that it enjoyed at least local popularity almost immediately after it was written. We know this because when the Japanese monk Enchin made a pilgrimage to Tiantai in 853 he was introduced to the text and subsequently introduced it to his

¹⁸ See Strassberg 1-56 for a discussion of the evolution of travel writing in imperial China.

native Japan. When the Tendai (Japanese for Tiantai) monk Saicho made a similar pilgrimage to the Tiantai Mountains more than two hundred years later in 1072-73, he carried with him a copy of the TTSJ²⁰. Was it equally important in China? Probably. It is listed among the books in the libraries of the Song which suggests that it was more than ephemeral travel literature²¹. The earliest copy I have been able to find is a reproduction of manuscript in the *Guyi congshu* 古逸叢書. There is a colophon on this edition that dates it to 1237. From this date on it must have been widely accessible, judging from how frequently it is cited in works from the Song through modern times. Interestingly, the TTSJ was not included in the Ming edition of the Daoist Canon. Instead, compilers used the Gazetteer of the Tiantai Mountains (Tiantai shan zhi 天台山志), an anonymous work that is nearly void of narrative. This work is primarily a short compilation of essays and poems about the site. The TTSJ was not included in any edition of the Buddhist Canon until the Japanese publication of the *Taishô shinshû Daizôkyô*, in the years 1924-1932. The wide spread availability of this edition of the Tripitika has resulted in an even wider distribution of the TTSJ. Unfortunately, the *Taishô* edition of the TTSJ is filled with errors.

Xu Lingfu

The TTSJ is not about any single person or religious sect. Nor is it a biographical or even personal piece. While Xu Lingfu's own voice is apparent throughout the work, he does not detail his own experiences in the mountains. He refers to himself only in passing and is much more concerned with the lives of the great spiritual masters that had

19 See Brook 49-72 for an overview of the mountain gazetteers in China.

preceded him. So it is that in reading his essay we may learn a great deal about such figures as Ge Xuan and Sima Chengzhen but our curiosity about the author is hardly satisfied. What little we know about Xu Lingfu comes from the text itself and what later historians of the Tiantai Mountains, beginning in the Song, have added.

A few biographical facts can be drawn from the TTSJ. At the end of his essay, Xu Lingfu states that in 815 he moved from the Southern Marchmount (Mount Heng), to the Tiantai Mountains²². Five years after his arrival he established the Fangying 方瀛 residence in the north of the Tongbai Basin near Rear Peak (Hou feng 後峰)²³. Finally, Xu says that he composed the TTSJ sometime during the years 825-827.

Later sources flesh out some of the details of Xu's life. The Red Citadel Gazetteer (Chicheng zhi 赤城志), written early in the 13th century, preserves this biographical notice:

Xu Lingfu was from Qiantang 錢塘 [northwest Zhejiang province]. His style was Mo Xizi 默希子. He lived at Tiantai's Cloud Cover Peak (Yungai feng 雲蓋峰), which he regarded as [the immortal realm of] Fangying. Here, he carried out his practice. He once expressed his joy in verse saying, "For those who study the Dao, total perfection is right here. One is born into confusion, wades across and waits for death. Then another birth is sought. Put an end to birth right now! No birth means releasing your hold on birth while knowing how to dwell in birth."

Early in the Huichang 會昌 period (841-847) [Xu Lingfu] repeatedly failed to respond to imperial summons, but sent this statement: "[My]

20 Borgen 64-71.

21 Van der Loon 83.

22 TTSJ 10948 UA6-8.

23 TTSJ 10945 LB1-2.

uncultivated nature sings of three joys, but the emperor's favor is of nine types. [Messengers] come to issue the directive of the purple palace, but they are dispatched below the white, cloud covered peaks. Everybody is ashamed that a text could be transmitted to a crane, but the depth of their shame is only a painting of a dragon. How could I be of any help to an enlightened ruler? I am old but content amongst the pines and the cliffs.”²⁴

Xu Lingfu's entry in the TTSFWZ, written in 1601, provides further detail. The text states that he came from the Tianmu shan 天目山 area of Qiantang. He was accomplished in Confucian studies but had no desire for fame and profit so he moved to a stone room at Tiger Head Cliff (Hutou yan 虎頭巖) near Cloud Cover Peak. He stayed there for more than ten years. During this time, Xu Lingfu stopped eating grains and remained focused and still. In this way he was transformed [into an immortal]. He died at the age of eighty-two. Xu Lingfu is said here to have authored four texts in addition to the TTSJ: the *Dark Mirror* (*Xuan Jian* 玄鑑), the *Classic of Progressing Toward a Mysterious Perfection* (*Tong xuan zhen jing* 通玄真經), a *Summary of the Three Caverns* (*San dong yao lue* 三洞要略), and a *Preface to the Collected Poems of Cold Mountain* (*Han shanzi ji xu* 寒山子集序)²⁵.

A recent history of the Tongbai tradition, the *Historical Gazetteer of the Tongbai Mountains* (*Tongbai shi zhi* 桐柏史志) provides a biography of Xu Lingfu that has him living into the 870's. If he died at the age of eighty-two he may have been born during the late 780's. This biography also states that Xu Lingfu was trained in the Shangqing (Highest Clarity) tradition by Tian Xuying 田虛應. He would have been around thirty

24 CCZ, *juan* 35.

years old when he moved from Mount Heng to Tiantai. According to this later record, Xu Lingfu took up residence at Tongbai Belvedere 桐柏觀, the main Daoist training center at Tiantai. After six years, he moved 5 *li* (2.5 km) behind the belvedere to Cloud Cover Peak. There he built himself a hermitage in a forest of pine and bamboo. There was a great pond in the area with strange stones that seemed like islands, so he called the place Fangying²⁶. In 829, despairing at the dilapidated state of Tongbai Belvedere, he along with several others, repaired the old halls and expanded the belvedere, adding a number of new buildings. After it was finished he asked the great poet Yuan Zhen 元稹 to write the *Record of the Restoration of Tongbai Belvedere* (*Zhong xiu tongbai guan ji* 重修桐柏觀記).

Such is the biographical information that has collected around the figure of Xu Lingfu. He is portrayed as learned in Confucian literature, trained in Daoist traditions and probably familiar with Buddhist doctrine. He had previously resided on Mount Heng, another major religious center for both Daoist and Buddhist traditions. In short, he is the ideal individual to write a record of the Tiantai Mountains.

25 TTSFWZ 381. His preface to the poems of Hanshan, though no longer extant, would have been the earliest edition of Cold Mountain's poems.

26 The name was given in 825 but, in 1008, changed to Yuan ming gong 元明宮.

Chapter 1

THE EARLY LITERATURE OF THE TIANTAI MOUNTAINS

3RD - 4TH centuries

Introduction: A Range of Words

The Tiantai Mountains, although mentioned briefly in geographical works dating from the Warring States period (475-221 BCE), began to receive the extended attention of Chinese writers and poets beginning in the 4th century²⁷. In this chapter, the role early literature played in establishing Tiantai as a sacred site is examined. The influence of literature on the Tiantai Mountains has taken many forms. In addition to bringing the range to the attention of readers located in the capital or other distant areas, literature that featured the Tiantai Mountains was also instrumental in shaping the perceptions and experiences of people at the site. This was the result of the interaction of at least two different factors. The first had to do with the very particular way that the mountains were represented in early and subsequent written works. The second involved the textualization of the landscape.

The majority of writers who mentioned the Tiantai Range in their work focused on the notion that the mountains were a liminal zone where the earthly and heavenly realms overlapped. Another prominent feature of the early literature that deals with Tiantai is the non-sectarian representation of the site. Although from at least the 4th century the Tiantai Mountains have been home to religious practitioners of many

27 The *Classic of Mountains and Seas* (*Shan hai jing* 山海經), written in the Warring States (475-221 BCE) and part of the Han (202 BCE- 220 CE), states, “In the middle of the Great Wilderness there are mountains. Their name is the Tiantai Mountains. Sea water flows into them.” See Birrell for translation.

different traditions, there is very little evidence to suggest a partisan divide between groups. On the contrary, those aspects of the range that were important to one group were equally valued by other groups, suggesting an interpretation of sacred space that was common to all religious traditions at Tiantai.

The relationship between a written text and the physical landscape has had a large impact on the traditional history of the Tiantai Mountains. In part, this chapter focuses on how many of the events associated with the ancient history of the Tiantai Range were created by later generations of authors²⁸. These created events were subsequently incorporated into the landscape by means of inscriptions and toponyms. The inscribed sites were read by later pilgrims and writers at Tiantai as archaeological evidence, proving the occurrence of past events. In this way, certain aspects of the traditional history of the Tiantai Mountains have been written retrospectively.

The representation of the Tiantai Mountains found in the *Record of the Tiantai Mountains* (TTSJ) has been both the subject and the agent of these influences. Xu Lingfu's TTSJ, unique though it was, was part of a long tradition of literature that dealt with sacred mountain sites. Xu Lingfu's material was often taken directly from other sources and these texts influenced Xu's method of presentation and interpretation. Before turning to the various issues imbedded within the early literature of the Tiantai Range, I first discuss the primary sources used by Xu Lingfu in his writing of the TTSJ.

Sources

Xu Lingfu used a variety of sources when compiling the TTSJ. His most heavily cited references were Sun Chuo's Poetic Essay on *Wandering in the Tiantai Mountains*

(*You Tiantai shan fu* 游天台山賦) and Tao Hongjing's *Declarations of the Perfected* (*Zhengao* 真告). He also cited such authorities on numinous mountains as Ge Hong 葛洪 and Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之. Almost as important for source material as these literary and artistic giants were imperial edicts and imperially sponsored steles, most of which were written near Xu Lingfu's own time in the mountains of Tiantai, during the middle of the Tang Dynasty (618-907). It is possible that Xu was drawing on local oral traditions as well as textual resources when compiling his record but he only refers directly to textual sources. While relying on the authority of previous literary works, Xu himself was creating a piece of writing that would be cited again and again by further contributors to the literature of Tiantai.

The authors of the texts to which Xu had access can be grouped into two categories: the lay-elite and the religious-professional. It is evident that during the formative years of Tiantai culture politicians, artists, scholars, and Buddhist and Daoist monks all shared a common outlook and enjoyed a close association with one another. But the authority that issued from their writings originated from different sources. For the secular elite, it was their position of authority within the political realm, as well as their high level of learning and literary ability (in a society where few could read literary or religious texts), which lent an air of authority to their observations. The monks and masters who left literary traces on Tiantai often claimed a divine providence for the marvelous events that were recorded in their works. In many instances, their reputation as accomplished practitioners was enough for many to accept their statements without question. Once a literary piece of work on Tiantai was established it became a model for

28 See the legend of Liu and Ruan discussed in the introduction for another example of this phenomenon.

future writers taking up the same topic or theme. We see certain works cited over and over again by later generations of writers. Sun Chuo's *Poetic Essay on Wandering in the Tiantai Mountains* is perhaps the best example of such modeling but there are many others.

Early Literati

Many of the place names and legends associated with the Tiantai Range were established through early works of literature. Although many toponyms were likely derived from ancient oral traditions, they would become widely known and celebrated through mention in famous essays and scriptures. In the fourth century a stream of writings was initiated by an elite group of local scholars and clerics living to the north in the Kuaiji area. These men were interested in the philosophical debates and speculations of the time regarding, among other things, the nature and location of sacred mountains. Their writings are highly syncretic in nature and are filled with allusions to both Buddhist and Daoist traditions. They were influential in establishing patterns of representation of the Tiantai Range.

The most important piece of literature in the early history of the Tiantai Mountains was the *Poetic Essay on Wandering in the Tiantai Mountains* (*You Tiantai shan fu* 游天台山賦) written by Sun Chuo 孫綽 (314-371). This essay describes the poet's ecstatic journey through the Tiantai Mountains and some of the spirits he encounters there. More than just the earliest essay to treat the spiritual landscape of Tiantai, it also became a celebrated example for the *fu* 賦 (poetic essay) genre of literature. Since the essay's initial circulation in the fourth century and its inclusion in

the literary collection of the *Wen xuan* 文選 in the sixth century, the piece became a principle source for anyone writing about the Tiantai mountains. The TTSJ opens with a quote from the essay and continues to cite it throughout the remainder of the text.

Sun Chuo and his contemporaries were operating out of the cultural center of Kuaiji 會稽 (modern day Shaoxing 紹興 in Zhejiang province) during the Eastern Jin Dynasty (317-420). At that time, the land south of the Yangzi River had once again become a political and cultural hub after northern China fell to a series of foreign rulers in an era remembered as the Sixteen Kingdoms (304-439). When Luoyang, the capital of the Western Jin (265-420), fell to the Xiongnu in 311 great masses of northern Chinese began to move south. A new capital was once again established at the site of modern Nanjing and a new era of Chinese religious and philosophical creativity was begun.

Sun Chuo was deeply involved in the ideological debates current amongst his affluent contemporaries and his literary output was clearly marked by the dominant intellectual model of the time, Dark Learning (Xuanxue 玄學), which emphasized non-being, vacuity, and the numinous nature of the world²⁹. Sun was identified as a lay follower of the Buddhist monk Zhi Dun 支遁 (314-366) and a protegee of the Daoist calligrapher Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (c. 307-365), suggesting a broad appreciation of various religious traditions. It seems that, regardless of religious affiliation, the elite echelon of Kuaiji shared a common, syncretic view of Confucian, Buddhist and Daoist philosophies³⁰. Sun Chuo's lines, "Wang Ziqiao drove a crane and soared to heaven. /

29 For a brief analysis of Dark Learning elements in Sun's *Poetic Essay on Wandering in the Tiantai Mountains*, see Mather's introduction to his translation 226-234. See also Wing-tsit Chan 314-318.

30 For a thorough treatment of the elite circle surrounding Zhi Dun and Sun Chuo's place therein, see Zürcher 116-140. The majority of the Lingbao scriptures, written by Ge Chaofu in roughly the same time and location, are also strongly marked by Buddhist-Daoist syncretism.

The arhats flung their staves and trod on air” set an inclusive tone that would sound throughout much of Tiantai’s lengthy history³¹. Not only were readers instructed for the first time that these mountains are the home of spirits which transcended efforts to categorize, but they were also introduced to what through the centuries would become the most important representatives of Tiantai: Wang Ziqiao and the Arhats. In this way, Sun Chuo laid the foundations for the way in which the Tiantai Mountains would be understood by later generations. But although he is credited with the introduction of the range to the literate Chinese, it was in conjunction with several other prominent figures that the literate world was introduced to Tiantai.

Wang Xizhi, regarded by many to be China’s most skilled calligrapher, was a student of both Buddhist and Daoist traditions. He was on close terms with the Buddhist monk Zhi Dun and the character *zhi* 之 in Wang’s name indicates his affiliation with the Celestial Masters sect of Daoism³². One of the earliest copies of the difficult *Scripture of the Yellow Court* was copied out in his famed script³³. Wang’s presence at Tiantai is recorded in the literature and on the landscape. The scripture was held to have been copied out in 356 near Tiantai’s Flower Peak (Huading 華頂). In the environs of the Peak one would find the Yellow Scripture Cave (Huang jing dong 黃經洞), his residence while writing the scripture, and the site where he washed his brush, Wang Youjun’s Ink Pool 王右軍墨池³⁴. The TTSJ also devotes a large amount of space to describe in detail the

31 Mather 242; Owen 188. Wang Ziqiao was often seen as the Daoist spiritual representative of the Tiantai Range, the arhats were the dominant Buddhist deities.

32 Lothar Ledderose has suggested that he was born into a family that adhered to the Celestial Masters sect for generations Ledderose 1984:248.

33 For a reproduction of sections of the original manuscript with explanatory notes see Little 2000:338-339, cat. no. 128. Although none of the original versions of Wang’s calligraphy survive, there are numerous reproductions.

34 Wang Youjun is another name for Wang Xizhi derived from his time spent in the military.

calligraphic instruction Wang received from his master White Cloud (Baiyun 白雲) at Flower Peak during the Jin Dynasty³⁵. Xu Lingfu's identification in the TTSJ of Master White Cloud with Sima Chengzhen is a major oversight (see note 45, Appendix I), but the basic narrative represents the account of Wang Xizhi's training as recorded in his own words in *Remembering Master White Cloud's Calligraphic Skill (Ji Baiyun xiansheng shu jue 記白雲先生書訣)*³⁶.

Wang was also linked with a site near to Wang Ziqiao's altar³⁷. The TTSJ records that Mount Jiufeng 九峰, "...is more than one hundred *zhang* high and has a circumference of six *li*. This is also the location of Tiantai's main tributary. In the past it was known as Jiulong Mountain 九壟山 (Nine-ridged Mountain). In the sixth year of Tianbao 天寶 (748) the name was changed to Jiufeng Mountain. Wang Yishao 王逸少³⁸ together with Zhi Dunlin 支遁林 often climbed this mountain. From this beautiful spot they would look out."³⁹

35 See TTSJ 10943 LB4-10944 UB10. A reputed remnant of Wang's calligraphy from this time was discovered at Huading Peak and is now housed at Guoqing Monastery on the eastern wall of the Three Sages Hall. The enormous (2.4 x 1.2 meters) and exquisite "Goose" (E 鵝) character was found carved in stone by Cao Lun 曹掄. *Guoqing si zhi* 288-89.

36 As cited in Xu Shangshu 2000:14-16. This article also suggests that Xu's mistake was based on being influenced by the *Tiantai tu jing* 天台圖經.

37 Wang Ziqiao is discussed later in this chapter.

38 This is another name for the famous calligrapher Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-379), a practitioner of the Shanqing school of Daoism.

39 TTSJ 10943 LA1-LA3. Zhi Dun 支遁 (314-366) was an important early monk who was very active in the Shan mountains directly north of Tiantai shan. The passage in the TTSJ indicates that he also spent time at Tiantai. A brief preface to an inscription on Tiantai, the "Tiantai ming xu" 天台銘序, is found in the *Collected Works of Zhi Dun (Zhi Dun ji 支遁集)*. The preface is two lines long and reads: "The *Yu lan nei jing shan ji* 余覽內經山記 says that in the southeast of Shan county there is a mountain named Tiantai. From the mountain of Tiantai the road passes Mount Chicheng." The same collection also contains a poem titled, "Thinking of the Tiantai Mountains" (Yi Tiantai shan 憶天台山) in which he extols the virtue of the mountain's numinous cliffs, plant-life, waters and weather. Zhi Dun's major traces are to be found at Mount Shicheng 石城, considered the west gate of the Tiantai range and the site of Zhiyi's death. Here he established the Qiguang 棲光 Monastery. See Zhi Dun's biography in the *Gao Seng Zhuan* 高僧傳 348-9 and FJRM 76.

Wang Xizhi's illustrious contemporary, the great painter Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (345-406), has no physical associations with the Tiantai Mountains but his writing was one of the sources used by Xu Lingfu when compiling his record. Like Wang Xizhi, Gu Kaizhi's name suggests that he was an adherent of the Celestial Masters school of Daoism. He was also adept at the painting of Buddhist images, such as the famous scene from the *Vimalakirti Sutra* he painted at Jiankang wa guan 建康瓦官 Monastery⁴⁰. Along with Sun Chuo and Zhi Dun, Gu Kaizhi was one of the first to of what would later become a long line of laymen and literati to pay tribute to the Tiantai mountains in verse. The TTSJ quotes from *Chang Kang's (Gu Kaizhi) Record for Dispelling Ignorance (Chang Kang jimeng ji 長康啟蒙記)* which offers a physical description of the site but is also very clear about the sacred nature of the place when speaking about the Stone Bridge: "Only one who has forgotten about the body will be able to cross. One who has crossed over will meet Mount Tiantai."⁴¹

This group of fourth century literati played a decisive role in establishing the way the Tiantai Mountains would be represented in later works of literature: a transitional realm inhabited by a range of spirits. Their writing also affected the way the site was experienced by pilgrims.

Toponyms

An important aspect of the literature of the Tiantai Mountains, from the Sun Chuo's essay to Xu Lingfu's TTSJ, is the attention given to place names. Toponyms both

40 Ibid. 1139; Zürcher 132.

41 TTSJ 10942 UA7-UB2. Chang Kang is another name for Gu Kaizhi. His *Record for Dispelling Ignorance* is no longer extant.

locate the traveler in the landscape and evoke particular historical events or imagery. Although many toponyms often find their way into works of literature, it is also the case that events and images from the literature become fixed as place names. Toponyms and literature respond to each other. Both have been essential in establishing the sacred nature of the Tiantai Mountains. The sacred nature of Tiantai so prevalent in the literature both reinforces and is reinforced by the textualization of the landscape. Dozens of geographic sites throughout the Tiantai Mountains have names that evoke the otherworldly nature of the mountains. Together, these toponyms form a type of text that subtly but certainly effects the way a pilgrim interacts with the place.

The naming of places links landscape with tradition. In the TTSJ, Xu Lingfu is concerned that the reader be aware of the names of the places he describes. In areas where the name may be unclear, Xu elaborates:

Going fifteen *li* to the east of Tiantai Belvedere, there is Red Citadel Mountain. The mountain is three hundred *zhang* high, with a circumference of seven *li*. This is Tiantai's south gate. From ancient times until the present, this is the place of the countries sacrificial rites. This mountain's amassed stone is reddish in color and resembles the rose tinged clouds of dawn. Gazing at them, they seem like crenellations. Therefore it is called Red Citadel. It is also called Burning Mountain.⁴²

In most instances, the associations of the toponyms are assumed obvious to the reader. Some toponyms are suggestive of the form of a natural out-cropping; others are associated with history and legend. Names like Phoenix Mountain (Fenghuang shan 鳳凰

42 TTSJ 10945 LB8-10946 UA1.

山), Red Dawn Cave (Danxia dong 丹霞洞), and Dragon Pavilion (Long zhang 龍章), to name just a few, are laden with the imagery of transformation. Through the seemingly simple act of learning the name of a mountain peak or stream, travelers are having their understanding of the place subtly shifted. There are more than fifty named mountains in the Tiantai Range, nearly as many named peaks, ridges, cliffs, rocks, caves, streams, pools and other geological features. Add to these the temple names, hermitages and roads and one is confronted hundreds of place names, many of which evoke the numinous nature of the place. These places are labeled on maps and the names become the vocabulary of the mountains⁴³. The traveler learns the lore of the mountains by passing through the landscape.

Historical Revision: The Case of Ge Xuan 葛玄 (164-244)

The authority of a revealed text or a celebrated piece of literature is such that once it becomes canonized its contents become veritable facts for later generations. Thus the power of a text could be enormous. Entire collective memories could be altered. There are many instances in the literary history of the Tiantai Mountains where events not recorded in earlier sources are suddenly documented hundreds of years after the fact, with the deliberate intention of creating historic roots for new traditions. Whole lineages and histories have been retrospectively created in this way⁴⁴. From the cultural perspective, created events are just as important to a site like Tiantai as are verifiable events. The story of the place becomes embedded in the landscape itself and its history is often traced

43 See Song Dynasty maps contained in the *Jiading chicheng zhi* 1-16.

44 For a discussion of this phenomena within the Chan school see Foulk 1999.

out through what stories exist on the ground at a particular point in time. This can be seen most clearly in the events resulting from the life of Ge Xuan.

The first religious practitioner to take up residence in the Tiantai Mountains was the *fangshi* 方士 (man of techniques) Ge Xuan 葛玄. In the year 238 it is said that he settled in the Tongbai Basin and soon began establishing places of practice, aided by the patronage of the ruler of Wu (222-280), Sun Quan 孫權⁴⁵. It was during this time that he is believed to have been visited by spirits who bestowed on him a number of texts which would later form the foundation of the Lingbao (Numinous Treasure) corpus. A closer look at the development of the textual tradition surrounding Ge and the Lingbao scriptures show that the events of his hagiography were created retrospectively by his ancestors in the late 4th century.

The further in time one moves from the life of Ge Xuan the more detail can be found regarding his activity at Tiantai. Ge Xuan himself left no literary traces⁴⁶. Ge Hong 葛洪 (284-362), Ge Xuan's great nephew, wrote the first hagiography of Ge Xuan in his *Biographies of Holy Immortals* (*Shen xian zhuan* 神仙傳). It relates that after Ge Xuan's parents both died when he was nineteen years old. Ge then devoted himself to seeking a method for the attainment of immortality. He hid himself away in famous mountain sites, inquiring about the Way from those he met there. Eventually he became a disciple of Zuo Ci 左慈 (dates unknown)⁴⁷. By virtue of the sincerity of his practice he moved the Supreme Lord (deified Laozi, *Tai shang lao jun* 太上老君) and the Primordial Perfected

45 See Chapter 3 for a further discussion of the relation between Ge Xuan and Sun Quan.

46 At least one poem has been spuriously attributed to Ge. See the *Tongbai shi zhi* 4.

47 In his *Baopuzi* 抱朴子 4.2a, (translated in Ware 69-70) Ge Hong states that Ge Xuan received three texts from Zuo Ci. These texts were the *Tai qing dan jing* 太清丹經, the *Jiu ding dan jing* 九鼎丹經, and

(Taiji zhen ren 太極真人) to descend and bestow upon him the Numinous Treasure (Lingbao 靈寶) texts⁴⁸. At the time Ge Hong was writing, the Lingbao sect of Daoism was still in its embryonic phases. The elaborate history of these texts would be fully developed by Ge Hong's second generation descendent, Ge Chaofu 葛巢甫⁴⁹, nearly half a century later.

Another hagiography is included in the *Short Record of the Numinous Treasure* (Lingbao lueji 靈寶略記) which elaborates on the original:

During the Chiniao 赤鳥 reign (238-251), when the land of Wu was ruled by Sun Quan 孫權, a man called Ge Xuan, also known as Xiaoxian 孝先, was born in Langya in the east of China as the son of Secretary Ge Xiaoru. His father was eighty years old at the time of his birth. Ge Xuan was full of numinous power. Even at the early age of thirteen he was fond of worshipping the Way and the Virtue. He was pure and of loyal faith, staunchly upholding filial piety and modesty. However, he did not proceed to serve in office, but abandoned all glory, gave up all income, and set his will firmly on the mountains and rivers. He duly went to the Tiantai Mountains to study the Way.⁵⁰

Bordering the north of Tiantai Valley was a steep 500-foot rise over the rim of which a great waterfall spilled over. Set atop the rise of reddish brown rock was wide and gentle basin covering an area of a few square kilometers. This was the Tongbai Basin,

the *Jin ye dan jing* 金液丹經. All three of these texts are concerned with the transmutation of gold and cinnabar.

48 *Shen xian zhuan* 346.

49 Birth and death dates for Ge Chaofu are not recorded. His work is believed to date to the last years of the fourth century.

50 Translated in Kohn 1993:47-8.

surrounded by the nine peaks of the Tongbai Mountains⁵¹. It was near the center of this forested basin, on a rise that would later be called Descending Perfected Terrace (Jiang zhen tai 降真台), that Ge Xuan built a small hermitage in 238 and carried out his religious practices. This was to be remembered as the first religious structure built in the Tiantai Mountains and the site of a series of miraculous occurrences⁵². The *Short Record of the Numinous Treasure* continues:

He concentrated his mind in meditation, penetrating even deeper. In less than one year he attained complete realization. The Highest Lord thereupon sent three sagely Perfected down to transmit the sacred writings of Lingbao to him... Before the three Perfected descended, the Supreme Lord had also ordered Xu Laile 徐來勒, the Primordial Perfected, to become Ge Xuan's teacher in the methods of the Three Caverns 三洞. From him Xuan received the sacred writings in twenty-three scrolls, together with instructions and questions in ten scrolls. Altogether he was honored with thirty-three scrolls.⁵³

In the year following Ge's revelation in the Tongbai basin, he was thought to have established at least three other practice sites in the same general vicinity. About one third of a mile to the north of his hermitage at Descending Perfected Terrace, Ge Xuan

51 The great traveler of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Xu Xiake, would later describe the area as, "a glen with hills as though it were a world by itself." See Li Chi 39 for a description of the state of the area at the time of Xu Xiake's visit in 1632. The whole area was flooded to create the Tongbai reservoir in the 1950's.

52 Sometime between the years of 948 and 950 the original structure was rebuilt by Qian Shifu 錢氏復 for Zhu Xiaowai 朱霄外. The original name for the site does not seem to be recorded. It was not until 1008 that the name was changed to Falun cloister 法輪院. Between 1330 and 1332 the cloister was restored but sometime later abandoned (Xia Yuncheng 76; *Tiantai xian zhi*:TTXZ 77; *Tiantai shan fang wai zhi*:TTSFWZ 179).

53 Adapted from Kohn 1993:47-8. The account of the textual transmission closely follows Ge Xuan's original biography with the difference that there it is recorded that he received thirty-six scrolls. *Shen xian zhuan* 346.

established a site for the compounding of elixirs⁵⁴. Whatever structure might have originally occupied this ground, it would later be the site of Tongbai Belvedere 桐柏觀. This practice center would become the primary Daoist Belvedere (*guan* 觀) in the Tiantai Mountains, as well as one of the more important Daoist establishments in China during the Tang Dynasty⁵⁵. During this same time another large place of practice was established down in the valley at the bottom of where the streams draining the Tongbai basin came thundering over the cliff. It is stated in the TTSJ that the ruler of the Wu Dynasty (222-277), Zhu Sunquan 主孫權, had a monastery built at this location and requested Ge to administer the place⁵⁶. This was Fusheng 福聖 (Blessed Sage) Belvedere, which is described in the TTSJ as a place of exceptional beauty grown thick with fragrant, intertwined plants. The stream of the waterfall was channeled so that it flowed through the Belvedere, into the kitchen and meandered out through the courtyard, emptying into a small pond. There was an altar to the Perfected of Tiantai, Wang Ziqiao, to the northeast quite close to Danxia 丹霞 (Red Dawn) Cave⁵⁷. Although it is the first Daoist Belvedere to be mentioned in the TTSJ, it never seems to have enjoyed the reputation of the more remote Tongbai Belvedere.

This is the traditional hagiography of Ge Xuan as it has come down to us through the Lingbao 靈寶 (Numinous Treasure) scriptures and has remained largely unquestioned by later generations of writers, Xu Lingfu among them. It was Tao Hongjing 陶弘景

54 This site is not mentioned in Ge Xuan's biographies.

55 Xia Yuncheng 76; TTXZ 76,77; TTSFWZ 173-175.

56 TTSJ 10943 UA2-3.

57 TTSJ 10943 UA2-10, 10943 UB8-LA1. Danxia Cave is also reputed to be another early site for Ge Xuan's alchemical practices. Fusheng is the original name of what was known in the Tang (and in the TTSJ) as Tiantai 天台 Belvedere. Although most sources clearly locate Fusheng Belvedere below the waterfall to

(456-536), the great collector and annotator of Shangqing 上清 (Highest Clarity) scriptures, that originally cast doubt on the authenticity of Ge Xuan's revelations, writing in the *Zhengao* that it was actually Ge Chaofu 葛巢甫 who produced the majority of the Lingbao texts sometime in the late fourth century⁵⁸. Tao suggested that it was because Ge Chaofu was dissatisfied with the low status of his ancestors (the Highest Clarity revelations had not long before claimed the Ge Xuan had only achieved a relatively low-level of immortality) that he fabricated their origins⁵⁹. Modern scholars have confirmed Tao Hongjing's accusation and it is now certain that whatever might have passed between Ge Xuan and spirits in the Tiantai mountains, the preserved Lingbao texts have their origin about two hundred years later⁶⁰.

Regardless of whether texts were divinely revealed or the work of inspired mortals, it is clear that the Tiantai area was the center of major textual traditions. There was a great deal of Daoist literary activity being carried out in the Shan Mountains, which was linked with Tiantai in the north, during the fourth and fifth centuries. After 404, the central area for the propagation of the Mao Shan literature (the Highest Clarity scriptures) was located in the Shan Mountains. This is the area to which Tao Hongjing traveled to

the east (the present day location of the Tongbai hydroelectric plant), others have argued that it might have been located elsewhere. See Chu Dingji 238.

58 See translation of the relevant passage in Strickman 1977:45-6. For a study of the sources of the Lingbao scriptures see Bokenkamp 1983.

59 It is important to note that Tao was not only connected to the Ge's through their passion for Daoist literature, but the two families had been related through intermarriage for generations. See Strickman 1972:126.

60 Note that none of the Lingbao texts said to have been received miraculously by Ge Xuan are listed among the titles Ge Hong received from his master who was the transmitter of Ge Xuan's library. Bokenkamp 440. It has been suggested that at the time Ge Hong was writing, the early 4th century, the Lingbao jing was a manual by and for magical practitioners that specified ways of entering the mountains and finding the medicines of immortality. See Toshiaki 229.

recover the scattered original Shangqing manuscripts⁶¹. The TTSJ records the location of the residence of Gu Huan 顧歡 (ca. 420-483), one of the first to gather together the scattered remnants of the Highest Clarity revelations: “Going twenty *li* to the south of Numinous Ruin there is a small farmstead at Huan 歡 Stream. The great scholar of the Liang Dynasty (501-557), Gu Huan, once lived here, so it is named Huan Stream”.⁶²

The Highest Clarity and the Numinous Treasure sects of Daoism have prospered through the ages largely due to the success of their literature. There are records of scholars active in these same mountains who, caught up in the successes of other writers, tried their hand at creating new revelatory scriptural movements⁶³. We know very little about them or their work because they were mostly unsuccessful. A successful textual construction could have the double benefit of a dissemination of what the author held to be the highest truth and the elevation of the author’s ancestors to the originators of a divinely inspired tradition. The efforts of Ge Xuan’s relatives have been rewarded through the identification of their lineage with the establishment of a great textual tradition originating with Ge’s reception of divine texts in the Tiantai Mountains.

By the Tang Dynasty, Ge’s old hermitage was no longer extant, but the place where the three Perfected had descended could be found in the Tongbai Basin:

According to the Falun jing 法輪經, “Three realized ones descended from the Primal Matter and helped the immortal Ge cultivate the way at Mount Tiantai.”

61 The TBSZ cites the Shen xian lie zhuan’s 神仙列傳 statement that during Tao’s quest for texts in 491 he went to Tiantai to compound elixirs and there uncovered more than ten texts of the Perfected. The text credits the writing of several of Tao’s literary works, including the Zhengao, to this time. There is no evidence to support these claims. See TBSZ 9.

62 TTSJ 10947 UA6. There is a discrepancy in the dates. According to the various dates given for Gu Huan, he would have been active in the Liu Song 劉宋 and the Qi 齊 Dynasties (420-502), not the Liang.

63 See account of Wang Lingqi 王靈期 in Stickman 1977:19-22.

This altar is the place where they touched down. This is the place of the *Duke Immortal's Perfect Scripture* 仙公真經⁶⁴ together with its commentary. Traces of these affairs have all been completely recorded in the original biography, therefore it has not been recorded here. Below the altar to the northwest there is a stone with clerical-style calligraphy (*lishu* 隸書)⁶⁵. The record, inscribed and dated, states, “By imperial decree Xu was ordered to perform a public ceremony at this altar and transmit the *Duke Immortal's Perfect Scripture*.” The realized one called himself Xu 徐, his name was Laile 來勒, his style was Ze 則.⁶⁶

By at least the ninth century, and very likely long before, Ge Xuan's story was etched in stone and dated. Whatever doubts might have been entertained by scholars and practitioners of other Daoist sects regarding the legitimacy of Ge's reception of sacred texts would forever have to contend with the reality of a marked physical site backed by a tremendous textual tradition. From the fourth century onward it was understood as fact that the Lingbao corpus was bestowed on Ge Xuan at a very specific site in the Tiantai Mountains by a retinue of divine beings. The great success of this claim contributed even further to the belief in the efficacy of Tiantai to the extent that even more practitioners were attracted to the place to visit the sites of Ge Xuan's revelation and to hope for their own contact with heavenly spirits.

All of the sites associated with the activity of Ge Xuan came to play an important role at Tiantai. He was the first practitioner to inhabit the mountains and the memory of his experiences there would color the expectations and understandings of later generations. Both places of practice and sites of Ge's revelations were located and

64 Another name for the Lingbao scriptures. The “Duke Immortal” is Ge Xuan.

65 This was the official script of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE) which is simplified from “small seal” xiao zhuan 小篆.

66 TTSJ 10944 LA10-LB4.

marked long after his death. The sites themselves had been created through textual traditions but now they themselves became a living text that could be read and cited by all that passed there. The presence of these monuments would constantly call to mind the early history of the Tiantai Mountains. More than new pilgrimage sites, a new history had been created, one that could only be altered through a manipulation of the very ground in which it was embedded.

The Case of Wang Ziqiao 王子喬

When Sun Chuo described the area around the falls in his famous essay on the Tiantai Mountains in the fourth century he made no mention of any human structures, but he did state that this was the place that, “Wang Qiao drove a crane and soared to heaven.”⁶⁷ The association of the ancient immortal Wang Ziqiao with the site of Tiantai is largely due to the later literature regarding the activity of Ge Xuan in the third century.

In the *Lie xian zhuan* biography of Wang Ziqiao translated in the introduction, no mention is made of the Tiantai Mountains. It is likely that that his cult would have continued to flourish exclusively on Mount Song and Mount Guoshi if it had not been for the activity of Ge Xuan and his ancestors. According to Ge’s biographers, in 239 he built a 14-meter wide brick altar to the immortal Wang Qiao on the edge of the Tongbai Basin. Situated right above the Fusheng Belvedere, on the edge of this cliff to the east of the waterfall, the site of the old altar had commanding views of the entire Tiantai Valley and southern ranges as well as the Tongbai Basin to the north⁶⁸. Wang Ziqiao played a part in

⁶⁷ Mather 242; Owen 188.

⁶⁸ The altar was situated on the small rise to the northwest of present day Tongbai Palace 桐柏宮, the last remaining Daoist practice center in the Tiantai mountains. Locals say that the altar was destroyed more than 100 years ago near the end of the Qing Dynasty, when war swept through the area.

the revelation of the Highest Clarity scriptures, appearing to the visionary Yang Xi 楊羲 (330-?) as a sword girl adolescent (one of a series of spirits from the Highest Clarity heaven that appeared to Yang Xi). After collecting and annotating the texts revealed to Yang Xi, Tao Hongjing was the first to state that Wang Ziqiao had been appointed the post of Perfected of the Tiantai Mountains⁶⁹. He was known to reside in the Golden Courtyard Grotto Heaven (Jinting dongtian 金庭洞天) located in the Tongbai Basin. Wang's "promotion" early on in the history of Tiantai would have lasting effects⁷⁰.

The original hagiography of Wang Ziqiao explicitly states that the range of his activity lay hundreds of miles to the north of Tiantai. Through the establishment of an altar in the Tongbai Basin and the appointment of Ge Xuan to the Perfected of Tiantai in the literature, later sources began to record that it was the Tiantai Mountains (rather than Mount Song) where Wang ascended to heaven. Sun Chuo may have been the first to make such statements and others followed: "Mount Jiuzhe 九折 is located forty-six *li* from the county seat...Old legends say that this is the place where Wang Qiao mounted a crane, therefore it is called Crane Peak (Hefeng 鶴峰)"⁷¹. By the Tang, the cult of Wang Ziqiao at Tiantai had attracted the attention of Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗, who personally visited the site to perform rituals and honor the guardian of Tiantai with a new hall:

...More than one *li* to the southwest is the altar of Wang Zhenjun 王真君.

Zhenjun is the Realized One of Tongbai. There is a small hall that contains an

69 References to Wang Ziqiao's position at Tiantai are mentioned throughout the *Zhengao* starting in the opening paragraphs, 1/2b/9.

70 For an illustrated account of the life and times of Wang Ziqiao as existed during the Tang Dynasty see Sima Chengzhen's *Shangqing shi di chang Tongbai zhenren tu zan* 上清侍帝長桐柏真人圖讚; Daozang 18-14436.

71 Fangwai zhi 方外志 cited in TBSZ 3.

image of Zhenjun. Early in the Kaiyuan period 開元 (713-742), Xuanzong had it constructed and appointed seven Daoist masters to attend to its affairs. In front of the hall there is a stone spring named Sweet Spring (Liquan 醴泉). Three paces to the south there is the newly established Perfected Kiosk (Zhenting 真亭). It is near the 10,000 Ren Seat (Wan ren zuo) 萬仞坐, which has a view of 1000 *li*. Travelers can climb up to the seat and gaze out over the flat land.

The main altar is 20 paces to the northwest of Zhenjun Hall. It has a stone altar of four *zhang*, eight *chi* at one level. It is constructed with old bricks. In the present day, when the people of the county pray to receive rain in times of drought, they all come to this altar.⁷²

Regardless of the fact that Wang Ziqiao never seems to have had any connection with Tiantai during his earthly life, the literary tradition of the establishment of his altar by Ge Xuan was enough for future generations to locate his spirit within a specific area of the mountains. Layers of text were added through repetition and embellishment of the story in the literature and, in an even more powerful way, recognition and marking of his physical site at Tiantai by an emperor. Wang Ziqiao became the representative spirit of the Tiantai Mountains. During the Tang, Buddhist monks and laymen from Korea and Japan transmitted Wang's cult, along with the Buddhist Tiantai sect and tea, to their home countries. Later legends even recorded that Wang Ziqiao himself did obeisance to the founder of the Tiantai school of Buddhism, Zhiyi, who administered the precepts to him and appointed him the Guardian Spirit (Qielan 伽藍; *Samghârâma*) of Guoqing monastery and the Lord of the Place (Tudi Zhu 土地主)⁷³. Even today, Guoqing

72 TTSJ 10944 LB6-10945 UA1. More will be said about the cult of Wang Ziqiao in Chapters 2 and 3.
73 TTSFWZ 361-62; Xu Shangshu 1998b: 185.

Monastery has an image of Wang Ziqiao in their Qienlan Hall and preserves the story of Zhiyi's relations with him in their monastic records⁷⁴.

Some clear patterns emerge after a brief look at the activity of fourth century scholar-elite and religious professionals in the Kuaiji area. It is evident that although the Tiantai mountains may have harbored recluses for more than a hundred years before, it was only after the establishment of an elite group of monks, artists and writers to the north of the range that word of the Tiantai Mountains began to spread. Through the agency of a geographically centered, inter-related group of families working both with and against each other to create authoritative scriptural traditions, patterns of representation became entrenched in the mountains. The site was celebrated as the dwelling place of an eclectic ensemble of spirits who could speed one's progress along the Way. The few short literary pieces that survive from this period, most notably Sun Chuo's *Poetic Essay on Wandering in the Tiantai Mountains* and Tao Hongjing's *Zhengao*, have been extremely important for later generation's experience of the mountains. Descriptive literature, as well as concrete marking of the landscape, has been instrumental in the creation of a sense of tradition and a sense of place. It was through these words that a diverse range found form.

74 See *Guoqing si zhi* 國清寺志 42-43. Zhiyi's associations with Tiantai are discussed in Chapter 3. The importance of Wang Ziqiao's legacy at Tiantai can be seen observations from Western visitors early in the 20th century. The Christian missionary Timothy Richard described an evening where, "On the floor, filling every available space, were women, lying down in their cloths without any bedding either under or over them...The women were lying not only in the temple but also in the veranda and the courtyard." According to Richard, they had come to pray for a dream from "Kwan-ti, the God of War" but they had come to the Qielan Hall that housed an image of Wang Ziqiao (Richard 281-82). E.R. Lapwood wrote that the Qielan hall was dedicated to Guanyin and that, "Its floor is covered with mats, for the peasants consider that a dream dreamed here is an omen for the future. The magistrate has taken control and charges twenty cents a night for the privilege of a mat." (Lapwood 31).

Chapter 2

THE NATURE OF THE TIANTAI MOUNTAINS

5th – 6th centuries

Introduction: Tiantai's Sacred Ecology

The literature that began to develop around the Tiantai Range in the 4th century and continued to be produced through the Tang and beyond emphasized the nature of the Tiantai Mountains as a transitional zone between mundane and divine realms. The sources of the *Record of the Tiantai Mountains* (TTSJ) and the TTSJ itself focus on those aspects of the mountains that appear to provide passage from one realm to another.

Within the landscape, naturally formed bridges, water sources (such as springs, waterfalls and deep pools), caves and peaks were all important as sites where it was possible to come into contact with spirits or cross over into the spirit realm. These sites were often filled with rare herbs and frequented by unusual animals. Just as important as the geography of the site was the presence of numerous monks and monasteries, both of which had the ability to ferry a pilgrim over to extraordinary realms. More than a sacred geography, the complex web of relations that constitute the numinous nature of Tiantai (from springs to birds to buildings) is best described as a sacred ecology.

Despite that fact that the Tiantai Mountains were home to a number of different religious groups whose doctrinal traditions and ideologies often stemmed from very different sources, the sacred ecology of Tiantai represented in the written works of all traditions was homogenous. Springs, for example, were important to Daoists and Buddhists for the same reasons: they were gateways to the spirit realm. The stone bridges

of Tiantai were also valued for their ability to provide safe passage to a paradisiacal world. For those oriented towards Daoist traditions, that world was inhabited by immortals. For Buddhists, the far side of the bridge led to the land of the arhats. The function of these sites remained the same. What changed was the way in which the resident spirits were identified. A different vocabulary was employed to describe the same phenomenon. The way in which these mountains were understood is more accurately described as “Chinese” than either Daoist or Buddhist.

The sacred ecology of the Tiantai Mountains, though unique in some of its details, is not particular to this range. China has a long history of sacred mountain sites and an abundant literature devoted to their description. The importance of water sources, caves and peaks, not to mention monks and monasteries, is common to nearly all the sacred mountain sites in China. Almost every mountain gazetteer contains sections listing important springs, caves and peaks. Such features define a place as sacred. The same can be said of bridges, though to a lesser extent. The naturally formed stone bridges at Tiantai set the range apart from other sacred sites. While bridges do play a minor role in some of the literature of other sacred mountain sites, they are central to the Tiantai Mountains. In addition to focusing on the role of the stone bridges and other natural features of the Tiantai Range, this chapter also briefly relates the events surrounding the first Buddhist practitioners at Tiantai, emphasizing their interaction with important aspects of the landscape.

The Bridges of Tiantai

Much of the early literature on Tiantai stresses the mountain's function as a site where transition and transformation occur. Legends which revolved around the mountain as a whole, particular places in the landscape, monasteries, or individuals, all dwelt on the potential for passage from one realm to another. The most outstanding symbols of this at Tiantai are the stone bridges. From very early times, the bridges of Tiantai have been understood to span the chasm separating the world of humans from the world of spirits⁷⁵. Even today tourists flock to the main stone bridge in the north of the range, and some, in spite of the danger (one slip would likely end in death), carefully walk from one end to the other. In the past, successfully crossing this bridge was thought to gain one entrance into the 'real' Tiantai, a numinous range of marvelous sprits and auspicious animals. The power of the physical symbol of a stone bridge spanning a deep gorge and the legends that have developed around it, have made the stone bridge the primary image of the range⁷⁶. The function of bridges, to allow passage across a barrier, makes an ideal metaphor for the function of the Tiantai Mountains and the religious practice that occurred there. But the metaphor extends to nearly all aspects of the site, from the entire range of mountains and rivers to solitary practitioners hidden amongst the peaks. Tiantai is a range of bridges.

That the whole of the Tiantai Mountains was seen a transitional zone is clearly apparent in the literature. The borders of the area were marked by directional gates in the same way that walled palaces and cities were constructed. These gates were physical structures marking the boundary between the ordinary world and a world that belonged to

75 Bridges play a role in several mountain traditions in China. For the manifestation of a miraculous golden bridge with heavenly beings at Southern Mount Wutai in the early 7th century see Chün-fang Yü 1992:195-196.

extraordinary beings. It was what lay inside that threshold that interested the pilgrims and practitioners at Tiantai. The earliest monograph on the Tiantai Mountains, the *Otherworldly Record of the Tiantai Mountains* (*Tiantai shan fang wai zhi* 天台山方外志), like other mountain monographs, is divided into four main sections. The first deals with the natural state of the mountains, its geography of creeks, caves and cliffs. The next section details the religious structures found throughout the range, Buddhist monasteries, Daoist belvederes, hermitages, etc. Following this is a lengthy section on important individuals, both religious and secular, who were associated with the mountains. Finally, a large sampling of the literature that had collected around the whole range and individually important sites closes out the monograph. What it is that makes a mountain sacred can, to some degree, be located in these aspects.

The TTSJ is concerned as much with the history and function of the physical landscape as it is with the background of religious structures. We have already seen how the Tongbai Basin came to be viewed as a place of transition. This is where Wang Ziqiao ascended to Heaven on the back of a crane and the Primordial Perfected descended to bestow teachings on Ge Xuan. While it is clear that the entire range is perceived as situated on the margins of the spirit world, there were key features in the landscape that were singled out as divine portals. These tended to be found clustered around naturally formed stone bridges, water sources, caves and peaks⁷⁷. They were the gateways near which mortals might meet visitors from the spirit world or through which they might

76 In modern times the image has been adopted for a great variety of local products, among them Stone Beam Beer. A testimony to the enduring nature of the image.

77 This phenomenon is unique neither to Tiantai shan nor to Chinese spiritual traditions. As early as the middle of the second millennium BCE, the Minoan culture on the island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea had communal shrines associated with caves and springs, with the largest group of rural sanctuaries set on mountain peaks. See Peatfield 6.

themselves pass out of this world into a better, more pure land. It was through their collective and concentrated presence that the entire range could be identified as a spirit realm.

Tan You 曇猷 (d. 396)

The period from the late 4th century to the early 6th century saw the foundations of Buddhist traditions being laid at Tiantai. Later sources would record the presence of a few Buddhist masters in the range south of the Tiantai Valley as early as the middle of the 3rd century, but it wasn't until the arrival of a monk from Gansu province, Tan You 曇猷 (d. 396), that the Buddhist history of the site truly began. Tan You established hermitages at two key sites in the Tiantai Range: the Red Citadel (Chicheng shan 赤城山) and the Stone Bridge. Nearly thirty years after the death of Tan You, another monk by the name of Fa Shun 法順 (ca. 425) founded a monastery near Tiantai Belvedere, at the base of Tongbai Falls. Finally, the monk Pu Yao 普耀 (ca. 479) took up residence in a cave to the north of Tongbai Belvedere, some fifty years after the founding of Fa Shun's Waterfall Monastery (Pubu si 瀑布寺). The stories revolving around the establishment of these sites all reveal how diverse spiritual traditions placed the same value on geographic sites. Embedded in the tales and hagiographies of these early masters are also indications of how the Tiantai Mountains were perceived by early practitioners. This section begins with an overview of Tan You's hagiography followed by an analysis of his life in relation to the legends surrounding the stone bridges of Tiantai.

We can only speculate about the presence of early Buddhist recluses in the Tiantai Mountains. Convincing evidence of Buddhist activity in the range is first found in the

figure of Tan You, the famed founder of Tiantai's Buddhist Realm (Foguo 佛國)⁷⁸.

While describing the Red Citadel, the TTSJ states that: “In the middle of the mountain's base there is a temple called Middle Crag Temple (Zhongyan si 中巖寺). This was established by the high monk of the Western Regions, Bai Daoyou 白道猷.”⁷⁹ Like other founding figures at nearly all of China's major Buddhist mountain sites, Tan You was a foreign monk. According to his notice in the *Biographies of Eminent Monks*, he had traveled to the east of China from present-day Gansu province in the Western Region⁸⁰. He first settled in the Shan 剡 area at Stone Citadel Mountain (Shicheng shan 石城山), the center of Zhi Dun's activity, where he passed the days sitting in meditation and begging for food. Before long, Tan You moved to the southeast and took up residence in a cave at the Red Citadel (Chicheng shan 赤城山) where he continued his meditation practice⁸¹. Here, he encountered a pack of tigers and chastised those that fell asleep while he was chanting sutras, which caused all the tigers to flee the site. After that, a great writhing tangle of snakes paid obeisance to Tan You before vacating the mountain.

The next day, a spirit appeared to Tan You and praised him, calling himself the master's disciple. When You asked him to identify himself, the spirit related that he was once an emperor's son during the Xia Dynasty (ca. 21st-16th BCE) and had dwelt at the Red Citadel for more than two thousand years. He then made an offering of incense to

78 Tan You was also known as Fa You 法猷 and Bai Daoyou 白道猷.

79 TTSJ 10946 UA4.

80 The *Biographies of Eminent Monks*, written by Hui Jiao 慧皎 (497-544), is a collection of the hagiographies of early Buddhist monks in China. The fantastical events that characterize Tan You's life are not uncommon in such collections.

81 The name “Chicheng” has been applied to mountain sites other than Tiantai and refers to a mythic Daoist realm. See illustration of the Ten Continents, with Chicheng and Peach Blossom Spring among them, in the *Xiuzhen taiji hunyuan tu* 修真太極渾圓圖, reproduced in Kohn 1993:51; For Chicheng at Mount Emei see *Emei chicheng yinshi fu yao jing* 峨嵋赤城隱士伏藥經, cited in van der Loon 1984:110.

Tan You and left the mountain accompanied by a great wind. Left alone at last, Tan You set to work using stones to build a stairwell up the cliff and connecting rounds of bamboo to carry water to his hermitage. His reputation spread amongst the local literati and Wang Xizhi himself was said to have come seeking an interview. The narrative then shifts to the north of the range and the Stone Bridge:

The hanging cliffs at Tiantai are steep and narrow, and their peaks are close to Heaven. An ancient tradition relates that up above are beautiful and exquisite buildings inhabited by those who have attained the Way (Dao 道). Although there is a rock bridge across the deep ravine, the bridge is blocked by a huge stone which blocks the passage of people. Furthermore, moss has made it green and slippery. From ancient times, there has never been one who could cross over.

You came to the bridge and heard a voice issuing from the emptiness saying, “We know that you are sincere and faithful. But the time is not yet ready for your passage. Ten years from now, you will come again.” You was greatly disappointed. When night fell he remained there. While sleeping, he heard the sound of the Dao being cultivated and prayers to the Bodhisattvas (Sa 薩). In the morning he was ready to go forward again when he saw a man with a white beard and eyelashes appear and ask where he was going. You answered him and the man said, “Sir, you have a body that is subject to life and death, how can you cross? I am the Mountain Spirit and that is why I say this to you.” You then withdrew and returned.

You had always regretted that he failed to cross the Stone Bridge. Later, he fasted for several days and went forward again. He saw a cavern opening in the great stone. As he entered, not far beyond the bridge, he saw exquisite buildings and spirit monks just as he had heard about. He joined in the burning of incense and the mid-day meal. When it was over the monks said to You, “Exactly ten years from now you will come again. Today you cannot remain.” With this he left.

As he turned to look at the obstructing stone, it was closed as it had always been.⁸²

From his biography it is clear that Tan You was not settling a vacant range. His first encounters were with the wild and dangerous denizens of the place, tigers and snakes. As mentioned in the introduction, panthers, tigers, snakes and other animals that posed a threat to humans were plentiful in these mountains and were a constant cause for concern. At the same time, it is probably more than the embellishment of the biographer to include this episode in You's biography. Since at least the early 4th century, there are literary representations of tigers as the guardians of the mountains and dragons and snakes as the lords of the watery realms⁸³. It is not uncommon for Buddhist masters to do battle with such creatures when bearing a new religious system to an old, spiritually charged mountain site⁸⁴. In this way we may understand this encounter as both a reflection of the actual physical situation at Tiantai and as a conversion of older, more indigenous traditions to the Buddhist faith.

The same phenomenon occurs in even more obvious terms when You encounters ancient mountain spirits. First it is the two thousand year-old spirit of an old prince who has come to reside in the mountains. From very ancient times it was believed that the souls of the dead gathered in mountains. Whatever local traditions regarding resident spirits of the range may have existed at the time, Tan You is shown to have supplanted them here. The biography then relates the belief that up above the mountains there were

82 *Gao seng zhuan* 高僧傳 395-396. Translation adapted from Fong 15. You is thought to have died during the final years of the fourth century (ca. 396). The monk Hui Ming 慧明 (428-497) is said to have happened upon You's old hermitage and found his corpse perfectly preserved. He later carved an image of Tan You. See his biography in the *Gao seng zhuan* 400.

83 See the *Bao puzi*.

84 See Faure 1991:99-100.

exquisite buildings inhabited by those who had attained the Way. According to You's biographer, this legend was popular at the site before You's arrival in the 4th century. We have seen it in the tale of Liu and Ruan, which may be the "ancient tradition" , mentioned in You's biography.

The terminology in the biography is also revealing. Although it is not uncommon for the term "Dao" to be used in a Buddhist context, the mountain spirit who functions as the guardian of the bridge has the stereotypical appearance of a Daoist immortal with his white beard and eye-brows. It has been suggested that the spirit You met on the bridge was none other than Wang Ziqiao, the immortal who had been appointed the guardian spirit of the mountain hundreds of years earlier⁸⁵. Later traditions would interpret You as meeting with the five hundred Buddhist arhats who were thought to reside in and around the Tiantai Range⁸⁶. But the entrance to a cave opening up in the mountains which leads to a paradisiacal realm filled with spirit beings is so common in indigenous Chinese lore that this episode must be seen as occurring within this tradition. It is clear that although Tan You may have traced his spiritual lineage to Indian masters, there is very little about his experiences at Tiantai to suggest that he viewed the site in a different framework than someone steeped in Chinese traditions. What was important to adherents of Daoist practices was also important to Buddhist practitioners. You's initial settlement at the Red Citadel, with its cinnabar sandstone eroded into a series of caves, and the Stone Bridge, with its reputation as a bridge between worlds, suggests that he was attracted to the same sites as earlier pilgrims. The landscape was interpreted in similar ways regardless of what

85 Xu Shangshu 1998b:184. It is also worth noting that in a later section of Tan You's biography he comes across the apparition of a young boy clothed in blue, another image thick with Daoist associations.

86 See introduction for a brief discussion of the arhats at Tiantai and a discussion of how the images of the tiger and the snake/dragon became associated with arhat paintings in the Song.

spiritual tradition a person was practicing. Although You is represented as a foreign monk (a native of Gansu), his manner of interacting with a sacred landscape fits nicely into a standard Chinese framework.

The literary tradition of Tan You's miraculous activity at Tiantai's Stone Bridge has been so successful that it appears to have bewildered a number of people. Before You arrived on the scene, it was known that high up in the Tiantai range was a marvelous, naturally formed stone bridge. This bridge could provide passage into the paradisiacal worlds of the immortals. The TTSJ preserves some of the old lore about this site:

There are resplendent jade palaces and pure jasper colored sweet springs towering above the azure clouds at Twin Peaks. All manner of immortals and other strange sorts can be seen from time to time. Woodcutters have reported this. If one searches for them they will not reappear. According to this record it is said to be a place of spirits and strangeness. One who is unhurried can witness them. What is seen by the travelers of today is not this bridge.⁸⁷

The bridge is located in the high mountains. The water sounds like an avalanche. There are times when those who pass become dizzy and their hearts throb with terror. The bridge which is seen by the travelers of today is the north bridge. This is the place where the arhats reside. It seems to me that the small one is known about and the location of the large one is unknown. It is the holy immortals obscure hiding place, not what is seen by common people.⁸⁸

It is also noted in the *Immortal's Scripture* (*Xianjing* 仙經)⁸⁹: "This mountain has stone bridges. One place still exists, the other's location is not known." It also says: "Many of the dispersed immortals come together to meet at the bridge. It is

87 TTSJ 10942 UB2-7.

88 TTSJ 10947 UA10-UB3.

because of this that we are able to speak of them.” This is the Numinous Immortals Bridge. It is not what is seen by people of our day. If one is not of honest spirit and subtle clarity, then a meeting [with the immortals] will certainly be obstructed. If perfected immortals cannot be seen, then how could the bridge be seen? Here there are peculiar birds and strange beasts of a thousand forms and ten thousand types. Numinous flowers and immortal grasses lie hidden in the valley. No one can name them. The multi-hued luminescence of the five mushrooms: if you are not perfected you cannot meet them. They are hidden beneath deep-rooted trees. How could they be seen by ordinary people? ⁹⁰

The location of this site is unmistakable given the description in the texts: a naturally formed stone bridge of about six inches spanning a deep gorge right at the confluence of two streams. This is without a doubt the site of one of modern Tiantai’s main tourist attractions, the Stone Beam’s Flying Waterfall (Shiliang fei pu 石梁飛瀑)⁹¹. With this place of Immortal activity so firmly established, how could it be that a Buddhist monk could cross a stone bridge and gain passage into an ideal world of *Buddhist* temples and monks? Although a close reading of Tan You’s biography makes it clear that he was interacting with a site whose boundaries exceeded the common definitions of Buddhism or Daoism, this brought no peace of mind to later, more sectarian students of Tiantai’s lore. An awkward compromise appears to have been worked out. The Buddhists could have the Stone Bridge. The “real” Stone Bridge, the larger and more spectacular Numinous Immortals Bridge, was so spiritually potent that it could never be seen except

89 The “*Immortal’s Scripture*” is used here as a general term for the Lingbao scriptures.

90 TTSJ 10947 LB10- 10948 UA5.

91 In 1101, the area around You’s old hermitage and the Stone Bridge would be built up into an elaborate series of temples, Upper, Middle and Lower Fangguang 方廣 Monasteries, which still function as places of practice today. They were originally known as Stone Bridge Temple (Shiqiao si 石橋寺). Because of their

by those of “honest spirit and subtle clarity.” The bridge that is seen by ordinary travelers and “common” people is the small bridge, the “place where the arhats reside.” Thus throughout the TTSJ and other Daoist oriented works on Tiantai, it is often said that deep in the Tiantai mountains there are two stone bridges, the small one still exists but the location of the large one is no longer known.

There were other stone bridges at Tiantai. Not far from the valley where Liu and Ruan were feasting with divine maidens was another bridge where it was believed to be possible to communicate with the spirit world: “Old Lady Heaven Mountain (Tianlao shan 天姥山) has a stone bridge through which it is linked up with Tiantai. On top of the stone wall there are characters in the Tadpole script (Kedou 科斗)⁹². The place is lofty and remote and cannot be reached. Those who hold moonlit sacrifices hear the notes of the reed leaf whistle and the bamboo flute”⁹³ Another bridge mentioned in the TTSJ which has remained important into the present day is the Broken Bridge (Duan qiao 斷橋)⁹⁴. Sites such as these have always been thought to set the Tiantai Range apart from other mountains.

Water

All the sites associated with Tan You have two things in common: they are established in places which originally had strong Daoist associations and they all involve

comparatively late construction, I don't treat their extended history here. Information can be found in TTSFWZ 150-51 and TTXZ 70.

92 “Tadpole script”. An ancient form of Chinese script characterized by heavy strokes at the top tapering off at the bottom, said to resemble swimming tadpoles. This script was one of several forms of script used during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (770-221 BCE). See Wilkinson 2000:408 n.2. 93 TTSJ 10947 LB5-7.

94 This area is not far from the Stone Bridge (about an hour's walk). It is now known as the Copper Kettle Clepsydra (Tong hu dilou 銅壺滴漏) and is celebrated more for its stunning scenery than for its legend or lore.

water. In the TTSJ water plays a very important role. Aside from its use in descriptive references, water, and especially springs and waterfalls, clearly functioned as a bridge between realms. Certain sites, where water bubbled up from deep underground or where it fell hundreds of feet through the air, were important as places of dramatic transition. For pilgrims at Tiantai, they marked the site where one world opened up into another. One might find spirits in such areas or perhaps sweet-tasting springs with the power to cure disease⁹⁵. It is for these reasons that documents like the TTSJ and the other monographs that would follow are careful to locate and identify all such areas. These are some of the places religious seekers would want to travel to. They are also areas practitioners would want to be near. The very proximity to the spirit world might be beneficial in advancing one's own spiritual practice and power⁹⁶.

Very little is known about the temple that Tan You is said to have founded at the base of Mount Chicheng, Middle Crag Temple (Zhongyan si 中巖寺). It is given brief mention in the TTSJ, which notes it along with various other important sites to be found at Chicheng⁹⁷. There are two water sources at this same site that have come to be associated with Tan You. They are Washing Intestines Well (Xichang jing 洗腸井) and Gold Coin Pool (Jinqian chi 金錢池). Later legends had it that when You went to worship at Fangguang Temple 方廣寺 a resident arhat claimed that his intestines had been contaminated by scallions when he was in his mother's womb and so could not be admitted. You then purified his innards with water from the well, whereupon a large

95 See TTSJ 10946 LA10-LB1 for a description of such a spring in the Lingxu area.

96 For a detailed study of the role of water, particularly as it relates to Buddhist traditions on Mount Wutai, see Birnbaum 1997.

97 TTSJ 10946 UA3-4. The mere fact that the temple is mentioned at all, when so many other important Buddhist temples are not discussed, is worthy of note. At present You's old hermitage cave is occupied by a small Buddhist nunnery called Purple Cloud Cave (Ziyun dong 紫雲洞).

patch of scallions sprang up. Another spirit awarded Tan You gold coins for his diligence in reciting sutras. You subsequently threw the coins into the nearby pool⁹⁸.

The name of the main tributary draining the Tongbai Basin, Numinous Stream (Ling xi 靈溪), gives some indication of the perceived nature of the water at Tiantai. As mentioned in Chapter 1, it was this stream that was channeled through Tiantai Belvedere. It was also along the banks of this stream, at the base of the great waterfall, that Fa Shun 法順 (dates unknown) established the Waterfall Monastery (Pubu si 瀑布寺) in the year 425⁹⁹. The TTSJ gives this description:

From Tiantai Belvedere, Waterfall Temple is one *li* to the west. In the middle of the Song's Yuanjia 宋元嘉 reign year (424-454) it was founded by the *Sramana* Fa Shun 法順. It is near the bottom of the waterfall and from this takes its name. There is a crag one *li* to the north. It is one hundred *zhang* high and so is named Baizhang Crag 百丈巖. Sun Xinggong's essay says, "Passing Ling Stream and washing, I clear away obstructions and vexations from my heart and mind." Water

98 Strassberg 506. Sources not cited. It is certain that this legend is of a much later time. We find You trying to worship at a temple that wouldn't be built for another 700 years. But the story still adheres to the basic scenario found in earlier tales. His contamination prohibited him from crossing the Stone Bridge and gaining access the manifest monasteries on the other side. In addition to these two sites, You was also said to have cultivated the Way at the site of where Ten Thousand-Year Temple (Wannian si 萬年寺) stands (TTSFWZ 154). Golden coins were associated with other early practice centers at Tiantai. The temple of Expounding the Dharma (Chanfa si 闡法寺) was not located in the northern range but was situated in the southwest of the Tiantai Valley. It was founded sometime during the Jin (265-420) when a general named Liuxuan 劉玄 made an offering of his residence to establish a temple given the name Establishing the Peace (Jianping si 建平寺). Liu's biography states that he was compelled to establish this site after being caught in a rain of golden coins. Neither the free money nor the temple would stand the test of time. The name of the temple was changed from Jianping to Chanfa in 1008. Sometime after, it was abandoned (TTSFWZ 159; TTXZ 72).

99 Very little is known about Fa Shun and his community. It would appear that information regarding his life is drawn primarily from the following reference in the TTSJ. Other monks have shared his name during the Sui and Tang Dynasties but I have not been able to find information regarding a Fa Shun in the Liu Song period.

is made to pass through the temple's kitchen and flow out into the surrounding courtyard.¹⁰⁰

Aside from the practical benefits of running water through the temple complex, it is clear from Sun Chuo's comments that water had the ability to purify and could thus be very important to those engaged in purification practices, like Fa Shun and his community of monks. Indeed, many of the streams and springs located in the vicinity of Waterfall Monastery and the Tongbai Basin were understood as harboring spirits.

Three wells in the Tongbai Basin that were recognized as particularly potent transitional zones were located just below the old altar of Wang Ziqiao. In addition to his role as guardian of the Tiantai Mountains, Wang was also known to have the power to control the weather in times of drought and flood. Too much or too little water was a perennial problem in agricultural China. Many of the sacred mountains found throughout the country have deities that can be approached and requested to provide help in troubled times. At Tiantai this deity was Wang Ziqiao and the water sources around his altar were the site of ceremonies in request of rain. About three hundred paces to the northwest of Wang's altar were three wells, one of which was thought to lead to the sea. These water sources, Xu Lingfu pointed out, were no ordinary wells, "It is common at this site for travelers to witness strange sights and peculiar sorts (*jingqi wuyi* 景奇物異). It is as though they have suddenly ascended to the Mysterious Jade Capital (*Xuandu yu jing* 玄都玉京)."¹⁰¹

100 TTSJ 10943 UB7-LA1.

101 TTSJ 10943 LB2-3.

Because of its depth and the fact that water seemed to endlessly gush forth there after rains, the deepest well became the place that people of the county came to pray for rain in times of drought¹⁰². From early on in the Tang Dynasty, through the fame of Sima Chengzhen 司馬承貞 (647-735) and the Buddhist master Zhiyi 智顓 (539-598), Tiantai was already well known throughout the empire and intimately familiar to a range of emperors (see Chapter 3). Emperor Xuan Zong 玄宗 (r. 712-56), a great patron of Sima Chengzhen, had a hall containing the image of Wang Ziqiao built near the altar and the springs early on in his reign¹⁰³. According to the TTSJ, at least three imperially sponsored sacrifices were performed at the site of the three wells in the years of 683, 738, and 825¹⁰⁴. The sacrifice consisted of the throwing of cast gold dragons and finely carved precious jade disks into the well as an offering to the spirits within, with the hope that they might answer their prayers for timely rain and general prosperity.

Not far to the west of Tongbai Basin is the spectacular chasm known as the Jade Terrace (Qiong tai 瓊臺) and Twin Watchtowers (Shuang que 雙闕), where, the TTSJ relates, strange flowers and beautiful tamarisks lined the canyons and strange beasts perched in poplar trees. While describing the scenic wonders of the place, Xu Lingfu also notes peculiarities in the water at its bottom:

102 TTSJ 10945 UA5-7.

103 It was perhaps this very image that on several occasions during the Song Dynasty was carried from its hall at in the Tiantai mountains and paraded through neighboring districts who were experiencing drought. It was thought that if Wang could only see the suffering of the people he would surely call in the rain. See Xu Shangshu 1990b:183.

104 The first was performed by emperor Gao Zong 高宗 (r. 650-684), the second was carried out under the auspices of Emperor Xuan Zong 玄宗 (r. 712-56) and the last was carried out by Wang Shiji 王士岷. TTSJ 10945 UA9-UB4.

I once looked for Jade Terrace beneath the clouds by walking upstream. Going to the north thirty *li* it flows slowly and gargles in the shallows. It is flat for about three to five *li* and then there is a cave-pool so deep that it cannot be traced. Its depth must be a thousand or ten thousand *zhang*. There are strange stones and the water's color is so clear and bright that the bottom can be seen clearly and the fine scales of the fish are not hidden. The Creator never forgets to return. If this was not a cave residence of the spirits and immortals, then how could it be like this?¹⁰⁵

These are some of the outstanding examples the presentation of water in the TTSJ, but the whole document is permeated with water motifs. The location of headwaters and springs, watershed divides and the courses of rivers and waterfalls are all a central concern for Xu Lingfu. They point to the numinous nature of water at Tiantai. This goes far beyond a utilitarian interpretation of the role of water at sacred mountain sites. In addition to being important for the sustaining of local agriculture, water both sheltered and attracted spirits. Water itself was a passageway, a bridge, between the earth-bound realm of humans and the subterranean world of spirits.

Caves

Water was not the only factor that defined a sacred site like Tiantai. It was also important that sacred mountains contain a series of caves, no matter how small or un-cave like they may seem. Birnbaum has noted that, “caves form a part of the ‘vocabulary’ of phenomena that traditionally constitute a sacred mountain complex in China.”¹⁰⁶ The Tiantai Mountains are no different. Although caves do not form as important a part of Tiantai ecology as do stone bridges or springs; they are still an essential aspect of the

105 TTSJ 10945LA4-7.

106 Birnbaum 1989-90:116.

natural community. There are eight caves in the Tiantai Mountains¹⁰⁷. Both the Buddhist and Daoist communities held these caves to be important and some caves were contested sites. Traditionally, caves were understood as sites particularly rich in medicinal minerals and consequently as places that marked the border between the human and superhuman realms. Thomas Hahn has noted that modern science has demonstrated that deep caves not only harbor important minerals and healing gases, but in some instances the high concentration of electricity absorbed through the skin can create a biological equilibrium sufficient to sustain an inhabitant for weeks with hardly any food or drink¹⁰⁸. Whatever lay behind medieval perceptions of caves, it is clear from descriptions of sites at Tiantai that they were valued for their ability to provide passage to and from the spirit realm.

According to Daoist tradition, China had 118 spiritually potent sites, known as Grotto-heavens (Dongtian 洞天) and Blessed-grounds (Fudi 福地) scattered throughout sixteen provinces. The highest concentration of these particularly potent sites, thirty-one, was in Zhejiang province¹⁰⁹. Four of these sites are located within the Tiantai Range. Of the thirty-six minor Grotto-heavens, the twenty-seventh, Grotto-heaven of the Golden Courtyard, is said to have been located in the Tongbai Basin:

“The Golden Courtyard (Jinting 金庭) has a village where there is no death. It is in the middle of Tongbai with a circumference of about 30 *li* (15 km). It is frequently covered with yellow clouds. There are Purple Perilla (Suya 蘇玢) and

107 TTSFWZ 126-28. Thirteen are listed in the TTXZ 64-65, including those in the southern range.

108 Hahn 2000:698-99.

109 The tradition of ten great grotto-heavens was first mentioned in the Eastern Jin (317-420) in the *Dao ji jing* 道跡經. The thirty-six grotto-heavens were first mentioned in the *Declarations of the Perfected*. The first reference to the seventy-two blessed-grounds in the *Fu zhai wei yi jing* 敷齋威儀經, composed during the Northern and Southern dynasties (420-589). Xu Shangshu 1998c:232. See also Stein, especially pp. 54-58.

Jade Trees (Linbi 琳碧), Stone Pith (Shisui 石髓) and Golden Essence (Jinjing 金精) springs.”¹¹⁰ The *Declarations of the Perfected* refers to this place as the Grotto-heaven of the Golden Courtyard (Jinting Dongtian 金庭洞天). The Realized One of Tongbai administers this place... Therefore the *Declarations of the Perfected* says, “In the state of Wu, Mount Juqu’s¹¹¹ 吳句曲 Golden Hill (Jinling 金陵) and in the state of Yue Mount Tongbai’s 越桐柏 Golden Courtyard (Jinting 金庭) have become the Numinous Ruins (Lingxu 靈墟) of the Perfected and nurture the spirits blessed realm (*fujing* 福境).”¹¹²

This area is the residence of Wang Ziqiao (the “Realized One of Tongbai”), filled with marvelous plants and free from sickness and death. But there is a problem in locating the cave: there do not appear to be any caves in the Tongbai Basin, much less one with a circumference of thirty *li* (about ten miles)! This has led to the speculation that the Grotto-heaven of the Golden Courtyard (Jinting *dong*) is synonymous with the Palace of the Golden Courtyard (Jinting *gong*) because the two terms seem to be used interchangeably in Sima Chengzhen’s essay on Wang Ziqiao¹¹³. In this instance it would appear that the notion of a grotto-heaven had been expanded to cover the entire Tongbai Basin and its environs (an area of approximately five square kilometers). The visible landscape itself is represented as a spirit realm, an accessible heaven.

The Grotto-heaven of Tranquil Jade Peace (Yu qing ping dongtian 玉清平洞天) at the Red Citadel was the sixth cave of sixteen major grotto-heavens¹¹⁴. The TTSJ

110 *Declarations of the Perfected* 14/19. The trees and springs are of an otherworldly nature. The English translation of the first (Suya) is tentative. The translation for the last (Jinjing) follows the *Declarations* using 精 instead of 漿.

111 Juqu is another name for Mao shan 茅山.

112 *Declarations of the Perfected* 11/5.

113 Chu Dingji 1998:236.

114 Post Tang traditions talk of ten major grotto-heavens.

records that, “This is the Cave of the Red Citadel which leads to the Heaven of Tranquil Jade Peace 玉清平. It has a circumference of 300 *li*. The entrance to the cave is in Le’an 樂安 County. This is the sixth of the sixteen Grotto Heavens. Commander Mao 茆司命 is in charge of this place¹¹⁵.” Commander Mao is none other than Mao Ying 茅盈, the oldest and most revered of the legendary three Mao brothers who gave their name to Mount Mao and the school of Daoism that flourished there¹¹⁶. Later legends would state that Mao Ying once refined elixirs in this cave and that his spirit still governed the place¹¹⁷. During the Tang, the cave was still occupied by Daoists but it would eventually house practitioners of the Buddhist faith¹¹⁸.

Some things, like the belief that caves and springs were passages to spirit realms, have remained constant through the centuries at Tiantai. What has changed through time is the way those spirits and spirit realms were visualized and who had access to them. Another event is hinted at in the TTSJ: “Going fifteen *li* to the west of Tiantai Belvedere there is Baiyan (White Crag) Temple 白巖寺¹¹⁹. The temple is thirty *li* from the county seat. At the end of the Song (420-479), the monk Pu Liao 普遼 saw spirit abodes here¹²⁰.” The monk was also known as Pu Yao 普耀. Later histories elaborate on his story:

115 TTSJ 10942 LA9-LB1. The *Dongtian fudi yue du mingshan ji* 洞天福地嶽瀆名山記 (DZ 18-14282), written by Tiantai resident Du Guanting 杜光庭 (850-933), lists this cave as having a circumference of 800 *li* and having its entrance located in Tai county. According to this text, the tenth cave heaven, Kuocang 括蒼, has a circumference of 300 *li* and an entrance in Lean county.

116 See Schafer 1989:4.

117 TTXZ 64.

118 At present the cave is occupied by a Buddhist nun who has lived there for more than twenty years.

119 First established in 479. The name “White Crag” was given to the temple during the Tang (636). It was abandoned in 844, re-established in 861. The name was later changed to Miaozhi 妙智 in 1013. TTXZ 73; TTSFWZ 152.

120 TTSJ 10945 LB7-8.

The monk Pu Yao had rested here in the past. Tiantai had a crag that seemed like a room. The master resided there. The spirit Jiang Bailang 江白郎 said to him, ‘This is my home!’ But by means of the master’s virtuous work and numerous vows, he chose [to occupy] this chamber and it was presented to him as an offering. Thereupon it was called White Crag. Not long afterward, a temple was built here.¹²¹

In a way that echoes Tan You’s experiences in his cave hermitage at the Red Citadel, Pu Yao, through virtue of his practice, so impressed the resident spirit that he abdicated his dwelling in Pu Yao’s favor. Spirits were often found in the caves and crevices of Tiantai because of their close proximity to subterranean worlds. But, in addition to dwelling amongst the roots of mountains, spirits were also fond of riding the wind and soaring amongst the clouds. It is not surprising therefore to find their traces on the peaks of Tiantai.

Peaks

Of the more than thirty peaks listed in the TTSFWZ, two are singled out in Xu Lingfu’s TTSJ. The first was the small rise located directly behind Tongbai Belvedere. The TTSJ relates that, “At the pinnacle of the peak there is what seems to be the outer wall of a city. This is the resting-place of spirits and Perfected...”¹²². Because of its proximity to heaven, this is where the long-lived of Heaven and Earth reside. The same holds true for Flower Peak (Huading), northern Tiantai’s highest point at 1110 meters. The TTSJ describes the peak as being constantly enveloped in a fine mist, even in the

¹²¹ TTSFWZ 206.

summer. The area around the peak is, “excessively perilous and difficult. There are a thousand cliffs, ten thousand ridges, and heavy rains in a thousand maze-like ravines. Apes and monkeys leap through the air, one can rely on the gods of the earth to appear. The traces of men do not reach here.”¹²³ This peak was also known as Banquet Seat (Yanzuo 宴坐) and was the site where the Buddhist master Zhiyi 智顓 (539-598) did Shakyamuni-like battle with demons.

Guanding’s 灌頂 biography of Zhiyi, written during the years 601-607, preserves this account:

To the north of the temple there is another peak called Huading. Once you are on top of this peak, you do not see other mountain peaks around you, and the climate is always different here from other places. The Master left the others and went there to perform mendicant (*toutuo* 頭陀) practices. Suddenly, during the second half of the night, a strong gust of wind ripped the trees out of the ground; thunder shook the mountain. A thousand groups of monsters, each with one hundred forms, emerged: some had the head of a dragon or a snake; others were shooting sparks out of their mouths. All these creatures were amorphous in shape like a dark cloud, and the sound of their voice was like a thunderbolt. They changed appearances suddenly, and it was impossible to identify or count them. The scene of the Buddha defeating Mara has been depicted in pictures. Though the creatures who threatened Zhiyi were a little smaller, they were even more frightening. But Zhiyi was able to calm his mind, and attained the state of untroubled quietude and

122 TTSJ 10943 LA8.

silence. The vision that was pressing on him spontaneously disappeared. Then, the creatures took the form of Zhiyi's parents and of the monks who were his teachers. Some came close to him and others embraced him; they cried and shed tears. But Zhiyi concentrated his thought on the True Reality, and realized the Original Non-being. The appearance of distress and suffering again disappeared after awhile. Neither the vision of aggression nor of suffering could affect Zhiyi.

When the morning star appeared in the early morning, a spirit monk (*shen seng* 神僧) appeared and said, "You have controlled and overcome enemies, and can be said to be courageous. No one can pass these trials better than you did." The monk then preached an extraordinary sermon, which could not be grasped conceptually.¹²⁴

This extraordinary account details the nature of Huading as well as the nature of Zhiyi's practice. It echoes the TTSJ in emphasizing the peculiar weather that often visited the peak, setting it apart from other, ordinary places. The biography also marks Huading as a site of transition, a bridge between the human and the spirit realms. As with the earlier inhabitants of the caves at the Red Citadel, we are introduced to some of the more malicious denizens of the mountain, demons with the appearance of snakes and dragons. But also, as in Tan You's experiences at the Stone Bridge, the peak is a portal to the world of spirit monks who can guide one's passage to a Buddhist paradise. The story was important enough during the Tang to be recorded by Xu Lingfu, who in addition to noting all the monuments associated with the Daoist master Sima Chengzhen at Huading, also

123 TTSJ 10947 LA9-LB1.

124 *Biezhuan* 別傳 192c23-194b19. Translation adapted from Shinohara 1992:121.

writes that, “It is the peak where the great master Zhizhe 智者 [Zhiyi] confronted descending demons. Behind it there is the stone screen that the spirits placed behind the back of the great master. Even today is still exists there.”¹²⁵

In his study of Zhiyi’s biography, Koichi Shinohara notes that all the miraculous occurrences said to have occurred during Zhiyi’s life time and in the years following his death took place at Huading, as narrated above, and at Folong 佛龍 (Buddha-Dragon) Peak, the principle place of Zhiyi’s activity¹²⁶. But as with many of the meetings between humans and spirits that have occurred in the Tiantai Range, the individual, such as Zhiyi or Tan You, is just as crucial to the encounter as is the physical site. Practitioners and their dwellings, in a way that is similar to bridges and springs, were spiritual portals. Biographies of eminent monks and immortals describe the extraordinary ability of some to cross the threshold and enter into the spirit world or to commune with spirits in the mundane world. Along with stone bridges, deep springs, caverns and peaks, monks and their monasteries represented areas of transition, where the knowable world brushed up against the mysterious. These were the sites and people that were important to both practitioners and pilgrims. Together they formed a numinous network of spiritual power: the sacred ecology of the Tiantai Mountains.

125 TTSJ 10946 UB3-5. The stone screen does indeed still exist at the peak of Huading but a military installation keeps all but the resident monks from visiting the site.

126 Shinohara 1992:110.

Chapter 3

THE PATRONAGE OF THE Tiantai MOUNTAINS

6th – 8th centuries

Introduction: The Construction of Tiantai's Temples

The numinous nature of the Tiantai Mountains was first canonized in the literary activity of the 4th and 5th centuries. In the following centuries the themes of transition and transcendence stressed in the literature were embodied by a handful of religious practitioners who took up residence in the range and purportedly interacted with the spirits who dwelt there. Although the foundations of Tiantai as a sacred site were firmly set by the late 6th century, the physical construction of Tiantai as a religious center is largely due to the imperial resources that were channeled into Buddhist and Daoist communities from the late 6th to early 8th centuries. During this time, there was a near constant exchange between the capitals and the Tiantai Mountains. Emperors or high officials of their court would journey to the mountains to receive instruction or perform rituals and leading religious figures would travel to the capital to serve as spiritual advisors for the emperor and his/her court.

The period from the beginning of the Chen (557-589), through the Sui dynasty (581-618) and the first half of the Tang (618-907) was a time of great political change and religious ingenuity in China. Tiantai benefited both from the frequent shifting of the political allegiances and the reputations of the religious figures that made the range their home. These two hundred years were a time of heightened activity on Tiantai. Later generations of Buddhists and Daoists would see the years preceding this period as a

prelude to the lives of their greatest masters and the following years as a continuation of their legacies. Many of the major temples of both groups were either first established during this time or built at a later date at the site of historical events originating in this period. This chapter reviews the lives of three pivotal figures in the construction of the Tiantai Mountains as a sacred site (Ge Xuan 葛玄 [164-244], Zhiyi 智顛 [538-597], and Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 [647-735]) with a focus on their interactions with political leaders.

The first temples constructed at Tiantai in the 3rd century were reportedly built for the wonderworker Ge Xuan by the ruler of the kingdom of Wu, Sun Quan¹²⁷. This is the earliest example of state resources being used for the construction of temples at Tiantai. Imperial support of the religious community and temples of Tiantai would re-emerge, beginning in the Chen period and continuing through the Sui and Tang dynasties, leaving more than a dozen new Buddhist temples and the re-establishment of an expanded Tongbai Belvedere. This later period of building and imperial attention came about largely through the activity of two great practitioners and their imperial sponsors. The first of these was the Buddhist monk Zhiyi, who hailed from an aristocratic family very closely connected to the Chen ruling house. He would receive the patronage of the last two rulers of the Chen state as well as the first emperor of the Sui. The close ties between the community Zhiyi established at Tiantai and the Sui imperial house would end when the Tang conquered the Sui in 618 and imperial interests shifted towards Daoism.

The Tang Emperors showed a pronounced interest in Daoist doctrine during the early centuries of the dynasty. Beginning with the first emperor of the Tang, Gaozu 高祖

127 See Chapter 1.

(r. 618-627), there was a pronounced interest in the teachings and texts of the Highest Clarity (Shangqing / Maoshan) school of Daoism that would continue for more than a century. Sima Chengzhen, also of aristocratic birth and the principle patriarch of the Highest Clarity school, would be called to the courts of no less than two Tang emperors and one empress. The relations between Zhiyi and Sima Chengzhen and their sponsors resulted in an almost unbroken chain of imperial patronage at Tiantai for nearly two hundred years.

The legacies of the Zhiyi and Sima Chengzhen have a number of things in common, despite the fact that their lives were separated by fifty years. One similarity that had a major effect on the Tiantai Mountains and its numerous structures was the extended patronage both men received from a series of rulers. Although these masters were central to the construction of many of Tiantai's temples during the 6th through the 8th centuries, they were neither the first nor the last practitioners to have their communities supported by the ruling house. It first occurred with Ge Xuan in the first half of the 3rd century. Because of the importance of imperial patronage in the creation of Tiantai as a religious center, it is worthwhile to briefly revisit the biography of Ge Xuan, focusing on his relations with his patron Sun Quan.

Ge Xuan (164-244)

The hagiographies of Ge Xuan and his teacher Zuo Ci preserved in the *Biographies of Holy Immortals* can be read as a series of shifting political allegiances. Zuo Ci is spiritual advisor to Cao Cao 曹操 (155-220), Sun Quan's main political rival. The relationship of the two later turned violent with Cao Cao intent on murdering the

priest who had once been his advisor. Zuo Ci eventually escaped and found refuge under Sun Quan, who at that time was consolidating his power in the eastern state of Wu. The hagiography represents Sun Quan as a man of great virtue, contrasting him with the demonic Cao Cao. The shifting allegiance of Ge Xuan's teacher occurred at the same time that Sun Quan broke his political alliance with Cao Cao¹²⁸. The amiable relationship between Sun and Zuo Ci spilled over to Zuo's disciple Ge Xuan, for whom Sun built at least one, if not all four, of the early temple sites associated with Ge's activity in the Tiantai Mountains¹²⁹.

It is clear from the hagiographies of both Zuo Ci and Ge Xuan that their relationship with the ruler of Wu was symbiotic. Daoist masters were not aloof from the power struggles that ensued after the fall of the Han dynasty in 220. A century earlier, Zhang Daoling declared that the deified Laozi had revealed to him that the mandate of Heaven had been removed from the emperor of the Han and bestowed on the Celestial Masters (Tianshi 天師), a large Daoist Ecclesia located on the Chengdu plain. By the early 3rd century, this small Daoist state had become a strong political force. Cao Cao needed the endorsement of Zhang Lu (fl. 190-220), Zhang Daoling's grandson, before he could consolidate his rule in southwestern China¹³⁰. For Sun Quan, Cao Cao's main rival in the southeast of China, it was equally important to receive the endorsement of religious

128 *Shen xian zhuan* 350-360. Zuo has another biography in Fan Ye's (398-445) *History of the Later Han*, translated by De Woskin in Minford 365.

129 Lingbao texts (*Lingbai yi jing jue* 靈寶儀經訣) note that Sun Quan established 39 places of practice for Ge Xuan, including all those at Tiantai. See Xu Shangshu 1998c:232,233 n.36. Zhu Sunquan is also noted as a patron of early Buddhist masters and is said to have built the first monastery of the Southern capital, the Jian chu si 建初寺, as well as a reliquary stupa for the Sogdian monk Kang Senghui 康僧會 (?-280). *Zhongguo fojiao ren ming da cidian*: FJRM 620; Zürcher 52. Seng Hui is credited with converting Sun Quan to Buddhism in 247 and thereby introducing Buddhism to the Wu court. His biography states that he was "the first Buddhist monk seen in the land of Wu." See Taylor 80.

130 Robinet 1992:55.

leaders to legitimate his rule. It is clear that the political sympathies of the writer of the hagiographies of Zuo Ci and Ge Xuan lay with the state of Wu and its founder Sun Quan.

At the same time, religious figures benefited secular rulers through added legitimacy to their rule and by functioning as advisors. For Daoists like Zuo Ci and his student Ge Xuan, acting as advisor to a powerful ruler facilitated the spread of their reputations and teachings. If the historical sources are correct, Sun Quan's patronage of Ge Xuan also resulted in the construction of several temples in the Tiantai Mountains and outlying areas. But the relationship between Sun Quan and Ge Xuan was not altogether ideal. As can also be seen in the later biographies of Zhiyi and Sima Chengzhen, imperial patronage often came at a high price. In the *Biographies of Holy Immortals* we see Ge Xuan reluctant to accommodate the frequent requests of the admiring ruler. Ge eventually told his disciples that, because of the demands of the ruler, he no longer had any time to prepare "the great medicine" (dayao 大藥). As a consequence, he decided to take leave of the world and alerted his disciples to the time and place of his departure. On that appointed day he dressed in his finery, lay down on his bed and stopped breathing¹³¹. According to his biographer, Ge Xuan chose death (or immortality) over the distractions inherent in the service of a ruler.

Zhiyi (538-597)

Many of the themes present in the relations between Ge Xuan and Sun Quan reoccur in the biographies of Zhiyi and Sima Chengzhen. While Zhiyi's feelings towards his royal patron were not quite as drastic as Ge Xuan's, he too would find himself bound up in the constant requests of the emperor and he too would die in the service of his

sponsor. Both Zhiyi and Sima Chengzhen were sought out by rulers who were, at the very least, partially motivated by their political needs. Some of the results of this patronage were the imperial sponsorship of the two master's communities at Tiantai, the construction of new monasteries and imperial recognition of the divine nature of the Tiantai Mountains. An interesting and important addition to the master-emperor relationship in the two biographies is the occurrence of miracles¹³². This is particularly evident in the early biographies of Zhiyi. At those times when the emperor acted in support of the masters' religious community, such as the construction of a new monastic complex, the action was often accompanied by the appearance of spirits, confirming that the actions of the emperor, as well as the practitioner, were in accord with the will of the spirits.

With the exception of Sima Chengzhen, a direct spiritual ancestor of Xu Lingfu, it is the meditation master Zhiyi who receives the greatest degree of attention in the *Record of the Tiantai Mountains* (TTSJ). This is significant in that the TTSJ is largely focused on the Daoist history of the site. To summarize, Xu Lingfu states that Guoqing (Kingdom at Peace) Monastery 國清寺 was built for Zhiyi by Emperor Yang 煬 (r. 605-617) of the Sui dynasty. After extolling the virtues of the monastery, Xu Lingfu also records the location of Zhiyi's original temple: Chanlin (Meditation Grove) Monastery 禪林寺. Xu also describes two of the sites where Zhiyi encountered spirits: Yanzuo (Banquet Seat) Peak 宴坐峰, where his resolve was tested by malevolent spirits, and Chen 陳 Fields, where a spirit made an offering of miraculous fields to Zhiyi¹³³. The laudatory treatment

131 *Shen xian zhuan* 347.

132 Although miracles are not absent from the hagiographies of Zuo Ci and Ge Xuan, they do not play a central role in their relations with political leaders.

133 TTSJ 10946 UA4-UB7.

of Zhiyi in the TTSJ tells us more than which legacies were considered most important to Xu Lingfu and his audience. It also reveals, in a way that cuts across all sectarian boundaries, what locations in the mountains had a history of spirit activity. We see, for instance, that Zhiyi encountered spirits at certain peaks and bridges that already had a long history of spirit manifestation. A closer look at the life of Zhiyi will provide some background to the information found in Xu Lingfu's TTSJ¹³⁴.

Zhiyi was born during the political upheaval that accompanied the end of the Liang 梁 (502-557) and the beginning of the Chen 陳 (557-589). He was born as Chen Wangdao 陳王道 in present-day Hunan in 538. As is evident in his surname, Zhiyi was related by birth to what would later be the ruling family of the Chen. During the Liang, his father had served as an advisor to Xiao Yi 蕭繹, the seventh son of Emperor Yuan 元, who ascended the throne in 552. Two years later, in 554, the capital of the Liang was conquered by the Western Wei, who murdered the Emperor along with many of his officials. It was during this time, when Zhiyi was about sixteen, that both of his parents died and he began his religious training. His father's political ties would continue to serve Zhiyi throughout his life¹³⁵.

134 A great deal has been written about the life and work of Zhiyi. Here I will speak very little of the details of his life outside of the Tiantai Mountains, or of his vast body of writings which would later form the foundation of the Tiantai school of Buddhism. The earliest biographical sources on Zhiyi are the *Guoqing bailu* 國清百錄 and the *Sui Tiantai Zhizhe dashi biezhuàn* 隋天台智者大師別傳, both of which were compiled by his disciple Guan Ding 灌頂 (561-632) shortly after the master's death. Further material is found in the *Xu gao seng zhuan* 續高僧傳, 一二, *Jing De chuan deng lu* 景德傳燈錄, 二七, and the *Tiantai jiu zu zhuan* 天台九祖傳, 一. The first extensive study in English of Zhiyi's life and work, based on the early sources, is Hurvitz 1962. Hurvitz's work neglected the miraculous portrayal of Zhiyi so central to the biographical material. Shinohara 1992 gives a more complete picture of early representations of the master. Finally, Weinstein 1973 has studied the affect of imperial patronage on the life and legacy of Zhiyi. 135 For the political connections of Zhiyi, see Weinstein 274-283.

During his early years, a friend of his father, General Wang Lin 王琳 (d. 573), took care of Zhiyi's financial needs¹³⁶. At the age of thirty, after 14 years of religious training under his master Huisi 慧思 (515-576), Zhiyi arrived in the capital of the state of Chen, Jinling 金陵, in 568. One of his biographers records Huisi's reasons for sending Zhiyi to the capital: "If you establish yourself in [the capital of] the state of Chen, our doctrine will surely flourish because of your connections there!"¹³⁷ The reigning emperor at that time, Emperor Xuan 宣帝 (r. 568-582) had also served Xiao Yi along with Zhiyi's father.

Zhiyi remained in the capital for seven years lecturing on the *Lotus Sutra* and the *Prajñâpâramitâ Sutra*. In Guan Ding's biography of Zhiyi, it is said that he was unsatisfied with the life of a scholar-monk at Jinling, the capital of the southern state of Chen, and, citing the examples of Tan You and Sun Chuo, desired to take up residence in the Tiantai mountains. Guan Ding quotes Zhiyi as saying that an "immortal's palace" existed on the mountain and that Tan You's report on this palace was trustworthy¹³⁸. Ignoring repeated requests for him to remain in the capital, Zhiyi entered the Tiantai Mountains in 575. He visited the grave of Zhi Dun and Tan You's cave, among other places. Given Zhiyi's clear familiarity with the miraculous events said to have occurred during Tan You's time at Tiantai, it is not surprising to find that during his early period of wandering one of the first places he visited was the legendary Stone Bridge. True to

136 Wang Lin was connected to the Liang court through his sisters who were a part of the imperial harem. When the Chen overthrew the Liang, Wang Lin set up a continuation government, posthumously known as the Later Liang. For more on this figure see Hurvitz 107 n.2.

137 *Xu gao seng zhuan* 續高僧傳 17, T 50.564b., quoted in Weinstein 277. "Our doctrine" refers in part to a dual emphasis on northern mediation traditions and southern scholastic traditions of Buddhism. Huisi and Zhiyi were essentially uniting northern and southern Buddhist traditions; a fitting model for the Sui emperors who sought to unite the politically divided north and south.

138 *Bie zhuan* 193a7,8. See Shinohara 1992:130.

tradition, it was here that Zhiyi met a mysterious old monk who prophesized that the Crown Prince would someday build a great temple for him at the bottom of the mountains¹³⁹.

His wanderings eventually led him to Folong 佛龍 (Buddha-Dragon) Peak where he lodged briefly with the monk Ding Guang 定光 (d. 581) and eventually built a hermitage to the north of Ding Guang's hut. Although it was said in his biography that Zhiyi lived a life of poverty at Folong, one year after his arrival there, in 577, Emperor Xuan ordered part of the taxes of Shifeng County (Tiantai) to be used in support of the community. By edict, two households of that county were excused from their civic duties to provide "firewood and water" to Zhiyi's community¹⁴⁰. It was Emperor Xuan who named the new temple Xiuchan (Cultivating Meditation) Monastery 修禪寺. Zhiyi's growing community was also receiving support from at least two laymen as well as Chen Baizhi 陳佰智, one of the sons of Emperor Wen (r. 559-66) and nephew of Emperor Xuan¹⁴¹. As if in confirmation of the support being offered to Zhiyi's community, shortly after the construction of the new temple a series of miracles began to occur. At noon, on a day after Zhiyi had intervened to assist a member of the imperial court who had been accused of criminal activity, an auspicious cloud suddenly appeared directly over Zhiyi's monastery. It was yellow, purple, red and white and looked like the ring that surrounds the moon. Around the same time, one layman, while attending a lecture on the

139 This was the famous Guoqing Monastery, built shortly after Zhiyi's death.

140 Hurvitz 128.

141 Weinstein 279.

Vimalakirti Sutra, saw, “a miraculous scene in front of the hall and dozens of foreign monks appearing from the mountain, each carrying an incense burner in his hand.”¹⁴²

The miraculous appearance of foreign monks plays a prominent role throughout Ding Guang’s biography of Zhiyi. We have already noted how Zhiyi did obeisance at the site of the foreign monk Tan You’s old hermitage. The supernatural arhats who inhabited the miraculous monasteries around the Stone Bridge were also envisioned as Indian monks¹⁴³. The appearance of Indian spirit-monks at crucial times, like the founding of a new monastery, and at certain places like the Stone Bridge, show that not only was Tiantai a place of contact with the spirit realm, but also that the spiritual world of India, as it was imagined by many Chinese in 6th and 7th centuries, was supplanting pre-existing Chinese spiritual traditions like the cult of the immortals¹⁴⁴. These traditions, characterized by the communion of spirits and mortals at distinct geographic locations, remained the same, but the way that those spirits were identified changed over time and reflect the changing concerns of religious groups at Tiantai¹⁴⁵.

After Emperor Xuan’s death in 582, his son, Chen Shubao 陳叔寶 (posthumously known as Hou Zhu 後主, r. 583-590), ascended the throne. It was at his insistence that Zhiyi reluctantly left Tiantai in 585 to return again to the capital. Emperor Wen of the Sui

142 Shinohara 1992:122

143 See Tan You’s experiences at the Stone Bridge detailed in Chapter 2.

144 I haven chosen to interpret the emergence of the cult of arhats at Tiantai as evidence of the authority Indian masters and traditions held for Chinese Buddhists at this time. Another interpretation holds that Indian monks migrating to China in search of the Law represent the shifting center of the Buddhist world from India to China. Both theories suggest, at least, that the presence of Indian monks and spirits at Tiantai was further proof that the mountains were sacred ground.

145 Although the early Buddhist interactions with the mountains are consistent with indigenous Chinese models, such traditions were not entirely absent in India. It was mentioned in the introduction that Indian sutras described the arhats as dwelling in the mountains. Hindu deities were thought to reside on sacred Mount Meru, the center of the universe for all Indian religious traditions. It is probable that early Chinese Buddhists took descriptions of Meru as correlate with Chinese traditions of cosmologically centered mountains.

dynasty in the north had conquered the state of Chen by 589. During this period of war, Zhiyi went on pilgrimage to Mount Nanyue and Mount Lu, two other major Buddhist centers. In less than a year, Zhiyi received a letter from the victorious Emperor Wen desiring to establish relations with him. Zhiyi's closest relationship with the imperial house would be with Emperor Wen's son, the crown prince Yang Guang 楊廣, to whom Zhiyi formally administered the bodhisattva precepts in 591. Yang would become Zhiyi's most powerful patron throughout the remainder of the master's life.

Zhiyi then spent a number of years travelling to other important Buddhist centers and living and lecturing in large temples in the capital. He returned to Tiantai in late 595 or early 596, where, at Prince Yang's request, he worked on a commentary to the *Vimalakîrti-nirveda Sutra*. Zhiyi's feelings toward the Tiantai range can be seen in some of the statements that he is said to have made during this time. Once again his powerful patrons were loath to see him retreat beyond their reach and did everything short of physically retaining him to coerce him to stay. In an earlier letter to Prince Yang, Zhiyi had stated that, "For more than thirty years I have dwelt among the rivers and rocks, and they have formed my character." Later, in response to the Prince's requests that he remain in a monastery close to the capital, he was even more emphatic, saying that he was determined to return to the Tiantai Mountains. Even if he were to die before making it, he had instructed his disciples to carry his remains to Folong Peak. Perhaps, Zhiyi consoled the prince, he may take up residence in the capital during some future incarnation¹⁴⁶.

During his final years in the Tiantai Mountains, Zhiyi received a stream of requests to return to Yangzhou where he could be closer to Prince Yang Guang. He

finally submitted in 597 and in poor health began the journey to Yangzhou. He would only make it as far as Tiantai's western gate, Mount Shicheng, where he wrote a final letter to the Prince, made an offering to an image of Maitreya and died at two o'clock in the afternoon, January 8th, 598¹⁴⁷. The master's body did not decay and was eventually interred at the site previously designated at Folong Peak¹⁴⁸.

One of Zhiyi's last requests to the Crown Prince was that he finance the construction of a large temple complex at the mouth of one of Tiantai's primary valleys. This monastery was completed in 601 and given the name Guoqing (Kingdom at Peace) 國清寺 in 606. The geographic locations of Guoqing and Xiuchan monasteries are revealing. From the main road in Tiantai Valley, Xiuchan, the center of Zhiyi's activity in the Tiantai Mountains, was more than 800 vertical meters up 8 kilometers of steep mountain trail. The difficulty of the route suggests that anyone settling at Folong clearly was not interested in receiving many visitors. In contrast, the site of Guoqing Monastery, built by Prince Yang, was set right at Tiantai's front door, at the mouth of Guoqing Valley, a mere two kilometers from the main road. Its accessibility is such that it has remained the major destination of pilgrims even into modern times. Indeed, its popularity is so great that modern monks at the six other monasteries scattered further back in the mountains often complain that it is difficult to get any practice done there!

Like Xiuchan Monastery, the building of Guoqing was also accompanied by a series of miracles. When Guoqing Monastery was finally completed, the Tiantai community sent a letter to Prince Yang stating that Zhiyi had miraculously appeared on

146 Hurvitz 144, 158.

147 Shinohara 1992:127.

many occasions¹⁴⁹. Now, instead of the appearance of the foreign monks that so dominated the visions of Tiantai's Buddhist community up until this point, we find the late Zhiyi manifesting in various locations. Traditional histories claim that Zhiyi was active at a great number of the monasteries' built at Tiantai. While early sources, such as his biographies and the TTSJ, only mention Guoqing and Xiuchan Monasteries as directly resulting from his activity, later sources have Zhiyi establishing no less than twelve temples at Tiantai¹⁵⁰. Although the vast majority of these temples were built at a later date on sites associated with the activity of Zhiyi, this does not detract from the fact that Zhiyi had a great impact on temple building at Tiantai during his lifetime and for centuries to follow. The Chen and Sui dynasties represent a peak in construction activity at Tiantai that would not be exceeded until the Five Dynasties (902-979) and the arrival of another great meditation master, Tiantai Deshao 德韶 (891-972).

Zhiyi's success can be attributed to many factors: his extraordinary ability to reconcile divergent Buddhist traditions; his aristocratic pedigree, which gained him quick acceptance among the political elite; the miracles surrounding his life and his ability to interact with the spirit world; and the hard work of later generations to promote his life

148 Zhenjue Monastery 真覺寺 (est. 598) now stands around the stupa that overlays Zhiyi's grave. Although the original stupa was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution, the monks there say that because the master's body lay in an underground chamber it went unnoticed by the Red Guards.

149 Shinohara 1992:101.

150 In addition to Guoqing and Xiuchan the others are: Jingming yuan 淨明院 (Gaoming si 高明寺) est. 936 at a site down the valley from Xiuchan that Zhiyi is said to have discovered while chasing sutra pages blown by the wind; Lingxu daochang 靈墟道場 (Tianfeng si 天封寺) probably built in the mid-10th century, in a valley below Huanding Peak said to have been an early hermitage site for Zhiyi; Baima si 白馬寺 said to have been established during the Chen (557-589), no information exists to link it with Zhiyi; Jiuming si 九明寺 est. 912; Longshan jiyun yuan 龍山集雲院 (Chanlin si 禪林寺), not to be confused with Xiuchan (also known as Chanlin); Huading yuanjue daochang 花頂園覺道場 temple not established until 936 by Deshao; Xizhu yuan 西竺院 (Guotai yuan 國泰院) temple not established until 856 this was Zhiyi's meditation ground; Songyin ju 松隱居, another of Zhiyi's early hermitage sites; Dinghui zhenshen ta yuan 定慧真身塔院, Zhiyi's reliquary, est. 597; and Luoxi yuan 螺溪院 (Qingxin si 清心寺) below Gaoming,

and work. All of these aspects combined to leave a legacy of structures and sites in the Tiantai Mountains associated with Zhiyi and his community¹⁵¹. Yet the Tiantai Range of Xu Lingfu's TTSJ is marked with the activity of a different meditation master, the Highest Clarity patriarch Sima Chengzhen, a spiritual ancestor to Xu Lingfu. Although he was born some fifty years after the death of Zhiyi, the lives of the two men, and the way they affected the history of the Tiantai Mountains, are remarkably similar.

Sima Chengzhen 司馬承禎 (647-735)

In many ways, Sima Chengzhen became the representative for the Tiantai Mountains after the fall of the Sui and establishment of the Tang. This was a period of shifting allegiances, when the imperial court sought legitimacy through the performance of Daoist ritual at the expense of the Buddhist traditions so avidly supported by the Sui¹⁵². While the political shift proved detrimental to the still developing community of monks established by Zhiyi, this was not the case for the Tiantai Mountains as a whole. The attention shifted from one religious community to another but always remained centered on the site of Tiantai. The mountains were still perceived as a spirit realm, it was just that

founding date not recorded. For temple histories see TTSFWZ 145-172; TTXZ 68-75. For claims that all twelve were founded by Zhiyi see Xia Yuncheng 77.

151 There are no sources to suggest the size of the Buddhist community at Tiantai during the Sui. Ennin's 圓仁 diary records a meeting with the monk Jingwen at Kaiyuan Si near the city of Yangzhou in 839. In his youth Jingwen had met Saicho at Tiantai shan and was then living at Chanlin si on the mountain. He and Ennin communicated by brush. Jingwen in reply to Ennin's questions, "Guoqing monastery normally has 150 monks in permanent residence, and in the summer period of retirement 300 or more men stay there. Chanlin monastery usually has 40 men in residence and in the summer period over 70 men (Reischauer 79).

152 Because they shared the surname "Li" 李, the Tang imperial family believed themselves to be descents of Laozi and made great efforts to promote the old sage's teachings.

now Sima Chengzhen was held to be the individual with the greatest ability to bridge the gap that existed between the spirits and those who wished to benefit from their favor¹⁵³.

Sima is clearly the star of the TTSJ. Xu Lingfu first introduces him in a long passage describing his training of the great calligrapher Wang Xizhi (ca. 307-365). Although the identification of Sima with Wang's calligraphy master White Cloud is in error, it is noteworthy that the legacy of Sima's life inspired this type of extraordinary attribution. In this instance, Sima's importance is defined in relation to that of Wang Xizhi, a man with an already mythic reputation. In fact, throughout the TTSJ, Sima's association with important figures defines his place in the history of the Tiantai Mountains. He is next mentioned in the context of the Tang emperor Ruizong's (r. 710-712) efforts to rebuild Ge Xuan's old site, Tongbai Belvedere. A later section details the exchange between Ruizong and Sima, when the former finally succeeds in convincing the latter to travel to his court. The remainder of Xu's portrayal of Sima Chengzhen revolves around Ruizong's successor, Xuanzong, and his patronage of the master.

Given his relations with emperors and some of the most influential literati of his day¹⁵⁴, it is easy to see why Sima Chengzhen is often described as one of the most important Daoist figures of the Tang. With such an honored position, it is also not surprising to find a large amount of literature, in both English and Chinese, which detail his teachings and, to a lesser extent, the important events of his life. This being the case, I limit my discussion of his life and thought to those aspects which are particularly relevant to the study of the Tiantai Mountains.

153 Among the similarities between Sima Chengzhen and Zhiyi are their meditation techniques. Japanese scholars have suggested that Sima Chenzhen's "Sitting in Oblivion" (Zuowang 坐忘) meditation was influenced by Tiantai and Chan systems of meditation. The fact that all three developed in such close

The *Stele of Tongbai Belvedere* (*Tongbai guan bei* 桐柏觀碑) states that the Refined Master (Lianshi 練師) was named Chengzhen, and was also known by the names Ziwei 子微, Tiantai's Master White Cloud (Tiantai baiyun zi 天台白雲子) and the Daoist Hermit (Dao yin 道隱)¹⁵⁵. He was a native of present-day Wen 溫 County in Henan Province. Like Zhiyi, Sima Chengzhen was descended from an elite, aristocratic family: "He was the descendent of Sima Gui, an official in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices under [the Emperor] Xuandi 宣帝 of the Jin Dynasty (254-420). His grandfather, Sima Sheng served the Sui dynasty (581-618) as the Grand Governor-General in Personal Attendance. At the beginning of the Tang (618-907), [Chengzhen's] father Ren Zui 仁最 became Courtier-at-large and Chief Administrator of Xiang Prefecture."¹⁵⁶ Sima Chengzhen was born in 647. Although he was a gifted child, he showed no interest in pursuing the path of the scholar-official. In 668, at the age of 21, he formally entered the Way (*ru dao* 入道) and took up residence at Mount Song under the guidance of Pan Shizheng 潘師正 (586-684)¹⁵⁷. From Pan, Sima received instruction in a number of texts, making him the sixth patriarch in the Highest Clarity school of Daoism, which traced its lineage from the initial revelations on to Lu Xiuqing 陸修靜 through Tao

proximity makes mutual influences probable but a detailed study has not yet been attempted. See Kohn 1987:65-67.

154 For a study of the poetry written for Sima Chengzhen by Tang scholar-elites see Kroll 1978, 1981.

155 The *Tongbai guan bei* (TBGB) was written by Cui Shang 崔尚 in April of 742. This along with Wei Ping's 衛憑 *Tang wangwu shan zhong yan tai zheng yi xiansheng miao jie* (TWWS) 唐王屋山中岩台正一先生廟碣, probably written within a generation of Sima's death, are the earliest sources for Sima Chengzhen's life. Both are translated in Kirkland 1997 (note that only the second half of the TBGB, which deals with Sima's biographical information, is translated by Kirkland. The full inscription is reproduced in TTXZ 798-799.). Later biographies are found in Lan Xibing 289-312, *Tongbai shi zhi* 13-16 and TTSFWZ 369-371.

156 TBGB (TTXZ 799); Kirkland 123-4. The same information is given in TWWS.

Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536) and his student Wang Yuanzhi 王遠知 (538-635) and on to Pan Shizheng¹⁵⁸. Since the establishment of the Tang, emperors had sought out all of the principle patriarchs of the Highest Clarity school. The attention Sima would later receive from a string of Tang emperors was not anomalous, but rather a natural progression in a long tradition of patronage.

Sima Chengzhen would later leave Mount Song on pilgrimage to other famous mountains, but by 680 he had come to settle in the Tiantai Range. His biographers state that Sima was immediately struck by the numinous beauty of the place¹⁵⁹. He entered the Tongbai Basin and built a hermitage at Jade Mist Peak (Yu xiao feng 玉霄峰). This is the place referred to by Xu Lingfu in the TTSJ: “Ascending seven *li* from Fangying there is the Jade Mist Mountain Hermitage (Yuxiao shan ju 玉霄山居). The flat land drops away and it is rimmed by four mountains. It is also deep and seems like a cave heaven. This is Tiantai’s third level.”¹⁶⁰ Soon after, Sima Chengzhen would construct Yellow Cloud Hall, the first building of what would later become the Tongbai Belvedere complex. It was here that he began forging the swords and mirrors that he would later become famous for¹⁶¹. In the years that followed Sima’s arrival at Tiantai, he was occupied with study, practice and the training of over seventy disciples.

157 Lan Xibing 290. Pan Shizheng took his vows somewhere between 605 and 618. He first resided at Mao shan and later moved to Mount Song. In the later years of his life he instructed the Tang Emperor Gaozong (r.650-683) in the teaching of Daoism. *Daojiao wenhua cidian* 道教文化辭典 214.

158 Both Wang Yuanzhi and his disciple Pan Shizheng were friendly with the early Tang Emperors. Wang Yuanzhi was summoned to the court of Sui Yangdi (the great patron of Zhiyi) but was disregarded. He later predicted the rise of the Tang and informed Li Yuan (Gaozu r.618-627) that he would become the next emperor and “secretly transmitted to him [Daoist] sacred registers and the [Heavenly] Mandate”(Kohn and Kirkland 341). The latter discussed the meaning of Highest Clarity scriptures with Gaozong (who had himself traveled to Tiantai shan to perform sacrifices). See TTSJ 10945 UA9). Robinet 2000:199.

159 See TBXZ 13.

160 TTSJ 10945 LB2-4.

161 Between 725 and 730, Sima presented Emperor Xuanzong with a numinous sword and mirror together with a text on their meaning. See Kohn 2000:34 An illustration of the sword is reproduced in the Daoist

Empress Wu (r. 684-701) was the first imperial power to seek out Sima Chengzhen, issuing an imperial edict, praising his high level of cultivation and requesting him to journey to the capital. He submitted to her summons but before long requested to return to Tiantai and the Empress held a farewell dinner in his honor¹⁶². In 711, a courier was sent to Sima from Emperor Ruizong (r.710-712) who had many times before requested that the master journey to the capital. The message sent by Ruizong is preserved in the TTSJ¹⁶³. In it, we see an emperor at pains to win the favor of the man he perceived to be one of the most influential masters of the time. It is not known how long Sima remained at Ruizong's court. On his departure he was presented with a precious zither and an ornate cape, as well as a promise from the emperor to rebuild Tongbai Belvedere, the site of Ge Xuan's old practice place.

In a way that parallels the relationship between Zhiyi and his imperial patron, the products of imperial sponsors, which in both cases were new temple buildings, were accompanied by miraculous events. With Zhiyi it was the sudden manifestation of foreign monks and later appearance of multi-colored clouds hovering above the new temple complex. When Sima's community completed the first buildings of Tongbai Belvedere similar events transpired: "The place of the Belvedere still had the old stele. The first five of the Heavenly Worthies Halls 天尊堂 were built, and then three [more] appeared up in the void. The good official wrote this down to record the auspicious

Canon of the Zhengtong reign (1444). This illustration, along with a Qing dynasty copy of the sword can be found in Little et al. 2000:214-215, cat. no. 58 and 59.

162 Lan Xibing 290.

163 TTSJ 10946 LB4-8.

event.”¹⁶⁴ Clearly, the spirits were pleased with the emperor’s support of Sima’s community.

Ruizong’s successor, Xuanzong (r. 712-756), was the third and final imperial power to seek the favor of Sima Chengzhen. In 721 Xuanzong requested Sima to travel once again to the capital and administer the royal precepts (*falü* 法籙), making Xuanzong a Daoist Emperor¹⁶⁵. It was during this time that Sima also brought Tongbai Belvedere’s collection of Daoist scriptures (more than 300 *juan*) to Chang’an for consultation by scholars then in the process of compiling the *San dong jing wang* 三洞瓊網 Canon¹⁶⁶. It was also in 721 that Xuanzong granted Highest Clarity deities supervision over all the empires local and mountain gods¹⁶⁷. This elevation in the status of the Deities of the Highest Clarity school effectively made them the most powerful spirits in the empire. Their headquarters were the Tiantai Mountains.

More than a year after his arrival, Sima again requested to return to the Tiantai Mountains and again was seen off with a banquet where he received poems from Xuanzong and other members of his court. Six years later, in 727, Sima was once again summoned to Xuanzong’s court on the pretext of receiving instruction on the Highest Clarity scriptures. It was during this time that the Emperor, despairing of the great

164 TTSJ 10944 LA5-6.

165 Lan Xibing 291.

166 TBXZ 15. Sima’s collection made up 12% of this work, also known as the Kaiyuan (713-742) Cannon 開元道藏. See also Zhu Feng’ao 1990:73-4 and Robinet 1997:187 who gives 748 as the date of the first Daoist Canon. Tongbai Belvedere remained an important source for Daoist scriptures long after Sima Chengzhen’s time. Two hundred cases of scrolls had been donated in 952 by the king of Wu-Yue Qian Hongchu 錢弘俶. It was this collection that by imperial command was sent to Hangzhou to be copied in 985. See van der Loon 34 n.21. Among the many other buildings that comprised Sima’s expanding belvedere was a hall to house Daoist scriptures (Zang jing dian 藏經殿). This was one of the factors contributing to the recognition of Sima Chengzhen as the founder of the Tiantai Shan Daoist Cannon (Zhu Feng’ao 1990:73. In a tradition that placed such a strong emphasis on the initiation into and possession of sacred texts, the great library at Tiantai was a rare treasure.

167 Robinet 2000:199.

distance between Chang'an and Tiantai, had Yangtai Belvedere 陽台觀 constructed at nearby Mount Wangwu 王屋山. At his request, Sima took up residence here for the following eight years until his death in 735 at the age of 89¹⁶⁸. With Sima's relocation to the north, attention would shift from the Tiantai Mountains in the south, ending, for the moment, 150 years of imperial sponsorship. It would not be until the fall of the Tang, during the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms (902-979), that Tiantai would once again experience a period of intensive temple construction and imperial favor –once again as a result of the close relationship between emperors and outstanding religious figures.

Even with Sima Chengzhen in the north, the disciples he trained and the belvedere he helped build remained in the Tongbai Basin¹⁶⁹. The reputation of the mountains, established through the work of Zhiyi Sima Chengzhen and the patronage of a series of emperors, would continue to attract practitioners and pilgrims throughout the Tang (and the following millennium). The Tiantai Mountains of the Tang could claim nearly seven hundred years of spiritual history, through Ge Xuan's revelations and the birth of the Lingbao scriptures, through Zhiyi's synthesis of meditation and scholasticism, up to the performance of sacrifices by Tang emperors. At that time, there were dozens of monasteries and hermitages scattered throughout the mountains and a landscape marked with the history of great masters and extraordinary spirits. This was the Tiantai found by Xu Lingfu when he arrived early in the 9th century, less than a hundred years after Sima's move to the north. It was a range that had developed from the remote mountains mentioned occasionally in early writings to a firmly entrenched, imperially recognized

168 Sima's relocation is described in TTSJ 10947 LA5-7.

169 Tongbai Belvedere, in various configurations would stand for more than a thousand years until the Chinese government had the area converted into a reservoir in the 1950's. The old temple is now deep underwater.

spiritual center. It is this Tiantai, established and matured, that Xu Lingfu describes for us in his *Record of the Tiantai Mountains*.

A NOTE ON THE TRANSLATION

I have based my translation on the version of the text found in the *Complete Literature of the Tang* (*Quan Tang wen* 全唐文), 1983 reprint. I believe this to be the most accurate and readable version. The version of the TTSJ found in the *Taishô shinshû Daizôkyô*, on which I based my first draft of this translation, has proved to be too problematic to use. The numerous scribal errors and erratic punctuation make many portions of the text unreadable or misleading. This is no doubt due to the difficult nature of their original source, the *Guyi congshu* edition of the TTSJ. This reproduction of a hand-written manuscript has its own problems of clarity but not accuracy. The printed text in the *Quan Tang wen* resolves both of these issues.

I have used several conventions when translating Chinese terms into English. Except for proper names, which I leave in romanized Chinese, I have translated all toponyms and text titles. In those places where the exact wording may be of interest to readers, I have provided the romanized Chinese, using the *pinyin* system, followed by the Chinese characters. Proper names and common terms have been left in romanized Chinese. The page references at the beginning of each paragraph refer to *the Tang quan wen* 唐全文 version of the text. 10941 LB7 refers to the page number (10947), the lower half of the page (L), the left half of the text (B), the line number (7).

This translation would not have been possible without the patient help of Professors Jeffrey Riegel and Michael Nylan. They both helped to illuminate the many obscure passages found within the text. All errors are my own.

Appendix I

RECORD OF THE Tiantai Mountains

Tiantai shan ji

天台山記

Compiled by Xu of Fangying Belvedere 方瀛觀徐, also known as Lord Zheng 徵君¹⁷⁰.

[10941 LB7] Sun Chuo 孫綽 wrote, “Crossing the sea there is Fangzhang 方丈 and Penglai 蓬萊¹⁷¹. Ascending the land there is Siming 四明 and Tiantai”¹⁷². How true! It is the Numinous Ruin (Lingxu 靈墟) of Huanying 寰瀛¹⁷³, the earthly palace of the Three Pure Ones (Sanqing 三清)¹⁷⁴. According to the *Declarations of the Perfected* (*Zhengao jing* 真誥經), “The Tiantai Mountains are 18,000 *zhang* [59,400 meters] high. They have a circumference of 800 *li* [400 kilometers]. The mountains have eight levels and the four sides seem like one.”¹⁷⁵ Its earthly location corresponds to the Ox (Niu 牛)

170 Xu Lingfu 徐靈府 was a Daoist master from the early to mid 9th century. He was also known by the name Mo Xizi 默希子. He authored several works including the *Scripture of the Profound Realization* (*Xuan zhen jing* 玄真經), *A Brief Outline of Three Caves* (*San dong yao lue* 三洞要略), and *Preface to the Collected Poems of Cold Mountain* (*Hanshanzi ji mao* 寒山子集序). He resided at Tiantai near a peak to the north of Tongbai guan known as Cloud Cover Peak (see Introduction). TTXZ;598, TTSFWZ;111. For more of Fangying gong see Chu Dingji 237.

171 According to the *Shi zhou ji* 十州記 (Record of the Ten Continents), Fangzhang 方丈 is in the middle of the Eastern Sea and is home to immortals who do not wish to ascend to heaven. Penglai 蓬萊 is on the northeast shore of the Eastern Sea and is home to the Nine Elderly Viziers and the Perfected King of the Nine Heavens. See Smith:1990.

172 This is the second line of Sun Chou's (310-397) *Poetic Essay on Wandering in the Tiantai Mountains* (*You Tiantai Shan Fu* 游天台山賦). The Siming 四明 mountains joined the Tiantai range on the north in the Shan 剡 range. For brief study of the author and a full translation of the essay see Mather 1961.

173 Huanying 寰瀛 is a dwelling place of immortals surrounded on all sides by the sea.

174 Also known as the Three Heavenly Worthies. A triad of Daoist deities. See Schipper, 1993:118-119.

175 The *Declarations of the Perfected* was compiled by Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456-536), the first patriarch of the Highest Clarity (Shangqing 上清) school of Daoism and famed collector of China's first

and Dipper (Dou 斗) constellations. It is from the correspondence of its peak with the Terrace (Tai 台) asterism, which augments the Purple Palace (Zichen 紫宸) asterism, that it has been named Tiantai.”¹⁷⁶ It is also called Paulownia Cypress Perch Mountain (Tongbai qi shan 桐柏棲山).

[10942 UA1] The Hermit Tao (Tao Ying 陶隱) in his *Secret Formula for Ascending to Perfection* (*Dengzhen yinjue* 登真隱訣)¹⁷⁷ said, “The Greater and Lesser Terraces are in the center of five counties (these are: Yuyao 餘姚, Linhai 臨海, Chuxing 處興, Juzhang 句章, and Shan xian 剡縣). Going six *li* [three kilometers] from the Greater and Lesser Terraces of Mount Tongbai, one comes upon two stone bridges. First one arrives at the smaller one. Following the path more than one hundred *li* [fifty kilometers], one reaches the larger one at the highest point. Medicinal herb gatherers see what seems like a painting of a stone screen and rainbow arch. They also see jade halls and the golden watchtowers. At the side of the bridge lotus flowers as big as chariot wheels can be seen. The flowers are so dazzling that they cannot be looked at for too long. It is from the small and large stone bridges that the greater and lesser peaks take their name.” Accordingly, it is said that the two mountains of Tiantai and Tongbai seem to be linked, their differences small.

known *Materia Medica*, the *Shennong bencao jing* 神農本草經. *Zhengao* 14/19 (juan 14, section 19), Engelhardt:78.

176 These two asterisms are also known as Taigong 台宮 and Zigong 紫宮, respectively. The latter is understood to be the celestial counterpart to the Imperial Palace on earth while the former is believed to be the sovereign's southern palace. See Schafer:1977:47-52. This passage effectively draws a link between the site of Mount Tiantai and the Emperor via the corresponding asterisms.

177 The *Secret Formula for Ascending to Perfection* was written by Tao Hongjing sometime near the end of the fifth century. It is said to have been a collection of practical directives contained within the biographies of the Perfected along with other ritual instructions and a commentary covering every detail of ritual action (Strickman 1972:140). The majority of the text is now lost but three juan bear that title in the *Daozang*.

[10942 UA7] According to the *Chang Kang's Record for Dispelling Ignorance* (*Chang kang jimeng ji* 長康啟蒙記)¹⁷⁸, Mount Tiantai is in Kuaiji 會稽 prefecture at the center of five counties. It is not far from the world of men. The road first passes by a waterfall and You Stream 猶溪, then extends to Mount Zhe 浙山. The source of You Stream twenty *li* [ten kilometers] to the east of Tangxing 唐興 county at Flower Peak (Huading 花頂). From Phoenix Mountain (Fenghuang shan 鳳凰山) it flows northeast, joining the counties other large streams. At Linghai prefecture it joins with the Xijiang River 溪江. The water is deep and cold. There is a stone bridge before it. From a distance it appears not more than a foot wide and over ten paces long. Both sides are cut off from the mist of the ravine. Only one who has forgotten about the body will be able to cross. One who has crossed over will meet the Tiantai Mountains. It is a lush and beautiful place.

[10942 UB2] There are resplendent jade palaces and pure jasper colored sweet springs towering above the azure clouds at Twin Peaks. All manner of immortals and other strange sorts can be seen from time to time. Woodcutters have reported this in the present day. They were unable to find the place when they searched for it again. It is from these reports that we know it to be a place of spirits and strangeness. One who is unhurried can witness them. What is seen by the travelers of today is not this bridge. Even from the upper reaches of You stream, one cannot see that there is a bridge. The place that all the travelers see, twenty *li* [ten kilometers] to the west of Rest Pavilion

¹⁷⁸ *Chang Kang's Record for Dispelling Ignorance* is a work that dates from the Jin 晉 (265-419) and is attributed to Gu Kaizhi 顧愷之 (345-406) whose literary name was Chang Kang 長康. This work is no longer extant.

(Xieting 歇亭), where the water flows into Shan county, is certainly not the same bridge spoken of by Chang Kang.

[10942 UB8] The prefecture takes its name from the mountain and is called Tai prefecture. The county known as Tangxing 唐興 was formerly known as Fengxian 豐縣. In the second reign year of Su Zong 肅宗 [757] the name was changed to Tangxing county. The mountains are a distance of 148 *li* [74 kilometers] from the prefecture seat, eighteen *li* (nine kilometers) from the county seat. “One head juts out into the blue sea. The Golden Courtyard (Jinting 金庭) has a village where there is no death. It is in the middle of Tongbai with a circumference of about thirty *li* [15 kilometers]. It is frequently covered with yellow clouds. There are Purple Perilla (Suya 蘇玢) and Jade Trees (Linbi 琳碧), Stone Pith (Shisui 石髓) and Golden Essence (Jinjing 金精) springs.”¹⁷⁹ The *Declarations of the Perfected* refers to this place as the Grotto-heaven of the Golden Courtyard (Jinting Dongtian 金庭洞天). The Realized One of Tongbai administers this place. He is Prince Qiao 喬太子, eldest son of King Ling 靈 of the Zhou. His style was Zijin 子晉¹⁸⁰. He was good at playing the reed flute and making the call of the Phoenix. He met with the Daoist Fu Jingong 浮近公 and together they climbed Mount Song 嵩山. For more than thirty years he was sought but could not be found. Then he appeared riding on the back of a crane. He took leave of the mortal world and departed¹⁸¹. At the Office’s

179 *Declarations of the Perfected* 14/19. The trees and springs are of an otherworldly nature. The English translation of the first (Suya) is tentative. The translation for the last (Jinjing) follows the *Declarations* using 精 instead of 漿.

180 More commonly referred to as Wang Ziqiao 王子喬. He was the heir of King Ling of Zhou (r.571-544 BCE). After Qiao was disinherited, he lived as a hermit on Mount Song. Sometime after he gained immortality and ascended on the back of the crane, he appeared to Yang Xi 楊羲 (330-?), the visionary source of the Highest Clarity texts, as a sword-girl adolescent. (Mather:242 n.99;Stickman:132 n.18)

181 This is taken from Wang Ziqiao’s biography in the *Lie xian zhuan* 列仙傳 59.

of the Immortals (Xian guan 仙官) he was appointed the Perfected of Tongbai. The Perfected Shi Bi 石弼¹⁸² governs the Five Peaks and is in charge of waiting on the emperor when he comes to administer this mountain¹⁸³. Therefore, the *Declarations of the Perfected* says, “In the state of Wu, Mount Juqu’s¹⁸⁴ 吳句曲 Golden Hill (Jinling 金陵) and in the state of Yue Mount Tongbai’s 越桐柏 Golden Courtyard (Jinting 金庭) have become the Numinous Ruins (Lingxu 靈墟) of the Perfected and nurture the spirit’s blessed realm (*fujing* 福境).”¹⁸⁵

[10942 LA8] In the *Famous Mountains and Blessed Grounds (Mingshan fudi ji 名山福地記)*¹⁸⁶ it says, “The great flood will not reach up to the three caves...”¹⁸⁷ It also says, “Where the cinnabar waters flow southward, there are a network of caves. If one passes...”¹⁸⁸ This is the cave of Red Citadel Mountain (Chichengdan 赤城丹) which leads to the heaven of Tranquil Jade Peace (Yu qing ping 玉清平). It has a circumference of 300 *li* [150 kilometers]. The entrance to the cave is in Le’an 樂安 county¹⁸⁹. This is

182 Shi Bi is yet another name for Wang Ziqiao.

183 This section is also reproduced in the Japanese monk Jōjin’s (1011-81) journal from his visit to Tiantai in 1072-73. Borgen:79.

184 Juqu is another name for Mao shan 茅山.

185 *Declarations of the Perfected* 11/5.

186 There is one reference to a work of this title in the *Qian qing tang shu mu* 千頃堂書, which gives Xu Youyu 許有玉 as the author. I have not been able to locate the text. There is also a text in the Daozang with the title *Dongtian fudi yue du mingshan ji* 洞天福地嶽瀆名山記, (*Daozang* 18-14285) which contains similar information but is probably not the source referred to here by Xu.

187 This passage is problematic. I am reading 穴 for 災, and there is a lacuna in the text. The original reads: 洪波不登三災口莫至.

188 This quote is found in the *Declarations of the Perfected* 14/19. The final sentence is cut off here. It should read: 從中過行三十餘里則得, If one passes more than thirty *li* from the center, then one will reach it.

189 The *Dongtian fudi yue du mingshan ji*, lists this cave as having a circumference of 800 *li* and having its entrance located in Tai county. According to this text, the tenth cave heaven, Kuocang 括蒼, has a circumference of 300 *li* and an entrance in Lean county.

the sixth of sixteen grotto-heavens. Commander Mao 茅司命 is in charge of this place¹⁹⁰. A group of lofty peaks crowd around and form a close, turquoise barrier. The peaks rub up against the clouds and rise up into the Milky Way. Clouds and mist rise and obscure the sun. Mulberries explode with fragrant white blossoms. The flowers emit a brilliance and splendor like candle flames. It seems like spring all year round. Phoenix and Luan 鸞¹⁹¹ birds soar [through the air] and perch on peaks. Leopards hide out in the valleys. Red silken clouds spread out to the south. In the north it meets up with the Siming Range. To the east it is blocked by the great Ao 激 river. To the west it opens up to the Shan 剡 river. Tamarisks, Pines, and Cassias hang like green pearls from the cliffs. The subtle glow of the Numinous Mushroom (Lingzhi 靈芝) illuminates the deep and secluded valleys. Mists hide the cliffs from view. It is not only that they contend with the Five Peaks, but also that they are where one can investigate what is strange and search out the unusual. From here, one can be drawn directly into the three mountains¹⁹². From the time of the Jin and Song [265-479] up to the Liang and Chen [502-589], everyone has looked to the ordering of this mountain when the sun is in the center of the Xingniao 星鳥 lunar lodging¹⁹³. Hoards of jade disks (*bi* 璧) and other treasures are offered in accord with the established canon¹⁹⁴.

[10942 LB8] *The Inner Chapters of the Master Who Embraces Simplicity*

(*Baopuzi neipian* 抱朴子內篇) says, “Ordinary, small mountains are not suitable for compounding elixirs. They all have the essence of wood and stone. Thousand year old

190 This is Mao Ying 茅盈 (145-? BCE), the oldest and most revered of the three Mao brothers who gave their name to Mount Mao and the school of Daoism that flourished there.

191 A mythic bird similar to a phoenix.

192 This may be a reference to the three islands of Fangzhang, Penglai, and Yingzhou.

193 This celestial alignment occurs in the fall.

ghosts a can ruin a person's medicine. Only the mountains Song 嵩, Zhen 鎮, Shaoshi 少室, Jin 緡, Yun 雲, Luofu 羅浮, and the Greater and Lesser Terraces, are truly the abodes of spirits. They can contribute to a person's prosperity and hasten their realization. They are terraces where elixirs can be compounded.”¹⁹⁵

[10943 UA1] Tiantai Belvedere 天台觀 is in the north of Tangxing county eighteen *li* [nine kilometers] and southeast of Mount Tongbai, beneath the waterfall cliff. The *Ancient Illustrated Scripture (Jiutu jing 舊圖經)* says, “Zhu Sunquan 主孫權¹⁹⁶ of the state of Wu 吳 founded this place for Ge Xiangong 葛仙公¹⁹⁷. It is a residence of the utmost natural beauty. On the northern edge is the altar of Wang Zhenjun 王真君¹⁹⁸. In the northeast it links up with Red Dawn Cave (Danxia 丹霞洞). A little to the northwest was Green Screen Crag (Cuiping 翠屏巖). Therefore when Sun Xingong's 孫興公 *Poetic Essay on the Tiantai Mountains (Tiantai shan fu 天台山賦)*¹⁹⁹ says, “Supporting myself by the wall of Green Screen...”it is a reference to this crag. The Immortal's altar together with Green Screen Crag rise up into the void like mountains and a waterfall bursts forth and falls more than a thousand *zhang* [3333 meters] through the crack in the western cliff. Its form is like a colorless rainbow hanging from the sky. It touches the ground like flying silk. When Sun Xingong's essay says, “The waterfall's flying and flowing forms the boundary of the path...”it is referring to this place . Soaring waves and churning froth stir up whirling clouds of mist. Thunderous, pounding sounds can be heard

194 The translation here is tentative.

195 This is slightly different from the original. Compare with Ware 93-94.

196 Founder of the Wu Dynasty (222-272) and patron of Ge Xuan.

197 A variant name for Ge Xuan 葛玄 (164-244).

198 A variant name for Wang Ziqiao.

199 Sun Xingong is another name for Sun Chou. See note 3.

from a distance, pleasing the spirits. The waterfall flows to the south. In more than a hundred paces it meets up with Numinous (Ling 靈) Stream. Together they flow into the counties great river and enter into Linhai prefecture. Flowing through the middle of the compound, the cataract winds around the veranda of the courtyard then pours into a pond. Lotus²⁰⁰ and Water Caltrop emit sweet-smelling fragrances and the Creeping Bamboo are densely intertwined . Travelers forget to return. It is without exception a place of extreme beauty.

[10943 UB1] To the east of the temple 150 paces, there is the old dwelling of the Lord Liu Shi 柳史²⁰¹, called the Purple Mist Mountain Residence (Zixiao Shan Ju 紫霄山居). To the south it looks out over dark green ridges. To the north it leads to Purple Mist Peak. To the right and left are all manner of small mountains, their forms faulted and fractured. In the northeast they join up with Red Dawn Cave. The cave has Ge Xiangong's first site for refining cinnabar. Numinous gardens, green tamarisks, and reeds are planted in the middle of the residence. Grasses bend over the pool and encircle the pond. Substances were refined and transformed in the courtyard of the alchemical furnace. It is a strange sight. The Lord Liu was named Bi 泌. In the 13th year of Emperor Xianzong 憲宗 [r.806-821] he returned from the counties Stone Gate Mountain (Shimen 石門山). By imperial edict he was given the post Governor of Tai County. He didn't go to the prefecture but stopped at the mountain's base. After ordering his affairs and preparing an elixir, he entered into Red Dawn Cave together with his entire family and concealed himself as an immortal.

200 Reading 荷 for 苛.

[10943 UB7] From Tiantai Belvedere, Waterfall Temple (Pubu si 瀑布寺) is one *li* to the west. In the middle of the Song's Yuanjia 宋元嘉 reign year [424-454]²⁰² it was founded by the *Sramana* Fa Shun 法順. It is near the bottom of the waterfall and from this takes its name. There is a crag one *li* to the north. It is one hundred *zhang* [333 meters] high and so is named Hundred Zhang Crag (Baizhang 百丈巖). Sun Xingong's essay says, "Passing Ling Stream and washing, I clear away obstructions and vexations from my heart and mind." Water is made to pass through the temple's kitchen and flow out into the surrounding courtyard. The temple is to the south of Nine-peaked Mountain (Jiufeng shan 九峰山). The mountain is more than a hundred *zhang* high and has a circumference of six *li* [three kilometers]. This is also the location of Tiantai's main tributary. In the past it was known as Nine-ridged Mountain (Jiulong shan 九壟山), but in the sixth year of Tianbao 天寶 [748] the name was changed to Nine-peaked Mountain. Wang Yishao 王逸少²⁰³ together with Zhi Dunlin 支遁林²⁰⁴ often climbed this mountain and from this beautiful spot they would look out.

[10943 LA4] From Tiantai Belvedere a northern road climbs twenty-two *li* [eleven kilometers] to Tongbai Belvedere. Steps are chiseled into the rock and coil upwards beneath overhanging cliffs. All along the narrow path grow ancient pines. The path extends to the entrance of Tongbai Cave. When the essay says, "On a mat of

201 Liu's story is related below. A similar retelling of his life can be found in the Tong Jian 通鑑, juan 241 p. 7775.

202 TTSFWZ gives the founding date as 424.

203 This is another name for the famous calligrapher Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (303-379), a practitioner of the Heavenly Masters school of Daoism.

204 A high monk and contemporary of Wang Yishao. His style was Dao Lin 道林. He wrote an inscription to the Tiantai Mountains, *Tiantai shan ming xu* 天台山銘序 and the poem "Thinking of the Tiantai Mountains" Yi Tiantai shan 憶天台山.

luxuriant fine grasses, shade falls from the ancient pines...”²⁰⁵, it is referring to this place. From the entrance of the cave there is a small peak about two *li* high. The Belvedere is nestled up against this small pine peak. In front of the peak the flat ground suddenly drops away and the four sides all rise up. At the pinnacle of the peak there is what seems to be the outer wall of a city. This is the resting place of spirits and Perfected, and the site of Chao 巢 and Xu’s 許 righteousness²⁰⁶. If it did not draw deeply into the clouds and pierce the Milky Way and was not where one could dream of the short lives of turtles and cranes²⁰⁷, then why would the long-lived of heaven and earth reside here? In ancient times, Master Chu 褚先生²⁰⁸ cultivated the Way here. It is also where the Master of the Law Xu 徐法師²⁰⁹ established a Daoist place of practice. It is called the Middle Peak of the Perfected Hermit (Yin zhen zhi zhong feng 隱真之中峰)²¹⁰. In front of the belvedere there are fields at a very steep incline. To the east there is a stream called Clear Stream (Qing xi 清溪). This stream irrigates the fields. To the west it passes into three wells before flying and falling down a waterfall. It is common at this site for travelers to witness strange sights and peculiar sorts. It is as though they have suddenly ascended to the Mysterious Jade Capital (Xuan du yu jing 玄都玉京).

[10943 LB3] The Belvedere was founded in 710 for Master White Cloud (Baiyun xiansheng 白雲先生). Master White Cloud is the Heavenly Master Sima (Sima Tianshi

205 YTTSF 上卷 2b.5. Mather:240.

206 Chao Fu 巢父 and Xu You 許由 were legendary figures from the time of the sage king Yao 堯 who were revered for their upright behavior.

207 In other words, those who dwell here are so long-lived that turtles and cranes, animals thought to have exceptionally long life spans seem ephemeral.

208 Chu Boyu 褚伯玉 (d. 536), from Qiantang 錢塘. His fame was such that a high emperor of the Qi 齊 (479-502) made a journey to visit him. Chu did not rise to greet the emperor. TTXZ 598.

209 This likely refers to the Daoist Xu Ze 徐則 (ca. 502-557).

210 This is in reference to Chu Boyu who spent twenty years as hermit on Tiantai’s middle peak

司馬天師)²¹¹. His name was Zheng 徵, his style Chengzhen 承禎. He was from Henei wen 河內溫²¹². His affairs are recorded on a stele²¹³. Early on, the Master entered Huading Peak and there met with Wang Xizhi²¹⁴. [After] entering the mountain, he [proceeded to] study his profession. The Master passed on his calligraphic technique to Xizhi saying, “If you desire to learn calligraphy, listen well to what I say. As for receiving a writing style, it has nothing in common with what is coarse. One must first pacify and then clear the mind. Completely devote yourself to mastering calligraphy. The sinews and bones²¹⁵ must have energy and strength. Again, everything must come to a halt. There is no difference between taking hold of the brush and taking hold of fine jade. There is no distinction between lowering the brush and throwing down a mountain peak. Do not boast of ‘proper’ or ‘correct’. When your muscles are strong and resolute, it will seem to naturally become proper and correct. On the eastern side there is a stone chamber. It is not frequented by people. There are strange beasts and numinous spirits everywhere. Turn toward my side to receive your work. If ordinary people were to go there, it would surely cause them harm and do damage to my fate. You may want to bring supplies but

211 Sima Chengzhen (647-734) was the 12th patriarch of the Shangqing School. He became a disciple of Pan Shizheng 潘師正 at Mount Gaosong at the age of 21. He Lived for many years on Mount Tiantai and the foundation of Tongbai Belvedere was granted to him by the Emperor Ruizong. Sima initiated both the Emperor Xuanzong and the great poet Li Bai 李白 into several Daoist texts. Among many other texts, he authored a collection of 11 short biographies of Shangqing saints connected with Mount Tongbai (*Shangqing shi di chang Tongbai zhenren tu zan* 上清侍帝長桐柏真人圖讚; Daozang 18-14436). He died on Mount Wangwu. Kohn:199;346

212 Also known as Luo zhou wen 洛州溫. Present day Henan province.

213 *Tang cui shang tongbai guan bei* 唐崔尚桐柏觀碑. Reproduced in TTXZ 798-9.

214 The association of Sima Chengzhen with Wang Xizhi's teacher Master White Cloud is in error. The TTSFWZ includes an account of another Master White Cloud from the Jin (265-420) who resided at Tiantai and was skilled at calligraphy. It also specifically notes that Sima later also adopted this name. TTSFWZ 375.

215 Sinews and bones refers to the form of the character, the bones forming the structure and the sinews the connecting lines.

do not dare²¹⁶. On the western side there is a stone chamber that lies quiet and idle. A table and ink-stone are all provided. A book of poetry will surely be sufficient. Pines, flowers, immortal herbs can be consumed in the morning. Rock Moss (Shiming 石茗) and fragrant springs may be drunk in the evenings. With a leisure and lightness the water will disperse passion from your mind. Close off your mind and then you will pass over the peak, no longer concerned with mundane affairs.”

[10944 UA4] Xizhi had already met with punishment so how could he dare disobey? He entered the stone chamber for no less than two years. In the evenings he gazed at moon in the nearby pool; in the mornings he threw down clouds with his brush. He cleared and settled his mind. He was truly devoted to mastering the art of calligraphy. He cleared and pacified his heart and spirit. He was determined to seek the writing style. Light circled around shadow but he remained still as the sun gave way to the moon. In this way he passed the years. In Xizhi’s first year of studying calligraphy he was like a snake roused from its spring hibernation; like a fish leaping in a cold pool. Lowering his brush, the dragon took flight and passed amongst dancing butterflies. Although he was not remarkable or ingenious, from early on he was able to startle the masses. In his second year of study, he was like a crane passing through the spring forest, like flying clouds in the midst of fine jade. His brush contained the five colors and his dots of ink seemed like tortoises. His sinews and bones were linked like hanging golden chains. During his third year of calligraphic study he could be considered ingenious. Then, taking several sheets of his calligraphy, he approached the Master, who did obeisance and unfolded the sheets on the table. With one stern look his face flushed and in a loud voice he reproached Xizhi saying, “Your method of calligraphy has absolutely no skill! The

216 The translation here is tentative. The pronouns in the original seem to be at odds.

sinews and bones are all slight, there is absolutely no strength or energy! If you do this type of calligraphy, how can it ever become writing? Still, if you intend to study calligraphy, then it is your fate to go to the hall of the immortals. Unless it is urgent, don't bother with asking questions.”

[10944 UB4] Xizhi cried out and immediately returned to the calligraphy hall. After spending another three years of total devotion his calligraphy was a success. Then, the Master praised Xizhi saying, “Reading your calligraphy, the marks are strange and not of this world. The thin places are not thin. The thick places are not thick. One who can obtain this is rare. One who can see it is hard to come across. In one character a thousand measures of gold are awarded. In one character a fief of ten thousand households are bestowed.” Again he praised him saying, “You are a pine in the midst of a forest, a peak amidst mountains, a numinous crane in the lowlands, Mount Song in the middle of the Five Peaks. I now return to the vulgar world but you will go to the Nine Red Mists (Jiuxiao hong 九霄紅)²¹⁷. Your returning to the world is like a crane coming out of its cage. From now on your mind will not look back. Now and then the distant moon can be seen in the middle of the white clouds.”

[10944 UB10] Earlier, when the Master entered Tiantai, by imperial edict Emperor Ruizong [r.708-710] restored Tongbai's old stele and invited the Master to live there²¹⁸. This had been handed down in an edict saying, “During the Wu Dynasty [222-281], Ge Xiangong abandoned Tongbai Belvedere at Tiantai. It was heard that a man of Shifeng county was out cutting pine and bamboo and damaged the site of the abandoned altar. There was much that was filthy and struck down. It repeatedly caused death. An

217 One of the highest Daoist heavens.

official from Yangzhou 仰州 and The Refined Master Sima (Sima Lianshi 司馬練師)²¹⁹ both knew about this and went to Tiantai. They sealed off the site, making it inaccessible for 40 *li*. Because of this it was the Blessed Ground (Fudi 福地) of wild animals, grasses, trees and other long lived ones.”²²⁰ The place of the Belvedere still had the old stele. When the first five of the Heavenly Worthies Halls 天尊堂 were built, Three [more] appeared up in the void²²¹. The good official wrote this down to record the auspicious event.

[10944 LA6] In the sixth year of Tianbao 天寶 [748] the Protector of the Prefecture Gugong Changyuan 賈公長源²²², together with Master Xuanjing 玄靜, who is the Lord Li 李, known by the name Hanguang 含光, and who was also the master of Xuan Zong 玄宗, celebrated by erecting a stele. The Grand Scribe Cui Shang 崔尚 composed the text²²³. Han Zemu 韓擇木 of the Imperial Academy inscribed the text²²⁴. The Emperor Xuanzong copied out the inscription in his own hand. There is an altar one *li* to the north of the belvedere. One level is made of a mixed layering of stones and bricks. It has a width of thirty-two *zhang*. According to the *Wheel of the Law Scripture*

218 The restoration of the stele (here *e* 額, the upper portion of the stele) implies the restoration of the entire temple complex.

219 Sima Chengzhen

220 From the *Tang ruisong ci sima chengzhen zhi guan* 唐睿宗賜司馬承貞置觀敕, dated the 10th month, 10th day of the second year of Jingyun 景雲 (712). Reproduced in TTXZ 798.

221 Probably referring to the worthies themselves (the Three Pure Ones?). Other texts have the halls appearing in the clouds.

222 Very little is known about Jia Changyuan (fl. 742-747) except that he was appointed prefect of Tai county in 742. See Kirkland 1997:116 n.31.

223 Cui is thought to have earned his *jinshi* degree in the year 700. When he composed this text, the *Tongbai guan bei* 桐柏觀碑, he was serving as the acting superior secretary in the Ministry of Sacrifices in the Department of State Affairs. The stele was erected on the 11th of April 742, seven years after the death of Sima Chengzhen. Ibid. 112 n.22.

224 Han Zemu was from Changli 昌黎 and served as a minister in the Board of Works during the Tang. He was famous for his calligraphic skill. *Shushi hui yao* 書史會要, 卷 5 p.7.

(*Falun jing* 法輪經), “Three realized ones descended from the Primal Matter and helped the immortal Ge cultivate the way at Mount Tiantai.”²²⁵ This altar is the place where they touched down. It is the place of the *Revered Immortal’s Perfect Scripture* (*Xian gong zhen jing* 仙公真經)²²⁶ together with its commentary. Traces of these affairs have all been completely recorded in the original biography, therefore it has not been recorded here.

[10944 LB2] Below the altar to the northwest there is a stone with clerical-style calligraphy (*lishu* 隸書)²²⁷. The record, inscribed and dated, states, “By imperial decree Xu was ordered to perform a public ceremony at this altar and transmit the *Revered Immortal’s Scripture* (*Xian gong jing* 仙公經).” The realized one called himself Xu 徐, his name was Laile 來勒 and his style was Ze 則²²⁸. Not much is known about him. In front of the altar there is a pond called the Descending Perfected Pond (*Jiang zhen tang* 降真塘). There are many types of Lotuses and Floating Hearts²²⁹ growing around the pond. Going more than one *li* south from the pond one can reach a cave entrance. Outside that entrance, more than one *li* to the southwest, is the altar of Wang Zhenjun 王真君²³⁰. Zhenjun is the Realized One of Tongbai. There is a small hall that contains an image of Zhenjun. Early in the Kaiyuan period 開元 [713-742], Xuanzong had it constructed and appointed seven Daoist masters to attend to its affairs. In front of the hall there is a stone

225 This story is contained in the *Tai shang dong xuan lingbao zhen yi quan jie falun miao jing* 太上洞靈寶真一勸誡法輪妙經 (DZ 10-7750) and may be the source to which Xu was referring.

226 This is a reference to the Lingbao scriptures which Ge Xuan is said to have received at this site.

227 This was the official script of the Han Dynasty (206 bce. – 220 CE) which is simplified from “small seal” *xiao zhuan* 小篆.

228 Xu Laile was the Perfected of the Great Ultimate and was ordered by the highest lord to become Ge Xuan’s teacher in the methods of the three caverns. It is from him that Ge Xuan received the texts and commentaries that would later form the core texts of the Lingbao school.

229 Xing 荇 *Nymphoides peltatum*.

spring called Sweet Spring (Liquan 醴泉). Three paces to the south there is the newly established Perfected Kiosk (Zhenting 真亭). It is near the 10,000 Ren [approximately 25,000 meters] Seat (Wan ren zuo) 萬仞坐, which has a view of 1000 *li* [500 kilometers]. Travelers can climb up to the seat and gaze out over the flat land.

[10944 LB10] The main altar is twenty paces to the northwest of Zhenjun Hall. It has a stone altar of four *zhang* and eight *chi* at one level. It is constructed with old bricks. In the present day, when the people of the county pray to receive rain in times of drought, they all come to this altar. To the east of the hall twenty paces there is also an octagonal altar. Descending from the hall to the northwest three hundred paces one will reach three wells. One of them is now stopped up. Legend has it that there was once a female master who fell in while washing her hands. The depth of the second well cannot be fathomed. It is as though it had naturally been chiseled out by heaven. Once there was a clever man who threw a spool of thread into it. The thread was completely unwound and yet never reached the bottom. It is also said that it leads to the sea or that it is a sea-well. It cannot be talked about in detail. Every time the rains fall in spring and summer the waters gush forth from this place in thunderous torrents. It is as though a hornless dragon lay hidden within, drumming in full force. When travelers look into the depths there are none whose spirit is not dumbfounded or overcome with terror. Every year that there is drought in the city, the Commanding Elders sincerely record affairs and pray for a fine rain. They are never answered with silence.

[10945 UA9] This is also the place where the country performs the sacrifice of Throwing Dragons and Jade Disks for prosperity. The emperor Gaozong 高宗 [r. 650-

230 Wang Ziqiao.

684] threw dragons here in 683. In 738 Xuanzong ordered the Grand Minister to perform a ceremony and commanded Wei Tao 韋縉 to throw golden dragons and white jade disks into the well. In 825 The Great Ambassador Qian Zhong 遣中 ordered Wang Shiji 王士岌, the Daoist Ritual Specialist Zhai Changying 趙常盈²³¹, the Taiqing Palace's²³² Great Virtuous Ruan Youxian 阮幽閑, and the Expectant Official of the Hanlin Academy Lu Tongxuan 祿通玄 to proceed to the mountain on the 13th day of the 5th month. They went to Tiantai Belvedere and performed a ceremony that allowed them to approach the three wells where they threw in dragons and jade disks.

[10945 UB4] Ascending about two *li* to the west of the three wells there is a Buddhist temple called Buddha Cave Temple (Foku yuan 佛窟院). At present this is the Daoyuan Belvedere 道元觀. Green Screen Crag billows up in front of it. In the north is connects with Greater Mount Tongbai. Green Screen Crag leads to the Immortal's Altar via a narrow footpath. The twin peaks of the waterfall are hidden in clouds and falling mist. On the top of the crag there is a kiosk where one can gaze out over flat land from the highest point. This is a place of marvelous sights.

[10945 UB7] Going seven *li* to the northwest of Tongbai Belvedere, one reaches the Jade Terraces (Qiong tai 瓊臺) which appear to be hanging in the middle of heaven. The Jade cannot be reached from Hundred Zhang Crag. The road to the Jade Terraces is deep in water and boulders. It is precipitous and cannot be ascended or waded across. If you need to climb the Immortal's Altar, it can be reached using the Tongbai road. At that

231 A contemporary of Bai Juyi 白居易. See Bai's biography in *Xin xiao ben jiu tang shu* 新校本舊唐書, 116.

232 The Taiqing Palace was one of two Tang ancestral temples dedicated to Daoist worship by Emperor Xuan Zong.

point you will have a level view of the Jade Terraces and will be looking down on the Twin Watchtowers (Shuang que 雙闕). Many travelers think it peculiar that the Jade Terraces are not in the middle of heaven and the Twin Watchtowers do not emerge from the clouds. It is because they are being viewed from the top of the mountain that they look like this. If they are seen from below, then not only are the Jade Terraces in the middle of Heaven but the Twin Watchtowers go on for five *li* before meeting up with Numinous Stream. The Green Cliff is 10,000 *ren* [25,000 meters] high. A forest clings to it. Strange flowers and beautiful tamarisks emit a sweet smell. Rare birds and numinous beasts call out from the poplar trees.

[10945 LA4] I once looked for the Jade Terraces beneath the clouds by walking upstream. Going to the north thirty *li* [fifteen kilometers], it flows slowly and gargles in the shallows. It is flat for about three to five *li* and then there is a cave-pool so deep that it cannot be traced. Its depth must be a thousand or ten thousand *zhang*. There are strange rock formations²³³ and the water's color is so clear and bright so that the bottom can be clearly seen and the fine scales of the fish are not hidden. The Creator never forgets to return. If this was not a cave residence of the spirits and immortals, then how could it be like this?

[10945 LA7] Five *li* to the northeast of Tongbai is the Flower Forest Mountain Hermitage (Hualin shan ju 華林山居). It is a territory of water and stone, translucent beauty and numinous silence (early in the Changqing 長慶 period [821-925] Chen Zongyan 陳宗言²³⁴ cultivated realization here). Ascending north of the Belvedere there is a peak. In about 5 *li* there is the Fangying Hermitage 方瀛居. On top there is flat land.

233 There are two unidentifiable characters in the text here which appear to be alluding to mountain peaks.

Before it drops away there is a pool the size of many acres. In the middle of the pool there is a small islet. It has Lotuses and Water Caltrop in the front that gaze out on azure hills backed by lofty clouds. It is called Rear Peak (Hou feng 後峰). In the west it meets up with Jade Terrace and in the east it enters into the Flower Forest (Hualin 華林). In the first year of the Changqing 長慶 period [821] I (Lingfu 靈府) established a residence here. It is Tiantai's second level.

[10945 LB2] Ascending seven *li* from Fangying there is the Jade Mist Mountain Hermitage (Yuxiao shan ju 玉霄山居). The flat land drops away and it is rimmed by four mountains. It is also deep and seems like a cave heaven. This is Tiantai's third level. Going three *li* to the southeast of Jade Mist is a slot canyon which is like a high gate, more than a hundred *ren* [two hundred and fifty meters] high. Because of this it is called Stone Gate (Shimen 石門). To the north of Tongbai Belvedere there is a road that climbs to Flower Peak (Huading 華頂). The road is deep and full of obstructions. Travelers are rare. Coming across this many people decide to go up by Kingdom at Peace (Guoqing 國清) road. Going fifteen *li* to the west of Tiantai Belvedere there is White Crag Temple (Baiyan si 白巖寺)²³⁵. The temple is thirty *li* from the county seat. At the end of the Song [420-479], the monk Pu Liao 普遼 saw spirit abodes here²³⁶.

234 It is possible that this refers to the Tang poet Chen Guayan 陳寡言. Styled Tai Chu 太初. TTXZ 598.

235 First established in 479. The name "White Crag" was given to the temple during the Tang (636). It was abandoned in 844, re-established in 861. The name was later changed to Miaozi 妙智 in 1013. TTXZ 73; TTSFWZ 152.

236 Generally written Pu Yao 普耀. "The monk Pu Yao had rested here in the past. Tiantai had a crag that seemed like a room. The master resided there. The spirit Jiang Bailang 江白郎 said to him, 'This is my home!' By means of the master's virtuous work and numerous vows, he chose this room and it was presented to him as an offering. Thereupon it was called White Crag. Not long afterward, a temple was built here." TTSFWZ 206.

[10945 LB 8] Going fifteen *li* to the east of Tiantai Belvedere, there is Red Citadel Mountain (Chicheng shan 赤城山). The mountain is three hundred *zhang* [one thousand meters] high, with a circumference of seven *li*. This is Tiantai's southern gate. From ancient times until the present, this is the place of the countries sacrificial rites. This mountain's amassed stone is reddish in color and resembles the rose tinged clouds of dawn. Gazing at them, they seem like crenelations. It is because of this that it is called Red Citadel. It is also called Burning Mountain (Shao shan 燒山). Therefore when the essay says, "Red Citadel, rose-tinged cloud rising, establishes its mark"²³⁷, it is referring to this mountain. On the upper level of the mountain there is Flying Rose-tinged Cloud Temple (Feixia si 飛霞寺). The Liang King Yue²³⁸ originally lived at this temple. Now it is abandoned. Below the mountain is a stone room. Daoists live there. In the middle of the mountains base there is a temple called Middle Crag Temple (Zhongyan si 中巖寺). It was established by the high monk of the western regions, Bai Daoyou 白道猷²³⁹.

[10946 UA4] Kingdom at Peace Temple (Guoqing si 國清寺) is ten *li* to the north of the county. There are ancient pines along the narrow path to the temple. The temple was built by the Sui Emperor Yang 煬 for the meditation master Zhiyi 智顛 during the 18th year of the Kaihuang 開皇 reign²⁴⁰. The temple has five peaks. The first is Eight Cassias Peak. The second is Reflecting the Rose-tinged Clouds Peak. The third is

237 YTTSF 上卷 2b.5; Mather 238; Owen 186.

238 King Yue Yang 岳陽 of the Liang Dynasty (502-557) is known as the founder of this temple. It was later home to Ding Guang 定光. The temple was abandoned at the end of the Liang.

239 Also known as Tan You 曇猷 (?-383). He entered the Tiantai mountains sometime during 363-365.

240 The Kaihuang reign was under the Emperor Wendi 文帝 and did not last for 18 years (590-601). The construction of the temple was begun in 598, one year after the death of Zhiyi, and completed in 601. See Shinohara 1992:99-106; TTXZ 68. Emperor Yang 煬帝 would not ascend the throne until 605. At the time of the construction of Guoqing Monastery he was the crown prince.

Numinous Mushroom Peak. The fourth is Numinous Bird Peak. The fifth is Auspicious Cloud Peak. Two gullies surround and embrace it. Of the world's four peerless temples, Kingdom at Peace is the first²⁴¹. The temple sits atop Fang dou lu 方兜率 Terrace. To the east of the terrace there is a stone altar with a spring at its center. In the past the meditation master Puming 普明²⁴² stuck his staff here and it opened. It is called Staff Spring (Xizhang quan 錫杖泉). Fifteen *li* to the northeast of Kingdom at Peace Temple there is Meditation Grove Temple (Chanlin si 禪林寺). The temple was originally the place where Zhiyi practiced meditation. In the fourth year of Zhenyuan 貞元 [789] it was ordered by official document that it be removed. Huangyan 黃巖 county destroyed Meditation Grove Temple's stele. They changed its name to that of a Daoist establishment.

[10946 UB2] Fifteen *li* to the east of the temple there is Fragrant Cauldron (Xianglu 香爐) Peak. It is extremely high and steep. On top of the peak there are many fragrant cypresses, tamarisks, and cassia trees that seem to be linked. There is also Banquet Seat (Yanzuo 宴坐) Peak. This peak is more than one hundred *zhang* [333 meters] high. It is the peak where the great master Zhizhe 智者²⁴³ confronted descending demons. Behind it there is the stone screen that the spirits placed behind the back of the great master. Even today it is still there²⁴⁴. Below the peak there is a dragon

241 According to the *Jiu yu zhi* 九域志 the three others are: Lingyan si 靈岩寺 in Jinan 濟南; Yuquan si 玉全寺 in Jiangling 江陵; and Qixia si 棲霞寺 in Nanjing 南京. See *Zhongguo mingshan dachuan cidian* 中國名山大川辭典 1208.

242 Lived during the Sui (590-618). From Kuaiji 會稽. Original family name Zhu 朱, also known as Fajing 法京. He was a disciple of Zhiyi. TTXZ 589; FJRM 790.

243 An alternate name for Zhiyi.

244 Most sources record this event as having occurred at Huading Peak. Fragrant Cauldron Peak lies along the same ridge several miles to the west in the vicinity of Wannian Monastery 万年寺. See TTXZ 63.

pool with a circumference of about one *li*. It empties into Whorling Stream (Luoxi 螺溪) and then into the counties great stream. Ten *li* above the temple to the northwest there are the Chen Fields 陳田 (in ancient times there was a spirit who at this place opened the fields as an offering to the great master Zhizhe; what was planted in the morning could be harvested in the evening). From Chen Fields about five *li* to the west, one reaches a water source. The land is flat and level. It is called White Sands (Baisha 白砂). There is a monk's hermitage here.

[10946 UB8] Going up twenty-five *li* to the northwest of Meditation Grove Temple, one reaches Rest Kiosk (Xieting 歇亭). This is Menggong of Pingchang's Simple and Clean Studio (Pinghang Menggong jianlian zhai 平昌孟公簡廉祭)²⁴⁵. This is also Zhizhe's meditation cloister and the place where Master White Cloud had his hermitage. In his early years of following the Way, the master first had a hermitage on Mount Song [and then on Mount] Hua. He was mixing with the wind and the dust there and he couldn't bare it. Going east he came to the terraced peak. He was satisfied with its elegance and isolation and proceeded to establish a place for the cultivation of perfection. When *the Declarations of the Perfected* says, "In the middle of Mount Tiantai there is a village of no death, becoming divine²⁴⁶ Numinous Ruins. There is a frequently a yellow cloud covering it," it is referring to this place. Formerly, there was a Perfected Concentration Hall (Sizhen zhi tang 思真之堂) established here. It was called Yellow Cloud Hall. There is a small ravine [near] the hall. To the south there is a stone ridge with a circular form. In front of the stone mound there is flat land where there stands an altar

245 Here I am reading 祭 for 察.

246 Here I follow the original text of the *Declarations of the Perfected* which has 成神 rather than 成禪.

of one level constructed of stone. It is called Mysterious White Spirit (Baixuan shen 白玄神).

[10946 LA5] Therefore, the Master's Song of the Numinous Ruin (*Lingxu song* 靈墟頌) says, "The hall is called Yellow Cloud because of its perfected essence²⁴⁷. The altar is named Mysterious Spirit (Xuan shen 玄神). One can look upward with clarity of vision here. To the east there is a training room (*lianxing shi* 練形室); a place for regulating the breath. To the south there is the Phoenix Carriage (Fengzhen 鳳軫) Platform. Here, the song of the wind nourishes freedom. Spirits are sought in the west where one opens with peaceful prayer and relies [upon obtaining results]²⁴⁸. To the north there is what is called the Manifesting Dragon Pavilion (Long zhang ge 龍章閣) and one can look up and see the ink-black clouds. Those who are humble and not corrupt can wait here for wind and rain. Those who are sincere but not [yet] prosperous can become completely empty and pure²⁴⁹. In front of the White Altar ten paces there is a great stream. It issues forth from the southeast of Flower Peak, then flows tranquilly to the sea. Also, forty paces to the west of the Hall there is a spring. Its flavor is sweet and it can heal diseases. In the center of the flat ground there stands a separate courtyard. Here, one can engage in the operation of the great alchemical furnace and the forging swords and mirrors. The ancient pines have trunks ten times as thick as average trees. Cultivated bamboo lean over en masse. All of them were planted by the hand of the Heavenly Master.

247 There is a lacuna in the text here: ...以口真氣.

248 The translation here is tentative.

249 Following Lan Xibing's reading of the second to last character as 虛.

[10946 LB4] There were a series of Imperial edicts but the master did not act on any of them. Then Ruizong, in the second year of the Jingyun 景雲 reign [712], ordered his brother²⁵⁰, Chengyi 承禕, to go to the mountain and invite the master to meet with the Emperor. The text of the edict said, “The Refined Master Dezhao Heshang 德超河上²⁵¹ and Daoyu Fujin 道邁浮近²⁵² were noble enough to descend from the azure [sky] and walk along the weed-choked paths. They paced within the borders of the pure source alone. Since the beginning of my approaching the Treasure Seat, I have long depended on your profound methods²⁵³. Although I am not Yao or Shun, my great plans and outstanding heart gnaw through my shortcomings. In the spacious halls and imperial offices I gaze into the distance thinking of Mount Kongtong 崆峒²⁵⁴. It has only been cherished by others in the distant past. My peace is hindered by these desires. Looking at the dawn and standing for a long time admiring the sunset, all traces of my torpid mind take flight. I desired to dispatch an envoy to greet you. Some thought that the Refined Master might be startled and fear the reason, so I ordered Chengyi 承禕 to go with the edict. I would like you to return together with him. The opening [of a time of] peace is not far off. Give this some thought.”

[10946 LB9] The master went to the capital. The Emperor asked, “You regulate your body, therefore it has the means by which to remain aloof from human affairs. Is it possible that the state could be regulated in this noble way?”

250 Probably Sima Chengzhen's brother in the Way.

251 A legendary Daoist from the time of the Western Han (202 BCE-CE 23), also known as He Shangong 河上公.

252 This is the Daoist with whom Wang Ziqiao climber Mount Song, also known as Fu Jingong 浮近公.

253 Here I follow Lan Xibing's (290) reading of the text.

254 Located in Gansu Province.

[10946 LB10] The master replied saying, “The state resembles the body and the body resembles the state. The Old Sovereign²⁵⁵ said, ‘Let the mind wander in tranquility²⁵⁶ and join your essence (*qi* 氣) with the Milky Way (Han 漢). Accord with the nature of things and Heaven and Earth will be regulated.’ The Book of Changes says, ‘The great person joins his virtue with that of Heaven and Earth.’ This is the knowledge that Heaven by not speaking is trustworthy, by not acting is able to achieve. The principle of non-action is the Way of ordering one’s household.”

[10947 UA3] The Emperor sighed and said, “What can be added to the words of Guang Cheng 廣成²⁵⁷? Please return to the mountain.” The Emperor gave him a precious lute and a cape woven of rose-tinged threads. At court more than one hundred men of letters presented poems²⁵⁸. Afterward, the Emperor established Tongbai Belvedere and various masters have since resided there.

[10947 UA5] Going twenty *li* to the south of the Numinous Ruins there is a small farmstead at Huan 歡 Stream. The great scholar of the Liang Dynasty [501-557], Gu Huan 顧歡²⁵⁹, once lived here, so it is named Huan Stream. Going along the thin line of

255 Old Sovereign refers to Laozi, but the following quote is not found in the *Dao de jing*. Other texts which contain this exchange simply say “a famous person (*ming ren* 名人) said...”

256 Here I follow the *Xin xiao ben jiu tang shu* 新校本舊唐書 which uses 澹 (tranquil) rather than 談 (speech). Other texts use 淡 (thin). This passage is open to interpretation.

257 A recluse of antiquity who lived on Mount Kongtong in a stone chamber. Sometime during his 1200 year life span, he is said to have transmitted the “Way of regulating the body” to the Yellow Emperor.

258 This story is also found in Sima Chengzhen’s biography in the *Xin xiao be jiu tang shu* 新校本舊唐書, 142. It is recorded elsewhere that Li Shi 李適(663-711), one of the most favored court poets presented Sima with an exquisitely written poem. More than three hundred courtiers then composed matching poems on the same subject. These poems were then collected as *The Record of White Cloud* (*Baiyun ji* 白雲記) but the collection has not been passed down. See Kroll 1978:21,29 n.26. Several of the poems are preserved in the *Tiantai shan lidai shi xuan* 天台山歷代詩選 3-7 and TTXZ 758-59.

259 Gu Huan (420/8-498/91) organized a community dedicated to the study of the original Shangqing scripts. He preceded Tao Hongjing in producing a compilation of traced facsimiles entitled the *Traces of the Perfected* (*Zhenji* 真跡). This work is now lost. It was due to Tao’s dissatisfaction with Gu’s work that he was compelled to compile the *Declarations of the Perfected* (Strickman 1972:140 n.50; for an extended discussion of Gu Huan see Strickman 1977).

the ravine fifteen *li* from the Rest Kiosk, one reaches a stone bridge. There is a small kiosk at its head. The colors of the stone bridge are all clear. It is seven *zhang* [25 meters] long. The southern head has a width of seven *chi* [a little more than one meter], the northern head has a width of two *chi*. It has a dragon form and a tortoise back. It spans a 10,000 *ren* gorge. There are two streams on top. The streams flow together and pass beneath the bridge before the rushing waters become a waterfall. They flow west to Shan 剡 county. Looking up from below it seems like a clear rainbow is drinking from the ravine. The bridge is located in the high mountains. The water sounds like an avalanche and there are times when those who pass become dizzy and their hearts throb with terror. The bridge that is seen by the travelers of today is the north bridge. This is the place where the arhats reside. It seems to me that the small one is known about and the location of the large one is unknown. It is the holy immortals obscure hiding place, not what is seen by common people.

[10947 UB3] From this bridge, following along the ravine fifteen *li*, there is another stone bridge. It is broken at the center and so it is called Broken Bridge (Duanqiao 斷橋). Ascending north twenty *li* [ten kilometers] from the Rest Kiosk, one can climb Huading Peak. This is Tiantai's highest place. It is often concealed by clouds and mist. Rare are the times when it is clear and bright. At this height there is a continuous fine rain. It seems cold when the clouds hidden in the ravine condense and spill out. All through the summer it is like this. If you chance upon a time when it is clear, then this is the place to watch the sun rise. The Classic of Maps (*Tu jing* 圖經) says, "Master White Cloud, without exception, always paid his respects to the dawn from the two places of Flower Peak and Numinous Ruin." A Heavenly Worthies Hall was

constructed at its top. The two chambers to the right and the left both had openings created to extend the sun and moon light. In the morning one could feed off this light and the [drink the] water from the clouds and mist that had collected in the carved niche. In the evening one could draw off this energy. There was an altar of three layers established in front of the hall. Inside of the hall there was a stone image. Above the chime stones there was an iron incense burner and a bell. For a long time there was a wasteland of hazel to the north of the altar. Recently, this area has been opened up for cultivation. To the east of the hall ten paces there is a sweet spring. The master passed twenty-eight years living here.

[10947 LA2] When he received imperial edicts, the master did not act on them. There was a memorial to the throne (*biao* 表) which said, “Even ordinary people, if they are loyal and wish to conceal themselves, are allowed a high perch. Daoists who cultivate perfection and truth should be allowed to keep themselves at a great distance.” The edict said: “Although it may obstruct the yearnings of others, it is appropriate that [you] take direction from this [edict]. Please break with [what you said in] the memorial I received. There is no need for further messages²⁶⁰.” In the eleventh year of the Kaiyuan 開元 reign [724], Emperor Xuanzong sought to be initiated. The master declined to return [to the capital]. Because Tiantai was secluded and distant, the Emperor was hard put to meet face to face with the master. Thereupon, at Royal Room Mountain (Wangwu shan 王屋 山), he selected a site of great beauty for the establishment of his residence at Yangtai 陽

260 Literally, “No other two’s or three’s.” 無或二三.

臺 Belvedere²⁶¹. Now at Numinous Ruin and Flower Peak, the halls were not roofed, there were only stands of pines and bamboo. The weather could be clearly observed. One could see the turquoise color of the ocean waters. “I, the sovereign, am as bright as the Heavens. If I were the companion of a clear Perfected one, then the three mountains and the ten continents could be seen, clouds of jade and the sound of the flute could immediately be heard.”

[10947 LA9] Descending from the north of Huading is excessively perilous and difficult. There are a thousand cliffs, ten thousand ridges, and heavy rains in a thousand maze-like ravines. Apes and monkeys leap through the air and one can rely on the gods of the earth to appear. The traces of men do not reach here. Going from Tiantai’s north gate, you are at Shan County’s Jinling 金靈 Belvedere. In front of the Belvedere there is Incense Brazier Peak (Xianglu feng 香爐峰). Below the peak there is a small hole which you can look into. There is no limit to its depth.

10947 LB2] Northwest of Mount Tiantai there is a peak. Its isolation and elegance set it apart and it can be compared with Tiantai. It is called Old Lady Heaven Peak (Tianlao feng 天姥峰). The road to Shan County is near the base of this peak. Looking up from below the road seems to wind up into the sky. In the past it belonged to Linhai prefecture and was under the jurisdiction of Kuaiji 會稽²⁶². It also has a greater and

261 Royal Room Mountain was in the Zhongtiao 中條 Mountains in the in the northwest of Shanxi Province, much closer to the capital than Tiantai. The Belvedere established by Xuanzong is said to still exist there. *Zhongguo ming shan da chuan ci dian* 中國名山大川辭典 203.

262 Kuaiji is the name of the prefecture to the north of the Tiantai Range. It is also the mountain where the first emperor of the Xia is said to have withdrew to practice the teaching of texts which had originally been bestowed on Thearch Gu by Celestial officials. These texts would form the basis of the Lingbao scriptures and would eventually be discovered deep amongst the root of the mountain. This story comes from the first narrative account of Grotto Heavens, the *Lingbao wufu jing xu* 靈寶五符經序 (Scripture of the Five Talismans of the Numinous Treasure, with Preface). See Bokenkamp 1986:66 n.4.

lesser Tuo 唾 Peak. A valley is formed below Old Lady Heaven's Tuo Peak. Old Lady Heaven has a stone bridge which links it with Tiantai. On top of the stone wall there are characters in the Tadpole script (Kedou 科斗)²⁶³. The place is lofty and remote and cannot be reached. Those who hold moonlit sacrifices hear the notes of the reed leaf whistle and the bamboo flute. During the Song Yuanjia 宋元嘉 period [424-454] the Censor dispatched the artisan Jin 盡 to draw the form of the mountains on a circular fan. The marks were numinous and extraordinary. This is also the place where, during the time of the Xia ruler Yu 夏禹²⁶⁴, Liu and Ruan went out gathering herbs and encountered immortals. In ancient times Liu Richeng 劉日成 and Ruan Zhao 阮肇 of Shan 剡 entered the mountains and met immortals at this place. These events are all recorded in their biographies.

[10947 LB10] It is also noted in the *Immortal's Scripture* (*Xianjing* 仙經)²⁶⁵: “This mountain has stone bridges. One place still exists but the other's location is not known.” It also says: “Many of the dispersed immortals come together to meet at the bridge. It is because of this that we are able to speak of them.” This is the Numinous Immortals Bridge. It is not what is seen by people of our day. If one is not of honest spirit and subtle clarity, then a meeting [with the immortals] will certainly be obstructed. If perfected immortals cannot be seen, then how could the bridge be seen? Here there are peculiar birds and strange beasts of a thousand forms and ten thousand types. Numinous

263 “Tadpole script”. An ancient form of Chinese script characterized by heavy strokes at the top tapering off at the bottom, said to resemble swimming tadpoles. This script was one of several forms of seal script used during the Spring and Autumn and Warring States periods (770-221 b.c.e.). See Wilkinson 2000:408 n.2.

264 Yu is the credited with the founding of the first Dynasty, the Xia (ca. 21st-16th BCE)

265 A general term for the Lingbao scriptures. 266 Reading 潤 for 閏.

flowers and immortal grasses lie hidden in the valley. No one can name them. The multi-hued luminescence of the five mushrooms cannot be experienced unless you are perfected. They are hidden beneath deep-rooted trees. How could they be seen by ordinary people?

[10948 UA5] In the tenth year of the Yuanhe 元和 period [815] I (Lingfu 靈府) moved from Heng Peak 衡岳 to Terraced Peak (Taiyue 台岳). I set up a hermitage at Fangying 方瀛. From early on in the Baoli 寶曆 period [825-27] my years had already exceeded the point where I could benefit²⁶⁶ from a leisurely cultivation of perfection. I merely picked from what the scriptures said in order to narrate this record so that it could be used to praise the numinous quality of this place.

Appendix II

EDIBLE, MEDICINAL AND USEFUL PLANTS OF THE Tiantai MOUNTAINS²⁶⁷

Chinese Name:

English and Latin (when known):

Edibles

Cha 茶	(Tea)
Changpu 菖蒲	(Calamus, Sweetflag Rhizome, <i>Acorus gramineus</i>)
Dunchi 蹲鴟	
Fuling 茯苓	(edible fungus often used as an herbal medicine, Sclerotium of Tuckahoe, China-root, Hoelen, <i>Poria cocos</i>)
Huangdu 黃獨	(Tuber, <i>Dioscoreae bulbiferae</i> ?)
Huangjing 黃精	(Sealwort, <i>Polygonatum sibiricum</i>)
Juefen 蕨粉	(Brakefern)
Mengcai 孟菜	
Qingjing 青精	
Quan 泉	(Spring water)
Qusheng zi 苣勝子	
Shanli 山栗	(Mountain Chestnut)
Shuyu 薯蕷	(Chinese Yam Root, <i>Dioscorea opposita</i>)
Xiangdou zi 橡斗子	
Wuzhi 五芝	(Five Fungi)
Zhucao 朮草	

Trees

Guaisong 怪松	(Strange Pine)
Jinsong 金松	(Golden Pine)
Luohan 羅漢	(Arhat Tree)
Puti shu 菩提樹	(Bodhisattva Tree; Pipal; Bo-tree)
Qi shu 琪樹	(Jade Tree)

Hedges & Canes

Fang zhu 方竹	
Fomian zhu 佛面竹	(Buddha's Face Bamboo)
Wansui teng 萬歲藤	(10,000 Year Cane)

267 Source: Tiantai shan fangwai zhi 天台山方外志 532-547.

Flowers

Dujuan 杜鵑	(Azalea)
Lanhui 蘭蕙	(Huilan = a species of orchid)
Shanfan 山礬	(Fan = <i>chem</i> Vitriol)
Shan haitang 山海棠	(Mountain Flowering Crabapple)
Suoluo shu hua 娑羅樹花	(Sal Tree, <i>Shorea robusta</i>)
Yulan 玉蘭	(Yulan Magnolia, <i>Magnolia denudata</i>)

Grasses

Changsheng cao 長生草	
Guanyin cao 觀音草	(Guanyin's Grass)
Shengjuan bai 生卷柏	
Xianzhang 僊掌	(Immortal's Palm)

Medicinals

Baihe 百合	(Lily bulb, <i>Lilium brownii</i> var. <i>colchestri</i>)
Baileng teng 百稜藤	
Baiyao zhu 百藥竹	
Baizhi 百芷	(the root of <i>Dahurian angelica</i>)
Baizhu 百朮	(the rhizome of Large-headed Atractylodes, <i>Atractylodes macrocephala</i>)
Baji 巴戟	(<i>Morinda officinalis</i>)
Banfu 半復	
Baohe 薄荷	(Mint)
Beimu 貝母	(the bulb of Fritillary, <i>Fritillaria thunbergii</i>)
Bima 蓖麻	(Castor-oil plant)
Canger 蒼耳	(Siberian Cocklebur, <i>Xanthium sibiricum</i>)
Cangpu 蒼蒲	(green cattail?)
Caojueming 草決明	(Foetid Cassia Seeds, <i>Cassia tora</i>)
Caowu 草烏	
Caojie 草薺	
Chaihu 柴胡	(Chinese Thorowax, Hare's Ear Root, <i>Bupleurum chinense</i>)
Changshan 常山	(the roots or leaves of Antipyretic Dichroa, <i>Dichroa febrifuga</i>)
Chantui 蟬蛻	(Cicada slough, <i>Cryptotympana atrata</i>)
Chenpi 陳皮	(dried Tangerine or Orange peel, <i>Citrus reticulata</i>)
Cheqianzi 車前子	(Plantago Seeds, <i>Plantago asiatica</i>)
Dahuang 大黃	(Rhubarb Rhizome, <i>Rheum tanguticum</i>)
Dihuang 地黃	(Glutinous Rehmannia, <i>Rehmannia glutinosa</i>)
Duhuo 獨活	(<i>Angelica pubescens</i>)
Fuling 茯苓	(edible fungus, <i>Poria cocos</i> : see "edibles")
Fupenzi 覆盆子	(Korean/Chinese Raspberry, <i>Robus chingii</i>)

Genzi 根子	
Gouqi 枸杞	(Chinese wolfberry, Fruit of the Matrimony Vine, <i>Lycium chinense</i>)
Gualouzi 瓜樓子	(possibly an error for 栝蒌子 : Chinese Trichosanthes, <i>Trichosanthes kirilowii</i>)
Gusuibu 骨碎補	(the rhizome of Davallia, <i>Davallia mariesii</i>)
Hanteng 含藤	
Heshouwu 何首烏	(<i>Polygonum multiflorum</i>)
Huajiao 花椒	(Chinese Prickly Ash)
Huangjing 黃精	(Sealwort, <i>Polygonatum sibiricum</i> , see “edibles”)
Huanglian 黃連	(the rhizome of Chinese Goldthread, <i>Coptis chinensis</i>)
Huangliao lang 黃寮郎	
Jinxianzhonglou 金線重蔓	
Jinyinhua 金銀花	(Honeysuckle, <i>Lonicera japonica</i>)
Juanbai 卷柏	
Kucan 苦參	(Bitter Ginseng?)
Kugeng ㄟ ± ð	
Liangjiang 良姜	(often with ^{oa} in front: Lesser Galangal Rhizome, <i>Alpinia officinarum</i>)
Lianqiao 連翹	(the capsule of Weeping Forsythia, <i>Forsythia suspensa</i>)
Longdan cao 龍膽草	(Chinese Gentian Root/longdan = rough gentian, <i>Gentiana scabra</i>)
Maimendong 麥門冬	(the tuber of Dwarf Lilyturf, <i>Ophiopogon japonicus</i>)
Malan 馬蘭	(Acanthaceous Indigo, <i>Strobilanthes cusia</i>)
Qianhu 前胡	(the root of Purple-flowered Peucedanum, <i>Peucedanum praeruptorum</i>)
Qianniu 牽牛	(Morning Glory Seeds, <i>Pharbitis nil</i>)
Qingfeng teng 清風藤	
Qipo teng 耆婆藤	
Qumai 瞿麥	(Fringed Pink, <i>Dianthus superbus</i>)
Sangbaipi 桑白皮	(the root bark of White Mulberry)
Sangjisheng 桑寄生	(Parasitic Loranthus, <i>Loranthus parasiticus</i>)
Shacan 沙參	(Grainy Ginseng?)
Shanchazi 山查子	
Shancigu 山茨菰	(Bulb of Chinese Tulip, <i>Tulipa edulis</i>)
Shaoyao 芍藥	(Chinese Herbaceous Peony, <i>Paeoniae</i> spp.)
Shechuangzi 蛇床子	(seeds of <i>Cnidium monnieri</i>)
Shinan teng 石南藤	(Heath, Rosebay)
Taixiong 台芎	
Tianhuafen 天花粉	(the root of Chinese Trichosanthes, <i>Trichosanthes kirilowii</i>)
Tianmendong 天門冬	(Tuber of Chinese Asparagus, <i>Asparagus cochinchinensis</i>)
Tianliji 天里急	

Tianshouteng 天壽藤	
Tingma 葶藶	(seeds of Woods Whitlon Grass, <i>Lepidium apetalum</i>)
Wanhua 萬華	(a kind of aquatic herb, <i>Scirpus lacustris</i>)
Weilingxian 威靈僊	(the root of Chinese Clamatis, <i>Clamatis chinensis</i>)
Wubeizi 五倍子	(Gall nut of Chinese Sumac, <i>Rhus chinensis</i> = plant, <i>Melaphis chinensis</i> = insect)
Wujiapi 五加皮	(bark of the Slender Acanthopanax, <i>Acanthopanax gracilistylus</i>)
Wumingyi 無名異	
Wuweizi 五味子	(the fruit of Chinese Schisandra, <i>Schisandra chinensis</i>)
Wuyao 烏藥	(the root of the Three-nerved Spicebush, <i>Lindera strychnifolia</i>)
Xiangfuzi 香附子	(the rhizome of Nutgrass Flatsedge, <i>Cyperus rotundus</i>)
Xianmao 僊茅	(Rhizome of Golden Eye-grass, <i>Curculigo orchioides</i>)
Xianyiliang 僊遺糧	
Xingren 杏仁	(Almond Kernal, <i>Prunus armeniaca</i>)
Xixian 豨薟	(Common St. Paulsworth, Siegesbeckia, <i>Siegesbeckia orientalis</i>)
Xixin 細辛	(the root of Chinese Wild Ginger, <i>Asarum sieboldi</i>)
Yinchen 茵陳	(Capillary Artemesia, <i>Artemisia capillaris</i>)
Yiyiren 薏苡仁	(seeds of Job's Tears, <i>Coix lachryma-jobi</i>)
Zhishi 枳實	(dried immature fruit of Citron or Trifoliate Orange, <i>Citrus aurantium</i>)
Zhuyu 茱萸	(the fruit of Medicinal Cornel, <i>Cornus officinallis</i>)
Zige 紫葛	(Violet Kudzu Vine)

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