

A Daoist princess and a Buddhist temple: a new theory on the causes of the canon-delivering mission originally proposed by princess Jinxian (689–732) in 730

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The Yunjusi 雲居寺, located in present-day Shuitou 水頭 Village, Shangle 尚樂 Town of Fangshan 房山 County and about seventy kilometres from the centre of Beijing, has in recent decades earned a worldwide reputation for the immense repository of Buddhist scriptures carved on the stone slabs that are stored there (the so-called Stone Canon of Fangshan [Fangshan shijing 房山石經]). Although the heroic enterprise of carving the whole Buddhist canon into stone had already been initiated during the early seventh century thanks to the determination of the monk Jingwan 靜琬 (var. Jingwan 淨琬, Zhiyuan 知苑, Zhiyuan 智苑, ?–639) and support from Empress Xiao 蕭 (?–630) of Sui Yangdi (r. 604–617) and her brother Xiao Yu 蕭瑀 (574–647), it did not start to accelerate drastically until 740 when two eminent monks from the capital delivered copies of over four-thousand fascicles of Buddhist translations to the temple to serve as base texts for the stone scriptures.¹ This remarkable event is reported in an inscription that was carved on the back of a pagoda close to the Yunjusi:

In Kaiyuan 18 (23 January 730–10 February 731) of the Great Tang, Princess Jinxian 金仙 (689–732) memorialized the Saintly Lord (i.e. Xuanzong [r. 712–756]) [on the necessity of] bestowing more than four thousand fascicles of new and old sutras translated under the Great Tang to be used as the base texts for the stone scriptures carved in Fanyang sub-prefecture, Youzhou prefecture. She also memorialized that [the income from] a wheat farm and an orchard on the swampy region of Zhao Rangzi in the Village Shangfa, located fifty *li* southeast of Fanyang sub-prefecture, and the forest encircling the mountains that borders in the east on Fangnan Peak, extends south towards other mountains, ends in the west at the mouth of Mount Baidai, and in the north falls within the confines of the watershed of the Great Mountain, be reserved for the expenses accruing to this ‘mountain-gate’ [i.e. The Yunjusi]. [The government] also commissioned Meditation

¹ Pending the appearance of a major monograph by Lothar Ledderose, the most comprehensive and valuable survey of the history of the Fangshan stone canon remains Tsukamoto Zenryū 塚本善隆, ‘Bōzan Unkyōji no sekkyō daizōkyō’ 房山雲居寺の石刻大藏經, *Tsukamoto Zenryū chosaku shū* 塚本善隆著作集 (7 vols. Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1974–76), 5: 293–610. Zhongguo fojiao xiehui 中國佛教協會 (comp.), *Fangshan Yunjusi shijing* 房山雲居寺石經 (Beijing: Wenwu, 1978), contains some new materials not available to Tsukamoto. For the monastery’s history under the Tang, see, particularly, Kegasawa Yasunori 氣賀澤保規, ‘Tōdai Bōzan Unkyōji no hatten to sekkyō jigyō’ 唐代房山雲居寺の發展と石經事業, in *Chūgoku bukkyō sekkyō no kenkyū: Bōzan Unkyōji sekkyō o chūshin ni* 中國佛教石經の研究: 房山雲居寺石經を中心に (Kyoto: Kyōtō daigaku gakujutsu shuppankai, 1996), 23–106; under the Liao and Jin dynasties, see Chen Yanzhu 陳燕珠, *Fangshan shijing zhong Liao mo yu Jindai kejing zhi yanjiu* 房山石經中遼末與金代刻經之研究 (Taipei: Jueyuan chubanshe, 1995).

Master Xuanfa 玄法 (fl. 726–755)² to recite the Buddhist canon on an annual basis, in order—in the upper realms—to extend the ‘precious calendar’ (of the Great Tang) and to bless the King of Compassion forever, and—in the lower realm—to lead those who possess life (i.e. sentient beings) to ascend the ‘tree of enlightenment’ together. On the eighth day of a summer-month (i.e. fourth, fifth or sixth month)³ of the twenty-eighth year of the Kaiyuan era, which is a *genchen* year, this record is written on the back of the stone pagoda at the top of the mountain, by Wang Shoutai 王守泰 (otherwise unknown), formerly an Ordinary Appointee (*changxuan*[*guan*] 常選[官]) of the Bureau of Rites (Libu 禮部) in [the prefectural government of] Mozhou 莫州 (present-day Renqiu 任丘, Hebei).⁴

Śramaṇa Zhisheng 智昇 (fl. 740s) of the Chongfusi in Chang’an,⁵ a scripture-deliverer;

Śramaṇa Xiuzhang 秀璋 (fl. 710–740), a preceptor presiding over the [precepts-]platform, a Scripture-collator (*jianjiao* 檢校) and deliverer;

Śramaṇa Xuanfa, a meditation master and the General Inspector and Collator [of the scriptures] (*du jianjiao* 都檢校).⁶

大唐開元十八年，金仙長公主/為奏/聖上，賜大唐新舊譯經四千餘/卷，充幽府范陽縣為石經本。又/奏：范陽縣東南五十里上垞村趙/襄子淀中麥田莊并果園一所，及環/山林麓，東接房南嶺，南逼他山，西止/白帶山口，北限大山分水界，並永充/供給山門所用。又委禪師玄法，歲歲/通轉一切經，上延·寶歷，永福/慈王；下引懷生，同攀覺樹。粵開/元廿八年庚辰歲朱明八日，前莫州吏部常選王守泰記山頂石浮圖後。

送經京崇福寺沙門智昇，
檢校送經臨壇大德沙門秀璋，
都檢校禪師沙門玄法。⁷

² This framework for the activities of Xuanfa is suggested by Kegasawa in his ‘Fangshan Yunjusi Jingwan de houjizhe yu Shijingtang’ 房山雲居寺靜琬與石經堂, in *Zhou Shaoliang xiansheng xinkai jiuzhi qingshou wenji* 周紹良先生欣開九秩慶壽文集 (ed. Bai Huawen 白話文 *et al.* Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 304.

³ Given that *zhuming* 朱明 refers to the summer season, which covered the fourth, fifth and sixth months in the lunar calendar, this inscription could have been written on 8 May 740 (Kaiyuan 28.4.8), 6 June 740 (Kaiyuan 28.5.8), or 6 July 740 (Kaiyuan 28.6.8). The first possibility seems most likely, not only because the summer season started in the fourth month, but also because the eighth day of the fourth month is recognized as the Buddha’s birthday in the East Asian Buddhist tradition.

⁴ Another possible way to read *qian Mozhou Libu changxuan* 前莫州吏部常選 is ‘a native of Mozhou and a former Ordinary Appointee of the Bureau of Rites’.

⁵ Although in principle *jing* 京, literally ‘capital’, could mean either Chang’an or Luoyang, in Tang literature it usually referred to Chang’an; Luoyang is referred to as *du* 都.

⁶ Although generally known as an imperial Chinese official title, which means ‘concurrently acting’ (see Charles Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985], 146, no. 804), *jianjiao* 檢校 here bears some special meanings in a Buddhist context. For example, the list of the compilers attached to the Taishō edition of the *Da Zhou Kanding shijiao mulu* 大周刊定眾經目錄 refers to these four different functionaries (*Da Zhou Kanding shijiao mulu* [T vol. 55, no. 2153] 15. 475a–476a):

- 1) the most usual one—*jiao jingmu seng* 校經目僧 (monks in charge of checking the scripture titles);
- 2) *kanding zhenwei-jing seng* 判定真偽經僧 (monks who investigated and determined the authenticity of a scripture);
- 3) *jianjiao seng* 檢校僧 (monks who inspected sutras [provenance, etc] and collated [their different versions]);
- 4) *du jianjiao* 都檢校 (chief inspectors and collators of the scriptures). In this project there were only two monks holding this title, Mingquan 明佺 and Daoqiong 道夔.

⁷ The rubbing of this inscription is photocopied in *Zhongguo fojiao xiehui* 中國佛教協會 (compiled), *Fangshan Yunjusi shijing* 房山雲居寺石經 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1978), 15; the transcribed text can be found in Beijing tushuguan jinshi-zu 北京圖書館金石組 and Zhongguo fojiao tushu wenwuguan shijing zu 中國佛教圖書館文物館石經組 (compiled), *Fangshan shijing tiji huibian* 房山石經題記彙編 (Beijing: Shumu wenxian chubanshe, 1987), 11–12.

This inscription involves both famous and obscure figures. The subject of the record, Princess Jinxian, was a daughter of Ruizong and a younger sister of Xuanzong, the serving emperor. Like her sister Yuzhen 玉真 (692?–762?),⁸ Jinxian is primarily famous for her status as a Daoist priest, a career she started to assume at the tender age of eighteen *sui* (seventeen years).⁹ The author of this inscription, Wang Shoutai, is unknown to us from other sources. Apparently he was the local official who acted as the liaison between the scripture-delivering delegation from the capital and the recipient of the texts, the Yunjusi, which was then headed by Xuanfa, whose status as a leader of the Yunjusi, though not explicitly stated in the inscription, can be verified by other sources.¹⁰

The scripture-delivering delegation was led by two Buddhist monks coming from the capital Chang'an. One of them, Xiuzhang, is rather obscure. In addition to Wang Shoutai's inscription, I have so far found only one further mention of this monk. It is in a colophon to a translation by Yijing 義淨 (635–713), in which Xiuzhang is identified as a 'Śramaṇa-translator' (*fanjing shamen* 翻經沙門) and 'bhādanta-preceptor' (*dade lüshi* 大德律師) of the Western Chongfusi 西崇福寺 (i.e. [Great] Chongfusi in Chang'an).¹¹ He was probably the same person as a monk with a slightly different name who attended the vinaya master Huaisu 懷素 (634–707) on his deathbed, and who was therefore his chief disciple.¹² The exceptional fame of another scripture-deliverer, Zhisheng, arguably the greatest Buddhist cataloguer and one of the most scrupulous Buddhist historians, contrasts with Xiuzhang's obscurity. One of the two major catalogues he completed in 730, the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 開元釋教錄, was probably intended as a catalogue of a Buddhist canon that was by then either complete or at least in preparation. This would be the Buddhist canon generally known to history as the Kaiyuan canon ('Kaiyuan zang' 開元藏).¹³ The appearance of Zhisheng's name here also implies that the canon must have

⁸ These dates for Yuzhen are suggested in Ding Fang 丁放 and Yuan Xingpei 袁行霈, 'Yuzhen gongzhu kaolun – Yiqi yu Shengtang shitang de guanxi wei guijie' 玉真公主考論—以其與盛唐詩壇的關係為歸結, *Beijing daxue xuebao* 北京大學學報 41/2 (2004), 41–3.

⁹ Jinxian and Yuzhen's biographical notes are found in *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975) 83.3656–7. The scant traces of her life are collected and meticulously analysed in Kegasawa, 'Jinxian gongzhu he Fangshan Yunjusi shijing' 金仙公主和房山雲居寺石經, *Di sanjie Zhongguo Tangdai wenhua xueshu yantaohui lunwenji*, 第三屆中國唐代文化學術研討會論文集 (ed. Zhongguo Tangdai xuehui bianji weiyuanhui 中國唐代學會編輯委員會, Taipei: Yuexue shuju, 1997), 292–310.

¹⁰ See, for example, an inscription dated 726 entitled 'Da Tang Yunjusi Shijing-tang bei' 大唐雲居寺石經堂碑, in which Xuanfa is listed as one of the two Rectors (Skt. *sthavira*, Ch. *shangzuo* 上座) of the Yunjusi. See Beijing tushuguan jinshi-zu and Zhongguo fojiao tushu wenwuguan shijing zu (comp.), *Fangshan shijing tiji huibian*, 9. We should also note that the 740 inscription suggests this position of Xuanfa by referring to his being asked by the government to chant the Buddhist canon for the welfare of the state and the benefit of sentient beings, and his status as the General Inspector and Collator [of the scriptures] (*du jianjiao* 都檢校).

¹¹ See Ikeda On 池田溫, *Chūgoku kodai shahon shikigo shūroku* 中國古代寫本識語集錄 (Tokyo: Tokyo daigaku Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo, 1990), 276–9, translated and discussed in Chen Jinhua, 'Another look at Tang Zhongzong's (r. 684, 705–710) preface to Yijing's (635–713) translations: with a special reference to its date', *Indō Tetsugaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* インド哲学仏教学研究 (Studies in Indian Philosophy and Buddhism, Tokyo University) 11 (2004), 3–27, at 13 ff.

¹² According to Zanning, on his deathbed Huaisu had a brief conversation with a monk called Xiuzhang 秀章, who was very probably the translator now known to us as Xiuzhang 秀璋. (See *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (*T* no. 2061, vol. 50) 14.792c21–25). That Xiuzhang attended Huaisu on his deathbed means that he was a very close disciple. The credibility of this assumption is supported by the fact that Xiuzhang distinguished himself as a vinaya master and that he was involved in Yijing's translation project, which was devoted mainly to vinaya texts.

¹³ The existence of such a canon during the Kaiyuan era is verified by Heng'an's 恒安 (?–945) *Xu Zhenyuan shijiao lu* 續貞元釋教錄 (completed 945) (*T* no. 2157, vol. 55, 1053a15–24). The Song dynasty vinaya master Yuanzhao 元照 (1048–1116) held the opinion that the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, which he referred to as 'Kaiyuan zang lu' 開元藏錄, was intended as a catalogue to the Kaiyuan canon. (See *Guan Wuliangshou fo jing yishu* 觀無量壽佛經義疏 (*T* no. 1754, vol. 37), 285b23–24.)

been distributed to some major Buddhist temples all over the empire. Although I have found no trace of such a nationwide distribution it would seem to me quite likely in view of the later practice that an officially sponsored Buddhist canon was compiled in order to be distributed to major temples within the empire. In addition, we do have a record of Xuanzong ordering the nationwide distribution of a Daoist canon in an edict he issued on July 23, 749 (Tianbao 8.6 [run].5).¹⁴ In spite of his reputation as a less than lukewarm supporter of Buddhism, it is probable that Xuanzong did have the Buddhist canon distributed, although not as widely as was its Daoist counterpart—otherwise, why would he endorse the compilation of a Buddhist canon? In view of these facts, the huge collection of Buddhist texts sent to the Yunjusi very likely constituted the main body of the Kaiyuan canon.¹⁵

The inscription presents us with several puzzles. First, one is struck by the gap of a decade between Jinxian's proposal that over four-thousand fascicles of Buddhist translation be sent to the Yunjusi (in 730) and the time when this epitaph was erected (in 740). When were these scriptures actually delivered to Yunjusi, in 730 (or shortly afterward), or 740? Probably due to the difficulty of imagining how it could have taken Xuanzong a whole decade to implement a proposal made by his sister, and also in view of the fact that, as of 730, efforts had obviously been underway to compile a major Buddhist canon, almost all scholars working on the Fangshan stone canon have come to the conclusion that the delegation was dispatched to the Yunjusi in 730 (or shortly thereafter), rather than in 740.¹⁶

However, the possibility that the scripture-delivering mission was actually not sent until ten years later should not be hastily dismissed. It is noteworthy that this memorial inscription is co-signed by three monks, of whom two were Zhisheng and Xiuzhang. This shows that Zhisheng and Xiuzhang were present when the inscription was carved in 740. Since these two were the scripture-deliverers from the capital, this would suggest that the delivery was indeed carried out in 740, unless we assume that they returned to the temple ten

¹⁴ The edict is preserved in *QTW* 40.3a:

Now, it should be ordered that the Daoist canon (*yiqie daojing* 一切道經) issued from the inner palaces is to be hand-copied (*shanxie* 繕寫) in the Institute of Promoting the Origin (Chongyuan 崇元館) and the copies are to be sent to the Imperial Inquisitors in the various Circuits (*dao* 道). They will order the prefectural governments under their jurisdiction to hand copy this canon. The official copies of the canon must be kept in the Taiyi Abbeys 太一觀 in the prefectures where the Imperial Inquisitors are based, so that they can be [properly] upheld, memorized and recited. 今內出一切道經, 宜令崇元館即繕寫, 分送諸道採訪使, 令管內諸郡轉寫。其官本便留採訪郡太一觀持誦。

The date of proclaiming this edict is noted shortly after the beginning of the edict; see *QTW* 40.1b2–3. According to this edict, the central government made only a small number of copies of the Daoist canon and sent them to the same number of Imperial Inquisitors, who were in charge of a certain number of prefectures all over the country. The edict does not specify how many copies of the canon each prefecture had to make. It seems that the number was to be decided case by case, depending on how many Daoist abbeys each prefecture had that were entitled to have a copy of this canon.

¹⁵ We should note, however, that while the Kaiyuan canon contained, according to Zhisheng, 1076 texts in 5,048 fascicles and 480 cases (*zhi* 帙) (*Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 19.680b29–c2), only four-thousand or so fascicles were sent to the Yunjusi in 740. There are two possible explanations for this discrepancy. First, as Zhisheng clearly notes in the last two fascicles of the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, the 5,048 fascicles actually covered thirty-seven texts (in 317 fascicles) that were compiled by Chinese monks in China, rather than translated Indian texts (*Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 20.722b23–c28). The Yunjusi stone canon was probably devoted to translated texts, which means that the Chinese texts were pulled out on purpose when a copy of the canon was sent to the Yunjusi. Second, the texts that had already been carved in stone might have been taken out of the canon before it was sent to the Yunjusi.

¹⁶ To the best of my knowledge, Ogawa Shigeki 小川茂樹 is the only scholar who believes that the scripture-delivering mission was dispatched in 740. See Ogawa, 'Bōzan sekifuto kimei kō' 房山石浮屠記銘考, *Tōhō gakuhō* 東方學報 6 (1935), 326.

years after the successful delivery of the scriptures, a possibility that sounds unlikely at the present stage of our knowledge of Yunjusi's history. Then, how may we explain the ten-year delay in enforcing Jinxian's proposal? I shall here suggest two possible explanations. First, 730 was the date for the completion of *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* (the catalogue to the Kaiyuan canon), and not necessarily for that of the canon itself, let alone that for a number of its copies. Although the technology of woodblock printing had already been invented, it had not yet been applied to large-scale printing activity (like the printing of a canon). In other words, the copies of the canon were hand-copied, rather than printed, not unlike in 749, when copies of the Daoist canon were made. The Tang government, at both central and local levels, had to resort to a huge amount of labour to hand-copy the Daoist canon for nationwide distribution. Given the huge size of the canon (over 5,000 scrolls), a small number of copies were hand-copied at the beginning and more followed as required by the situation. Second, Jinxian died two years later (in 732) and this may have caused some delay in fulfilling her wishes.

Moreover, it is difficult to understand why Princess Jinxian, who was then an ordained Daoist nun, played such an active and decisive role in this project. Obviously, the Yunjusi was not originally on the list of institutions which were to receive copies of the canon. Either Jinxian voluntarily proposed to have the Yunjusi included or, what is more likely, someone with sufficient influence succeeded in persuading her to do so.

Such a remarkable and important event inevitably invited considerable attention from scholars, who have noticed, and attempted to explain, several aspects of the mystery surrounding Jinxian's Yunjusi ties. Compared to Tsukamoto Zenryū, who has pointed to the widespread interpenetration of Buddhist and Daoist practices among religious practitioners in this period, in order to account for Jinxian's unexpected participation in the Yunjusi project, Kegasawa Yasunori has raised a more specific and fascinating hypothesis by suggesting that Jinxian might have come into contact with the Yunjusi through her friend Xu Jiao 徐嶠 (style-name Jushan 巨山), who was probably related to Xiao Yu and his sister-empress, two main supporters of the Yunjusi stone-canon project in its early phase.¹⁷

Kegasawa's theory deserves serious consideration. However, it seems to me that we still lack substantial evidence for Xu Jiao's relationship with Empress

¹⁷ After successfully re-identifying the author of the funeral epitaph for Jinxian, Xu Jiao, Kegasawa suggests that he was a member of a prestigious family in the Southern Liang kingdom who was relocated to the Guanzhong 關中 area by the Western Wei rulers. Then, by correlating this family background of Xu Jiao with Xiao Yu and Empress Xiao, he further suggests that Jinxian might have become involved in the Yunjusi through Xu Jiao. See Kegasawa, 'Jinxian gongzhu he Fangshan Yunjusi shijing'. For an easily accessible version of Xu Jiao's epitaph for Jinxian, see Zhou Shaoliang 周紹良 *et al.* (comp.), *Tangdai muzhi huibian xuji* 唐代墓誌彙編續集 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2001), 552–3. Kegasawa has proffered no compelling evidence for any significant ties between Xu Jiao's family and the Xiao family. In addition, aspects of his speculation on the origin of Xu Jiao's family are flawed. For example, it is not true that Xu Jiao's ancestors (Xu Zheng 徐整 and his relatives) were moved to Guanzhong during the Southern Liang period. As a matter of fact, Xu Zheng's son Xu Zong 徐綜 still served as the governor of Shian 始安 (in present-day Guilin 桂林, Guangxi Province) under the Chen dynasty, and it was not until after the Sui conquered Chen that the Xu family, like other prestigious Jiangnan 江南 families, were ordered to emigrate to Guanzhong. See the funeral epitaph that Zhang Jiuling wrote for Xu Jiao's father Xu Jian, 'Gu Guanglu daifu You shanqi changshi Jixianyuan xueshi zeng Taizi shaobao Donghai Xu Wengong shendaobei bing xu' 故光祿大夫右散騎常侍集賢院學士贈太子少保東海徐文公神道碑並序, *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 (Taibei: Huawen, 1965) 893.6b–7a (QITW 291.8a–b); briefly discussed in Cen Zhongmian 岑仲勉 (collated and annotated) (edited by Yu Xianhao 郁賢皓 and Tao Minv 陶敏), *Yuanhe Xinzuan* 元和姓纂 (3 vols, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1994), 205.

Xiao or her brother. Furthermore, even if such a connection could be proved, we would still have to explain, first of all, how Xu Jiao could have commanded such decisive influence over Princess Jinxian that he could convince her to take the bold act of persuading her brother the emperor, who was not an enthusiastic supporter of Buddhism by any standards, into granting these massive and decisive supports on the Yunjusi; and secondly, why and how two Chongfusi monks, who were men of obvious stature, should have demonstrated such zeal in escorting so many Buddhist texts to this apparently marginal temple.

For the second question, one might refer to the likelihood that Zhisheng and Xiuzhang's monastery, the Chongfusi, was the headquarters at which the Kaiyuan canon was compiled and copied, and from which copies of the canon were distributed to a selected number of major monasteries all over the country, especially those designated 'Kaiyuan monasteries' 開元寺 after the monastic network was re-designated in 738.¹⁸ Is there any deeper reason beyond this easy explanation? In this article, I will attempt to address this old issue from a perspective that has never been explored. I will broach and elaborate on the possibility that the great Avatamsaka master Fazang's 法藏 (643–712) possible ties with the Yunjusi is a major missing piece in this complex puzzle.

I. *The probability of Fazang's visit to the Yunjusi in 697*

In June 696, the people of Khitan (Ch. Qidan 契丹), then a vassal state based in the north-eastern part of the Great Zhou empire, rose in rebellion at the instigation of their leaders Li Jinzhong 李盡忠 (?–696) and Sun Wanrong 孫萬榮 (?–697). Shocked by this largely unforeseen insurrection, Empress Wu quickly dispatched an army to suppress it. Li Jinzhong and Sun Wanrong turned out to be two exceptionally shrewd warriors, who repeatedly frustrated a series of military attacks and counter-attacks by the Zhou army. Although blessed by good fortune and the timely help of the new *qaghan* of the Northern Turks, Qapaghan (Mochuo 默啜), Empress Wu and her government still took a whole year to suppress the rebellion, and it left some traumatic effects on the military and diplomatic institutions of her reign and those that followed.

In addition to military and diplomatic efforts, Empress Wu also avidly sought the help from other-worldly sources, both Buddhist and Daoist, in order to overcome this severe political and military crisis. To the best of my knowledge, her efforts in this regard receive no treatment whatsoever in secular sources, and are touched on only briefly in two religious sources, one being the funeral epitaph devoted to a contemporary Daoist leader and the other a biography of Fazang composed in 904 by the famous Korean author Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn 崔致遠 (857–904).¹⁹ Let us, then, first look at the evidence provided by Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn, even though it is about two centuries later than the Daoist source:

In the first year of the Shengong reign era (29 September–19 December 697), the Khitan refused to submit to the authority [of the Great Zhou].

¹⁸ On 5 December 690 (Tianshou 1.10.29), Empress Wu proclaimed that in each of the prefectures all over the country and each of the two capitals (Chang'an and Luoyang), a temple called 'Dayun' 大雲 (Great Clouds) should be erected. These Dayun temples were ordered to be renamed 'Kaiyuan' 開元 on 22 June 738. See *THY* 48.850.

¹⁹ *Tang Tae Ch'ŏnboksa kosaju pŏn'gyŏng taedŏk Pŏpchang hwasang chŏn* (Ch. *Tang Da Jianfusi gu sizhu fanjing dade Fazang heshang zhuan*) 唐大薦福寺故寺主翻經大德法藏和尚傳 (hereafter *Pŏpjang chŏn*), *T* vol. 50, no. 2054, 285a16–b3.

Empress Wu declared war on them. Her Majesty issued a special decree ordering [Fa]zang to stem the havoc caused by the rebels in accordance with the teachings in the Buddhist scriptures. [Fazang] therefore memorialized the empress saying, 'In order to destroy and subdue the ferocious enemies, please allow me to resort to the 'left-hand (that is, Buddhistically unorthodox) path' (*zuodao* 左道). Imperial permission was granted. The Dharma Master took a bath and changed his robes before building a *bodhimāṇḍa* (*daochang* 道場; i.e. 'ritual precinct' or, more broadly, 'field of practice') of the Eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, in which he placed images of that bodhisattva and started to carry out the rituals. Within only a few days, the barbarians saw countless warriors of the King and a congregation of deities. Some of them witnessed images of Avalokiteśvara floating in the sky and then slowly descending to the battlefield. Flocks of goats and packs of dogs started to harass them. Within a month, [the Great Zhou army] prevailed and the news of victory was reported [to the throne]. Her Majesty rewarded his merits with a nicely-worded decree, which says, 'Outside Kuaicheng, the warriors heard the sound of heavenly drums; within the district of Liangxiang, the enemy crowd saw images of Avalokiteśvara. Pure wine spread its sweetness in the battalions, while the chariots of the transcendents led the flags in front of the army. This [victory] was accomplished by the divine army sweeping away [the enemy], and that must have been aided by the [Buddha's] compassionate power!' 神功元年, 契丹拒命, 出師討之。特詔藏依經教, 遏寇虐。乃奏曰, 『若令摧伏怨敵, 請約左道諸法。』詔從之。法師盥浴更衣, 建立十一面道場, 置光音像行道。始數日, 羯虜睹王師無數, 神王之眾, 或矚觀音之像, 浮空而至。犬羊之群, 相次逗撓。月捷以聞。天后優詔勞之, 曰: 『蒯城之外, 兵士聞天鼓之聲; 良鄉縣中, 賊眾睹觀音之像。醴酒流甘於陳塞, 仙駕引轟於軍前。此神兵之掃除, 蓋慈力之加被。』²⁰

The secular sources make no mention of Fazang's role in this year-long military endeavour. Here we must note that Wu Youyi 武攸宜 (d. between 705 and 710), a first cousin once removed of Empress Wu²¹ who played a significant role in suppressing the Khitans, was a friend of Fazang whom the monk had helped just one year earlier by bringing down rain with prayers and so ending a drought afflicting the area under his jurisdiction.²² This relationship suggests that Fazang's role in the suppression of the Khitan army is not unlikely. However, it is Empress Wu's edict quoted above and a poem that Zhongzong wrote for Fazang, which confirms and commends Fazang's role in 'destroying these devils' camps' (very probably referring to the Khitan rebels),²³ that force us to consider this role of Fazang more seriously. It seems undeniable that Fazang did contribute to the resolution of this severe sociopolitical crisis, or at least was perceived to have done so.

The lack of historical evidence has left us with no alternative but to speculate on Fazang's actual role in this critical moment. It seems that Fazang might have performed some forms of black magic (the so-called 'Left Path' he was reported to have recommended to Empress Wu), so as to produce the illusion of some images of Avalokiteśvara floating in the sky, which scared away

²⁰ *Pōpjang chōn*, 283c16–25.

²¹ Wu Youyi was a grandson of Empress Wu's paternal uncle.

²² *Pōpjang chōn*, 283c9 ff., where Wu Youyi is mentioned as Prince Jian'an 建安. For his role in the campaigns against the Khitan rebellion, see *ZZTJ* 205.6507 ff.

²³ *Pōpjang chōn*, 284a23–24 (*QTW* 17.22a2): 珍茲魔陣.

some Khitan soldiers.²⁴ Although the effect of this feat might not have been as decisive and far-reaching as depicted in the Buddhist sources, Fazang's intervention in this crisis and Empress Wu's appreciation of it seem beyond doubt.

Certainly, this feat proved to be a critical turning point in Fazang's life. According to the Korean monk Kyunyō 均如 (923–973), Fazang's career suffered a severe setback in late 694 or early 695, some time before the arrival of the Khotanese missionary-cum-translator Śikṣānanda (652–710) in China. Exasperated by Fazang's interpretation of a 'buddha' as but a 'provisionally-named bodhisattva' (*jiaming pusa* 假名菩薩), Fuli 復禮 (fl. 680–705), a Buddhist monk who was also very influential under the reigns of Gaozong and Empress Wu, impeached Fazang for advocating a heterodox theory and urged that he be punished in accordance with the law. As a result, Empress Wu decreed Fazang's exile to the Jiangnan 江南 area, whence he was not called back to the capital until Śikṣānanda and Fuli encountered insurmountable difficulties in translating the chapter on Puxian 普賢品 of the new version of the *Avatamsaka sūtra* that Śikṣānanda brought to China. In the course of co-operating with Fazang in the translation project, Fuli once even went so far as to coerce him to alter some passages in the original text in order to fit his own theories.²⁵ Although this record is not found in any other sources than Kyunyō's, Fazang's (albeit brief) banishment from the capital seems likely given his absence from two extremely important religio-political projects carried out in 693 and 695 respectively—the translation of the *Ratnamegha sūtra*, which resulted in the ten-fascicle Chinese text entitled 'Baoyu jing' 寶雨經 (*Sūtra* of the Precious Rain), and the compilation of an officially sanctioned Buddhist catalogue which included (and thereby canonized) those texts (some of dubious origins) which had been newly translated under the aegis of the empress.²⁶

The exile was a brief one though, given that Fazang had obviously already been in the capital in 697, when the empress sought help from him. Evidence shows that his relationship with the empress rapidly improved after he

²⁴ Eugene Wang suggests that in helping the Zhou army battle the Khitan rebels, Fazang brought up some frightening reflections with a device composed of eleven faces of mirror. See Wang, *Shaping the Lotus Sutra: Buddhist Visual Culture in Medieval China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 259. Although this interpretation is not supported by Ch'oe Ch'iwōn's biography, in which *shiyimian guanyin* 十一面觀音 just means eleven-faced Avalokiteśvara, Wang does raise a possible stratagem that Fazang might have employed to defeat the Khitan army; this seems to have been related to his skill in magic, in which Fazang possessed considerable skills as I have shown in my book. See Jinhua Chen, *History and His Stories: A Biographical and Hagiographical Study of Fazang* (643–712) (under review for publication), esp. ch. 8.

²⁵ *Sōk hwaōm kyōpun wōnt'ong ch'o* 釋華嚴教分記圓通鈔, HPC 4: 256c19–257a11.

²⁶ The *Baoyu jing* is believed to have contained passages interpolated by the translators for the purposes of providing further ideological support for Empress Wu's female rule. The translation project, led by Bodhiruci (a.k.a. Dharmaruci, 572?–727), involved almost all the major Buddhist monks in Chang'an and Luoyang at the time. The names of its thirty-two translators (both Buddhist monks and court officials, Chinese and non-Chinese) appear in a Dunhuang manuscript, S. 2278; the full list is translated in Antonino Forte, *Political Propaganda and Ideology in China at the End of the Seventh Century: Inquiry into the Nature, Author, and Function of the Tunhuang Document S. 6502. Followed by an Annotated Translation* (Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale, Seminario di Studi Asiatici, 1976), 171–6; see also the second edition of the book that is currently (2005) published by the Italian School of East Asian Studies (Kyoto). The other project, the compilation of the *Da Zhou Zhongjing shijiao mulu*, involved at least seventy major monk-scholars according to a list that was attached to the catalogue (see *T* no. 2153, vol. 55) 15: 475a–476a). Fazang's name was—conspicuously—absent from the above two lists, a fact which strongly suggests his absence in the two capitals at that time given that his eminence as a Buddhist leader and his extraordinary capacity as a Buddhist translator should have made him a very likely candidate to be included in either of the two enterprises, on which so much was staked by Empress Wu's government and the Buddhist church at the time.

performed a highly desirable role in the course of suppressing the Khitan. Several weeks after the new Chinese translation of the *Avatamsaka sūtra* was completed on 5 November 699,²⁷ Fazang delivered a lecture on the new translation, which allegedly brought forth strong tremors that were felt around the area of the monastery. This greatly pleased Empress Wu, who issued an edict to praise this auspicious sign and ordered it to be recorded in the historical texts.²⁸ In the summer of 700, Fazang, along with other distinguished monks including Sikṣānada and Fuli, was probably in the empress's company at one of her summer palaces at the Songshan area when they were preparing for a new translation of the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*.²⁹ At the turn of 705, when the Empress was in a critical moment of her life, she summoned Fazang to her palace and entrusted him with the task of escorting the Famensi 法門寺 relic to the imperial court for veneration. This important move aimed at recovering her health and strengthening her power base, which was by then rapidly corroding because of her deteriorating health.³⁰

Ch'oe Ch'iwōn plainly states that Fazang performed these rituals one month before the victory over the Khitans was declared (on 27 July 697 according to the secular sources).³¹ This implies that Fazang was invited to resolve the military conflict in June 697. In contrast to the clear way in which Ch'oe Ch'iwōn provides a timeframe for this event, his locating of these rituals is problematic and requires further clarification. The two locations he gives, Kuaicheng and Liangxiang, were in present-day Baoji 寶雞 in Shaanxi and Fangshan in Beijing, respectively. Given that the rebel Khitan forces had never managed to penetrate to the Kuaicheng area but rather had engaged in close combat with the Great Zhou army in some areas of Hebei Circuit 河北道 (in present-day Shangdong, Hebei and Henan), including Tanzhou 檀州, Pingzhou 平州, Dingzhou 定州, Yizhou 易州, Zhaozhou 趙州 and, particularly, Youzhou 幽州, a place which had decisive importance for the defence system of the Sui and Tang empires,³² I suspect that in the current edition of the *Pōpjang chōn* the character *ji* 薊, which indicated a place in present-day Daxing 大興, Beijing, very close to Liangxiang,³³ was miswritten as *kuai* 蒯 due to their similarity in form. This means that the miraculous effect of Fazang's rituals, as Ch'oe Ch'iwōn believed, took place on two battlefields that were quite close together, and which were both located within present-day Beijing.

Further, it is important to note that Liangxiang happened to be in Fangshan, where the Yunjusi is located. The *Liao shi* 遼史 provides the following detailed description of Liangxiang's name changes:

²⁷ For this date, see Empress Wu's 'Da Zhou xinyi Da fangguangfo huayanjing xu', *T* vol. 10, no. 297, 1b11–12; *QTW* 97.7a6–7.

²⁸ The earliest known source for this episode is a commentary on the *Avatamsaka sūtra* by Huiyuan 慧苑, (673?–743?), a chief disciple of Fazang. See *Xu Huayanjing lüeshu kandingji* 續華嚴經略疏定記 (*XZJ* vol. 5) 1.25b–c.

²⁹ In her preface to the new Chinese translation of the *Laṅkāvatāra sūtra*, Empress Wu mentions Sikṣānada and Fuli, but not Fazang. See 'Xinyi Dasheng ru Lengqie jing xu' 新譯入楞伽經序, *QTW* 97.10a8–9.

³⁰ For this relic veneration, see Chen Jinhua, 'Śarīra and Scepter: Empress Wu's political use of Buddhist relics', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 25/1–2 (2002), 97–103.

³¹ *ZZTJ* 206.6522: Tiancewansui 2.7.6 [*gengzi*]. The original has the day as *gengwu*. As there was no *gengwu* day in the seventh month of Wansuitongtian 2, I have emended *gengwu* 庚午 to *gengzi* 庚子 on the basis of the similarity in form between *wu* 午 and *zi* 子.

³² Li Songtao 李松濤, 'Lun Qidan Li Jinzhong Sun Wanrong zhi luan' 論契丹李盡忠孫萬榮之亂, *Shengtang shidai yu Dongbeiyu zhengju* 盛唐時代與東北亞政局 (ed. Wang Xiaofu 王小甫, Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2003), 100–01.

³³ As a matter of fact, sometime during the Northern Qi dynasty, Liangxiang once became a part of Kuai sub-prefecture 蒯縣 (see a passage quoted from the *Liaoshi*, to be discussed below).

Liangxiang Sub-prefecture was called Zhongdu 中都 Prefecture under the Yan 燕 [of the Warring States Period]. Its name was changed to Liangxiang under the Han (206 B.C.–220 A.D.). In the past it belonged to Zhuojun 涿郡. In Tianbao 7 (January 28 556–February 14 556) of the Northern Qi (550–577), it was annexed to Jixian 薊縣. Its status as an independent sub-prefecture was restored in Wuping 6 (January 27 575–February 14 576). It was renamed Gujie Garrison 固節鎮 in Shengli 1 (December 20 697–May 26, 700) of the Tang. In Shenlong 1 (January 30 705–January 18 706) it was reinstated as Liangxiang Sub-prefecture. 良鄉縣: 燕為中都縣, 漢改良鄉縣, 舊屬涿郡, 北齊天保七年省入薊縣, 武平六年復置。唐聖曆元年改固節鎮, 神龍元年復為良鄉縣。³⁴

The *Liao shi* compilers here obviously erred in assigning the Shengli era to the Tang. As a matter of fact, the Shengli era—lasting from December 20, 697 to May 26, 700—fell under the reign of Empress Wu (r. 690–705). Wang Pu 王溥 (922–982), the compiler of the *Tang huiyao* 唐會要, specifies that the renaming happened on Shengli 1.1a(run).29.³⁵ Thus, it seems that Empress Wu had Liangxiang renamed as Gujie shortly after successfully cracking down on the Khitans in July 697. Its status was also changed from a sub-prefecture to ‘garrison’ (*zhen* 鎮), which emphatically indicated its military and strategic importance.³⁶ A Qing dynasty geographical work continues to narrate the history of name-changing that Liangshi underwent after the Shenlong period:

Liangxiang as a sub-prefectural unit was abolished under the [Latter] Tang dynasty (923–936) of the Five Dynasties period (907–959). In Dading 29 (January 19 1189–February 6 1190) of the Jin dynasty (1115–1234), a sub-prefecture called Wanning 萬寧 was instituted there, and the income from the sub-prefecture was used to serve the royal mausoleum within the territory. In Mingchang 2 (February 7 1190–January 26 1191), it was renamed Fengxiang, and was subjected to the jurisdiction of Zhuozhou. In Zhiyuan 27 (February 11 1290–January 31 1291), it was renamed Fangshan, and continued to be under the jurisdiction of Zhuozhou. During the Ming dynasty (1368–1662), it belonged to the Shuntian Prefecture of Zhuozhou. 五代唐時徙廢。金大定二十九年, 置萬寧縣, 以奉山陵。明昌二年更名曰奉先, 屬涿州。至元二十七年, 又改曰房山, 仍屬涿州。明屬順天府, 涿州。³⁷

According to this, Liangxiang came to be called Fangshan in 1290, or early 1291.

Although Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn clearly identifies the place of the miracles, he does not deign to tell us whether Fazang performed the rituals in Luoyang, where Empress Wu and her government were based at the time, and that the rituals projected their miraculous effects hundreds of miles away, or whether Fazang went to a place close to the two battlefields specifically to perform these rituals.

Fortunately, a contemporary epigraphic source sheds some light on the obscure parts of this picture, left incomplete by Ch’oe Ch’iwŏn:

³⁴ *Liao shi* 40, 494–5.

³⁵ *Tang huiyao* (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshu guan, 1935) 71.1261.

³⁶ The Zhonghua shuju 中華書局 editors of the *Liao shi* observe that the *Liao shi* significantly differs from the ‘Geographical monograph’ (*Dili zhi* 地理志) of the *Jiu Tang shu* and the *Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記, both of which record Gujie’s (*Taiping huanyu ji* miswrites it as Guojie 國節) status as *xian* 縣, rather than *zhen* 鎮, as is indicated in the *Liao shi*. See editorial note 7 attached to *Liao shi* 40, p. 502; for the reference to the *Taiping huanyu ji* made by the Zhonghua shuju editors, see *Taiping huanyu ji*, *Yingyin Wenyuan-ge siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書 [Taibei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1983–86] (hereafter *SKQS*) (vols 469–70) 69.10a.

³⁷ *Jifu tongzhi* 畿輔通志 (*SKQS* vols 504–06) 13.21b.

通天年，契丹叛逆。有敕祈五岳恩，請神兵冥助。尊師銜命衡霍，遂致昭感。³⁸

In the [Wansui]tongtian era (7 April 696–25 April 697), the Khitans rebelled. An imperial edict was issued to order [Daoist priests] to visit the Five Marchmounts (*wuyue* 五岳), to pray for occult help from celestial troops. Our Venerable Master went to Heng[shan] 衡山 and Huo[shan] 霍山 on imperial orders, and thereby brought about illustrious responses [from the deities].

The Venerable Master referred to here is Hou Jingzhong 侯敬忠 (651–718), the Head of the Great Hongdao Abbey 大弘道觀 and Ritual master of Three Caverns (Sandong fashi 三洞法師), a Daoist leader under the reign of Empress Wu and the subsequent reigns of Zhongzong, Ruizong and Xuanzong. He was once, by force, ordained as a Buddhist monk by the notorious Huaiyi 懷義 (a.k.a. Xue Huaiyi 薛懷義, ?–695) during the Yongchang era (27 January–17 December 689).³⁹ He did not get an opportunity to file a petition to the court asking for his return to the Daoist priesthood until during the Wansuidengfeng era (10 January–6 April 696), shortly after Huaiyi was murdered on 22 February 695. Empress Wu granted him permission to do so,⁴⁰ obviously shortly before he offered her his timely assistance by going to the two marchmounts.

This important source from the Daoist side is unfortunately too sketchy about Hou Jingzhong's role during the crackdown of the Khitan rebellion. However, it still proves beyond any reasonable doubt that in her desperate effort to halt the aggression of the Khitan, Empress Wu ordered some Daoist clerics to go to the Five Marchmounts to invoke the Daoist deities residing there to intervene in this series of military conflicts. Although this source only concerns Daoist priests and mountains, it does not seem too far from the truth if we assume that Empress Wu actually sent off both Buddhist monks and Daoist priests to a select number of key sites (both strategically and religiously important) all over her imperium in order to entreat the grace and favourable intervention of both Buddhist and Daoist deities when she was facing this life-threatening crisis.

³⁸ 'Da Tang Da Hongdao guanzhu gu sandong fashi Houzuni zhiwen' 大唐大弘道觀主故三洞法師侯尊誌文, in Zhou Shaoliang 周紹良 *et al.* (comp.), *Tangdai muzhi huibian* 唐代墓志匯編 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1992), 1207.

³⁹ Although he was the son of a low-ranking local official, Hou Jingzhong's religious career seems to have been closely related to the Great Tang and Great Zhou imperial families. In addition to his ties with Empress Wu outlined above, we should also note that he became a Daoist priest following a special imperial edict that was issued to celebrate the birth of Li Dan 李旦 (662–716), the future Ruizong, which happened on 22 June 662 (Longsuo 2.6.1 [*jiwei*]) and that in Yonglong 2 (25 January–26 October 681), several months after the Hongdao Abbey was built on the site of an old residence of Li Xian 李顯 (656–710) (the future Zhongzong) following his appointment as the crown prince on 21 September 680 (Yonglong 1.8.23 [*yichou*]), he was lodged at this cosmopolitan abbey (for the establishment of the Great Hongdao Abbey, see *THY* 50.870). He was elected as its head shortly after 696 (probably after his visit to Mounts Heng and Huo). Before his affiliation with the Hongdao Abbey, he stayed at the Chongling 崇靈 Abbey in his home town of Zhengzhou 鄭州, Taiyi 太一 Abbey on the Central Marchmount (i.e. Mount Song) and the Songyang 嵩陽 Abbey (probably also at Mount Song). It is quite remarkable that Hou Jingzhong's teacher at the Taiyi Abbey was a Daoist master, here addressed as Venerable Master (Zunshi 尊師) Liu He 劉合, obviously the famous Liu Daohe 劉道合 (d. c. 672), for whom Gaozong built the Taiyi Abbey on Mount Song and who assisted Gaozong and Empress Wu in their effort to perform the *feng* 封 and *shan* 禪 ceremonies on Taishan in 666. See *JTS* 192.5127, *XTS* 196.5605; Lei Wen 雷聞, 'Tangdai daojiào yu guojia liyi-yi Gaozong fengshan huodong wei zhongxin' 唐代道教與國家禮儀—以高宗封禪活動為中心, *Zhonghua wenshi luncong* 中華文史論叢 68 (2001), 62–79.

For Hou Jingzhong's relationship with Huaiyi, see Forte, 'The Maitreyist Huaiyi (d. 695) and Daoism', *Tang yanjiu* 唐研究 (1998), 20.

⁴⁰ The original of the epitaph here has 願天從還居仙境 (Zhou, *Tangdai muzhi huibian*, 1207). I suspect that the two characters 願天 might have been an error for 則天, Empress Wu's personal name.

Correlating such a general understanding of this major co-operation between the secular and monastic authorities in 696 or 697 with the service that Fazang was believed to have done to the empress at this critical moment, we can imagine that, not unlike Hou Jingzhong, who was sent to the two Daoist Marchmounts, Huoshan and Hengshan, Fazang went to at least one place of major significance for the Buddhist tradition. Given that it is Liangxiang and Jicheng (if my correction on Kuaicheng can be adopted) that were reportedly blessed by the divine influences exercised by Fazang's rituals, the Buddhist key place in which Fazang carried out these rituals was very probably the Yunjusi—arguably the most celebrated Buddhist sacred site in the area since the Northern Qi.⁴¹ The credibility of this assumption is enhanced by Yunjusi's close relationship with the Chinese *Avatamsaka* tradition, which was created by its founder Jingwan.

Influenced by the Ming dynasty source *Dijing jingwu lue* 帝京景物略 (A brief description of the scenes and products in the imperial capital [i.e. Beijing]) by Liu Tong 劉侗 (?–1634⁺) and Yu Yizheng 于奕正 (fl. 1615–35), scholars are generally of the opinion that Jingwan was a disciple of the Tiantai 天台 master Huisi 慧思 (515–568).⁴² Such a view can no longer be maintained in light of the compelling evidence recently advanced by Luo Zhao 羅炤, who has cast serious doubt on the master–disciple relationship between Huisi and Jingwan and who has argued instead for Jingwan's discipleship under Lingyu 靈裕 (518–605), a disciple of Daopin 道憑 (488–559), one of the ten chief disciples of Huiguang 慧光 (after 491–after 560), who was recognized as a major forerunner of the Chinese *Avatamsaka* tradition.⁴³ Probably because of this intellectual background, the Chinese translation of the *Avatamsak sūtra*—the *Da Fangguangfo Huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經—was chosen as one of the nineteen texts that was carved, although not completely, in the Leiyin 雷音 Cave, which represented the earliest part of the stone-canon project supervised by Jingwan.⁴⁴

Be that as it may, it is very likely that, during his mission in 697, Fazang used the Yunjusi as the platform for enemy-quelling rituals. This implies that he must have since cherished a strong affection for the Yunjusi given that this service, being perceived as highly favourable to the Great Zhou army, bore extraordinary significances for his career in that it drove him so close to Empress Wu.

If Fazang's ties with the Yunjusi are implied in the historical sources under examination, then how about his relationship with the Chongfusi? It turns out that while a part of the reasoning for Fazang's Yunjusi ties might remain hypothetical, his long-standing and extraordinarily close connections with the Chongfusi are substantiated by far more abundant evidence.

II. *Fazang's abbotship of the Chongfusi*

The Great Chongfusi was originally called Western Taiyuansi 西太原寺, and was built on the basis of an old residence of Empress Wu's mother Madame

⁴¹ See Liu Ji 劉濟 (753?–806?), 'Zhuolushan shijingtang ji' 涿鹿山石經堂記, *QTW* 526.22a.

⁴² *Dijing jingwu lue* (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 1980) 8.347–8. Tang Lin's 唐臨 (600–659) *Minbao ji* 冥報記, the earliest source on Jingwan which also contains most of the information currently available on him, like other early sources, is silent on Jingwan's lineage.

⁴³ Luo, 'Fangshan shijing zhi yuan yu Jingwan zhi chuancheng' 房山石經之源與靜琬之傳承, *Wenwu* 文物 562 (2003), 86–92.

⁴⁴ Luo, 'Jingwan', 88–90. The inscription attributed to Jingwan about his plan to carve the *Huayan jing* is still extant. See Beijing tushuguan jinshi-zu and Zhongguo fojiao tushu wenwuguan shijing zu, *Fangshan shijing tiji huibian*, 10–11.

Rongguo 榮國 (579–670) for her posthumous welfare.⁴⁵ Given that Madame Rongguo died on 22 August 670,⁴⁶ the monastery must have been built shortly afterwards. On 19 February 687 (Chugong 3.I.2) the name of the Western Taiyuan Monastery was changed to Weiguo [xisi] 魏國西寺 (the Western Monastery of Weiguo), which was changed again to Da Zhou xisi 大周西寺 (the Western Monastery of the Great Zhou), probably shortly after 16 October 690, when Empress Wu established her own dynasty. It seems that before the proclamation of the Great Zhou dynasty, and therefore before the assumption of the name Da Zhou xisi, the monastery had received another new name, the Chongfusi, on 23 December 689 (Zaichu 1.zheng.6) or 9 January 690 (Zaichu 1.zheng.23). The name of the Da Zhou xisi was switched back to the Chongfusi after the Great Zhou dynasty was abolished and the Great Tang was restored on 21 February 705.⁴⁷

Fazang was among those Buddhist monks who were assigned to the Western Taiyuansi shortly after it was established. The expression Yan Chaoyin 閻朝隱 (?–713?), the author of Fazang's funeral epitaph, used to describe Fazang's affiliation with this monastery, *zhu Taiyuansi* 住太原寺, which could mean 'resided at or supervised (*zhuchi* 住持, to be the abbot of) the [Western] Taiyuansi', has led some later Buddhist sources to conclude that Empress Wu appointed Fazang as the abbot of the Taiyuansi, a view which has been widely accepted by modern scholars.⁴⁸ This is implausible not only because at the time Fazang was still a novice but also, more importantly, because it was another Buddhist monk, Huili 慧立 (615–?), well known for his status as a biographer of the famous Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664), who served as the abbot of the monastery.⁴⁹

Evidence shows that although Fazang had been affiliated with the Chongfusi for most of the rest of his life, he did not become its abbot until some time between 5 November 699,⁵⁰ when he was still identified as a monk (and not the

⁴⁵ See Fazang's funeral epitaph written by Yan Chaoyin 閻朝隱 (d. c. 713) shortly after his death in 712, the 'Da Tang Da Jianfusi gu Dade Kangzang Fashi zhi bei' 大唐大薦福寺故大德康藏法師之碑 (*T* vol. 50, no. 2054), 280b15–17; a more detailed account can be found in the *Pōpjang chōn*, 281b15–20.

⁴⁶ Antonino Forte discussed the epigraphic evidence establishing Madame Rongguo's dates in 'The Chongfusi 崇福寺 in Chang'an: foundation and name changes', *L'inscription nestorianne de Si-ngan-fou: A Posthumous Work by Paul Pelliot* (ed. Antonino Forte, Kyoto and Paris: Scuola di Studi sull'Asia Orientale and Collège de France, Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1996), 456–7.

⁴⁷ For the complicated history of the foundation and repeated renaming of the Eastern and Western Taiyuansi, see Forte, 'Chongfusi'.

⁴⁸ See, for example, *Fajiezong wuzu lieji* 法界宗五祖略記 (*XZJ* vol. 134), 273b14; Fang Litian 方立天, *Fazang* 法藏 (Taipei: Dongda tushu, 1991), 4; Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 46.

⁴⁹ In a biographical note for Huili, Zhisheng (*Kaiyuan shijiao* lu 9.564c8) records his status as the abbot of the Taiyuansi, without telling us when he served in this position. Fortunately, the evidence for Huili's abbacy of the Western Taiyuansi as of 4 July 671 (Xianheng 2.5.23) is provided by Dunhuang Manuscript S 5319; see Ikeda, *Chūgoku kodai shahon shikigo shūroku*, 211–12. Given that the Taiyuansi was founded some time between 9 November 670 and 14 February 671 (this dating is suggested by Forte, 'Chongfusi', 457), that is, less than eight months before Huili was known in the capacity of the Western Taiyuansi abbot, we have reason to believe that Huili was the first abbot of the monastery. Another Dunhuang manuscript shows that Huili remained in the same position as late as at least 29 January 677 (Shangyuan 3.12.21, which should be corrected to Yifeng 1.12.21 given that a change of reign-name from Shangyuan to Yifeng occurred on 18 December 676 [Shangyuan 3.11.8 (*renshen*)] (Dunhuang manuscript S 2956 [Ikeda, *Chūgoku kodai shahon shikigo shūroku*, 230]), if not 26 June 677 (Yifeng 2.5.21; Dunhuang manuscript S 3094 [Ikeda, *Chūgoku kodai shahon shikigo shūroku*, 231–2] attests to the existence of a Huide 慧德, which appears to have been a mistake for Huili, as the Western Taiyuansi abbot as of this date).

⁵⁰ This was indicated in a Dunhuang manuscript (p. 2314), which contains a copied list of the translators for the new translation of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*. The list is summarized in Chen Jinhua, 'The location and chief members of Siksanda's (652–710) *Avatamsaka* translation office: some remarks on a Chinese collection of stories and legends related to the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*', *Journal of Asian History* 38/2 (2004), 135.

abbot) of the monastery, and 16 November 703, when he is first known to have been addressed as such.⁵¹ Fazang was still holding the position at the turn of 705, when he led a team to fetch the Famensi relic to Luoyang on the orders of Empress Wu.⁵² This was the delicate moment when political infighting in the court was intensifying to the point of breakthrough—the *coup d'état* on 20 February 705 (Shenlong 1.1.22 [*guimao*]), which resulted in Empress Wu's forced abdication and Zhongzong's resumption of the throne. As I have shown elsewhere, in this series of bitter court struggles, Fazang sided with some pro-Tang court officials who conspired in the removal of Empress Wu's two favourites, Zhang Yizhi 張易之 (?–705) and his brother Zhang Changzong 張昌宗 (?–705). In one sense or another, Fazang ended up being a betrayer of Empress Wu.⁵³ This in turn has presented to us the problem of whether Fazang, after the 705 coup, was allowed to maintain his position as the abbot of the Western Chongfusi, which was one of Empress Wu's clan temples before she founded her own dynasty on 16 October 690 and one of her dynastic monasteries afterwards. A preface that Zhongzong wrote for some of Yijing's translations verifies that Fazang's abbotship of the Chongfusi did indeed continue for at least several months after the coup.⁵⁴ It thus seems that, as she was forced to the wings of the political stage, Empress Wu became unable to decide the appointment and dismissal of the abbot of one of her own monasteries. Then, can we know how Fazang related to the Chongfusi after Zhongzong reconfirmed his abbotship when he wrote the preface in 705?

Although Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn was right about Fazang's role at the Chongfusi at the turn of 704 and 705, he does not seem so in his observation on Fazang's relationship with another important monastery at the time, the Great Jianfusi 大薦福寺. Both in the title of his funeral epitaph by Yan Chaoyin and that of his biography by Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn, Fazang's monastery affiliation is given as the Great Jianfusi. While Yan Chaoyin merely identifies him as a *bhadanta*-monk (*dade-seng* 大德僧) of the monastery, Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn identifies him as its abbot.⁵⁵ Such an identification of Fazang in terms of the Jianfusi has led modern scholars to assume that in addition to the Western Chongfusi the

⁵¹ Fazang's abbotship of the Great Chongfusi was first reported in another Dunhuang manuscript, a copy of the colophon to the *Jin guangming jing* 金光明經 (Skt. *Suvarnaprabhāsattama sūtra*) translated by Yijing (S. 523, dated 17 November 703 [Chang'an 3.10.4]; reproduced in Forte, *Political Propaganda*, Plate XXXIII; and edited in Ikeda, *Chūgoku kodai shahon shikigo shūroku*, 263). In the colophon Fazang is identified as a Sramāṇa-translator and the abbot of the Da Zhou xisi (*Fanjing shamen Da Zhou xisi sizhu* 翻經沙門大周西寺寺主).

⁵² See *Pōpjang chŏn*, 283c25–284a14, with Fazang's abbotship of the Western Chongfusi mentioned at 283c28–29.

⁵³ Chen, 'More than a philosopher: Fazang (643–712) as a politician and miracle-worker', *History of Religion* 42/4 (May 2003), 341–52.

⁵⁴ Entitled 'Sanzang shengjiao xu' 三藏聖教序, also known as 'Da Tang Zhongxing Sanzang shengjiao xu' 大唐中興三藏聖教序 or 'Da Tang Longxing Sanzang shengjiao xu' 大唐龍興三藏聖教序, this preface now exists in at least five editions, the most easily accessible included in *QTW* (17.17b–21a). The text itself is well known among Buddhist scholars and Tang specialists, although the date of its composition is open to question. For the latest study of this preface, see my above-quoted article on Yijing, in which I have reconfirmed that the preface was written in 705, although I have attempted to solve the puzzle caused by such a dating: that is, why the preface states that Yijing had by that time finished two-hundred fascicles of translations, while on the other hand, according to Zhisheng Yijing had finished only 121 or 117 fascicles by 705. Forte, on the other hand, suggests that the preface was written on the ghost festival of the year; that is, Shenlong 1.7.15 (8 August 705). See Forte, *Political Propaganda* (second edition), 185–6 n. 44.

⁵⁵ Fazang's funeral epitaph by Yan Chaoyin, 'Da Tang Da Jianfusi gu dade Kang Zang fashi zhi bei' (*T* no. 2054, vol. 50), 280b–c. Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn's famous biography for Fazang carries a title which can be translated as 'Biography for Upādhyāya Fazang, the Late Bhadanta-translator and Abbot of the Great Jianfusi of the Tang'.

Jianfusi was another monastery at which Fazang had often stayed.⁵⁶ Recently, a scholar has even claimed that by at least the eve of the 705 coup, Fazang was the abbot of the Jianfusi.⁵⁷

When did he then transfer to the Jianfusi (apparently from the Chongfusi)? In my attempts to look into this matter, I have found to my surprise that, despite his alleged status as the Jianfusi abbot, Fazang's relationship with the monastery is only mentioned on two occasions—his direction of a rain-prayer ritual at the monastery in the mid-summer (that is, the fifth month) of Jinglong 2 (24 May 708–22 June 708),⁵⁸ and his death there on 16 December 712. Furthermore, it is particularly striking that Zhisheng makes no mention whatsoever of his participation in Yijing's translation projects in Chang'an after December 706, which were all carried out at the Jianfusi, although Zhisheng confirms his participation in Yijing's translation projects at the Fuxiansi 福先寺 in Luoyang (700–7 November 701, and 10 December 703–18 November 706) and at the Ximingsi 西明寺 in Chang'an (26 November 701–21 November 703).⁵⁹ One might wonder whether or not Zhisheng forgot to include Fazang as a collaborator of Yijing's at the Jianfusi. In order to assess this possibility, we need to analyse closely Zhisheng's list of Yijing's Jianfusi collaborators, who can be divided into the following ten groups in terms of their functions:

- i) *du-fanben* 讀梵本 (Enouncers of the Indic Originals): *śrāmana* Huiji 慧積 (d.u.), and two Buddhist lay men from Central India, Li Shijia 李釋迦 (d.u.), Dupoduo 度頗多 (d.u.), and others;
- ii) *zheng-fanben* 證梵本 (Verifiers of the Indic Originals): Yisheluo 伊舍羅 (d.u.), a 'Tribal Chief' (*shouling* 首領) of East India, and others;
- iii) *zheng-fanwen* 證梵文 (Verifiers of the Indic Words): the Khotanese *śrāmana* Damonantuo 達磨難陀 (d.u.);

⁵⁶ See, for example, Tang Yongtong 湯用彤, *Sui Tang fojiao shigao* 隋唐佛教史稿 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1982 [reprint]), 167; Fang Litian 方立天, *Fazang* 法藏 (Taipei: Dongda tushu gongsi, 1991), 29.

⁵⁷ See Sun Yinggang's 孫英剛 otherwise excellent article: 'Chang'an yu Jingzhou zhijian: Tang Zhongzong yu fojiao' 長安與荊州之間唐中宗與佛教, in *Tangdai Zongjiao xinyang yu shehui* 唐代宗教信仰與社會 (ed. Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 2003), 137–8. Sun does not mention the source for this claim. Given that just before this, he mentions a rain-praying ritual that Fazang supervised at the Jianfusi in the mid-summer of Jinglong 2 (i.e. Jinglong 2.5 [24 May–22 June 708]), which is quoted from Ch'oe Ch'iwön's biography (*Pōpjang chôn*, 284a29–b5), I assume that he has come to this conclusion on the basis of the same source. However, although in the title of the biography Ch'oe Ch'iwön identifies Fazang as the abbot of the Jianfusi, throughout the biography itself he never makes the same identification, let alone tell us when he started to serve in this position. On the contrary, on the occasion of narrating Fazang's role in the Famensi relic veneration at the turn of 705 (also the eve of the 705 coup mentioned by Sun), Ch'oe Ch'iwön refers to Fazang as the abbot of the Great Chongfusi: 時藏為大崇福寺寺主 (*Pōpjang chôn*, 283c28–29). Did Sun Yinggang misread the 大崇福寺 here as 大薦福寺?

⁵⁸ *Pōpjang chôn*, 284a29–b5; discussed in Chen, 'More than a philosopher', 354.

⁵⁹ See *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 9.568c5, for Fazang's participation in Yijing's translation centre at the Fuxiansi in Luoyang and the Ximingsi in Chang'an. Fazang's role in Yijing's Ximingsi translation bureau is verified by several colophons to the translations that Yijing made in this period; see, for example, a colophon (dated Chang'an 3.10.4 [17 November 703]) to Yijing's translation of *Jin guangming jing* (made at the Ximingsi), in which Fazang is identified as the abbot of the Western Monastery of the Great Zhou (i.e. Western Chongfusi); see Ikeda, *Chūgoku kodai shahon shikigo shūroku*, 260–64; Forte, *Political Propaganda*, Plate XXXIII. See also a colophon (dated to the same day) to the *Genben Shuoyiqieyou bu pinaiye* 根本說一切有部毗奈耶 (in which Fazang is identified by the same position); see Ikeda, *Chūgoku kodai shahon shikigo shūroku*, 264.

Regarding Fazang's absence in Yijing's activities in Chang'an (at the Jianfusi), see *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 9.568c29–569a11, 569a16–18. Fazang's absence in Yijing's Jianfusi translation bureau is also corroborated by four colophons to four translations that Yijing completed in Jinglong 4.4 (4 May 710–1 June 710), including (1) *Genben Shuoyiqieyou bu nituona* 根本說一切有部尼陀那, (2) *Genben Shuoyiqieyou bu nituona mudejia* 根本說一切有部尼陀那目得迦, (3) *Genben Shuoyiqieyou bu bichuni binaiye* 根本說一切有部毘芻尼毘奈耶, (4) *Yuxiang gongde jing* 浴像功德經, in none of which Fazang is listed as a translator; see Ikeda, *Chūgoku kodai shahon shikigo shūroku*, 272–9.

- iv) *zheng-fanyi* 證梵義 (Verifiers of the Indic Meanings): the Tokharian *śrāmana* Damomomo 達磨末磨 (d.u.) and Central Indian *śrāmana* Banu 拔弩 (d.u.);
- v) *zhengyi* 證義 (Verifiers of Meanings): *śrāmanas* Wen'gang 文綱 (636–727), Huizhao 慧沼 (651–714), Lizhen 利貞 (d.u.), Sūngjiang (Ch. Shengzhuang) 勝莊 (a Korean monk, d.u.), Aitong 愛同 (d.u.),⁶⁰ Siheng 思恒 (653–726) and others;
- vi) *bishou* 筆受 (Scribes): *śrāmanas* Xuansha 玄傘 (d.u.), Zhiji 智積 (d.u.) and others;
- vii) *ciwen runse* 次文潤色 (Composers and Polishers): more than twenty lay scholars including Li Jiao 李嶠 (645?–714?), Wei Sili 韋嗣立 (660–719), Zhao Yanzhao 趙彥昭 (?–710+), Lu Cangyong 盧藏用 (?–713), Zhang Yue 張說 (667–731), Li Yi 李义 (649–716),⁶¹ Su Ting 蘇頌 (670–727) and others;
- viii) *zhengyi* 證譯 (Verifiers of the Translations): two Buddhist lay men—the Eastern Indian Qutanjin'gang 瞿曇金剛 (d.u.) and a Kashmiri prince Ashun 阿順 (d.u.), and others;
- ix) *jianyi* 監譯 (Supervisors of the Translations): Wei Juyuan 韋巨源 (?–710) (Duke of Shuguo 舒國公), Su Gui 蘇瑰 (639–710) (Duke of Xuguo 許國公), and others;
- x) *jianhu* 監護 (Supervisors and Protectors of the Translations): [Li] Yong [李]邕 (?–727), Prince Siguo 嗣號.⁶²

On the other hand, a colophon attached to the first fascicle of [*Genben shuo*] *yiqieyou bu bichuni binaiye* [根本]說一切有部毘奈耶, one of the nineteen translations whose publication was officially announced in Jinglong 4 (4 February 710–4 July 710), contains a much longer list of Yijing's colleagues.⁶³

- i) *du-fanben* (or *xuanshi fanben* 宣釋梵本 [‘enouncing and explaining the Indic originals’]): Yijing, Huiji, Li Shijia, and Dupoduo;⁶⁴
- ii) *zheng-fanwen*: Damonantuo, and Yisheluo;⁶⁵
- iii) *zheng-fanyi*: Damomomo and Banu;⁶⁶
- iv) *zhuiwen zhengzi* 綴文正字 (or *zhengzi* 正字): Yijing, Zhiji (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Jianfusi) (also concurrently acting as a Verifier of Meanings, see below), Aitong (Preceptor and Elder of the Wangjisi 罔極寺)⁶⁷ (also acting concurrently as a Verifier of Meanings, see below);⁶⁸

⁶⁰ A short biographical note of this monk is found at *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 9.571a6–11. A member of the prestigious Tianshui Zhao 天水趙 family (the same from which Fazang's teacher Zhiyan came), he abandoned his household life when he was twenty and gradually distinguished himself as a vinaya expert.

⁶¹ The original has Li You 李义, which was obviously an error for Li Yi 李义.

⁶² The original has Sihao 嗣號, an error for Siguo 嗣號.

⁶³ Ikeda, *Chūgoku kodai shahon shikigo shūroku*, 276–9.

⁶⁴ At the top of this list, Yijing's functions are given as *xuanshi fanben* 宣釋梵本 (enouncing and explaining the Indic originals) and *zhuiwen zhengzi* 綴文正字 (patching up the compositions and correcting the words). These two functions probably roughly matched those of *du-fanben* 讀梵本 and *zhengzi* 正字. They were, of course, in addition to his overall role as the ‘Translation-director’ (*yizhu* 譯主).

⁶⁵ Zhisheng's list has assigned two different functions, *zheng-fanben* and *zheng-fanwen*, to Damonantuo and Yisheluo respectively.

⁶⁶ Zhisheng's list completely accords with this list in this regard.

⁶⁷ The original has 罔極寺, which was obviously an error for 罔極寺. The Wangjisi was built by Princess Taiping 太平 (?–713) in the Taining 大寧 (i.e. Daning 大寧) Ward in Chang'an for the posthumous welfare of her mother Empress Wu, in accordance with a decree issued by Zhongzong on 9 April 705 (Shenlong 1.3.12, only a few months after the empress's death). Its name was changed to Xingtangsi 興唐寺 on 3 July 732 (Kaiyuan 20.6.7). See *THY* 48.846.

⁶⁸ Zhisheng's list does not include the function of *zhengzi*.

- v) *bishou*: Xuanshan (Bhadanta of the Chanhesi 禪河寺 in Xiangzhou 相州) (also acting concurrently as a Verifier of Meanings, see below), Li Jiao (also acting concurrently as a polisher, see below);⁶⁹
- vi) *zhengyi*: 1) Wen'gang⁷⁰ (Bhadanta-preceptor [*dade lishi* 大德律師] of the Great Chongshengsi 大崇聖寺); 2) Huizhao 慧沼 (Bhadanta of the Dayunsi 大雲寺 in Zizhou 淄州); 3) Daolin 道琳 (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Chongxiansi 崇先寺⁷¹ in Luoyang); 4) Liming 利明 (Abbot of the Fushousi 福壽寺); 5) Siheng (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Great Jianfusi); 6) Xuanshan; 7) Sūngjiang (Bhadanta of the Great Jianfusi); 8) Aitong; 9) Huaizhi 懷志 (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Zhao-fusi 招福寺); 10) Tanbiao 曇表 (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Western Chongfusi); 11) Chongye 崇業 (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Ximingsi); 12) Huilang 惠朗 (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Xindusi 新都寺); 13) Daliang 大亮 (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Guanyinsi 觀音寺); 14) Zhiji; 15) Yunbian 雲辨 (Bhadanta of the Great Boresi 大般若寺); 16) Huishan 慧傘 (d.u.) (Abbot of the Dayunsi in Dezhou 德州); 17) Duozi 多子 (d.u.) (Bhadanta of the Great Anguosi 大安國寺); 18) Daogui 道珪 (d.u.) (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Longxingsi 龍興寺); 19) Bi'an 彼岸 (d.u.) (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Western Chongfusi); and 20) Xiuzhang 秀璋 (Bhadanta-preceptor of the Western Chongfusi).⁷²
- vii) *runse* 潤色 (Polishers): 1) Li Jiao; 2) Wei Sili; 3) Zhao Yanzhao; 4) Li Xian 劉憲 (?–711?); 5) Cen Xi 岑羲 (?–713); 6) Cui Shi 崔湜 (?–713); 7) Zhang Yue; 8) Cui Riyong 崔日用 (673?–722?); 9) Lu Cangyong; 10) Xu Jianzhen 徐堅貞 (probably an error for Xu Jian 徐堅, 659?–729); 11) Guo Shanhan 郭山暉 (?–713?); 12) Xue Ji 薛稷 (?–713); 13) Xu Yanbo 徐彥伯 (?–714); 14) Li Yi; 15) Wei Yuandan 韋元旦 (d.u.); 16) Ma Huaisu 馬懷素 (before 657–after 716); 17) Li Shi 李適 (663?–711?); 18) Su Ting; 19) Zheng Yin 鄭愷 (?–710); 20) Sheng Quanqi 沈佺期 (?–713?); 21) Wu Pingyi 武平一 (?–741?); 22) Yan Chaoyin; and 23) Fu Feng 符鳳 (d.u.).⁷³
- viii) *zhengyi*: Qutanjin'gang, Ashun, and Li Shuluo 李輪羅 (d.u.) (of the Longbo Kingdom);⁷⁴
- ix) *jianyi*: 1) Wei Juyuan; 2) Su Gui;⁷⁵ 3) Tang Xiuqing 唐休璟 (627–712); 4) Wei Wen 韋溫 (?–710); 5) Wei Anshi 韋安石 (651–714); 6) Ji Chu'ne

⁶⁹ Under the category of *bishou*, Zhisheng gives Zhiji and Xuanshan, in contrast to this list, which under this category includes Xuanshan and Li Jiao, but not Zhiji, whom it includes in the category of *zhengzi*. Thus, it seems that Zhisheng might have understood *zhengzi* as a part of the function of *bishou*.

⁷⁰ The original has Wen'gang 文剛, which was obviously an error for Wen'gang 文綱, whose *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 biography identifies him as a monk of the Chongshengsi 崇聖寺 in Chang'an. See *Song gaoseng zhuan* (T no. 2061, vol. 50) 14.791c15.

⁷¹ The original has 崇光寺, which was obviously an error for 崇先寺.

⁷² All of the six scribes mentioned by Zhisheng—Wen'gang, Huizhao, Lizhen, Sūngjiang, Aitong and Siheng—with the exception of Lizhen, can be found in this list. Lizhen 利貞 was very likely Liming 利明 in the list. When the list was prepared in 710, the character *zhen* 貞, being a part of the personal name of Empress Wei's father Wei Xuanzhen 韋玄貞 (?–c. 684), was tabooed so that Lizhen had to be written as Liming. The taboo was abolished after Empress Wei was executed and disgraced in 710, making it possible for Zhisheng to restore the original form of Lizhen's name when he compiled his list in 730.

⁷³ All seven famous scholars—Li Jiao, Wei Sili, Zhao Yanzhao, Lu Cangyong, Zhang Yue, Li Yi, Su Ting—whom Zhisheng mentions as 'Composers and Polishers', are found in this list.

⁷⁴ Both of the Verifiers of the Translations that Zhisheng mentions in his list, Qutanjin'gang and Ashun, are found here.

⁷⁵ The original has 環, an error for 瑰.

- 紀處訥 (?–710); 7) Zong Chuke 宗楚客 (?–710); 8) Xiao Zhizhong 蕭至忠 (?–713);⁷⁶
- x) *shushou* 書手 (copyists): Zhao Xiling 趙希令 (d.u.), Yin Tinggui 殷庭龜 (d.u.);⁷⁷
- xi) *jianhu*: 1) Pan Jiayi 潘嘉寂 (d.u.); 2) Liu Lingzhi 劉令植 (d.u.); and 3) Li Yong.⁷⁸

A comparison of this list with that of Zhisheng reveals that the latter was no more than a shortened version of the former, since all members in the latter can be found in the former. Like Zhisheng's list, this far longer list also proves Fazang's absence. This list is particularly noteworthy in that it contains the names of twenty-three letters of men—almost all of the major scholar-bureaucrats who were then in Chang'an—as the polishers of Yijing's translations, in addition to those of eight high-ranking court officials (all of them were enfeoffed as Dukes) as the 'Supervisors of the Translations'. This fact, in combination with another (i.e. that nineteen of Yijing's translations were published in 710) suggests that this list cannot be taken as being merely for the members involved in the vinaya text, but rather that it lists most, if not all, of the chief members participating in Yijing's translation activities since the last occasion on which Yijing's translation was published (that is, in 707, when his two-fascicle translation, the *Yaoshi liuliguang qifo benyuan gongde jing* 藥師琉璃光七佛本願功德經, was published⁷⁹), until 710. In view of Fazang's exceptional prestige at the time and the fact that he was then definitely still alive, we have to conclude from the absence of his name on such an apparently exhaustive list that he had nothing to do with Yijing's translation activities from 707 to 710. Moreover, if we consider that, had Fazang been at the Jianfusi during this period, it would have been unimaginable for him not to become involved in any part of Yijing's translation activities, we have to further read the lack of his role in Yijing's Jianfusi translation bureau from 707 to 710 simply as his absence from the monastery in this period.

In contrast to the lack of any documentation of Fazang's involvement in Yijing's Jianfusi translation centre, we have evidence, provided by Zhisheng himself, that Fazang was a member of the translation team based at the Chongfusi that was headed by Bodhiruci (a.k.a. Dharmaruci, 572?–727), mainly devoted to the translation of the twenty-six *huís* of the *Mañjuśrī buddhakṣetraguṇavyūha*, which resulted in thirty-three *juan* of Chinese translation.⁸⁰

Then, what of the last phase of Yijing's translation project, from 710, when Yijing published these nineteen translation, to Jingyun 2 (January 24 711–February 11 712), when he published twelve more translations? Did Fazang play any role in the very last phase of Yijing's career as a Buddhist translator? The answer is also negative on the basis of the identical testimony provided by Zhisheng. According to Zhisheng, Yijing's collaborators in the last phase of

⁷⁶ Both of the Supervisors of the Translations that Zhisheng mentions in his list, Wei Juyuan and Su Gui, are found here.

⁷⁷ Zhisheng's list excludes people of this function.

⁷⁸ In our list Li Yong and the other two persons are not clearly indicated as 'Supervisors and Protectors of the Translations'. Thanks to Zhisheng, we know the status of Li Yong. Furthermore, since on the list the names of Pan Jiayi and Liu Lingzhi are presented in the same way as that of Li Yong (they are two characters closer to the top of the document), I assume that they belonged to the same group and had served Yijing's translation bureau in the same capacity.

⁷⁹ The translation was done in the Foguang Basilica 佛光殿 (that is, Foguangsi 佛光寺, a palace chapel of Zhongzong in Chang'an) in the summer (i.e. fourth–sixth months) of Shenlong 3 (6 May 707–1 August 707), with the participation of Zhongzong, who acted (symbolically) as a scribe (*bishou* 筆受). See *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 9.567c28–29.

⁸⁰ *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 9.567c28–29.

his translation project included: 1) Helimodi 曷利末底; 2) Wuditipo 烏帝提婆⁸¹ and others, who acted as *dufanben* 讀梵本 (Enouncer of the Sanskrit Texts); 3) Xuansan 玄傘; 4) Zhiji 智積 and others, who acted as *bishou* 筆受 (Scribes); 5) Huizhao 慧沼 and others, who acted as *zhengyi* 證義 (Doctrinal Verifiers); and 6) Xue Chongying 薛崇胤, who acted as *jianhu* 監護 (Superintendent).⁸² This is not, of course, a complete list. However, given Fazang's prestige at the time, his name would not have been omitted had he ever engaged in the translation project.

It must be the case then, that although from 706 when the Tang capital was moved back to Chang'an until Fazang's death in 712, there existed two translation centres in Chang'an, at the Western Chongfusi and the Great Jianfusi, under the leadership of Bodhiruci and Yijing respectively, Fazang seems to have worked mainly at the Chongfusi centre, both as a translator-*bhadanta* and as its host. We are then presented with the puzzling issue of when and how Fazang came into connection with the Jianfusi, apparently so closely that he was eventually identified as a monk belonging to that monastery?

At this juncture, the case of the Buddhist thaumaturge Sengqie 僧伽 (Samgha?, 628–710) comes to our attention. We know from one of his biographies that he was transferred (from the inner palace) to the Jianfusi only shortly before his death, at a moment when his health was starting to deteriorate so drastically that the imminence of his passing became clear to the court attendants (and also to Zhongzong).⁸³ Then, can the same be said of Fazang and the Jianfusi? This appears rather likely if we consider the fact that, as noted above, Fazang is known to have been connected with the monastery only on two occasions.

If this is true that Fazang entered the monastery essentially in order to die there, then how do we explain the fact that Yan Chaoyin in the title of the epitaph identifies his late friend as a *bhadanta*-monk of the Jianfusi, rather than of the Chongfusi, with which he obviously had been affiliated for the most part, if not the whole, of his career as a monk? I think such an identification was made not only because the Jianfusi was the place of Fazang's death, but also because it happened to be a 'principality monastery' (and therefore one of the most prestigious monasteries of the Great Tang), a monastery originally named Great Xianfusi 大獻福寺, which was converted from an old mansion of Zhongzong for the posthumous benefit of his father Gaozong.⁸⁴

⁸¹ For this Gandhāran monk, see Chen Jinhua, 'Tang Buddhist palace chapels', *Journal of Chinese Religions* 32 (2004), 123, n. 74.

⁸² *Kaiyuan sijiao* lu 9.569a11–18.

⁸³ *Song gaoseng zhuan* 18.822a19–23; cf. Li Yong, 'Da Tang Sizhou Linhuai xian Puguangwang si bei' 大唐泗州臨淮縣普光王寺碑, *QTW* 263.12a1–2. Although clearly telling us that Sengqie died at the Jianfusi, Li Yong does not say that he was transferred there from the palace immediately before his death. See also *Shenseng zhuan* 神僧傳 (T no. 2064, vol. 50) 7.992b–c, according to which he was transferred to the Jianfusi after briefly staying in the palace chapel (*neidaochang* 內道場) in Jinlong 2 (708).

⁸⁴ For the history of this important monastery, see *THY* 48.991, *Tang liangjing chengfang kao* 唐兩京城坊考 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1985), 2: 35–7; cf. Ono Katsutoshi 小野勝年, *Chūgoku Zui Tō Chōan jin shiryō shūsei* 中國隋唐長安寺院史料集成 (2 vols, Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1989), 1: 3–10, 2: 3–8. Originally belonging to Yang Guang 楊廣 (589–618) (Sui Yangdi 隋煬帝, r. 604–617). During the Wude era (18 June 618–22 January 627), it was bestowed on Xiao Yu (the former chief sponsor of the Yunjusi project in the Sui) as his 'western garden' (*xiyuan* 西園), in which a mansion was built when Xiao Yu's son Xiao Rui 蕭銳 (d. after 644) married Taizong's daughter Princess Xiangcheng 襄城 (?–651). After she died, the government purchased the mansion and assigned it to Prince Ying 英, the future Zhongzong. On the one hundredth day after Gaozong died on 27 December 683 (Yongchun 2.12.4 [*dingsi*]) (that is, Wenming 1.3.9 [*xinmao*] [29 March 684]; *THY* [48: 991] gives it as Wenming 1.3.12 [2 April 684], which was actually the 103rd day after Gaozong's death), the mansion was turned into a monastery named Great Xianfusi (Zhongzong had then been deposed and exiled to Fangzhou 房州 thirty-five days ago, on Sisheng 1.2.6 [*xuwu*] [26 February 684]). In Tianshou 1 (16 October 690–5 December 690), it was renamed Great Jianfusi. After Zhongzong ascended to the throne once again in 705, the monastery was renovated and started to assume increasing importance.

Even though Fazang was eventually affiliated with the Jianfusi (more than the fact his last days [weeks, or months] were spent there), the affiliation would not have lasted long. Further, given that Yan Chaoyin identifies Fazang as the Jianfusi abbot neither in the title of the epitaph, nor in the epitaph per se, I am inclined to believe that Fazang was probably never the Jianfusi abbot (I here assume that on an official occasion like the writing of the funeral epitaph for Fazang, Yan Chaoyin would not have merely identified him as a *bhadanta*-monk of the Jianfusi had he really been its abbot).

How do we explain, then, how in four of Fazang's extant works, at least according to several of their editions, Fazang as their author is identified as a monk of the Jianfusi? These four works are: 1) *Huayan yicheng jiaoyi fenqi zhang* 華嚴一乘教義分齊章 (better known as *Huayan Wujiao zhang* 華嚴五教章); 2) *Huayan jing yihai baimen* 華嚴經義海百門 (better known as 'Yihai baimen' 義海百門); 3) *Xiu Huayan aozhi wangjin huanyuan zhang* 修華嚴奧旨妄盡還源章 (better known as 'Wangjin huanyuan guan' 妄盡還源觀); and 4) 'Jin shizi zhang' 金師子章.⁸⁵ Concerning this issue, I think it is important to note that this kind of identification was more often than not added by later editors and may not necessarily have derived from Fazang himself, as is correctly pointed out by the learned Japanese scholar-monk Sōshun 僧濬 (1659–1736), who testifies that in all the Song dynasty editions of the *Wujiao zhang*, Fazang as the author was identified as a monk of the Chongfusi, rather than the Jianfusi:

又宋本俱云：京大崇福寺沙門法藏述。《義苑》，《復古》等作‘大薦福寺’者，皆後人之改添耳。⁸⁶

Further, all the Song dynasty editions contain 'Jing Da Chongfusi shamen Fazang shu' ('narrated by *śramaṇa* Fazang of the Great Jingfusi in the capital [Chang'an]). [The identification of Fazang by] the Great Jianfusi [as seen] in the [*Huayan yichengjiao fenqizhang*] *Yiyuan [shu]* [華嚴一乘教分齊章]義苑[疏] [by Daoting 道亭, d.u.] and the [*Huayan yishengjiao fenqizhang*] *Fugu [ji]* [華嚴一乘教分齊章]復古[記] [by Shihui

⁸⁵ The Taishō edition of the *Huayan wujiao zhang* is based on the edition of the Baoen Canon 報恩藏 (of the Zengshansi 增上寺, printed in Kangxi 2 [1663]), in collation with three more editions, the Shūkyō 宗教 University edition (printed in Hōei 寶永 3 [1706]), the Otani University edition printed in Keichō 慶長 17 (1612), and the Otani University edition of Shōō 正應 3 (1290). Of these four editions, only the 1290 and 1663 editions contain the identification of Fazang in terms of his affiliation with the Jianfusi. See *T* no. 1866, vol. 45, editorial notes 1, 3 at 477.

As for the *Yihai baimen*, the Taishō edition is based on the Otani University edition printed during the Tokugawa period, collated with the *Zoku zōkyō* 續藏經 edition. Both editions contain an identification of Fazang by his Jianfusi affiliation 'Jing Da Jianfusi Fanjing shamen Fazang' 京大薦福寺翻經沙門法藏 (a Translator-Śramaṇa of the Great Jianfusi in the Capital [jing 京, that is, Chang'an]). See *T* no. 1878, vol. 45, editorial notes 1 at 627.

The Taishō edition of the *Wangjin huanyuan guan* is based on the Baoen edition (printed in Kangxi 3 [1664]), collated with a Heian period manuscript (in the possession of Ono Genmyō 小野玄妙), and the Otani University edition dating from the Tokugawa period. The Baoen edition has the identification as 'Tang Da Jianfusi Fanjing shamen Fazang' 唐大薦福寺翻經沙門法藏 while the other two have *jing* 京 instead of Tang 唐. See *T* no. 1880, vol. 45, editorial notes 1, 3 at 637.

Regarding the 'Jingshizi zhang' included in the *Jinshizi zhang Yunjian lejie* 金師子章雲間類解 by the Song dynasty Avatamsaka master Jingyuan 淨源 (1011–1088), the Taishō editor relied on the Baoen edition printed in Wanli 20 (1592). However, given that Jingyuan comments on the expression 'Tang Da Jianfusi shamen' 唐大薦福寺沙門, we know that at least by his time some editions of the 'Jingshizi zhang' had already contained such an identification. See *Jinshizi zhang Yunjian lejie* (*T* no. 1880, vol. 45), 663a29–b7.

⁸⁶ This passage is from Sōshun's *Kegong ichijō kyō bunki fushū kyōshinshō* 華嚴一乘教分記輔宗匡真鈔 (*T* no. 2344, vol. 73) 1.304a15–17; briefly discussed in Yoshizu Yoshihide 吉津宜英, *Kegon ichijō shisō no kenkyū* 華嚴一乘教思想の研究 (Tokyo: Daitō shuppansha, 1991), 148, n. 27.

師會, ?–1165], and other [editions], all resulted from the alterations and additions made by people of later generations.

To sum up: either Fazang was not transferred to the Jianfusi until he was on his deathbed, or he was affiliated with the monastery for a very short period of time (otherwise he must have left behind him some evidence pointing to his connections with the monastery further than the simple fact that he died there), during which time he was probably only a *bhadanta*-monk, rather than the abbot, of the monastery. It seems more likely that Fazang had served as the abbot of another great monastery, the Great Chongfusi (i.e. the former Western Taiyuansi), until some time shortly before his death on 16 December 712, when he was transferred to the Great Jianfusi, apparently in the hope that he was to receive better medical care at this imperial monastery, which was far better funded and equipped than other cosmopolitan monasteries.⁸⁷

III. *Fazang's friendship with Princess Jinxian*

The likelihood of Fazang having been friends with Princess Jinxian is enhanced by his connections with, primarily, her father Ruizong, secondly, one of her brothers-in-law, and finally, her own teacher.

It is unclear when and how Fazang established his ties with Ruizong. The earliest documented contact between them can be traced back to 2 February 689 (Yongchang 1.zheng.7), when Ruizong ordered Fazang to organize a large-scale Avatamsaka dharma-assembly.⁸⁸ However, since the real ruler was then Ruizong's mother Empress Wu, and Ruizong was merely a puppet manipulated by his mother, Ruizong was probably only the nominal authority endorsing this grand religious and political activity; it is therefore far from certain that Fazang did come into a real association with him at the time.

The earliest provable, documented, communication between them that I have been able to trace did not take place until the winter of Jingyun 2 (15 November 711–11 February 712), one year before Fazang's own death, when Ruizong summoned Fazang into his palace for his advice on how to relieve the agricultural crises caused by the imminent drought. Fazang proposed that scripts with the text of esoteric scriptures be thrown into a pond at or beside the Wuzhensi 悟真寺 on Mount Zhongnan 終南. This method allegedly worked, bringing down some snow and significantly alleviating the drought. This greatly pleased Ruizong, who issued two edicts lavishing praises on Fazang.⁸⁹

The high esteem that Ruizong maintained towards Fazang is shown by the fact that on Fazang's sixty-ninth birthday (4 December 712, Xiantian 1.11.2 [*dingmao*]), which turned out to be his last as he died a mere twelve days later, Ruizong, who had by then abdicated in favour of his son Xuanzong but who still maintained a part of supreme power in the capacity of Emperor Emeritus (*taishanghuang* 太上皇), sent him some gifts, along with a congratulatory letter

⁸⁷ There are other possibilities to be considered. Perhaps there was a special place (hospice?) for dying monks at the Jianfusi. Possibly it was inauspicious for monks to die at the Chongfusi for some reason. Perhaps it was a mark of posthumous honour to be associated with the Jianfusi. It is always possible that Fazang was transferred after his death for this reason. This issue requires further thought.

⁸⁸ This Avatamsaka assembly is discussed in Chen, 'More than a philosopher', 326–9.

⁸⁹ *Pōpjang chōn*, 284b16–29.

quite respectfully addressed.⁹⁰ Ruizong's letter amply expresses his respect and fondness for Fazang. Far more than a perfunctory greeting from a secular monarch towards a prestigious religious leader, the letter conveyed a taste of the very genuine and personal sense of friendship that was usually only enjoyed between two close friends:

敕華嚴師：黃鐘應律，玄序登司。欣承載誕之祥，喜遇高祺之慶。乘茲今日，用表單心。故奉法衣，兼長命索餅，既薦四禪之味，爰助三衣之資。願壽等恒沙，年同劫石。霜景微冷，法體安和？近阻音符，每增翹仰。因書代敘，筆不宣心。⁹¹

Let it be decreed to Master Huayan: Now, as it reaches the eleventh month, the winter starts to dominate [the season]. Happily bearing the bliss of your birthday, We also have the pleasure of encountering the celebration of your longevity. Taking advantage of this propitious day, We convey to you Our utmost sincerity. We hereby present a set of dharma-robles and some noodles [as a symbol of] longevity. Not only presenting to you the taste of the 'Four stages of Dhyana' (*sichan* 四禪), We also provide the support of 'Three Garments' (*sanyi* 三衣).⁹² Let it be wished that the number of your age become as great as that of the sands in the Ganges, and your longevity is as long-lasting as the rocks of a *kalpa*. As it is turning cold in the season of frost, We wish that your dharma body remain comfortable and healthy. The recent disruption in our communication has enhanced Our longing for you. Let this letter [temporarily] act as our personal conversation, although the brush is incapable of [exhaustively] conveying Our feelings.

Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn continues by telling us that in order to show his appreciation of Fazang's unflinching effort to serve the Tang royal family and his constant respect for Fazang as a teacher, Ruizong presented him with two-thousand bolts of silk to cover the expenses caused by the religious services that Fazang was to conduct for the people's benefit.

Most notably, according to the erudite Japanese monk Dōchū 道忠 (1653–1744), it is by following Fazang's advice that Ruizong decided to relinquish the throne to Xuanzong.⁹³ Unfortunately, Dōchū does not tell us the source for this claim, which, if true, would testify to Fazang's crucial role in the power-transition at the highest level in 712 that ushered in one of the most prosperous eras in imperial China.⁹⁴

Fazang's exceptionally close relationship with Ruizong is further proved by the fact that five days after he died on 16 December 712 (Xiantian 1.11.14), it was Ruizong, who had retired about three months earlier (on 7 September), rather than the ruling emperor Xuanzong, who issued an edict to praise his outstanding performance as a Buddhist leader and an order to honour his spirit with a grand funeral at the state's expenses.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ *Pōpjang chŏn*, 284c2–7.

⁹¹ *Pōpjang chŏn*, 284c2–7.

⁹² *Sichan* denotes the four progressively subtle stages of meditation which lead one out from the 'desire realm' into rebirth in the four meditation heavens in the 'realm of form' (Skt. *caturdhyāna*). The *sanyi* are three regulation garments of a monk: *saṅghātī* (assembly robe), *uttarāsaṅga* (upper garment) and *antarvāsaka* (vest or shirt).

⁹³ Dōchū makes this remark in his commentary on the *Pōpjang chŏn* titled 'Shinkan Genju hidden shōgō' 新刊賢首碑正誤 (*T* no. 50, vol. 2054), 288c1: 睿宗後讓位養德，皆依法藏之勸導也。

⁹⁴ It is interesting to note that Fazang died on 16 December 712 (Xiantian 1.11.14), only four months after Ruizong officially handed over supreme power to Xuanzong on 8 August 712 (Yanhe 1.8.3 [*jiazi*]).

⁹⁵ *Pōpjang chŏn*, 285b7 ff.

The amiable personal relationship between Fazang and Ruizong is also reflected in the good terms that he maintained with the emperor's son-in-law Zheng Wanjun 鄭萬鈞 (?–740⁺), who married his fourth daughter Li Hua 李華 (style-name Huawan 華婉) (687–734), Princess Yongchang 永昌 (called Daiguo Zhang gongzhu 代國長公主 after his half-brother Xuanzong was enthroned), who was a half sister of Jinxian.⁹⁶

Fazang wrote a commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* at the request of Zheng Wanjun in Chang'an 2 (2 February 702–21 January 703) at the Qingchansi 清禪寺, while he engaged in some translation projects. To this commentary, Zhang Yue 張說 (667–731), a prestigious statesman and author, wrote a preface, 'Bore xinjing zanxu' 般若心經贊序 (A Preface to the Comments on the *Bore xinjing*). According to this preface, Zheng Wanjun had the *Heart Sūtra* inscribed on a stele which he erected in a 'treasure quarter' of the Shengshan[si] (Shengshan zhi baofang 聖善之寶坊).⁹⁷ Both Zhang Wanjun and Princess Yongchang were devout Buddhist believers. The *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記, based on the *Jiwen lu* 紀聞錄, which is no longer extant, records an episode in which two sons of Zheng Wanjun and the princess are presented as the reincarnations of two 'celestial beings' (*tianren* 天人) and that they were born to the formerly sterile princess thanks to a Buddhist thaumaturge called Hehe 和和 (d.u.), who agreed to help after receiving a gift of three-thousand bolts of silk from Zheng Wanjun. The two boys, born in the same year (although

⁹⁶ *JTS* 83.3656. Princess Yongchang's mother, *née* Liu 劉, was a daughter of Liu Yanjing 劉延景 (d. 689). See *JTS* 51.2176. Jinxian and Xuanzong were born, on the other hand, by another consort of Ruizong, *née* Dou 竇. See *JTS* 51.2176, *XTS* 76.3489.

Zheng Wanjun wrote the memorial epitaph for his wife, sometime after Kaiyuan 28 (we know this since it mentions his elder son's marriage with a princess, which happened in that year as recorded by Zhang Yue [see note 97]). The inscription, preserved in *QTW* (279.2b–7a) as 'Daiguo zhang gongzhu bei' 代國長公主碑, reveals the princess's deep faith in Buddhism. She had keenly learned and practised Buddhism for over one decade, which means that she started to dedicate herself to that religion shortly after she turned thirty given that she died at forty-eight. She regularly took vegetarian meals, constantly engaged in meditation, and avidly chanted a number of Buddhist texts, including the eighty-scroll new translation of the *Avatamsaka sūtra*. She once knelt before the famous Chan master Yifu 義福 (661–736) in order to receive from him instructions in meditation. She was also conferred the consecration of *dhāraṇī* from Tripitaka Jin'gang 金剛三藏, who was probably Vajrabodhi (Ch. Jin'gangzhi 金剛智, 671?–741). The Buddhist nuns she closely associated with included Fanhai 梵海 and Cihe 慈和, the latter of whom, belonging to the Daoshansi 導善寺, predicted her rebirth in the Tuṣita Heaven. As her last will, she requested that half of her fiefdom income should be donated to Buddhist and Daoist monasteries (*siguan* 寺觀).

⁹⁷ This preface is now preserved in *QTW* 225.10b11a, and attached to the Taishō edition of the *Bore boluomiduo xinjing lueshu* 般若波羅蜜多心經略疏 (*T* vol. 33, no. 1712), 555a24–b9. It ends with these two sentences: 國老張說, 聞而嘉焉。讚揚佛事, 題之樂石 ('The Elder of the State Zhang Yue commanded this when he heard of this. In order to praise and promote Buddhism, he [Zhang Yue] had this recorded on the stone chime.'). This suggests that this preface might not have been written by Zhang Yue, otherwise it would be hard to explain how Zhang Yue could not have been so arrogant as to call himself 'guolao' (a reference to a retired Minister or Grand Minister; cf. Hucker, *Official Titles*, 298, no. 3526). Another possibility is that the last two sentences might have been added by an editor to the whole preface, as is supported by the following fact. Whereas the last sentence of the preface quoted above suggests that Zhang Yue wrote it shortly after the commentary was written (in 702), Zhang Yue did not retire (at the order of Zhongzong) until 27 February 727 (Kaiyuan 15.2.2 [yisi]) (see *JTS* 8.190, *ZZTJ* 213.6777), twenty-five years after Fazang wrote the commentary for Zheng Wanjun and fifteen years after Fazang's death. Given that the Shengshansi did not come into being until 706, this epitaph was not erected until at least four years after Fazang wrote the commentary for Zheng Wanjun.

Zhang Yue's letter addressed to a Zheng Fuma 鄭駙馬 (Zheng, who married an emperor's princess) is still extant (*QTW* 224.13b–14a). Since both Zheng Wanjun and his son Zheng Huiming married princesses of two Tang emperors (Ruizong and Xuanzong), the recipient of the letter could be, in principle, either the father or son. However, given that Zhang Qianya was not married to Princess Linjin 臨晉 until Kaiyuan 28 (2 February 740–21 January 741), one decade after Zhang Yue died, the letter must have been addressed to Zheng Wanjun.

not as twins due to the smallness of the Princess's womb) and named Qianyao 潛曜 and Huiming 晦明, were both handsome and learned.⁹⁸

Finally, we should note that Princess Jinxian's Daoist teacher Shi Chongxuan 史崇玄 (?–713) was obviously a friend of Fazang, judging by the fact that they shared each other's efforts in building a major monastery dedicated to the posthumous benefits of Empress Wu—Shengshansi 聖善寺.⁹⁹ Zanning reports that in Shenlong 2 (19 January 706–6 February 707), when the construction of the Shengshansi was completed, nine monks including Fazang were each granted a rank five title, Grand Master for Closing Court (*chaosan daifu* 朝散大夫), and a sub-prefectural dukedom.¹⁰⁰ Two secular sources supplement this report by stating that these nine Buddhist monks were joined by four Daoist priests, including Shi Chongxuan and Ye Jingneng 葉靜能 (?–710), who were rewarded for the same reason.¹⁰¹ It is quite unusual that four Daoist priests should have become involved in such a project. I speculate that their function might have mainly consisted of raising funds, not unlike the role Shi Chongxuan played in the course of constructing the two convents for Jinxian and her sister. No matter what Shi Chongxuan's real role was in the Shengshansi project, his friendship with Fazang seems to be in little doubt.

Conclusion

After discussing Fazang's possible visit to the Yunjusi in the summer of 697, his abbotship of the Chongfusi and his possible friendship with Princess Jinxian, let us see if we are now in a better position to explain all the baffling mysteries surrounding Jinxian's role in the project of sending scriptures to the Yunjusi.

Fazang's 697 mission in the Liangxiang area, the nature of this mission and the general way in which such a mission was implemented (i.e. by praying to the deities on a sacred site like a holy mount) strongly suggest that Fazang executed his rituals at a renowned mountain site in Liangxiang, which was very probably Mount Baidai 白帶, where the Yunjusi was located. This accordingly raises the fascinating possibility that Fazang became a main medium through which the Yunjusi came to be tied with the Chongfusi, the monastery whence came the two key monks who escorted the large collection of Buddhist texts to the Yunjusi in 740, and at which the catalogue to the Kaiyuan canon and

⁹⁸ *Taiping guangji* 97.647–8. The same episode is also seen in the *Song gaoseng zhuan* (19.833b–c) and *Shenseng zhuan* (8.1003b22–c2). Zheng Qianyao was famous for his filial piety towards his mother. See the account that Dugu Ji 獨孤及 (725–777) wrote to praise him, 'Zheng Fuma xiaoxing ji' 鄭駙馬孝行記, *Piling ji* 毘陵集 (*SKQS* vol. 1127) 17.14b–16a; *Wenyuan yinghua* 830.2b–3b; *Tang wen shiyi* 唐文拾遺 (Taipei: Wenhai, 1979) 21.7b–8b.

In his memorial epitaph for his wife, Zheng Wanjun mentions that his older and younger sons, Cong 聰 (who married a princess) and Ming 明, acted as the Left and Right Grand Master Admonishers (*zanshan daifu* 贊善大夫, members of the Right and Left Secretariats of the Heir Apparent). 'Daiguo zhang gongzhu bei', *QTW* 2794a2–4. Cong and Ming must have been, then, Qianyao and Huiming's style-names respectively.

⁹⁹ For Shi Chongxuan's status as a teacher of Jinxian and her sister, see *Chaoye qianzai* (Cheng Yizhong 程毅中, Zhao Shouyan 趙守儼 [collated and annotated], *Sui Tang jiahua Chaoye qianzai* 隋唐嘉話 朝野僉載 [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979]), 5.114. The ordination ceremony of Jinxian and her sister was superintended by Shi Chongxuan. This important ceremony is the subject of Charles D. Benn's excellent monograph; see Benn, *The Cavern-Mystery Transmission: A Daoist Ordination Rite of A.D. 711* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991). Shi Chongxuan was believed to have raised a huge amount of money for building two Daoist convents for her two royal disciples. See *XTS* 83.3656–3657.

¹⁰⁰ *Da Song sengshi lue* 大宋僧史略 (*T* vol. 54, no. 2126) 3.250b3–11.

¹⁰¹ *JTS* 7.141 and *ZZTJ* 208.6598, which specifies that the rewards were made on 9 April 706 (Shenlong 2.2.22 [*bingshen*]).

perhaps even the canon itself were compiled (published, if not also hand-copied). Such a possibility is rendered particularly likely by the fact that Fazang, after such a long affiliation with the Great Chongfusi, had become its most powerful figure, some time between 5 November 699 and 16 November 703, until his death on 16 December 712. Even if we concede that the rituals were not performed at the Yunjusi itself, they were probably carried out within its environs. In addition, we have emphasized how this mission greatly endeared Fazang to Empress Wu and therefore drastically changed his life. Its critical importance for Fazang means that Fangshan, Mount Baidai (or to be more specific, the Yunjusi) must have constituted a part of the most precious and beloved memory in his innermost heart throughout the rest of his life.

These factors (Fazang's 697 trip to Liangxiang, which probably brought him to Mount Baidai or even the Yunjusi, the importance of this trip to him and finally his prominence at the Chongfusi both during and after his life), in combination with Princess Jinxian's friendship with Fazang, make the following scenario rather likely to me: when Fazang's former colleagues at the Chongfusi experimented in 730 (eighteen years after his death) with a special way to honour the memory of their former abbot by sending a copy of the newly compiled Kaiyuan canon to a temple with unique karmic ties to him, the plan was enthusiastically supported by one of Fazang's erstwhile friends, Princess Jinxian, who subsequently urged her brother-emperor to enact it. We should here emphasize a special relationship between Xiuzhang and Fazang. Given that Huaisu, Xiuzhang's teacher, was a disciple of Daocheng, a mentor of Fazang, it is likely that Huaisu befriended Fazang too. Be that as it may, in addition to his being a colleague (and subordinate) of Fazang at Western Chongfusi, Xiuzhang might also have achieved a personal relationship with Fazang through their shared relationship with Huaisu.

If this reconstruction of Fazang's ties with the Yunjusi stands, we are then obliged to give more thought to his 697 mission, the significance of which has so far gone largely unnoticed. This mission not only marked a critical turn in Fazang's eventful life, it also (although Fazang did not live to see it) significantly affected the fate of one of the boldest cultural endeavours ever attempted on the soil of medieval East Asia. When put into the larger historical context, it also demonstrates some extraordinary ramifications.

Although Empress Wu's government fortunately survived the Khitan rebellion, it left its indelible impact on the rest of her dynasty and the Great Tang that was to be restored less than a decade later. This insurgence affected the north-eastern defence system of the Zhou or Tang empire so much that the defence line of Youzhou started to take on a much larger role, which eventually led to another, far more disastrous, uprising fifty-nine years later which almost uprooted the Tang dynasty.¹⁰² This time, Xuanzong was far less fortunate than his grandmother. No foreign allies with the strength of Qapaghan stood with him, nor was a capable monk like Fazang ever known to lend his esoteric, shamanic and magical power to the service of the empire. The unhappy emperor was forced to flee to a remote corner in the south-western part of his imperium, where he had to wait for two years until his son and heir Suzong (756–762) had him escorted back to Chang'an in 757. It is quite ironic that the chief culprit of this rebellion An Lushan 安祿山 (703–757), a Buddhist believer himself, also happened to be associated with the Yunjusi.

¹⁰² Li Songtao ('Qidan') has recently provided an interesting discussion of the far-reaching implications of the 696–697 Khitan uprising.

One inscription that he left there as a testimony of his faith has come down to us.¹⁰³

It is even more intriguing to note that after the Khitans eventually succeeded in establishing their own rule in north China, centring around the Youzhou area in 907 under the dynastic title Liao (907–1125), they too became enthralled with the Yunjusi and its stone-canon project. Their generous and continuous patronage pushed that project to an unprecedented size and scope. One cannot help but wonder, ‘When the Liao rulers devoted such energy and passion to the Yunjusi project, did it ever occur to them that the temple had been the stage upon which a Buddhist leader performed some esoteric rituals so unfavourable to their ancestors?’

ABBREVIATIONS

- JTS* *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975.
QTW *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文. Taipei: Hualian chubanshe, 1965.
HPC Tongguk taehakkyo pulchön kanhaeng wiwönhoe nae Han’guk Pulgyo chönsö pyönch’an wiwön 東國大學校佛典刊行委員會內韓國佛教全書編纂委員 (compiled), 1979–1984. *Han’guk Pulgyo chönsö* 韓國佛教全書, 6 vols. Seoul: Tongguk taehakkyo ch’ulp’anbu 東國大學校出版部.
S Chinese manuscripts from Dunhuang in the Stein Collection, British Library, London.
SKQS *Yingyin Wenyuan-ge Siku quanshu* 景印文淵閣四庫全書, 1,500 vols. Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1983–1986.
T *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 (100 vols, eds. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡邊海旭 *et al.*). Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–1932.
THY *Tang huiyao* 唐會要. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991.
XTS *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975.
XZJ *Wanzi xuzang jing* 卍續藏經. Taipei: Xin wenfeng chuban gongsi, 1968–1970 (reprint of the *Dai Nihon zokuzōkyō* 大日本續藏經, ed. Nakano Tatsue 中野達慧. Kyoto: Zōkyō shoin, 1905–1912).
ZZTJ *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976.

¹⁰³ Beijing tushuguan jinshi-zu and Zhongguo fojiao tushu wenwuguan shijing zu, *Fangshan shiing tiji huibian*, 14.