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Family Ties and Buddhist

Nuns in Tang China: Two Studies

In East Asia, from premodern to modern times, the most commonly used expression for entering monastic life has been 出家 (Ch.: *chujia*; Kor.: *ch'ulga*; Jp.: *shukke*; a translation of the Sanskrit term *pravrajyā*), which means “leaving one’s family,” or “abandoning household life.” Inspired by this idea, the fourth-century Buddhist leader Daoan 道安 (b. 312/314; d. 385/389) initiated a practice accepted ever since by nearly all Chinese Buddhist clerics: to adopt *shi* 釋 as the family name as soon as the monk entered the monastic community, the understanding being that all Buddhist monks and nuns belonged to the sacred family named after Śākyamuni.

Many scholars seem to assume, based on these facts, that a Buddhist monk or nun automatically and permanently severed ties with his or her family. In turn, they are prone to study a Buddhist monk or nun mainly only in terms of connections and positions within the monastic world. Little attention has been paid to the role that family background played in shaping a monastic career on the one hand, or the ways in which the monastic career might have affected the fortunes of one’s secular family, on the other.

Without completely denying the feasibility of an approach that focuses on monastic lineages and connections, I remain aware of its limitations. In fact it is surprising that with so much scholarly attention devoted to the importance of family background in the social and political realms of medieval China, there is still a paucity of research on the roles that lineages might have played in linking the secular and monastic worlds, as well as within the monastic word itself.¹

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¹ There are exceptions. In several publications, Kenneth Ch'en noted the prominence of family in donative inscriptions by monks and nuns; Ch'en, *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey* (Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1964), p. 179; idem, “Filial Piety in Chinese Buddhism,” *HJAS* 28 (1968), pp. 81–97; idem, *Chinese Transformation of Buddhism* (Princeton: Princeton

Evidence shows that a Buddhist cleric's family background was influential throughout the whole of his or her monastic life. To be more specific, family background exercised influence mainly on two major fronts. First, through family a Buddhist priest maintained and developed ties with the powerful in the secular world – ties of crucial significance to the monk or nun, to their secular family members, and to the sectarian group to which he or she belonged. While it is almost self-evident that a Buddhist priest easily created and fostered relationships with secular people within his clan or other clans tied to his in one form or another (most typically through intermarriage), it requires some explanation to demonstrate the other similarly important fact: a Buddhist monk's success (or lack thereof) in the *samgha* had a great deal to do with the earlier, secular, family. In connection with these two facts, we should also recognize the considerable extent to which the family background of a Buddhist cleric (especially a leader) affected the rise or fall of his or her sect, especially when that family's gain or loss was fixed to the contemporary political arena. On the other hand, the monastic significance of family background should be discerned not merely between *samgha* and state, but also within the *samgha* itself. Some Buddhist monks were grouped together not merely by their common doctrinal and practical orientations, but also through their kinship relationships.²

While my previous research has been confined to Buddhist monks in Sui-Tang China, in this article I extend the line of investigation to another side of the Tang dynasty *samgha* – the political and social roles that were played by Tang nuns. This short study focuses on two unique nuns, Facheng 法澄 (640–729), a princely concubine turned nun, and Qiwei 契微 (720–781), who, though born into a Taoist-dominated noble family, became a Buddhist nun when she was a teenager. The focus allows me to test preliminary conclusions that I have reached on kinship

U.P., 1973), pp. 14 ff. Gregory Schopen showed the same tendency for early-Indian Buddhism; see "Filial Piety and the Monk in the Practice of Indian Buddhism: A Question of 'Sinicization' Viewed from the Other Side," *TP* 70 (1984), pp. 110–26; a revised version is in his *Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks: Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India* (Honolulu: Hawai'i U.P., 1997), pp. 56–71. My thanks to John Kieschnick for kindly reminding me of these focuses on family. Both Ch'en and Schopen, however, pay attention to the filial love that Buddhist priests feel towards their parents, which only reflected a small aspect of the extensive and intense ties that they maintained with family throughout their monastic careers.

² Jinhua Chen, "The Birth of a Polymath: The Genealogical Background of the Tang Monk-Scientist Yixing (673–727)," *Tang Studies* 18–19 (2001–2002), pp. 1–39; idem, *Monks and Monarchs, Kinship and Kingship: Tanqian in Sui Buddhism and Politics* (Kyoto: Italian School of East Asian Studies, 2002), chap. 1.

factors in the medieval Chinese monastic world. It is also my hope that scholars working on other East Asian Buddhist traditions might profitably pay attention to similar issues.

Several reasons account for my choice of these two nuns and the construction of a close comparison. First is their considerable importance in the contemporary monastic (and sometime political) world. The second is their lofty individual family backgrounds. While one of them was from a distinguished family with continuing national influence in Tang and even pre-Tang times, the other nun, though originally from a low level within the aristocratic elite, was married into the royal family. Finally, the distinct circumstances under which the two nuns entered the *samgha* make them two perfect cases for comparison and contrast. One of them, in spite of her own family's inclination towards Taoism, decided to enter the *samgha* out of her own religious piety and against the wishes of her family. The other, though from a family favorably disposed toward Buddhism, became a nun not of her own accord, but mostly as a response to political pressure that broke her family.

FACHENG: FROM PRINCELY CONCUBINE TO BUDDHIST NUN

The information on Facheng is derived from the epitaph for her stupa titled “Xingsheng sizhu ni Facheng taming bing xu” 興聖寺主尼法澄塔銘並序 (“Inscription, with Preface, for the Pagoda for Nun Facheng, the Abbot of Xingshengsi”). It was written by an imperial prince who was, as we shall see, one of her relatives.³

Family Background

Facheng was styled Wusuode 無所得 (Nothing-to-Attain), a name with obvious Buddhist significance. She was a native of Yue'an 樂安 and a descendant of Sun Quan 孫權 (r. 222–252), the founder of the Wu kingdom (222–280) during the Three Kingdoms period (220–280). Her grandfather, Sun Rong 孫榮 (dates unknown), was governor of Fuzhou 涪州 (present-day Fuling 涪陵, Sichuan), while her father Sun Tong 孫同 (dates unknown) was the district magistrate of Pingyi 馮翊 in Tongzhou 同州 (present-day Dali 大荔, Shaanxi). She was the second daughter of Sun Tong. Her epitaph reads:

³ *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文 (Taipei: Hualian, 1965; hereafter *QTW*) 100, pp. 8a–10a; and Zhou Shaoliang 周紹良 and Zhao Chao 趙超, eds., *Tangdai muzhi huibian* 唐代墓志匯編 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1992; hereafter *TMH*), pp. 1362–63. For modern scholarship on this nun, see especially Li Yuzhen 李玉珍, *Tangdai de biqiuni* 唐代的比丘尼 (Taipei: Taiwan xuesheng shuju, 1988), pp. 22, 53–54.

With the essential energy that descended [from the heavens], she embraced the sincere [intention] of great generosity. Having upheld great wisdom in her previous lives, she had, since an early age, opened her mind to the numinous. She reflected on the impermanence of the floating life and realized the reliability of the constant happiness [of the dharma]. While serving the prince of Jiang 蔣 [as a concubine],⁴ she sought permission to abandon secular life. Therefore, she “left home” in the second year of the Shangyuan era (February 1, 675–January 20, 676). 降精粹之氣，含宏量之誠。大惠宿持，靈心早啓。鑒浮生不住，知常樂可依。託事蔣王，求爲離俗，遂於上元二年出家。⁵

The prince of Jiang, whom Facheng served as a concubine, was the title of Li Yun 李暉 (?–675), a son of Taizong (r. 627–649), the second emperor of the Tang. The scant information available to us about him is mainly derived from two largely identical biographical notes in the two official Tang histories (*Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 and *Xin Tang shu* 新唐書) and some occasional references to him in a couple of Buddhist collections. We start with the secular sources, first and foremost his biographical note in *Jiu Tang shu*:

The prince of Jiang, [Li] Yun [李] 暉, was the seventh son of Taizong. In Zhenguan 5 (February 7, 631–January 26, 632), he was enfeoffed prince of Yan 鄴. In Zhenguan 8 (February 4, 634–January 23, 635), he was appointed as the prefect of Mingzhou 洛州 (present-day Yongnian 永年, Hebei). In Zhenguan 10 (February 12, 636–January 31, 637), his princely title was changed to Jiang 蔣 and he was appointed commander-in-chief (*dudu* 都督) of Anzhou 安州 (present-day Anlu 安陸, Hubei), with a fief of [tax income from] 800 households. In Zhenguan 23 (February 17, 649–February 6, 650), his “real fief 實封” was increased to one thousand households. In Yonghui 3 (February 15, 652–February 2, 653), he was appointed commander-in-chief of Liangzhou 梁州 (present-day Nanzheng 南鄭, Shaanxi). When [Li] Yun was in Anzhou, he was keen on manufacturing vessels, furniture, dresses and devices for

⁴ Here I understand the two-character expression *tuoshi* 託事 as having the same meaning as *shi* 事 (“to serve someone [as a concubine or maid]”). A similar usage is found in the biography of a man whose daughter was, like Facheng, a concubine of Li Yun: 有女事王，王極寵遇 (“he had a daughter who served the prince [as a concubine] and with whom the prince was deeply in love”). See Huixiang 慧祥 (d. after 706), *Hongzan Fahua zhuan* 弘贊法華傳, *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經, ed. Takakusu Junijirō 高楠順次郎, Watanabe Kaiyoku 渡邊海旭 et al. (Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–32; hereafter *T*), vol. 51, no. 2067, j. 6, p. 26A.

⁵ “Xingsheng sizhu ni Facheng taming bing xu,” *QTW* 100, pp. 8a–b; *TMH*, p. 1362.

entertainment, so numerous that on the expiration of his tenure he left behind him four hundred station-chariots 遞車.⁶ People in the prefectures and sub-prefectures under his governance could not bear the burden that he imposed on them. When he was impeached by the government officials in charge, the emperor (Gaozong [r. 649–683]) granted him a special amnesty. Later he successively acted as the prefect of Suizhou 遂州 (present-day Suining 遂寧, Sichuan) and Xiangzhou 相州 (present-day Anyang 安陽, Henan). During the Shangyuan era (674–676), someone went to the capital to accuse him falsely of treason. Panic-stricken, he committed suicide. [The government] awarded him posthumous titles of minister of works (*sikong* 司空) and commander-in-chief of Jingzhou 荊州 (present-day Jiangling 江陵, Hubei). He was allowed to be buried [with Taizong] in the Zhao 昭 Mausoleum.⁷ 蔣王惲, 太宗第七子也。貞觀五年, 封王。八年, 授刺史。十年, 改封蔣王、安州都督, 賜實封八百戶。二十三年, 加實封滿千戶。永徽三年, 除梁州都督。惲在安州, 多造器用服玩。及將行, 有遞車四百兩。州縣不堪其勞。爲有司所劾, 帝特宥之。後歷遂、相二州刺史。上元年, 有人詣闕, 誣告惲謀反。惶懼自殺。贈司空、荊州大都督, 陪葬昭陵。⁸

Although Li Yun's suicide must have been a shocking event at the time, the *Jiu Tang shu* compilers limit themselves to a rather cursory account here. Gaozong's "Basic Annals" (*benji* 本紀) in *Jiu Tang shu*, under the twelfth month of Shangyuan 1 (January 22–31, 675), also merely touches on this event without any further discussion, while *Xin Tang shu* appears more specific by dating it Shangyuan 1, 12th lunar month, 8th day (*kuiwei*); that is, January 9, 675.⁹ By referring to Li Yun's *Xin Tang shu* biographical note, we get more ideas (although similarly vague) pertaining to the event, obviously of great importance for his concubine, soon to become Facheng:

During the Shangyuan era (674–676), he was reappointed as the prefect of Qizhou 箕州 (present-day Zuoquan 左權, Shanxi). Zhang Junzhe 張君徹 (?–675, otherwise unknown), a *lushi canjun* 錄事參軍 (administrative supervisor [on the staff of the prefecture]), lodged a false accusation of treason against [Li] Yun. The emperor ordered his envoys to investigate this. Panic-stricken, [Li] Yun committed

⁶ That is, *yiche* 驛車, the chariots used for transport between post stations.

⁷ The Mausoleum of Taizong, located at present-day Mount Jiuzong 九峻 in Liquan 禮泉, Shaanxi.

⁸ *Jiu Tang shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1975; hereafter *JTS*) 76, p. 2660; cf. *Xin Tang shu* (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1975; hereafter *XTS*) 80, pp. 3574–75.

⁹ *JTS* 5, p. 99; *XTS* 3, p. 71.

suicide. Realizing his innocence, Gaozong ordered the execution of [Zhang] Junche. 上元中, 遷箕州刺史. 錄事參軍張君徹誣告惲反. 詔使者按驗, 惲惶懼自殺. 高宗知其枉, 斬君徹 ...¹⁰

Zizhi tongjian 資治通鑑 (*Comprehensive Mirror for Aid in Government*), in general highly respected for its accuracy, meticulousness and critical selectiveness in narrating historical events, provides more details:

Zhang Junche 張君澈,¹¹ an administrative supervisor in the prefecture of Qi, lodged a false accusation of treason against the prince of Jiang and his son commandery prince 郡王 of Runan 汝南 [Li] Wei [李] 煒 (?–689). The emperor (Gaozong) ordered *tongshi sheren* 通事舍人 (secretarial receptionist) Xue Sizhen 薛思貞 (otherwise unknown) to go [to Qizhou] with express transportation to interrogate them. On the *kuiwei* day of the twelfth month [of Shangyuan 1] (January 9, 675), Li Yun hanged himself to death out of dread. Realizing that he was innocent, the emperor deeply deplored [this tragedy], and ordered the execution of [Zhang] Junche and others (four in total). 箕州錄事參軍張君澈等誣告刺史蔣王惲及其子汝南郡王煒謀反. 敕通事舍人薛思貞馳傳往按之. 十二月癸未, 惲惶懼, 自縊死. 上知其非罪, 深痛惜之, 斬君澈等四人.¹²

We do not know what motivated Zhang Junche to frame Li Yun; whether, for example, it had anything to do with his resentment for Li Yun's avarice and toughness as a governor. That Li Yun had a reputation as a voracious hoarder of personal wealth, who was harsh on his subordinates, is supported by sources other than the above-quoted official histories. He was so notorious for his greed and cruelty that the hardship of serving under him was at the time compared to that of being exiled to some of the remotest places in the country.¹³

In spite of his apparently insatiable desire for wealth, Li Yun demonstrated an intense interest in Buddhism. According to Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667), the erudite early-Tang Buddhist scholar and historian, Buddhism prospered in the Xiangyang 襄陽 area (in present-day Hubei) when it was under Li Yun's governorship. He also describes Li Yun's

¹⁰ *XTS* 80, p. 3575.

¹¹ Here Sima Guang has given the second character of Zhang Junche's personal name differently from that in *XTS* (澈 in contrast to 徹).

¹² *Zizhi tongjian* (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1976; hereafter *ZZTJ*) 202, p. 6373.

¹³ *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1991) 5, pp. 56–57. *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1990) 876/25, p. 9919. Zhang Zhuo's 張鷟 (660–733) *Chaoye qianzai* 朝野僉載 also records an anecdote that Gaozong once openly ridiculed his older brother because of his greed. See Cheng Yizhong 程毅中 and Zhao Shouyan 趙守儼, eds. and annots., *Sui Tang jiahua Chaoye qianzai* 隋唐嘉話朝野僉載 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1979) 3, pp. 75–76; quoted in *Taiping guangji* 太平廣記 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1961) 243, p. 1745. Cf. *ZZTJ* 199, p. 6274.

close association with two eminent monks, both Mādhyamika experts who befriended each other: Zhiba 智拔 (573–640),¹⁴ a disciple of Jizang, the greatest Mādhyamika master in East Asia, and Huileng 慧稜 (576–640),¹⁵ a disciple of two other major Mādhyamika masters at the time – Maoshan Ming 茅山明 (also known as Daming 大明; d. after 581) and his disciple Huigao 慧高 (547–633).¹⁶ When Zhiba died, Li Yun went to his residence to convey his condolences in person, burning incense and making offerings. He also donated over one hundred bolts of silk and sponsored a vegetarian feast for five thousand people beside his grave. Li Yun was similarly respectful and caring towards Huileng. When the monk became critically sick, Li Yun forced him to drink two *liang* 兩 of Shaozhou 韶州 (present-day Qujiang 曲江, Guangdong) milk. After he died, the prince donated fifty bolts of silk and personally escorted his coffin to Mount Fenglin 鳳林.¹⁷

It is interesting to note that the two monks close to Li Yun were both Mādhyamika experts. It is possible that Li Yun was committed to

¹⁴ Zhiba, surnamed Zhang 張, was a native of Xiangyang. After successively studying with Master Run 閏 and Dharma Master Zhe 哲, he eventually became a disciple of the Mādhyamika master Jizang 吉藏 (549–623). Master Run 閏 was probably Zhirun 智閏 (540–614), a native of Xiangyang like Zhiba (see his biography in *Xu Gaoseng zhaun* 續高僧傳, as printed in *T* no. 2060, vol. 50 [hereafter *XGSZ*], *j.* 10, p. 502c), while Dharma Master Zhe 哲 was probably Huizhe 慧哲 (539–597) (biog. *XGSZ* 9, pp. 493c–494A), a native of Xiangyang and a Mādhyamika expert too; see their biographies at *XGSZ* 10, p. 502b; 9, pp. 493c–494A. Zhiba then returned to Xiangyang, where he resided at Qisheji 耆闍寺. He died on October 7, 640 (Zhenguan 14.9.17) at the residence of a layman called Zhang Ying 張英. See *Hongzan Fahua zhuan* 3, p. 19A–B, esp. B, ll. 9–11; cf. *XGSZ* 14, p. 537B, esp. ll. 26–27.

¹⁵ Huileng, surnamed Shentu 申屠, was a native of Xilong 西隆 (present-day Longlin 隆林 autonomous county, Guangxi). A posthumous son, he started to study the Mādhyamika “three treatises” (*sanlun* 三論) with Dharma Master Run of Xiangyang (obviously the same Zhirun), since a boy of under eight. At that age he had become an orphan and a *śrāmaṇera* under Vinaya Master Dan 誕 of Tanxisi 檀溪寺, which was originally built by Daoan (*Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳, *T* no. 2059, vol. 50 [hereafter *GSZ*], *j.* 5, p. 352b). In 581, at sixteen *sui*, he became a disciple of Maoshan Ming in Jingzhou 荊州, and studied with him for three years (581–584). At the end of the Sui dynasty, he followed Master [Hui]gao [慧]高 to Shu 蜀 and was eventually appointed as his heir on his deathbed. He later returned to Zijinsi 紫金寺 (Xiangzhou 襄州, present-day Xiangyang 襄陽, Hubei), where as a preacher he attracted 300 followers. In Zhenguan 8 (February 4, 634–January 23, 635), he went back to Xumi[si?] 須彌[寺]. On December 28, 634, responding to a weird dream, he ordered his disciples to disperse. Some time after the prince of Jiang became the governor of Xiangzhou, Huileng was invited to be a preacher at Fanyun[si?] 梵雲[寺], where he attracted a huge audience. His contemporaries believed he was invited to preach in the underworld upon his death.

¹⁶ Maoshan Ming was the *sanlun* 三論 master Falang’s 法朗 (507–781) disciple and appointed heir. Daoxuan does not accord him a biography in *XGSZ*, but in the biography of Famin 法敏 (579–645), Maoshan Ming’s disciple, he provides an extended account of the dramatic scene in which Falang appointed him heir; see *XGSZ* 15, p. 538c, discussed in Chen, *Monks and Monarchs*, p. 192, n. 32. Huigao had started to distinguish himself as a popular preacher since he was thirty. His career and his relationship with Maoshan Ming are narrated in his biography at *XGSZ* 13, pp. 522B–523A.

¹⁷ Also known as Mt. Fenghuang 鳳凰 (Phoenix), Fenglin was 10 *li* SE of Xiangyang, Hubei.

the Mādhyamika philosophy, which, if true, would resonate with the specific sort of keenness that Facheng displayed in Buddhist doctrines. As a final remark on Li Yun's ties with Buddhism, and especially as a useful perspective for the dramatic transition that Facheng underwent, let us note that he had another concubine whose father was so eager to practice the *Lotus* teachings that he burned himself to death.¹⁸

We are now ready to see if this aspect of Facheng's exceptional family background will shed any light on her life as a Buddhist nun. We are instantly attracted to the fact that she abandoned her secular life in the reign year Shangyuan 2 (February 1, 675–January 20, 676), shortly after Li Yun committed suicide on January 9, 675. It seems likely that her decision to become a nun resulted from the complex interaction of at least three factors – her own family faith, Li Yun's affection for Buddhism, and frustration over her political uncertainty following her husband's suicide.

Religious Background

After leaving the princely establishment and becoming a nun, Facheng applied herself to ascetic practices, subjecting herself to numerous austerities (*dhūta*) on mountains, in forests, and other solitary places. She was not deterred even by the danger of falling prey to ferocious beasts. Not only was she diligent in studying Buddhist doctrines, but she was also keen on a variety of Buddhist practices ranging from study of the *vinaya* and meditation, to *dhūta*, or “ascetic practice.” The complete and systematic nature of her training program suggests that she was studying with at least one teacher, although the author of her epitaph does not deign to identify any of them, probably because they simply paled before the truly illustrious master that she eventually went to study with:

Acting in accordance with the ideal of awe-inspiring deportment and the precepts, she practiced enlightening contemplation and mental exercise based on meditation. Walking through the realm of Truth, she constantly abandoned (the concepts of) both emptiness and being. Holding only a vase, a bowl and other monastic utensils—[no more than the prescribed] eighteen in total,¹⁹ she

¹⁸ See biog., *Hongzan fahua zhuan* 6, p. 26A, which is summarized and discussed in James Benn's excellent study of self-immolation in medieval China, *Burning for the Buddha: Self-Immolation in Chinese Buddhism*, Ph. D. diss. (Los Angeles, U.C.L.A., 2001), p. 323.

¹⁹ This refers to the eighteen items that *Fanwang jing* allows a monk or nun to hold in the course of practicing *dhūta* in a solitary place; *Fanwang jing* 梵網經 (*T*no. 1484, vol. 24) 2, p. 8A. For a full list of these eighteen items, see Nakamura Hajime 中村元, *Bukkyō-go daijiten* 佛敎語大字典 (rpt. Tokyo: Tōkyō shoseki, 1981), p. 660A.

practiced *dhūta* in mountains and forests. There was once a leopard following her, [which did not cause harm to her] thanks to the protection of a deity. 威儀戒行, 覺觀禪思. 跡履真如, 空用恒捨. 遂持瓶鉢, 一十八事, 頭陀山林. 有豹隨行, 逢神擁護.

She then went to Zhixiangsi to attend the dharma lectures delivered by master Kangzang 康藏. She investigated the subtleties [of the dharma], making them open up with a flash of enlightenment, just as happened to Bodhisattva Shancai.²⁰ In steadfastly controlling her own three karmic actions (of body, mouth and mind), how could one see any difference between her and Bodhisattva Haiyi 海意 (Skt.: Sāgaramati)?²¹ Master Kangzang frequently pointed to our master and announced to his disciples, “This master is exactly the person who is able to uphold and maintain the Buddhadharmā!” 於至相寺康藏師處聽法. 探微洞悟, 同彼善才; 調伏堅持, 寧殊海意? 康藏師每指法師謂師徒曰, “住持佛法者即此師也.”²²

This master Kangzang was none other than the renowned Buddhist philosopher Fazang 法藏 (643–712), the actual founder of the Avatamsaka tradition in China, and indeed in the whole of East Asia. He was referred to as Kangzang because he was a third generation immigrant in Tang China from a Sogdian state, Samarqand (Kanguo 康國). Zhixiangsi was a temple on Mount Zhongnan 終南, at which Fazang’s teacher Zhiyan 智嚴 (602–668) had stayed long before moving to Chang’an and becoming a resident of Yunhuasi 雲華寺. Despite Zhiyan’s protracted association with Zhixiangsi, it was at Yunhuasi that Fazang, according to his Korean biographer Ch’oe Ch’iwön 崔致遠 (857–904+), met him and became his disciple.²³ None of Fazang’s biographical sources notes his personal connection with Zhixiangsi. The Korean biography gives us the impression that he spent the rest of his life in the two Tang capitals – Chang’an and Luoyang – as a cosmopolitan priest, since in 670 he entered Taiyuansi 太原寺 (later known as Western Chongfusi 西崇福寺) in Chang’an at the invitation of empress Wu, who established the monastery on the basis of an old mansion of her newly deceased mother. This information becomes important not only to help in understanding the religious background

²⁰ 善才 probably an error for 善財; that is, *Shancai tongzi* 善財童子 (Skt.: Sudhanaśreṣṭhī-dāraka).

²¹ Bodhisattva Sāgaramati is the subject of the *Haihui pusa pin* 海慧菩薩品 (*Sāgaraprajñā-bodhisattva varga*, T no. 397, vol. 13, p. 46B ff) translated by Dharmakṣema (385–433), which constituted a chapter (*pin* 品, Skt.: *parivarta*) of the *Daji jing* 大集經.

²² “Xingsheng sizhu ni Facheng taming bing xu,” *QTW* 100, p. 8b; *TMH*, p. 1362.

²³ Ch’oe Ch’iwön 崔致遠 (857–after 904), *Tang Tae Ch’ōnboksa kosaju pōn’gyōng taedōk Pōp-chang hwasang chōn* 唐大薦福寺故寺主翻經大德法藏和尚傳, T no. 2054, vol. 50, p. 281B.

of Facheng, but also for new light on an aspect of Fazang's life. Given that Facheng, who became a nun in 675 or early 676, had practiced Buddhism for several years before assuming discipleship under Fazang, this information implies that sometime around 680 Fazang was in residence at Zhixiangsi.²⁴

Religious and Sociopolitical Roles

Approaching the end of the 680s, Facheng's life took another critical turn. As in the case of her deceased husband, here too it involved political and life-threatening accusations, this time against Facheng herself:

During the year of Ruyi (April 22–October 22, 692), full rein was given to excessive penalties. A false allegation was raised against our Dharma Master, who was accused of having assisted the prince of Runan in carrying out his rightful acts. Because of this, she was turned into a female server in the inner palace, where she somehow greatly expounded the saintly teachings and promoted the true law. Those who came to rely on her were like birds flying to the forests and jungles or fish swimming to the rivers and seas. 如意之歲，淫刑肆逞，誣及法師：將扶汝南，謀其義舉。坐入宮掖故，法師於是大開聖教，宣揚正法。歸投者如羽翮趨林藪，若鱗介赴江海。²⁵

As noted above, the prince (to be more accurate, commandery prince) of Runan was Li Yun's son Li Wei, whose conspiracy with several imperial princes of the Tang to reenthroned the deposed Tang emperor Zhongzong (r. 684, 705–710) cost him his life when it was exposed in the summer of 689:

In the summer [of Yongchang 1], the day *jiachen* of the fourth month (May 16, 689), [empress Wu] killed twelve imperial members including Li Wei, who was the prince of Runan and the *biejia* 別駕 (administrative aide [to the prefect]) of Chenzhou 辰州 (present-day Yuanling 沅陵, Hunan), Li Yan, who was the duke of Boyang and administrative aide [to the prefect] of Lianzhou 連州 (present-day Yunlian 筠連, Sichuan), and exiled their families to Juanzhou 巖州 (in present-day Sichuan). Li Wei was a son of [Li] Yun, while [Li] Yan was a son of [Li] Yuanqing. 夏，四月，甲辰，殺辰州別駕汝

²⁴ Although Facheng is the only female disciple of Fazang about whom we have detailed information, she was obviously not the only one. Ch'oe Ch'iwŏn informs us that there was a group of *bhikṣuni* who studied and practised Buddhism under his direction; *Tang Tae Ch'ŏnboksa kosaju pŏn'gyŏng taedŏk Pŏpchang hwasang chŏn*, p. 285A.

²⁵ "Xingsheng sizhu ni Facheng taming bing xu," *QJW* 100, p. 8b; *TMH*, p. 1362.

南王煒、連州別駕鄱陽公譚等宗室十二人，徙其家於嶺州。煒，暉之子；譚，元慶之子也。

On the day *yiyou* (May 17, 689), [empress Wu] killed vice-minister (shilang 侍郎) of the Ministry of Personnel (Tianguan 天官) Deng Xuanting 鄧玄挺 (?–689), a native of Lantian. [Deng] Xuanting's daughter was married to Li Yan, while he himself befriended Li Wei. When Li Yan conspired to bring back Zhongzong from Luling 廬陵 (present-day Ji'an 吉安, Jiangxi) [in order to get him reenthroned], he inquired of [Deng] Xuanting about this plan. Li Wei also once asked [Deng] Xuanting, "I am planning for the contingency. What do you think?" To this query [Deng] Xuanting made no response. He was thus executed with them (Li Yan and Li Wei) on the grounds that he kept silent on the [conspiracy for] treason.²⁶ 己酉，殺天官侍郎藍田鄧玄挺。玄挺女爲譚妻，又與煒善。譚謀迎中宗於廬陵，以問玄挺；煒又嘗謂玄挺曰：“欲爲急計，何如？”玄挺皆不應。故坐知反不告，同誅。²⁷

Thus, if here the expression “the year of Ruyi 如意” is not an error for “a year during Yongchang 永昌,” it was about three years after Li Wei was executed that Facheng was punished by being forced into service in the palace. This means that she was not considered to have directly participated in Li Wei's conspiracy; rather, she was implicated mainly because of her status as a former concubine of Li Wei's late father. We are not clear as to whether or not she was Li Wei's mother. Such a possibility cannot be excluded given that she had been thirty-six years old and therefore had obviously been a concubine of Li Yun for many years by the time Li Yun was killed in 675.

Facheng's epitaph says nothing about why or how she managed to turn herself from a humble palace server to a popular court chaplain. We can only speculate that she must have deeply charmed empress Wu, a devout and knowledgeable Buddhist laywoman. Another major reason might have been her discipleship under Fazang, who was deeply trusted and admired by the empress. At any rate, the fact that Facheng was able to preach in the inner palace and attracted a huge number of followers proves the existence of at least a palace convent at the time. This is compatible with what other sources tell us.²⁸

²⁶ Cf. *JTS* 6, p. 120, where we are told that those who were persecuted were the sons and/or grandsons of the prince of Jiang (Li Yun), the prince of Dao 道 (Li Yuanqing 李元慶), the prince of Xu 徐 (Li Yuanli 李元禮), the prince of Cao 曹 (Li Ming 李明) and others.

²⁷ *ZZTJ* 204, p. 6457.

²⁸ Chen Jinhua, “The Tang Buddhist Palace Chapels,” in *Journal of Chinese Religions* 32 (2004), pp. 81–82, on the convent.

Facheng was not released from the inner palaces until some time after Zhongzong was reenthroned on February 23, 705. From this, we know that she spent at least thirteen years in the inner palaces, from 692 to 705. In Jinglong 2 (January 28, 708–February 14, 709), at the recommendation of an unnamed *bhadanta* Tripiṭaka master (probably Śikṣānanda [652–710] or Yijing 義淨 [635–713]) and others, the government appointed her as the abbess of Shaotangsi 紹唐寺. Otherwise unknown, “Shaotangsi” might have been either an erroneous or alternate name of the famous monastery in Chang’an – Xingtangsi 興唐寺, originally named “Wangjisi” 岡極寺. Wangjisi was built by princess Taiping (?–713), a daughter of empress Wu, in the Taining 太寧 (Daning 大寧) Ward in Chang’an for the posthumous welfare of empress Wu, in accordance with a decree that Zhongzong issued on April 9, 705, only a few months after the empress’s death. This fact establishes its close ties with Zhongzong, princess Taiping, and empress Wu as well.²⁹

When Li Longji 李隆基 (685–762), the future Xuanzong (r. 712–756), visited Xingshengsi 興聖寺 as the heir-apparent sometime between January 28, 708 and September 8, 712,³⁰ he donated one thousand strings of cash to defray the expenses of renovating the nunnery. Owing to her reputation, Facheng was renamed as its new abbess 寺主.³¹ It took her less than one month to complete the renovation project. She also had painted transformation-pictures 變 of the Avataṃsaka As-

²⁹ See *Tang huiyao* 48, p. 846, where Wang Pu also tells us that the monastery was renamed Xingtangsi on July 3, 732 (Kaiyuan 20.6.7). However, Song Mingqiu 宋敏求 (1019–1079) notes that this happened six years later, in Kaiyuan 26 (January 25, 738–February 12, 739); see *Chang’an zhi* 長安誌, in Hiraoka Takeo 平岡武夫, comp., *Tōdai kenkyū no shiori* 唐代研究のしおり, T’ang Civilization Reference Series 12 (Kyoto: Kyoto Daigaku Jimbun kagaku kenkyūsho, 1954–1965), vol. 6, j. 8, p. 9a. Cf. Du You 杜祐 (735–812), *Tongdian* 通典 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1988 [collated by Wang Wenjing 王文錦 and others]) 7, p. 149, in which Wangjisi is listed along with Taipingguan 太平觀, Xiangshansi 香山寺 and Zhaochengsi 昭成寺, as the Buddhist monasteries and Taoist abbeys built by princess Taiping, Wu Sansi 武三思 (?–707), and empress Wei 韋 (?–710) under the reigns of empress Wu and Zhongzong. Du You does not specify who was the sponsor of Wangjisi.

Wangjisi is also famous for its association with several major monks including the Northern Chan master Puji 普寂 (651–739) and his disciple Yixing 一行 (683–727), both of whom died there after short residencies, and the Pure-land leader Huiji 慧日 (680–748), who was lodged by Xuanzong at the monastery when he returned in Kaiyuan 7 (January 26, 719–February 12, 720) from an 18-yr. pilgrimage to India. See Jinhua Chen, *Collusion and Collision: Buddhism and Taoism’s Politico-economic Roles in the Tang Restoration (704–713)* (in preparation), chap. 2. For Xingtangsi, see also *TMH*, pp. 1736–37.

³⁰ We know this time-frame since, according to Li Zhijian, Li Longji was then heir-apparent 在春宮, a status that he held until September 8, 712 (Yanhe 1.8.3 [gengzi]), when he was enthroned, and on the other hand, this obviously happened sometime after Facheng was appointed as the abbess of Shaotangsi in Jinglong 2 (January 28, 708–February 14, 709).

³¹ The characters *si* and *zhu*, missing from the *QTW* edn., are present in the edition included in *TMH*.

sembly (Huayan haihui 華嚴海會, or Huayan fahui 華嚴法會) and an octagonal pagoda built within the nunnery.

It turns out that this nunnery also had close connections with the Tang imperial family. In Zhenguan 1 (January 23, 627–February 10, 628), or Zhenguan 3 (January 30, 629–February 17, 630), Taizong decreed that an old residence of his father Gaozu (then the emperor-emeritus, or Taishanghuang 太上皇) – the Tongyi Palace 通義宮 – be turned into a nunnery called “Xingshengsi.”³² However, according to Falin 法琳 (570–640), it was Gaozu, rather than Taizong, who ordered the conversion of one of his old residences in the capital into the Xingsheng Nunnery.³³ Since the emperor-emeritus was still alive, the conversion of the Tongyi Palace could be regarded as ordered by him too (especially as it concerned his personal belongings), although it was officially decreed by his son, the actual ruler at the time. The special symbolism that the imperial house had given to the nunnery is amply shown by the following episode. On September 29, 711, Ruizong decreed a general amnesty to celebrate the auspicious sign that a persimmon tree within the Xingsheng Nunnery, which had withered since sometime during the Tianshou era (October 16, 690–April 21, 692), when empress Wu declared the replacement of the Great Tang with her own dynasty Great Zhou, suddenly returned to life.³⁴ Thus, for a cleric it was quite a remarkable achievement to be appointed as the abbess of this nunnery.

In addition to her efforts to refurbish the nunnery, Facheng also

³² This edict, “She jiuzhai zao Xingshengsi zhao” 捨舊宅造興聖寺詔, is preserved in Daoxuan, *Guang Hongming ji* 廣弘明集 (T no. 2103, vol. 52) 28, p. 329c; and *QIW* 9, pp. 4b–5a. *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統記 (T no. 2035, vol. 49, j. 39, p. 363b) dates this conversion to Zhenguan 1.1 (January 23–February 20, 627) and gives Gaozu’s residence as Tongyiguan 通義觀, the Taoist Abbey of Tongyi, which was obviously an error for Tongyigong 通義宮 (the error was made probably due to the fact that in classical Chinese *gongguan* 宮觀 or *guan* 觀 was used for a Taoist abbey). On another occasion (*Fozu tongji* 53, p. 464A), Zhipan repeats this attribution, without providing a specific date for this conversion. *Tang huiyao* concurs that the conversion was made in Zhenguan 1, in addition to telling us that it was in Wude 1 that Gaozu’s old residence was named Tongyi Palace. See also Luo Tianxiang 駱天驥 (ca. 1223–ca. 1300), *Leibian Chang’an zhi* 類編長安志, comp. and annot. Huang Yongnian 黃永年 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1990) 5, p. 145.

³³ See Falin 法琳 (572–640), *Bianzheng lun* 辯正論 (T no. 2110, vol. 52) 4, p. 511B. Daoxuan echoed the same idea in his preface to a summary of the debates carried out between Fu Yi 傅奕 (555–639) and Buddhist monks concerning the benefits of becoming a monk. See Daoxuan, *Guang Hongmingji* 25, p. 283A; cf. Daoxuan, *Ji gujin Fodao lunheng* 集古今佛道論衡 (T no. 2104, vol. 52), 3, p. 379c. See also Juean 覺岸 (1286–1355), *Shishi jigu lue* 釋氏稽古略 (T no. 2037, vol. 49, 3, p. 812c), according to which it was one of his old residences in Jinyang 晉陽 that Gaozu turned into Xingshengsi.

³⁴ *JTS* 7, p. 157; cf. *ZZTJ* 210, p. 6666. See also Nianchang 念常 (1282–after 1344), *Fozu lidai tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載 (T no. 2036, vol. 49) 13, p. 588A, which places this event in Shenglong 1 (January 30, 705–January 18, 706), the same year that Zhongzong was reenthroned.

engaged in a series of Buddhist construction projects, including building a reliquary pagoda at Matoukong, a site of particular significance for the Huayan school. Matoukong 馬頭空, or Matouxue 馬頭穴, indicated a complex of grottoes on a mount (called Longshou 龍首) east of Chang'an.³⁵ This grotto-complex was originally built under the direction of Sengzhen 僧珍 (d. after 574), the master of Fashun 法順 (also known as Dushun 杜順, 557–640), who, as the teacher of Zhiyan, would be respected as a forerunner of the Chinese Avatamsaka tradition.³⁶ Matoukong/Matouxue seems to have gradually become a popular place for burying Buddhist clerics. Buddhist monks who were buried there included Fakan 法侃 (551–623) and Sengmeng 僧猛 (507–588).³⁷

As she approached the end of her life, Facheng resigned her position as the abbess of Xingshengsi in order to concentrate on copying Buddhist works, including *Huayan shuyi* 華嚴疏義 (in three fascicles), *Yulanpen jing* 盂蘭盆經, and *Wenshi jing* 溫室經. She died on December 27, 729, at the age of ninety. She was beautiful and elegant in looks and manners 容儀美麗, and possessed of impressive eloquence.

Her disciples included Miduoluo 彌多羅 (a Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit word Mitra, “friend”), who was a daughter of Li Zhijian, the author of Facheng’s stupa epitaph. Li Zhijian 李志暎 (?–729+) was better known as hereditary prince of Peng 嗣彭王. His father Li Xuan 李絢 (dates unknown) was originally a son of the prince of Huo 霍 (Li Yuangui 李元軌 [?–688], the fourteenth son of Gaozu), but was later adopted as the heir to the prince of Peng 彭, that is, Li Yuanze 李元則 (?–651), the twelfth son of Gaozu. As a grandson of Li Yuanze, Li Zhi-

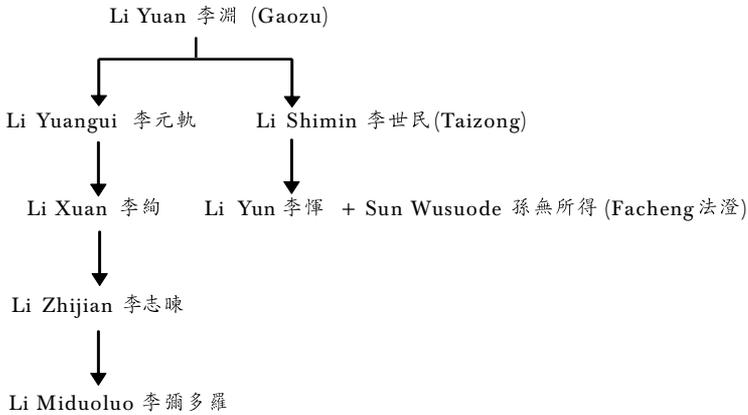
³⁵ Facheng’s relationship with the Matoukong grotto-complex is briefly discussed in Liu Shufen 劉淑芬, “Sishi yiku, Zhonggu Fojiao lushi zang yanjiu zhi er (zhong)” 石室靈窟中古佛教露屍葬研究之二(中), *Dalu zazhi* 大陸雜誌 98.3 (1999), pp. 98. Liu misrepresents Fadeng 法澄 (631–669), one of Xiao Yu’s 蕭瑀 (574–647) three granddaughters (all ordained as Buddhist nuns; see also n. 44, below) as our Facheng 法澄. Even though we assume that Fadeng was an error for Facheng, she could not be identified with this Facheng given that they came from different families, Xiao and Sun respectively.

It is Liu Shufen’s opinion that in accordance with a readily identifiable expression used in the Guanzhong 關中 area, *tuku* 土窟 is expressed as *tukong* 土空, and thus grottoes dug in Mount Matou were called Matoukong or Matouxue; Liu, “Sishi yiku,” p. 98. This understanding is supported by Daoxuan, who, in describing Sengzhen’s efforts to make grottoes on Matou, tells us the following: “A mount to the east of the capital was called Matou by the locals. It had steep (originally hollow) and layered cliffs, which had the potential of becoming luminous grottoes 京室東阜, 地號馬頭. 空岸重邃, 堪為靈窟” (*XGSZ* 25, p. 653B). In his *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 (*T*no. 2122, vol. 53, 28, p. 494C) Daoxuan’s fellow-disciple Daoshi changed these two sentences to: 京室東阜, 地號馬頭空. 崖岸重邃, 堪為靈窟, which means that the place (mount) was called Matoukong. This modification does not seem tenable in that Matoukong (Matouxue) names the grottoes on the mount, rather than the mount *per se*.

³⁶ *XGSZ* 25, p. 653B.

³⁷ See their *XGSZ* biogs. at 11, p. 513A–C (esp. l. 4 of C) and 23, p. 631A–C (esp. l. 29 of B). Fakan is briefly noted in Chen, *Monks and Monarchs*, p. 32, n. 57.

jian inherited his principality in the early Shenlong reign-era (January 30, 705–October 4, 707), hence his title “Hereditary Prince of Peng.” At the beginning of the Jinglong reign-era (707–710), he was bestowed the title of *yinqing guanglu daifu* 銀青光祿大夫 (grand master of imperial entertainments with silver seal and blue ribbon). He died some time between 729 and 741,³⁸ after serving for an unspecified length of time as *zongzhengqing* 宗正卿 (chief minister of the court of the imperial clan – treated as a supplementary official [*tong zhengyuan* 同正員]).³⁹ Li Zhijian’s relationship with Li Yun and Facheng can be illustrated by the following chart:



Thus, Li Zhijian’s father (Li Xuan) and Facheng’s husband (Li Yun) were cousins descended from a common paternal grandfather (Gaozu). Zhijian’s daughter Miduoluo was therefore a first cousin twice-removed of Facheng’s husband.

QIWEI: A BUDDHIST NUN WHO PROSELYTIZED A TAOIST-DOMINATED CLAN

While Facheng was a well-known Buddhist nun who has received some attention from modern scholars, Qiwei 契微 (720–781), our other focus in this article, has remained rather obscure – so much so that scholars have generally mistaken her for a monk!⁴⁰ Ui Hakuju’s 宇井

³⁸ Li Zhijian’s biography only notes that he died during the Kaiyuan era (713–741). However, his authorship of the epitaph for Facheng, who died in 729, means that he was still alive in that year. He then must have died sometime between 729 and 741.

³⁹ *JTS* 64, p. 2429.

⁴⁰ See Ui Hakuju 宇井伯壽, *Zenshū-shi kenkyū* 禪宗史研究, 2d edn. (Tokyo: Iwanami, 1942), pp. 269–374, especially p. 325 and 373–74. This understanding is followed in John McRae, *The Northern School and the Formation of Early Ch’an Buddhism* (Honolulu: Hawaii

伯壽 ground-breaking work *Zenshū-shi kenkyū* 禪宗史研究 collects basic information on Shenxiu's 神秀 (ca. 606–706) first four generations of disciples. To the names of Shenxiu's female disciples, Ui has attached the character *ni* 尼 in order to distinguish them from the male disciples' names. The fact that he does not apply such a character to the name of Qiwei proves that he takes this person as a monk. This confusion as to the gender of Qiwei might have been caused by the way she is addressed in the title of her stupa epitaph – “Heshang” 和尚 (Skt.: Upādhyāya, “Preceptor”),⁴¹ which, at least starting from the Song era, has generally referred to a male Buddhist priest, as is corroborated by the following definition recorded by the Song author Zhuang Chuo 莊綽 (1079?–1149?):⁴²

And in the capital area (Kaifeng and/or Hangzhou), people avoid calling monks 僧 “Preceptors” (*heshang*), addressing them instead as “Great Masters 大師”; [they] avoid calling nuns 尼 “dharma-aunts 師姑,” but address them as “Female Preceptors” (*nü heshang*). 而京師僧諱和尚，稱曰“大師”；尼諱師姑稱曰“女和尚。”⁴³

That the appellation “*heshang*” was avoided when referring to a monk in the capital area at the time just means that it was used outside the capital at that or other period of time. Further, the fact that the expression *nü heshang* was applied to a nun implies the exclusive use of *heshang* for a monk at the time. However, during the Tang era, the appellation *heshang* could also be applied to a female Buddhist cleric. I give two examples. The nun Qiyi 契義 (753–818) (a great-granddaughter of Wei Anshi 韋安石, 651–714) is called Wei Heshang 韋和尚 (because of her secular surname Wei 韋) in the epitaph inscription that her kinsman Wei Tongyi 韋同翊 (?–818+) wrote for her, while another

U.P., 1986), p. 296, n. 176. Li Yuzhen, who provides what is so far the most comprehensive study of Tang Buddhist nuns (Li, *Tangdai de biqiuni*), also does not seem to have taken Qiwei as a nun judging by the fact that she does not mention Qiwei at all in her book. Jiang Yin 蔣寅, who has provided, to the best of my knowledge, the most thorough and reliable chronicle of Quan Deyu's life and work, referred to Qiwei as “heshang,” by which he probably meant a male priest as it is used in modern Chinese, also understands Qiwei as a monk. See Jiang, *Dali shiren yanjiu* 大歷詩人研究 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1995), p. 640. In her useful electronic database for Tang studies, Lü Qichang 呂棋昌 also confused Qiwei as a monk, whom she further identifies as a granduncle (*shuzu* 叔祖) of Quan Deyu. See Lü, *Tangdai wenshi ziliao ziliao ku* 唐代文史資料庫: <www.cc.nctu.edu.tw/~1ccpan/newpage139.htm>

⁴¹ See Quan Deyu, “Tang gu Dongjing Anguosi Qiwei heshang taming bing xu” 唐故東京安國寺契微和尚塔銘並序, *Quan Zaizhi wenji* 權載之文集, as printed in *Suoben Sibü congkan chubian* 縮本四部叢刊初編 (Shanghai: Shangwu, 1922; hereafter *QZW*), vol. 38, j. 28, pp. 170a–171a; *QTW* 501, pp. 13a–15a.

⁴² These rough dates of Zhuang Chuo are suggested in Xiao Luyang's 蕭魯陽 “Zhuang Chuo shengping ziliao kaobian” 莊綽生平資料考辯 (included as appendix 2 in Xiao Luyang, annot., *file bian* 雞肋編 [Beijing: Zhonghua, 1983], pp. 135–57), p. 151.

⁴³ *File bian* 1, p. 13.

nun, Huiyuan 惠源 (662–737), is also referred to in the same way in her funeral epitaph by Yang Xiulie 楊休烈 (d. after 737).⁴⁴

More importantly, the content of Quan Deyu's 權德輿 (759–818) epitaph proves beyond any reasonable doubt that Qiwei was a female.⁴⁵ Quan Deyu reports that she was so attractive both in looks and virtue that when she was still a teenager her family attempted to find an outstanding scholar-official as her match, a proposal that she squarely rejected.

Family Background

Qiwei was from a very distinguished family – the Quan 權, who were originally based in Lüeyang 略陽, in Tianshui 天水 (present-day Qin'an 秦安, Gansu) and can be traced back to a trusted advisor of the Former Qin ruler Fu Jian 苻堅 (r. 357–385) named Quan Yi 權翼 (fl. 352–385), of whom Qiwei was a tenth-generation grandchild. Combining a list that Quan Deyu provides for Qiwei's lineage and another more detailed genealogical chart “Zaixiang shixi” 宰相世係 provided in *Xin Tang shu*, Qiwei's family background can be reconstructed as follows:

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Quan Yi | 7. Quan Rong 權榮 |
| 2. Quan Xuanbao 權宣褒 | 8. Quan Wendan 權文誕 |
| 3. ? | 9. Quan Chongben 權崇本 |
| 4. ? | 10. Quan Tongguang 權同光 |
| 5. ? | (660? –736?) |
| 6. ? | 11. Qiwei (720–781) ⁴⁶ |

Formerly a subordinate of Yao Xiang 姚襄 (331–357; an older brother of Yao Chang 姚萇, r. 384–393, the founder of the Later Qin

⁴⁴ For Qiwei, see Lu Xinyuan 陸心源 (1834–1894) (compiled), *Tang wen shiyi* 唐文拾遺 (Taipei: Wenhai, 1979) 25, pp. 10b–12a: *Tang gu Longhuasi neiwai Lintan Dade Wei Heshang* 唐故龍花寺內外臨壇大德韋和尚; for Huiyuan, see *QTW* 396, p. 19a: *Da Tang Jidusi gu Dade Biqiuni Huiyuan Heshang* 大唐濟度寺故大德比丘尼惠源和尚; cf. *TMH*, p. 1473 (based on *j.* 82 of *Jinshi cuibian* 金石萃編). We note that Huiyuan is called both *biqiuni* and *heshang*, which were later reserved for female and male Buddhist monks, respectively. Huiyuan's family background and its ties with Buddhism are remarkable. She was a descendant (7th-gen. granddaughter) of the Buddhist emperor Liang Wudi (r. 502–549). Three paternal aunts of Huiyuan's sisters (daughters of the renowned Tang layman Xiao Yu, a 5th-gen. grandson of Liang Wudi) were also ordained as nuns; Tsukamoto Zenryū 塚本善隆, “Bōzan Ungoji no sekkyō daizōkyō” 房山居寺の石刻大藏經, *Tsukamoto Zenryū chosaku shū* 塚本善隆著作集 (Tokyo: Daitō shuppansha, 1974–76) 5, pp. 375–82; Li, *Tangdai biqiuni*, p. 24, 51–53.

⁴⁵ Some scholars have opted for 761 as the date of Quan Deyu's birth. Tao Min 陶敏 has compellingly reestablished 759 as correct. See Fu Xuancong 傅璇琮 et al., *Tang caizi zhuan jiaojian* 唐才子傳校箋 (rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua, 2002) 5, pp. 261–62. See also Wang Huibing 王輝斌, “Quan Deyu shengping qiushi” 權德輿生平求是, *Liuzhou shizhuan xuebao* 柳州師專學報 11.2 (1996), pp. 56–61; Jiang Yin, “Dali shiren zhaji (xu), Quan Deyu” 大歷詩人割記(續) 權德輿, *Zhangzhou shiyuan xuebao* 漳州師學院學報 3 (1995), p. 54.

⁴⁶ See Quan, “Tang gu Dongjing Anguosi Qiwei,” *QZW* 28, p. 170a (*QTW* 501, p. 13a);

regime [384-417]), Quan Yi (courtesy name, Ziliang 子良) later became a confidant of Fu Jian, whom he served as right chief-administrator (*you buye* 右僕射). In recognition of his merit, Fu Jian enfeoffed him as duke Jing of Anqiu 安丘敬公. When Chang'an was occupied by the Later Yan (384-409) ruler Murong Chui 慕容垂 (r. 384-396) in 385, shortly after Fu Jian died following the humiliating failure of his military expedition against the Eastern Jin government, Quan Yi fled Chang'an and turned to serve Yao Chang instead.⁴⁷ He is best known for two incidents in the course of his long-term service to Fu Jian – his objection of Fu Jian's showing extraordinary esteem to the Buddhist leader Daoan⁴⁸ and his attempt to dissuade Fu Jian from a plan to unify China by annexing the Eastern Jin in the south.⁴⁹ It is the first episode that has more pertinence to our purpose:

When [Fu] Jian went to the East [Imperial] Park, he ordered Daoan to ascend the imperial carriage and ride with him. The chief administrator (*buye*) Quan Yi remonstrated with him for this, saying, "This servant of yours heard that the Son of Heaven could only share his 'chariot of law 法駕' with his palace attendants (*shizhong* 侍中). How could Daoan, whose shape is mutilated, be allowed to ride with Your Majesty?"⁵⁰ His complexion changed, [Fu] Jian replied in a fear-inspiring tone, "Master [Dao]an is so venerable in virtue that he would not deign to trade [his status as a monk] for sovereignty of the territory under heavens even though We offer it to him.⁵¹ [For him,] the honor of riding on the imperial chariot is no more than a stinking and rotten [rat, as is perceived in the

and "Zaixiang shixi," *XTS* 75B, p. 3393. The Quan clan was included in the "Zaixiang shixi" thanks to Quan Deyu's status as a prime minister of Xianzong (r. 805-820).

⁴⁷ Quan Deyu says in the inscription that the traces of Quan Yi's life are exhaustively described in the "historical records and accounts" (*shi bei zaiji* 事備載記). However, Quan Yi is not accorded a separate biography in any dynastic history, but is only mentioned in the *zaiji* section of Fang Xuanling 房玄齡 (578-648), *Jin shu* 晉書 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1975); to be specific, in the *zaiji* for Fu Jian (*Jin shu* 113, p. 2884-86; 114, pp. 2912-13, 2920), and that for Huangfu Zhen 皇甫真 (dates unknown) (111, p. 2862), that for Yao Xiang (116, p. 2962), that for Yao Chang (116, p. 2966, 2970), and that for Murong Chui (123, p. 3080). Cf. *ZZTJ* 99, pp. 3123, 3134; 100, pp. 3163, 3166; 102, pp. 3230, 3240; 104, p. 3301; 105, pp. 3314, 3326; 106, p. 3346.

⁴⁸ Sengyou 僧祐 (445-518), *Chu sanzang jiji* 出三藏記集 (Tno. 2145, vol. 55) 15, p. 108B-c; *GSZ* 5, p. 353A.

⁴⁹ *ZZTJ* 104, pp. 3301, 3304; *Jin shu* 114, pp. 2912-13.

⁵⁰ By "mutilation," Quan Yi seems to refer to the tonsure, the understanding being that an upholder of the Confucian teachings on filial piety should try his best to prevent his own skin and hair, both of which were inherited from his parents, from being hurt.

⁵¹ This refers to the stories told in the *Zhuangzi* 莊子 (e.g. chap. 26, "Waiwu" 外物, and chap. 28, "Rangwang" 讓王) that several sages like Xu You 許由 and Wu Guang 務光 declined Yao's offer of abdication; see Guo Qingfang 郭庆藩, annot., *Zhuangzi jishi* 莊子集釋 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1961), pp. 943, 965.

eyes of a *yuanchu* 鵠鵠 bird].”⁵² He therefore ordered [Quan] Yi to hold up [Dao]an when he ascended the carriage.⁵³ 會堅出東苑，命安昇輦同載。僕射權翼諫曰，“臣聞天子法駕，侍中陪乘。道安毀形，寧可參廁乘輿？”堅慄然作色曰，“安公道德可尊，朕將舉天下而不易。雖輿輦之榮，乃是爲其臭腐耳。”即敕翼扶之而登輿。⁵⁴

Quan Yi had two sons, Quan Xuanji 權宣吉 and Quan Xuanbao 權宣褒, the latter of whom was *huangmen shilang* 黃門侍郎 (gentleman attendant at the Palace Gate) of the Later Qin. Quan Xuanbao's sixth-generation grandson Quan Rong was the director of the pasturage for fine steeds (*yitong* 儀同) of the Sui Dynasty,⁵⁵ and was enfeoffed duke of Lucheng 鄜城 (present-day Luxian 鄜縣, Shaanxi).⁵⁶ Quan Rong's son Quan Wendan was appointed as grand master of imperial entertainments with silver seal and blue ribbon, governor of Fuzhou 涪州 (present-day Fuling, Sichuan) and Changzhou 常州 (present-day Changzhou, Jiangsu), an aide (*zhangshi* 長史) in the Area Command of Jingzhou, and enfeoffed state-founding duke (*kaiguo gong* 開國公) of Pingyang 平涼 commandery.⁵⁷

Quan Wendan's son, Quan Chongben, who was Qiwei's grandfather, was a grand master for closing court (*chaosan daifu* 朝散大夫) of the Tang, the magistrate (*xianling* 縣令) of Kuangcheng 匡城 in Guzhou 滑州 (present-day Changyuan 長垣, Hubei). He had two older brothers: Quan Chongji 權崇基, who was the director (*langzhong* 郎中) in the Ministry of Revenue (Hubu 戶部), and Quan Chongxiang 權崇先, a vice-minister (*yanwailang* 員外郎) of the Bureau of Waterways and Irrigation (Shuibu 水部). All three brothers were celebrated for literary and political accomplishments during the Zhenguan (626–649) and Yonghui eras (650–656).

⁵² This obviously refers to the famous story in *Zhuangzi* in which Zhuangzi ridicules his old friend Hui Shi 惠施 for his fear that Zhuangzi was intent on snatching his position as prime minister of Liang. In the story, Zhuangzi likens his own contempt for the position to a *yuanchu* bird's disdain for a stinking, rotten rat; Guo, *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 605; Burton Watson, trans., *Chuang Tzu: Basic Writings* (New York: Columbia U.P., 1996), pp. 109–10.

⁵³ A similar story involved the monk Huilin 慧琳 (fl. 424–440), emperor Wen (r. 424–453) of the Liu-Song (420–479), and his courtier Yan Yanzhi 顏延之 (384–456). When emperor Wen invited Huilin, whom he trusted as a confidant, to sit beside him and when the invitation was accepted, Yan strongly protested with a similar reason, i.e., Huilin was someone who was “mutilated” (*xingyu* 刑餘). See *Song shu* 宋書 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1974) 73, p. 1902; *Nanshi* 南史 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1975), 34, p. 880.

⁵⁴ *Chu sanzang jiji* 15, p. 108c.

⁵⁵ According to Charles O. Hucker, *yitong* 儀同 was probably a variant (or calligraphic error) for *yisi* 儀司; Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1985), p. 270, no. 3023.

⁵⁶ *XTS* 75B, pp. 3391–92.

⁵⁷ Quan, “Tang gu Dongjing Anguosi Qiwei,” *QZW* 28, p. 170a; *QIW* 501, p. 13a.

Finally, Quan Tongguang (Quan Chongben's son and Qiwei's father) was the district defender (*xianwei* 縣尉) of the district of Henan 河南 (present-day Luoyang, Henan), vice-magistrate (*xiancheng* 縣丞) of Chang'an district, and an academician (*xueshi* 學士) of the Hanlin 翰林 Academy who was also an editor (*xiangding* 詳定) in the Office for Compilation of Imperial Pronouncements (Bianxiu zhiling suo 編修制令所). In the epitaph for Qiwei, Quan Deyu only mentions two older brothers of Quan Tongguang: Quan Wudai 權無待, who was the district defender of District Chengdu 成都 in Yizhou 益州, and Quan Ruone 權若訥 (660?-725?), the governor of Xizhou 歙州 (present-day Xixian 歙縣, Anhui), Guizhou 桂州 (present-day Guilin 桂林, Guangxi), and Zizhou 梓州 (Present-day Santai 三台, Sichuan). The *Xin Tang shu*'s "Zaixiang shixi," however, lists two more older brothers of Quan Tongguang – Quan En 權恩 (Wusi 權無思?) and Quan Wuji 權無己.⁵⁸ In addition, another bureaucrat-scholar Quan Wuer 權無二 (?-681+), who communicated with the learned monk Fuli 復禮 (fl. 680s-700s) in 681 concerning his doubts on some Buddhist teachings, might have also been Quan Tongguang's brother.⁵⁹ In short, Qiwei came from a family with a long tradition of official service and extensive political connections.

As for the religious leanings of the family, Quan Deyu tells us that while Quan Tongguang and two of his older brothers were highly respected among contemporaries for their literary brilliance, they failed to gain eminence in the political world due to the inclination to "stay in the world as [one possessing] clarity and purity 清淨住世." This might imply noble thoughts and feelings inspired by Taoism, which is verifiable by the possibility that they were from a Taoist family as we are to show below.

⁵⁸ Given that all of his brothers' names, from Wudai, Ruone, to Wuji and Tongguang, were based on Taoist ideas from either *Daode jing* or *Zhuangzi* (see below), I suspect that En might not have been the right form of this Quan. Furthermore, in view of the fact that two of the Quan brothers had *wu* 無 as the first character of their names, I suspect that this Quan was originally named Wusi 无思, which refers to a sentence in the "Tiandi" 天地 chapter in *Zhuangzi*: 德人者, 居無思, 行無慮, 不藏是非美惡 ("A man of virtues is someone who takes residence without any thoughts, undertakes a trip without concerns, and who does not harbor [any prejudices on] what is the right, wrong, beautiful or ugly"); Guo, *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 441; my translation.

⁵⁹ This communication between Quan Wuer and Fuli is discussed 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* (Naples: Istituto Universitario Orientale, Seminario di Studi Asiatici, 1976), p. 138 ff. Although *Xin Tang shu* mentions Quan Wuer twice, once as the author of the *Shidian jiyi* 釋典稽疑, and again as an expert on rituals (*XTS* 59, p. 1526; 198, p. 5655; cf. *JTS* 21, p. 826), it does not include him in the "Zaixiang shixi." However, the fact that Quan Tongguang had two brothers (Quan Wuji and Quan Wudai) who had two-character names beginning with *wu* 無, as did Quan Wuer, suggests that Quan Wuer might have been his brother, or cousin.

In the preface that Quan Deyu wrote for the collected works of Quan Tongguang's brother Quan Ruone, Quan Deyu provides a relatively rich source of information about the three Quan brothers.⁶⁰ At about nineteen years of age Quan Ruone went to study at the National University in the capital along with his older brother Quan Wudai and younger brother Quan Tongguang. Their literary talents quickly earned them a reputation among their peers. Since the Yonglong (September 21, 680–November 14, 681) and Kaiyao (November 15, 681–April 2, 682) eras,⁶¹ the government began to enroll officials by examination, in which the three brothers excelled (all ranked as “first rate 甲科”). After serving in several low-ranking positions in local government, Quan Ruone was called to the court, where he slowly mounted the bureaucratic hierarchy under the reigns of empress Wu and her successor Zhongzong – from the position of right rectifier of omissions (*you buque* 右補闕) to that of imperial diarist (*qiju lang* 起居郎). Quan Deyu then laments that his ancestor's uprightness and lack of flexibility cost him the opportunities of getting promoted in the court. He was subsequently sent away to act as governor in several prefectures remote from the capital.⁶²

In the history of Chinese Buddhism and politics, Quan Ruone is known for his enthusiasm in defending empress Wu's legacy, as is amply shown in a memorial that he submitted to Zhongzong in 706, in which he strongly protested Zhongzong's previous edict of abandoning the special characters invented during the reign of empress Wu (the so-called “Zetian wenzi 則天文字”) and insisted that the political institutions set up by the empress be strictly observed.⁶³

The way that Quan Tongguang's father named Quan Tongguang and most (if not all) of his sons demonstrates his keen interest in Taoist

⁶⁰ Quan, “Tang gu Tongyi daifu Zizhou zhujunshi Zizhou cishi shang zhuguo Quan gong wenji xu” 唐故通議大夫梓州諸軍事梓州刺史上柱國權公文集序, *QZW* 34, pp. 199b–200b. This preface was written in 780 (when Quan Deyu was twenty-one *sui*), one year before he wrote the epitaph for Qiwei. This date is provided by Jiang, *Dali shiren yanjiu*, p. 639. Guo Guangwei 郭廣偉, on the other hand, dates the letter one year earlier (in 779). See Guo, “Quan Deyu nianpu jianbian” 權德輿年譜簡編, *Xuzhou shifan xueyuan xuebao* 徐州師範學院學報 1994-3, pp. 77–78.

⁶¹ For Yonglong 永隆 the original has Yongchong 永崇; *long* was tabooed because of Xuanzong's personal name Longji 隆基.

⁶² Quan, “Tang gu Tongyi daifu,” *QZW* 34, pp. 199b–200b.

⁶³ Quan Ruone, “Qing fu Tianhou suozao zhui shu” 請復天后所造諸字疏, *QTW* 268, pp. 15b–17a; this memorial is discussed in Forte, *Mingtang and Buddhist Utopias in the History of the Astronomical Clock: The Tower, Statue and Armillary Sphere Constructed by Empress Wu*, Ser. Orientale Roma 59 (Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient [Publications de L'École Française d'Extrême-Orient 145], 1988), pp. 222–25. Forte's interpretation is opposite of mine. Rather than taking the memorial as a strong defense of empress Wu's legacy, he reads it as an attack.

philosophy, or even the possibility of Taoism being his family religion. At least four of his five sons had names that were derived from Taoist classics like *Daode jing* and *Zhuangzi*:

1. Wudai 無待 – obviously from Zhuangzi’s idea of *wudai* 無待 (unconditioned, absolute), in contrast with *youdai* 有待 (conditional, relative), as is elaborated in his much relished thesis “Xiaoyao you” 逍遙遊;⁶⁴
2. Ruone 若訥 – from the idea of *dabian ruone* 大辯若訥 (“Great eloquence seems tongue-tied”) in Chapter 54 of the *Daode jing*;⁶⁵
3. Wuji 無己 – from the Chapter of “Zaiyou” 在宥 in *Zhuangzi*: 無己, 惡乎得有有 (“be of no self, how would one be limited by the being”)?⁶⁶
4. Tongguang 同光 – probably an abbreviation of a line in the *Daode jing* (chapter 4): 和其光, 同其塵 (“Soften the glare; let your wheels move only along old ruts”).⁶⁷

If we can take Quan Wuer as Quan Tongguang’s brother, then the term *wuer* would be an obvious reference to the Taoist teaching on non-duality. Finally, if another brother of Quan Tongguang, Quan En, was indeed named Wusi as I suspect, the Taoist source of his name is also self-evident.⁶⁸ The same “Zaixiang shixi” reports that Quan Tongguang had two sons, Quan Zan 權儻 and Quan Ting 權挺. They are therefore Qiwei’s brothers.

We cannot finish surveying Qiwei’s family background without a note on her relationship to Quan Deyu, who identifies himself as her first-cousin twice-removed (*zhisun* 侄孫).⁶⁹ Such a relationship is corroborated by both the detailed lineage information about Qiwei stated in her epitaph (descent from Quan Chongben to Quan Tongguang to Qiwei),⁷⁰ and Quan Deyu’s information given in “Zaixiang shixi” (descended from Quan Chongben to Quan Wudai to Quan Chui 權

⁶⁴ *Wudai* 無待 does not appear in *Zhuangzi*, which, however, contains a similar expression, *wuhudai* 惡乎待: “He escaped the trouble of walking, but he still had to depend on something to get around. If he had only mounted on the truth of Heaven and Earth, ridden the changes of the six breaths, and thus wondered through the boundless, and what would he have had to depend on?” 此雖免乎行, 猶有所待者也。若夫乘天地之正, 而御六氣之辯, 以遊無窮者, 彼且惡乎待哉! (Guo, *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 17; Watson, *Chuang Tzu*, p. 26).

⁶⁵ D. C. Lau, tran., *Tao-te ching* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963), p. 54.

⁶⁶ Guo, *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 395 (my translation). The same expression also appears in “Xiaoyao you,” *Zhuangzi*: “Therefore I say, the Perfect Man has no self; the Holy Man has no merit; the Sage has no fame” 故曰: 至人無己, 神人無功, 聖人無名 (Guo, *Zhuangzi jishi*, p. 17; Watson, *Chuang Tzu*, p. 26).

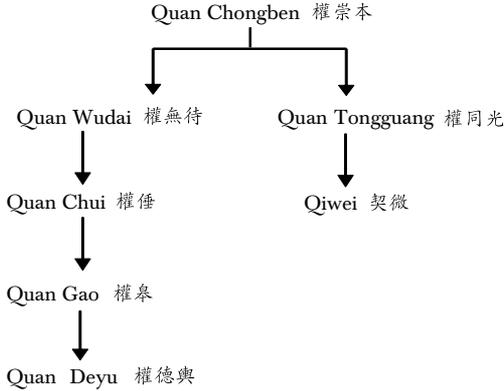
⁶⁷ Lau, *Tao-te ching*, p. 8.

⁶⁸ See n. 58.

⁶⁹ Quan, “Tang gu Dongjing Anguosi Qiwei,” *QZ*W 28, p. 170b (*QITW* 501, p. 14b).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 170a (*QITW* 501, p. 13b).

捶 [?-745],⁷¹ and finally to Quan Gao 權皋 [725-767],⁷² his father).⁷³ These data establish that Quan Deyu’s great-grandfather Quan Wudai was an uncle of Qiwei – that is, that Qiwei’s father Quan Tongguang was a younger brother of Quan Wudai:



Quite interestingly, Quan Deyu’s relationship to Qiwei is similar to Miduoluo’s relationship to Facheng, although Quan Deyu never became a cleric as Miduoluo did.

Religious Background

Having discussed her secular genealogy, we are now in a position to examine Qiwei’s religious background – both the Buddhist traditions into which she was successively initiated and the Buddhist masters who acted as her teachers in different phases of her career. According to Quan Deyu’s epitaph:

Born to be intelligent and enlightened, Her Reverence was aloof and possessed of mysterious enlightenment. At the age of nine *sui* (that is, in 728), she was initiated by Tripitaka (literally, master of the Three Canons) Jin’gang of Jianfusi 薦福寺 into the “practice field” (Chin.: *daochang* 道場; Sk.: *bodhimāṇḍa*) of mantras, in which she received and upheld sacred *mudrā*. The speed with which she was enlightened into [the *bodhimāṇḍa*] caused people to liken her to a precocious youth [extolled in the *Book of Odes*]. However, since her virtue and looks were both outstanding, she was respected and

⁷¹ The date of Quan Chui’s death is provided by Quan Deyu in the funeral epitaph that he wrote for his grandmother (Quan Chui’s wife), “Wang bifuren Hongnong Yangshi fuzang muzhiming” 王妣夫人弘農楊氏祔葬墓誌銘, *QZW* 26, p. 151.

⁷² The Dates of Quan Gao are controversial. I have here followed Fu et al., *Tang caizi zhuan jiaojian* 2, pp. 577-78.

⁷³ *XTS* 75C, p. 3392.

valued by her kin. They insisted on selecting an excellent bureaucrat-scholar as her match. At the time, she was so keen on abandoning her household life that she wished to cut her own skin in order to escape [from this imminent engagement]. 和尚生而敏悟, 超然元覺. 年九歲, 於薦福寺金剛三藏, 發心入曼荼羅道場, 傳持聖印. 悟入之速, 發於岐嶷. 然其德容具舉, 家族敬異. 將必擇卿士之良者以嬪之. 時勇於出世, 至欲刃其膚以自免.

After her father (Quan Tongguang), who was a Hanlin Academician, passed away, her mother and older brother(s) were no longer able to constrain [her desire to enter the *samgha*]. Therefore, when she just came of age 初笄之年 (turned fifteen *sui*), she donned a set of monastic robes.⁷⁴ In the first year of the Tianbao era (February 10, 742–January 19, 744) (when she was twenty-two years old), she received full ordination from *vinaya* master Dingbin 定賓 (fl. 730s–740s) of Fuxiansi 福先寺. She then became affiliated with Anguosi 安國寺 in the Eastern Capital (Luoyang), studying with Bhikṣuni Wusheng 無勝 (?–742+), from whom she received the teachings in the *upāya* of the mind-gate. She believed that the mind was a transformation of the external world and that the true arises from the dispelling of the false. With the false dispelled, the true will also disappear; with its transformation the mind will also become tranquil. Therefore, outwardly she showed [her observance of] *vinaya* and regulations, while inwardly pursuing the pleasure of meditation. Although she had a beginner’s mind, she resided in true wisdom; free of the form of being, she was enlightened to the dharma of emptiness. Subsequently, she thoroughly understood scriptures of the “Four Divisions” under the direction of great master Hongzheng 宏正 (var. 弘政) (d. ca. 757), and became particularly versed in the teachings of the *Lankāvatāra sūtra*.

翰林府君既捐館, 母兄竟不能抑. 遂以初笄之年, 被服緇褐. 至天寶元年, 始受具於福先寺定賓律師. 隸東京安國寺, 師事苾芻尼無勝, 受心門方便之學. 以爲心實境化, 真由妄遣. 遣之而真亦隨盡, 化之而心乃湛然. 故外示律儀, 內循禪悅. 因初心而住實智, 離有相而證空法. 乃通四部經於宏正大師, 尤精“楞伽”之義.⁷⁵

First and foremost, Quan Deyu’s featuring of the dramatic conflict that the young Qiwei had with her family concerning her devotion to Buddhism gives the proof that, contrary to what is supposed in modern scholarship, Qiwei was actually a nun, rather than a monk. Since the

⁷⁴ This means that Quan Tongguang died sometime between 728, when Qiwei was nine *sui*, and 736, when she was fifteen *sui*.

⁷⁵ “Tang gu Dongjing Anguosi Qiwei,” *QZW* 28, p. 170b (*QIW* 501, pp. 13b–14a).

year 728, when she was only nine *sui*, until some time after 742 when, turning twenty-two years old, she received full ordination, Qiwei had successively studied with four distinguished teachers: first, at Great Jianfusi in Chang'an, with an Esoteric master who is referred to here as Tripitaka Vajra, very likely Vajrabodhi, better known in China as Jin'gangzhi 金剛智 (671?-741);⁷⁶ then, at Fuxiansi in Luoyang she was ordained by (and probably also studied under) *vinaya* master Dingbin, an expert of the Four-division *Vinaya* (Skt.: *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*; Ch.: *Sifen lü* 四分律) tradition and who played an essential role in transmitting Chinese Vinaya tradition to Japan;⁷⁷ also in Luoyang, but at a different monastery (Anguosi), she studied with a nun called Wusheng, who instructed her in *dhyāna*. Eventually, she turned to her fourth – and as far as we know, the last – of her teachers, Hongzheng. Although Quan Deyu here does not tell us at which monastery Qiwei studied with Hongzheng, it was very likely Shengshansi 聖善寺 given that Hongzheng's long affiliation with the monastery won him the sobriquet of "Shengshan Hongzheng dashi" 聖善弘正大師 (Great Master Hongzheng of Shengshan[si]). This monastery was dedicated in 706 by Zhongzong to the posthumous welfare of his newly deceased mother empress Wu. Although completely ignored by later Chan sources, Hongzheng was regarded as the eighth Chan patriarch by some Chan traditions.⁷⁸

Quan Deyu's brief description gives us the impression that Qiwei received rather comprehensive and organized training in various forms of Buddhist traditions, including Esoteric, Vinaya, Dhyāna and other Mahāyāna teachings. Except for the otherwise unknown nun Wusheng, her other three teachers were influential Buddhist leaders at the time.

It is not a coincidence either that all four monasteries that Qiwei was associated with during her early career were of exceptional importance in Tang religious and political worlds. Great Jianfusi in Chang'an was built by empress Wu in 684 for the posthumous welfare

⁷⁶ Vajrabodhi arrived in the Chinese capital 京邑 (Chang'an or Luoyang) in Kaiyuan 8 (February 13, 720–January 31, 721) and died in China in 741. His association with Great Jianfusi started from Kaiyuan 18 (January 23, 730–February 10, 731); see Zhisheng 智昇 (d. after 740), *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 開元釋教錄 (T no. 2154, vol. 55), 9, p. 571c. cf. *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (hereafter *SGS-Z*, T no. 2061, vol. 50) 1, p. 711B–C; Chou Yi-liang, "Tantrism in China," *HJAS* 8 (1945), p. 275.

⁷⁷ Chen Jinhua, "One Name, Three Monks: Two Northern Chan Masters Emerge from the Shadow of Their Contemporary, the Tiantai Patriarch Zhanran (711–782)," *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 22.1 (1999), pp. 64–65.

⁷⁸ For Hongzheng, see Xu Wenming 許文明, "Chanzong dibadai beizong Hongzheng dashi" 禪宗第八代北宗弘正大師, *Dunhuangxue jikan* 敦煌學輯刊 1992.2, pp. 32–39; and Chen, *Collusion and Collision*, chap. 2.

of her husband Gaozong. Derived from a garden originally belonging to Yang Guang 楊廣 (589–618) (Sui Yangdi 隋煬帝; r. 604–617), during the Wude era (June 18, 618–January 22, 627), it was bestowed to Xiao Yu as his “western garden 西園,” in which a mansion was built when Xiao Yu’s son Xiao Rui 蕭銳 (dates unknown) married Taizong’s daughter princess Xiangcheng 襄城 (?–651). After she died, the government purchased the mansion and assigned it to prince Ying 英 (Li Xian 李顯, 656–710), the future Zhongzong. On the hundredth day after Gaozong’s death on December 27, 683, the mansion was turned into a monastery named Great Xianfusi 大獻福寺 (Zhongzong was already deposed and exiled to Fangzhou thirty-five days previously, February 26, 684). In Tianshou 1 (October 16, 690–December 5, 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.⁷⁹

The monastery Anguosi was closely related with another Tang emperor – Ruizong, Zhongzong’s younger brother and successor. It was built in 710 on the basis of Ruizong’s princely mansion in the Changluo ward 長樂坊. The name of the monastery, Anguo 安國 (“pacifying the state”) was derived from the title (Anguo Xiang wang 安國相王, Prince Anguo of Xiang) that Ruizong received from Zhongzong for his merit in subduing the clique of the two Zhang brothers, Zhang Yizhi 張易之 (d. 705) and Zhang Changzong 張昌宗 (d. 705) at the beginning of 705.⁸⁰ The importance of this monastery should be studied with another monastery in Kaifeng that was also closely associated with Ruizong, Xiangguosi 相國寺.⁸¹

As a family temple of empress Wu, Fuxiansi was built in 675 on the basis of an old residence in Luoyang left by empress Wu’s mother, who died five years earlier. It was then called Eastern Taiyuansi 東太原寺, in distinction to its counterpart in Chang’an, which was built several months after empress Wu’s mother died.⁸² Not only was Fuxiansi

⁷⁹ For the history of this important monastery, see *Tang huiyao* 48, p. 991, *Tang liangjing chengfang kao* 唐兩京城坊考 (Beijing: Zhonghua, 1985) 2, pp. 35–37; cf. Ono Katsutoshi 小野勝年, *Chūgoku Zui Tō Chōan jūin shiryō shūsei* 中國隋唐長安寺院史料集成 (Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1989) 1, pp. 3–10; 2, pp. 3–8.

⁸⁰ Ono, *Chōan jūin* 2, pp. 69–77.

⁸¹ Chen, *Collusion and Collision*, chap. 3.

⁸² Originally called Taiyuansi 太原寺, this monastery was subsequently called Western Taiyuansi 西太原寺 because of the existence of its twin in Luoyang, until it was renamed Weiguo xisi 魏國西寺 on February 9, 687 (Chuangong 3.1.2). See Antonino Forte, “The Chongfusi 崇福寺 in Chang’an: Foundation and Name Changes,” appendix written for Antonino Forte, ed., *L’inscription nestorienne de Si-ngan-fou: A Posthumous Work by Paul Pelliot* (Kyoto and Paris: Scuola di Studi sull’Asia Orientale and College de France, Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1996), pp. 429–72.

a major Buddhist translation center at the time, but it also acted as an East Asian cultural center from the seventh to ninth century.⁸³

Shengshansi and the great Buddha-stature enshrined within a pavilion (actually a pagoda) therein are not unfamiliar to scholars of Tang Buddhism. It is best known for its connections with Shanwuwei 善無畏 (Śubhākarasimha, 637–735), who was lodged there when he followed Xuanzong to Luoyang in 722. Other monks affiliated with this monastery include the *vinaya* master Huaiyuan 懷遠 (fl. 710s), the Chan master Huijian 慧堅 (719–792) and Hongzheng. The Shengshansi statue is also similarly noteworthy. Not only was it inextricably entangled with empress Wu’s celebrated effort to build and rebuild the splendid politico-religious architectural institution generally known as “Luminous Hall” (Mingtang 明堂), it was also closely related to the so-called Bronze Statue of the Buddha that was allegedly set up on a slope close to Luoyang, and this imaginary bronze statue has been generally taken as a (if not the) main source of inspiration for the bronze statue of the Buddha Vairocana (16.08 meters high and cast between 747–749) that was enshrined in Tōdaiji 東大寺 at Nara.⁸⁴

Religious and Social Roles

Like other authors who wrote under similar circumstances, Quan Deyu gives us a highly stereotypical picture of Qiwei’s religious and social roles as an independent cleric:

Later, she resided in the understanding of non-abiding, washing away the six fallacies and ridding herself of any duality. Abiding by the great way, which is open and poised, she entered the dharmastream, which is swift and swirling. She taught and guided her disciples with skill and profound wisdom. With provisional or ultimate truths, she was able [to show to them] the refuge and the goal. She was like Vimalakīrti, who protected and instructed people in accordance with varying conditions; like Yan [Zun] 嚴 [遵] (also named Zhuang Zun 莊遵, Yan Junping 嚴君平) of the Shu 蜀,⁸⁵ who [interpreted Taoism] in terms of the [Confucian] teach-

⁸³ Forte, “On the Origins of the Great Fuxian Monastery 大福先寺 in Luoyang,” in Benn et al., eds, *Monasticism: Asian Perspectives* (forthcoming).

⁸⁴ Shengshansi is renowned for its pictographic and calligraphic masterpieces by Tang artists and its close relationship with Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846), who stored one of the four copies of his own collection at the monastery. It is also known for a tragedy – a massacre committed towards the end of 762 by Uighur soldiers that claimed over ten thousand civilian lives. For this monastery and its connections with both empress Wu and Hongzheng, see my forthcoming *Collusion and Collision*, chap. 2.

⁸⁵ Shuyan 蜀嚴 refers to Yan Zun 嚴遵, the Han-era scholar famous for commentaries on the *Daode jing* (viz. his *Laozi zhigui* 老子指歸). His original name was Zhuang Zun 莊遵 (styled

ing on loyalty and filial piety. Subsequently, all of her inner and external kin, both by birth and in law, were universally bathed in her teaching. How is it possible to enumerate the [spiritual] benefits that all of them gradually derived from her? 而後住無住證。洗六妄，離二邊。遵大道以坦蕩，入法流而洄復。以深惠善誘誨學徒，或權或實，為歸為趣。亦猶淨名之隨機攝導，蜀嚴以忠孝為言。故中外族姻，遍沐其化，漸漬饒益，可勝道哉？⁸⁶

Disregarding the banal rhetoric characteristic of this sort of literature, we find in this passage several noteworthy points that distinguished Qiwei as an extraordinary preacher. First is her being equated with Vimalakīrti, explicitly because she could train her followers in accordance with the varying faculties they possessed and the different circumstances in which they were situated, but probably also implicitly because of her willingness and ability to act as a bridge between the lay and the religious, given Vimalakīrti's status as a layman. Secondly, one cannot help but be impressed by Quan Deyu's comparison of Qiwei with the great Eastern Han Taoist scholar Yan Zun, who attempted to synthesize Taoist and Confucian values. This comparison is intriguing, since it not only advances our suspicions about the possibility that Qiwei's family, at least starting from her grandfather (Quan Chongben), had Taoism as their hereditary religion, but also strongly hints that despite her personal commitment to Buddhism Qiwei by and large remained an upholder of Confucian values throughout her career as a Buddhist nun. This is verified by what Quan Deyu says about her relationship with her family members, another point noteworthy in his depiction of Qiwei's roles. Qiwei maintained such a close relationship with her family that most of them came under her influence and became Buddhist believers.

Turning to the later part of Qiwei's life, Quan Deyu gives us a brief account:

Previously, during the Guangde era (August 14, 763–January 25, 765), she followed her family to emigrate to the south, where she found a peaceful residence at Zhumingsi 朱明寺 in Suzhou 蘇州. On the sixth day of the ninth month of Jianzhong (September 27, 781), in calm and silence she passed into extinction. Her retribution age was sixty-three and her monastic age forty one. As a child

Junping 君平, which was changed to Yan Zun 嚴遵 in observance of the taboo on the character *zhuang* 莊 after E. Han emperor Ming (r. 57–75) (Liu Zhuang 劉莊) was enthroned. The name "Shu Yan" referred to his native prefecture of Shu 蜀郡.

⁸⁶ "Tang gu Dongjing Anguosi Qiwei," *QZW* 28, p. 170b (*QTW* 501, pp. 14a–b).

of her older brother (her niece), her disciple the nun Huicao (?-781+) is therefore able to go most deeply in exploring the taste of her (Qiwei's) teachings. Thus, leading both the religious and lay (followers of Qiwei), she wailed while holding the golden body [i.e. the remains of Qiwei] and building a stupa at the mount to the northeast of the Eastern Wuqiusi 東武邱寺, as a token of their determination to follow her teachings. 初以廣德中, 隨其家南渡, 安居於蘇州朱明寺. 以建中二年九月六日, 冥然化滅, 報年六十二, 經夏四十一. 弟子尼惠操, 又其兒子也, 故探其義味, 最為深入. 乃率籲縉俗, 號捧金身, 建塔於東武邱寺之東北岡, 從其教也.⁸⁷

Quan Deyu does not explain why Qiwei's family moved south, but one reason may have been the turmoil of An Lushan's 安祿山 (703-757) and Shi Siming's 史思明 (703-761) rebellion from 755 to 763. An even more compelling turn of events, though, can be seen directly in Quan Deyu's family just before the rebellion. Either in or shortly before 755, Quan Deyu's father Quan Gao 權皋 (725-766), who was then a counselor to An Lushan, became convinced that An Lushan was about to rebel. He then, by means of a clever stratagem, escaped from An's area of control and fled south with his mother. Upon his arrival, and with the rebellion having broken out, Quan Gao was catapulted into statewide limelight, so much so that he almost straight away became a national hero widely wooed by southern governors and literati. His reputation and talent even captured the attention of Xuanzong, who was then ruling Sichuan and neighboring areas through his government-in-exile. The emperor appointed him as his censor (*jiancha yushi* 監察御史).⁸⁸ Largely thanks to Quan Gao's meteoric rise in political and intellectual worlds, the Quan clan started to gain a stronghold in the area of Suzhou. Thus, it is quite likely that Qiwei and her family moved south not so much to run away from the social chaos in the north as to join their kinsmen who were newly established in a vibrant cultural center in southern China.

Zhuming Monastery was a major one in the Suzhou area and possessed a long history that could be traced back to the Eastern Jin dynasty (317-420). Legend maintained that it was built in Longan 2 (February 3, 398-February 21, 399) on the basis of the mansion that the Jin figure Zhu Ming 朱明 (?-398+), renowned for integrity, donated to the *sangha*.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ "Tang gu Dongjing Anguosi Qiwei," *QZW* 28, p. 170b (*QIW* 501, p. 14b).

⁸⁸ See Quan Gao's biog., *XTS* 194, pp. 5566-67.

⁸⁹ This legend is recorded in *Wudi ji* 吳地記, a collection attributed to the Tang-era Lu Guangwei 陸廣微 (dates unknown). A native of Suzhou, the righteous and wealthy Zhu Ming

Similarly noteworthy in this passage of Quan Deyu's epitaph is the record of Huicao's status as both a disciple of Qiwei and her niece. That Qiwei played a crucial role in converting many members of her family into Buddhist believers is borne out by this excellent example. She was a daughter of either Quan Zan or Quan Ting, supposing that Qiwei had no other brothers than are reported in "Zaixiang shixi."

Finally, it should be noted that the Eastern Wuqiusi, in the vicinity of which Qiwei was buried, was another famed monastery in the Suzhou area. It was celebrated along with its twin monastery, Western Wuqiusi 西武邱寺, both on Mount Huqiu 虎邱 (later named Wuqiu), located outside Changmen 閶門, in Wu commandery in 吳縣, Jiangsu.⁹⁰ The twin monasteries were renovated on the basis of the two villas that Wang Dao's 王導 (276-339) grandson Wang Xun 王珣 (347-399) and his younger brother built on the mount in 368.⁹¹ Since then, the twin monasteries were closely associated with such eminent monks as Tandi 曇諦 (392?-452?), Daosheng 道生 (?-434), Daoyi 道壹 (330?-400?),⁹² Sengmin 僧旻 (467-527), Zhiju 智聚 (538-609),⁹³ Sengyuan 僧瑗 (639-689),⁹⁴ and Qihan 齊翰 (719-796).⁹⁵ In the time of the Song dynasty, the mount became a center for the Chan school and inspired a distinct sect named the Huqiu Sect 虎丘派. The monastery is currently known as Yunyansi 雲巖寺. The fact that Qiwei was buried so close to such a religiously important mount should be therefore read as an indication of the unusual prestige that she enjoyed among her contemporaries.

lived with his younger brother. After learning that his sister-in-law wished to split their family properties by establishing a separate household, Zhu surrendered all properties to his younger brother, leaving himself only an empty house. One night, a storm blew the properties back to him. His younger brother and his wife, immensely ashamed, committed suicide. Obviously grief-struck by this family tragedy, Zhu Ming gave away his house as a Buddhist monastery, which was subsequently named after him; *Wudi ji* (CSJC, ser. 1, edn.), no. 3146, pp. 13-14.

⁹⁰ Mount Huqiu was renamed Wuqiu 武丘 (or 武邱) during the Tang in observance of the tabooed character *hu* 虎, the first name of Li Yuan's grandfather Li Hu 李虎 (505-577).

⁹¹ *Wudi ji*, p. 8.

⁹² For these three monks' ties with Mount Huqiu and the Huqiusi, see biogs.: *GSZ* 7, p. 371A; 5, p. 356C; and 6, p. 357A.

⁹³ These two monks' activities on Mt. Huqiu are documented in their *XGSZ* biogs.: 5, p. 461C; 10, p. 502C.

⁹⁴ See Sengyuan's biog., *SGSZ* 4, p. 731A-B. This monk is noteworthy for having written a biographical collection titled "Wuqiu mingseng yuan" 武丘名僧苑 (one-fascicle), nonextant.

⁹⁵ See the stupa epitaph of Qihan by Jiaoran, "Tang Suzhou Dong Wuqiusi lüshi taming bing xu" 唐蘇州東武邱寺律師塔銘並序, *QTW* 918, pp. 6B-7B, written by the famous monk-poet Jiaoran 皎然 (a.k.a. Qingzhou 淸晝, 720-796). (Jiaoran's dates are proposed by Xu Wenming, "Tangdai shiseng Jiaoran de zongxi he sixiang" 唐代詩僧皎然的宗系和思想, in Wang Yao 王堯, comp., *Fojiao yu Zhongguo chuantong wenhua* 佛教與中國傳統文化 [Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1997], pp. 17-23.) Jiaoran does not specify the date of Qihan's death, only telling us his monastic and biological ages (47 and 68 *sui*), which, in combination with the date of his full ordination (750) (at the beginning of the epitaph, *QTW* 918, p. 6b), enables us to

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Up to this point, we have treated aspects of the religious and political lives of two fascinating eighth-century Chinese Buddhist nuns separately. Now we should subject them to comparison. As soon as we do so, we find between them a number of interesting similarities and differences. Let us first see how they are distinguished from each other.

They were from quite different types of families. While Facheng's was obviously Buddhist, given the connotations of her name (Wusuode 無所得), Qiwei's was very likely Taoist – one of her remote ancestors was even an opponent of Buddhism judging by his unfriendly attitude towards arguably the greatest Buddhist leader in his day. Quite unexpected in a family like this, with their non-Buddhist faith, Qiwei committed herself to Buddhism in a far more direct and spontaneous way than did Facheng. In contrast to Qiwei, who was already attracted to Buddhism in her childhood before formally becoming a Buddhist nun at the tender age of fifteen *sui*, Facheng did not enter the *samgha* until she was thirty-six, after her marriage was brought to a tragic end when her husband committed suicide under mounting political pressure.

Turning to their individual monastic lives, we once again notice distinctions. Although mainly practicing as a Buddhist hermit in mountains and forests, Facheng – once again quite unexpectedly, largely thanks to the humiliation of having been ensconced as a palace server – emerged as a court preacher first, and subsequently a cosmopolitan nun who successively supervised at least two capital monasteries with imperial ties. Qiwei's four-decade life as a female priest, on the other hand, was divided into two parts, with the first half spent in north China, very likely in the eastern capital Luoyang, and the latter half at a local temple in the exquisite southern city of Suzhou.

All these differences notwithstanding, the two nuns also had several points in common. We are first of all drawn to two obvious similarities. First, each one's epitaph was written by a kinsman: for Facheng, the author was a cousin once-removed of her husband; and for Qiwei, a cousin twice-removed. This probably reflects an accepted practice in medieval, especially Tang, China.⁹⁶ Second, we note that

deduce the year of his death (796) and his birth (719). Zanning also accorded Qihan a biography, which seems largely based on Jiaoran's stupa; see *SGSZ* 15, p. 799c.

⁹⁶ In addition to the above-mentioned example of Wei Tongyi, who wrote the funeral epitaph for his kinswoman the nun Qiye, Wu Chongzheng 武崇正 (?-731+), a cousin twice-removed of Wu Zetian, also did the same service for his older sister, the nun Lingjue 靈覺 (687?-738). See Wu Chongzheng, "Da Tang du Jingfu sizhu Wei Heshang taming" 大唐都景福寺主威和上塔銘, in Lu Xinyuan, *Tangwen xu shiyi* 唐文續拾遺 (Taipei: Wenhai, 1979) 3, pp. 1a-32a; discussed by Wen Yucheng 溫玉成, "Longmen suojian liang Tangshu zhong renwu zaoliang

Facheng and Qiwei each accepted at least one of their kinswomen as disciples. Such parallels remind us how closely the two nuns remained tied to their own secular families after they “abandoned their household lives.” Such an impression is only enhanced when we look more closely into their lives.

In the case of Facheng, it seems that all the major ups and downs in her life were directly caused by her status as a concubine of a member of the imperial family. No matter whether by choice or by necessity, she left the princely establishment for a mountain life as a nun largely because of the political storm that befell her husband’s family; she was then forced to abandon life as a mountain nun as a result of being implicated in the aftermath of the political purge targeted against one of her husband’s sons; and eventually, toward the end of her eventful life various favors and honors were heaped upon her from three successive Tang emperors (Zhongzong, Ruizong and Xuanzong) partly due to their sympathy for a widow of their kinsman.

As for Qiwei, she continued to exert influence on her family to the extent that most of them became Buddhist devotees. Her close relationship with her family is also highlighted by her decision to go south with them, where a branch of her clan was prospering.⁹⁷ We have found in Qiwei a fascinating case of how the three major religions (Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism) interacted with each other within a prestigious family in medieval China: after becoming a Buddhist nun, a female from an originally Taoist-dominated family, driven by her commitment to the Confucian values of loyalty and filial piety, maintained close ties with her family members and as a result succeeded in converting most of them to Buddhism. Thus, although apparently going against the Buddhist principle of “severing one’s ties with one’s secular family,” Qiwei ended up doing service to that religion by bringing to its embrace many members of the intellectual elite, among whom was the outstanding bureaucrat-scholar Quan Deyu, whose enthusiasm for Buddhism is well-documented.⁹⁸

gaishuo” 龍門所見兩唐書中人物造像概說, in Longmen shiku yanjiusuo 龍門石窟研究所, ed., *Longmen shiku yiqianwubai zhounian guoji xueshu taolunhui lunwenji* 龍門石窟一千五百週年國際學術討論會論文集 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1996), pp. 130–31. Wen has identified Wu Chongzheng as the youngest son of Wu Sansi.

⁹⁷ An anonymous reviewer suggests the possibility that Qiwei’s family went south partly in compliance with “an accepted practice” that nuns would transfer their nunneries to be near immediate family or family-head. So far, I have not encountered examples of such a practice.

⁹⁸ For the latest study of Quan Deyu’s relationship with Buddhism, see Wang Hongxia 王紅霞, “Lun Quan Deyu de ru, shi, dao guan” 論權德輿的儒釋道觀, *Sichuan shifan daxue xuebao* 四川師範大學學報 29.2 (2002), pp. 87–92.

Quan Deyu treated the Chan master Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一 (709–788) as his teacher.⁹⁹ He also maintained a long-standing friendship with Daoyi's disciple Baiyan Huaihui 百岩懷暉 (756–816).¹⁰⁰ His monastic friends also included those accomplished monk-poets as Jiaoran and Lingche 靈澈 (dates unknown).¹⁰¹ It is also noteworthy that Quan Deyu claimed discipleship under a master Ying 應, a disciple of Bukong 不空 (Amoghavajra, 705–774), for whose memorial hall 影堂 he wrote an inscription.¹⁰²

The epitaph that Quan Deyu wrote for his great-aunt demonstrates his familiarity with Buddhist doctrines. A close reading of the text that is set against his personal situation and his associations at the time brings to light several aspects of its complicated agenda, as well as pertinent attitudes toward (and possibly a capitalization of) Buddhism on Quan's part. In writing these inscriptions for monastic relatives, Li Zhijian and Quan Deyu seem to have different agendas. Whereas Li Zhijian's efforts to feature Facheng's excruciating experiences during and after empress Wu's persecution against the royal Li family bespoke a desire to rehabilitate the reputation of a disgraced kinsman, Quan Deyu, by emphasizing Qiwei's decision to emigrate with her family to the south, cleverly reminded the readers of his father's heroism and loyalty in order to advance his own interests.

Moreover, Quan Deyu's epitaph emphasized the transformative impact that his great-aunt wrought on his whole clan, giving people the impression that Buddhism increasingly was adopted as the family faith. Thus, in crafting this text he skillfully wielded a two-pronged strategy, on the one hand touting to the court and the public his family's loyalty to the Tang imperial house and, on the other, stressing Buddhism as a new faith for his family.¹⁰³ Such a strategy was fairly easily derived, considering his personal situation at the time. As a political and literary novice (he was then merely twenty-two years old), he was begin-

⁹⁹ See Daoyi's stupa-epitaph by Quan Deyu, "Mazu Daoyi chanshi taming" 馬祖道一禪師塔銘, *QZW* 28, pp. 167–68.

¹⁰⁰ See the stupa inscription Quan Deyu wrote for Huaihui, "Baiyan Chanshi taming" 百岩禪師塔銘, *QZW* 18, pp. 112–13.

¹⁰¹ Lei Enhai 雷恩海, "Zouxiang Zhenyuan wentan zongzhu diwei de jieti, Quan Deyu de jiashi beijing ji xueshu yuanyuan kaocha" 走向貞元文壇宗主地位的階梯權德輿的家世背景及學術淵源考察, *Xibeishi daxue xuebao* 西北師大學報 39.4 (2002), p. 68.

¹⁰² Quan, "Tang Daxingshansi gu Dahongjiao Dabianzheng sanzang heshang yingtang jieming bing xu" 唐大興善寺故大宏教大辯正三藏和尚影堂碣銘並序, *QZW* 28, pp. 169–70.

¹⁰³ This should not, however, prevent us from recognizing the fact that it was Confucianism that set the keynote of Quan Deyu's ideology. Likewise noteworthy is his regular engagement in Taoist-style meditation; see David McMullen, *State and Scholars in Tang China* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1988), p. 107. In addition to Qiwei's influence, Quan Deyu's devotion to Bud-

ning service as a low-ranking retainer (*congshi* 從事) under Du You 杜祐 (735–812), an accomplished scholar and financial expert.¹⁰⁴ Simultaneously, Quan was also attracting considerable attention as a fledgling author, gradually recognized as a core member of the literary circle based in what are nowadays Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces. This literary circle was headed by luminaries like Dugu Ji 獨孤及 (725–777),¹⁰⁵ Bao Ji 包佶 (?–792), Li Hua 李華 (717?–774?), the monks Jiaoran and Lingche, and supported by some of Quan Deyu’s peers, including Tang Ci 唐次, Gao Can 高參, Qi Kang 齊抗, Chen Jing 陳京, Zhao Jing 趙璟, Cui Yuanhan 崔元翰 (729–795), and most remarkably, Liang Su 梁肅 (753–793).¹⁰⁶ It might be more than coincidence that key members of this group entertained deep sympathy for Buddhism (like Dugu Ji, Li Hua, Bao Ji, Liang Su, and Cui Yuanhan),¹⁰⁷ others being actual monks (Jiaoran and Lingche). It is tempting to speculate the extent to which Quan Deyu’s familial ties with Buddhism might have smoothed his way into this literary circle, within which he was to distinguish himself as

dhism must also be understood in a larger intellectual context, which was marked by a delicate evolution of Confucian interest in interior or psychological questions (the so-called *xingming* 性命 issues) that McMullen (*State and Scholars*, pp. 105–12) has astutely detected as a major change in the intellectual milieu of T’ang China after the An Lushan rebellion.

¹⁰⁴ Fu et al., *Tang caizi zhuan jiaojian* 2, pp. 579–80; Jiang, *Dali shiren yanjiu*, pp. 604–5.

¹⁰⁵ In his mourning article for Dugu Ji (“Ji gu Dugu Changzhou wen” 祭故獨孤常州文, *QZW* 49, p. 293), Quan Deyu recalls that he paid a visit to Dugu Ji “at the age when he was determined to scholarship 志學之歲,” which in literary Chinese usually indicated the age of fifteen. However, according to Jiang Yin’s investigation (*Dali shiren yanjiu*, pp. 602–3), this visit should have occurred when Quan Deyu was sixteen years old. The close relationship between Dugu Ji and Quan Deyu was further reinforced by the marriage between Dugu Ji’s son Dugu Yu 獨孤郁 and one of Quan Deyu’s daughters.

¹⁰⁶ Jiang, *Dali shiren yanjiu*, pp. 603–4; Lei, “Zouxiang Zhenyuan,” p. 68.

¹⁰⁷ I survey some aspects of Dugu Ji’s longstanding and widespread interaction with contemporary Buddhist monks in my article, “One Name, Three Monks,” pp. 11–29. Li Hua was also a close friend of Quan Gao, whose funeral epitaph he wrote (see Quan Deyu’s biography at *JTS* 148, p. 4002). For Li Hua’s extensive Buddhist ties, see Silvio Vita, “Li Hua and Buddhism,” in Antonino Forte, ed., *Tang China and Beyond* (Kyoto: Istituto Italiano di Cultura, 1988), pp. 97–124.

Bao Ji was a close friend of Jiaoran and Lingche (Lingche’s biog., *SGSZ* 15, p. 802B; and Jiaoran’s letter to Bao Ji, “Zeng Bao Zhongzeng shu” 贈包中丞書, *QZW* 917, pp. 4b–6b). He also wrote a memorial inscription for the Chan master Mazu Daoyi 馬祖道一 (709–788) whose stupa epitaph was written by Quan Deyu (see Daoyi’s biog., *SGSZ* 10, p. 766c). *Yudi bei jimu* 輿地碑記目 records a memorial verse that Bao Ji wrote for the Third Chan Patriarch Sengcan 僧璨 in Jianzhong 3 (January 19, 782–February 5, 783), “Shangusi sanzhu dashi ji” 山谷寺三祖大師偈; see *Yudi bei jimu*, printed in *Shike shiliao xinbian* 石刻史料新編, series 1 (Taibei: Xinwenfeng, 1977), vol. 24, j. 2, p. 13a. Liang Su was not only a student of Dugu Ji, but also a lay disciple of Tiantai master Zhanran 湛然 (711–782). He was also a close friend of Quan Deyu; see McMullen, *State and Scholars*, p. 107. Cui Yuanhan wrote a memorial epitaph for Faqin 法欽 (714–792), the founder of the Jingshan 徑山 sect of the Chan school; see *SGSZ* 9, p. 765A. His friendship with Quan Deyu is attested by the preface that the latter wrote for his collection of work; see Quan Deyu, “Tang gu Shangshu Bibu langzhong Boling Cui Jun wenji xu” 唐故尚書比部郎中博陵崔君文集序, *QZW* 33, pp. 195–96.

a leader.¹⁰⁸ In his reply to a letter of Quan Deyu, Jiaoran, one of the most prestigious writers at the time, lavished praise on the young man probably not wholly from his fondness for Quan Deyu's literary accomplishment, but also out of appreciation for Quan Deyu's and his family's enthusiasm toward Buddhism.¹⁰⁹ Given that Jiaoran wrote a funeral epitaph for a monk belonging to the Eastern Wuqiusi, with which Qiwei also maintained some close connections, I am even willing to assume that Jiaoran probably knew of, if not befriended, Qiwei. At any rate, it seems safe to say that this Buddhist nun had significantly helped, even though inadvertently, the secular career of one of her most talented kinsmen when he was cautiously making his first step towards a capricious world. This is not, moreover, an isolated case.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GSZ	<i>Gaoseng zhuan</i> 高僧傳
JTS	<i>Jiu Tang shu</i> 舊唐書
QTW	<i>Quan Tang wen</i> 全唐文
QZW	<i>Quan Zaizhi wenji</i> 權載之文集
SGSZ	<i>Song gaoseng zhuan</i> 宋高僧傳
T	<i>Taishō shinshū daizōkyō</i> 大正新修大藏經
TMH	<i>Tangdai muzhi huibian</i> 唐代墓志匯編
XGSZ	<i>Xu Gaoseng zhuan</i> 續高僧傳
XTS	<i>Xin Tang shu</i> 新唐書
ZZTJ	<i>Zizhi tongjian</i> 資治通鑒

¹⁰⁸ Many factors, of course, contributed to Quan Deyu's success as a political and literary leader at the time. These included talent, integrity, and family background. His and his family's involvement in Buddhism should also be considered crucial, given that a number of contemporary political and literary leaders (including Daizong and Dezong) were quite infatuated with that religion. It appears both necessary and rewarding to study the role Buddhism might have played in creating and developing several politico-literary circles at that (and other) periods of time.

¹⁰⁹ See Jiaoran, "Da Quan congshi Deyu shu" 答權從事德興書, *QTW* 917, pp. 2b–3b. Only the month and date, and not the year, of the letter are given at the end of the letter. Lei Enhai ("Zouxiang Zhenyuan," p. 68) identifies the year as Zhenyuan 3 (January 24, 787–February 11, 789). If this dating is correct, Quan Deyu was then twenty-nine *sui*.