

The Invention of Traditions: With a Focus on Innovations in the *Scripture of the Great Cavern* in Ming-Qing Daoism*

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Abstract

This paper aims to discuss the formation of new religious traditions and authorities in Ming-Qing Daoism and their social-cultural backgrounds. Focusing in particular on the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Cavern* (*Dadong zhenjing* 大洞真經), which held the position of supreme scripture until the Song Daoist Canon, this paper will show how spirit-writing in premodern times imposed new interpretations on the scripture and its practices and adapted it to the latest social and intellectual context in changing times.

Keywords: Ming-Qing Daoism, Scripture of the Great Cavern, Whirlwind Unification of Thearch One, spirit-writing, cult of Wenchang and Lü Dongbin, literati class, locality.

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I. Introduction

Revelation has played a significant role in the history of the canonization of Daoist texts. It has always been an important way of creating new authorities as well as innovating on the tradition itself. Indeed, it should be sacred writings, or texts revealed by divine beings, that become canonical scriptures. A Chinese conservative theory on the formation of canons is based on such an idea: a canonical scripture (*jing* 經) can be created only by Sages or divine beings, and ordinary humans with flesh and blood merely transmit it, as Confucius emphasized when he referred to “only paraphrasing and not creating (述而不作)” in the *Analects*.

From the outset, the legitimacy of canonizing Daoist scriptures depended on acknowledgement of their revelatory authenticity, by which they gained the power to innovate on the Daoist tradition. Drawing special attention to the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Cavern*, which has gone through dramatic changes not only in its interpretation but also in its textual composition from medieval times to late imperial China, this paper aims to explore the changes and developments that new revelations in the Ming-Qing period brought to the scripture, as well as ways in which the text was recontextualized in the latest social and intellectual environments.

The *Perfected Scripture of the Great Cavern* (*Dadong zhenjing* 大洞真經; hereafter *Great Cavern Scripture*) appeared with the Highest Clarity (*shangqing* 上清) movement, often called the “revelation of Maoshan 茅山,” in the fourth century in Southern China. Many studies down to the present day agree that the *Great Cavern Scripture* is a text that was revealed to the spirit-medium Yang Xi 楊羲 (330–386?), who was a central figure in the formation of the corpus of Highest Clarity scriptures.¹

¹ Michel Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations: Taoism and the Aristocracy,” *T'oung-pao* 63.1 (1977): 1–62; Isabelle Robinet, *Taoist Meditation: The Mao-Shan Tradition of Great Purity*, trans. Julian F. Pas & Norman J. Girardot (State University of New York Press, 1993); id., *Taoism: Growth of a Religion* (Stanford University, 1997); Mugitani Kunio 麥谷邦夫, “*Daidō shinkei Sanjūkyūshō* o megutte 《大洞真經三十九章》をめぐって,” in *Chūgoku kodōkyōshi kenkyū* 中國古道教史研究 (Kyōto: Dōhōsha, 1992), 55–87.

The *Great Cavern Scripture* has substantial status in the history of Daoism because it was placed at the start of the *Daoist Canon* throughout medieval China, being considered the ultimate method for both transcendence and salvation. Although the extant Ming *Zhengtong Daoist Canon* places the *Scripture of Salvation* (*Duren jing* 度人經) at the start, as Chao Gongwu 晁公武 (1105–1180) commented in his *Record of Reading Books in Prefecture Studio* (*Junzhai dushu zhi* 郡齋讀書志), the *Great Cavern Scripture* had always been placed at the head of the *Daoist Canon* until the end of the Song.²

The ultimate purpose of the *Great Cavern Scripture* lies in both the transcendence of the practitioner and the salvation of others, including seven-generation ancestors.³ This is achieved through ten thousand recitations of the scripture (*songjing* 誦經) as well as visualization or actualization (*cunsi* 存思)⁴ of gods and divine realms. In particular, the “method of Whirlwind Unification of

² *Junzhai dushu zhi* 16: 738–739. “大洞真經，……道藏書……皆以此書為之首。” Strickmann asserts that the replacement of the head scripture of the *Daoist Canon* took place in the Huizong reign period. Strickmann, “The Mao Shan Revelations,” 339. Judith Boltz, *A Survey of Taoist Literature: Tenth to Seventeenth Centuries* (Berkeley: Institute of Asian Studies, University of California, 1987), 27. But it is unlikely that Huizong placed the *Scripture of Salvation* at the start of the *Zhenghe Daozang* (completed in 1114) since Chao Gongwu’s first draft of the *Record of Reading Books* was completed around 1151 (Shu version 蜀刻本 in 4 juan, Yan version 袁本 in 7 juan) and revised it in 20 juan before 1187 (Qu version 衢本). The *Zhenghe Daozang* was printed at least forty years earlier than Chao’s record, and so it is unconceivable that Chao would not have seen it.

³ Mugitani, “Daidō shinkei,” 75–82.

⁴ The translation “visualization” is not an adequate rendering of *cunsi* because *cunsi* means “to imagine and make something real or existent,” based on the Chinese *qi* system. Thus it is close to the idea of “active imagination” or “creative imagination,” as many scholars have noted. See Edward H. Schafer, “The Jade Woman of Greatest Mystery,” *History of Religions* 17 (1978): 387–398; Robinet, *Taoist Meditation*, 48–54. Its aim is to synthesize both the mental and physical sense of reality, using all five sensory images, not just the sense of sight but also hearing, smell, taste, and touch. But because “actualization” is a somewhat strange term for English readers, in this paper I have opted to use “visualization” as a term implying a contemplative practice that activates and integrates the five sensory images.

Thearch One”⁵ (*huifeng hunhe diyi zhi fa* 迴風混合帝一之法) has great importance as the “orthopraxis” of the scripture. By “orthopraxis,” I mean the core practice that has been recognized as orthodox for embodying or realizing a religious goal. The practice is characterized by visualizing inner gods and *qi* so as to unify them into a single infant-form god, Diyi 帝一 or “Thearch One”;⁶ “Whirlwind” represents the cyclonic mixture and flow of *qi* within and without the practitioner’s body.

Although Isabelle Robinet emphasized that the *Great Cavern Scripture* contains two levels—“one celestial and the other corporeal”—and that the visualization of the body gods must be understood as the perfect counterpart to visualizing the gods in the heavens, she characterized its practice as making the Daoist adept’s body into a “closed world” at the outset.⁷ Many introductions to Daoism also describe the meditation of inner gods as the main characteristic of the scripture.⁸ How, then, did this introverted and individual pursuit of the *Great Cavern Scripture* obtain supreme authority in the *Daoist Canon*?

⁵ “Diyi” is commonly translated as “Emperor One” by Euro-American scholars. But *di* implies both the highest god and ruler in Chinese tradition, and therefore “Thearch One” has been chosen in order to emphasize its divinity, following the advice of reviewers. This translation was also adopted by Robert Ford Campany, “Relation with Unseen World,” in *Early Medieval China: A Sourcebook* (Columbia University Press, 2013), 620, 634. Hereafter I translate *di* consistently as “thearch” to differentiate it from historical dynastic emperors.

⁶ Mugitani, “Daidō shinkei,” 75–82; Robinet, *Taoist Meditation*, 97–117. Although Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 questioned its authenticity as a genuine revelation to Yang Xi, the whirlwind visualization has been the orthopraxis of the *Great Cavern Scripture* since the Six Dynasties period. As for Tao Hongjing’s view, see a fragment of the *Dengzhen yinjue* 登真隱訣 in DZ104 *Shangqing dadong zhenjing yujue yinyi* 上清大洞真經玉訣音義, Chen Jingyuan 陳景元, ed., 12a; Kim Jihyun 金志珪, “Daidō shinkei no jisshu ni okerushintai: Unkyū shichisen shaku sanjūkyūshōkei o fumaete 《大洞真經》の實修における身體：《雲笈七籤》釋三十九章經を踏まえて,” *Tōhō shūkyō* 東方宗教 107 (2006): 25.

⁷ Robinet, *Taoism*, 103.

⁸ For example, Qing Xitai 卿希泰, ed., *Zhongguo daojiao shi* 中國道教史, vol. 1 (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1999), 337–377. For the revised version, see Qing Xitai and Zhan Shichuang 詹石窗, eds., *Zhongguo daojiao sixiang shi* 中國道教思想史, vol. 1 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2009), 393–398.

By reconstructing the old composition of the text, I have suggested the necessity of reinterpreting the vision of the *Great Cavern Scripture*. First, the scripture incorporated the “Jade Commentary (*Yuzhu* 玉注)” up to the sixth century, which was regarded as equivalent to the core part of the scripture itself. This was mainly because Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 (456–536) included the *Great Cavern Scripture* and *Jade Commentary* together in the original *Secret Instructions for Ascending to the Perfect* (*Dengzhen yinjue* 登真隱訣).⁹

This commentary plays a role in clarifying the double structure of the scripture and strengthening the spatial concreteness of the celestial world. Thus, if based on the *Jade Commentary*, in contrast to previous understanding that emphasized the level of inner gods, the *Great Cavern Scripture* not only aims at visualization of the corporeal gods, but also aims at visualization of the celestial gods and their palaces. Several anthologies suggest that one of the main characteristics of the *Great Cavern Scripture* is its grandiose description of the Daoist celestial world. In short, the practice of the scripture was intended to simultaneously manifest two worlds—the microcosm and the macrocosm—in order to unify and embody them.¹⁰

The *Great Cavern Scripture* has undergone dramatic changes from the beginning through to late imperial China. From the fourth to fourteenth centuries, it developed mainly into three versions, which are extant in the Ming *Daoist Canon*. If we delve into the

⁹ See Kim, “*Daidō shinkei* no jisshu ni okerushintai,” 24–26. Chen Jingyuan 陳景元 called the *Jade Commentary* “Jade Commentary of Lords of Dao (*daojun yuzhu* 道君玉注)” (DZ104: 12a–b). It is partially preserved in *YJQQ*, juan 8–9 and briefly noted in the Maoshan version (DZ6). The Maoshan version’s succinct note shows well how the *Jade Commentary* was supposed to be memorized before reciting the text. Here I am not arguing for the existence of the original text of Yang Xi. It had already been lost by Tao Hongjing’s time, as many scholars have pointed out, but Tao acquired two transcribed versions of the *Great Cavern Scripture* (one shorter and the other longer) and *Jade Commentary* and included them both in the *Dengzhen yinjue*, which survived until the Song period. Thus the fragments preserved in *YJQQ* are highly likely to be related to the older text predating the Southern Song version (DZ6).

¹⁰ Kim, “*Daidō shinkei* no jisshu ni okerushintai,” 27–37.

historical background of these texts, it is noticeable that each version has a specific locality in accordance with its origin and circulation. It is even more interesting that these distinctive local regions generated another three versions of the text from the late Ming to the Qing that show complex interrelationships with the previous versions.

Before discussing the innovations of the *Great Cavern Scripture* in the Ming-Qing period, it is necessary to describe the previous three versions in the *Daoist Canon* and their distribution in pre-Ming periods.

II. Pre-Ming Versions of the *Great Cavern Scripture*

(a) The Maoshan Version in the Jiang-Zhe Region (11–13C)

Apart from a fragment of a Dunhuang manuscript (Ch.75.iv2), it is known that the oldest extant text of the *Great Cavern Scripture* is the *Perfected Scripture of the Great Cavern of Highest Clarity* (DZ6, *Shangqing dadong zhenjing* 上清大洞真經) in 6 juan, edited by the twenty-third patriarch (*zongshi* 宗師) of Highest Clarity of Maoshan, Zhu Ziyong 朱自英 (974–1029), and collated by the thirty-eighth patriarch, Jiang Zongying 蔣宗瑛 (d. 1281), in the thirteenth century. Zhu Ziyong's edition must have been the standard text of the Northern Song period. Chen Jingyuan 陳景元 (1025–1094) attests that Zhu's edition was not much different from the text transmitted by Maoshan patriarchs.¹¹ Thus, for the sake of convenience, let us call the extant text (DZ6) the Maoshan version. However, it should be noted that Jiang Zongying's collated edition was not included in the Song *Daoist Canon*, nor in the *Tiangong Baozang* 天宮寶藏 or *Zhenghe Wanshou Daozang* 政和萬壽道藏. We shall return to this point later.

The Maoshan version is composed of 39 chapters and includes various elements: *Jade Scriptures* (*yujing* 玉經) or *Cavern Scriptures* (*dongjing* 洞經) belonging to celestial gods (*daojun* 道君), manuals for visualization of corporeal gods (*tishen* 體神) and incantations of protection, which are called “Secret Writs and Esoteric Incantations of Divine Knowledge for the Extinction of Māra 消魔神慧內祝隱文,”

¹¹ DZ104: 2b.

talismans transmitted by Maoshan patriarchs, etc.

The core part of the text is written in verse, starting with “The *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern* said . . . (*Dadong yujing yue* 大洞玉經曰).” Because the *Jade Scripture* can be described as “a scripture within a scripture,” this results in a “double structure” of the text. Each *Jade Scripture* corresponds to one of the 39 chapter titles, ending with the “*daojing* 道經” of a certain Lord of Dao (*daojun*). This indicates that the scripture’s core parts were intended to be believed to be the spoken words of 39 Lords of Dao (*daojun*), who again represent particular celestial spaces. A lost fragment of the scripture also states, “Thirty-nine Lords of Dao wrote each chapter. Thus it is called the *Thirty-nine Chapter Scripture* 三十九道君，各著經一章。故曰三十九章經。”¹² Its composition suggests a double structure consisting of corporeal and celestial parts, and the aim of reciting and meditating on the scripture is to embody the unification of the two realms.¹³

Let us consider the distribution or circulation of the text in pre-Ming times. Basically, Daoist monasteries in the capital and main provinces were provided with sets of the *Daoist Canon* by the court, and they must have had the *Great Cavern Scripture* ever since the Song Emperor Zhenzong 真宗 had the *Tiangong Baozang* (*Precious Canon of the Celestial Palace*) completed in 1019.¹⁴ It

¹² YJQQ 8: 1a, quotation from *Dadong zhenjing*.

¹³ Kim, “*Daidō shinkei* no jissu ni okerushintai,” 27–37.

¹⁴ The *Tiangong Baozang* was a collection of transcribed manuscripts and not a printed version. Zhang Junfang 張君房 (fl. 1008–1025) submitted seven copies to the court in 1019 (Preface to YJQQ). Fan Zhen 范鎮 writes about the distribution of the *Tiangong Baozang* in the eleventh century that “[The Emperor] distributed [copies of the *Daoist Canon*] to Daoist Abbeys and Palaces throughout the country so as to propagate the transmission [of Daoist teachings] 賜天下宮觀，以廣其傳。” However, its distribution did not reach Sichuan. The Daoist Yao Ruogu 姚若谷 of Chengdu 成都 and the Daoist Zhu Zhishan 朱知善 of Zizhou 梓州 made efforts to transcribe copies from Daoist monasteries in other prefectures. At the start of the new reign of Yingzong 英宗 in 1064, they asked the court for a set of the *Daoist Canon* and finally received an official version (*guanben* 官本). This tells us that the distribution of the *Daoist Canon* was nationwide by imperial order, and local Daoists reproduced transcribed copies from the official version and redistributed them to local Daoist temples. Fan Zhen, “Records of the Daoist Canon in Chongdao guan 崇道觀道藏記,” in Cheng Yusun 程遇孫, comp., *Chengdu wenlei* 成都文類 37: 17b–20a, in *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshu guan 臺灣商務印書館, 1983–1986).

would be more likely since the Emperor Huizong 徽宗 had woodblock prints of the *Daoist Canon* made in 1114. However, it seems that the circulation of the Maoshan version outside Daoist monasteries was quite limited in the Jiangsu 江蘇 and Zhejiang 浙江 area during the Song-Yuan period.

Jiang Zongying, a native of Piling 毗陵 (Changzhou 常州 in Jiangsu), found the *Dengzhen yinjue* in a cave on Mt. Jinting 金庭山 (present-day Xiaoxing 紹興 in Zhejiang) when he was young. It made him become a disciple of Tang Zhidao 湯志道 (the thirty-seventh patriarch) on Mt. Mao, and he eventually became the thirty-eighth patriarch. However, when Khubilai's troops invaded Ezhou 鄂州 (present-day Wuchang 武昌) in 1259, Jiang resigned as patriarch of Mt. Mao and sought refuge on Mt. Tianmu 天目山 (present-day Lin'an 臨安 in Zhejiang), wandering through the Yongjia 永嘉 region (present-day Wenzhou 溫州 in Zhejiang), where he wrote a commentary on the *Great Cavern Scripture* in 16 juan.¹⁵

During nearly a decade of reclusion, Jiang Zongying reached Mt. Jiuhua 九華山 (Anhui 安徽) and transmitted the *Great Cavern Scripture* to his disciple Cheng Gongduan 程公端, worrying that its transmission would end, probably because of the fall of the Song dynasty. While Cheng was grateful for having received the sacred scripture, he stressed the text's exclusive transmission among the Maoshan patriarchs: "It was transmitted from generation to generation of the patriarchs of Highest Clarity of Maoshan. During a thousand years, there were only 38 people (who received the text)" 茅山上清宗壇，歷代傳授。千餘歲間，纔三十八人。¹⁶

Cheng respected his master's wish to broaden its transmission and made a woodblock print of it. He commemorated its completion by writing the postscript on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month in 1272, which was the first year of Khubilai's new Dayuan 大元. Many patriarchs of Maoshan died with the fall of the Southern Song, and Jiang Zongying passed away in the year of the summons by Shizhu 世祖 Khubilai to Beijing in 1281. It was the same year that Khubilai ordered the burning of all texts of the *Daoist Canon* with the exception of the *Daode jing* 道德經.¹⁷

¹⁵ DZ304 *Maoshan zhi* 茅山志, Liu Dabin 劉大彬, ed., 12: 9a-b.

¹⁶ DZ6: 19a, Postscript.

¹⁷ *Yuanshi* 元史 11: 234 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju 中華書局, 1976).

It was probably from this time that the Maoshan version began to circulate outside Daoist monasteries. A Song imperial kinsman and eminent calligrapher, Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫, who was a native of Wuxing 吳興 (Zhejiang), transcribed the *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern of Most High* (*Gaoshang dadong yujing* 高上大洞玉經) in 1305. It is worth noting that its main part is completely identical with the *Jade Scripture* part of the Maoshan version. Zhao had close connections with Daoist masters of Mt. Mao. According to a colophon by Yu Ji 虞集 (1272–1348) in another copy of the text, Zhao received secret instructions for the *Great Cavern Scripture* from the Perfected Liu 劉真人 of Mt. Mao.¹⁸ The extant transcribed copy was acquired by the famous collector Hang Yuanbian 項元汴 (1525–90) in the Ming period and became a treasure of the Qianlong 乾隆 Emperor of the Qing dynasty, now held by Tianjin Municipal Art Museum 天津市藝術博物館.¹⁹

Meanwhile, Jiang's collated version was handed down to the forty-third Heavenly Master Zhang Yuchu 張宇初 (1361–1410) when a native of Min 閩 (Fujian), Xiong Changyi 熊常一, asked Zhang Yuchu to write a postscript for making a woodblock print. It appears that Zhang Yuchu incorporated the text into the Ming *Daoist Canon*. It was in 1408 that the Yongle 永樂 Emperor issued an edict for him to complete the *Daoist Canon*.

In short, the circulation and reproduction of the Maoshan version was quite restricted among the inner circle of Daoist priests before the fall of the Song dynasty and did not extend far beyond the southeastern regions of China. This explains the reason that the text has remained relatively unchanged.

¹⁸ Wang Keyu 汪軻玉 (1587–?) records two copies transcribed by Zhao Mengfu. Yu Ji's colophon is attached to "Zhao's transcription of the *Gaoshang dadong yujing* 趙書高上大洞玉經" in *Shanhuwang* 珊瑚網 8: 9b–10b, in *Siku quanshu*.

¹⁹ A reprint of this work is available in the *Kaishu gaoshang dadong yujing* 楷書高上大洞玉經 (Huangshan shushe, 2008). Many reliable ownership stamps have been confirmed in this work, e.g. the Qing imperial stamps "Qianlong yulan zhi bao 乾隆御覽之寶," "Qianqing gong zhenzang bao 乾清宮珍藏寶," Hang Yuanbian's ownership stamps "Hang Yuanbian yin 項元汴印," "Molin 墨林," and "Hang Zijing jia zhenzang 項子京家珍藏," and Zhao Mengfu's stamps "Zhao 趙," "Daya 大雅," "Zhao Mengfu yin 趙孟頫印," etc. Wang Keyu wrote a postscript for it. See *Shanhuwang* 8.

(b) Spirit-writing and the Wenchang Version in the Bashu Region (12–Early 14C)

It was in 1168 that spirit-writing (*fujī* 扶乩), or descending brush (*jiangbi* 降筆) by flying phoenix (*feilan* 飛鸞), reformulated the *Great Cavern Scripture* for the first time. A new text was revealed by the Thearch Lord of Zitong 梓潼帝君 (i.e. the God of Literature, Wenchang 文昌 or Wendi 文帝) to Liu Ansheng 劉安勝 at his “Phoenix Altar (*lantai* 鸞臺).” This new revealed text is called the *Transcendent Scripture of the Great Cavern* 大洞仙經 or the Wenchang version.

During the Yuan dynasty, Wei Qi 衛琪 (1260–?; *hao*: Zhongyangzi 中陽子) produced two editions, in 1302 and 1309, which are extant in the *Daoist Canon*. One is the *Taishang wuji zongzhen Wenchang dadong xianjing* 太上無極總真文昌大洞仙經 (DZ5; hereafter “Liu version”) in 5 juan, which originated with Liu’s text and was collated in 1264 by Luo Yizi 羅懿子, who received the second spirit-writing of Wenchang at Mowei cavern 摩維洞 on Mt. Aotou 鰲頭山 (Nanchuan 南川 in Chongqing 重慶). Wei Qi received another revelation at his “Altar of the Assemblage of the Perfected (*zongzhentan* 總真壇),” located in Guiyan 桂巖 in Xiling 西陵 (present-day Chongqing)²⁰ in 1302 and completed the 5-juan edition. The other is the *Yuqing wuji zongzhen Wenchang dadong xianjing zhu* 玉清無極總真文昌大洞仙經註 (DZ103; hereafter “Wei version”) in 10 juan, completed in 1309.

The characteristics of the Wenchang version are its composition and, needless to say, its relationship with the cult of the Thearch Lord of Zitong (Wenchang). As regards its composition, it reduces the 39 chapters of the Maoshan version to 36 chapters, which corresponds to the multiplication of the “metal numbers (*jinshu* 金數)” 4 and 9, and so it symbolizes the “golden elixir.”²¹ In

²⁰ “Guiyan,” or Cassia Cliff, was a mystical place in Fuzhou 涪州 (present-day Chongqing) where a cassia tree bloomed only when someone passed the imperial examination. *Sichuan tongzhi* 四川通志 46: 106a, in *Siku quanshu*. “桂巖：涪州南長灘里內，巖下有古桂樹，花不常開，其年有士登科則花。石上有「桂巖」二大字。” I received valuable advice from Prof. Hshieh Tsung Hui 謝聰輝 for identifying place-names in the Bashu region.

²¹ DZ103, 1: 6a–b, Wei Qi, Preface, “三十六章以應四九金數，即自己金丹之道，上卷
(Continue on next page)

comparison to the Maoshan version, which has inconsonance in literary style since it includes both 4-syllable and 5-syllable verses, the Wenchang version has uniformly 5-syllable verses.²² As mentioned above, the 39 *Jade Scriptures* of the Maoshan version have 39 different titles and start with “The *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern* said . . .,” and the *Jade Scriptures* represent multiple realms of various celestial Lords of Dao. In the Wenchang version, on the other hand, the 39 titles have been removed and the opening statement has been replaced with “The Celestial King of Primordial Beginning (Yuanshi tianwang 元始天王) said. . .” The 36 chapters of the Wei version are called “*Jade Stanzas of the Great Cavern of Wenchang* (*Wenchang dadong yuzhang* 文昌大洞玉章).” This means that all *Jade Scriptures*, now *Jade Stanzas* transmitted by Wenchang, are the words of a single god, Yuanshi tianwang.

Consequently, the meaning of “Great Cavern (*dadong*)” changed. In the context of the Maoshan version, “Great Cavern” means “thorough unification” of the manifold cavern-heavens (*dongtian* 洞天) of celestial Lords of Dao with the manifold inner spaces of corporeal gods. The unification must be achieved through the recitation of the scripture as well as the visualization of “Whirlwind Unification of Thearch One.” However, in the Wenchang version, “Great Cavern” designates the “great realm” of Yuanshi tianwang, who grants both transcendence and salvation, provided that one dedicates oneself to worship of Yuanshi tianwang’s statue and recitation of the scripture. In this new

(Note 21—*Continued*)

十章，中卷十章，下卷一十六章，三卷皆以五言為句，共三十六章。” The chapter divisions are different in the Liu and Wei versions. The Liu version actually has 38 chapters of the Maoshan version, but without numbering. Among these 38 chapters, chs. 1 and 13 of the Maoshan version have been turned into prefatory remarks, and chs. 10 and 11 have been combined into one chapter. Thus the main part has become 36 chapters, which start with “Yuanshi tianwang said. . .” In the Wei version too, ch. 1 of the Maoshan version has been turned into prefatory remarks, and a second chapter has been added and ch. 17 of the Maoshan version deleted. It is divided into 3 juan and 36 chapters: juan 1 is composed of chs. 3–12 of the Maoshan version, juan 2 chs. 13–16 and 18–22, and juan 3 chs. 24–39.

²² Chapters 1 and 38 of the Maoshan version are written in 4-syllable verses. In the Wenchang version these have been made prefatory remarks, and otherwise they have been deleted or rewritten.

revelatory tradition, nothing is more essential than the power of talismans (*jiuguang fu* 九光符, or Nine Lights Talismans) and a liturgical method (*jiutong fa* 九統法, or Method of Ninefold Integration). Although it is unclear whether the talismans and the ritual existed in specific forms, Wei Qi emphasizes “the combination of ninefold integration and nine lights 九統合九光,” which is superior to the visualization of Whirlwind Unification:

By the method of Ninefold Integration, one can unite with the Thearch; by the talismans of Nine Lights, one can assemble [corporeal] gods. It is all about the way of “Whirlwind Unification.”²³

九統之法以會帝，九光之符以集神。此乃回風混合之道。

A tendency towards simplification of soteriology is closely related to the legend of Lord Zitong (Wenchang), who acquired the salvific power to ward off flood damage and pestilential disease. In this legend, we can find common elements in the main scriptures related to the Wenchang cult, the *Book of Transformation of Wenchang* (*Wenchang huashu* 文昌化書 JY255, DZ170 *Zitong dijun huashu* 梓潼帝君化書) and the *Scripture of the Responses and Proofs of the Thearch Lord of Zitong* (DZ28, *Yuanshi tianzun shuo Zitong dijun yingyan jing* 元始天尊說梓潼帝君應驗經). The background of the story is the Shu 蜀 (Sichuan) region, and the Lord of Zitong (Wenchang) is closely connected to Yuanshi tianwang or Yuanshi tianzun 元始天尊.

According to the legend of Lord Zitong described in the preface to the Liu version, the salvation of all ancestors and the elimination of disasters can be accomplished only through worship of Yuanshi tianwang and recitation of the scripture. The story goes as follows. Once when the future Lord Zitong was working in the fields, he found a golden statue of Yuanshi tianwang. It was said that the ancient sage-king Yu 禹 of Xia 夏 had used the statue to prevent flooding. He was also able to prevent floods by worshipping the statue, and divine gods of light gave him the *Great Cavern Scripture* to recite. By virtue of reciting the scripture, he was eventually able to rescue his parents' souls from hell, eliminate sins, exterminate disasters, prolong life, and enrich blessings. After one

²³ DZ103, 4: 20a, ch. 9.

thousand recitations of the *Great Cavern Scripture*, he acquired the power to exorcise plague demons (*wengui* 瘟鬼) by receiving the ritual text and talismans of the *Great Cavern* (*dadong falu* 大洞法籙). By performing the ritual with talismans, he summoned soldiers from the Great Cavern-Heaven to arrest plague demons. After performing many good deeds by saving people, he ascended to the post of Celestial Worthy of Eternal Life and Restoration (Gensheng yongming tianzun 更生永命天尊).²⁴

As Boltz has pointed out, one of the essential religious functions of Daoist scriptures of the Song-Yuan period can be encapsulated in salvation from disease and disasters through liturgical methods.²⁵ In this sense, it is no coincidence that the Wenchang version of the *Great Cavern Scripture* has a style of composition similar to the *Scripture of Salvation* (*Duren jing* 度人經). Wei Qi was the main person who advocated the equal importance of both scriptures. The revelation of Wenchang in 1302 said, “The *Scripture of Salvation* and *Book of the Great Cavern* are the ancestors of all Daoist scriptures, . . . [However,] people know only how to recite the *Scripture of Salvation*, but do not know how to recite the *Scripture of the Great Cavern*.”²⁶

As many scholars agree, the cult of Wenchang was popular among literati who sought positions in civil offices and government. Accordingly, most texts related to Wenchang reflect the ethical views of the literati class in the Song-Ming period.²⁷ Above all, the

²⁴ DZ5, 1: 1a–5a, Preface. The same story is seen in the *Book of Transformation* (JY255, DZ170), but Liu’s preface dated 1168 is apparently the earliest source. The *Book of Transformation* preserved in the *Daozang jiyao* is dated 1181, while the Daozang version is a Yuan recension dated to 1316. See Terry Kleeman, *A God’s Own Tale: The Book of Transformations of Wenchang, the Divine Lord of Zitong* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

²⁵ Boltz, *A Survey of Taoist Literature*, 23–25.

²⁶ DZ5, 1: 5a, Preface, “度人經、大洞書、諸經之祖、……世人惟知誦度人經、而不知誦大洞經。”

²⁷ Kleeman, “The Expansion of the Wen-ch’ang Cult,” in *Religion and Society in T’ang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 45–73; id., *A God’s Own Tale*; id., “The Lives and Teachings of the Divine Lord of Zitong,” in *Religions of China in Practice*, ed. Donald S. Lopez, Jr. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 64–71; Sakai Tadao 酒井忠夫, *Zōho Chūgoku zensho no kenkyū* 增補中國善書の研究, 2 vols. (Tōkyō: Kokusho kankōkai 國書刊行會, 1999).

synthetic understanding of Neo-Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism is a general characteristic of Daoist texts that were circulating among intellectuals at that time. The same is the case with Wei Qi's annotations of the *Great Cavern Scripture*.

Wei Qi interprets "Thearch One" as the unifying and controlling function of the human mind rather than the unified divine *qi* of corporeal gods. He interprets "Thearch (*di*)" as the intellectual power to "preside over" or "control," and so he writes that "it designates the human heart/mind." He also states, "Oneness (*yi*) is wholeheartedness (*cheng* 誠)," and therefore "it can be known that the *Great Cavern Scripture* corresponds to the Confucian doctrine of the mean (*Zhongyong* 中庸)."²⁸ Further, Wei's commentary on the statement "Whirlwind unites with the Thearch's heart/mind 迴風混帝心" reads as follows:

"The Thearch's heart/mind" (*dixin* 帝心) is "the heart/mind that follows the Dao" (*daoxin* 道心). "The human heart/mind is precarious; the heart/mind that follows the Dao is subtle. Be concentrated and unified! Faithfully hold to the mean." . . . The meaning of "unification through Whirlwind" is that by combining *qi* of heaven and earth one completes the perfected way of Thearch One so as to acquire the Samādhi of the Thearch's heart/mind. It is the same with the human body: one can make the dragon with bodily fluids and make the tiger with *qi*. The way to transform circulation [in inner alchemy] lies only in these two things.²⁹

帝心，即道心也。「人心惟危，道心惟微，惟精惟一，允執厥中。」……
迴風混合者，天地之炁相交，以成帝一真道，三昧帝心也。人亦如之，以津成龍，以炁為虎。運轉之道，在此二物。

Wei Qi obviously used a famous statement from the *Book of Documents* (*Shujing* 書經) that is essential to the Neo-Confucian theory of mind/heart.³⁰ Moreover, he interpreted the visualization of

²⁸ DZ103, 3: 4b-5a, "主宰謂之帝，人心是也，……一乃誠也……故知大洞經即儒中庸也。"

²⁹ DZ103, 5: 9a; 10a, ch. 11.

³⁰ The sixteen characters of the *Book of Documents* were regarded as the *xinfa* 心法 (dharma of heart/mind) transmitted by the sage-kings Yao, Shun, and Yu and were taken as the firm basis for the Neo-Confucian doctrine of "the true lineage

(Continue on next page)

“Whirlwind Unification” in the Maoshan version in relation to Buddhism and inner alchemy.

A chancellor of the Hanlin Academy, Zhang Zhongshou 張仲壽 (1252–1324), aptly pointed out the characteristics of Wei Qi’s commentary.

The *Transcendent Scripture of the Great Cavern* may originate from the western Shu region. It has never been seen in the central plains. Master Zhongyang, Lord Wei, came to the capital from Mt. Feng 蓬山 (located in present-day Suining 遂寧 in Sichuan) and showed me the text, asking me to write a preface. . . . Lord Wei combined the three sages’ teachings in the commentary, for its meanings are profound and surpassing. Unless one penetrates all the books of the three teachings, it is not easy to understand.

大洞仙經，蓋西蜀之文，中原未之見也。中陽衛君自蓬山來京師，示予一編，且求為序……衛君以三教聖人有雜註於其間，旨意深遠。苟不能貫通三教之書，未易觀也。³¹

The greatest difference between the Wenchang version and the Maoshan version is widespread circulation of the former outside Daoist monasteries. It was circulated and transcribed among the literati class. An abundance of prefaces for the Wei version ensured that civil officials and scholars of national academies favored this scripture.

It is highly likely that the spread of the scripture was triggered by *Wenchang hui* 文昌會, or associations for liturgical activities centered on the recitation of the Wenchang *Great Cavern Scripture*. This started from the Sichuan region in the Southern Song and flourished from the Yuan period onward. Liu Ansheng had already mentioned these associations in his preface written in 1168 (DZ5). They appeared to be held in shrines dedicated to Wenchang, which were often attached to Buddhist temples. According to Wei Qi’s description, they were gatherings of lay societies, both Buddhist and Daoist, and encompassed local governors, the gentry class, and

(Note 30—*Continued*)

of the Way” (*daotong* 道統). Zhu Xi theorized about it in his preface to the commentary on the *Doctrine of the Mean*.

³¹ DZ103, 1: 3b.

ordinary people, and mutual understanding and synthesis of the two teachings naturally occurred.³²

In 1310, Wei presented his new commentary to the Emperor Wuzong 武宗 and the Empress in the Yuan imperial court.³³ In 1316, the third year of the Yanyou 延祐 reign, the Emperor Renzong 仁宗 issued an edict for the addition of the venerable name “Thearch Lord (Dijun 帝君)” to Wenchang.³⁴ It is likely that Wei Qi intended by this integration of the three teachings to submit a new form of the *Great Cavern Scripture* to appeal to new contemporary audiences as well as to reinstate the importance of the scripture, particularly in the Yuan period when most Daoist scriptures had been burnt.³⁵

(c) The Qingwei School and the Longhu Version in the Jiangxi Region (Late 14C)

The third pre-Ming version of the *Great Cavern Scripture* is the Longhu 龍虎 version in the Jiangxi 江西 region. The extant text is preserved in the *Daoist Canon* under the title *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern* (DZ7, *Dadong yujing* 大洞玉經). Its postscript was written at the end of the fourteenth century by Gong Detong 龔德同. Gong was a Heavenly Master Daoist on Mt. Longhu, and he attests that there was an old text of the *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern* transmitted by the Heavenly Masters of Mt. Longhu. However, because there were no commentaries, he was unable to understand its meaning. Later, he obtained the Maoshan and Wenchang versions, but many things still remained unclear. In 1364, Xiong

³² DZ103, 2: 7b–8a, “文昌會上，有通悟禪師、波淪禪師、蜀中諸禪師，皆觀音菩薩化身，並與嗣祿道場，號曰心珠會，仍以帝君為主，每歲各師生辰，諸山釋子大作勝會，廣化香火，慶贊稱賀，官員士庶欽仰者比比焉。故凡二教經儀，多釋道混融互用。” For details of the *Wenchang hui* and its development in the Ming-Qing period, see Hsiao Teng-fu 蕭登福, “Faith of Wenchang Spirit and the Cherishment of Written Paper 文昌帝君司命敬惜字紙,” *Journal of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences* 人文社會學報 (National Taichung University of Science and Technology 國立臺中技術學院) 4 (2005): 5–16.

³³ DZ103, 1: 1a–2a, Wei Qi, *Biao* 表.

³⁴ DZ103, 2: 21b–22a; *Yuan zhigao* 元制誥. The full title is “*Fuyuan kaihua Wenchang silu hongren dijun* 輔元開化文昌司祿宏仁帝君.”

³⁵ DZ103, 1: 8a, Wei Qi, Preface, “惟恨文字訛謬，十本九乖，無所從正，……且天下經教，經大治化爐之後，不復有聞。”

Taigu 熊太古 (*zi*: Linchu 隣初), a native of Yuzhang 豫章 (Nanchang 南昌 in Jiangxi), visited him with a transcribed copy of the *Great Cavern Scripture*. Gong valued the text highly because it had the Immortal Zhao Shouzhen 趙守真's commentary, which explained the names of gods and details of their realms, and so he asked a fellow Daoist, Zhou Lanxue 周蘭雪, to make two copies.³⁶

Since 1351, the Red Turban rebellion (*hongjin qiyi* 紅巾起義) had been continuing against the Yuan dynasty. Zhu Yuanzang 朱元璋 (1323–1398) joined the rebels and took Nanjing in 1356. It may have been during the Battle of Lake Poyang 鄱陽湖 (1363–1366) that Xiong Taigu resigned as assistant professor (*zhujiao* 助教) of the National University (*guozixue* 國子學) and fled to Mt. Longhu.³⁷ Xiong Taigu spent those years travelling in the mountains and studying Daoism. He reminisced about that time as follows: “It was the eighth fortunate thing in my life. After the world changed, I just kept a wooden ladle and a rain-hat to take refuge in stone chambers in the mountains, where I sat still for more than two hundreds days and made friends with Daoist masters and common people, roaming all over the peaceful mountains.”³⁸ He called the poems written during this time “Splendid Perfected (*xizhen* 熙真),”³⁹ a term found in the *Scripture of Inner Phosphors in the Yellow Court* (*Huangting neijing jing* 黃庭內景經).⁴⁰

³⁶ DZ7, 2: 28a–29a, Gong Detong, Postface.

³⁷ DZ7, 2: 28a, Postface.

³⁸ Xiong Taigu, “The Twenty Fortunate Things in My Life 余生二十幸,” in *Jiyue jiji* 冀越集記 1: “世變之後，攜瓢笠，入諸山石室中，危坐二百餘日，與黃冠野服之人，遍遊山和之間，八也。” In *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe. 上海古籍出版社, 1995–2003).

³⁹ Lin Bi 林弼, Preface to the Collected Poems of Xiong Taigu 熊太古詩集序, in *Dengzhouji* 登州集 13: 12a–13b, in *Siku quanshu*. “*Splendid Perfected* is a collection of poems written in the period when the Master sought refuge from war on Mt. Longhu, where he was able to study Daoist scriptures of inner alchemy and secret instructions. Thus he expressed his inspiration of infinite emptiness and sublime transcendence. . . . Although the works in *Splendid Perfected* were [written] at [times of] misfortune, it was surely at the beginning of our Great Ming’s unification. 熙真，則先生嘗避兵龍虎山，得道家丹經玉訣之學，因寓興於沖虛高逸之表者也。……熙真之作，雖當變故而寔我皇明開一統之初也。”

⁴⁰ The term is from the *Huangting neijing jing*, ch. 35 (YJQQ 12): “Sit upon the Whirlwind and see the birth of [immortal life] of the red [infant]. Transcending all boundaries, Splendid Perfected is cultivating the blooming essence [of life] 坐於颺臺見赤生，逸域熙真養華榮,” DZ1032, juan12: 24a.

The characteristics of the Longhu version are as follows. As regards its composition, it consistently uses the 5-syllable verses of the Wenchang version in the main part, but it also incorporates the visualization of corporeal gods and the 39 titles of the Maoshan version. In other words, it is an intricate synthesis of both the Maoshan and Wenchang versions. In particular, most of its commentary has been taken from the *Jade Commentary*.

The uniqueness of the Longhu version lies in its talismans, the form and shape of which are clearly different from the Maoshan version. Besides, it shows the importance of talismans by placing them at the beginning of each chapter, whereas the Maoshan version places them at the end of each chapter. Above all, this text is characterized by the *Jade Talisman for Assembling the Perfected of the Great Caverns* 大洞總真玉符 and a series of incantations of the Immortal Zhao Shouzhen.

Zhao Shouzhen is one of the deities of the Qingwei-pai 清微派 (School of Clarified Tenuity) in the Yuan dynasty.⁴¹ Although it is difficult to determine to what extent *Qingwei* practices played a part in this text, its orthopraxis clearly places emphasis on the visualization of Thearch One, accentuating the use of these new talismans and incantations. It explains that the *Jade Talisman* integrates every *qi* of all the thirty-nine talismans into the place of Thearch One, and so the use of this single talisman was believed to be very efficacious.⁴²

III. Late-Ming and Qing Versions of the *Great Cavern Scripture*

The development of woodblock printing technology brought major changes to the circulation of Daoist scriptures. In medieval times,

⁴¹ Zhao Shouzhen is listed among the divine immortals of Qingwei Daoism. DZ224 *Qingwei zhaifa* 清微齋法, 1: 9a, “The Perfected of Great Mystery Zhao Shouzhen and Chen Gong, natives of Suzhou, take charge of the Residence of the Great Prime in the Palace of Bright Clarity in the Realms of Great Mystery 太玄真人趙守真，又陳拱，蘇州人，主太玄清明宮太元府。”

⁴² DZ7, 2: 23, “大洞總真玉符：右符總三十九符真炁於帝一之所……此符單用，亦可功備大成。”

the transmission of a Daoist scripture required a solemn ritual of a pledge between master and disciple, and the scripture was in the form of a transcribed copy. However, from the Southern Song inner alchemy texts in particular were printed with woodblocks, and the publishing of Daoist texts was taken as a way of waiting for future disciples.⁴³

In the Ming period, Ming princes often compiled and published Daoist texts in order to display their knowledge of mystical realms and share them inside the exclusive circles of elite groups.⁴⁴ Transcribing Daoist scriptures with gold pigment on dark blue paper (*ganzhi jinni* 紺紙金泥) was also popular among the local nobility.⁴⁵ The printing of Daoist scriptures had flourished since the Wanli 萬曆 reign.

In the late Ming and Qing periods, the interconnections between the above three *Great Cavern Scriptures* generated another three new versions. The driving force behind the birth of these new versions was spirit-writing related to the cult of Wenchang and Lü Dongbin, which was carried out mainly by members of the secular gentry class. Most striking is the fact that the three new texts had specific local bases in Jiangsu, Jiangxi, and Bashu, respectively. It will be interesting to see if there are any enduring characteristics in the same local regions, or whether earlier traditions played certain roles in producing new texts.

⁴³ Matsushita Michinobu 松下道信, “Haku Gyokusen to sono shuppan katsudō: zenshinkyō nanshū ni okeru shiju ishiki no kokufuku 白玉蟾とその出版活動：全真教南宗における師授意識の克服,” *Tōho shūkyō* 東方宗教 104 (2004): 23–42.

⁴⁴ Richard G. Wang, *The Ming Prince and Daoism: Institutional Patronage of an Elite* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 61–82.

⁴⁵ Golden scriptures transcribed with gold pigment on dark blue paper had been produced since the sixth century in Buddhism, but it is unclear when this practice started in the case of Daoist scriptures. A golden scripture of the *Scripture of Salvation* from the Ming period is held by Jiangxi Provincial Library. See Zhou Jianwen, ed., *Jiangxisheng tushuguan guanzang zhenben guji tulu* 江西省圖書館館藏珍本古籍圖錄 (Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe, 2010), 184. A golden scripture of the *Gaoshang yuhuang benxing jing* 高上玉皇本行經 is held by Nanyang Municipal Library. It was transcribed in the thirtieth year of the Wanli reign (1611). See *Diyi pi guojia zhengui guji minglu tulu* 第一批國家珍貴古籍名錄圖錄, vol. 7 (Beijing: Guojia tushuguan, 2008), 158, fig. 01992.

(a) The Late-Ming Version of the *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern (Dadong yujing)* in Jiangxi and Its Development in Qing Daoism (16–Ealry 19C)

A new version of the *Great Cavern Scripture* appeared in the Jiajing 嘉靖 reign period and was printed in Jiangxi during the Wanli reign. Its full title is considered to be *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern of Most High [Lord Lao] in the Realm of Jade Clarity (Taishang yuqing dadong yujing 太上玉清大洞玉經)*.⁴⁶ It was printed by Yang You 楊攸 (fl. 1522–1566; zi: Xuting 虛亭) and his younger brother Yang Dongzhu 楊東渚 in 1583.

According to the preface by Xiao Yunru 蕭允儒 (fl. 1567–1583), the Jiajing Emperor (Shizong 世宗, i.e. Suhuang 肅皇, Zhu Houcong 朱厚燧) sent court officials all over the mountains to find “talismans and manuals of the *Great Cavern Scripture (dadong fufa 大洞符法)*.” The Daoist master Liu Sanren 劉散人 (fl. 1522–1566; zi: Ming’an 明菴), who often performed Daoist ritual services at the *shimiao* 世廟, the Paternal Shrine for the Jiajing Emperor’s real father, obtained the scripture there. Later, Liu Sanren transmitted the scripture to the hermit Yang You.

Yang You, a native of Qingjiang 清江 (Jiangxi), had been a keen pilgrim since his youth. He travelled through the regions between the Yuan 沅 and Xiang 湘 Rivers to Qinhuai 秦淮 district near Nanjing. Wandering in the area to the south of the Yangtze River, he devoted himself to saving people and giving charity secretly. Most of all, he persevered with Daoist practice and making the golden elixir.⁴⁷

Yang expressed as follows his joy at receiving the scripture: “Fortunately, I met Lord Liu and received the scripture that had been treasured in the Paternal Shrine. I was so pleased to see the talismans [of the Great Cavern] in their entirety. Therefore, I made the woodblock print and extended its transmission. If one is able to encounter this scripture, it will be a blessing for the three ages, past, present, and future” 幸遭劉君，授以世廟秘本，快睹符籙之全。因刊施一藏，以廣其傳。得遇者，乃三生之幸。⁴⁸

⁴⁶ JY6, di 氏 3: 5b, Xiao Yunru 蕭允儒, Preface to *Taishang yuqing dadong yujing* 太上玉清大洞玉經序.

⁴⁷ JY6, di 3: 5a–6a.

⁴⁸ JY6, di 3: 89, Yang You, Postscript 後跋.

Xiao Yunru 蕭允儒 (*zi*: Zonglu 宗魯), who wrote the preface, was a member of the gentry class and a native of Qingjiang county. He passed the local imperial examination in 1567 and worked as county chief in Huangpi 黃陂 (Hubei 湖北).⁴⁹ It was in his later years that he returned to his hometown and met the Yang brothers, who asked him to write the preface.⁵⁰

The text incorporated various elements from the three earlier Maoshan, Wenchang, and Longhu versions. Above all, the talismans have been fully taken over from the Longhu version. The most striking feature is a new mythical narrative about the origin of the text:

In former times, on the first day of the first lunar month in the second year of the Guanghua 光和 era (179) of Lingdi 靈帝 of the Han, the Perfected Lord Ge (Ge zhenjun 葛真君, i.e. Ge Xuan 葛玄) secluded himself on Mt. Tiantai and wished sincerely to achieve the Dao. His wish moved Lord Lao of Most High (Taishang laojun 太上老君) to descend in person [to this world], accompanied by the Perfected of Mysterious Oneness (Xuanyi zhenren 玄一真人), and gave him the *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern*. Lord Ge saluted them and received it. [About 180 years later,] when the Elder Lord Mao (Damaojun 大茅君) was living quietly on Mt. Mao, Matriarch Wei (Wei yuanjun 魏元君) transformed herself into a poor woman and entered the Hut of Women's Jealousy (*nudu'an* 女妬菴) to devote herself to Daoist practice. [However,] her belly unexpectedly swelled as if she were pregnant. Many Daoist nuns hated it and reprimanded her. Matriarch Wei said, "It is not [because of] pregnancy, but a transcendent scripture," and cut her belly open with a knife and obtained a scripture called *Great Cavern Scripture*. Then she and the Elder Lord Mao held the scripture up in their hands [and transcended]. Until now there exists the pond "Breaking Belly" in the mountain.⁵¹

昔漢靈帝光和二年正月朔，有葛真君，在天台山，精思念道，感太上老君，同玄一真人親降，出大洞玉經。葛君拜而受之。大茅君息靜茅山，魏元君化貧女，入女妬菴修道，不覺腹大，似有妊者。眾姑惡而斥之。魏君曰，非妊也，乃仙經也。自以刀剖腹，得經一本，名曰大

⁴⁹ *Qingjiang xianzhi* 清江縣志 8: 51a–b (Chongzhen 崇禎 edition).

⁵⁰ JY6, di 3: 5b.

⁵¹ JY6, di 3: 89b, Yang You, Postscript.

洞經。遂與大茅君，捧在手中。至今山中，有破肚池存焉。

This narrative depreciates the Maoshan version by recasting its origin in the shameful story of a nun's pregnancy and, even more disgracefully, in the middle of "women's jealousy." In addition, the story describes the origin of the text itself, far more ancient than the Maoshan version, by declaring that its transmission started from the second-century Transcendent Ge Xuan and its revelation was brought down by Lord Lao of Most High in Jade Clarity Heaven.

This legend is based on the *Biography of Transcendent Duke Ge of the Grand Pole* (*Taiji Ge xiangong zhuan* 太極葛仙公傳), written around 1377. It would have been closely related to the local legend of Mt. Gezao 閣皂山 in the same Qingjiang county, believed to be the place of Ge Xuan's transcendence.⁵² In addition, Mt. Gezao was one of the three main sites of Southern Daoism in the Yuan Dynasty.

By creating such a new mythical origin, it asserted a new religious authority superior to the Maoshan version and tried to transfer the origin of the *Great Cavern Scripture* from Maoshan to Jiangxi. Moreover, it not only asserts the authority of the scripture, but also suggests a new orthopraxis. Yang You writes:

[The Daoist adept] must get up early every day, clean himself and don his robes, ascend to the hall, burn incense and light lamps, offer three cups of clean tea and a jar of clean water, and chant incantations addressed to the gods. When this has been done, he stands up, sits

⁵² DZ450 *Taiji Ge xiangong zhuan* 太極葛仙公傳, Tan Sixian 譚嗣先, ed., 1b, Preface. Zhu Chuo 朱綽 states that it is based on the *Hagiography of Xiangong* 仙公傳 written on Mt. Gezao. "漢光和二年正月朔，仙公於天台上虞山，感太上遣玄一三真人，太極徐真人，授以三洞四輔經錄，修行秘訣。……又命王思真，披九光玉蘊，出洞玄大洞靈寶經典，……以授仙公。" The commentary quotes the preface to the *Great Cavern Scripture* written by the Tang Daoist master Li Hanguang 李含光, which mentions that the legend already existed in the Tang: "李含光大洞經序云，太極真人徐來勒，以大洞經，授仙公。" On the date of DZ450, see Yamada Takashi, "Taiji Ge xiangong zhuan 太極葛仙公傳," in *Bibliographical Introduction to Daozang Jiyao*, ed. Mugitani Kunio (Kyōto: Jinbun kagaku kenkyūsho, 2012), 77.

facing east, and recites and visualizes the thirty-nine chapters. Every chapter has a host god. He should first direct himself to *Niwan* 泥丸, and then he returns to his original position and firmly abides there. [In the visualization] there is a descending flow from the anterior [of the body] as well as an ascending flow from the posterior, depending in each case on the manner of [the chapter of] the scripture. As for ingesting the talisman and meditating on circulation, “swallowing liquid (*yanjin* 嚥津)” does not mean to swallow the saliva of the mouth; it is just visualizing the true liquid at the top of the head. [One must] visualize and imagine it being transferred and pouring into the middle palace (i.e. heart), . . . The circulation [of *qi*] starts from the center of the head and descends to the middle palace. It is called “Whirlwind Unification.” [The circulation moves] from the “tail gate” (*weilü* 尾閭) and “narrow strait” (*jiaji* 夾脊) and reaches the “top gate” (*dingmen* 頂門). This is called the “silent audience with the Highest Thearch” (*mochao shangdi* 默朝上帝).⁵³

每日早起，梳洗盥漱，整肅衣冠，登堂焚香燃燈，淨茶三盞，淨水一盃，持咒啟聖。畢，興身向東坐，誦存運三十九章，每章各有神主之。宜先朝泥丸，然後復居本位，嚴固守之。有自前而下者，有自後而上者，各依經式。服符存運，內有嚥津者，非是口口吞液，只存頂中真液，以目意送注中宮。……始運從頂心，下布中宮，名迴風混合；從尾閭、夾脊，至頂門，名默朝上帝。

The new definition of “Whirlwind Unification” and “Thearch One” (here redefined as “silent audience with the Highest Thearch” [默朝上帝], which is found in the *Gaoshang yuhuang xinyin jing* 高上玉皇心印經 dated to the thirteenth century) implies that the circulation of *qi* runs through the conception and governor vessels (*rendu mai* 任督脈), which flow through the anterior and posterior of the body in the inner alchemical process.

In the late Qing period, it developed further and was combined with the cult of Lü Dongbin by an elite literati spirit-writing group. In 1805, Jiang Yupu 蔣予蒲 (1755–1819; *zi*: Yuanting 元庭) and members of the Altar of Enlightening Origin (*jueyuantan* 覺源壇) reprinted the text under the title *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern*

⁵³ JY6, di 3: 89a.

of [the Celestial King of] Primordial Beginning (*Yuanshi dadong yujing* 元始大洞玉經), which is extant in *Essentials of the Daoist Canon* (*Daozang jiyao* 道藏輯要, JY6).⁵⁴

Its preface is attributed to “Thearch Lord of True Protection and Support of Destiny in Harmony with Primordial Qi” (Xieyuan zanyun fuyou dijun 燮元贊運孚佑帝君), an honorific title of Lü Dongbin, the ancestral god of Jiang’s altar. The postscript was also attributed to a spirit-writing god, “Perfected Lord of Broadening the Teachings” (Hongjiao zhenjun 宏教真君), who is the second ancestral god, Liu Shouyuan 柳守元. Both were revealed in 1805 by the descending brush.⁵⁵

The reprinting of the text was clearly linked to the cult of Lüzu 呂祖 and the power to control river floods. One year before its publication, the title “Supporting [the Dynasty’s] Destiny in Harmony with Primordial [Qi]” (Xieyuan zanyun 燮元贊運) was added to Lüzu. In the ninth year of the Jiaqing 嘉慶 (1804) reign, the area to the south of the Yellow River flooded and miracles were manifested by Lüzu to end the disaster. In order to commemorate this, the Jiaqing Emperor issued an imperial order to add the title as well as to build shrines in the region of the Huai River 淮水 and regulate worship of Lüzu twice a year, in spring and autumn, at all Lüzu shrines throughout the provinces.⁵⁶

In 1805, when Jiang Yupu and his associates reprinted this text, their main purpose was to prevent floods. Lüzu’s preface reads:

⁵⁴ On Jiang Yupu and his compilation of the *Daozang jiyao*, see Monica Esposito, “The Discovery of Jiang Yuanting’s *Daozang Jiyao* in Jiangnan: A Presentation of the Taoist Canon of the Qing Dynasty,” in Mugitani Kunio, ed., *Kōnan dōkyō no kenkyū* 江南道教の研究 (Kyōto: Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University, 2007), 79–110.

⁵⁵ The date was deleted in the text of the (*Chonggan*) *Daozang jiyao*, but the text of the original *Daozang jiyao* held by Nakajima Library and Tōyō bunko gives the date (JY6, di 3: 1b; 88a): “嘉慶十年歲次乙丑閏六月十三日.”

⁵⁶ “Treatise of Worship 祠祀志” in *Dongliu xianzhi* 東流縣志 13 (1818 edition); “The Palace of Supporting Transformation 贊化宮” in Wang Ding’an 王定安, comp., *Lianghuai yanfazhi* 兩淮鹽法志, 150: 11a–11b (1851 edition). The year when the title “*xieyuan zanyun*” was added to Lüzu is debatable. Sources are divided into those that give the ninth year of Jiaqing (1804) and those that give the sixth year of Jiaqing (1801). See Kim Yun-su 金侖壽, “*Dojang jipyo* wa Jang Yopo 《道藏輯要》와 蔣予蒲,” *Dogyo munhwa yeongu* 道教文化研究 17 (2002): 305. In my opinion, the *Dongliu xianzhi*, printed in 1818, is the most reliable source.
(Continue on next page)

This summer, rivers in the south flooded. The altar server, Master of Surpassing (*chaozi* 超子, i.e. Wu Jing 吳璣), who was once the commander of the river, wished to inspire [the divine world] with his accumulated faith so as to restore the harmony of nature by response. Fortunately, Master of Enlightenment (*juezi* 覺子, i.e. Jiang Yupu) and his friends supported his wish. They printed the *Dadong yujing* so as to prevent disasters beforehand. Their wish is surely good!⁵⁷

今夏南水盛漲。侍壇超子曾為河帥，故欲其積誠感召以應天和。幸覺子等同志，贊助發愿，刊刻大洞玉經，以弭患於未然。志良善也。

As was seen earlier, the link between the *Great Cavern Scripture* and flood control was explicit in the Wenchang version. The *Yuanshi dadong yujing* (JY6) added the same preface as the Wenchang version, which refers to its miraculous efficacy for ending floods and disasters. The text was obviously consecrated by its power to control water.

However, when was the Wenchang version's preface added to the text? Was it at the time of its reprinting in the Qing period? Or did it already exist in Yang You's edition? To answer this question, it is necessary to consider that the Jiajing Emperor wished to find "talismans and manuals [of the ritual] of the *Great Cavern Scripture*" mentioned in the Wenchang version. Although further research on the relationship between the Jiajing Emperor and the Wenchang cult is needed, we can assume that the emperor's order may have been related to his veneration of his real father,⁵⁸ possibly inspired by Wenchang's filial piety, and the talismans of the Longhu

(Note 56—Continued)

Qingxu wenxian tongkao 清續文獻通考, 158: 4–5 (Shanghai yinshuguan, 1936), "Treatise of Various Worshipers 群祀考," section on the ninth year of Jiaqing 嘉慶九年 also supports this. See also Yin Zhihua 尹志華, "Qingchao Jiaqing nianjian chifeng Lüzu jiqi yingxiang 清朝嘉慶年間敕封呂祖及其影響," *Zhongguo daojiao* 中國道教 141 (2014): 53–57.

⁵⁷ JY6, di 3: 1b. On the identification of "chaozi" with Wu Jing, see Kim, "Dojang Jibyo wa Jang Yopo." *Dogyo munhwa yeongu* 17 (2002): 305. See also Mori Yuria 森由利亞, "Dōzō shūyō to Shō Yoho no Ryoso fukei shinkō 道藏輯要と蔣予蒲の呂祖扶乩信仰," *Tōhō shūkyō* 98 (2001): 37, 41. Wu Jing served as director-general of the Southern Grand Canal 江南河道總督. See *Qingshigao* 清史稿 199: 7295–7301 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1976).

⁵⁸ Wang suggests that the Jiajing Emperor's strong affection for Daoism was influenced by his father. Wang, "The Ming Prince and Daoism," 105.

version finally accorded with the emperor's demand. The fact that the scripture had been stored in the Paternal Shrine strongly supports this assumption. Yang You also stated that the text had all the talismans of Nine Lights. Then the combining of Wenchang's preface with the Longhu version may have already occurred in the Ming Jiaping period.

However, this amalgamation led to the intriguing coexistence of two different claims about the origin of the scripture. The first was that the scripture originated with Yuanshi tianwang and was transmitted to Wenchang. The second was that it originated from Most High Lord Lao (Taishang laojun) and was transmitted to Ge Xuan. The latter appears to be rooted in local mythology related to sacred sites in Jiangxi, while the former was probably prompted by a Ming imperial request.

What is more, a new divine authority was added during the Qing, that is, the connection with Lüzu. But, interestingly, Lüzu was viewed as a mediator who resolved this incongruity by inventing an orderly genealogy for the scripture: "Yuanshi tianwang transmitted [it] in order to help the divine king Yu control water and suppress the river flood. Thereafter it was once transmitted [to Ge Xuan] on Mt. Tiantai and again [to Wenchang] on Mt. Qiqu."⁵⁹

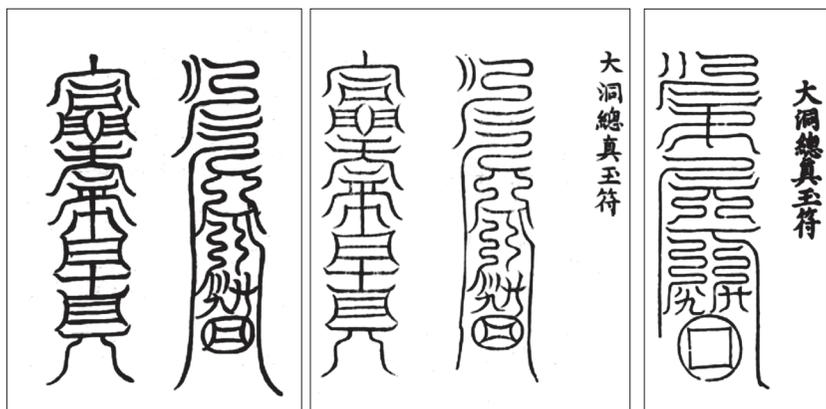
In the course of this amalgamation, the shape and form of the talismans had remained almost intact since the Longhu version. Even in a transcribed copy of 1865, the talismans were carefully transcribed in exactly the same form (Fig. 1). The transcriber was a certain Dongyuan yishi 洞淵逸士 (hermit of Penetrating Abyss) of Jiangxi.⁶⁰ According to his preface, he was a prodigy who had mastered all the Confucian classics between the age of four and eleven, and he assiduously transcribed Buddhist and Daoist scriptures throughout his life.⁶¹ He refers to the *Yuanshi dadong*

⁵⁹ JY6, di 3: 1b, "元始天王，為神禹治水，鎮伏諸瀆而傳。厥後一授於天台，再授於七曲。"

⁶⁰ *Yuanshi dadong yujing*, 3 juan, 2 volumes, transcribed in 1865, originally held by Qianyitang 謙益堂. It is now held by Tokyo University General Library 東京大學綜合圖書館.

⁶¹ *Yuanshi dadong yujing*, preface. He states that he had copied a total of about 1.4 million juan by the age of 52.

yujing by another title, *Dadong jing yuzhuan fufa* 大洞經玉篆符法, or *Jade Seal-script Talismans and Manuals of the Great Cavern Scripture*. No name characterizes the text better than this.



1865 Transcribed copy of JY6 JY6 *Yuanshi dadong yujing* DZ7 *Dadong yujing*

Fig. 1 Jade Talismans for Assembling the Perfected of the Great Cavern

(b) Peng Dingqiu's Spirit Altar and a New Exegesis of the *Great Cavern Scripture* in the Jiangsu Region (Late 17C)

The first Qing version of the *Great Cavern Scripture* appeared during the Kangxi 康熙 reign. It was a text annotated by Qian Rong 錢嶸 (fl. 1673–1678), who selectively collected past commentaries of the scripture. Qian Rong (*zi*: Dongxia 東霞, *hao*: Sanye shanren 三野山人), who lived beside streams and rivers, moved to Suzhou 蘇州 in his later years and lived in the west wing of the Pavilion of Embracing Treasure (Miluobao ge 彌羅寶閣) of the Daoist Abbey of Mystery (Xuanmiao guan 玄妙觀). He spent three years completing the commentary.⁶²

Xuanmiao guan originated in the third-century Daoist Monastery of True Blessings (Zhenqing daoyuan 真慶道院). The Pavilion of Embracing Treasure, built in the Ming Zhengtong era (fifteenth century), held a set of the Ming *Daoist Canon*. It was

⁶² Shan, Xuefu 單學傅, *Haiyu shibua* 海虞詩話 2: 10b, in *Xuxiu siku quanshu* (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995).

destroyed in the late Ming (1602), and its rebuilding was started by the Qing provincial administrator of Suzhou (*Suzhou buzheng* 蘇州布政), Mu Tianyan 慕天顏, in the twelfth year of the Kangxi reign (1673) and completed in 1675.⁶³ Therefore, 1678 is the *terminus post quem* for Qian Rong's completion of his commentary, that is, three years after the rebuilding of the Pavilion.

Mu Tianyan (d. 1696; *zi*: Heming 鶴鳴 or Gongji 拱極), a native of Jingning 靜寧 (Gansu 甘肅), had served as provincial administrator of Suzhou since 1670. Later he was promoted to governor of Jiangsu (*Jiangsu xunfu* 江蘇巡撫) and eventually reached the position of director-general of water transportation (*caoyun zongdu* 漕運總督), dying in 1696 in Jiangsu province.⁶⁴

It was around 1710 that Qian Rong's commentary was combined with the spirit-written explanation of the "Matriarch, Ancestral Goddess Wei (Weizu yuanjun 魏祖元君)," who is the legendary female transcendent of the Maoshan revelation, Wei Huacun 魏華存 (251–334). The full title of the text is *Explanation and Commentary on the Transcendent Scripture of the Great Cavern of Wenchang, the Assemblage of the Perfected in the Most High Realm of Jade Clarity without Ultimate* (*Taishang yuqing wuji zongzhen Wenchang dadong xianjing zhushu* 太上玉清無極總真文昌大洞仙經註疏), which is extant in *Essentials of the Daoist Canon* (JY8). As the title implies, the main text is based on the Wenchang version, but its overall composition follows the 39 chapters of the Maoshan version.

According to the postscript by Mu Zhen 慕珍, he combined Qian's *Commentary* and Matriarch Wei's *Explanation* and made a woodblock print.⁶⁵ There is, however, no further information about Mu Zhen except that he called himself "Longgan 隴干 Jianxiao 見曉 Mu Zhen." "Jianxiao" [Seeing the Dawn] must be his *zi* or a Daoist name. "Longgan" is a symbolic name for Jingning in Pingliang 平涼府 (Gansu), which must have been his birthplace. This means that Mu Zhen came from the same area as Mu Tianyan. Mu

⁶³ Feng Guifen 馮桂芬, *Suzhou fuzhi* 蘇州府志 41: 16a–20a (1883 edition).

⁶⁴ *Suzhou fuzhi* 68: 36a–b; *Qingshigao* 278: 10099–10102.

⁶⁵ JY8, di 4: 118, "彙集註疏，編梓告成。"

Tianyan died in Suzhou and his grave was located on Mt. Qionglong 穹窿山 in Wu county 吳縣 in the same province.⁶⁶ Suzhou people revered him so much that they built a shrine for Lord Mu (*Mugong ci* 慕公祠), calling it the Jingning Academy (*Jingning shuyuan* 靜寧書院), named after his hometown.⁶⁷ That being the case, are there no possible family ties between Mu Zhen and Mu Tianyan? At any rate, the text has close connections with Xuanmiao guan and spirit-writing activities in Suzhou.

Peng Dingqiu 彭定求 (1645–1719) is a strong candidate who received the spirit-writing explanation from Matriarch Wei. It is worth noting that Peng Dingqiu not only participated in various religious activities at Xuanmiao guan, but also longed to make a pilgrimage to Maoshan during his lifetime. He wrote the *Inscription for the Restoration of the Pavilion of Embracing Treasure and the Hall of Three Clarities in the Daoist Abbey of Mystery* (*Xuanmiao guan xiujian Sanqing dian Miluobao ge bei* 圓[玄]妙觀修建三清殿彌羅寶閣碑) to commemorate the reconstruction of the Pavilion in 1675.⁶⁸ Peng Dingqiu admired the Daoist Shi Daoyuan 施道淵 (1616–1678) as a “revered master (*zunshi* 尊師)” who made great efforts for the Pavilion’s reconstruction. Furthermore, the provincial administrator Mu Tianyan, who promoted the reconstruction, had a close relationship with Peng’s Confucian master Tang Bin 湯斌 (1627–1687).⁶⁹ Peng Dingqiu was in his mid-thirties when Qian Rong completed the commentary on the *Great Cavern Scripture* at the Pavilion of Embracing Treasure. It is hard to imagine that all these people engaging in religious activities at the same time and in the same place had no connections with each other.

⁶⁶ *Suzhou fuzhi* 49: 27a–b.

⁶⁷ *Suzhou fuzhi* 37: 736–74a.

⁶⁸ Peng Dingqiu 彭定求, *Nanyun wengao* 南畝文稿 5: 16–17 (1881 edition). In *Nanyun quanji* 南畝全集, Peng Zhuxian 彭祖賢, comp., in *Changzhou Pengshi jiaji* 長洲彭氏家集 (held by Library of Institute for Research in Humanities, Kyoto University).

⁶⁹ See Kim, “*Dojang Jibyo wa Jang Yopo*,” 291. Mu Tianyan’s wife was a descendant of Tang Bin. See “Bibliography of Jiang Yupu” in *Guochao qixian leizheng chubian* 國朝耆獻類徵初編 juan 94: 160–164 (1890 edition); Hu Jing 胡敬, “Epitaph of Jiang Yupu,” *Ibid.* 94: 183–188.

In particular, Peng Dingqiu's faith in spirit-writing immortals was so well known that he was mistaken for the compiler of *Essentials of the Daoist Canon*.⁷⁰ There were many legends about him. According to one, he received an oracle from the Matriarch (probably Wei Huacun), written in vermilion red in his notebook, which predicted his passing the imperial examination as the top scholar (*huizhuang* 會狀) in 1676.⁷¹ Another says that he had a dream two years before the examination in which a divine being commended his filial piety and foretold his attainment of top placing.⁷²

Apart from these tales, spirit-writings performed at Peng's altar in Tianxin 天心 village in Suzhou are extant in the *Jade Exegesis* (*Yuquan* 玉詮, JY243).⁷³ The Thearch Lord of Pure Yang (Chunyang dijun 純陽帝君, i.e. Lüzu) praised him as follows: "Master Peng is predestined for it. Heaven has blessed him deeply. His will is also very strong. He is the one who has truly succeeded to the method of my Way" 彭子甚有緣。天恩既深。子立志亦復不小。真吾道之嗣法人也。⁷⁴

Peng Dingqiu also states that he had wanted to make a pilgrimage to Maoshan ever since 1675, when the Three Lords Mao (Sanmaojun 三茅君) appeared to him in a dream. In 1705,

⁷⁰ For example, He Longxiang 賀龍驤, preface to (*Chonggan*) *Daozang jiyao* 1:46; Qing Xitai, *Zhongguo daojiao shi*, 4: 455–461. On the basis of careful investigations, the first and original compiler of the *Daozang jiyao* has been proved to have been Jiang Yupu. See Mori, "Dōzō shūyō to Shō Yoho no Ryoso fukei shinkō; Kim, "Dojang Jibyo wa Jang Yopo"; Esposito, "The Discovery of Jiang Yuanting's Daozang Jiyao in Jiangnan." Esposito made clear that only two versions of the *Daozang Jiyao* existed, Jiang Yupu's Jiaqing edition and Erxian'an 二仙庵's 1906 edition. See Esposito, *Creative Daoism* (Wil/Paris: University Media, 2013), 219–260.

⁷¹ Xu Ke 徐珂, "Peng Dingqiu Worships the Transcendent of Spirit-writing 彭定求奉亂仙," in *Qingbai leichao* 清稗類鈔 33 (Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館, 1917), "The Matriarch allowed me to pass (the imperial examination) as the top scholar in 1676 (元君許我必中丙辰會狀)."

⁷² Zhang Peiren 張培仁, *Jingyuting biji* 靜娛亭筆記 6: 37a–38a. In *Xuxiu siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書.

⁷³ *Yuquan yulu* 玉詮語錄, in JY168 *Yulu daguan* 語錄大觀, bi 3: 78a–b. The date of the spirit-writing is noted as the forty-ninth year of Kangxi: "康熙四十九年冬日."

⁷⁴ JY243, gui 鬼 1: 107.

thirty years after this dream, his dream finally came true. He travelled to Maoshan, worshipped the Three Lords Mao, and visited the Shrine of Matriarch Wei.⁷⁵ His longing for Maoshan was undoubtedly influenced by his Daoist master Shi Daoyuan (zi: Liangsheng 亮生, Daoist name: Jinjing 金經, hao: Tiezhu 鐵竹), a native of Wu county. Master Shi made efforts to rebuild the Provisional Palace (*xinggong* 行宮) of Lord Mao on the Peak of the Three Lords Mao (Sanmao feng 三茅峰) on Mt. Qionglong (Suzhou). The Hall of the Three Lords Mao (Sanmao dian 三茅殿) was the main building of this divine palace, renamed in a later period as Daoist Abbey of Highest Perfected (Shangzhen guan 上真觀). It is not difficult to imagine the importance of Mt. Qionglong as a sacred site that was considered to be connected to Mt. Mao. Peng also wrote the epitaph for Shi's grave: "The Master rides on clouds to return to Highest Clarity 師乘雲兮歸上清," "He wanders free and easy, following Lord Mao 遊逍遙兮從茅君."⁷⁶

To summarize the above events in chronological order, the year of Peng Dingqiu's dream of Lord Mao was the year when the reconstruction of Xuanmiao guan was completed (1675); Qian Rong there completed his commentary around 1678; Peng's pilgrimage to Mt. Mao took place in 1705; five years later, in 1710, Qian's commentary and Wei's spirit-writing explanation were printed. Are these all coincidences? Could it not be surmised that Peng Dingqiu may have received spirit-writing from Matriarch Wei after his pilgrimage to Mt. Mao?

There is evidence that proves Peng's relationship with this text. It is found in the last version of the *Great Cavern Scripture*, the *Dadong jing shidu* 大洞經示讀. In its preface, revealed in 1728,

⁷⁵ Peng Dingqiu, "Journey to Mt. Mao 遊茅山記," in *Nanyun wengao* 4: 33, "戊辰, 謁魏元君祠." He also wrote a poem in memory of this pilgrimage, "*Wei yuanjun ci* 魏元君祠" in *Nanyun shigao* 南畝詩稿, 8a. I am grateful to Dr. Burton-Rose for sending me a copy of this poem.

⁷⁶ Peng Dingqiu, "Epitaph for Master Shi Liangsheng of Mt. Qionglong 穹窿亮生施尊師墓表," in *Nanyun wengao* 10: 1-2; "Biography of Shi Daoyuan 施道淵傳," in *Suzhou fuzhi* 135. On Shi Daoyuan and the local cult in Suzhou, see Vincent Goossaert, "Daoism and Local Cults in Modern Suzhou: A Case Study of Qionglongshan," in *Chinese and European Perspectives on the Study of Chinese Popular Religions*, ed. Philip Clart (Taipei: Boyang Publishing, 2012), 200-228.

Wenchang says, “It originated with brothers of the Peng clan (that is, a group of the scholar Peng Dingqiu), who propagated the teachings of *my Way* in the present dynasty 本朝大吾道之化者，賴彭氏弟兄[即彭太史定求輩]發其源。”⁷⁷ “My Way” here refers to Wenchang’s *Great Cavern Scripture*, and “present dynasty” means the Qing dynasty. There is no possibility that “my Way” here refers to other texts related to the Wenchang cult in general since this preface is exclusively attached to the *Dadong jing shidu*, and the context of the following phrases also restricts it to the *Great Cavern Scripture*. Among the three Qing versions of the *Great Cavern Scripture*, the text produced during Peng Dingqiu’s lifetime is none other than this text.⁷⁸

The combined text with Matriarch Wei’s explanation adds three treatises before the main part: “Twelve Points of Explanation of the *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern*” (*Dadong yujing suyao shi’er yi* 大洞玉經疏要十二義), “Altar Ritual for the *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern*” (*Dadong yujing tanyi* 大洞玉經壇儀), and “General Introduction to the *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern*” (*Dadong yujing zonglun* 大洞玉經總論). The characteristics of Wei’s explanation are summarized in the “Twelve Points” and “General Introduction.”

Each chapter inserts passages from Qian Rong’s commentary, which is multi-layered, including not only his own interpretation but also past commentaries from the Six Dynasties to the late Ming. The oldest stratum of Qian’s commentary is the *Jade Commentary*, dating from the early sixth century. At the end of

⁷⁷ JY7, di 3: 90a. There is a slight difference in the “Original Preface to the *Great Cavern Scripture* 大洞經原序” in the *Wendi quanshu* edition, where it is stated, “It only originated with the Peng clan of Changzhou (that is, the group of Master Yiyang Peng Long and Master Nanyun Peng Dingqiu), who propagated the teachings of my Way in this dynasty 本朝大吾道之化者，惟長洲彭氏[即一菴先生瓏、南响先生定求輩]發其源” (7: 3a). Master Yiyang, Peng Long, was Peng Dingqiu’s father. Dr. Burton-Rose advised me about the family relationships of the Peng clan.

⁷⁸ The two other versions are the *Yuanshi dadong yujing* (JY6) and *Dadong jing shidu* (in *Wendi quanshu* and JY7). The *Yuanshi dadong yujing* was printed in 1805, and the *Dadong jing shidu* was revealed in 1728. Both postdate Peng Dingqiu’s death.

each chapter, “The Explanation of Matriarch, Ancestral Goddess Wei of Purple Voidness (*Zixu weizhu yuanjun shu* 紫虛魏祖元君疏)” is added, explaining the overall meaning of each chapter.

The new interpretation of Matriarch Wei provides a quite unique and abstruse understanding of human nature, developing its unique theory of the integrated cultivation of both spiritual and physical aspects of the human being (*xingming shuangxiu* 性命雙修) from the perspective of the coincidence between Transcendence and Enlightenment (*xianfo tongyuan* 仙佛同源). Mu Zhen also pointed this out:

The scripture gave importance to the integrated and mutual cultivation of [spiritual] Nature (*xing*) and [physical] Life (*ming*):⁷⁹ what is referred to as Nature is “Nature inside Life”; what is referred to as Life is “Life inside Nature.” As every being has one Great Principle [of Being] (*taiji* 太極), the human body . . . is also endowed with the Great Principle. If one is endowed with the Great Principle, then it generates spirituality (*shenming* 神明). The 39 chapters of this scripture are the source of keeping the celestial gods (*daojun* 道君) and goddesses (*yuanjun* 元君) and more than seventy venerable [corporeal] gods. [By] keeping these divine spirits, the grand world of the Precious (Celestial) King manifests on the tip of a hair. Is it not Nature that comes to Life and becomes “Nature inside Life (*ming zhongzhi xing*)”?

⁷⁹ It is very difficult to translate *xing*, especially when juxtaposed with *ming* in Daoist texts. Most of these texts were produced after the emergence of Neo-Confucianism, specifically under the strong influence of the Quanzhen 全真 tradition. Thus *xing* has the implications of Neo-Confucian innate human “Nature,” which corresponds to the cosmic “Principle” or *li* 理. In addition, it implies the Buddhist concept of “original [Buddha] nature” or *benran zhi xing* 本然之性. In the context of Daoist texts, *xing* mainly points to the mental or spiritual aspect, while *ming* represents the physical or bodily aspect of the human being. See Wang Chongyang, *Chongyang lijiao shiwu lun* 重陽立教十五論 (DZ1233: 4b): “*xing* means spirit, *ming* means vital force 性者神也, 命者氣也.” Although it is difficult to find “nature” as a term contrasted with the “physical” or “bodily” order of life, I reluctantly use “Nature” here as a translation of *xing*, with an emphasis on the spiritual aspect. Mu Zhen also understands *xing* as human spirituality when he considers the unification of body gods—spirits or spiritual entities inside the human body—as the process of keeping *xing* inside *ming*. Wei’s exegesis also uses *xing* with the same implications.

It is a normal function of Life to see colors and hear sounds, to hold with hands and tread with feet. But through visualization with immortal eyes and hearing [recitation] clearly with holy ears, one reaches the fundamental elucidation of the great meanings and attains all-encompassing enlightenment. Is it not Life that returns to Nature and becomes “Life inside Nature” (*xing zhongzhi ming*)? . . . When divine spirits disperse, they transmute into precious writs of the *Great Cavern Scripture*; when divine spirits gather, they transmute into the Perfected Way of Thearch One.⁸⁰

經之所重，聿在性命雙修。其所言性，乃命中之性。所言命，乃性中之命爾。蓋凡物各具一太極，人身……亦各具一太極。太極具而神明生焉。此經三十九章，所以有道君、元君、七十餘位之尊神也。有此神而一毫端能現寶王。非性來歸命，為命中之性乎。見色聞聲，手持足履，命之常也。而乃方瞳洞照，梵耳虛明，以至大意朗元，十通並證。非命復歸性，為性中之命乎。……神之散也，為大洞寶文；神之聚也，為帝一真道。

Matriarch Wei's exegesis can be characterized as follows. First, its interpretation is based on the synthesis of the three teachings: the Neo-Confucian theory of Nature and Principle (*xingli* 性理) is deeply embedded in the understanding of the *Great Cavern Scripture*. It understands innate human nature (*xing*) in terms of Neo-Confucian *jing* 精, or concentration (of the mind unified with Dao), and the characteristic (*xiang* 相) of human nature in terms of divine spirituality (*shen* 神);⁸¹ Yuanshi tianwang is identified with Vairocana (Piluzhena 毘盧遮那) and regarded as the ancestor of the Buddha and a Transcendent at the same time. From this divine ancestor, every human being is given the light (*guang* 光) that presides over his or her body. In this sense, the human body is not perfect darkness (*zhenmei* 真昧, i.e. *avidyā*). Rather, it is naturally endowed with numinosity (*yiling zhi bing* 一靈之稟). However, because they fall into the cycle of death and rebirth, human beings become far removed from the Dao. This is why Yuanshi tianwang wanted to save people by transmitting this scripture.⁸²

⁸⁰ JY8, di 4: 117a–b, Mu Zhen, Postscript.

⁸¹ JY8, di 4: 20b, General Introduction, “性，精也。相，神也。性為萬法之本。”

⁸² JY8, di 4: 3a, Wei Huacun, Preface.

According to Matriarch Wei's exegesis, the practice of the *Great Cavern Scripture* is the great way of realization of the fundamental state of human Nature.⁸³ The fundamental state of one's nature is often symbolically referred to as luminous essence, the “*canghuxie* jewel 蒼胡頡寶”;⁸⁴ it is also considered to be the “base consciousness” among the eight consciousnesses (*bashi* 八識), that is *ādāna* 陀那 (i.e. *ālaya-vijñāna* 阿賴耶識).⁸⁵ Therefore, the goal of practice of the scripture is identified with realization of the Buddhist truth of reality. It says:

Those who embody the Perfected Way of Thearch One spontaneously embody the *dharmatā* (*fati* 法體, fundamental state of existence) as well as the *dharmā*-realm (*fajie* 法界, realm of reality) of Thearch One. . . . Those who practice the way of Thearch One must themselves realize unobstructed *dharmatā* (fundamental state of all beings).⁸⁶

具此帝一真道者，自具帝一之法體，帝一之法界者也……修帝一之道者，當知自己無障無礙之法體。

Secondly, Matriarch Wei's explanation also prescribes the integrated cultivation of body and spirit in order to achieve the Dao, but with unique terminology. While it emphasizes that “Thearch One is the substance of the Way of the *Transcendent Scripture* 仙經之道，以帝一為之體，” it finds the structure of [spiritual] Nature and [physical order of] Life (*xingming*) in the combination of “Thearch” and “One.”

Thearch (*di*) is [the manifestation of] gods of the Great Cavern. Oneness (*yi*) is the primordial root of the Great Cavern. What is called “Thearch” is the unification of [spiritual] Nature, and so it is venerable; what is called “One” is the accomplishment of Life, and so it is worthiest. Integrated cultivation of Thearch and Oneness results in a return to Great Voidness and prevents descent into *samsāra* (cycle of death and rebirth). Therefore, Thearch One is essential to practicing the *Great Cavern Scripture*. But it is just an imposed name as Most

⁸³ JY8, di 4: 1a, Twelve Points, “大洞仙經乃修證之大道也。”

⁸⁴ JY8, di 4: 79b.

⁸⁵ JY8, di 4: 20b, General Introduction, “是經所稱蒼胡頡寶也……真乃八識之源，陀那之本，而為性之宗矣。”

⁸⁶ JY8, di 4: 1b–2a.

High (i.e. Laozi) said. If we inquire into its origin, it is just Great Voidness or Empty Cavern. How could it be the name of Thearch One?⁸⁷

帝者，大洞之神。一者，大洞之元也。稱帝而性之統乃尊，稱一而命之功乃至。帝一兼修，可復還太虛，而不至顛倒輪迴矣。是以帝一為修大洞之要。然亦太上之所謂強名也。原其始太虛空洞，豈有帝一之名乎！

In this case, “Great Voidness” (*taixu* 太虛) or “Empty Cavern” (*kongdong* 空洞) no longer has spatial meaning as it does in medieval interpretations. Rather, it is an allusion to the fundamental state of the human mind. Wei’s explanation says, “Great Cavern (*dadong*) means Great Voidness (*taixu*). It is just the Great Voidness inside our mind [我心內之太虛], and not that of celestial space [空中之太虛].”⁸⁸

Thirdly, Wei’s interpretation provides a harmonious understanding of the disparate Wenchang and Maoshan versions, and even the degraded story of the Jiangxi version. In spite of differences between the three, it considers the result of practice to be the same in obtaining transcendence.

Thearch Lord of Wenchang obtained a golden statue of Yuanshi tianwang and worshipped it without negligence. As a result, it moved [Yuanshi tianwang] to transmit the *Transcendent Scripture*, and so he achieved the right result. This is the [text of the] Zitong sect; I manifested my trace on Mt. Mao, having been transformed into a Daoist nun, and transmitted the scripture to Lord Mao in order to give it to the world. This is the [text of the] Maoshan sect; on the first day of the second lunar month of the second year of Guanghe, in the Lingdi reign of the Han, Lord Lao of Most High descended to Mt. Tiantai and transmitted the *Great Cavern Scripture* to Old Man Ge (i.e. Ge Xuan). This is the [text of the] Old Immortal sect. Although the transmissions of the three sects are different from each other, among people who kept reciting [the scriptures], there was no one who could not ride the clouds and dragons to ascend to Highest Clarity Heaven.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ JY8, di 4: 3b.

⁸⁸ JY8, di 4: 26b.

⁸⁹ JY8, di 4: 24b, General Instruction.

文昌帝君得元始天王金像，奉事弗懈，感受仙經，以資正果，此梓潼派也。余顯跡茅山，化為女姑，授經茅君，以傳世，此茅山派也。漢靈帝光和二年正月一日，太上老君降於天台，出大洞經，授於葛翁，此仙翁派也。三派流傳，互有同異，然持誦之者，未有不乘雲駕龍，而登上清者矣。

In particular, the analogy of Buddhist logic is used to reinterpret the Nine Lights talismans and Ninefold Integration ritual of the Wenchang version in line with the visualization of the 39 chapters of the Maoshan version. Thearch One is regarded as the substantial and fundamental state of human beings, and its functional states are threefold: Being (*you* 有), Non-being (*wu* 無), and Mysterious-being (*xuan* 玄). These three states of being, or triune *dharma* (*sanfa* 三法), generate nine beings, and this is called “Ninefold Integration.”⁹⁰ Qian’s commentary on the “*fa* of Ninefold Integration” and “talismans of Nine Lights” reads as follows:

Every being (*fa*) derives from one heart/mind. Inside one heart/mind, there are bound three states [of being] (*sanfa*): being, non-being, and mysterious-being. Mysterious-being is in between being and non-being. These three further generate nine states [of being]: being of being, being of non-being, non-being of non-being, non-being of being, non-being of mystery, mystery of being, mystery of non-being, and mystery of mystery. If we give an integrated name to this, it is “subtle wonder” (*miao* 妙).

Celestial King of Primordial Beginning showed the “being (*fa*) of Ninefold Integration” in order to [make people] meet the Thearch. “Nine Lights” . . . spontaneously become Nine talismans. Celestial King of Primordial Beginning transmitted the “talismans of Nine Lights” in order to [make people] unify spirituality.⁹¹

凡法不出一心。而於一心中，復約以三法，曰有，曰無，曰玄。玄則兼於有無者也。三法復生九法，曰有有，曰有無，曰有玄，曰無無，曰無有，曰無玄，曰玄有，曰玄無，曰玄玄，統而名之曰妙……元始

⁹⁰ JY8, di 4: 4a, Wei Huacun, Preface, “以有無玄三法為之用，三法復生九法，是為九統。”

⁹¹ JY8, di 4: 28a–b.

天王示九統之法，以會帝。九光者，……自成九符……元始天王傳九光之符，以集神。

In this way, the reference to ritual performance with talismans in the Wenchang and Jiangxi versions is reinterpreted as the functional state of mind/heart or the crystallization of its inner virtue.

Because the text regards Thearch One as the substantial state, the visualization of 39 corporeal gods is considered to be, relatively speaking, subsidiary or peripheral. The main part of the text is composed of only the *Jade Scripture* (*Jade Stanzas*) in verses, commentary, and explanation; the manual for visualization (*cunsi*) in each chapter is completely omitted. This is well expressed in Wei Huacun's preface, when she writes, "Since [Yuanshi tianwang] explains Thearch One as the host of Dao, consequently the corporeal gods of the 39 chapters are considered to be companions of Dao" 既說帝一為道之主，隨說三十九章之神為道之伴，⁹² and further, "Great Cavern is the ancestor of Great Dao. Thearch One is the lineal son of Great Cavern. The thirty-nine heavens are illegitimate sons of Great Cavern" 大洞為大道之祖，帝一為大洞之長子，三十九天為大洞之支庶。⁹³

With regard to orthopraxis, it redefines the visualization of Thearch One, mainly focusing on four points in a vertical line on the body. It deviates from the normal understanding of the three cinnabar fields (*santian* 三田), in which *niwan* is identified with the upper field, the middle with the heart (*xin* 心), and the lower with the spleen or *huangting* 黃庭. Surprisingly, it assigns *niwan* and the three cinnabar fields as follows: the lower cinnabar field "Prime Pass" (*guanyuan* 關元) is the storage place of *qi* 炁, the upper field "Vermillion Palace" (*jianggong* 絳宮, i.e. heart) is the storage place of *jing* 精, and the middle cinnabar field "Yellow Court" (*huangting*) is the place of the merging of *qi* and *jing*, while the top of the head (*niwan*) is the storage place of *shen* 神. Utmost importance is placed on the bottom *guanyuan* and the top *niwan*.⁹⁴

⁹² JY8, di 4: 3b. Wei Huacun, Preface.

⁹³ JY8, di 4: 4a. Wei Huacun, Preface.

⁹⁴ JY8, di 4: 5b–6a, Twelve Points.

Cinnabar Field	Normal Understanding	JY8
		Top of Head (<i>niwan</i>) <i>shen</i> 神
Upper	Top of Head (<i>niwan</i>)	Vermillion Palace (heart) <i>jing</i> 精
Middle	Vermillion Palace (heart)	Yellow Court (spleen) <i>jing</i> 精 + <i>qi</i> 炁
Lower	Yellow Court (spleen)	Prime Pass (<i>guanyuan</i>) <i>qi</i> 炁

Fig. 2 Three Cinnabar Fields

In this new interpretation, *jing* 精 is not seminal essence stored between the kidneys. Rather, it is a “concentrated” (*jing*) and “unified” (*yi*) state of mind/heart as referred to in the *Book of Documents*: “*Jing* of the Vermillion Palace means the pure concentration [of mind], which is not contaminated by selfishness nor deluded by desire. It is the everlasting constant and fundamental state of being” 絳宮之精，精一之精也。不為私染，不為欲蔽，歷劫常住之體。⁹⁵

Further, Wei’s explanation divides the visualization of “Whirlwind Unification of Thearch One” (*huifeng hunhe diyi*) into two different practices. It considers “Whirlwind Unification” (*huifeng hunhe*), which visualizes the unification of celestial gods with corporeal gods, to be complicated, trivial, and doubtful.⁹⁶ Thus, it argues that Whirlwind Unification should be incorporated into “Three to One” (*sanyi* 三一) visualization. The visualization of Three to One is as follows:

The pair of human eyes represents the Sun and the Moon in the sky. [Visualize the Sun and the Moon on the eyes.] From the eyes, pour [the light] into the heart and visualize the cinnabar fields for a while. Then “turn the light” (*huiguang* 回光) [from the front side to the back side of the body]. From the tail gate (*weilü*), it goes up through the backbone, and “reverse and illuminate” (*fanzhao* 返照) the top of the head (*niwan*) and thereby salute the Highest Thearch. [If one] keeps the light uninterruptedly, [then] during the decades one can fly and ascend [to the divine realm]. This is the Way of Three to One.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ JY8, di 4: 5b, Twelve Points.

⁹⁶ JY8, di 4: 8a, Twelve Points, “古仙迴風混合之道，存天中之神，合身中之神……顧其道繁矣，屑屑而思，章章而擬。”

⁹⁷ JY8, di 4: 8a–b.

人之兩眼，猶天中日月。其法以目注心想丹田，良久，便回光。從尾閭、夾脊，返照泥丸，以朝上帝。含光無間，一紀飛昇。即此三一之道也。

The practice of Three to One implies the circulation of *qi* along the conception vessel and governing vessel. Turning the inner gaze of visualization from the anterior to the posterior of the body is considered to be “turning the light” (*huiguang*). The convergence of the flow of light at the end of the circulation at the top of head is called “reversed illumination” (*fanzhao*). It is clear that the inner alchemical circulation of *qi* through the Cosmic Orbit (*zhoutian* 周天) is incorporated into this practice. It is also obvious that the previous Jiangxi version influenced this reinterpretation. For example, *renzhong* 人中, which had been one of the points for visualizing the Revered Lord of Thearch One of the Great Cavern (大洞帝一尊君) since medieval times,⁹⁸ is explained as the intersection of the two conception and governing vessels in both texts.⁹⁹

Finally, it gives a unique interpretation of recitation. It says that there are three ways of reciting the scripture: recitation with a clear voice, without a voice, and halfway between the two. However, these are merely “physical recitation” (*xingsong* 形誦) and not “spiritual recitation” (*shensong* 神誦). Spiritual recitation is “to activate one’s original spirit (*yuanshen* 元神) and raise it to Great Voidness. . . . [If one] makes the spirit immovable within Great Emptiness, then one can spontaneously attain the view of the Infinity of Primordial *qi* of Heaven and perfect realization of the realm of reality. . . . This is the wonder of spiritual recitation.”¹⁰⁰

This text is also connected to the cult of Lüzu. Here Thearch Lord of Pure Yang (Chunyang dijun) plays a role in introducing the conceptual framework of *ti-yong* 體用, or “substantial state and functional state of being.”

⁹⁸ YJQQ 30: 21a, DZ6, juan 2: 2a.

⁹⁹ JY6, di 3: 2a, “人中有一嬰兒，……號大洞帝一尊君，鎮任督二脈交會之所。” JY8, di 4: 15b.

¹⁰⁰ JY8, di 4: 10a, “惟運我元神，躋於太虛，……定神太空之內，自見天元無極，法界圓明……乃神誦之妙也。”

My Way, Dao, values the prolonging of life, and so it gives great importance to the “order of existence” (*ming* 命, Life). What makes the order of existence of Dao different from human beings is divine spirituality (*shen* 神). Human beings have corporeality (*xing* 形, i.e. body) as their order of existence, and so they must have life and death. In contrast, Dao has divine spirituality as its order of existence; therefore, Dao has neither life nor death. . . . There is the true substantial state (*ti* 體) and the true functional state (*yong* 用) of spirituality [of human beings]: its [substance] is not the soul (*hun* 魂); its [function] is not cognition (*shi* 識). . . . The true substantial state of spirituality is the primordial essence (*yuanjing* 元精); its true function is “consistent illumination” (*zhenming* 貞明) [as described in the *Book of Changes*]. Is it not shown in the celestial law? The three treasures of the celestial orbit—sun, moon, and stars— . . . all have essence and illumination as their substance and function. The human spirit (*shen* 神) is the same. The primordial essence of human beings has been conferred since the Great Beginning [of the Universe]; it has been transmitted through *kalpas* since ancestral time. It is not the essence of seminal fluid, but the unified and concentrated state of human Nature (*xing zhong jingyi* 性中精一). If one can thoroughly realize this subtle mystery and keep the true essence, then the light [of one’s essence] shines as brightly as the red sun and the white moon and prevents the delusion of being and non-being. This is the substantial state [of the human spirit]. Illumination is generated by the essence; the substance exists, for illumination exists [as its function]. It illuminates the infinite and the finite at the same time. This is the functional state [of the human spirit]. . . . Integration of these substantial and functional states can complete the “true order of existence.”

吾道貴長生，所重者命而已。而道之命，所以異於人者，神而已。人以形為命，形則有生必有死。道以神為命，神則無死亦無生……實有其神之體，實有其神之用，……神非魂也……神非識也。……蓋神之真體，在於元精。神之真用，在於貞明而已。不觀之天道乎！天道三寶日月星，……皆以精明為體用也。而神亦如之。夫人之元精，稟於太始，傳於祖劫。非身中精液之精，乃性中精一之精也。能洞觀其妙，葆此真精，則其光晃耀，大如紅輪，明如皎月，不落於色，不滯於空者，是其體也。明因精發，有是體即有是明，洞煥無垠，昭融有象者，是其用也。……具此體用，而真命乃全。

This provides a new framework for understanding the *Great Cavern Scripture*, which rediscovers the original Nature of the human mind and spirit as the root of transcendence and salvation. Through the unconsciousness of literati of the Kangxi period, the medieval “playful universe,” where gods were embodied and the body was spiritualized, transformed itself into a theological treatise to ground divine spirituality within human Nature.

(c) **Radical Innovations of the *Great Cavern Scripture* in Guizhou and Liu Tishu’s *Complete Works of the Literary Thearch* (18C)**

The final version of the *Great Cavern Scripture* is the *Introduction to Reading the Great Cavern Scripture* (*Dadong jing shidu* 大洞經示讀) in 3 juan. It represents the most radical innovation of the Wenchang version. First of all, the 36 chapters of the Wenchang version have been further reduced to 24 chapters, among which there remain only 21 chapters of the Maoshan version. Interestingly, Wenchang himself claims authorship of these 21 chapters. This occurred at spirit-writing altars in southwestern China from the 1720s to 1730s.

Initially, Jin Bencun 金本存 (*hao*: Fuyangzi 復陽子) and Hua Ruqi 華如琪 received the main text at the Altar of Eternal Salvation (*yongjitan* 永濟壇) located in Yu 渝 (present-day Chongqing). The preface attributed to Thearch Lord of Wenchang 文昌帝君 is dated 1728. It says that Lord Wenchang descended by the brush to correct the misunderstanding of people and the many mistakes of previous versions: people had the misbelief that the *Great Cavern Scripture* was a textbook for guiding Wenchang to achieve the Dao, but it is his own work; people know only the 36-chapter edition but do not know that the 36 chapters have many errors and redundancies.¹⁰¹

Eight years after the revelation of the main text, the annotations of Celestial Lord Ma (Ma tianjun 馬天君) were produced by another act of spirit-writing, performed at Jin Bencun’s Sturgeon Altar (*zhantan* 鱸壇) in Dading 大定 (Guizhou) in 1736.

¹⁰¹ JY7, di 3: 90a, Original Preface of *Great Cavern Scripture* 大洞經原序.

This version became the most popular among all versions of the *Great Cavern Scripture*. Its derivative versions were found from Beijing to Fujian in the Qing period, and even in Hong Kong and Taiwan in modern times.¹⁰² It owed its widespread circulation to Liu Tishu 劉體恕's compilation of the *Complete Works of the Literary Thearch* (*Wendi quanshu* 文帝全書) in 32 juan. He published it in 1743, and Peng Qifeng wrote the preface.

Liu Tishu (a.k.a. Qiao 樵; *zi*: Kechen 柯臣, *hao*: Wuwozi 無我子), a native of Wuling 武陵 (Hunan 湖南), served as county governor (*zhixuan* 知縣) in several counties of Guizhou during the Yongzheng 雍正 and early Qinglong 乾隆 reigns.¹⁰³ He was a typical member of the literati class who studied Confucianism and recognized the educational power of the teachings of Lüzu and Wendi for ordinary people. Liu Tishu believed that “the Great Patriarch of Transcendental Teaching is Lüzu; the Great Patriarch of Confucian

¹⁰² There are the greatest variety of reprints for this version. Apart from the *Wendi quanshu* and *Daozang jiyao*, the collated edition of Zhu Gui 朱珪 (1731–1806; native of Daxing 大興, Beijing) is included in Ding Fubao 丁福保, comp., *Daozang jinghua lu* 道藏精華錄 under the title *Wenchang dijun jiuji kaixin congming dadong zhenjing* 文昌帝君救劫開心聰明大洞真經 (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe 浙江古籍出版社, reprint, 1989). There is another 2-juan edition titled *Wenchang dijun dadong jing* 文昌帝君大洞經 included in the *Daoshu yiguan* 道書一貫 (box 1, juan 5) printed in 1873. The *Zhongzhu dadong jing* 重注大洞經 (4 juan), annotated by Liu Yuan 劉沅 (1768–1855; native of Sichuan), is included in the *Sandong shiyi* 三洞拾遺, vol. 2 (Huangshan shushe 黃山書社, 2005). Dr. Hu Jiechen kindly informed me of extant individual woodblock editions: Shao Zhikun 邵志錕's edition printed in 1850; 1853 Cixi zhixintang 慈西治心堂 edition, now held by Shanghai Library; 1859 Sixiangcaotang 四香草堂 edition, now held by Nanjing Library. The text underwent rewriting by the descending brush of Great Perfected Lou 婁大真人 at the Liaojian Division Altar 了闡分壇 in Xiamen 廈門 (Fujian). Perfected Lou was believed to be a late-Ming literatus, whose name was Dexian 德先 and *zi* Zhishi 秩士, a native of Jiangyin 江陰. He became a spirit-writing immortal of the Qing scholar Guo Zengxin 郭曾忻 of Fuzhou 福州 from 1898. The Liaojian Division Altar at Xiamen was built in 1926, and the *Taishang yuqing wuji zongzhen dadong xianjing* 太上玉清無極總真大洞仙經 was printed as a spirit-written text from Great Perfected Lou in 1928. It was reprinted in Taiwan by the Liaojian Division Altar in 1968. In 1991, it was reprinted in Hong Kong by Liaojian daoshe youxian gongsi 了闡道社有限公司 (<http://www.liuhan.org.hk/introduction.php?i=1>). Both the 1968 and 1991 editions are held by The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

¹⁰³ *Guizhou tongzhi* 貴州通志 18: 27b (1741 edition); *Qingshigao* 300: 10438.

Teaching is Wendi” 仙教大宗，呂祖是也；儒教大宗，文帝是也。¹⁰⁴ He was also the compiler of the *Complete Works of Patriarch Lü* (*Lüzu quanshu* 呂祖全書). After printing this, it took him almost twenty years to complete the *Wendi quanshu*.

During his stay in Guizhou, he acquired two manuscripts of spirit-written texts, one from Jin Bencun in person, and the other from the collection of his own son Liu Wucheng 劉悟誠 (*hao*: Qingxuzi 清虛子). Liu edited the text, called *Introduction to Reading the Great Cavern Scripture with Commentary and Explanation* (*Dadong jing shidu zhushu* 大洞經示讀註疏), and included it in the Inner Box (*neihan* 內函) of the *Wendi quanshu*. Later, the text was also reprinted as *Introduction to Reading the Cavern Scripture* (*Dongjing shidu* 洞經示讀) in *Essentials of the Daoist Canon* (JY7).

This revised text, written in a readable literary style, boldly reinterpreted the scripture with the simplified terminology of popular inner alchemy and set out the entire process of individual transcendence and salvation of others. Wenchang explains it as “the beginning of self-completion and the end of completion of others” 成己之始，成物之終。¹⁰⁵

The changes in the text’s composition are well expressed at the start. The first chapter, “Introduction to the Scripture” (序經章第一), represents prefatory remarks, and the text starts in effect from the second chapter. This second chapter was the seventh chapter of the Maoshan and Wenchang versions. It begins with a description of a god: “Perfected Yang is a guest grandee of the Thearch. He receives task orders for an audience with the Jade Sovereign” 真陽帝賓老，受事會玉皇。¹⁰⁶ In the Maoshan version, this chapter concerns a celestial deity, “Perfected Yang Grandee, Lord of Mysterious Oneness” (Zhenyang yuanlao xuanyi jun 真陽元老玄一君).

¹⁰⁴ Liu Tishu, Preface, in *Wendi quanshu*, 1: 13a.

¹⁰⁵ JY7, di 3: 91a.

¹⁰⁶ JY7, di 3: 94a.

JY7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
DZ103	道言	7	10	9	經首	1	2	3	道言	4	6	5	27	28	8	11	道言	20	19	12	13	14	15	結經
DZ6	×	7	10	9	1	12	2	3	×	4	6	5	29	30	8	13	×	21	20	14	15	16	18	×

Fig. 3 Chapters of the Maoshan version (DZ6), Wei version (DZ103), and *Introduction to Reading* (JY7)

The substitution of this chapter for the opening was obviously due to the importance of “Perfected Yang” in the inner alchemical tradition. It signifies “the ancestral *qi* (*zuqi* 祖炁) for generating myriad beings, the primordial state still undivided into heaven and earth, the numinous light (*lingguang* 靈光), and the perfectness of *wuji* 無極 [Infinity of Great Ulitimate].” It is also based on earlier Neo-Confucian understanding when it interprets “Jade Sovereign” (*yuhuang* 玉皇) as “the ruler of our mind/heart, the Principle inside Original [Nature]” (*benran zhi li* 本然之理).¹⁰⁷

As for Thearch One, it says, “Thearch One is the one and only ruler [of mind and body]”; “the highest phosphors” (*shangjing* 上景), which was a descriptive expression for the convergence of lights and *qi* of corporeal gods in Thearch One in the Maoshan version, is now reinterpreted as “the Highest Principle.”¹⁰⁸

This new text does not deal with the visualization of corporeal gods or practice with talismans. It has removed all liturgical elements and has completely changed into a text for reading without ritual. The characteristics of the *Introduction to Reading* are crystallized in the exegesis attributed to Celestial Lord Ma. For example, chapter 12 reads:

The true Nature of human beings is concealed in the ancestral aperture (*zuqiao* 祖竅); it spontaneously generates numinous light (*lingguang*). The light [of original Nature] rises to illuminate the Nine

¹⁰⁷ JY7, di 3: 94a-b, “真陽，乃生物祖炁，天地未判之先，一點靈光，無極之真也；玉皇上帝，……吾心之主宰，本然之理。”

¹⁰⁸ JY7, di 3: 103a, “帝一，主宰惟一。上景，乃理之最上者。”

Palaces (*jiugong*) [on top of the head, *niwan*], descends to the Yellow Court [in the abdomen], . . . and finally unifies with *yuanshen* (original spirit) in the kidneys. It is the unification of Nature [*lingguang*] and Life [*yuanshen*], and through the turning of the light and the reversal of illumination, [true Yin of] the heart and [true Yang of] the kidneys converge with each other and generate enlightenment everyday, [for]. . . without any instruction . . . one can ascend to Highest Clarity.

真性之藏於祖竅者，自有靈光發現，上徹九宮，降黃庭，……與腎中元神會合。性命合一，回光返照，心腎交融，智慧日生，……不須指導，能自得師，……而登於上清矣。¹⁰⁹

This text is also based on a synthesis of the Three Teachings and the perspective of the integration of spiritual and physical practices. It concentrates on reading the *Great Cavern Scripture* as an inner alchemical process based on the Neo-Confucian understanding of the *Book of Changes* within the framework of Primordial Heaven (*xiantian* 先天) and Later Heaven (*houtian* 後天), and Principle and Qi (*liqi* 理氣).

Above all, the text was strongly influenced by the popular self-cultivation and inner alchemical tradition found in late Ming classics such as the *Xingming guizhi* 性命圭旨. This characteristic is well illustrated by the works it cites: *Scripture of the Seal of the Heart of the Jade Sovereign* (*Gaoshang yuhuang xinyin jing*), *Awakening to Perfection* (*Wuzhen pian* 悟真篇), *Sūraṅama Sūtra* 楞嚴經, *Scripture of Dragon and Tiger* (*Longhu jing* 龍虎經), and commentaries on the *Concordance of the Three* (*Cantongji* 參同契). Most of these seem to have been taken from the *Xingming guizhi*. The whole process of practicing with the scripture is often summarized in the inner alchemical stages of transformation, for example, “refine essence into *qi*, refine *qi* into spirit, . . . then both body and spirit achieve the subtle wonder and return to Great Emptiness 煉精歸炁，煉炁歸神，……則形神俱妙，復還太虛，”¹¹⁰ including the corresponding results such as the formation of the “Sacred Embryo” (*shengtai* 聖胎), “[Immortal] Infant” (*ying'er* 嬰兒),

¹⁰⁹ JY7, di 3: 122b.

¹¹⁰ JY7, di 3: 99b.

and “Yang Spirit” (*yangshen* 陽神).

The influence of Neo-Confucian reading was already noticeable in the Wei version (JY6), but it became more concentrated and fully applied in the framework of Neo-Confucian cosmology. At the end of the scripture, “The General Meaning of the *Great Cavern Scripture*” (*Dadong jing zongyi* 大洞經總義) summarizes the internalization of *taiji* 太極 in human Nature as well as the reversal process for returning *taiji* through the practice of the *Great Cavern Scripture*.¹¹¹ The main method of reversal is “Whirlwind Unification,” but it is here reinterpreted as “reversed illumination” of one’s Nature.

Lastly, the text ends with the twenty-five “Poems of Enlightenment (*Shimeng ouyin* 示蒙偶吟)” in 7-syllable *jueju*. These illustrate the orthopraxis of the scripture with an emphasis on embryonic breathing (*taixi* 胎息).

[Poem 24]

[By] mysterious breathing originating from the ancestral aperture,
The true seed of Primordial Heaven bears fruit as the embryonic infant.
The precious luminosity of the Perfect Jewel unites with the Whirlwind.
In deep tranquillity its constant illumination will be the lamp [of enlightenment] forever.

玄息原從祖竅生，先天真種結胎嬰，圓珠寶映回風合，湛寂常明萬歲燈。

[Poem 25]

The origin of Dao never ends; delusion [about life and death] is never true.
[With] constant breathing in embryonic crystallization, one enters into [primordial] chaos.
Detached and purified from material worlds, everything is Emptiness.
[Within the Emptiness] there are no [longer divisions of] others, the self, and the body.¹¹²

道原不息妄非真，息住胎凝入渾淪，離相清塵空一切，無人無我亦無身。

¹¹¹ JY7, di 3: 152b–153a; *Wendi quanshu* 9: 20b–21b.

¹¹² JY7, di 3: 156b; *Wendi quanshu* 9: 25b–26a.

Rejecting the normal breathing of Later Heaven, these poems emphasize the embryonic breathing of Primordial Heaven. With this primordial breathing, one generates the Perfect Jewel 圓珠 of Fire (*hua* 火) in the Water (*sui* 水) of the kidneys.¹¹³ There is an allusion to the River Chariot (*hecha* 河車), which is the force for turning the flow of *qi* and reversing it to the top of the head.¹¹⁴ In particular, the Whirlwind is emphasized as the main method for returning everything to primordial chaos. In the midst of chaotic unification, everything is bound together, undivided and without distinctions.

It should be noted that the propagators of this new exegesis were never interested in a historical or critical approach to the text. Liu Tishu believed this to be the most ancient text among the *Great Cavern Scriptures*. He criticized people's ignorance, which thought that ancient Daoist texts were restricted to the *Daode jing* and *Yinfu jing* 陰符經. He argued for the greater antiquity of this text, basing himself on the belief that it originated with Yuanshi tianwang. Liu Tishu asserted that other Daoist texts, including the *Cantongji* and *Wuzhen pian*, were merely derived from it. For him, the *Great Cavern Scripture* was the central pole, like Mt. Kunlun, among all immortal scriptures.¹¹⁵

It is also important to understand the civil officials' faith in Wenchang during the Qing period. Liu Tishu ended his life as a local governor, not as a member of the highest ranked elite group like Peng Qifeng. But their understanding has much in common, judging from their prefaces to the *Wendi quanshu*. We can say that Liu Tishu may well represent the Wendi cult of the Qing literati class. He writes, "The works of Lüzu propagate Daoism but also integrate Confucianism and Buddhism; the works of Wendi propagate Confucianism but do not depart from Buddhism and

¹¹³ JY7, di 3: 112b, "珠明水底，真陽生於北海之中"; JY7, di 3: 155a, Poem 14, "火從水底圓珠現。"

¹¹⁴ JY7, di 3: 155a, Poem 16, "順則長生逆即仙，河車搬運入丹田。"

¹¹⁵ *Wendi quanshu* 1: 25b, Liu Tishu 劉體恕, "Original Divided Preface of Dexintang 德馨堂原小序," "自古道書，首推陰符三百、道德五千，而此經授自元始，應在二經之前，其傳授甚奇，其文字甚奧。雖肆力於道者，且茫然不知所謂。今得示讀一編，而茫然者了然，與陰符、道德，文異義同。參同、悟真而下，皆其支派。萬卷仙經，要以此為崑崙星宿焉。"

Daoism” 呂祖之書，以闡道教而兼乎儒釋。文帝之書，以宣儒教而不離乎釋道。As shown in this remark, Wenchang basically possesses a character representative of Confucianism. But at the same time, Liu admits that the *Great Cavern Scripture* is the best of Daoist texts. Then how does he explain the relationship of the scripture with Confucianism? He finds the answer in the filial piety of Wenchang: “In case of the scripture and talismans of the *Great Cavern*, [Wenchang] was able to receive them on account of his filial piety” 如大洞經錄，以孝而獲授。¹¹⁶

IV. Conclusion

The history of the reproduction and reinterpretation of the *Great Cavern Scripture* presents a miniature history of changing hermeneutic paradigms in Daoism. The pursuit of knowledge and practice of the correlative structure of the inner body and the celestial world was preserved, but it was turned into attempts to theorize or conceptualize about the inherent human nature of transcendence. Needless to say, new perspectives unified the ideals of Neo-Confucianism, Buddhist enlightenment, and Daoist inner alchemy.

A significant difference among the various versions can be found in the social entities that produced and interpreted the text. Until the end of the Song, it was only ordained Daoist priests who wrote commentaries on the *Great Cavern Scripture*: Zhu Ziyang and Jiang Zongying were patriarchs of Maoshan, while the Longhu version was related to the Qingwei-pai, or Daoist school of Clarified Tenuity, and the text was handed down to Heavenly Master Gong Detong on Mt. Longhu.

In the case of the spirit-written text of the Wenchang version, it is unclear whether Liu Ansheng was an ordained Daoist or not. Wei Qi, the annotator, called himself Zhongyangzi of Mt. Feng 蓬山 in Eastern Shu 東蜀 but never used any Daoist title. In fact, he was an ordinary member of the literati class who had received a Confucian education. He used the text for educating people while serving as a

¹¹⁶ *Wendi quanshu* 9: 50b, Liu Tishu, Original Postscript.

civil official, and his annotations were the result of his thirty years of studying the scripture.¹¹⁷ Other Qing spirit-written versions are almost the same in this regard. An elite group, mainly composed of the local gentry class and governors, was the epicenter of the new exegesis. But what makes Qing versions different from Wei Qi's case is that not only the text itself but also the commentaries claim to be divine revelations.

Changes in the method of transmitting the text can also not be overlooked. The transmission of the scripture had been restricted to liturgical ceremonies held in Daoist monasteries, where the master transmitted a transcribed copy to ordained adepts. But from the Southern Song period onward, through the development of woodblock printing, it spread to lay society and the gentry class in the secular world.

Lastly, the reproduction of the three new versions in the Ming-Qing period had strong connections with local traditions. Wei Huacun's new revealed text in Suzhou (JY8) claims the Maoshan version as its predecessor and follows the format of the Maoshan version (DZ6); Jin Bencun's new revealed text in Guizhou (JY7) completely altered the previous Wenchang version (DZ5, DZ103) but affirmed an even stronger connection with the Wenchang cult; and the Jiangxi version of the *Jade Scripture of the Great Cavern* (JY6) adhered to the form and style of talismans of the Longhu version (DZ7). Both Jiangxi versions show compromises between the Maoshan and Wenchang versions. Geographically too, Jiangxi lies between Jiangsu and Sichuan. Needless to say, these three regions, Jiangsu, Sichuan, and Jiangxi, have local mythologies linked to their sacred places, Mt. Mao (and Mt. Qionglong), Zitong, and Mt. Gezao, respectively.

This article has dealt with only a few aspects of each version. However, by focusing on changes in the core part, I have attempted to elucidate how each version delivered new discourses to an ever-

¹¹⁷ DZ105, 1: 8a-b, Wei Qi, Preface, written in 1309, “琪幼蒙義方，至於諸子百家，靡不攻考。至元巳卯（1279），時方弱冠，受誦此經，迨今三旬……比歲薄宦西南，嘗以此勸人，家至戶到，往往好讀……近因浪走江湖，旅邸靜坐，默有所悟，輒將曩者註藁翻譯，以平昔所記三教經書，其間旨意合同者，隨句解釋。”

Abbreviations

- DZ *Daozang*; text numbers follow Schipper & Verellen, eds., *The Taoist Canon*, University of Chicago Press, 2004.
- DZ5 *Taishang wuji zongzhen wenchang dadong xianjing* 太上無極總真文昌大洞仙經. 5 juan.
- DZ6 *Shangqing dadong zhenjing* 上清大洞真經. 6 juan.
- DZ7 *Dadong yujing* 大洞玉經. 2 juan.
- DZ28 *Yuanshi tianzun shuo Zitong dijun yingyan jing* 元始天尊說梓童帝君應驗經.
- DZ103 *Yuqing wuji zongzhen wenchang dadong xianjing* 玉清無極總真文昌大洞仙經. 10 juan.
- DZ104 *Shangqing dadong zhenjing yujue yinyi* 上清大洞真經玉訣音義. Chen Jingyuan 陳景元, ed.
- DZ224 *Qingwei zaifa* 清微齋法.
- DZ304 *Maoshan zhi* 茅山志. 33 juan. Liu Dabin 劉大彬, ed.
- DZ450 *Taiji gexiangong zhuan* 太極葛仙公傳. Tan Sixian 譚嗣先, ed.
- JY (*Chongkan*) *Daozang jiyao*; text numbers follow DZJY Project team led by Monica Esposito (<http://www.daozangjiyao.org/dzjy/texts/dzjy>).
- JY6 *Yuanshi dadong yujing* 元始大洞玉經. 3 juan.
- JY7 *Dongjing shidu* 洞經示讀. 3 juan.
- JY8 *Yuqing wuji zongzhen dadong xianjing zhusu* 玉清無極總真大洞仙經注疏. 3 juan.
- JY168 *Yulu daguan* 語錄大觀.
- JY243 *Yuquan* 玉詮.
- YJQQ *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 (DZ1032).
- ZWDS *Zangwai daoshu* 藏外道書. Bashu shushe 巴蜀書社, 1992–1994.
- ZWDS20 *Xuanmiao guan zhi* 元(玄)妙觀志.

傳統的創新：以《大洞經》在明清時代的 革新為中心

金志玪

摘要

本論文考察了明清時代的道教中傳統的創新和宗教性的權威的形成，以及它們的社會背景。特別注目於到宋代為止都在道藏中處於究極的經典之位的《大洞真經》和其修行法的「回風混合帝一之法」，論述了近世以後「扶鸞」或者「降筆」的啟示傳統是如何對《大洞經》與其修行法進行革新性的詮釋，如何使它們在不斷變化的社會風土和文化知識中得以適用。

關鍵詞：明清道教、《大洞經》、回風混合帝一之法、乩筆、文昌 / 呂祖
信仰、文人階層、地域性