

靈境

Magic Precincts

Five Buddhist temples and How They Grew

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PREFACE

OK, so it's 4am or so; you're standing in the back row of a Buddhist temple's main hall somewhere in China. The wooden clapper woke you up 30 minutes ago, a monk's pounding the huge dharma drum like crazy, and still hardly anyone's there. Or maybe it's thronged with older women bowing and praying, pilgrim's bags at their sides--but where are all the temple monks? You're standing there--have you made your 3 bows to the altar yet?--on the cement floor; if it's Spring or Fall on a mountain you might well feel cold; what do you do? What can you expect? Welcome to Buddhist China...

Let's assume you got this far. You found out a temple up in the mountains somewhere; you arrived (later in the day proves tactically astute if you don't know whether you can expect a welcome; always harder to turn away a supplicant/guest when the sun's sinking low), found a sympathetic-looking monk (don't ask the doorman), introduced yourself as a Buddhist lay believer, and asked if you might spend a couple nights. You found a room, hopefully got a thermos or two of boiled water, and acquainted yourself with the temple as best you could. Usually, the front gate or "mountain gate" will face south; proper geomancy prescribes a "root alp" **benshan/zuoshan** in back and a "facing/blocking alp" **anshan** in front. Some monasteries will build a stupa to remedy lack of a mountain or to accentuate a small one. Tiantai's Guoqing Temple, for example, has a lovely 1400-year old stupa facing from the south; Lushan's East Grove Temple (Donglin si) has a towering new stupa on the low northern hill behind it. After you enter--famous temples will usually charge an entry fee one time--usually the first main hall will house the protective Four Kings, tutelary guardians of the four directions. If this hall contains a Buddha, more likely than not you'll see a potbellied Maitreya, Mile or "clothbag monk." As the wellworn Chinese saying goes, His

Great belly takes in and holds, takes in all that's hardest to take in the world;
Laughing mouth always parted, laughing at all the laughable folk in the world.

Usually the next building will house the Great Hero's Hall **daxiong baodian**, most imposing of the temple's structures, though at some larger temples you'll find intervening buildings. At Putuo's Fayu (Dharma Rain) Temple, for example, first you pass through a Jade Buddha Hall, a huge, thronged Nine Dragons Hall, and an Imperial Stela Hall before reaching the Hero's Hall. Inside the Hall you will usually look up to behold the temple's main icon--a huge bronze, stone, or wood image of Shakyamuni, perhaps, or Guanyin if the temple's dedicated to her, or perhaps Amida if you've entered a Pure Land Temple, etc. By the way, few

people know this but when you enter the main hall, usually you take either the left or right door, leaving the main door for Buddhas and distinguished guests. If you enter by the left door, proper etiquette demands you lift your **left** leg over the lintel first, then your right; vice versa if you enter from the right. Follow the same etiquette on leaving, and you may well impress the monks who notice such things. Most temples--certainly all the larger ones--will include more buildings on the main central axis; you may encounter halls for other buddhas/bodhisattvas/ arhats in different numbers (18 or 500, usually), sutra-storing halls, meditation halls, and perhaps the Abbot's Quarters. In wings to left and right, which may face the central court or, in large temples, face front like the Hero's Hall, you will find monks' quarters, dorms for lay Buddhists and perhaps pilgrims, the refectory, a "Guest's Hall," where you will most likely visit first and, perhaps, register, etc. Depending on the number of wings, corridors, and levels--many temples sit on mountains and have many different levels--as well as the vagaries of any one temple's architecture and current state of (re)construction, you may get lost easily. Orient yourself as well and quickly as possible before you have to stumble to morning service in the dark.

Well, now it's pre-dawn, and you wonder about the services; as bells and drums subside, the monks gather, and ceremonies begin. Usual services begin with an incense offering, followed by a number of dharanis from the Surangama Sutra. If you can, get a copy of Fojiao niansong ji or a similar anthology from the temple bookstore; it includes all the usual prayers, dharanis, etc. You will see lay Buddhists carrying these at service; sometimes the younger monks consult it for the longer dharanis (older monks sometimes forget, too, but they tend to fake it rather than lose face). Watch the monks to see when you should drop your hands from prayer position to folded mudra. After what at first seems an eternity--it usually takes about 20 minutes, depending on the temple's recital speed--they will finish with the Heart Sutra, then change pace and tune. Now they chant a benedictory hymn; your prayerbook will include the lines for Amidha; in a temple dedicated to Guanyin, they will sing a hymn to her included farther back in your prayerbook; likewise if the temple's dedicated to Manjusri, Ksitigarbha, Samantabhadra, etc. Then--at last--your sore feet get to circumambulate the temple, reciting the appropriate Buddha's or bodhisattva's name; you'll fall into line after the monks as the last and least of lay believers, often before the pilgrims. As you make the first bend, you drop your hands to folded mudra; this will last a few circuits, until the chant rhythm changes and you lift your hands in prayer again; keep an eye on the monks while maintaining your

deep meditative trance, and you'll know when to follow. After returning to your station--with luck, you'll still have one--you kneel and recite a vow, usually Samantabhadra's "Ten Great Vows," then the "3 Refuges." This short, simple prayer you'll find easy to memorize, and it seems worth translating here (you bow on your cushion after each verse):

Take my refuge in the Buddha/ Wishing all living creatures/ May personally realize the great Way/
Sending on sublimest thought.
Take my refuge in the Dharma/ Wishing all living creatures/ Will profoundly penetrate the Scriptures/
Wisdom vast as the sea.
Take my refuge in the Sangha/ Wishing all living creatures/ Will join together as one/
Entirely without hindrance.

Then, after repeating Indra's Daughter's Dharani and a hymn to Weituo (the temple guardian), the monks will make an offering, with another prayer. At this point, usually, you can head for the refectory and eat either with the monks or, depending on arrangements, with the pilgrims. This routine varies when pilgrims have requested a special mass for a loved one, or a general All-souls ("water and land") mass (which may take place over seven days and nights!), or on particular holidays when the temple celebrates one Buddha's birthday, or another's parinirvana, or the ordination of a monk, or a funeral, etc. You can find the relevant liturgies for most of these ceremonies in your prayerbook; ask a friendly monk if something unusual seems to have taken place. Don't worry too much about your inability to memorize great chunks of liturgy; try to learn the short, easy chants, and the monks will appreciate any efforts you make. Unlike some religious ceremonies you may have witnessed in the West, Chinese ceremonies have a certain amount of leeway about personal conduct. Pilgrims may exchange some words and gawk about (but you will maintain deep meditation, or at least appear dignified, if you can); occasionally a monk will hawk and, in respect to the Buddha, lean out the main door before spitting into the dark. Once, while circumambulating, a monk came in from outside and excitedly asked me something. The first time I didn't quite grasp his accent and thought he planned to order me out of the temple, pronto! On repetition, I grasped he only hoped to invite me to a Ksitigarbha mass already in progress, when I had finished the service. No one seemed to mind the interruption; later they let me sit in on the mass, handed me a prayerbook, and let me stumble through the chants. You occasionally see odd phenomena that everyone takes in stride; an altar candle blows out, and the sacrificer spends several minutes repeatedly climbing up and toying with the recalcitrant taper. At Tiantai's Gaoming Temple, I followed right behind the shortest monk I've ever seen--a dwarf less than 3 feet tall. He had quite a good chanting voice--it put me to shame--and I wondered which of us the Chinese

saw as the greater oddity. Well, i don't really wonder...nothing you can do about standing out conspicuously in China. Just get a lay Buddhist's cloak or, at least, wear dark unobtrusive clothing and accept their tolerant stares.

Evening service proceeds a lot like morning service, with different chants. Usually, you begin a short expiatory prayer, then a recital of the Amidha Sutra--this may vary by temple--then a series of chants devoted to the evening food offering. These include some elements well-known in Western Buddhism liturgies, such as the "Purification" chant and the "Great Vows." This last (which you'll find on p.57 of Fojiao niansongji) particularly deserves translation:

Living creatures boundless: i vow to save ("ferry") them/ Vexations endless: i vow to cut them off.

Dharma gates innumerable: i vow to learn them/ Buddha's Way unsurpassed: i vow to perfect it.
(The "vexations" by the way refer to the **klesas**: greed, ill will, and ignorance.)

Next, you'll kneel and recite the Pure Land Dharani, in which you vow to win rebirth in the Blessed Land, followed by Samantabhadra's Admonishment and the now-familiar "3 Refuges." After repeating the "Great Compassion Dharani" from morning service, the ceremony closes with a hymn to the temple and, often, to Guanyin. Unless some special ceremony's taking place, you can now go back to your room. The temple gates, of course, have long gotten shut; they generally close around sunset and will not open until after breakfast.

Other than these services--non-compulsory, by the way--you may have the chance to attend sitting meditation sessions, which usually take place during the afternoon or evening. Timing depends on the monks' schedule; when pilgrim activity reaches a height, when "water and land" masses take place, or at festival times, the monks get quite busy and have little time for formal meditation. If you find yourself denied access to one activity or another, just reflect you're a most fortunate guest here; their willingness to let you stay--usually for a pittance or donation of your choice--you should recognize as a dharma gift. A most useful phrase to remember in China, in temples, and, indeed, anywhere: **suiyuan**, or "go with your karma." As a Westerner with a chance to see Chinese Buddhism up close, you must have very fortunate karma indeed; no need to push because you hoped to do something the monks find inconvenient or unsuitable. Just shrug and say "sui yuan"; they'll appreciate your proper Buddhist attitude and, quite likely, might compensate by doing something else special for you. If you can, emulate famous poet and lay

Buddhist Su Shi (1037-1101), celebrated for his ability to "find peace whatever he encountered" **sui yu er an**.

Women who stay at nunneries will find that, by and large, nuns' services proceed just like the monks'. Note that, throughout this "Orientation," we have assumed you can speak (and, hopefully, read) some Chinese. If you managed to get this far *without* speaking Chinese, then you have our undying admiration. However you have gotten here, keep it up!

At some point in your orientation toward Chinese temples, it may occur to you: why have you ended up *here*? In just the southeastern region we visited this Spring, 2000, Chinese through history have built many thousand temples. Most succumbed; only a few managed to become--at one time or another--the capital of southeastern Chinese Buddhism. What fueled their rise to enduring national prominence? How, and to what extent, have they managed to maintain their preeminence? What magnetic forces lead you--most likely--to one of the five sacred sites examined in these pages? This leads us to consider the past, particularly the textual past, of Chinese Buddhist and literati culture.

The forces propelling these five mountains into prominence seem multifarious and shift over time, but a reading of traditional sources about these temples immediately reveals something important. Writings about the five temple complexes we explore all stress the **magic power/efficacy/sacredness/ numinousness ling** they exert on the sensitive visitor. What gave these temples **ling**, and how did that **numinous power** find expressions and contribute to the eminence of each temple? Read on, as we follow an army of poet, monk, and essayist guides on an armchair tour that takes us from Lingyin si near Hangzhou, to Putuoshan in the Zhoushan Islands off Ningbo, to Tiantai (Heavenly Terrace) in the central Zhejiang alps, to Jiuhuashan (Nine-flower Mountain) in southern Anhui, and finally to Lushan near the confluence of the Yangzi and Lake Boyang, in northern Jiangxi.

Thus, this book argues you must plumb some of China's deep past in order to understand why you stand where you do today. Though most Buddhist meditation focusses on here and now, hoping to stand "at the still point of the turning world," you will need to take T.S. Eliot's message from "Four Quartets" as a whole. Eliot wrote: "Only through time is time conquered." He saw present moments as points "where past and future are gathered" and continued:

The world becomes stranger, the pattern more complicated
Of dead and living. Not the intense moment

Isolated, with no before and after,
But a lifetime burning in every moment
And not the lifetime of one man only
But of old stones that cannot be deciphered.

Let's see together what we can decipher of those old stones before your eyes and under your feet.

Note about pronouns and provenance. This trip began as a suggestion by my learned friend Garrick Flint, entrepreneur and connoisseur, bon vivant and Buddhist layman, to explore some southeastern Buddhist sites. We toured Lushan together for a few days and, as Gary's business interests gradually drove him in a different direction, we began pursuing separate adventures at Jiuhua Mt. Then business forced him back to the US, and the trip took yet another, solo tack. Hence, this account sometimes refers to "we" as the two of us travelling; sometimes it uses "we" for judgments that most Sinologists would probably share; elsewhere it refers to singular experiences and judgments with "i." Just so you don't find it confusing...

Also, it seems worthwhile to note that this book oscillates from the Sinological to the personal, much as it swivels from "we" to "i." Most of the lore and heritage of these temples exists on paper and involves Sinology; we have decided to softpedal scholarly baggage, minimize footnotes, and abbreviate quick references in the body of the text. Serious Sinologists will find all sources mentioned at the end of the book. We hope, indeed, that this guide will prove helpful to three kinds of readers: to Sinologists with an interest in what made these temples preeminent in the history of Southeastern Chinese Buddhism; to travellers who plan to visit these sites and who want some cultural background that will enrich their visit; and to armchair travellers with interests in Buddhism and/or the southeast of China. May each type of reader find something of value in these heterogenous pages!

LINGYIN

The scenery of Hangzhou, especially around its West Lake, has won lasting fame; the charms of its gracefully landscaped lake and small but dramatic Western hills have bewitched centuries of tourists and poets. There, where the wild herd of Wulin Mtns, a spur from the same chain that erected Huangshan, tumbles in confusion into the Hangzhou Bay, rears the 350 meter "North High Peak." (On Lingyin geography, see esp. LYXiaozi 1947:6-7;XX) A molehill by some standards, yet it possesses enough dramatically steep inclines, rushing freshets, dense groves, and mysterious caverns to captivate traditional eyes. From this peak extends eastward a long bony ridge, 167 meters at its height, swooping down toward West Lake.

This fortunate site has attracted an enchanted assembly of legend, lore, and history. According to legend, in 328 Indian monk Huili climbed it and exclaimed: "This is a small ridge of the **Divine/Magic Vulture Peak Lingjiu** (Sanskrit:Grdhra-kuta) from India! In what age did it fly over here?" Speculating that "most of the transcendent divinities had retired here," Huili called it "Divine/Magic/Spirits' Retreat" **Lingyin Peak** and built a small temple beside it. Ever after, Chinese literati seemed to locate the mountain's mana within the tale of the "Peak That Flew Over" **Feilai feng**. When they wrote of the divine/numinous /magic/sacred **ling**, they almost always referred to the "Divine Vulture" or "Divine Peak." Already magic in Indian Buddhism, the Peak acquired greater mana in the contexts of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism. Shakyamuni supposedly taught several key Mahayana sutras atop Grdhra-kuta, including the Lotus Sutra, Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra, and Hero's Progress (Surangama) Sutra. Gradually Chinese Buddhists came to see Divine Vulture as the Western Paradise; as the Chinese Lotus Sutra describes it: "My Pure Land remains undestroyed." (see the account in Shahar 1992:207) Small wonder, then, that "Divine Vulture" and "The Peak That Flew Here" became the focus of uncounted literary efforts.

Perhaps Lingyin's earliest tribute comes from Xie Lingyun (365-433), with his poem "Tribirth Stone" (symbol of metempsychosis from past through present to a future life) evoking the sacred alp:

Startled how it recalls Divine Vulture Alp/ Still I imagine Jetavana Garden's path. (506)

Hui Shanxian wrote in his "Peak that Flew Here" (569):

Still bearing dynamic contours from its flight through space/ Gaze, astonished, on its suspended grots & straths.
Seems it hasn't been long at all since this Alp/ Flew here from the Western Heavens.

Xi Tun echoes this trope (572):

Whence did you fly here to rest your feathered robes? As I arrive, I fear only that you'll startle back into flight...

Zhu Mou (550):

I always marvel this green mtn. never moves on/ Who said Magic Vulture flew from afar?
This secluded spot, just right for its Lotus petals/ Divine marvel, truly I wonder if it's Demonspawn? ...

Bai Ting (513): Magic Mountain, always pellucidly pure/ A single Spring wells up within.
Magic Mountain flew over here/ Could this stream have had any other source?

Wang Shizhen (583): The mtn. spurs a cinnabar vulture down/ Its spring rolls white dragons up.

Zha Jizuo wrote on "Climbing the Peak That Flew Here" (521):

Kohl hues strike into relief Divine Vulture's crags/ Wave glints fly into Bend River's tidal bore.

Eminent monk Zun Shi (964-1032), in his ode to "Divine Vulture Temple," describes the Peak (511):

Lush and brooding, the Divine Vulture/ Wafting aloft, like a wild duck in flight.
Layered in the void, piling up bizarre boulders/ Ancient trees growing from its stony skin.
Kind tigers abiding safely roost/ White apes at times keen and call...

Mei Xun (964-1041) on "The Peak That Flew Here":

Huili of India pointed out this peak/ Flown here from Divine Vulture.
Its apes & birds, unaware/ Remained as before among vapors & mists.
Rise & Fall extend from millennial antiquity/ Heaven & Earth converged on this key point!/?
I only fear its Cinnabar straths will shift/ And some year flee back West! (510)

Gu Lin (515): Magic Peak, from where have you come? Rearing rugged, erecting your dark Phoenix.
Your pinion feathers just will not fold/ At any moment, ready to fly away...

Fang Gan wrote in his "Peak that Flew Here" (569):

Deep in the heights, tall trees hoard a summer chill/ On the couch, I can see Cloud Creek from my pillow.
The more buildings it bears the clumsier this mtn. gets: 'Twill be pretty hard to fly off again!

Most verses allude to Buddhist lore, e.g., Lin Jingxi (531):

When transplanted from India? Graceful hues flashing from gaunt spiky heights.
Surpassingly pure, unaware of Swelter/ In emptiness, **ready to** enlighten monks...

Lin exploits a traditional Buddhist allegory of "coolness" as enlightened relief from Summer swelters of desire; his "ready to/desire"**yu** in Chinese, underscores the sublimated volition of a Bodhisattva.

Xie Zhaozhi's "Lingyin Temple" exploits the dual entwined history of "Hindu Temple" **Tianzhu** and

"Spirit Retreat" by linking their mythic discoveries (535):

Place where two monks hurled their staffs/ Vulture Ridge--when were you divided?
Round the ancient temple, only yellow leaves/ On Autumn hills, solo white Clouds.
Flower-showers fall beyond the void/ Tidal-tidings, heard in meditation.
Ready to go off, playing pipes/ In the clear welkin simurghs and cranes flock.
(line 5: standard synecdoche for eloquent **sermons**)

Hui Shanxian (539) asked:

In what age did you fly here? In vacant drizzle, thronged with jumbled green?
Million-marveled Divine Vulture rocks/ A uniform nephrite, Cold Fount's kiosk.
Rent in the wall--coiling conch-chignons/ High temple-pennants--upwelling Sanskrit chants.
Somewhere a monk lives on the lonely summit/ At midnight, fiery drifting stars.

Lines 3 and 5 referred to Buddhist statues in Flown-here Peak's grottoes.

Occasionally you find literati turning to Daoist lore for variety, e.g., Su Jun (516):

I've heard how Divine Vulture Peak/ Once lay on the shore of the Tumid Sea.
Naturally so, without carving or polish/ Embracing **Simplicity**, keeping intact **Perfection**.
In the middle of night, a **Mighty One**/ Carried it off to the Riverbank.
Six dragons, never loosing their reins/ Hauled it off, as if **In-Spirited**.
Purling peal--its many **pipes** resound/ Lustrous laugh--100 flowers renewed.
Demonic chiselwork; artful, for sure! But **Shape-less** had already sunk from sight.
Dark & yellow really harmed its trees/ Virid kingfishers--how could they hide themselves?
Wouldn't you rather tatter your feathers/ Ascend Primal Hill & forsake worldly dust?

"Simplicity" refers to Laozi's "uncarved block"; "Perfection" invokes the Daoist ideal of the "genuine"**zhen**. The tale of a "mighty one at midnight," carrying off whatever we imagined we held most securely and reminding us of life's radical insecurity, comes from Zhuangzi 6.24; the metaphor of natural and human movements as the music of **pipes** comes from Zhuangzi 2.3ff. **In-Spirited** and **Shape-less** (from ZZ 12.18) mark Daoist ideals, Primal Hill a Daoist paradise. Su claims that any "complete" visible instantiation marks a decline, an erosion from the primordial unshaped matrix of potential forms, from the "uncarved block." Each color, each "dark and yellow" transformation of heaven and earth—Zhuangzi would say: each "completion makes an undoing." (2.35) When one possible Divine Vulture emerged from the sea—how geologically apt!—another complementary Vulture drowned from its articulation. Su concludes with a classically Daoist solution; take wing and fly back to heaven's undifferentiated context, or, in the Daoist adage: Return to **Perfection**, revert to **Simplicity**.

Two complete poems may serve to summarize Divine Vulture lore; first, this ode by Xu Zeng (562):

The Indian monk reached here & planted his staff/ Once back in Western Heavens he'd seen Vulture Peak.
Scented Sea waters bore traces of its passage/ Sublime High Peak threaded by dragons' arrival.
Heaven-born Buddha-rock, moss swept into a chignon/ In the grotto a divine monkey, arms dangling from
a pine.
When winds arise, I'm afraid it will fly off again/ Enfolding Wulin cloud: how many thousand layers?

Perhaps the most famous poem associated with Divine Retreat Temple, our last selection got attributed to at least two early Tang poets, and many legends circulated about its composition. According to recent

research by Volker Klopsch (TS VI:1988 77-81), it seems least unlikely that Luo Binwang (640-684?)

wrote it:

Vulture Ridge, brooding, with jagged spines/ **Dragon Hall**, locked in empty silence.
From its tower, observe Azure Sea sunbeams/ At its gate, listen to Bend River's tidal bore.
Cassia fruits fall in the moonlight/ Heavenly fragrance wafting beyond the clouds.
Clinging to creepers, climbing afar to a stupa/ Splitting trees to channel a remote spring.
Frost is light, flowers blossom anew/ Ice is thin, leaves yet to wither.
Since early years, esteeming the far & strange/ Facing the scene, I wash away woe & ado.
Ready to start on the road to Heavenly Terrace/ Watch me cross Stone Bridge! (581)
(line 2: kenning for a **temple**, from 5th c. legend)

For Luo, this magic precinct inspires a spiritual renewal. As the pilgrim climbs ever higher, his ascent leads to a metaphorical transcendence. We will examine the religious significance of Heavenly Terrace's Stone Bridge below...

These quotes serve to highlight what literati found most salient about "Spirit Retreat" Temple, and what they found most numinously magical **ling** about it. Of course, Divine Retreat's magic profile did not simply waft over from India; it evolved along with southeastern Chinese culture. Although Spirit Retreat's cultural apotheosis had gotten well under way during the Tang, it did not become a preeminent temple until the Song. The temple's rise closely paralleled that of Hangzhou. A modest city until China's medieval economic transformation, Hangzhou—at the southern terminus of China's grain-transport canal system—swelled as trade and foreign tribute increased, as southern rice production boomed, and as Chinese increasingly fled/migrated southeast after the eighth century. During the tenth century, Spirit Retreat and other Hangzhou temples particularly benefited from lavish Buddhist patronage bestowed by rulers of the Tang-Song interregnum Wu-Viet state. By early Song times, Spirit Retreat alone boasted 72 buildings and more than 1000 monks, many from Korea and Japan (Hangzhou:164). By the 1200s, Divine Retreat thronged with more than 1700 monks (Hzh:21; cf. ZGFSDG:204; other temples like Jingci also boasted more than 1000 monks--Huang 1999:321). Su Shi described the scene:

Up in the hall at mealtimes array 1000 men/ Striking bells and beating drums, noisy from dawn till dusk.
(Hzh:12);

Su marveled at West Lake's Buddhist scene: 360 temples! In secluded pursuits, you can spend a whole year.

Thus, we see at the core of Spirit Retreat's development a curious isomorphism. It depended on a foreign religion that "flew over" from India; it grew with the patronage and cultural contacts of literati who had fled

there from all over China and beyond; and it batted on largesse from an upstart merchant city that took wing as an import-export center (on the growth and "convergence" of literati and clerical ties, see Huang:295ff.). Even the little hills west of town needed "fashioning" into suitable cultural mountains; and this process demanded the symbol of Divine Vulture Peak, magic symbol for the growth of Lingyin Temple. Even the Chinese name for Divine Vulture had to undergo appropriation; as Erik Zürcher (208) observes, traditional China sported no less than 6 Divine Vulture Mtns, some named as far back as the 5th century (including one at Lushan!--see Chapter 5).

After Huili, Divine Spirit did not lack for prominent monks. Especially during the golden years of tenth-century growth, the temple saw talents like Deshao (891-972), who helped bring monks and lost sacred texts from Korea, his student Yanshou (904-975), and Zun Shi (964-1032); these monks deserve much credit for a Buddhist revival in Hangzhou. Interestingly, while presiding over a Chan temple, all 3 promoted syncretist tendencies; Deshao and Yanshou adopted elements of Pure Land practice, and Zun Shi, who hailed from Mt. Tiantai, incorporated Tiantai repentance rites into Chan services (on Deshao and Yanshou, see Hatanaka 1954:305-365; on Zun Shi, see esp. Stevenson 1999:340-408). His heir, Qisong (1007-1072) won imperial recognition for urging monks to accord their practice with the demands of Confucianism; this accommodation greatly eased anti-Buddhist criticism by conservative scholars at court (Hzh:164; on Qisong see esp. Huang 1986). Later prominent abbots we associate mainly with Chan Buddhism, figures such as Huiyuan (1103-1176), who won imperial recognition for his wise stewardship and who became immortalized for ordaining Daoji (d.1209), or Jigong, the "mad monk" of Hangzhou.. Though you won't find Crazy Ji's stele among the "500 Arhats" in Lingyin's Arhat Hall—his main shrine stands at nearby Jingci Temple to the south—you will find Jigong's "bed" and "table" among Flown-here Peak's nearly 400 sculptures (on Jigong, see esp. Shahar 1998). One more eminent monk, Jude (1600-1667) deserves singling out for presiding over a renaissance of Hangzhou Chan and Spirit Retreat during the early Qing, thanks also to sedulous patronage from early Manchu emperors (see esp. Hzh:34-5,176).

The "Peak that Flew Here" got immortalized as one of the "Eight Scenic Spots" of West Lake, but Spirit Retreat could boast another: its "Cold Spring Pavilion" **Lengquan ting** (some sources add Tao'an Ridge, northwest behind Lingyin Temple under the crest of North High Peak). Coldspring's scenic rest spot

wedged between North High Peak and the "Peak that Flew Here" across from Divine Retreat's main gate began to win fame during the ninth century, when Bai Juyi visited and exclaimed:

Of southeastern scenery, Hangzhou has the best; of Hangzhou's sights, Spirit Retreat marks the finest; and gazing from the temple, Coldspring Pavilion is the fairest.

Bai went on to rhapsodize about the kiosk's placement amid hills and waters...

Mtn trees form its canopy/ Promontory boulders make a screen.

Clouds born from its rafters/ Waters flush with its steps.

Those who sit and enjoy can wash their feet from a couch/

Ones who lie intimately by it can angle for fish from their pillows.

Furthermore,

Gurgling flows, pure and swift/ Pellucidly cold, supple & gliding.

Whether layman or man of Dharma--

The dust from eyes and ears/ The filth from heart and tongue

Are dashed away without basin or rinse.

Its sunken bounty and hidden favors-- Who could fully express!? (300-1)

Among countless tributes to Coldspring's beauty (second only to odes concerning Spirit Retreat and the "Peak that Flew..."), we will cite (aside from the fragment above) only two examples. First, a few lines by

Su Shi:

Before Spirit Retreat/ Behind the "3 Hindus"

2 Torrents gushing gurgle to a single Magic Vulture.

Who knows where these waters came from?

Leaping waves race through the gorge like dashing thunder.

Insentient yet intent--who could plumb either one?

Willing to purl & swirl their way down to Coldspring Kiosk. (524)

These lines display Su's customary dynamic style and penchant for discerning general patterns to phenomena.

Second, a quatrain by Lin Hong (11 - ?) (571):

One purl of your purity soaks full my yen for verse/ Cold & warm during these years--known only to oneself.

After you've flowed to West Lake & transported song and dance/ Looking back--no longer like this alpine spring.

Line 2 alludes to the Zen saying: When you drink the water, only you know whether it's cold or warm; Lin applies this both to the stream and (presumably) to his own life's course. His closing meditation on purity, again, could refer to a man's way through public and private life as well as to the spring's course. In thinking of the geishas and pleasure-boats on West Lake, Lin presumably remembers Du Fu's "Beauty," who retired to the hills to keep her integrity, saying:

Within the hills, the spring flows pure/ Outside the hills, the spring gets muddied.

If you continue across Coldspring over the Vulture's spine, you will find Divine Retreat's sister-temples, the "3 Hindu Temples;" Divine Retreat and the Upper Hindu Temple in particular used to count as one unit;

see, for example, Bai Juyi's "Roving to Tianzhu" (Hzh 243: Lingyin and Tianzhu originally formed one administrative unit)

One mtn gate divided into 2 mtn gates/ 2 temples divided from 1 original temple.
East Gorge's water flows into West Gorge's water/ So. mtn's clouds link to No. mtn's clouds.
Flowers on Front Terrace blossom, seen from Back Terrace/ Upper Realm's bell-peals, heard from Lower Realm.
From afar, imagine my teacher where he walks his Way/ Heaven-scented cassia fruits fall in profusion.

These days at Divine Retreat, you see almost no wildlife but lizards. Yet once Lingyin won fame for its monkeys. Meir Shahar has elegantly demonstrated how monkeys associated with Grdhra-kuta when found on Divine Vulture got seen as testimony to Lingyin's divine Indic provenance:

One monkey proved this as Divine Vulture! (Dong Sigao, qu. in Shahar 221);
not only Huili but other early legendary monks supposedly raised monkeys on the mtn. See, for example, Li Shen (Hzh247):

Sometimes apes strike the bells and chimes/ So the old monk can't meditate in peace!

The "Cave for Summoning Monkeys" became a prime topic for verse; typically, Chinese literati supposed the cave sheltered "a road that leads back to India" (Zhu Mu, qu. in Shahar 219). Cf. Gong Xingyi (524):

The grotto ape hugs her baby tight, calling after me/ Bamboo-grove dragons toy with pearls, fretting the waters will dry up.

Jia Dao: In deep meditation, one hears a cricket/ Where a crane once roosted hangs a monkey. (Hzh 266)

Guan Xiu (d.912, cf Shahar 222, n.95) Call the white ape--no response/ Piney dew drops on the monkeys. (530close)

Hui Shanxian, visiting Huili's stupa (539):

The two apes emerge, called from their cave/ 5 temples open out, carved from the clouds.

Yang Pan (546):

Beyond the memorial arch, startled by a yellow crane's sudden flight/ Ringing in my ears, the white ape's lingering cry.

Zhang Zhu (Yuan):

A dragon follows the monk to dwell among the clouds/ Apes recognize our call & clamber down from the tree. (551)

Li Xiaoguang: The stone room hides a white ape/ The red cavern rears a dark vulture. (qu. in Shahar 222)

or Hui Shanxian's "Peak that Flew Here" (562):

If the apes hadn't sprung from its mystic depths/ Who'd had believed this mtn. was magic?
Cave & strath that wafted here--tripartite Heaven remote/ Lotus blossoms carved open--myriad petals blue.

Sarira Stupa connects to Huili's Stupa/ Coldspring Kiosk faces Emerald Greenery Kiosk.

Gaze to a faraway shire as if to Penglai Peak/ A dipperful of clouds for each year gone conveys my rootless drift...

The blue lotuses, a symbol for Buddhist faith, adorned his dais when Buddha expounded sutras.

Li Moge: With 1 cry from the ape pine-cones fall/ Innumerable white clouds gather by the emerald screen.
(575 close)

Hui Shanxian (578):

The 2 apes called forth--amazed at this marvelous tale/
Proving that Divine Vulture split from the Magic Range...

Monkeys not only proved the mtn's divine origins; they could testify to a monk's holiness. Huili associated with them; early monk Huihong allegedly raised and fed tame ones; and Huiyuan supposedly raised a black ape who waited on him. Huiyuan called him "Black Gibbon Pilgrim"; after Huiyuan died, the ape clutched Huiyuan's death-poem and remained at his side. (LYZ 609)

Finally, golden or red-flowered cassias provide the temple's tutelary plant and a name for one of Spirit Retreat's main peaks. According to temple legends (LYZ 56-7), during the golden years of the High Tang a Magic Cassia rained down unusual fruits from Heaven: black, white, and yellow; people called it the "Cassia from the Moon." This miracle repeated in 1023--a golden age during the Song--and then again during Spirit Retreat's renaissance, in 1666. Chinese envisioned a cassia in the moon and associated the late-blooming evergreen with transcendents and immortals; to pluck a cassia bough often meant "success in imperial examinations." Innumerable literati visited Spirit Retreat and admired --or imagined-- cassias.

Among them: the locus classicus--Luo Binwang's famous couplet—

Cassia fruits fall in Moonlight/ Heavenly scents wafting beyond the clouds. Cf.

Pine grove exudes Spring vapors/ Cassia fruits fall in Autumn moonglow. (509)

Cassia fruits in the Autumn wind/ Shaking my robes, I bow to Master Luo. (538 close)

Heavenly scented cassias fall in profusion. (544 close: Bai Juyi)

The moon wanes, frosts heavy, tiny blossoms withered/ This flower once accompanied a Cassia Hall Transcendent. (54#)

Or Wang Wei (fl. 1250) on the moon:

Far-off it crosses Divine Vulture, the West wind turns cold/

A medley of fallen cassia fruits sprinkled in a jadewhite vase. (quoted in Graham 1990:45, imprecisely translated; Graham 8 does identify the fallen "buds" as immature fruit).

Magic Vulture Peak cassias fell, startling the night/ Lunar Toad Grotto boughs emptied--recall past years...
(Su Shi ode to Cassias:545)

Zhang Shangying (1043-1121):

Cinnabar cassias have a date to ripen Full in Moonlight/ To former alps, no route--white apes mourn. (548)

Bai Juyi: Night's billet--where Lunar Cassias fell/ Wine-rapt--when Sea Pomegranates blossom. (581)

Ci Yong, on "Lunar Cassia Peak": Cinnabar cassias bearing Jasper fruits/ A once-in-a-millennium sight!
Come especially by Indian routes/ Viewable only from the Lunar Palace... (582-3)

Divine Retreat and its sister-temples have enjoyed much attention from pilgrims--"incense-offering travellers" **xiangke**—and tourists since the Soong dynasty. By Ming times, the "incense market/fair by West Lake" had become quite famous. Especially during Spring months after Guanyin's birthday (on the second lunar full moon) herds of pilgrims thronged Divine Retreat and surrounding temples. Zhang Dai (1597-1684?) described the swarming devoted in a famous passage:

Pious men and women, as if fleeing or pursuing, racing or chasing, clutching and pawing without any break, latching and pulling without cease, everyday by the hundreds or even hundred thousands, men women old and young crammed and clustered all around the temples. (qu. in Hzh:32-3; cf. Chunfang Yu in Naquin 1992:198,200-1; see Yu's video for a recent documentary look at Hindu Temple pilgrims).

They still swarm today. On a nice Spring weekday you can scarcely enjoy the temple for the crowds. Tourists and curiosity-seekers outnumber devoted pilgrims; somehow they diminish the awe even of Divine Retreat's imposing Main Hall and its enormous 25-meter golden Buddha, with his cobalt hair. The few monks i could collar to talk with seemed harried and unfriendly; they assured me the temple accepted no lay boarders. A quick escape over Divine Vulture to see the Ape Cave and then the Three Hindu temples provided only a brief respite. A new highway along the Three Temples has, as my friend Gary observed, destroyed the place's ambiance. The Three Temples still pack in pilgrims--more than ever--but the atmosphere has changed. They don't seem to welcome lay Buddhist boarders, and the folk i encountered at formerly peaceful Upper Hindu Temple seemed merely irritated to deal with one more foreign tourist, regardless of his interest in Buddhism. By contrast, Middle Hindu Temple seemed relatively mellow and the people rather friendly. But at length, wearying of all the Guanyins and busy pilgrims, the incense smoke and carhorns, i lit out over the higher reaches of Magic Vulture, tracing a small path toward Lotus Peak that didn't seem to reach Taoguang Ridge. However, descending across a saddle, i did come across a peaceful-looking priory called Zhongyin. At 1pm siesta time, they had closed all their doors, certainly a sensible way to keep out the tourists. Back through a tea plantation, across which you could see workmen building a garish new--well, "structure" comes to mind. On the site of a former cloister--destroyed since the Cultural Revolution--Chinese now prepare a huge new "viewing center," complete with monstrous bronze dragons spewing ugly metal balls. Personally, i prefer the coppery smooth skinks with black meridional band--just 4" long, with another 6" of tail--that dart along the paths and temple walls.

They lead me on to Taoguang (Sheathed Radiance) Ridge, once the site of a most scenic Soong dynasty cloister. It's still relatively shady and peaceful up the steps past a tame creek to a Guanyin shrine, Lake-Gazing Kiosk, and then up to Sea-gazing Kiosk. From there you can view the southwest part of West Lake and a portion of the city poking out beyond the West Hills. These days Hangzhou smog prevents you from viewing the ocean or the Qiantang River's famous tidal bore; all lost in the haze. Oddly, the highest shrine here has gotten devoted--not to a Buddha--but to Daoist legend/deity Lu Dongbin, or "Lu Pure-yang," as they say. On this day Master Lu receives considerable incense from some very devoted-looking pilgrims. The pines and bamboos overhead make this an agreeable spot to rest and contemplate Hangzhou, though you wouldn't call it really peaceful. Just overhead you'll find the path to a gondola-station at the summit of North High Peak, also crowned by a weather station. The descent past Divine Retreat toward Flown-here Peak's famous 400 or so rock-carvings hurls you back into tourist maelstrom. With tour-groups per square foot of cave and umpteen gawking visitors for every statue, aesthetic appreciation--never mind religious contemplation--becomes a joke. All in all, Divine Retreat and its surroundings do not invite a second day's visit. They illustrate the classic paradox of religious sites; often the very mana that sustained and won them fame cannot survive their renown. You might only hope that the income they receive helps fund serious Buddhist meditation, somewhere behind locked doors and, probably, well more than an easy bus-ride from a Chinese metropolis. What might still seem numinously **ling** to a visitor? Unless that visitor proved very easily awed by big statues and high pillars, only some powerful predisposition in the beholder's mind could sustain a vision of magic precincts, when so many casual tourists undermine it every day.

PUTUO

Compared to Divine Retreat, Putuo Mountain presents a simpler cultural picture. The small (less than 7x4 km), rugged island rose to fame solely as the sacred site/**bodhimanda/daochang** for worshipping Guanyin (Avalokitesvara). The Chinese goddess Guanyin—as goddess of mercy, bringer of sons, protector of travellers, and general advocate for sinners—fills many of the roles we might associate with Mother Mary. Gradually, during the tenth to seventeenth centuries, Putuo came to outshine all other Guanyin centers and win imperial recognition as Guanyin's Chinese home. The name Putuo, in fact, transliterates Sanskrit Potalaka (lit. "little white flower"), which in the Avatamsaka Sutra marked the mythical southern island home of Avalokitesvara. Much as Chinese saw Divine Vulture Peak as a chunk of Grdhra-kuta that "flew over," they conceived Putuo as a sort of migratory piece of the Indian rock, as a kind of "branch office" or Chinese franchise. China had her own Celestial Isles—three Daoist Paradises that floated in the China Sea drawn and supported by gigantic sea turtles. Characterizing Putuo as a home for (Daoist) transcendents, as we shall see, becomes a standard poetic trope for the island, occurring several dozen times in the Gazetteer, e.g.:

This makes a marvelous place to cultivate Perfection/
Who needs the Drowning Waters in quest for Penglai? (PT 145 close)

The Drowning Waters, upon which no one could float, recall liminal watery barriers in myths around the world; they separate us from the abode of Chinese Transcendents.

Our field of view links straight to Penglai's precinct/ All within reach of Her sprinkling willow branch.
(PT 158 close: Guanyin supposedly showered blessings with a magic willow branch; a statue of Guanyin with willow branch, housed in the priory at Willow Branch Cloister, forms one of Putuo's most treasured icons)

My favorite:

Coiling Rock's ladder to its very pinnacle/ Watchet waves rush eastward—gaze toward Penglai (PT 162 close)

East of Putuo stands her closest sister, Lejia, also sacred to Guanyin. Putuo and her sibling Zhoushan Islands—more than 1300 of them—extend the same mountain range shared by the Tiantai complex; during recent Ice Ages, retreating seas have several times linked Putuo to its mainland alpine chain. (For good reviews of Putuo geology and geography, see PTSZ 1995: 22-25, and PTXZ 1991:30-35)

Despite the Penglai trope, most Chinese have seen Putuo as a Buddhist, not Daoist, sacred site; Putuo's miracle lore reflects this. Putuo's **ling**, its divine/numinous/magic/sacred efficacy, owes almost everything to miracles associated with the goddess. In 848 a foreign (probably "Indian") monk reached the magic "Tidal Tone Cave" **Chaoyindong**. Upon burning off his fingers, he received an epiphany and a precious jewel from the Bodhisattva herself. Several years later (ca.859; other sources give the year 916) Japanese pilgrim Egaku tried to take a sacred image of Guanyin back home; when he neared Putuo, the boat struck "Korean Reef" (or, in other version, encountered a storm), lotus blossoms—sacred to Guanyin—covered the sea, and the boat could not continue. Egaku supposedly prayed: "If my country's poor souls are not fated to see this Buddha, then I shall build Her a shrine where the bow points." Egaku's bow pointed toward a cove on the island's southeast coast, quite near the magic Tidal Tone cave, and the bodhimanda for the "Guanyin Who Refused to Leave" got launched. Early miracle tales—the core for Putuo's growth as pilgrimage mecca—naturally enough center around shipping, tidal caves, and safe passage. For example, in 1080 Wang Shunfeng's diplomatic mission to Korea encountered a storm **and** a giant sea turtle who humped the boat precariously up onto its monstrous back. When the terrified Ambassador Wang prayed to Guanyin's shrine; the goddess emerged from her tidal cave in a halo of radiant light, casting pearls on the sea. The turtle disappeared, and the grateful Ambassador returned to the capital; the emperor bestowed on Guanyin's shrine the official title "Putuo Guanyin Temple." Putuo's Gazetteer (174-5) records that afterward the surrounding waters became safe for merchants and envoys from "the hundred states"; any pious souls who encountered pirates or storms could pray to Guanyin and win safe passage. This fulfills the promise in the Lotus Sutra that:

One might float in a great sea/ In which are dragons, fish, and sundry ghosts.
By virtue of constant mindfulness of ...[Guanyin]/ The waves could not drown one. (Hurvitz 1976:316)

A similar story befell a Song mission to Korea ca. 1105; on their return, the envoys got becalmed in near zero-visibility conditions for 4 days. The alarmed wayfarers prayed; Guanyin suffused the sea with "divine radiance" and allowed them to reach safety (175).

A little historical background may help here. As we learned before, Hangzhou became a major regional and international trading center during the late medieval era. But since Hangzhou's shallow, sandy estuary could not handle oceangoing junks, nearby Ningbo—just across the strait from Putuo—grew into a key entrepot for international traders and bearers of tribute. As scholars have noted, Ningbo became

headquarters for the "Office of Overseas Trade... which supervised the coastal trade and controlled the maritime tribute of Korea and Japan" "almost continuously from 992 to 1523" (see S. Mann in Elvin and Skinner 1974:73-96; cf. Yu 202; Shiba in Skinner 1977 392ff). Delays due to customs and bad weather meant that Putuo's sheltering harbor received a lot of sea traffic and stood well to receive patronage from grateful seafarers to perhaps the medieval world's richest trading center.

Sometimes the faithful glimpse Guanyin in her Tidal Tone Cave; sometimes she issues forth to save boats in distress. In either case, the mana of the place depends entirely on Her magic efficacy; the Gazetteer repeats the terms "manifesting Magic" **xianling** (10 times), "magic traces" **lingji** (12 times), "magic arousal" **linggan** (11 times), "magic wonder" **lingyi** (12 times), "magic efficacy" **lingyan** (10 times), and the like; they appear almost as often as the ubiquitous "Magic Mountain" **lingshan** (16 times) and Mountain divinity/magic (22 times, at least). In comparison to other Gazetteers, the Putuo accounts—even the newest 1924 edition—place a much higher emphasis on divine efficacy, as we can see by comparing just the relative lengths of text with the section on "Miracles and Wonders" (usually **lingyi**):

	Putuo	Lingyin	Tiantai	Lushan	Jiuhua
Text length (pp.)	638	386	447	2050	386
Miracles...	36 (6%)	0	0*	~60#(~1.5%)	13 (3%)
	(* or 9pp., in an earlier edition) (# some, mixed in with many miscellaneous anecdotes)				
Poetry	188	80	447	590	60.

And these miracles show Guanyin as a vigilant, even fierce, protector of Chinese political and mercantile interests in the southeast. For example, in 1663 a Dutch ("redhair") ship looted Putuo and sold the booty in Japan for 200,000 cash; Guanyin caused a fatal fire onboard (PT 188). We see Her again and again foiling pirates, threatening a ship that had tried to smuggle off her sacred image (see PT189), and protecting the faithful. Tale after tale show Her as almost shopkeeperlike in her determination to prevent minor thefts of her sacred images, statuary, etc. In one tale (PT 200) a boatful of returning pilgrims got stymied by thick fog. When the anxious boatmen demanded if any passengers had committed any sins while on the sacred isle, one old woman shamefacedly took from her bag a piece of tile whose color had appealed to her and cast it into the ocean, back toward Putuo. Soon, the fog lifted and the boat resumed its journey. All marvelled at "the Bodhisattva's wondrous power of response." We see here many of the factors at work in Hangzhou: an imported religion, a sacred site "towed over" from India, and an economic foundation based on imports and Chinese who had fled to the southeast. In fact, Hangzhou's Divine Retreat Temple's sister

temple Upper Hindu Temple had previously served as capital for Guanyin worship until roughly the seventeenth century. The "founding mountain" for Putuo's chief "Universal Salvation" **Puji** Temple got named "Magic Vulture Peak!" Among several references, see:

By twin *sala* trees listen to sutras on Vulture Ridge/ One cupful, holding a begging bowl to enter Dragon Hall.(CXPTZ 547)

Dragon Hall can refer to any Dragon God's Palace, or to a temple, thanks to the Divine Retreat allusion: when 5th c. monk Tanchao preached the dharma, a Dragon King got so delighted he clapped his forepaws—up sprang a "Jade spring." Later, Divine Retreat boasted a Jade Spring Temple, and "Dragon Hall" became a conventional name for a Buddhist temple.

Guanyin's magic efficacy and the production of miracle tales to prove it closely followed economic macrotrends in Chinese history; the sacred island reached peaks of prosperity during the early sixteenth century—height of Ming maritime might, during the "New World Silver Boom" from 1560-1620 (when monks established a second "Dharma Rain Temple" in a grove close to the island's northeast beach), and during the peak of Qianlong prosperity (in 1788 monks established a third "Wisdom Salvation Temple" atop Buddha Peak atop the island's northern summit). Conversely, when pirates and coastal unrest resulted in prohibitions on trade or even enforced resettlement of coastal populations—as after 1387, from 1522-1557, during the 1620s-1640s, and during the reign of Koxinga (1671-1684)—Putuo naturally suffered. (see chronology in PTSZ 1995)

Thus far we have scarcely considered verse, partly because literati poems did not prove nearly as crucial to Putuo's development as they did to the rise of places like Divine Retreat and Lushan. Previous scholars of Putuo have concentrated on pilgrims' accounts; yet despite scholars' dismissal of such verses as unrevealingly conventional (Yu 206), some poems do enter into the island's spirit and illuminate its numinous character. For example, many verses treat the voyage/pilgrimage to Putuo as an allegory for religious questing/transcendence. The ships they arrive in become vehicles for "crossing over" to "the far bank," a classic Buddhist metaphor for enlightenment (cf. Hindu "tirthayatsa," pilgrimage as journey to enlightenment; Coleman:137), e.g.:

Brown dust and white hair—truly, unreliable! Her Loving barque to the **far bank**—where shall I seek?
(PT 152 close)

The opening line refers to the evanescent vicissitudes of our human world and our bodies.

Who like the magic monk could float across in a cup/ And take his own Mani-pearl to light up Penglai?

(PT 154 close)

"Cupcrosser" Beidu (fl.~500) supposedly crossed the Yangzi Jiang in a cup; the Mani-pearl symbolizes the priceless illumination of an enlightened mind.

Night turns cold—wind & rain—dragons listen to **dharma**/ The sun sinks—billows & breakers—a monk crosses in a cup. (PT 158)

As we have seen, the conversion of autochthonous Chinese deities and powers figured in the motif of dragon(s) heeding dharma talks occurs and recurs in Buddhist devotional lore.

Ahh—if we could borrow Her Loving barque/ We'd never tire of the toilsome round trip! (PT 156 close)

Heaven's daughter scatters blossoms, communes with Sagely Truth/
Responders to perfection ferry the Raft, call forth the mystic scholium.
Her Loving barques one by one fill with Dragon Treasure/
Bowing to the Golden Transcendent, we end all worldly karma.
(PT 157>close)

"Responders to Perfection" refer to Chinese arhats; as so often, Chinese refer to a Bodhisattva with a Daoist term—aside from "Perfected," cf. "Transcendent" as an epithet for Guanyin.

Inside a golden begging bowl, hail the Dharma Rain/ Within Her iron lotus-blossom, ferry Her Loving barque! (164)

Dharma rain, a kenning for mind-purifying Buddhist preachings, became the name for Putuo's northern temple; "Iron," applied to various nouns, stresses a Bodhisattva's adamant will to save all against all practical odds; once when Southern Sung court eunuch Wang Gui tried to approach Putuo, he got blocked by a chain of iron lotuses in the "Lotus-blossom Current" southwest of Putuo; only when Wang prayed "sincerely" for permission to land—one wonders if he offered richer gifts—did a white ox emerge and devour the iron lotuses, whence Wang got the chance to make shore. (See PTSZ 1995:63)

Where does Her Fragrant boat become an Iron Boat? (CXPT 454)

This vehicle for enlightened faith surpassing conventional human understanding also figures an "Iron lotus,"

for at poem's close:

1000 sails at sunset all turn to red lotuses. Cf. Layman Pang's devotional verse ending:

When you attain the inmost meaning of this/ An iron boat floats upon water.
(See Foster1996:68; Sasaki 1971:75)

If only I can manage singlemindedly to surmount the 6 Paths/ No need to trouble Her Precious Barque to cross Delusion Stream. (CXPT 460 close)

The "6 Paths" refer to the 6 possible kinds of rebirth inflicted on souls locked in samsara).

Prepare the *prajna* boat/ Cross forever to the Bodhi bank! (PT 177) *Buddhist devotional wisdom*

Cross the Bitter Worlds on a single reed/ Dally at leisure on Mei Ridge's crown. (CXPT 538)

The Bitter Worlds—*saha*—refer to the 3600 realms where unenlightened mortals must endure suffering; Bodhidharma, according to legend, crossed the Yangzi on a single reed; Mei Fu, a legendary Han seeker of transcendence, lent his name to the highest peak on southern Putuo; we will hear more about him below.

As we can see, among the 40 or so references to sea journeys as a voyage toward enlightenment, almost any vehicle—from an iron barque to a single leaf or reed—will do for the truly faithful; Guanyin's power can ferry all, no matter how weighty the sin, how frail the craft.

Chinese turned Avalokitesvara, a god with both male and female guises, into the goddess Guanyin. Perhaps the Indian savior got blended with the maritime mother goddesses who offer bountiful harvests to fishermen, sons to their wives, and who protect/pacify the coastline: e.g., Mazu ("Ancestress") Lady Linshui (the Lady Who Overlooks the Waters). [Some see Mazu as a reincarnation of Guanyin—e.g., Hodous 1929 104ff; others think Mazu arose in competition with Guanyin—see Burkhardt 1953 I:13; for a noncommittal review of the problem, see Watson in Pop. Culture 1985:298. On Lady Linshui, see Bapandier in Unruly Gods (1996) 105-49]. Certainly, like Mazu, Guanyin became identified with Chinese commercial shipping interests and got invoked as guardian of the Chinese coastline (for Mazu, see Watson 303,307); we may recall that the Lotus Sutra's hymn to Guanyin concludes by describing the bodhisattva as "happiness accumulated, a sea incalculable." (Hurvitz 1976:319) Others, noting that already during the Six Dynasties you find carved statues of female Guanyin hundreds of miles from any coastline, suggest affiliations with Tibetan Tara worship or even with Inner Asian Virgin Mary cults (see Brazier 1997:197,n.6). Whatever her connection with other deities, as a goddess Guanyin deserves her flowers, and they figure prominently—on almost every page—in Putuo's Gazetteer. Since Guanyin supposedly sat on a Diamond Throne upon a Lotus dais, folk see her as a goddess of lotuses--appropriately, since lotuses symbolize enlightenment and Buddha's purity. At the same time, she also gets associated with the "little white blossoms"—Potalaka—that lent their name to Putuo. Among countless examples, we may adduce [first, Su Shi] :

Orchid Mt stirs into motion, Graceful Mtn dances/ Little white- & peach-blossoms half-bursting into flower. (PT 82)

Last night the East wind kept blowing along/ Till all turned to Tathagata's little white blossoms. (90 close, on mume blossoms)

The Golden Transcendent faces us, without a word/ Spring floods the hidden crags with little white flowers. (144 close)

Smiling, we twist little white flowers/ Autumn tides falling like snow. (144 close, after a night journey to Putuo)

"Little White Flower" also gave its name to the island's central southern mountain peak:

Fruit of enlightenment—White Flower's pinnacle/ Transcendently rising above the world's edge. (CX 538)

Lotuses signify with even greater variety:

Where dust, dirt and kalpic ashes never reach/ Where lotus petals bloom and fall--here's the secret of Chan! (153 close)

Her worldly footsteps manifested by lotus blossoms/ Her sacred grove concealed by bamboo leaves. (156)

Guanyin's sacred "Purple Bamboo Grove" now boasts a major temple, the Purple Bamboo Grove Palace. It stands near "Guanyin's Leap," a rocky point with a giant "footstep" Chinese myth commemorates at Guanyin's trace.

Multiple peaks on every side as serried lotus blossoms (165)

A foot away, Compassionate Clouds upwell Lapis lotuses/
Her pennants beyond the sea leading to the Heavens.(165)

In these selections, we see the magic of synecdoche transform Guanyin's lotuses into the peaks and, indeed, the whole of her sacred site **bodhimanda**.

A sweep of sparse trees stirred by chill white Fall/ Where Her lotus-blossom Ocean ends, see the Sutra Hall! (163)

Winds tumble Jetavana Garden, stirring pure shadows/ Rains pass over Lotus-blossom Ocean, transforming to violet roserack (170)

Dawn emerges at the edge of East China/ Soon touching Her Lotus Hall. (176)

Lotuses could, it seems, stand for any part of Guanyin's sacred island. Several miracle tales also attest to the power of her magic blossoms. For example, when the Ming founder wanted to retaliate against Japanese pirates in 1387, he sent the Duke of Xinguo (Tang Hejing) to pacify Ningbo and burn [what he supposed was a pirate lair in] Putuo's temple. But when the Duke approached, iron lotuses emerged from the water, shining like gold, guarded by dancing shark-people and dragons, blocking his path. The Duke returned and reported the miracle, whereupon the amazed emperor granted Putuo imperial recognition and funds for restoration (PT 181). This legend obscures that Tang Hejing actually burned more than 300

Buddhist buildings on Putuo and took Guanyin's statue to Ningbo (see chronology in PTSZ 1995) In 1645, a sincere pilgrim named Liu saw a vision of Guanyin on her Lotus throne, flanked by her acolytes Sudhana and the Dragon King's daughter, also floating on giant lotuses. Then a storm capsized the boat and all drowned—except Liu who, guided by a pink radiance, managed to reach the other shore (PT 189).

Note that, aside from the Penglai metaphor and Guanyin-as-Transcendent, Daoists did leave some traces of presence on an otherwise almost completely Buddhist island. Mei Fu (fl. -20) practised alchemy on Putuo; his name adorns southern Putuo's highest peak (109 meters; his mountain shrine now sports a Buddhist cloister). Anqi Sheng (-249-209?) supposedly practised Daoism there before wafting off to the Immortal Isles; and Ge Hong (253-333?) left a Cinnabar Refining Well on Putuo (as well as other places; his well has now gotten swallowed by a Guanyin cloister, Yanxiaguan; all 3 Daoists have gotten associated with Putuo wells—see PTSZ 1995:57). Poets occasionally evoke them to create a "transcendent" ambiance, e.g.:

How many sparse mume trees inclined among the rocks? I ask you, mume: when you fall, whose blossoms
are you? (PT 90, on "Mei's Peak")

All he left was a dipper of water among the crags/ To reflect how pure his heart, way back when...
(122, on Ge Hong's Well)

Mei Fu refined cinnabar redder than oranges/ Anqi sent back dates bigger than melons!
(PT 144 Sheng Ximing, early gazetteer)

In addition to Daoist tutelary heroes, poets also peopled Putuo with a variety of scaly, shelly, and finny prodigious denizens. Dragons get referred to at least 72 times: Guanyin's "Dragon Hall," Her sidekick the Dragon King's daughter, "fishy-smelling" or poisonous dragons that allegorize gross human passions and need quelling or purifying, or pious dragons who listen to—and presumably heed—Buddhist sermons, etc.:

The stench of fish and dragons doesn't reach: The rays of Sun and Moon arrive here first. (PT 143: "first," because Putuo lies east of the Chinese mainland; this poem by Wang Anshi, perhaps the earliest surviving by any noted literatus, holds pride of place in most editions of Putuo's Gazettes)

Her sideward glance sees 100, 1000 fathoms: At her perfect enlightenment, the poisonous dragon surrenders. (PT112 close)

Note that the word "see/observe" forms part of Guanyin's Chinese name: "She who observes the world's tone."

Dragon King's daughter offers pearls and cowries/ Tathagata manifests a strand of Jade hair.
(CXPT 398; few poems about the "Cave of Sudhana and Dragon King's daughter" survive, e.g. CXPT 410)

When they've finished burning incense, Dragon King's daughter leaves/ A Heavenly wind blows all back

to Tidal Tone Cave. (CX425 close)

Suddenly we pass by the Eastern King's Isle/ Then float past Dragon King Daughter's Hall. (CX 484)

Fish and dragons join in circling around/ Mtn demons, astonished, turn to nothing. (CX 392)

Dragons offer precious pearls, return to the Feature-less/ Monks save fragrant rice to feed giant Chelonians. (CX 403)

Human and non-human alike listen to the Dharma/ At midnight a dragon arrives—the hall doesn't stink! (CX 417, close)

Divine dragons heed the Dharma, monstrous shark-folk dance/
Behold for yourself Tathagata extend his golden arm! (CX 421 close)

Heaven's daughter offers flowers, communing by Stone Channel/ Dragon deities listen to Dharma, howl out Tidal tones. (CX 478, on Tidal Tone Cave; the flowers probably refer to spray from huge waves)

The Dragon King's daughter assumed great importance in Putuo's Guanyin cult; appropriately, since the precocious daughter fulfilled Buddha's claim that all sentient beings, regardless of pedigree or sex, can attain buddhahood (see Lotus Sutra Chapter XII: Hurvitz 1976:200-1). In a key passage from the Lotus Sutra, the Dragon daughter offers up a precious pearl to Buddha and magically transforms into malehood, proving her perfect enlightenment.

Invite a monk to dispense food—dragons peer in the bowl/ Lean on a staff to watch the clouds—clams form their towers. (CX 435; Chinese conceived of sea-mirages as the vaporous exhalations of giant clams)

Buddha Fire suspended at night: Dragon's trove turns to dawn/ Sea **Magic** forms in the morn, clam-towers brighten. (CX 466)

Whales--and occasionally Leviathan waves--occur several times, e.g.:

Winds still **Divine** pennants, Leviathan seas subside/ Moonlight enfolds Jetavana trees, Clam-towers engulfed. (CX 428)

Shipswallowing weird beasties understand to submit to Dharma/ Wavesmashing grey dragons know the year they tugged [Putuo] here (CX448).

Or Liu Bingwen, who crosses the sea to Putuo "to pay respects to Mountain **Spirits**" and concludes:

Expounding Dharma as night fades, folk still unwearied/ It's plain that in the Eastern Sea remain no Great Leviathans. (CX 459; presumably Liu found this an auspicious thought—or earnest prayer—to end his poem as he prepared for a safe return voyage).

Shark-people pop up about fifteen times, including:

Under the shark's palace with sea-turtle pillars emerge monstrous Softshells/
About precious visages twined with pearlstrands reveal Divine marvels. (CX 407)

Dragon Halls & Shark Chambers piled among snowy waves/
All revealed by the Brahman eaves of the Void's King. (CX 456) Buddha's epithet: King of the Void.

Large seaturtles seem to occupy a particularly dear place in the imaginations of Chinese literati who visited Putuo. Poets offered up odes to Turtle Pool:

From Luo River you once emerged, bearing portents of Sagely Brilliance/ From yore, your **Divine
Traces**
have graced Mt pools. (CX 452)

From Ninefold Heavens dragons & elephants carry down the clouds/
Myriad leagues Giant Chelonians come piloting the seas. (CX 475)

Sharks & Clams form towers, clouds boil up black/
Giant Chelonians smack the waves, the sun tumbles redly. (CX 573)

The oddly shaped "Two Sea-turtles Listen to Dharma Rock" attracted many onlookers, and giant sea-turtles—as legendary plinths for the floating Isles of Daoist Transcendents—receive at least 22 mentions in Putuo verse, e.g.:

Their force flattening the seagates, sea-turtle backs ponder/ Gleams shaking the hilly isle, clam-towers
fling open. (CX 397)

Ming poet Tu Long, en route to the Sacred Isle, imagines (?):

Strange birds whose song harmonizes with Transcendent tunes--faint; On **Magic** sea-turtle backs flash
Buddha-lanterns--red. (CX 414)

These light a way for him to conclude by speculating: And what's more, it's only a foot or two to reach Penglai!

Up till now we have offered only glittering morsels of marine prodigies; but now readers have enough lore to enjoy a full-course seafood extravaganza. Consider, for example, Chen Jiusi's Ode to "Sea-tide Temple" (PT 279-80)

The eastern edge of our Divine Kingdom submerged in the Vast Hyaline/
No earth for its coiling roots: a Huge sea- turtle supports.
Bijoued Palace rebuilt—Heaven opens a Realm/
Precious appellation announced—the Emperor bestows a title.
Buddha Fire suspended at night: Dragon's trove turns to dawn/
Sea **Magic** forms in the morn, clam-towers brighten.
Her fragrant barque scatters petals a myriad leagues/
All who get to cross fulsomely praise the passage to its far shore.

Or Lu Chunxue's Ode to "Tidal Tone Cave" (CXPT 426):

Upon the great sea, a **Magic** Mtn remote/ Dragon Palace—not easy to seek.
Over myriad years, bestowing its sublime appearance/ Lone cavern unstopping its tidal tone.
Heaven pared its peak into a jewel/ Sands carpet the earth as gold.
Jingling chime of Sanskrit chants/ Have longed rinsed away all worldly thought.

These days it's harder for the peaceloving pilgrim to "rinse away worldly thoughts" at Tidal Tone Cave; the only magic seabeasts you're likely to encounter adorn brass censers and get rubbed shiny by

luckseeking tourists. Viewed on a map from the south, Putuo Island looks like a longsnouted pig standing on very short trotters. You'll disembark at the pig's asshole on its southern coast, and if you choose the 19th day of the second, sixth, or ninth lunar months (sacred to Guanyin), or a busy summer week-end, or a major holiday like Spring Festival, Purebright (usually on April 5th or so), or International Worker's Day (the first week of May), the crowd's squeeze may well leave you breathless. If you head right toward the pig's rear trotters on the southeast coast, you'll see its very busiest part. A rather crass leaning 30-meter Guanyin statue dominates the southeastern skyline; nearby you'll find a temple to "The Guanyin Who Refused to Leave" and the pathetically trashridden, crowdtrampled Tidal Tone Cave. Past Purple Bamboo Grove to the pig's hoof and you'll find a peninsula or—at high tide— island called Guanyin's Leap. A large rock boasts a quite unconvincing "footprint" from the time Guanyin leaped across to Putuo's sister-isle Lejia. Perhaps she leapt to escape the crowds, though the footprint seems lilybound tiny for a 30-meter bronze bodhisattva. If you look carefully along the Guanyin Leap beach, you may find a few small, flatly conical shells the Chinese call "Guanyin's Tears"; they're supposed to cure cataracts.

Actually, i suggest you leave the pig's hindquarters for a less crowded time of day/year and head west from the ferry. Go past the Putuo Buddhist Academy up the stone steps and hike uphill, away from the greater mass of humanity. You'll find an ancient "Guanyin Cave" with a simple, rustic image that—assuming you've arrived early enough to avoid crowds—has power to move the onlooker. Continuing on, you'll find Mei Fu's Cloister, the Twin Turtles and Coiling Rock, Perfect Understanding Cloister, and Sea-gazing Tower, part of the distaff campus for the Buddhist Academy—the other Academy nunnery stands halfway up Buddha Head Alp at Willow Branch Cloister. If you really dislike crowds, don't go back down toward Puji Temple, but head by backways past Mei's Peak along the less-frequented and rugged western side of Putuo island... But most will head down toward Puji, which does have a big, lovely fish-releasing pond called "Sea-seal Pond," and the main hall's imposing Guanyin with her 32 incarnatory manifestations. You may notice the main gate to Puji stays closed; the legend goes the when the Qianlong emperor found Puji's abbot indiposed to receive, the irate Son of Heaven ordered its main gate to stay closed. Now visitors must enter from the eastern gate; the temple opens its main gate only once every several years for very special dignitaries.

At this point you might stroll northeast past Transcendent's Well to the Thousand-Pace Strand, a very pleasant beach. At its north end—under the armpit of the pig, you might say, you'll find Dharma Rain Temple. Its layout departs a bit from the usual; the temple gate stands at the southeast corner and features a large stone "9-dragon screen," as well as an "Om Mani Padme hum" inscription. Its main courtyard features 2 huge, marvelous camphor trees and, on the right, a twisty old juniper. After the Four Kings' Hall and a Jade Buddha Hall, you find—not the usual "Great Hero Hall" but a "Nine Dragon Hall" with, of course, a giant Guanyin statue. Look carefully at the ceiling; you'll see eight dragons snaking across suspended from the ceiling toward the center, where a ninth dragon toys with a huge "pearl"—really a "lapis lazuli lantern." According to the story, during the Cultural Revolution ransack, Red Guards readied to smash the "pearl" when a timely thunderstorm struck the fear of Guanyin into them and so saved the ceiling, though much else got trashed. Two enormous ginkgo trees growing in front of the Nine Dragon Hall also merit a gander.

When you've wearied of the smoke and noise, head up the stone steps toward Buddha Head Summit and Huiji Temple. This 291-meter summit—Putuo's highest—marks the culmination of traditional pilgrimage routes; during holy days, you will see quite a number of devoted walking three paces, then prostrating to Guanyin and repeating the process all the way up 1088 stone steps to Huiji. On Guanyin's birthday after the second lunar full moon, you may see thousands of prone Chinese along the path, including the entire Buddhist Academy en masse. At a large boulder beyond a steep turn, you'll see the huge red inscription "Sea Heaven Buddha Land," a most apt epithet for Putuo. Farther up by the temple you'll see the equally pithy inscription "(at) Buddha head/peak headbow (to) Buddha" **foding dingfo**, a rather clever antimetabolic illustration of supple Chinese syntax. Due to the new gondola, you may find the crowds at Huiji crushing. But do look at the back hall, whose pillars feature a very nice couplet in clerical style **lishu** by noted Surangama Sutra scholar Baiguang ("White Radiance"). The couplet, also from the Surangama, reads:

Manifest the Jewel-king's Kirk with the tip of a brush/
Sit mid obscurest dust & turn the giant Dharma-wheel.

They're now building a fourth huge temple north of Huiji, at Hindu Village near the "mouth" of the pig. Perhaps you'll want to go and see the construction before the crowds get enormous. If they build with fresh cedar, as traditional templebuilders often do, your nose will appreciate the experience. Even more the fresh camphorwood they use for brackets, sculptures, and sometimes whole pillars. A visit to a Chinese

Buddhist-sculptor's studio leaves you inebriated with the clove-and-cinnamon scent of its fragrant wood. Otherwise, you might want to head east along the road—along the extended forefoot of the pig—toward "Brahman Tone Cave." Here a stunning little kirk built spanning a steep, narrow crevice in the cliffs way above the ocean looks inward, where one stone ledge has wedged in the crevice. Above this ledge, when atmospheric conditions send late morning sunlight through fog, seaspray, and, most likely, clouds of incense, you may see an apparition of Guanyin outlined against some unusual cliffrocks above the ledge. Even the usual press of tourists cannot completely dispel the mana of this place, although their habit of tossing trash into the crevice does mar its beauty. At this point you might recall that the Lotus Sutra equates:

Delicate-voiced [Guanyin--]/ The Brahma-toned, sea-tide toned. (cf. Hurvitz 1976:318)]

To escape the crowds, take the back stone stepped route toward "Sudhana's Cave." This relatively rustic part of the island has decent views and an unusual cave, with a "dragon's jaw" and "dragon's eyes." On the way back, you might stop at Xianghui (Auspicious Wisdom) Cloister, where the learned abbot Shengxu—editor of the Putuo Buddhist Journal—may show you his computer; he has nearly the entire Buddhist Canon on a CD-ROM. Useful innovation for this age of weak memories!

If you get up early and wear fleet feet, you can do all this in less than one day. But to savor the fragile beauties and vestiges of **ling** that still remain on Putuo, avoid summer weekends and big holidays. To leave, take a late afternoon ferry to Shanghai—or wherever you're headed. As you sail into the sunset, the hundreds of Boat Island reefs and isles—1390 in all!—rise and fall into the China Sea. You might imagine a tribe of great sea beasts—huge mossbacked sea-turtles, a pod of humpy whales, the serpentine vertebrae of giant dragons—frolicking and heading east, to pay court to Guanyin. Reach a hand out to stroke their backs and wish for good luck!

TIANTAI

The journey up China's "Heavenly Terrace" to Flowery (Lotus) Peak's 3752' summit begins by understanding classical literati's "Landscape Transcendentalism." As Eduard Chavannes so aptly wrote, "Les montagnes en Chine sont les divinities." (Chavannes 1910:3; cf. Demieville 1965:364ff.) Symbols of long life and bringers of life, mountains inspired religious awe as "engenderers of the myriad things." (Shuowen, quoted in Demieville:364). We may follow this sacred alpine trail and the Tiantai Mountain Gazette by tracing Chinese literati's appreciation of landscape to Sun Chuo's "Rhapsody on Heavenly Terrace" (ca.310-97). Sun begins by lauding Tiantai as "most divinely florescent of alps and marchmounts." He links it with the mountain homes of Daoist Undying/transcendent ones:

Fording the ocean one finds Penglai & Fangzhang;
Ascending dry land one finds Siming and Tiantai. (cited from Wenxuan I:223-227)

Describing Heavenly Terrace as a site where "Numinous transcendents **lingxian** made grotto dwellings,"

Sun conceives the alps as **qi** configurations of the Great Void, which:

Melts to form stream and brook,
Congeals to form hill and mound.

He envisions Tiantai's landmarks:

Red Citadel rising amid rose-rack erects its summit;
The Cascade drifting in flight marks out its path.

Then, at the critical crossing of Stone Bridge, Sun takes off from human paths and soars into the hyperspace

of religious transcendence:

Straddle heaven-vaulting Suspended Stone-stair,
Overlook the myriad-fathom cut-off Dark-abys.

The rest of his rhapsody traces Sun's free-spirited roving through precincts of Transcendents, ultimately merging with the "hidden, mystic" **dao** to find perfect enlightenment. (Mather:232-3). Later literati referred to Sun again and again in their visits, echoed his phrases endlessly, and in particular used the crossing of Stone Bridge as allegory for enlightenment. The earliest surviving tale that explicitly uses this trope dates from almost the same generation. Consider Buddhist monk Tanyou (d.396, or perhaps 419), who in his many years in a mountain cave on Heavenly Terrace acquired fame as anchorite, thaumaturge, and exorcist (Zurcher 146; Demieville 442). Even Tanyou could not lightly cross Stone Bridge; his

hagiography mentions that "from antiquity, none have ever managed to reach" the other side, due to Stone Bridge's narrow, mossy span and the boulder blocking farther progress at its terminus. Tanyou tried twice, but each time a voice from thin air and a white-bearded mountain spirit advised the monk that he would have to perfect himself for another decade. On his third attempt, Tanyou did actually reach the boulder, found a magic aperture there, and enjoyed a brief sojourn among the monks of Paradise. (Shenxian Zhuan, discussed in Wen Fong:17-8). Later tradition associated these monks with the "500 Arhats" of sutra lore, the Buddhist equivalent of Daoist Transcendents. We find Stone Bridge tropes on almost every page of the Heavenly Terrace Gazette; it devotes 68 pages of poems to Stone Bridge alone, more than any other site. Shinohara 1988(130) calls Stone Bridge the symbolic portal into a "supernatural realm" at Tiantai.

But Sun Chuo held less esteem in later Chinese tradition than his successor, Xie Lingyun (385-433), the father of Chinese landscape poetry. Xie dwelt among the mountains northwest and southeast of Tiantai; though he did not write exclusively about Heavenly Terrace, he mentioned it in his "Rhapsody on Dwelling in the Mountains": To the far east, there's Tiantai and Paulownia-Cypress.

Paulownia-Cypress would later form the site for Tiantai's most important Daoist monastery (see *infra*). Xie, an indefatigable mountaineer, often led his large assembly of retainers on hikes through the Zhejiang alps.

On one such occasion,

He set out from Shining (northwest of Tiantai) into the southern alps, chopping trees to open a path, all the way to Linhai (southeast of Tiantai), with a retinue of hundreds. Linhai's Prefect, Wang You, was astonished and feared mountain brigands; only upon realizing it was Xie Lingyun did he relax. (Song shu: 67.1775)

According to the itinerary implied in this account, Xie must have traversed at least the foothills of Tiantai, if not its steeper ridges, although with the intrepid Xie, we could hardly say for sure. In any case, later Chinese found endless inspiration in Xie's "landscape transcendentalism" (modified from Mather). Xie frequently described himself "clambering up moss and pulling himself up by creepers" (see *cites in* Westbrook 132 and n.24; cf. Mather 239; the phrases had gotten used by Sun Chuo before), and these became stock elements in 1500 years of poems about climbing Tiantai, e.g.:

Lean on my staff, pull and clamber--like climbing Heaven! (Pan Zhen:142)

Surpassing sights of the southeast--all speak of Tiantai;
Climbing the steep, tugging at precipices, I make a special trip. (Yu Can:230)

Walking stick through cloud, sandals on boulder, scurrying without rest;
No path through this sodden gauze--hard to pull and clamber. (Xu Si:384)

The phrase Xie used for "ascending alps" also became a stock element in later verse, as did the following trope from this passage in Xie's biography:

In his *alpine ascents*, Xie regularly wore wooden cleated clogs; when climbing up, he would remove the front cleat, when descending, he would remove the back cleat. (Song shu: 67.1775)

Not a bad idea, in the days before Vibram soles and crampons. References to Xie's clogs became ubiquitous in later poems about climbing alps, particularly in climbing Heavenly Terrace, e.g.:

Moss adheres to short cleats as the guest arrives;

Mume fall by an idle window where a monk dozes. (Xia Xian:201)

[Flowering apricot or "Plum-blossoms"]

Up from Heavenly Dame peak we ascend more alps;

Starting at Pine Gate, clogs climb up into the clouds. (Cai Chao:228)

Clamber and ascend, tugging and pulling, as the path gets more remote. (Zhou Zhen:332)

These two 4th-5th century pioneers, Sun and Xie, became the literary guides for 1500 years of Tiantai gentry pilgrims. Richard Mather called Xie's variety of mystical trekking "landscape Buddhism." But since the religious inspiration for both Sun and Xie owed a great deal to Daoism as well—indeed, the two often borrowed terms and ideas from each other—it seems less restrictive to call this "landscape transcendentalism." When Sun Chuo—and many later Tendai monks from Japan—"crossed Stone Bridge," when Daoists visualized an inner microcosmic landscape and alchemically cultivated a perfected Undying body forged of **qi**, **jing**-essence, and **shen**-spirit in the furnace of an adept's abdomen, or when Tiantai monks strove to extinguish cravings and reach the blessed Western Paradise, they all sought a more or less similar passage to enlightenment. When we translate this religious impulse as "transcendent," we do not mean to export Western baggage about escaping this world altogether to reach an altogether different, better one; rather, Chinese conceived a more immanent transcendence that **extended** capabilities beyond ordinary human limitations and shortcomings to embrace wider, wiser realms of experience and understanding. The Chinese word "spirit" **shen**, after all, means primarily "extension" from the coarser, grosser forms of configured energy to the rarer and more celestial. No one more powerfully, authentically inhabited **this** world than a perfected Daoist adept or a bodhisattva. (we use transcendental throughout in what Hall and Ames would call a "weak" sense; see Ames 1995:esp. xiii-xiv, 142-164 Cf. Thoreau and Muir; Western Transcendentalism, too, often involved immanentist delight in landscape; Bokenkamp in Early Daoist Scriptures 1997 also uses "transcendent" throughout)

In fact, despite our focus on Buddhist temples and the Tanyou story, we would in one sense follow a false trail by giving Tiantai's Buddhist tradition first priority. The earliest legends associated with Tiantai told of Wangzi Qiao, the "Stilt-legged Princeling," a Zhou ruler's son who visited Heavenly Terrace, then ascended to Heaven as a Transcendent on the back of a crane.(9.2b; legend awarded Wang a celestial appointment as Lord of Tiantai, or "Tongbai Alp") Legend spoke of Ge Xuan (ca. 238), Daoist magician and alchemist who perfected himself among the Heavenly Terrace alps for three years before ascending to heaven. (WZ9.2b). His "Alchemizing Cinnabar Well" still forms a stop on the tourist trail near Flower Canopy Peak, Tiantai's highest site. Above all, legends spoke of Liu Chen("Dawn") and Ruan Zhao("Initiate"), who roved in Tiantai in the year 62 AD and, following a Peachblossom Stream, met two beautiful Undying maidens, who entertained them in a magic grotto for 6 months. When the two fools grew homesick and left the mountains, they found their "hometown" had changed utterly and its inhabitants had already passed on 7 generations. The unfortunate "van Winkles" --Daoists would call them "earthbound transcendents **dixian**"--never could find their way back to Paradise. (WZ 9.3a) This tale enchanted Chinese literati; the Gazetteer devotes 33 pages exclusively to poems on Peachblossom Grotto, and references to Ruan and Liu grace countless other verses. Literati even wrote essays trying to "prove" where the cave **must** have existed; today you can still hike to "Peachblossom Source" Valley and seek out caves where you imagine Liu and Ruan **actually** visited, though as of yet it hasn't caught on as tourist attraction. No one's erected an entrance gate or sold any tickets yet!

References to "peach blossoms," Liu and Ruan, and Daoist utopia strew every page of the Gazetteer; in many sections, such references actually become the *default* closure. You may well suspect that the literatus at a loss when ending his poem would simply reach for the "van Winkles" as easiest and most obvious solution.

Peach Blossom Cave: most references make the Peach Blossoms and the Peach Blossom Grotto symbols for Transcendents, as when Zhang Hu "Recalled Roving to Heavenly Terrace" and remembered it as a magic place where:

Cloud dragons leaped from the waters as windy squalls receded;
Sea cranes called from the bank when moonlit hues grew pellucid.

Zhang ended in disillusion:

On returning everything's a dream in this human world;
Liu and Ruan--mid vast vagueness, where could I seek? (25)

Inspired Song poet Gao Sisun could wax more hopeful, e.g.:

Young Liu from back then now can cross over/
One by one, the peach blossoms will flower for me! (27, close)

Gaze far into the distance, at Gold-Malachite Court/ One can penetrate the Cinnabar Spring route.
Tonight I'll sleep among peach blossoms/ Don't be too hasty about taking leave! (27:close)

In Gao's first poem, "cross over" figures a return to paradise. In his second poem, Gao had described himself treading in "transcendent tracks" recalled with Gold-Malachite Court and Cinnabar Springs. The peach blossoms, sacred to Daoists and perhaps referring to the long-lifegiving Emerald Peaches of the Queen Mother of the West, give Gao hope that Spring, his tourist jaunt, and his life may all long endure unchanged.

But most poets closed with more wistful thoughts about the distance between Transcendent and Mortal:

The transcendent has mounted a crane and flown back--where?
Below the promontory, Emerald peaches blossom in vain. (43)

We must be only a step or two from Peach-blossom Spring/
Mtns everywhere--but how to inquire about Liu and Ruan? (187 close)

For a witty interchange, see Q646 Liang Tongshu's (1723-1815) riposte to lines by Yuan Haowen (1190-1257; quoted in Qian 1979:2.646)

(Yuan) To my dying day I'll ever regret Ruan and Liu—How come they missed our world and returned!?

Liang: I'll speak a turning phrase for heaven and earth!

After all, our world trumps heaven; Otherwise Liu and Ruan would never have returned!

Daoist visionary Cao Tang's 5-poem sequence evoking the tale of Liu and Ruan has particularly won accolades (though, as Liang Jikang points out in TTSWHS 1937:16, Cao probably never even got near Tiantai). His 3rd and 5th verses "Sending Liu and Ruan Off From the [Transcendents'] Cave" and "Liu and Ruan Revisit Heavenly Terrace and Seek the Transcendents—In Vain" seem especially vivid, thus we translate them as first-person dramatic address, though you could equally well render them in third person:

Graciously sending you off from Heavenly Terrace;
When could you ever return to transcendents' realm?
Since you're going off, drink all you can of Cloud Ambrosia,
No more to serve--you'll never again open up our Jade Seals.
Flowers fill the cave-mouth, it's always Spring here;
The stream heads for your human world, never to return.
Sad longings by the creekside, now we take leave;
Full moonbeams through emerald mist lock in verdant moss. (353)

Back to Heavenly Terrace to seek out Ms. Jade Perfected;
The verdant moss and white boulders now turned to dust.
Pipes and song fallen silent, stilling the deep grotto;

Cloudborne crane lone & forlorn, cut off from its old neighbors.
All the grasses and trees, even, no longer their former color;
Mists and roserack--none retain the Spring of bygone years.
Peach blossoms and flowing waters still remain,
But no sight of they who offered wine way back then. (354)

The Daoist tradition of seeking transcendent bliss continued apace. Alchemist, pharmacist, and Daoist synthesizer extraordinaire Tao Hongjing (456-536) visited Heavenly Terrace seeking wisdom texts in 490-491, then later returned during the period 508-512, during a later period of wisdom-seeking peregrination. Tao's fourth-generation disciple, Sima Chengzhen (647-735), continued Tao's legacy of synthesizing Shangqing Daoism with Buddhist meditation techniques. Sima borrowed extensively from Tiantai meditation regimes; in Sima's system, Daoist cultivation becomes almost entirely a matter of internal cultivation; swallowing heavy metals, commanding and/or exorcising demons, and manipulating prayers and talismans seem to play no role. (esp. DN 34-6) Sima dwelt 30 years in Tiantai's alps and became known as the "Layman of Red Citadel." As index to his high stock at court, in 712 the emperor established Paulownia-Cedar Belvedere (Tongbai guan) northwest of Guoqing Temple in Sima's honor. Tongbai became mecca for southeastern Daoists. Among many illustrious Tang figures, we shall simply mention Du Guangting (850-933), eminent Daoist scholar and codifier of Lingbao tradition, who studied on Heavenly Terrace for many years as a young man. Later, the legendary ninth-century "father of internal alchemy" Lu Dongbin supposedly dwelt there and left a quatrain on the temple walls, before ascending to become the most renowned of China's "Eight Transcendents":

A blue serpent coils on the ground, moonbeams flicker back & forth;
Night grows calm, clouds still--the crane has not returned.
Wanting to transcend all affinities, he transforms his bones,
Temporarily leaving behind a trace at Heavenly Terrace. (qu. in TTZ 9.6a)

Lu's more substantial heir, Zhang Boduan (984-1082?), a key figure among the "Five Patriarchs of Southern Daoism," also spent time at Heavenly Terrace and, according to some accounts, originally hailed from Tiantai. Zhang largely continued Lu's tradition of "Internal Alchemy," borrowing extensively from Chan meditation techniques. Zhang became known as patriarch of the "Heavenly Terrace Transcendent School" of Daoism; after an ideal span of 99 years, he supposedly left behind purified remains—thousands of purple and viridian *sarira*. (TTZ 9.6b; cf. Boltz 173-5). Zhang's heir, the colorful Bai Yuchan ("Jade White-toad"; fl. 1194-1224) also studied at Tongbai and continued the Southern Daoism Internal Alchemy tradition. Bai, who had fled into the alps after having killed a man, apparently left literary traces at all the

famous Southern Daoist mountains. A prolific and talented poet, Bai also grew famous as a master of Daoist "Thunder Rites." (Boltz 176-9; DN 37) But Tiantai Daoism did not confine itself to meditative accommodations with Buddhist tradition; a flourishing magic ritualist tradition based on Lingbao scriptures also existed during the Song. By the twelfth century, Tiantai had become one of the chief Daoist sacred peaks. Its thaumaturges got so active and notorious their antics began to receive criticism from prominent Daoists (see Boltz 43). A short "stroll" through the important cultural byways near Tongbai Belvedere will suffice to demonstrate that Buddhists could rarely monopolize Heavenly Terrace's status as Sacred Peak.

Tang Daoist Xu Lingfu considered Paulownia-Cedar Belvedere, Twin Pylons, and Rosegem Terrace the finest scenic area in Tiantai (TTZ 2.6b). Tongbai evoked associations not only with legendary Wangzi Qiao but also Ge Xuan (ca.283), who supposedly practiced alchemy in the vicinity. Li Bai supposedly wrote an influential early verse:

Heavenly Terrace, companion to *Fourfold Radiance*/ [nearby peak]
Flowery Summit, highest in all of Viet.
Gateway marked by Red Citadel roserack/
Chill and bleak, moonlight on verdant isles.
Leaning way up high, climb and look out/
Straight down, see the Darkling Depths.
Clouds trail as the Great Roc wingflaps/
Waves dash as Leviathan dives.
Windswept breakers ever crash and billow/
Divine wonders, how sudden and swift.
Delightedly, I observe this realm/
My love for **dao** unflagging.
Clambering up branches, I pick pearly fruit/
Swallowing herbs, I alchemize perfected bones.
How can I learn to grow feathery wings/
And for 1000 Autumns rest on Penglai's palace-gate? (256)

Among innumerable later tributes to Tongbai by famous literati and devout Daoists, we shall restrict ourselves to Bai Yuchan's evocative night meditation poem at Tongbai:

Pale moonlight enfolds verdant pines/ Pure flows baptize tall bamboos.
Waters deepen, the **toad** undrowned/ Ever accompanies the Daoist's night vigil. (258)

Here we will want to observe that "baptize" evokes its homophone, the Daoist "sprinkling" rite of cosmic renewal; the toad can metaphorize the moon and/or the catch-basin of a clepsydra: in either case, it symbolizes a triumph over time and mortality, no doubt the focus of this nocturnal meditation by Bai

"*White Jade-toad*" **yuchan**.

Daoism has fared far worse than Buddhism on Heavenly Terrace; you have to look very hard. After some difficulty, i managed to commandeer a motorcycle and visit Tongbai's former site. Now a huge dam constructed in 1958 has flooded its valley; Paulownia-Cedar lies immured under 30 meters of pure water. All around stood lowering sacred peaks that once housed dozens of monasteries and sheltered many of China's most illustrious Daoists (for local geography, see esp. TTZN1934:59-60; TTSYLZ 3.65-66) On a lone butte jutting off to the southwest, affording a spectacular view of Tiantai City and Bright Cliff and Cold Cliff to the southwest, you'll find a small Daoist monastery—originally called "Subtle Delight Belvedere" **Miaoleguan** (est. 1895), but now called "Tongbai Palace." The area around Tongbai used to boast 36 Palaces and 72 Belvederes; now only one remains. You'll find first a "Purple Yang Hall" with a large statue of Zhang Boduan (984-1082?); to your left you'll see a statue of Xie Xichun (ca.1895-1984), a Southern Daoist (Zhengyi) patriarch who hid out in Heavenly Terrace for more than 30 years before accepting disciples again. A stele on Daoist cultivation by his disciple and transmission-heir, Mlle. Ye (d. 1998) adorns the wall in front of Xie's statue. The rudimentary statues of hermits Bo Yi and Shu Qi out front supposedly come from a Tang palace. If you continue on into the back "3 Pure Ones Hall," you'll find statues of the Daoist Trinity, with a smaller statue of Lu Dongbin off to their right. The current abbot of Tongbai, Master Zhang, met Xie in the early 1980's in Beijing; at first Zhang—then a computer wizard at Qinghua Univ.—learned internal **qigong** cultivation, but soon he got initiated into the finer points of Daoism. Zhang spent some years in the US, where he established a branch temple in Coral Springs, FL. When Mlle. Ye died, Zhang returned to take charge of Tongbai and train its 11 Daoists; he's assisted by 4 other adepts, including Mlle. Ye's older sister, a kindly woman in her 70s whose unassuming appearance belies her years and her deep religious training. Zhang aspires to revive Tiantai Daoism and hopes the temple's numinous **qi**—according to Zhang, when the original Tongbai got inundated, all the area's Perfected Beings and Alpine Divinities **shanling** took refuge there; he claims the well as Ge Xuan's original Transcendent's Well—will at least preserve Tiantai Daoism's last stand (Zhang1717:8.2b notes **two** Alchemy Wells on Tiantai associated with Ge Xuan—one near Tongbai, another near the summit at Huading). Now i recall the beginning to an old poem "Inscribed at Miaole Belvedere" by reclusive Ming loyalist-monk Lingyi ("Magic Prime," alias Qu Dajun); Miaole Belvedere originally got dedicated to "Princeling Stilts":

Empty Mountain Belvedere where Wang Qiao once dwelt/
Till this day, white clouds still gather, undispersing.
Moonlight path to the altar--how many thousand years?
Ever & again he blows his syrxin, half descending from Heaven. (323)

You can view the magnificent gorge at Rosegem Terrace and Dual Pylon Portal by proceeding north, then west along the shore of Tongbai Reservoir from the monastery. You'll reach a mountain spur with tremendous vistas north, west, and south; it will seem unbelievable that any trail could lead down into the precipitous ravines south and west, past the odd-looking "Transcendent's Seat." Nonetheless, a stone trail does just that, winding down into the narrower defile behind the Transcendent. To the north, Hundred Stave Cliff bars progress toward the mythic Peach Blossom Stream; to the south, Rosegem Terrace and Floral Canopy rear forbiddingly. Eventually you reach the gorge's floor, where you can catch your breath before heading downstream past Dual Pylon Portal—a "Lu Dongbin Cave" perches halfway up its eastern side—to fields, a dam raceway, and eventually the Tongbai Dam Power Plant.(for differing opinions about exactly where to situate Rosegem Terrace, see TTZN1934:65) Tongbai Belvedere sacrificed its earthly form, but its Daoist powers still provide the local population with abundant, non-polluting hydroelectric **ling**.

To enter the Tiantai Mountains proper, most pass through its southern portal, with Red Citadel **Chicheng** on their left. Right away it hits you what a **red** alp this seems. You've just come through dusty Tiantai City, lanes of red clay where they haven't yet paved, and at least two cuts through red sandstone hills. The you behold the Citadel's dull-red face, with redwalled cloisters and caves layered like an Arizona Pueblo condominium! As adventurer Xu Xiake (1566-1641) observed, Red Citadel's geologically distinct from the other Tiantai Alps (for Xu's geological insights, see esp. Zheng 1994;186; only when you proceed north do you hit good solid granite). But all throughout Tiantai you will observe more or less reddish dirt, more ocher where Chinese have cultivated mountain terraces, brighter red swatches from the iron oxides in eroded, exposed patches. You can see all the major sites on Red Citadel and reach the summit easily in 90 minutes, so don't bother packing lunch. Purple Cloud Cave, lowest down, boasts a lovely cave-shrine with water spraying over the entrance and a natural-rock ceiling; the nuns there behaved most graciously early on a weekend morning with only a few visitors. Traditionally, Red Citadel has housed nunneries, and this remains true, except where shrines to Crazy Ji (Jigong) have invaded the mountain. Crazy Ji's historical avatar Daoji supposedly hailed from Heavenly Terrace, and now as you ascend you find a new Jigong Hall

to your right and a Jigong Hall—formerly a nunnery—to your left. Inscriptions above the two rear doors to the right hall leading to Jigong's cave shrine provide typical Crazy Ji atmosphere:

To my ornate cave with drunken gait/ Through the Cloud-gate, singing madly.

The left-hand cave offers more Crazy Ji mottoes, such as the prominent: “Defends Heaven, succors men.”

After a few more cave-cloisters, including what the Daoists once claimed as the Sixth of 72 Grotto-Heavens (later renamed Jade Capitol Cave), you reach the summit, with its less-than-beautiful Liang Consort's Stupa, dedicated to a sixth-century princess who helped introduce Buddhism to Japan. Somehow, Red Citadel loomed larger in lore than life. Consider this ode by Zheng Shanfu:

Before Heavenly Terrace, a yellow crane flies;
Around the transcendent's Citadel pylons, rose-rack encircles.
Most affecting—how Xie's daughter (Ziran) went off to Penglai,
Not knowing of this human realm's Sima Chengzhen. (112)

Xie Ziran sought Daoist illumination, but didn't realize she could find her ideal teacher closer to home. For legends of Sima Chengzhen and his return to capital life, see TTYXJ 1984:67-71. Or Xia Song's couplet:

Vermilion walls serried in the void, scarps soaring thick on all sides;
Just where Most Perfected Ones ought to halt their Magic Tracks. (**lingzong** 114).

Gu Kuang:

Magic Creek where we stayed links to Magic Alp;
Hidden gleams of the high tower, at ease in moonlight.
Midnight: a crane's call at dream's wane;
Still thinking I heard a zither tune from Grotto Chamber. (119)

Pan Zhen, explaining why he needn't follow his Transcendent dream to Heavenly Terrace's peak:

I'll visit Red Citadel, seek out a hermitage/ And build a cottage by its roserack, to live out my life. (49)

Cf. Pan Mo, apologizing for his inability to end earthly ties:

I'd like to borrow a tenth-acre of Red Citadel's mountain
And build a cottage by its roserack, a temporary billet. (87)

To stay at Red Citadel meant to remain on this side of the transcendents' world, in two senses. First, the physical alp, southern boundary of the Heavenly Terrace range, lay well south of the Stone Bridge that, to Sun Chuo and his heirs, symbolized a passage to transcendence. Second, symbolically, a Red Encinte **chicheng** surrounded the Daoist Arbiter of Destiny's citadel, so in that sense also living at Red Citadel meant remaining just on the border of celestial precincts (see Strickmann in Welch:154).

2. Guoqing (State at Peace) Temple. After you pass the portal and buy your Park entrance ticket, you'll see a Cold (Alp) Found[ling] Kiosk on your right, then a bridge—Fenggan's bridge!—leading to an orangey-brick wall, the "ancient Sui Dynasty Temple." Founded in 595 by Zhiyi on his second visit to Tiantai,

Guoqing still boasts the largest and oldest surviving temple complex on the mountain. Unlike the others, it escaped the Cultural Revolution largely intact, became first (in 1973, thanks to a Sino-Japanese diplomatic rapprochement) to receive repairs, and has received the most income from Chinese, overseas Chinese, Japanese and Korean Buddhists. Among its chief features you'll find the huge "Great Hero's Hall" with its 7-meter Shakyamuni; the court in front boasts 2 lovely 400-year old camphor trees and two equally ancient towering cedars. Off in a separate courtyard to the right coils the ancient seventh-century "Sui *mume*" tree--planted by Chiyi's disciple Guanding, if you believe the legend. According to the concierge, the Sui *mume* still bears "plums," except that during the Gang of Four's reign—1667-1970—it bore no fruit. In 1971, after their downfall and the worst of the Cultural Revolution, the Sui *mume* began producing as youthfully as ever. My room looked out over two layers of roofs toward a piece of the Hero's Hall and part of this lovely garden; on a moonlit evening, with Auspicious Cloud Peak—Guoqing's "blocking peak" to the southeast, and one of its 5 surrounding peaks—looming darkly and the Sui Pagoda—all nine stories, with a broken, overgrown crown—bright with the full moon's light, i can scarcely believe my luck as a guest here. Though Guoqing receives heavy tourist and pilgrim traffic, it can still seem very ancient and peaceful around dusk, even with the distant drums of a "Water Earth Rite" dinning in the temple. Guoqing covers a fair amount of area; it has five rows of buildings, the northern ones occupy different heights, and its innumerable covered walkways make it easy to get lost. That happened to me twice, especially at night after a long evening service.

Zhao Puchu "Inscribed on Guoqing Temple" (#2/4: GQS Zhi, Ding Tiankui... ed. 1995) p.410

In bygone days meeting at this **Magic** Mountain/ Together we heard the Lotus Sutra.
How happy today to requite my lifelong vow/ And set my staff within this White Lotus sea.

Juehui (1911-1998) "Written for the Prajnaparamita Stupa" (GQSZ 430)

Afar learning this **Magic** Alp of the Eastern Land remains /
In grass sandals I take my way and bow to Heavenly Terrace.
A million written sutras resume the Wisdom Charge/
1000 Autumns of Dharma-milk nourishing those to come.

Jia Dao

Leaving the Capitol, I have passed through Viet, Returning to a temple by the peaks west of the Sea.
In the rocky gorge, streams course in tandem; Up to Alpine Gate, pines for 9 leagues.
Once I heard Forbidden City's clepsydra, Now I listen to Red Citadel's bell.
Sublime words--the stone-inscribed lectures: I must look for traces of the Wise Monk. (Zhiyi; 63)

Zhiyi, of course, founded Guoqing after making his second visit to Tiantai in 591. You simply cannot understand Tiantai or its **ling** without knowing something of Zhiyi and his importance. Lore about Zhiyi

(538-598) constantly reverberates through the traditions and literature that have grown up around Heavenly Terrace [Sources Hurvitz Melanges Brussels 1962; Shinohara Koichi and Phyllis Granoff ed. Monks and Magicians: Rel Biogs in Asia (Mosaic: Oakville, Ont 1988) "2 Sources of Chn Buddh Biogs: Stupa Incriptions & Miracle Stories" 119-228; Richard Davis, ed. Images, Miracles and Authority in Asian Religious Traditions (Westview: Boulder 1998) "Dynastic Politics and Miraculous Images" 189-206. Granoff and Shinohara, Speaking of Monks: Rel Biog in India & China (Mosaic: Oakville 1992) "Guanding's Biog of Zhiyi, the 4th Chn Patriarch of the Tiantai trad" 97-232). TTZ 6.2b-4a; Chappell 1983 usefully observes that Hurvitz's treatment of Tiantai Buddhism got somewhat distorted by over-reliance on Korean monk Chegwan's tenth-century Outline of the Four Teachings.]

Flashes of mysterious "divine light" accompanied Zhiyi's birth; he had all the back-shoulder-eye-&-earmarks of the 4 Sage Kings. Even as a wee lad 'twas said he slept with hands at gassho, always sat facing the West[ern Paradise], always bowed on seeing a Buddhist image, and always gestured ritually on seeing a monk. At 15 he dreamed the Buddha rubbed his head & vowed to become a monk, officially doing so at 18 (for early miracles associated w/Zhiyi, see esp. Shinohara 1992:118-9). He made the difficult journey north to study in Henan for 7 years with Huisi (515-576), a worshipper of Maitreya and specialist in the Lotus Sutra; Zhiyi then returned south and taught at the Chen capital for 8 years. In 575 Zhiyi retired to Heavenly Terrace for 10 years of purification and advanced study (as DN:61 observes, Zhiyi chose Heavenly Terrace because it already had won fame as a "**Magic Mtn**"); Zhiyi got credited with (at least a hand in) founding 12 Buddhist temples on Tiantai, esp. Guoqing (598) and Fangguang (above Stone Bridge, which Zhiyi naturally crossed on first reaching Heavenly Terrace--the temple got built later). Zhiyi also underwent an extraordinary spiritual trial on Flowery Summit when, during a storm as he meditated in ascetic trance, monsters and demons assailed him—Zhiyi used all his piety and meditative resources to quell the autochthonous demons and make Heavenly Terrace safe for Buddhists (see esp. Shinohara '92:121). Zhiyi lamented all the fishing in the rivers and coastline near Tiantai and reportedly sold his own robes to buy fish and set them free—even est. "Set-free ponds" for the fish. In response the Chen dynasty supposedly issued a proclamation banning fishing for 60 leagues around the temple and gave the locals reparations. In 585 Zhiyi went back to court; when the Chen fell in 588 Zhiyi—a relative of the ruling family—went home and visited Lushan, still a Buddhist mecca at the time. Zhiyi quickly attracted the patronage of Sui Prince

Yang (soon to become the second Sui emperor); after years of shuttling between Lushan, Jiangling, and Yangzhou, Zhiyi returned to Tiantai in 595. Zhiyi, like many eminent monks, had ridden a seesaw of teaching and patronage (Nanjing 567-75, Yangzhou 589-595) and purifying retreats and pilgrimages to sacred alps (Lushan in 589-92, Tiantai 575-85, 595-97). His death, naturally, occasioned a great number of miracles (more than a dozen discussed in Shinohara 1992:99-116). The Sui Emperor later worshipped Zhiyi's perfected mummy—discreetly ensconced behind a stone door.

Zhiyi's most important literary works—his Fahuaxuanyi "Exposition of the Lotus Sutra's Import," Fahuawenju "Textual Commentary on the Lotus," and Mohozhiguan "Great Stilling and Insight" (a manual for meditation and religious cultivation translated and studied in Neal Donner and Daniel Stevenson The Great Calming and Contemplation (UH 1993)—all got written at Tiantai. The "Heavenly Terrace" sect of Buddhism Zhiyi founded, a syncretic Mahayana sort of Buddhism, you could perhaps best describe as a marriage of Northern Buddhist meditative and devotional practices with Southern Buddhist scholasticism and study. In the Chinese phrase most associated with Tiantai, Zhiyi sought to make "teaching and contemplation unified and consistent" **jiaochan yizhi**. He developed and refined systems of exegesis and scripture classification that ascribed the most "Perfectly Rounded Teaching" **yuanjiao** to the Lotus Sutra (and the late Parinirvana Sutra); he also refined a system of "threefold stilling and insight" **sanzhong zhiguan**, testifying to his deep concern with balancing meditation and scholarship. Zhiyi's thought reached its pinnacle with his idea that man could directly apprehend the simultaneous emptiness and fullness of the world and accomplish a mystic identification with Buddhist Truth; Zhiyi called this "the Trischiliocosm in One Thought" **yinian sanqian** (see esp. Hurvitz 271-318). Sometimes this gets glossed as "the Middle Way is identical to the true State of Existence, which is none other than Thusness." (Marathon Monks of Hi'ei:13)

Zhiyi did not lack for talented disciples and heirs. Among Tiantai patriarchs, Guanding (560-632), Zhanran (711-782), Zhili (960-1028), and Zhixu (1599-1655) have won particular fame. Saicho (766-822) made his pilgrimage to Tiantai in 804 and brought back the teaching to Japan, where it flourished. Subsequently, nearly every great Japanese Buddhist pilgrim visited Heavenly Terrace: in 1168 Eisai marvelled at the wonderful "Lohan Tribute Tea" grown near Stone Bridge and brought cuttings back to Japan, starting a tea craze that would change Japanese life forever. In 1223-24 Dogen also made his

pilgrimage to Tiantai, a formative experience in his summation of Caodong (Soto) Zen teachings. (for a quick review of Sino-Japanese interactions on Heavenly Terrace, see esp. DN:204-5,210-1,219-20)

Note that the last two monks went to China largely to study Chan/Zen and did so at Tiantai. Tiantai Buddhists displayed a notably syncretic spirit, even for China. Tiantai itself, from the very beginning a syncretic teaching, had particularly close ties to "Pure Land" salvationist devotion. Among major figures associated with Tiantai, Deshao (891-972), who helped bring important lost Tiantai scriptures from Korea, also specialized in Pure Land Buddhism; his disciple Yanshou (904-975) studied Chan and esp. Pure Land Buddhism as well as Tiantai. Yanshou imitated Zhiyi in many ways; as a young man, he diverted official funds to buy fresh fish and set them free and nearly got executed for his piety. Later Tiantai patriarchs turned increasingly to Chan meditation as that sect gradually outshone all others in China. The wild monks Cold Mountain and Foundling, who used to beg food from Fenggan in the Guoqing kitchen, left many legends and traces at Tiantai and have, of course, become mascots of Chan Buddhism.

3. Cold Mountain: the alp itself stands 40 kilometers southwest of Tiantai city; it means a long cab ride on very bad roads either way. This time i did not get there and, considering that Cold Mtn seems more a spiritual state than a physical location, i left with only a few mild twinges of curiosity about what modern Chinese tourism might have made of the site. Among the innumerable poems written about Cold Mtn, it seems only fair to give legendary mountain monk "Cold/wintry Mtn" his say:

Climbing, climbing up the Cold Mtn road/ Cold Mtn's road never ends.
The stream lengthens, boulder piled about/ The gorge widens, grasses grow lush.
Mosses slippery, but not from rain/ Pines whisper, with no hint of wind.
Who can surmount worldly encumbrances/ And sit with me among white clouds? (369; cf. Watson 58)

We could quote and quote, but such poems will not yield a vivid "realistic" picture of Cold Promontory. The "Cold Mtn" in these verses describes more a state of mind than a heap of boulders; you could find Cold Mtn atop many other peaks, and you could visit Cold Promontory and never recognize it as "Cold Mtn." So we'll confine ourselves to quoting the beginning from one more "Cold Mtn" poem that characteristically focusses more on what **isn't** than on what is, evocatively suggesting his enlightened realm:

Among redoubled cliffs I've chosen a home/ Birds' path, bereft of human tracks.
What do you find beside my porch? White clouds hugging hidden boulders. (369)

Cold Mtn and Foundling's buddy Fenggan usually gets painted leaning fondly on a sleepy tiger. Zhiyi got credited with taming a tiger, and you can still find a "Tame-tiger Ridge" west of Tiantai. But for Heavenly

Terrace's most appropriate zoological emblem you would have to choose the Crane—or, more broadly, the range of cranes, wild swans, phoenixes, and simurghs that serve as steeds for wandering transcendents... We have already seen many examples. Tiantai still boasts a "White Crane Town" northwest of Tongbai. The main street east of town bears the name "Flying Crane"; you can see signs for "Flying Crane Paints" and "Flying Crane Car Repair" on your way up to Guoqing. For another more lyrical example, consider the conclusion to Daoist adept Bai Yuchan's verse in which he confers with a Transcendent:

On the stone altar we sit and chat in the piney breeze;
One call of the crane, and the Mt. moon falls. (258; on Tongbai Belvedere)

Or Chen Xiao (95), after he imagines himself climbing "beyond things," ready to meet a "Banished Transcendent":

Oriole calls at noon harmonize along the creeper-festooned road,
Cloudy **qi** sunlit flying up Crane Peak.

Small wonder that after Xu Xiake visited Stone Bridge, he heard many cranes calling from the pines!

(Xu:41)

As for plants, you might suspect the rare Udumbara blossom, symbol of Buddhist enlightenment; monks built a Udumbara Terrace near Stone bridge; or perhaps the prized Lohan Tribute tea. But far and away the most prominent plant in Tiantai lore is the peach blossom, symbol of Daoist transcendence, which in many sections of the gazetteer smiles from every page. Tiantai reads as a very RED place, from its peach blossoms to its Red Citadel, from the roserack on its misty peaks to the red-capped cranes conveying its immortal denizens from Grotto Heaven to Celestial Palace. And though on my visit i saw more pink azaleas and lavender wisterias than peach-blossoms—and the pink rhododendrons on Flowery Summit lay in bud, just waiting for a few more warm days to burst open—i would concur.

4. Tatou (Stupa) Temple and Gaoming (Lofty Bright) Temple. 5 miles up the road from Guoqing—less if you take the stone-stepped shortcuts—you'll see a ridge on your right with first a tunnel (a sign reads: Gaoming Temple), then an unobtrusive set of stone stairs without sign leading up the hill to a forested copse. Uphill perches Tatou Temple—traditionally known as Zhenjue (True Enlightenment)—now the new home for the Tiantai Buddhist Academy. It receives visitors almost exclusively to see the stupa with Zhiyi's remains; indeed, disciples built the temple as a mausoleum for him by the year 600. The temple, relatively peaceful, commands fine views of sunrise and sunset on good days and endures fierce winds the rest of the time. Inside, 36 students and 9 teachers work hard at transmitting the Dharma. Around the eastern side,

follow the woods path past three ancient stelae. They commemorate 3 of Tiantai's greatest monks:

Guanding, who transmitted Zhiyi's biography and built Tiantai as an ongoing lineage; Zhanran (711-782), who elucidated Zhiyi's metaphysical and educational doctrines; and Chuandeng (Transmit the Lamp), who among other accomplishments wrote the standard Mountain Gazetteer for Tiantai. Professor Chaoran at the Academy wrote a quatrain alluding to these great figures in the lineage:

South to north: Golden and Silver land/ East to west: sun & moon citadel.

Mornings I walk Zhiyi's path/ Evenings I meet with Zhanran. ("Gold and silver" land refers to Buddha's Mound on which Tatou stands; in a dream Zhiyi reportedly encountered Dipankara Buddha, who gave him a vision of a "gold and silver land" where he could found a temple; Zhiyi later found it on Tatou's ridge).

Cf. Pan Lei's quatrain on the ridges around Tatou (qu. in TTZN1934:37):

Who called Mtn monks poor right down to the bones? All around we see Lands of Silver and Gold!
I'll live on Gold Ridge & you live on Silver/ A clear line thru empty void to distinguish master from guest.

Continue around Silver Ridge to the east, keeping below the villlage, and you'll reach the Dharma-talk Terrace, where Zhiyi supposedly preached to the stones and whoever else would listen. From this vantage—as from almost anywhere on the ridge—you can look almost straight down onto the roofs of Gaoming Temple, nestled in the bottleneck of a steep ravine. Almost completely destroyed after 1966, Gaoming enjoyed a relatively quick restoration beginning in 1979, thanks largely to the efforts of much-loved abbot Juehui of Zhejiang (1911-1998). Gaoming's unusual in that it has temple lands; the monks and—especially—
—their support staff actually grow much of their own food. Before 1966 it boasted two unusual features: above the Hero's Hall Ming eminent monk Chuandeng built a replica of the legendary Surangama Altar **Lengyan tai**, which included a lower border of eight mirrors facing a ceiling border of eight mirrors, plus a large ninth mirror in the center. Adorned with lotus patterns, with a central bowl of "clear dew" and built on a platform infused with ten aromatic spices, it won great approbation. Renowned Ming literati Yu Chunzhao, Dong Qichang, and Chen Jiru respectively wrote a commemorative stele, did the calligraphy, and inscribed the characters on stone (see GMSJ 25-6 for an account; for Chuandeng's elated report on the altar, see GMSJ 39-44). Destroyed after 1966, its former site now houses the Abbot's quarters. Second, Gaoming boasted a huge, 10000 tael bell that, tradition informs us, "you could hear as far away as Stone Bridge and Guoqing." This also got destroyed during the Cultural Revolution; the newer 5000 tael bell looks fine but, according to the young monk who kindly guided me around, its inferior metal—cast in

France—cannot nearly match the original's resonance. An old rhyming ditty describing the chief features of Tiantai temples goes: Guoqing's pines/ Tatou's winds/ Huading's fog/ Wannian's pillars/ Gaoming's bell.

(see, for example, ZGFSDG:255; on the former treasures of Gaoming, see esp. TTN1934:39)

The fogs and winds remain; time and political fortunes have diminished all the ditty's remaining landmarks. But Gaoming still enjoys beautiful scenery. According to founding legend, the place got started when Zhiyi preached at "Dharma-talk Terrace." A high wind blew leaves of his patra-leaf sutrabook down into the valley and, when he pursued them down the steep slope, he found a gully wonderland so secluded it still bears the name "Secluded Creek." Further embellishments of the legend have Zhiyi falling asleep and receiving a vision from Guanyin, who urged him to found a temple there and explained 3 giant iron Buddhist statues intended for the Hero's Hall lay at the bottom of the sea, guarded by a conch spirit. When Zhiyi built the temple, Guanyin whisked the conch away into her magic vase, leaving behind only a shell that formed part of "Conch Creek" gorge below the temple; the boat bearing the 3 statues—still visible today in the Hero's Hall—transformed into a scenic cliff above Conch Creek called the "Conch Creek Angler's Skiff." Xu Xiake explored the creek in 1632 and greatly appreciated its waterfalls, which he favorably compared to Stone Bridge (Xu 41). On a rainy morning i clambered up the slippery stones to the lower waterfall and had a marvelous time swimming in the pool, but i did not reach the higher falls and natural stone bridge described by the truly adventurous Xu Xiake. Closer to Gaoming, you will find a number of unusual rock formations. Returning along the creekbed, on your right you can see along the cliffs the most ridiculously Priapic stone on earth. "It's just **got** to be man-made"; yet the glans alone must weigh 5 tons. Presumably its upper tip rested on softer sediments that got eroded, leaving only the granite shaft beneath—rather an amusing landmark for a Buddhist temple. Above, only a minute from the temple gate, you'll find a lovely natural "cave" formed by a giant horizontal rock supported by several natural stone "pillars." The inscription tells us that Zhiyi meditated there; more reliably, renowned Ming-dynasty monk Chuandeng supposedly wrote part of the Tiantai Gazetteer in this cave, as well as his glosses on the "Perfect Understanding Sutra." The cave bears the name "Perfect Understanding" **Yuantong** and enjoys a terrific view to the south. You can get an even better view from the "Cloudviewing Rock" above; monks sometimes come here in the morning for a quiet place to meditate; it looks out on dauntingly steep mountain walls down into Conch Creek. From there it seems incredible that anyone could climb down, let

alone tend the terraced plots that snake all the way up from Conch Creek along the side of Secluded Creek's gorge. For a farewell to Gaoming, we can't improve on this verse from Chuandeng's series of sixteen

on "Views at Secluded Creek." Perfect Understanding Cave

One cave that barely admits your knees/ Yet settling in, the sights turn secluded.
Creek sounds ever at your ear/ Mountain hues just flooding your vision.
According with my nature that perfectly understands / Sweetening this jaunt beyond phenomena.
Growing tired, lie pillowed on a rock: In this life, these times, what else would you seek? (GMSZ 206)

5. Fangguang (Grand Realm) Temple.

No mystery about the chief attraction here. After you get off the bus and get your entrance ticket, head down the stone steps and, as you turn, you can glimpse the main falls of Stone Bridge through a lovely bamboo gorge. Descend a bit further, and you can gaze up at the bridge, 30 feet across, ten feet high, inclining toward its fat western end, tapering near the top western edge to 4" across. It stands about 30 meters above its pool; its waterfall crashes down a bit less than perpendicularly. At the western edge, you see a temple ingeniously built into the cliff: Middle Fangguang. Only a few monks live secluded within the large complex; it admits no lay boarders. But Lower Fangguang, rebuilt in 1989-9, beautifully nestled among the bamboos and cedars southwest of the falls, does allow the occasional lay believer. Its front garden features some lovely camellias; in April the court fills with fresh bamboo shoots, drying in the sun. In back of Hero's Hall you find a hall dedicated to Guanyin; while i stayed there the monks rejoiced to receive a brand new marble statue of Guanyin, sent by a Taiwanese monk via Hong Kong. From the Guanyin Hall entrance, you look at the back of Hero's Hall and see faint traces of Cultural Revolution slogans, washed over with temple orange-red but still visible, e.g.:

Foment revoution with Chairman Mao! Though the sea dries and rocks crumble, our Aim will never falter.

Farther down, barely legible, reads something like: Down with the old Buddha's shop! ...

Fanguang receives some day-visitors, but it remains fairly peaceful. Usually only 3-4 monks live there now, and they appreciate the tranquil surroundings as an aid to cultivating their dharma. After dusk, when the temple's gate has closed, you walk in its courtyard and see the full moon rising over Fangguang's "facing mountain" in the east. Slight breezes don't ruffle the temple's eave-bells; only a distant white roar from Stone Bridge fills the silence—a wonderful place to meditate. In the morning after breakfast i find a quiet moment when no people stir below the falls, then duck the guardrail and walk across Stone Bridge: a

mere 15 paces, less than 15 seconds to the western side. Then you have to retrace your steps, since a large and very forbidding boulder guards the far side. My daughter does double-flips on something no wider than this! Can't claim to feel very bold; later that morning a troop of tourists explores the bridge; one bold 30ish lass walks saucily across and then, on her way back, poses insouciantly at the narrowest point. The temple cook tells me he saw a woman cross the bridge with a baby strapped to her back! What would Sun Chuo say? (Actually, he would shoot back the standard Daoist answer: any bridge mundane eyes can see isn't the transcendent bridge, which would appear only to the adept)

Stone Bridge loomed immense in China's literary tradition, boasting 131 poems in its section of the Gazetteer alone: for examples, consider Zhang Hu's "Roving Heavenly Terrace" and its "magic traces" **lingji**, glimpsed in a climactic visionary dream:

Plied a swan in the vast dream/ Waking to feel my body feather-light.
From Eastern Abyss, the moon at midnight/ Somehow pregnant—mother of Primal Transformations.
Penghu Lake didn't fill a cup/ Bent River a barely discernible thread.
Stone Bridge soared across a myriad fathoms/ Its 1000 walls standing erect.
Looking down on Red Citadel's crown/ Sweeping along like knives & crossbow-darts... (24)

Zeng Ji, extolling Heavenly Terrace as "crown of Earthly Magic," climaxes his account with:
Stone Bridge—lying on the blade of Sword and Pike; Cataract waters—spurring forth Thunder. (32)

Xiao Yizhang sounded a most common trope (45):
Stone Bridge can't be crossed/ Clinging to creepers, I clamber alongside.
Stone Bridge spans the void, not 1 foot across/ Myriad-fathom deep tarn, pellucid to its bottom. (43)
Why have I risked myself coming here? I want to commune with the great Bodhisattva, west of Stone Bridge. (26:closure)

For such precipitous footwork, wouldn't you need Uncle Swoon's knack?
Easily to pace back & forth on Stone Bridge. (47 close)
Zhuangzi 21.57... records the tale of Uncle Swoon Nobody **Bohun Wuren**, who could walk backwards till his feet projected off the edge of a thousand-fathom cliff, while "his spirit's vital energy remained unperturbed." See Watson 231.

Shen Kai, feeling transcendent, concludes:
All my life I've had bones of roserack and mist;
In broad daylight I'll mount a simurgh and descend to Stone Bridge. (53 close)

Zhou Zhiwei, feeling less confident about his ability to leave this world, contrasted himself with Cold Alp's patron Luqiu Yin (86 close):
Alas, my life's affinities can't match Prefect Luqiu;
Longingly I gaze on transcendent tracks crossing Stone Bridge.

Or Chen Yao's powerful votive closure, envisioning flight to Transcendent precincts (96):
From the edge of Stone Bridge, mount the Wind and fly off
Soaring to who knows which level of Rosegem Terrace?

Or Wu Fu's visionary starplay, mingling the terrestrial and celestial realms (the "fiery" Vermilion Bird is

our Corvus; the Dragon corresponds roughly to Leo):
Fiery Bird at midnight disgorged from the Eastern Sea;
Stone Bridge flying across the Dragon at Heaven's Gate.(135)

Or monk Dafan come to commune with the spirit of Zhiyi (185):
Heaven's Lord has conjured up this Tathagata Realm/
Earth's arteries have borne forth a Wyrd Olde Bridge!

Yuan Mei (1716-1798): "Reaching Stonebridge, I View the Waterfall"
I know this must be Tiantai's ancient Stonebridge:
One dragon lone spanning the mountain's hollow.
Rearing high its bony spine, thrusting out a hip,
While below, etched in the void, races the angry cataract....(610)

Wei Yuan (1794-1857) "Song: Watching Tiantai's Stonebridge Waterfall After Rain" (Wei Yuan shiwen

xuanzhu:253-7 Changsha 1979)

Yandang's waterfalls, lost in misty grey/ Midbranch's waterfalls—thunder on the rocks.
Lushan's waterfalls, vast & spreading like the Yellow or Yangzi River;
Only at Tiantai do the marvels lie, not with waterfalls, but with Stonebridge.
Like someone lying on his side with one arm extended/ Strong enough to prop 84,000 fathoms of alp,
Releasing nine channels of Silvery River frost into the blue void.
(water drops compared to frosty stars from the Milky Way)

Perhaps the last words, and a complete verse entitled "Stone Bridge," should go to legendary Wintry Alp

Hanshan (158):

Rearing remote beyond the cloudy welkin/ The path among clouds to a cresting cusp.
Waterfalls flowing 1000 fathoms/ Like stretching a bolt of raw silk.
Below, a grotto for stilling the heart/ Spanning serenity, a bridge to fix one's fate.
Heroically grand, it overwhelms the world/ Above Heavenly Terrace, its fame soars alone.

Or the companion piece by his sidekick, "Foundling" **Shide**: (158)

Far & remote, precipitous mountain path/ Myriad fathoms, the sheer steep defile.
On Stone Bridge, moss and lichen turn green/ Where often a cloud scuds by.
Waterfall, suspended like raw silk/ Moonbeams dropping into the radiance of its tarn.
Next, I'll climb up Flowery Summit/ To await my rendez-vous with a lone Crane.

6. Wannian (Myriad Years) Temple. Wannian sits in a bowl-shaped valley facing south, with a steep mountain range at its back. You can see clear across the Stone-bridge Creek valley to Flowery Summit on a clear day. Wannian currently links to Stone Bridge by a long, muddy mountain road; instead, i hiked along a pleasant stone-stepped trail over from Fangguang Temple in about two hours, sampling beautiful waterfalls like "Copper Vase", abandoned farmhouses, and full-blossoming azaleas all the way. However, despite several attempts, i never could identify the famous Water-Pearl Curtain Falls maps place near "Copper Vase." Perhaps when celebrated wandering poet Yuan Mei (1716-1798) wrote on Water-pearl, he saw a lot more water going over the falls (see TTSWHS 1937:17-8, for a discussion of Yuan's verses). But roaming in the mountains near Wannian—as elsewhere on Heavenly Terrace—i could identify with Yuan's

"Miscellaneous Poems En Route to Tiantai" #3/4 (Yuan Mei *quanji* I:605 Jiangsu 1993; cf. Seaton, *I Don't Bow to Buddhas* 72: Copper Canyon 1997)

Wound around by millionfold mountains/ Cut off, detached... no place to go.
Before arriving: No way you could get here;/ Once here: No way you'd want to leave.

During the Cultural Revolution Wannian got savaged; only the shells of a few buildings survived. Now they're just in the middle of a rebuilding campaign; the Hero's Hall gradually takes on shape and paint around its huge camphor statue of Vairocana; a Shakyamuni sits in the framed but unfinished back hall—apparently Buddhas like to keep an eye on the construction! (Imagine trying to maneuver a huge statue in once the main gate has taken fixed shape) In the meantime, monks hold their ceremonies in the Four Kings' Hall; we circumambulate the statue of laughing Mile/Maitreya. The extensive rebuilding, largely with fresh cedar and fragrant camphor, depends on funds from Guoqing; Wannian itself receives few pilgrims and rates as a poor mountain temple, as two of its monks complained. Both felt you can't expect a monk to live decently on 150 yuan/month; at other places, i heard the figure 200 yuan/month mentioned. But the elderly abbot, Shijie from Eastern Zhejiang, seems unconcerned. A kindly and approachable man—unfortunately, his Zhejiang dialect and my Mandarin have few points of contact—he has suffered much worse times and seems content to lead 10 monks and a few lay Buddhists—all except me **thoroughly** conversant with the liturgical chants; one gives me a chapbook so i can begin memorizing at least the easier chants—around Mile on a cold cement floor in a bare hall at 4am. Well, almost bare; two new larger-than-life camphor statues sit in the shadows. Last night they came in by truck, and i carried Weituo's head into the temple. God, it felt like 200 pounds! By the time we got our temple guardian situated, i feared dropping his head--a monk came over and helped me lift Weituo upright, saving me from either fatal sacrilege or a martyr's hernia.

The famous pillars from the old Wannian have vanished, except for a few less-than-imposing ones in the Four Kings' Hall. But despite the professions of poverty and the general disarray—a troop of workmen live at the temple, since transportation proves inconvenient—Wannian seems quite a pleasant place. The monks have enough to eat; their bare cement cells offer sufficient space, peace, and quiet for practicing their dharma. The temple rises pleasantly from surrounding terraced fields—from the mountain ridge in back the brick-orange red of the temple merges almost imperceptibly into the paddies, and its green tiled roof fits in perfectly with the potatoes, rice, and vegetables growing about—and for a monk with simple tastes, it

seems to offer plenty for contentment. Wannian typifies a most distinctive and endearing feature of Tiantai. At other sacred mountains you find great views and imposing temples, but here you always find cultivated earth wherever you go! At Lushan or Huangshan, too, you can find a million stoneflagged steps. But stepping up Tiantai, you see millions of stonewalled, painstakingly diked terrace paddies, climbing toward heaven. As Zhi Dun (314-366), one of the first monks to sing of Tiantai, noted:

Still I envision the ruggedness of Heavenly Terrace/ How vividly the Stairways of promontories rear.
("Yonghuai" #3/5, in Ding I:502; cf. discussion of his work in DN :89-90).

Take a steep path, climb through bamboo and pine forests toward some distant peak, and chances figure you'll encounter at least another round of rice paddies and tea fields before you reach its summit. Sometimes you meet men tending cattle; some wear the traditional conical sedge hat and coir raincloak. Sometimes you see a weatherbeaten mother with baby strapped to her back, picking tea. They have to pick and repick those bushes, often returning to the same steep, remote hill 10 or more times to gather the tender young leaves. Chinese peasants don't waste much land; the paths and earthen bunds in the "hill terraces" span no wider than your shoe. Some villages bevel their homes into the less suitable hilly land on the side of a ridge, reserving all bottom land for crops. When you descend through a hamlet, you find their terraced fields interrupted by a grove of stony mushrooms, as the farmhouse roofs cluster toward the sky. As you thread between them on narrow stone pavement, from above you seem to view a crop of stone; in a sense, you do. Sometimes you come across a field banked so steeply—from 40 to even 60 degrees!—you can't imagine anyone could step down to harvest whatever they hope to grow. And despite the bundled thatch covering the exposed earth, you imagine erosion would quickly frustrate attempts to grow anything. Haven't these peasants gone too far in using all available land? But they know better than i; the steepest plots suit the growth of **baishu**—white rooted *Atractylodes*, a valuable medicinal root that loves steep slopes. (*Atractylodes* has a long history as one of Tiantai's local specialties; see TTSZN1934:22) Though unlike Xu Xiake i never heard a crane, i did flush a chukhar or a brace of chukhars on 3 occasions, as they burst from cover and shot in a flash of russet, gold, and earthy reddish-brown, across my path. You get the impression that the blood and sweat of millions of peasants have built this Heavenly Terrace, stone by toilsome dike; their work never stops. Small wonder that Song poet Zeng Ji lauded the alp:

Tiantai crowns all terrane **numinous magic**.(32)

The phrase "earthly magic" **diling**—or its variant "heaven and earth magic"—rarely occurs elsewhere; you

find it several times in Tiantai's Gazetteer, including:

3 Lodgings beautify Heaven's Sequence;

2 Metals signpost Earthly Magic.

(on the "Magic ruins" at Tongbai, qu. in an essay by Li Milun:TTSFWZ 20.3a; the "3 Lodgings refer to constellations and the "2 Metals" to ingredients in a complex alchemical scheme).

Li Milun continues to describe the shrine at Tongbai as a place that can:

Aid in transforming and nurturing,

Partake in Heaven and earth's **Magic**. (TTSFWZ 20.3a)

Cf. Shi Runzhang on Jade Capital Cave:

Magic citadel--no distant soil;

Vermillion stories rear, Heaven-built (Zhang1717:16.56a)

Or Pan Lei (Zhang1717:17.28a):

This alp **makes numinous** its remotest sectors:

Flocked dragons have long seized & possessed...

Or Pan Lei again (Zhang1717:17.4a):

Heavenly Terrace's **magic marvels** reside in this earthly realm

Where kalpa fires cannot burn, nor the 3 Calamities reach.

The rice, vegetables, potatoes, and tea here grow magically from the ruddy, clayish soil that gives Tiantai so

much of its distinctively numinous appeal. This pair of Wannian Temple poems captures its rustic charm:

To the ancient temple i come, seeking lodging/ At which layer of this cloudswept promontory?

Well, I've got a poem to offer the Buddha/ But I've no business to bother these monks.

In the little garret, water resounds by my pillow/ Down the long corridor, rains dim the lamp.

Fond of peaks, I haven't seen enough/ My dreams wind around their soaring emerald ranks.

(Chen Zhirou: 225)

And by Zhao Shixiu:

Wannian's mountain trees, already a thousand years;

By stone path & gloomy forest to its winding wall.

How many flecks of idle cloud--who's their master?

A single thread of flowing water--the stones know its source.

They plant medicinal peony: "better than *Atractylodes*";

The monk says macaques cower in fear of gibbons.

At midnight in the *empty* hall, all realms grow *hushed*; [evoking Buddhist concepts: *sunyata* & *nirvana*]

Faintly heard bell and chanting still seem noisy. (225-6)

7. Flowery Summit:

Most people get to Flowery Summit by bus (Guoqing lies about 20km south of Huading—or, as

Zhang1717:6.1a calculated, about "50 leagues"). Indeed, i did that once myself. But it's wonderful for a

pilgrim to arrive on foot, with staff and incense bag, and i'll share a nice route with you. From Tatou, take

the northern path and go over Buddha Mound into the village, keeping a large stone wall on your right.

Almost immediately you'll see an elementary school higher up the hill on your left. Enter the grounds, go

behind the school, and take the path behind leading uphill. At the crest, turn northwest and follow a larger trail; now you're walking on good stone steps. Continue for several miles, winding in and out of three bluffs and hollows, largely on a level contour. The last hollow's steep and the trail's eroded in places. If you have Vibram soles and face a wet trail, use **extreme** caution. The trail descends, fords a stream, and continues around the next point. Then it passes just below a very small village of four families—all surnamed Qiu, or "hill," and very gracious to lost white adventurers :-). Continue north downhill through some bamboos, where you'll find a dirt road quite near Yellow Dragon Dam. Turn north along the road, take the left fork, and follow it as it turns into a village and ends.

At this village, watch out for the dogs; they like foreign meat. Use your stick—of course you have a walking stick in these mountains—freely. Proceed east through the village, then turn sharply left uphill, although the "main trail" appears to head straight up into the hills. Following a trail that merely leads up into terraced paddies and/or gravesites makes the easiest way to get delayed/lost. The Huading trail continues steeply up through bamboos, then more open territory. At a crest, you intersect a dirt road; follow it downhill to the left. Soon it joins another branch, and you enter the village of Shuangxi (Twin Creek). Turn right into the village—which also has its share of protective dogs and very hospitable peasants—and continue east along the cable markers. When the trail has nearly crested, turn left out of the valley and climb fairly steeply east and north. When the trail climbs between two giant, lovely old cedars, you've nearly reached the temple. Turn right along the path, keeping a stone wall on your left. Continue around the mountain and turn right across the mouth of a large (fish-freeing) pond; take the dirt path uphill, turn right facing six enormous Cryptomeria cedars, whose age estimates range from 800-1200 years, and you see the temple across a road to the summit.

Above the temple, you'll see a beautiful tea plantation that once belonged to the temple, a few kiosks, mostly new, a lovely stand of rhododendrons, and a path to the summit. A plaque from 1995 commemorates Zhiyi's former "Subdue Demons Stupa"; the ruins of his original "Worship Sutras Terrace" (see *infra*) now share the peak with a satellite tracking military installation. Recently the Chinese have built a new replacement kiosk closer to the teafields; it, too, has a wonderful view, but not quite the spectacular "sea-sunrise" view the east-facing peak got renowned for. These days haze almost always prevents you from seeing the ocean; Huading gets less sunshine even than most high peaks. On my second day there i

got lucky; the weather proved perfect and, after breakfast, i dashed up toward the summit. Foreigners cannot enter the military complex, but i watched the sun rise—even on a clear day, you don't see the haze-covered E. China Sea—and heard the horrifically distorted blare of soul music from Detroit or Philly caterwauling through the mountains. You get a vision of intoxicated satellite-jockeys, having partied all night with James Brown and Shaoxing ricewine, now blearily awaiting a new dawn and wondering whether or not to push the button: "Shall we obliterate Taipei? or Taizhou? Or Texas, today?" Only Li He could do the scene justice, as in his close to "The King of Qin Gets Drunk":

From transcendents' candelabra, waxen smoke wafts light/
Clear-toned cither, drunken eyes, tears' purling pool.

By the time i have visited a nearby cave and the Li Bai Memorial Hall, officers have awakened and replaced the soul music with more orthodox government news reports, at no diminishment of volume.

Until 2 years ago, Huading's temple had remained almost deserted (though repairs began in 1990), its large complex defaced by an ugly ragtag of dorms and trash facing the street. Even now you can see political slogans from ca.1980 branding the backs of the barracks:

Study the Constitution! Promote the Constitution! Obey the Constitution!

But in the last year a young (42 year-old) abbot from Shanxi named Yuntong has revitalized the place; about 15 monks now reside there. Flowery Summit presents a different atmosphere than some temples; though it receives a few tourists on the way to Flowery Summit's peak and a few busloads of pilgrims, Yuntong considers it a serious place for monks to cultivate their own practice. At no other temple did the monks seem so indifferent to an American "pilgrim"; when they talked with me, their conversations focussed on Buddhist practice and on Buddhism in China—not in the US. Since Flowery Summit reaches almost 4000', the winter here get harsh; the temple has only a bit of land far from the monastery, and many years they lose a crop to untimely frosts.(even before the Huading monks lost their tea plantation, their monastery got known as a poor one; see the testimony in TTSYLZ 1937:2.36) So the monks of Huading seem to pride themselves on enduring privations and practicing rigorously; unlike some other temples, they would not allow a lay foreigner to join them for sitting meditation (however, unlike some temples, they did allow me to eat with them—at a separate table—every temple improvises slightly different arrangements for dealing with the anomaly of a blond lay guest :-). And though the temple must rate as poor in artifacts and relics, you can eat your fill; the old rooms have real wooden floors and 14-foot wooden ceilings, with

pillars from Surangama Hall below running right up along the walls; the view out over the Mani-pearl and dragons atop Hero's Hall toward the facing Sky Pillar Peak rivals any i saw in China.

The atmosphere of serious mountaintop cultivation continues beyond the temple walls. Traditionally, Huading won some fame for its many small cloisters and "sheds," where ascetic monks practised solo (and hid out from Communist oppression). Qing poet Pan Lei had written:

Tiantai's 65 thatched sheds/ All dangling from the steepest cliffs and gorges.
After all the alpine flowers have fallen, no one visible/ From a pile of white clouds, one bell's sound.
(Huading:14)

During the last 50 years or so, the number has grown to a proverbial "72 sheds." One of the last surviving shed-ascetic monks from the 1960s, Wenhua from Zhejiang, has only in the last year moved largely back into the temple; at 75 or so, he just can't endure the rigors of shed living anymore. Wenhua has only a few teeth, no Mandarin, and perhaps less than a full supply of wits left. But he greets me cheerfully, and we exchange pleasantries and Buddhist bows; the younger monks revere him as a living relic, a link to a great ascetic tradition. After all, Zhiyi conquered his demons here in solo meditation; his "Worship the Sutras Terrace," where Zhiyi supposedly climbed to pray for the transmission of still-unknown Mahayana classics—everyone mentions the Surangama as a particularly wished-for sutra—stands at its very summit. A young monk lives in a hut next to the ruin; the military allow him to come and go. Now some of the Huading sheds have gotten taken over by local farmers, but i visited at least three sheds and talked with two of their inhabitants. Another young monk, Menyuan (Door-affinity) lives in a small bilobed cave like a little womb in the red-clay-and-shale side of a hill near the temple. He extols its clean air, its southern "Yang" exposure, and the piney view from his door. Here, everyone wants to talk about religious cultivation. My first-day guide, young Changshun from Gansu, echoed a teacher from the Zhejiang Buddhist Academy in stressing the need for firm confidence and unshakeable faith in a bodhisattva's vow to carry an aspirant through the trials and crises of cultivation. Abbot Yuntong stressed the need for a complete cultivation arsenal in these days of "Degenerate Dharma" **mofa**; he has monks chant Pure Land sutras, intone Tantric dharanis for "protection," and sit Chan meditation. Menyuan, who has cultivated **qigong** most of his life and speaks forcefully in a thick Hunan accent, emphasizes the Buddha's power to perfect one's joy in life. He speaks passionately of Buddha as perfect bliss, as the culmination of a life-affirming delight—this from a fellow who lives in a tiny cave, eats less than you or i, and spends most of

his time meditating. Menyuan used to live in a cave on the slopes of Jiuhua; he knew and greatly respects Fahang! (see next chapter) My last dharma-guide, on what has become more and more a crash course in Chinese Buddhism, hails from Jiangxi and has lived in a hut for two years. Still fairly young, Moon Autumn **Yueqiu** has a beard, burn-scarred head—testimony to his stint as Tantric ascetic—and an intensity that recalls Fahang's. He rarely looks at me but rather at the distant forested hills, as he talks for nearly an hour about cultivating Buddhism. He speaks respectfully of a "fierce" teacher who could "destroy students' illusions," but Yueqiu stresses the need for self-education. Actually, all the solo monks do, and with good reason. If they could not find and maintain their own dharma path, who could guide them? Yueqiu seems almost haunted by specters of delusion; he repeatedly speaks of "smashing delusions," of "using delusions to smash delusions," of "quelling demons," and of working on the heart/mind: "when an illusory thought arrives, see through and subdue it." He tells me it doesn't matter which lineage i adopt; our essential task remains the same. Like Yuntong, he recommends i read, among others, the Surangama Sutra.

For a sample of Flowery Summit poems, consider these monkish odes:

Flowery Summit (Monk Lingche: ***-***)

Beyond Heavenly Terrace's massed peaks/ Flowery Summit fills the void.
Sometimes half-invisible/ Looming aloft in the clouds.(133)

Cold Alp: Idly I rove up to Flowery Summit/ Heavens bright with noontime glow.
Gaze all around in the sunlit void/ White clouds fly with the crane.

Even much later, Tiantai's "Heavenly Terrace"—where i spent nearly half my pilgrimage in Southeast China—remains most vividly in mind. Its "earthly numinous magic," the renascent piety you find in its temples, and the moving faith of its more committed clerics all left a deep impression. Tiantai, more than any other religious site i visited, exudes a still-powerful *ling*; it's still a crane who can take your spirit soaring with its white clouds.

JIUHUA: Nine-flower Alp

Both in terms of physical access and numinous appeal, Jiuhua **Nine-flower** Alp seems to present a relatively straight-up climb and narration, to its 1354m summit at Ten Kings Peak (*not* nearby Heavenly Terrace which, despite old gazetteer testimony to the contrary, stands lower at 1306m). The Nine-flower Alp range extends more than 30 miles from north to southwest and links with the even more famous Huangshan; Nine-flower shares similar geologic features, especially the fantastic number and variety of folded, faulted, and eroded granite spires poking from primeval oceanic sediment in beautiful and grotesque attitudes (for a summary of geological and natural features, see JHSZ 1997:2-17). Wang Jiwen (fl.861) described it (9HZ 1997:25; 317)

9-Flowers tower ruggedly, claiming the southlands/
Lotus blossoms extend their grace up from mountain bellies.
Emerald screens cut athwart myriad-league skies/
Suspended rivers fall, perfecting a thousand fathoms of jade.
Cloudy stairs—100 stone steps—enter the gloomy darks/
Look down in all 4 directions, as if from a central court.
Cinnabar cliffs flatten down Lushan & South Marchmount/
White stones hide or reveal Dipper & Weaver-maid...

The "9-Flower Alp Gazetteer" (Jiuhuashan zhi: 1938) traces Jiuhua's **ling** entirely to Jin Qiaojue (696-794??), a Korean prince and monk claimed to have lived there 75 years. After Jin's death—and he lived an appropriately magical 99 Chinese years—his mummy got worshipped as the reincarnation of Ksitigarbha, the "Earth Store Bodhisattva" **dizang**, who serves as advocate for all souls in Chinese hells and purgatories. Dizang consoles, attempts to vindicate, acquit, or at least plea-bargain for sinners facing judgment before the dreaded 10 Kings of the underworld (Teiser 6; cf. Manabe 1968:12-3) We might well wonder about Jin Qiaojue's historicity; Song hagiographies either do not mention his personal name and dates (Gaoseng zhuan) and give his dates as 706-804 or as 630-728 (Shenseng zhuan, calling this incarnation of Dizang a precise 1500 years after Shakyamuni's death). Majority opinion relies on the testimony of Fei Guanqing's "Account of Transfigured City Temple," written only a dozen years or so after Jin's supposed death. Very gradually the alp built a local reputation as the bodhimandala **daochang** for Dizang; until the late Ming, only his mummy and Apparitional/Transfigured Citadel Temple **Huachengsi** enjoyed much fame (the odd name, incidentally, refers to a city Shakyamuni conjured up for his starving disciples when they could walk no further deep in the mountains). Then in a flood of imperial patronage thanks partly to the "Wanli

Emperor's" pious mother and partly to famous monk Zhixu's (1599-1655) faith in Ksitigarbha, several new temples sprang up or first enjoyed national recognition (esp. in 1586,1599; see Wang 2000:5-6). Jiuhua's fame continued to rest on the "numinous wonder" **lingyi** of Jin's mummy, the "Golden Dizang," as well as that of famous monk Haiyu (1514-1623?), whose gold-filigreed corpse become a national fetish in 1630, ensconced in the appropriately named "Centenarian Palace" **Baisuigong** (you might have expected that "Cup-crosser," the legendary miracle-working monk who supposedly crossed the Yangzi in a cup and founded Huacheng Temple around 400 AD, would have gotten more press; subsequent lore, however, ignores his legend).

Indeed, the magic powers of mummies and preservation pervade these alps. Among significant occurrences of **ling** in the Jiuhua Gazetteer, aside from references to "mountain spirits" (8) and "magic alp" (8), we find 6 references to "numinous wonder" **lingyi**, 4 to "magic responses" **lingying** (almost always of Dizang), 2 to "magic arousals" **linggan** (due to the bodhisattva), and 2 to "magic bones" **linggu** of mummified monks (here i acknowledge William Powell 1993, which anticipated my stress on **ling**; his work remained unavailable to me until after we reached Jiuhuashan). Though Dizang worship primarily focussed on urging the faithful to sacrifice to the bodhisattva before dying or, less efficaciously, to have relatives pray for a sinner's soul after death, in time Jiuhua pilgrims also came to treasure its efficacy as a place to pray for a longer lifespan. Worshippers apparently deemed mummified corpses—if not precisely alive—also not exactly dead (see Faure 1991:135). Looking up from the tourist center at Nine-flower Street, your eyes will turn to Centenarian Palace, gleaming whitely on the eastern ridge, and to Jin's Mummy Palace, looming at the base of Divine Gleam Ridge to the southwest.

On turning to the poetry section in the JHS Gazetteer, you will find a puzzling phenomenon. Literati seem oblivious to Jin, to the Golden Earthstore Bodhisattva, and to worshipping souls in Purgatory. Not until Wang Yangming ca. 1521 do we find references to:

Alps empty out Undying bones stored in a gold sarcophagus;
Spring warms stony polypores extending jadewhite sprouts. (330)

Wang uses the polysemous word **kong** "empty/bare/*sunyatta*" to imbue Jin's relics with a sense of unreality; after 800 years of uncertain vicissitudes, no one's quite sure about their physical location. Yet their mana helps grow magic mushrooms, which manifest Jin's sacred alp's ever-renewing powers.

Golden bones stored in His **Magic** stupa/ A numinous glow lighting the distant peaks. (330)

This couplet deftly marries human relic and natural context. Jin's stupa seems to radiate and also focus sunset's glow. Subsequently, references quickly get numerous; Zhao Guolin echoes Wang's rhymes and pays homage to his first couplet with these lines from a verse on East Promontory, where Jin Qiaojue supposedly first lived on reaching Jiuhua:

A single cassock stores His Buddha bones; 1000 Autumns in the gorge lengthen cloudy sprouts.(353)
When we recall 9-Flower's foundational myth—how Jin claimed the alp by spreading his monk's cassock till it covered the entire mountain—we realize the whole alp has become his stupa; his animating mana continues to fuel the growth of immortal mushrooms.

Ming monk Liaoran writes a poem in "Golden Earthstore style"(350). Tong Chengxu pens this couplet:

His stupa stores Golden sarira-relics, His temple rests on Stone Lotus-blossoms. (346)
These lotuses presumably adorn the temple's foundations, as lotuses formed the legendary dais from which Buddha preached his sutras.

A century later, Huang Jidi found it so irresistible he lifted the couplet, polished it a bit, and produced:

His stupa gleams with golden sarira-relics, The pond reflects stony lotus-blossoms. (354)
And Ming Huang Daozhou wrote the following clever quatrain "Upon Leaving Jiuhua":

Way back when I saw Buddha/ Nowhere but in Earthstore's Hall.
Now those people of Earthstore/ All bear the Buddha's face. (344)

Perhaps Huang has become completely enlightened, but his poem primarily marks the passing of old monk-friends from this world.

Why did literati poets appear almost entirely to ignore Earthstore Bodhisattva for 800 years? This partly reflects the slow growth of Dizang's cult, but it also reflects the peculiar itinerary of the JHS Gazetteer. After carefully reading the gazetteer's "Temple" chapter, you will find earlier references. For example, Transfigured Citadel Temple, the main pre-Ming site for Dizang worship, became subject for several verses, including 2 by Wang Anshi (1021-1086)—a devout Buddhist late in life—that include this couplet on mountain clouds:

They disperse into **douluo** cotton/ Storing within Precious-moonlight gleams. (142)

Douluo, an Indian epithet, evokes the softness of Buddha's hands. Buddhists have long used white clouds as a figure for non-attachment, for the freedom that enfolds enlightenment. Wang's second verse ends:

With these **golden ricegrains** from Golden Earth/ We'll taste the sweetness of monks' maigre cuisine. (142; William Powell 1993:22 cites the legend that Jin Qiaojue brought a variety of ginseng called "golden essence" to China; you can still taste "golden rice" made with "golden essence"; fresh *huangjing* tastes like sweet ginger. However, the Gazetteer mentions a fat, fragrant "golden-grain rice" that Jin also brought from Korea [JHZ:361]). Both verses suggest the Earthstore Bodhisattva's mana as a source for illumination and (spiritual) nourishment.

On moving west up Divine Radiance Ridge, you will find Jin Qiaojue's "Earthstore Stupa." Another foundational myth claims that when Jin Qiaojue died, numinous beams shot out from a nearby ridge, upon which monks exhumed Jin's remains and built his stupa on the ridge. 9-Flower's Gazetteer quotes a poem by Tang monk Yikui (##-##!?) relating how Jin:

Crossed the sea, leaving his native land/ Forsaking honor to dwell in bitter **lack/void**.
Building a hut under Bodhi trees/ He left a stupa amid the glories of China. (138)

Lack, again, is **kong** in Chinese; "glories"**hua** also refers to Nine-flower**jiuhua** Alp.

Chen Yuan (d.1299), a Soong loyalist from nearby Qingyang who fled into the Jihua Alps after the Yuan conquest, wrote 218 poems about sites among the alps, 56 of which get quoted in the Gazetteer. Writing about Jin's stupa, Chen marvelled at "Earthstore's grave, after more than 500 years" and related how its windchimes seemed to speak to him in his dreams (138).

But most of all, if you carefully read the opening section on Earthstore Bodhisattva's accomplishments and incarnations, you will find a short hagiography of Jin Qiaojue and the following poem he supposedly wrote to an acolyte returning to lay status; this verse got copied into the Complete Tang Poems (compiled during the late 17th century) and so represents the closest tradition could come to preserving Jin's own words.

SENDING THE ACOLYTE BACK DOWN THE MOUNTAIN (87)

Empty gate silent, desolate—you yearn for home/
With bows you depart this cloudy abode & descend Nine-flowers.
Fond of riding your bamboo horsey by the bamboo palisade/
Slow to amass golden sands in this Golden Realm.
The vase fills at creek-bottom—no more moon-picking/
Bowl washed in the pond—give up flower-grasping.
Go on along; no use in prolonging your tears;
This old monk has mist and roserack for company.

The "empty gate" and "Golden Realm" represent Buddhism (a wealthy merchant purchased Deer Park for Shakyamuni's preaching ground by "spreading gold all over the ground"); picking at lunar reflections and at flowers in a mirror (or a mirrorlike pond) refer to a novice's misconceptions about Buddhism.

The Gazetteer's itinerary, by the way, continues on to mention the alps' chief Buddhist sites, including Qiyuan ("Jetavana Garden") Temple, built in the late Ming as an eastern "annex" to Transfigured Citadel; Centenarian Palace, just east from Earthstore Stupa, the showplace for Sea-Jade's goldleaf mummy; Sweetdew Temple (**Ganlu si**), built in 1667 at midmountain along the main pilgrimage road up toward Transfigured Citadel and now the home for Anhui's provincial Buddhist Academy; and "Earthstore's Chan Temple" atop Heavenly Terrace Peak (**Tiantai si**), where Jin Qiaojue supposedly dwelt in a cave. Earthstore's Chan Temple grew prominent during the late 16th century, partly in honor of "Seal-Jade (**Xiyu**), another centenarian monk who haunted the peak. Tiantai and the awesomely steep stone stairway up its slope have now become the most thronged tourist attraction on the mountain. But few of these places—much less the many other sites listed in the Gazetteer—attracted much attention as centers for devotional verse considered worthy for inclusion. Golden Earthstore Bodhisattva's cult continued to flourish; by the 1800s Jiuhua's alps contained as many as 300 temples, halls, and convents, and literati testify to its thriving population of monks. As early as the ninth century, Duan Wengui had written:

Below the promontories, among the groves, monks everywhere! (329)

Their doors in the cliffside like a honeycomb.

(342; Zhong Xing [1574-1624], who goes on to mention "thousands of niches").

A thousand monks' chambers and garrets rise, layer on layer.

(143; Ming Zou Yuanbiao on Transfigured Citadel Temple).

But though Nine-Flower Alp developed and grew as bodhimandala for the Earthstore Bodhisattva, and though the Gazetteer records in extensive detail the miracles, buildings, and monks associated with Dizang worship, when literati (particularly before the 1500s) wrote verse, they largely ignored Dizang. Why, then, did they visit the mountain, what sites did they haunt, and what did they commemorate in their poems?

For Chinese literati, "Nine-flower Alp," or at least its name, enters the cultural map only in 755 when Li Bai, passing nearby along the Yangzi, observed from afar its distinctive array of peaks and penned the lines:

Sublime Presence dividing yin and yang/ **Magic Alp** opening its Nine Blossoms. (Jiuhua Shixuan: 3)

The next year Li Bai returned to the vicinity and actually improved on his previous bestowal with:

Heavenly River suspending its green waters/ Blossoming forth her nine lotus flowers. (311)

These first mentions of Jiuhua proved definitive; nearly all subsequent literati viewed the alps through Li Bai's metaphor. Du Mu, master of the heptasyllabic quatrain, could find no better epitome in describing Jiuhua than:

Rather I recall the Banished Transcendent's dashing poetic style/
How he could sing "Blossoming forth her nine lotus flowers." (316)

References to Li Bai, the "Banished Transcendent," stud nearly every page of Jiuhua verses and outnumber allusions to the Earthstore Bodhisattva umpteen to one, e.g.:

This famous alp laughs at my naive eyes: One Tang poem long ago carried off top renown.
(Zong Gao: Shixuan:50)

This transcendent precinct having passed the Banished Transcendent's eye,
His fine fame & majestic lines matched its verdant grace. (Wang Shipeng [1112-1171] Shixuan:52)

How could the Banished Transcendent have lacked astonishing lines?
With each word, his fame grew for mighty poems. (Zhou Yun: Shixuan 188)

Inscribing my verse—ashamed by the Banished Transcendent's talent. (Wang Yangming:335)

Truly, the Banished Transcendent had the keenest eye;
After he wrote on Nine-flower one could not break the mold. (Wang Yangming:332)

Although Liu Yuxi (772-842) penned perhaps even a more appropriate descriptive couplet for Jiuhua:
I fancied Nine Dragons, reared up to scale the heavens,
When a sudden peal of thunder transformed them into stones! (312)

And Wang Anshi (1021-1086) also wrote found an ingenious metaphor:
Soaring aloft, nine women's coiffures/ Vying reflected from a trousseau's mirror. (323)

Yet no one seemed to pay much attention to such non-canonical strokes of imagination.

Li Bai also held the sobriquet "Blue Lotus Layman"—referring to his alleged Buddhist sympathies—and allusions to Blue Lotus or Lapis Lotus appear frequently in the Gazetteer:

Towering craggily, Jade Sword's chilly blade so sharp/
Undulating sinuous, Blue Lotuses' cyan hues compounded. (321)

(On "Lotus Peak"): Jade hook: hangs the new moon/ Revealing its Blue Lotus. (331)
How remarkable—the Blue Lotus Layman/ Seeing these alps from the Yangzi and inscribing his verse.
(344)

Petals of the Blue Lotus form a Citadel. (356)

All night their wintry gleams crowd the Silvery River/ Blue lotuses transformed into white lotus blossoms
(9HZ 1997:153, on mountains after snow).

A myriad Blue Lotus petals/ Extending gracefully erect Immortal hands. (359)

Above the Jiang, how many blue lotus blossoms? As the famous alps invite my heart to imbibe their **Magic**
(9HZ 1997:153)

Soaring aloft, spear and sword's chilly points gleam sharp/
Gracefully curved, blue lotuses' malachite hues redoubled. (9HZ 1997:19)

While 9-Flower's floral emblem took root in firmly Buddhist soil, its predominant heraldic animal, the Crane, marks a Daoist symbol for transcendently long life. You might have expected Jin Qiaojue's faithful white dog "Heedful" to attract more attention, but no one made a cult of poor Fido. However, the Jihua longevity cult **did** result in dozens of crane references. Since we have witnessed so many transcendentals riding them on Tiantai—Jihua's cranes usually do not convey folk anywhere but emblemize long life simply by their presence—we will restrict ourselves to a few distinctive illustrations, for example:

The stream following Tiger's Head away/ Clouds availing Crane Spring to flock.
(327, playing on local names) Or (325):

How many have attained the Way here? The very grasses have become completely **numinous**.
At cloud's edge sings a homing woodcutter/ Beside the pine nests an aging crane. (9HZ 1997:190)

Call up a white crane from a cloudy peak/ Angle for fine fish in Dragon Pool. (Wang Shouren's **fu**; 306)

A crane of the wilds casually peers into the tripod/ A monk in his niche quietly reads his sutra...

And my favorite, by longtime Jihua hermit Chen Yan (d.1299), on the Hall for the Venerated Sage (167):

Mountain contours on all sides, as waters pour forth.
Within, a golden lotus: Heavens of the Realms of Form.
I clear note from chimestones--a monk arises from meditation;
Among the pines a Magic Crane in a whirling, swirling dance.

A note seems in order here. The Hall also got known as Magic Crane Abbey, because it sits on Magic Crane Alp (sometimes called White Crane Alp). The 33 levels of Buddhist Heaven form 3 classes: highest, the realm of No-form; next, the Realms of Form; lowest, the Realms of Desire. Chen's closure gains additional resonance from covert allusion to "Crane Grove"; according to legend, when Shakyamuni entered Nirvana in the **sala** grove near Kusinagara, sala leaves whirled about and transformed into white cranes.

This kind of peace proves elusive these days, as Jihua enjoys an era of heavy pilgrim traffic and large-scale rebuilding. Of course, such ups and downs in the history of a Buddhist sacred mountain hardly ring new. Pilgrim traffic has formed the lifeblood of many Chinese Buddhist centers. Already in the late Ming, one observer estimated that Huacheng Temple alone raked in "no less than 10,000 guilders per year" (Cai Lishen, *qu*. in 9HZ 1997:419). Even after the Taiping devastation, Jihua temples by the end of the Qing could accommodate 7500 visitors per day (9HZ 1997:419). In recent years the village of Jihua, home to less than 2100 citizens and 270 clergy, found room for nearly 2.4 million visitors (during the period 1979-

87; recent figures have to have climbed immensely—see 9HZ 1997:421,479). Now you see rebuilding everywhere, from humble mountain priories to major Buddhist palaces with marble floors, teak pillars, and giant bronze Ksitigarbha statues (his "Hall for Great Commiseration," near Jin Qiaojue's Mummy Hall). Soon a new tourist extravaganza will rise in the upper Min Valley: a 99-meter statue of Ksitigarbha, complete with staff and Mani-pearl, will command a huge new temple complex—the Dajue "Great Awakening" Temple. The project, expected to involve some 25 buildings, 100,000 square meters, and a cost of 400 million yuan, will likely in the next few years greatly increase the scope of Jiuhua's pilgrim trade. Small wonder that when i called upon venerable abbot Rende, now 71, i found him at a large table beset by wheelers, dealers, contracts, supplicants, donors, two secretary-monks, and a very busy cellular phone. He graciously allotted me a few minutes; when i asked if he wouldn't sometimes rather close his doors, meditate quietly, and imitate Wang Wei:

In my evening years I love only stillness/
The myriad affairs don't touch my heart.

Rende smiled wryly and acknowledged he might wish so; of course, he remains bound to the service of his temples. But amidst all the hustle and bustle of a thriving popular Buddhist complex, you can find unexpected pockets of peace and sincere clerical cultivation. One morning i climbed up the main stone stairs to Heavenly Terrace—somewhat delayed by an unpardonable but delightful bushwack detour around lower Lotus Peak—and found myself part of the throng. Spry old pilgrims, jowly middle-aged officials and their broods, and lean porters with oversized loads of cement and bricks on their double-ended carrying poles vied for space on the steep stairs. A larger and larger knot of onlookers crowded each successive temple and priory up the hill, as the crags to either side got more and more dramatic. Maneuvering my way past the crowds, ignoring persistent begging from panting porters, i at last reached Heavenly Terrace's summit, only to find an even larger crowd, most of whom had just disembarked from the gondola. And this by no means marks the hightide of Jiuhua pilgrims; approaching Dizang's "birthday" on July 15, the number swells many-fold, during a two-week celebration of the Chinese "harrowing of Hell." During that fortnight, pilgrims engage large-scale masses for the dead during their window of opportunity to escape Hell; on July 31 (close to the ancient "All-Souls' Day," a major traditional Chinese lunar holiday and season to feed hungry ghosts) the gates of Hell close again (see esp. the account in 9HZ 1997:485) Forsaking the boisterous Chan Temple at Tiantai's peak, i sought some quiet and cleaner air east, along the

path to Ten Kings' Peak and beyond. Amazing how quickly one peak shuts out their noise and my impatience. It strikes me how older Gazetteers once claimed Heavenly Terrace—with its wealth of literary associations—as 9-Flower's summit; only recent decades have recognized the preeminence of Dizang's colleagues, the "Ten Kings" who judge the dead. 9-Flower's mountains just keep rolling on to the south; a short bushwack, and you can climb Lohan Peak, the Seven Wise Men, and so continue perhaps all the way to Huangshan, as far as i know. And then you can relax and accept these pilgrims, who belong here as you might never. "The lotus emerges from mud and remains pure"; a few grandmothers emerge from the incense and greed with glowing eyes as they behold another shrine—or a child; and improbable slabs of granite rear above 10,000 meters of sea muck, clawing the skies and daring wind, sun, and rain to bury them again. Behind the spine of Heavenly Terrace you can still see isolated abbeys and solitary monks pursuing their dharma in out-of-the way cottages and caves, from 2.5 League Kiosk in the south to Old Roof Hamlet in the east and in, perhaps, dozens of other isolated pockets behind the mountain. Ironic that the eastern face of Jiuhua, the main route until the last 50 years—you can still see some of the 1-meter stone slabs traditional pilgrims slogged up—should today afford hidden retreats for less gregarious Buddhists. Now i sigh sympathetically with the couplet by Chen Qing (fl.1464):

Stone steps wind around bamboos, the path grows dark and deep/
How could vulgar dust ever invade here? (9HZ 1997:79)

As you proceed north along the main ridge, the tourists quickly fade behind; now you can find your own boulder and stare off into space, like the near-anchorite inhabiting a tiny cottage west of "Flew-here Peak." Despite a stone stairway, you practically need a ladder to reach his spare hut, his tiny shrine, and his vast view that would reach the Yangzi if pollution didn't keep it veiled even on the clearest of days. No one home, so you trudge onward. Jiuhua boasts quite a few caves—the modern gazetteer lists more than 30 better-known ones—and lone monks or nuns have long frequented such sites as Fish & Dragon Cave, Manjusri Cave, Guanyin's Cave (**both** of them), Rebirth Cave, and Tiger-tamer Cave (not to confuse with the more northerly Tiger Cave). Now, cleared of human annoyances, Jiuhua's bizarre rock formations seem more and more amusing, better even than their names—although a few like "Old Rhino Gazes Moonward" really do capture the spirit and texture of these ancient slabs chunks blocks and spires of weathered granite, upheaved hurled ground worn and fractured into incredible tableaux. Some seem to shed old pelts of mossy grass like motheaten mammoths; others stand coated fringed and stippled by pines. The stone trail rears and

vaults dips and plunges spirals and twists like a dragon. You climb a million or more stairs, each hoisted and borne, then dropped and fitted with some overburdened coolie's earnest prayer—if only for rest and a bowl of rice. Now the million-scaled dragon, gorged on the sweat of countless porters, glides sharply down into the Min Valley and Dragon Creek, largest of the "Five Creeks" draining Jiuhua's basin; he lumbers toward Centenarian Hall like the proverbial "Dragon Prince Heeding the Dharma," wending his way. And innumerable pines and bamboos, too, all seem to face downhill, leaning as if in prayer toward sacred Centenarian's Ridge. You wonder how so many Chinese visitors can claim: "Jiuhua really has no scenery to speak of." Maybe they only have eyes for their idols and each other.

Near Manjusri Cave i explore a smaller trail and notice a cleft between two huge boulders. Clambering down to peer inside, i seem to have found the back entrance to some primitive living room! Making my way down around to the front, i surprise a young monk in vermilion Tantric robes—and he startles me. "Aiya" he goes; and i bow with hands at my chest and greet him: "Amitofo." Now he does a double-take, then grabs me by the arm—"Come in!"—and pulls me inside his little cave. Since we're in China, i enter without fear...and find a crevice, water underneath spanned by a tiny raft of interwoven bamboo trunks, a cot along its port edge, a small burner perched near the stern, and one metal container—nothing else but perhaps a plastic bag or two hanging from a tarpaulin ceiling, for the cave has no true roof. The monk sits me down, offers me boiled water, and reaches into his container for some long-hoarded sugar, which he dumps into my cup as if he hadn't seen a visitor in months. When asked if the occasional Chinese tourist doesn't find his cave, he answers that he sees no one. Given Chinese preferences for well-travelled routes and loud group excursions, this rings true. This monk has lived here more than 10 years without ever leaving the mountain--indeed, hardly without leaving his cave except to gather bamboo for fuel. He has a tiny plot of carefully-tended **bok choy** outside his door; 2 or 3 times a year someone brings him flour; and he subsists on oilcakes and greens. Aside from these simple mundane tasks—chop wood, carry water—he spends "all his time" meditating and chanting on the couch. He has found temples too noisy and commercialized for the "pure, quiet" **qingjing** realm he prefers as setting for his devotions. This young monk (34 years old) hails from the area and impresses me as lucid yet extremely intense, with his five-by-three pattern of burnscars on a close-shaven head. He strikes me as the most pious monk i've met today; ironically, after a day of declining to contribute to beggars, incense-peddlers, and commercial Buddhist

establishments, i find myself dying to offer **something** to a monk who absolutely refuses any gift. On the contrary, he digs down past a sutra-book or two, fishes out another bowl and chopsticks, and tries to get me to stay for dinner. Here's a fellow with a handful of bok choy and flour to his name, and he insists on playing host! Finally i convince him i must head back soon to the monastery so my friend won't worry—true enough—and depart after more conversation. His cave shows no sign of extra clothing or bedding—"How do you bear the winters?" He answers: "I've chosen this path for myself, to make my way by my own sole efforts." And this adamant monk with his pure faith and diamond eyes moves me, again, to tears. He has taken the name "Dharma Raft." The Chinese for dharma includes the element "water," and the (unusual) graph for "Raft" (the **hang** of **Hangzhou**) means "a bundle of bamboo/wood for crossing a river." Thus Fahang's name—"River-crossing Dharma Raft"—perfectly describes his life-course and the tiny one-man vessel of bamboo over water with which he plans to "reach the other side." As i depart, Fahang pushes aside a couple bamboo poles and shows me where he has carved his name into the cave's wall. He leaves a deep impression; i vow to myself that if my own practice and meditation do not deepen at least a little from his example, i will never live down the shame.

Fahang's not alone in his solitary ways; farther down i meet an older monk at Tiger-tamer Cave. He projects a commanding air and guides at least one or two attendants; the cave complex includes a farmhouse. This monk, Dengliang or Lamplight—a name that invokes multiple associations of enlightenment, religious devotion, and legendary Daoist magician Zhuge Liang's sagacity—seems very Daoist himself. He has evidently cultivated **qigong** for many years, and he answers my naive questions with Daoistically swerving wit. "Where's your master?" "Oh, he sits in a cave thousands of leagues away and knows everything that goes on" (an allusion to Laozi 46). "Where's your home?" "Oh, the Blessed Realm, where i'll return after death." Tiger-tamer Cave has a long history; it's named for a sixth-century monk who allegedly first made Jiuhua safe for Buddhism, and no less than 2 Qing abbots emerged from long periods of seclusion here to lead Jiuhua. Perhaps Lamplight's waiting for old Rende to pass on and take over! (for the stories of recluse-monks Zhouan [fl. 1687] and Lungshan [fl. 1757], see JHZ 191,193). The old nun at nearby Guanyin Cave, who regularly entertains and instructs the young hotel receptionists who hike uphill during a long lunch break, also impresses me with her wit and wisdom. Within these

cavedwelling anchorites, i believe, the numinous heart of Jiuhua Mountain lies. If its hills can still shelter such souls, then you won't grudge it a century of temple-building success and profitable incense-sales.

LUSHAN

Lushan "Hermitage Alp" presents the most complex array of mountains, the longest and most multifarious continuous cultural history, and the most mindboggling variety of lore and folkways we have encountered. Chinese claimed it has "99 peaks," and few have agreed which should count as chief peak: different opinions held out for the "Five Old Men," "Greater Hanyang" (at 1534 meters, the range's highest point); a plurality has simply shrugged and decided Lushan has "no main/central peak." Lushan consists of at least seven ranges—depending who counts—that run largely northeast-southwest, though a few run east-west, or even northwest-southeast. Deeply scoured by glaciation, Lushan contains innumerable hollows, "mountain nests," basins, and spectacular gorges; Lushan's waterfalls remain a prime tourist attraction today. So do its "seas of clouds," its "oceans of cotton"; Lushan looms over Lake Boyang, now China's largest, and lake-effect clouds and fog shroud the mountain much—192 days, on average—of the year, especially after the lake swells with spring snowmelt and summer monsoons. These mountains could bewilder even the wisest literati; Su Shi, rarely at a loss for words, traveled to Lushan and marvelled at so many "alps and gorges so remarkably lovely, I could not take them all in at once, so I decided not to try any verses." (Dongpo Zhi:4)

Su soon changed his mind and penned what has become the last word in epitomizing Lushan:

Seen broadside it forms ranges, from edgewise it forms peaks;
Far and near, high and low — no two of them alike.
That we cannot perceive Hermitage Alp's true face
Is just because we're standing among its hills.

Not that the Lushan range lacks all integrity; it roughly resembles a trapezoid aligned northeast to southwest, with southeast and northwest faces nearly parallel; it glowers 4000+' above the Jiang and Lake Boyang like a military outpost. Only in the north/northeast do you find relatively easy access, winding up through fold after stunning fold of steep granite ridges, many unnamed, till you reach its main tourist gate at Guling (Oxridge). But within Lushan's vast, misty citadel, it's easy to get lost.

Faced with such bewildering variety, travel books have divided Lushan into any number of different "routes," some north of the highest range of peaks, some south. No two books ever seem to divide up the mountains the same way or ever arrive at the same number of routes (Zhang for example, finds 10 east-west-north-south-center; LSZ finds 4 northern and 7 southern; Chen 1957 distinguishes 28 routes in 6

regions). Then, how should we proceed? We might take as our Ariadne's thread roughly the course pursued by Xu Hongzu (usually known as Xu Xiake "rose-rack wanderer"; 1586-1641); Xu, like most modern tourists, began from Jiujiang on the Yangzi north of Lushan, and went first to Donglin ("East Grove") Temple, one of China's earliest Buddhist landmarks. Its founder, Huiyuan (334-416), unquestionably put Lushan on the cultural and religious map of China. Familiar with indigenous Confucian and Daoist modes of understanding and committed to the proposition that all "exoteric and esoteric Ways can illuminate in mutual concord," (from his famous letter on "Why Monks Should Not Make Obeisance to Kings," qu. in LSHYFS 7; cf. Hongming ji 5.6aff.), Huiyuan in his sermons and translations naturalized Buddhist ideas intelligibly to an eager audience of southern Chinese literati. Huiyuan also greatly increased Buddhism's popular appeal by elucidating a salvationist cult founded on praying to Maitreya; for this reason he still gets venerated as the "founder" of Pure Land Buddhism, though technically most scholars prefer to reserve this accolade for later monks Daocho and Tanluan.(see Corless:4ff.) But undoubtedly Huiyuan deserves primary credit for making Lushan the capital of Six Dynasties Buddhism in China. Huiyuan appears in the Gazetteer's pages more often than anyone; he forms the subject of dozens of poems, figures prominently in at least 130, and glancing references to the monk, his temple, his magic "Tiger Creek," and the "White Lotus Society" he founded grace nearly every literarily-minded page of the Gazetteer's 2050+pages!

Myths and legends about Huiyuan mushroomed and formed essential bodies of lore every cultural tourist to Lushan must recognize:

* Tiger Creek-- When Huiyuan sought a spring to support his temple, one day a tiger sprang forth and, from that spot, gushed forth a reliable spring. Afterward, Huiyuan got renowned for never leaving his sacred precinct any farther than the bank of Tiger Spring. According to legend (unreliable, since Lu Xiuqing did not visit Lushan until decades after Huiyuan's death), one time Daoist scholar Lu Xiuqing (406-471) and celebrated local scholar-hermit-poet Tao Qian (365-427?) visited Huiyuan and had such a wonderful time Huiyuan forgot his vow and crossed the creek, whence his trusty tiger roared out a warning. The 3 friends supposedly parted laughing, and the "3 Laughing at Tiger Creek" became an enduring subject for Chinese poets, painters, and storytellers. Why? Probably at least in part because it celebrated friendship among 3 great men of supposedly different philosophical orientations: one Buddhist, one "Confucian," one Daoist. The tamed tiger bound in service to Buddhist dharma, of course, we have encountered before as a standard

part of temple-founding mythology and religious hagiography. (As one illustration of such common lore, see Fan Chengda, who compared Tiger Creek to Lingyin's Cold Spring:1345) Unfortunately, now when you cross over the modest bridge from a lane thronged with vendors to East Grove Temple, you probably won't even notice the trashfilled cesspool leaking on either side. Its stone lions seem downcast; the inscription "Tiger Creek" hides off to one side, apparently unwilling to call attention to Tiger Creek's pollution.

*Plant-staff Creek-- Huiyuan later sought another water-source; he planted his monk's staff in the ground, and an enduring spring welled up. This, again, represents a common "miraculous" motif in the founding of a temple; you can still find a spring of this name in back of the temple's main hall.

* Toss-brush Peak-- After Huiyuan finished his commentary on the Nirvana Sutra, he supposedly tossed away his writing-brush; it rested in mid-air, refusing to fall. Atop Toss-brush Peak, southwest of East Grove Temple, the rock formation still reminds imaginative Chinese of a writing brush.

* Spirit-moved Hall-- when Huiyuan decided to build a shrine near his temple and worried about where to find building materials, a storm broke and the resulting landslide delivered a shrine-full of stones and fine cedar lumber to his doorstep.

* Demon-piled Wall--similarly, when Huiyuan had monks begin building a wall and time grew short, overnight mysterious forces finished it completely.

* Tao Kan's Manjusri statue-- Renowned literatus and central Yangzi governor Tao Kan (Tao Qian's grandfather) acquired a mysteriously numinous statue of Manjusri and attempted to move it to his governor's mansion. Manjusri refused to move and remained in (the site of modern-day) Wuhan for years, until Huiyuan simply asked the statue nicely, whence it wafted off to Huiyuan's temple.

* White Lotus Society-- this story appears more frequently than any other in Huiyuan's extensive mythology. It apparently contains considerable factual basis, since Huiyuan did attract large numbers of lay followers, in addition to his huge number of monk disciples. Around 412 Huiyuan began a study group called the "White Lotus Society"; apparently more than 100 of the chief literati of the region took part, including many of the most famous of the day. After, poets ever celebrated the "Eighteen Scholars" whom they considered chief among them. Supposedly, young Xie Lingyun hoped to join the group, but Huiyuan found him unworthy! Tao Qian supposedly received an invitation, but decline because he preferred getting

drunk to discussing Buddhist dharma! These legends endlessly fascinated Chinese poets, and any poetaster stuck for an ending to his Lushan verse could always revert to "default mode" and present himself as a latter-day Xie Lingyunlike unworthy aspirant to wisdom, or as like/unlike Tao Qian in preferring brew to philosophizing.

Huiyuan, defending the separate status of monks and the autonomy of Buddhism, observed about the myriad things that:

it's all a matter of having or lacking **numinous magic/ling**. With **magic**, one makes a lively [emotional]response to transformations; without **magic**, one cannot. Without a lively response to transformations, one's life's exhausted when the transformations complete. (LSZ 971; Hongming ji 5.7b)

This comment might well characterize his response to Lushan's scenery, which we may imagine embodied in the poem "Roving on Mt. Lu" traditionally ascribed to him (though almost certainly not written by Huiyuan; see, for example, Zhou 39). This poem stands at the head of just about all Lushan poetry and so demands inclusion:

On the exalted cliff I exhale pure **qi**-breath/
On hidden peaks I rest spirit-traces.
Faintest music reports from its many pipes/
Echoes emerge from alpine plashing streams.
There's a wanderer roving alone in the dark/
Traipsing on, forgetting where he's going.
Waving his hand, he strokes the cloudy gate/
Magic Pass: however could one rive it apart?
Letting heart flow, he knocks on the Mystic port/
Inspiration arrives--the Pattern unobstructed.
Who is this rearing through the 9 Welkins/
Soaring without effort on Heavenly pinions?
Sublimely communing, he proceeds to smooth himself in/
Enlightened once and for all, he transcends the **3 Augmenters**. (LSJ 1195) **sanyi**

This poem contains a great many "Daoist" quotes and notions, some of them unpackable without extensive commentary. Perhaps we can emulate the spirit of verses that mention almost every kind of "action" except **dao** "course" itself and leave some essential things unsaid. "Huiyuan's" conclusion, however, demands scrutiny; he alludes to Analects 16.5, where the "3 Augmenters" refer to delight in decorum, praising virtue, and worthy friends. From a Daoist viewpoint, one should not try to "augment"**yi** one's spontaneous life processes or interfere with one's natural course **dao**. In Zhuangzi 4.11 Confucius as Daoist sage warns his protege against making a show of virtue and duty, cautioning against such "augmenting excess." At Zz 5.58 Zhuangzi recommends that we simply abandon our usual human reactive dispositions **qing** and:

continually follow what's natural, without trying to "augment life."

This, in turn, recalls the language of Laozi 55: "Augmenting vitality we call ill-omened." Cf. Chapter 50, which cautions that some lose vitality because "they set too much store by life" (D.C. Lau:111) and Chapter 48: "Pursuing studies one daily augments; Pursuing **dao**, one daily diminishes. For "Huiyuan's" adept, any such program of moral augmentation will merely constrain one's natural course; **yi** 阨 will become its cognate cousin **ai** 阨 "barrier." Without further annotation, you can no doubt see that the adept's barriers and **magic** portals/gates/pass do not simply exist **out there**; the true magic happens when a sublime communion with Nature triggers a self-forgetting transcendental enlightenment in the poet. She then enlarges her inner world to attune with the cosmic powers of "shaping and transforming"; just as such processes rived open Stonegate, so the adept can burst her own spiritual barriers. This process, beginning with the inhalation and exhalation of pure mountain **qi** and ending—if we can even speak of an end in such a context—with mystic communion, speaks volumes about the magic appeal of Lushan.

Buddhism long continued to flourish at Lushan; several Buddhist monasteries survive even to this day. Among prominent temples, Gazetteers mention Western Grove, founded by Huiyuan's brother, Guizong (Return to Lineage) Temple in the southern foothills, Xixian (Rest to the Wise) on the road to White Deer Academy, and the Yuantong (Complete/Perfect Comprehension) Temple, founded in 964 by renowned poet-king Li Yu in the western foothills below Stone Ear Alp. Lushan still rated as Buddhist mecca in 589-592, when Tiantai patriarch Zhiyi made several pilgrimages to the temple to escape the confusion and intrigues at southern dynasty courts. During later medieval China, Lushan boasted from 300 to as many as 500 Buddhist and Daoist buildings; Song poets marveled at:

Mt. Lu--300 Buddhist temple sites! (1338)
Song times:360 temples! (quoted in Zhou 51)

Chao Buzhi described a monastery as: 500 monks' cells bundled like a honeycomb (1303);

Huang Tingjian envisaged Fallen Star **Luoxing** Temple :
In the honeycomb every cell opens its separate door;
Under the anthill, each dreamed of his own kingdom. (1326)

And then again:

In the honeycomb, every cell opens its separate door;
Place after place: boiling tea, each with its wisteria staff. (1327)

During the Ming, Wang Siren (1574-1646) could write:
In my mtn roving I never saw a guy with hair! (qu. in Zhou:51)

And Zhang Shuai, upon visiting Lushan, remarked (1385):
Everywhere on Lushan you encounter monasteries/
Try to find a secular household--nary a one!

Playwright Li Yu (1611-1680), who considered himself an "heir" to Laozi, offered this wistful couplet on

viewing the ruins of once-thriving Daoist Simple Stillness Belvedere (qu. in Zhou 44):
Famous alps under Heaven mostly occupied by monks/
Couldn't they leave 1 or 2 weird peaks to roost my Daoist friends?
Fine words of this world spoken all by Buddha/
Who remembers the 5000 True Words uttered by my Ancestral teacher?

Temples rose and temples fell; in bad times, like the Soong interregnum of 1127-29, or the bloody end of the Yuan (1355-1368), many got destroyed. But new dynasties and fresh eras of patronage always founded new pagodas, stupas, temples, and abbeys. The shadows of China's imperial heritage lengthened, and antiquarian-minded literati grew increasingly inclined to lament the ruins of once-famous sacred sites. But amid all the *ubi sunt*, you can still hear a weary Qing adventurer clamber up and exclaim (Zhao Yi:1607):

You have to hit another temple before you take a break:
This isn't visiting a mountain, it's visiting monasteries!

Unhappily, almost none of Lushan's temples have survived the cataclysms of the last 150 years. After the Taiping Rebellion, the Japanese shellings of 1938-40, and the Cultural Revolution, only a few remain. Donglin and its sister Xilin (now a nunnery) weathered great destruction during the Cultural Revolution; recent efforts have reconstructed their main buildings and stupas. Behind Donglin, for example, now rises a beautifully situated new concrete 9-story stupa offering a tremendous view all around the area. As homeland for Pure Land Buddhism, East Grove makes a centerpiece for government efforts to convince guests that Buddhism can flourish under PRC rule; it remains a mecca for pilgrims. But the twins stand almost alone. Recently, monks have restored the small Yellow Dragon Temple above Yellow Dragon Falls; 17 monks live there. But no other traditional large temple stands completely; Xixian retains one small building with three mud Buddhas; the 7-8 monks residing in a humble dorm nearby hope to beg enough funds to daub them with gold paint. Xixian retains a certain honest rustic demeanor, but it's dwarfed even by a nearby nunnery at Guanyin Bridge. No more would a Chinese literatus conceive the temple's awesome *mana* as extending to all surrounding mountains, as Wang Shipeng (1112-1171) wrote:

Lion's roar perfecting an unworldly dharma/ Stoneman meditates into trancelike dhyana.
(Lion—one of the "Lesser 5 Peaks" below the "Five Old Men"—and Stoneman refer to nearby mountain peaks, as well as to Buddha and bonze, respectively)

Kaixian, an important temple south below the southern Incense Brazier Peak, has disappeared; a new

tourist development has stolen its very stones to build lay dwellings, and only a commemorative stele remains. Nearby Guizong Temple—in Qing times perhaps the largest and most imposing monastery on Lushan—has also succumbed. Despite earnest efforts, we could hardly find anyone in the village who remembered where it stood! Finally we located the site behind a high school; locals have taken away its stones and built dorms, houses, etc. on its foundations. Only two massive camphor trees—many hundreds of years old—stand to mark the garden before its vanished Great Hall. In a nearby bamboo grove, a few old rock stools survive; you can sit and imagine the cool tranquility that once obtained within temple walls. (Though LS1981 writes of Kaixian and Guizong as "still extant," other sources—like Lushan 1983—admit their demise) Everywhere you find a similar story; we happened to see a small sign by an eastern road. On investigating the rutted sidepath, we found the ruins of a small temple called "Dragon Spring," named after the miraculolous freshet that supposedly ended a drought and supported Huiyuan's first billet on Lushan (the "real" Dragon Spring, if we may use such a dubious phrase, must lie closer to Eastern Grove, probably near either the ancient Huacheng Temple or closer to Stone Gate). A few monks lodged in a nearby barnlike dorm have hopes to begin rebuilding "next year." Our route took us quite near the ancient site of Yuantong Temple, but we found no trace at all. And of Greater Heavenly Pool (Tianchi) Temple, a magnificent complex after late Ming patronage, survives only a stupa. We encountered an itinerant monk from Sichuan (Shizhi), whose teacher has charged him with the task of rebuilding the temple. After 3 years of great privation and far-reaching fundraising, Shizhi still has a long way to go to reach the 3 million or so **yuan** needed to erect a decent-sized temple. We asked him where he spends the night, since no temples stand nearby; even on rainy, foggy, cold Lushan's ramparts, he spends the night "under a tree, meditating." Not the last time a monk's tale—and it seemed quite genuine, since his temple (Zhaojue in Sichuan) and his teacher (Qingjing) have a very high reputation among Chinese Buddhists—moved me to tears.

Still, Lushan can afford a few happier surprises for temple-viewers. During a 3-day stay as lay Buddhist at East Grove, i made an interesting discovery by accident. Observing worshippers sweeping tombs and setting off firecrackers high on a neighboring hill, i hiked up and onward past ever-sparsier tombs. After more than an hour's walk i reached a tiny mountain village, where an elderly forester proudly showed me the village's new temple: "We built it ourselves." They called it "Temple of the Transfigured/Illusory City" **Huachengsi** and assured me its site was ancient and its ruined predecessor high atop an even remoter ridge

"even older than East Grove!" The next day Gary and I hired a villager as guide and viewed the new temple, quite a charming little kirk dedicated to Ksitigarbha. Then we followed our nimble guide across teafields, past a partial reconstruction of Bai Juyi's "Original Thatched Hut," and very rugged, steep trails. After more than an hour, we finally gained the ridge and found the old ruins completely engulfed by a sea of bamboo. You could scarcely make out vestigial foundations and the dubious traces of long-illegible inscriptions (someone had faked a "Ming-dynasty" inscription with red paint and simplified graphs!). We felt rather disappointed, but on returning to the library in Hawaii I discovered that—indeed—Lushan had once boasted 3 Huachengsi. The highest, to whose ruins we apparently traipsed, dates from the Eastern Jin and may possibly have marked Huiyuan's first temple. A middle temple, whose hard-to-find ruins in one of the hollows between the Upper and Lower temples we eschewed, got built perhaps by the year 600. And the Lower temple, upon whose incarnation we so serendipitously stumbled, may also date from the Eastern Jin. Huacheng got well-known during the sixth century when its abbot, the crusty Fachong (fl.600), supposedly became the first cleric to declare: "Women have no place inside a Buddhist temple!" (see Fomen gushi:295) Incense Burner Peak still overlooks this area, and an old road still winds up along a ridge between the temples; our guide said you could gain Ox-ridge in just 45 minutes from his village—that is, if you can match his mountain-goat gait! Adventurous sightseers celebrated the area in verse, notably Bai Juyi "On the Road up to Incense Censer Peak";

Clutching creepers and treading steep boulders/
Hands and feet weary from the up-and-down.
3 or 4 fellows accompanied me/
2 of them didn't dare make the ascent! (LSLDSX:48-9)

Just southeast of the village—probably on the present site of a lovely tea plantation—stood Huiyuan's legendary Sutra-expounding Terrace, where the cleric supposedly discoursed on the Nirvana Sutra (see LSLDSX:137). From a lookout east of the teafields you can see Stone Gate on a sunny day—or so we got told; during our visit on "Purebright Day" the sky had clouded up. Later literati like Zha Shenxing also remarked on the beautiful scenery around the ancient sites:

Coiling around the foot of Incense Burner Peak we gazed on Huacheng Temple. Middle Huacheng's several thatched buildings lie where the path gets somewhat level; it overlooks the Yangzi and excels by the vastness of its view. Upper Huacheng appears phantasmagorical among peaks and forests; the views from Lord Lang's Cliff and Lamp-gazing Boulder, with thousands of ancient trees, excel by their clandestine mystery. Lower Huacheng lies at the foot of the mountain whose summit we had now reached. (Zha Jiyou 1.5b-6a; cf. LSZ:259)

Jetting through straths for a dozen leagues.
 Streaking along as lightning in flight/
 Stealthily rising like a rainbow in white.
 For a bit, astonished: had the Starry River fallen!
 Splashing over half the cloudy skies!?
 Looking higher, its sweep gets even more powerful/
 Magnificent! The Shaper and Transformer's might!
 The sea-winds blow without cease/
 The River Moon shines it ever voider.
 Within the void, wild surges shoot forth/
 Left & right, laving the green walls.
 Flying pearls disperse into diaphonous mist/
 Flowing froths boil over arching rocks
 And me—devotee of famous alps!
 I face it, and my heart grows calm.
 Never mind a gargle with rosegem ambrosia/
 I get to wash my dusty face!
 So long as I can enjoy what I've always loved/
 I vow to leave the human world forever!

Bai Juyi, in his less ebullient way, found the view "Travelling to Stonegate Gorge" equally transfixing (1237):

I dismount at West Grove Temple/
 Floating ahead with my light walking-stick.
 At dawn a slave to my office/
 By dusk a wanderer in **Magic** Mountains.
 In April, on the north slopes of Hermitage Mt.,
 Ice and snow are just beginning to thaw.
 Sunny groves put forth tender shoots/
 Gloomy channels drain spring veins. (yang vs. yin)
 Basking in sunbeams, breeze & soil turn warm/
 Fuming with fog, clouds & mist stratify in layers.
 Dispersing into waters of a myriad straths/
 Condensing into the Emerald of one unified **qi**-vapor.
 Leisurely in body, I easily feel becalmed/
 Disposed of office, nothing tugs or constrains.
 So remote—those 18 Worthies: (Huiyuan's White Lotus comrades)
 Ancient and modern share this ease.
 This year, southern bandits have uprisen/
 Up in arms and shields everywhere.
 Wise gentlemen labor wits and stratagems/
 Military officers suffer on punitive campaigns.
 Only this man of no talent/
 Can enjoy these mountains' fonts and stones.

Bai's verse reveals a measure of guilty pleasure about taking time off from work, but his association of Lushan's waterfall-world with eremitic joys would become a staple of Chinese poetry and art (see Fu 45-6). Most literati, however, viewed Stonegate in more dramatic terms. Wei Yuan (1794-1857), lamenting that master landscapist Xie Lingyun had never produced a poem about Lushan's Stonegate, offered the following experiment in Xie's style (1658):

Riven apart, a myriad fathom gorge/
 Pouring forth marrow of white clouds.
 Within, a single bolt of rawsilk sky/
 Below spurts a bolt of rawsilk water.
 The more the torrents, the more I wade & ford/
 With each stone, another round of astonished joy.
 The earth deep-sunk, font echoes landslide/
 The gorge splits, frozen clouds expire.
 Ravines resound—the mtns even stiller/
 Sun sets—the springs race ever onward.
 Bell sounds can't escape the valley/
 A myriad years encased in chilly nephrite.
 Darting minnows rove in formation/
 Mossy greenery stirs the empty void.
 The murky gloom freezes my hair/
 Its pellucid spurt ice-pangs my teeth.
 I must treasure the contents of this hoary chill/
 How else to commune with the **Pattern** of Lofty profundity? **li**
 Steep and level put heart & eye at ease/
 Straitened or expansive set my feet on different paths.
 Of these extremes, which to follow & forsake?
 Obscure exploring strays between source & outcome.

Wei nicely captures not only Xie's self-conscious philosophizing about the numinous Pattern/inscape inherent in phenomena, he also understands well how deeply the gorge had scoured into the mountains' bedrock (ll. 7-8) All in all, you can tell Stone Gate's impact on Chinese by reading a recent article which tries rather credulously to pin down Lushan's legendary "Dragon Spring" to a particular site halfway up Reclining Dragon Alp along Stonegate's northern wall ([Jingtu](#) 25-27, Spring 2000). As the tourist blurb reads:

Stone Gate crowns the world/ Its gorge scenery intoxicates the wanderer.

In wet seasons, the "Three Dragons" above Stone Gate can also offer spectacular scenes; White Dragon Cataract emptying into Black Dragon Tarn, and thence to Yellow Dragon's waterfall and famous "bottomless tarn." See Shu Tianxiang in 1804 (1647):

Myriad trees, roaring with a single sound/ Sweeping **Magic** Alp, ready to take off.
 Dormant dragon, after driving rains/ Slanting sunlight bringing clouds back home.
 Tarn waters, pure as if scoured/ Mountain blossoms, pinkly unwithered.
 My heart fixed on no particular sight/ Who's got time to prove his "Chan illumination?"

Admittedly, we found this area only mildly pleasant in dry weather. Black Dragon Tarn and Yellow Dragon waterfall seemed very tame; the stele by Yellow Dragon proved to be styrofoam, and Gary lifted it for a gag photo. Engineers have ruined the lower passage to Divine Dragon; a dam has filled in the gorge and the falls now feature a trickle of water over the dam and a mountain of rubbish below. We scarcely had

the heart to walk down to Stone Gate.

Xu Xiake also visited and confessed himself impressed by Lushan's more southerly gorges (Xu:I,28-9).

"3 Gorges Ravine" won fame because the vehemence of its narrow torrent recalled to literati the fury of the central Yangzi gorges. Su Shi had remarked on the site:

Even greater, these hundred peals of thunder/
Myriad eons, battling the rocks.
Depths winding to the bottom of 9-fold earth/
Steepness surpassing even the 3 Gorges.
Ever transporting the endless stream/
Trying to fill the bottomless trough... (1293)

Intrepid raviner Qu Dajun 1629-1696) described "Three Gorges":

24 tarns battling past a single bridge.
Frightened fonts spurting spume—never exhausted.
One whole alp's cataracts gravitate to 3 *Gorges*;
With just a puff of Heaven's wind blow oceanic tides! (1519)

Kong Wuzhong (fl.1090) captured the gorge's character well from the "3 Gorge Bridge" (1309):

Lushan deepens here/ On every side loom manifold scarps.
Who'd know that near Nine River's bank/ Would flow Three Gorges' majesty!
Storied cliffs meet its flying course/ Deep ravines gape 100 fathoms.
I've heard that, in the Beginning/ It had fused into a bizarre shape.
God sent Heaven's 6 Strongmen/ To bore it open into an empty expanse.
Cleaved into a twin-leaved barrier-gate/ Uprooted to form paired citadel scarps.
Lofty groves—manifold curtained tents/ Weird rocks—crouching rhinos & elephants.
High springs descend within/ Swift as from an upturned crock.
Thunder rolls in stertorous roars/ Dragons moan with sadder sobs.
It winds & flows for 10 leagues/ Still surging with its last vehement fury...

In his sequel to neighboring Sleeping Dragon Tarn, Kong exclaimed (1309):

It comes from endless mountains/
Races into bottomless ravines.
Ravines ringing with 100 peals of thunder/
Woods beyond swallowing cold drops of jade.
Its heroic might and pellucid clarity/
Continue from top to below.
Sunny cliffs aburgeon with secluded flowers/
Gloomy straths bestrewn with giant trees.
Paired cliffs that heaven split asunder/
Millions of years, spirits submerged in secret...

Again, during dry weather at the end of March, you may find the 3 Gorges watershed less than spectacular, though their ancient 25-meter "3 Gorges Bridge" or "Guanyin Bridge" remains a lovely sight, spanning 20 meters above the rugged, calligraphy-marked rocks and green waters of the gorge.

A few leagues southwest fall the twin waterfalls: Green Jade and Horsetail. This "Graceful Peaks" area, where Lushan's highest alps descend precipitously down glacier-scoured faces, moved countless Chinese

literati to exclaim:

Lushan's beauty lies south of the mountains;
Its southern beauties rest with Graceful Peaks. (qu. in Zhou 48; cf. Hu Shi 1931:30)

"Graceful Peaks" refer to the alpine sources of the Twin Waterfalls, to Twin Sword Peak, South Incense Censer, to Yellow Crag, Crane-call, Turtle-back, and Manjusri Stupa, all celebrated in numerous verses. Su Shi extolled them like this (1293):

Lofty crags blot out the ruddy sun/ Deep ravines beckon the sad winds.
Splitting open Green Jade Gorge/ Propelling forth Two white dragons.

Zhang Weibing (1780-1859) conceived the falls as a mythic place:

Yu's palanquin never reached the storied crags' crest.

Kuang Lu still keeps this font from Primordial Deluge... (eponymous hermit of **Lu** "Hermitage" Alp)

Kuang and his brothers wearied of the madding crowd;

God-gods whipped the boulders to fix this chasmic void.

These rocks date from before Nuwa could smelt;

Pouring forth flying flows to rend open the Twin Falls.

Grotto Court's Dragon-king's daughter ever spinning silk:

Shark-pongee woven to a perfection that no one ever saw!

Or aping Pockmother's sly trick: (goddess **Magu**)

Hurling down 1000 fathoms of brilliant lapis lazuli....

Zhang later concludes [1654]:

Water and clouds whirl and cycle together endlessly:

The **vaporous confluences** of mountain and mere have always been like this. **qitong**

This is where Chinese literati found the magic in Lushan, in a world pulsating with energetic **qi**-

transformations whose infinitely varied flows you could never limit to the realm of the merely "natural."

Unfortunately, Chinese have turned the Graceful Peaks area, too, into a tourist trap, with ticket-wicket, gondolas, merchant-stalls, and busloads of casual tourists. Despite the garish proclamation:

Grand gully's **Magic** everlasting

screaming from among dozens of huge red-inked inscriptions by famous and not-so-famous Chinese, gouged into the cliffwalls of a lower waterfall, we found the Disneyfied atmosphere depressing. Hard to enjoy fine scenery under such conditions; without a chance to generate any **ling** and short of time, we abandoned the climb only halfway, yearning for a closer look at the falls Chinese literati so beautifully described:

Blue hills split asunder, rearing Dual Swords/

Primal **qi**-vapor pouring straight down the ravaged scarp. (Jiang Shiquan [1721-1785], in X151)

Farther east, Xu clambered down "Three-pleat Gorge," risking life and limb to discover one of his peak landscape epiphanies:

the water, about to crash down, had twice the volume and angry force. In front of it, clusters of cliffs stood in irregular formations, bottomless and weird in appearance. The terrific crashing roar sounded like thunder through landslides, striking our overwhelmed senses. In fact, we were so dizzy we could not even see where the furious cataract leaped down and vanished. (Li 114)

How Xu could negotiate the perilous gorge and "go to the cliffs on the other side" to get a better view remains a mystery to me! Indeed, the gorge had proved so difficult to find and access that apparently no Chinese literati discovered it until ca. 1180. Later poets made up for the lacunae; it proved especially popular with reclusive Ming loyalists. Fang Yizhi (d.1671), who took the tonsure and picked up the name "Herbland Bonze (medicine monk)," saw this cataract as:

Icy pongee sheared apart & trimmed into cloudy shades/
Starry River decanted down to a Jade canal. (1504)

Zhao Mengfu (1254-1322) saw the falls as: (1380)

Flying spring like a curtain of jade/ Straight down several thousand feet.
A new moon like the curtain's hook/ Suspended far-off in the gemmy void.

Ming loyalist Qu Dajun (1626-1705?), who spent several years in Lushan and took the Buddhist title "Magic Prime," wrote many poems about waterfalls, including this ode looking down on "Three-pleat Gorge" from "5 Old Men's Peaks":

On every side, pinnacle and peak sundered/
Spanning Heaven, the green of an iron wall.
Flying fonts like mist and fog/
Racing like peals of thunder at high noon.
Rousing boulders to form Three Pleats/
Piercing clouds to reveal Ninefold Screen.
No one knows of this surpassing sight/
To and fro—waters refine their **Magic**. (1516)

Xu and his cohorts would roll in their graves to see Three-pleat today. Perhaps they would not balk at the convenient granite steps, but Xu Xiake would no more step into a palanquin than would I; well below the Falls now stands a garish new orange kiosk. From the gorge ramparts blares loudspeaker music, and high aloft stretches a tightrope cable. As we approach in the rain, a daring couple steps out and performs a routine with parasols, juggled balls, and finally bicycles, risking their lives on rainslick cables unbelievably high above the gorge for a handful of spectators. The local guys taking shelter in the kiosk gawk upward, too; this marks the first performance, and no one knows these acrobats, who come from far away. Their

almost invisible somersaults, splits, twirls, dangles, and tumbles have to mark the weirdest and most useless display of death-defying Dada i've ever seen. It would make Xu Xiake, who only risked his neck for worthwhile exploratory purposes, sick. Such antics and the press of sightseers at the main Falls make it harder to enter that worshipful lyric spell of literati like Shao Yuanchong (1888-1936?):

Cascade suspended down 3 Pleats, soaring its **magic flows**/
Fragrance dispersed through many Heavens dashed on my intoxicated face. (x194)

At the eastern mouth of the gorge lies a section so narrow and steep even a daring adventurer could scarcely enter. Chinese called this part "Jade Stream Gate," and it became a popular source for poetic inspiration, as in this song by Li Ying (fl. ~1650): (1558)

At 3 Pleats' stream-mouth a million bushels of snow/
Shriek like a pulley's unceasing wheel.
Scraping Heaven, paring the cliffs till a crack opens up/
Massive boulders suspended in mid-air clog its gut.
Arriving travellers hunch over & wriggle like snakes/
1000 fathoms of Black iron, chased with chilly jade.
Ape-dads & demon-moms don't dare dwell here/
1 fleck of lonely cloud spends the night atop the empty gorge.

Chinese found this site sufficiently numinous/sacred/magic **ling** to imagine it as the legendary site for Lushan's own "Stone Bridge" or, more properly, "3 Stone Bridges." Apparently Lushan devotees found a need not just to imitate Tiantai but to one-up it. The "3 Stone Bridges" cult began with Li Bai's "Lay of Lushan," a must-read for any Lushan literary tourist, for its own sake and because it provided endless material for later Lushan poets:

LAY OF LUSHAN, for CHAMBERLAIN LU EMPTY-BOAT

At root I'm a *madman of Chu*, [here, the hermit "Greet-cart, who sang a warning]
Singing "Phoenix," laughing at "*Great Hill*" [Confucius; "Phoenix" was Greet-cart's song]
Hand grasping a green jade staff,
At dawn departing Yellow Crane Tower.
To 5 Marchmounts seeking transcendents, never stinting the distance;
All my life I've loved to roam among famous alps.
Lushan rises gracefully by the Southern Dipper. [Hermitage Mtn]
9-pleated *Windscreen* unfurling cloudy brocade. [furrowed wall of 3-pleat Gorge]
Reflections falling in the bright lake with gleams of cyan and kohl.
Golden pylons open ahead along *Twin Peaks*' length. [the twin spires of Stone Gate Gorge]
Silvery River hung inverted on 3 Stone Bridges. [our "Milky Way"]
Incense Censer's waterfalls in remote mutual gaze. [Xianglu: a major peak in southern Lushan]
Swirling cliffs, piled-up scarps soaring verdantly.
Alcedine shadows & roserack kindled by morning sun;
Birds' fly without finish across endless Southeast skies.
Mount higher--most magnificent view between Heaven & Earth!
Great Jiang--vast and vagrant--departs, never to return.
Dun clouds a myriad leagues stirring tempestuous sights;
Whitecapped waves along *Nine Channels* float off Snowy Alps. [of the Yangzi R.]

Fine to sing a Lushan Lay/
 High spirits triggered by Lushan.

A casual look into *Stone Mirror* purifies my heart; [legendary reflecting boulder in eastern Lushan]
 Where Xie Lingyun once walked green moss engulfs.

Better hurry and down *Sublimed Cinnabar* to lose worldly cares; [elixir for transcendents]
 My well-tempered heart *three-peated* as my **dao** becomes perfect. [pun on "3-Pleat" Gorge]
 Glimpse afar Transcendents within polychrome clouds,
 Hands holding lotuses, paying court to *Jade Capital*. [home of a chief Daoist deity]
 Set a future date--unfolding unfathomably beyond the 9 Bournes;
 I vow to greet **Lu** Ao and roam to *Great Purity*! [One of the 3 Daoist Heavens]

Li's magnificent lay epitomizes Chinese landscape transcendentalism; you might link its structure with the way a "Great Romantic Ode" proceeds from perception through introspection to apperception. Here Li Bai, after his opening invocation to sacred alps, envisions Lushan, focussing on upward views (7-15) that merge heavenly and mundane realms: the mountain neighbors the Southern Dipper; its "Windscreen" unfurls clouds; its reflections land in Lake Boyang; and the Starry River hangs reflected in the cataracts flowing under Lushan's legendary "3 Stone Bridges." Vision provokes a crisis with the never-returning river, roiling clouds and wind, and the snow-swollen waves carrying off (the melt and silt of) Snowy Alps [for an analysis of likely topical political criticism lodged in these lines, see Eide's ingenious analysis in Wright 1973:385-7; for a similar example from Du Fu's verse, see McCraw 1992:108; for the never-returning Yangzi as trigger for intimations of mortality, see James Liu, "Time Space and Self in Chinese Poetry CLEAR 1.1 1979:139; cf.155-6]. True to the lore of internal alchemy, Li makes his crucial refinement when he turns inward, examines himself as poet (in the Stone Mirror), and refines his own inner music (the well-tempered heart, literally a "cither-heart," thrice-tuned and/or sung through with three refrains). He finds there a likeness of Xie Lingyun, father of landscape transcendentalism and trigger for a Nature-inspired epiphany that inspires Li's culminating vow: he will ascend to Daoist heaven.

Formal features highlight Li's themes; reflections and repeated number-plays suggest the continuity of landscape exploration and internal transformation. Li begins "All my life," literally "One [whole] life" he's aimed at the 5 Sacred Marchmounts; he ends "Set a future date... beyond the 9 Bournes." "9-pleated Windscreen" evokes a "3-peated" disposition, even as it echoes with the 9 Channeled Yangzi and, finally, the 9 Bournes that bound our human realm. "Twin Peaks" echo with Sublimed—literally "refined"—Cinnabar, his internal elixir. Even the 3 Stone Bridges strung with stars foreshadow the "3-peated" zither music that metaphorizes our poet's internal transformation (and the final transformation of his lay). All the number-plays suggest the enumerated workings of Daoist alchemy. Lakes and rivers reflect

alps, streams reflect constellations, and boulders reflect our poet's heart. In the end, we cannot easily distinguish internal from external, microcosm from macrocosm.

These characteristics get enhanced when we consider Li's punning nameplays. We have **Lu**=Hermitage, Mr. **Lu** the Chamberlain, **Lu**=brazier/oven, and **Lu** Ao the Daoist wanderer. Contiguity suggests resonances between them, particularly as Lushan becomes a kind of alchemical furnace for Li Bai's spiritual transformation. We begin with reference to **Greet**-cart, singer of Daoist caution to Confucius; we end with Li Bai vowing to **greet** a Daoist. But in the concluding allusion to Huainanzi, Lu Ao did not come off as hero. He meets a nameless Daoist hero on the fringe of the world who declines to remain with Lu, claiming "I've set my date to unfold unfathomably beyond the 9 Bournes." Rather typically, Li Bai has displaced Lu Ao, claiming the wisest role of unnamed Daoist sage for himself!

On a less exalted level of interpretation, Li's references to "Nine-pleated Windscreen" and "Three-pleated" (Gorge) near "3 Stone Bridges" suggested to literal-minded Qing scholars a solution to a vexing "geographical" problem. Literati venerated the Stone Bridges and wrote about them at least 30 times in the Gazetteer, but few could agree about their location. Some placed it near the scenic southern cataracts around Twin Sword Peak:

Stone Bridges bestride flying cataracts/
Torrent's snows falling in profusion.
(Yang Yi 1729, "Observing the Waterfall at Twin Swords")

Liu Tongsheng (fl. 1613), after reviewing and rejecting several theories, claimed actually to have seen the 3 Bridges in a precipitous gorge east of "Embouching [Lake] Bo[yang] Ridge" Hanboling eastward toward 5 Old Men's Peaks (1062-4) but found it too steep to explore. Qu Dajun climbed Greater Han Peak and claimed in closure:

Who will help me seek the highest summit/
Far, far-off extend 3 Stone Bridges. (1520)

The debate rather recalls how literati determined to find a physical location for Heavenly Terrace's Peach-blossom Cave. Some, indeed, like Ming gazetteer Sang Qiao, doubted if the Bridges actually existed. Poets sometimes spoke of the Bridges as fabulous, e.g.:

I'm shamed by the Master who Dines on Roserack/
Rearing his head by 3 Stone Bridges.
(1545 close; presumably a Daoist transcendent's tracks would prove hard to locate in our human world)

I've also heard of the 3 Bridges/
Concealed occult, remotely hard to climb. (1553)

Anqi and Red-pine cannot be sought/
Stone Bridges--far away as Cinnabar Hill.

(1554; the Daoist transcendentals and Magic Daoist peak mentioned do not inspire confidence for Stone Bridge hunters).

During an extensive trip to Lushan in 1692 (see his LSYJ), noted scholar and poet Zha Shenxing (1650-1727) tried to nail it down. He recited Li Bai's poem while visiting Three Pleat Gorge and found:

Windscreen's pleats face the 5 Old Men;
Now I can envision where [Li] once roamed.
3 Stone Bridges lie here at 3 Pleats:
This scenery clearly matches the words of his Lay.
Later commentators grew too fond of farfetching—
Jumbled profusion of innumerable explanations I can't swallow. (1572)

After this rousing poetic conclusion (!), Zhao appended a long note explaining that 3 Stone Bridges metaphorically described the appearance of the 3 bends/pleats of surging waters in the gorge below Nine-pleat Screen. This sensible-sounding and poetically sensitive explanation might have ended the debate, but the quasi-spiritual quest for a Magic Stone Bridge more concrete than poetic fancy proved too tempting to forsake. Even in this century renowned scholar Huang Kan (**-19**) attempted the search, but found:

Stone Bridge's name survives, but folk scoff at ones who've "been there";
I see only flying fonts suspend from rugged crags.
From the fissure violet mists ascend majestically;
Dawn light illuminates, the golden pylons unveil... (1746)

In another verse, his "Lay of Stone Bridge," Huang also relates his quest, its fruitless outcome, and concludes by calling Stone Bridge an old wives' tale:

Believing folk, believing books—no good comes of it;
In this world, you can only believe your own experience. (1747)

Actually, all these literati deliberations missed one important datum that casts sizable doubt on the physical reality of Stone Bridge but does support Li Bai's reputation as a learned Daoist adept; we will elaborate below. Here we might just add that Zha's interpretation seems unlikely because a): the waterfall at "3-pleat" decidedly does **not** resemble one or three stone bridges, and b): how could the carefree and scarcely athletic aging Li Bai have managed a gorge so remote and so difficult to climb that no one else found it until 1180? Even today we found the nearly 3000 stone stairs leading down to the falls quite challenging. Especially as you near the falls, the slick surfaces—many inclined downhill—of the incredibly steep stairs demand very close attention to each step. Locals carry tourists on palanquins, chanting to keep their movements in time and avoid a jostle—or worse. They wear gummy rubber-soled sneakers they bought for 75c in a store, which proved 100 times better than stiff Vibram-soled hiking shoes costing 200

times the price! In the days before stone stairs and railings, it seems impossible that Li Bai could have reached 3-pleat Falls, even if he stayed sober.

Of course, a great many poems about waterfalls and the like do not single out one recognizable site. For example, we hear Li Bai, Gazing On the Waterfall (LSZ:1219)

Sun strikes Incense Censer, kindling purple smoke/
Far-off, view the waterfall suspend its endless stream.
Flying flows fall straight down 3000 feet/
I thought the Starry River had dropped from 9-fold Heaven.

Literati (like Luo Hongxian, fl. ~1550: p.1449) never tired of couplets like the following:
Hearing the cataract, for a moment I thought dragons had roused in battle/
Peering at crags, I often walk where tigers left their trace.

Or Wang Ren (fl.~1779; p.1627) who ended his observation of another painted waterfall:
Watching while there still are forms to see,
Listening where there's nothing more to hear.
Landscapes have character and feelings: **shanshui**: "alps and streams"
May my cart always find a home here.

Or Li Wei (fl. ~1650; p.1527) on a painted waterfall:
Booming gator-drum notes that rattle cloudy roots, (kenning for rocks)
Dropping shark-pearl reflections connecting water and **qi**.

Part of the enduring fascination with Chinese poetry lies in the deft, inventive ways they meld the mythic, "solid," liquid, and gaseous into a single realm of **qi**-transformations. For example, Jiang Wei (1284) observed cascades:

Myriad leagues paying court to the Watchet Sea/
1000 fathoms emerging from white clouds.
Chilly music--always far away/
Magic veins--who could distinguish?
Once you've seen "Heavenly Terrace"/
No common flow could ever match.

We may note that, along with such common occurrences of ling such as "magic alps" (32 times), "alpine spirits" (10 times), and "magic transcendents" (6 times), you find no less than 22 references in the Lushan Gazetteer to aqueous **ling** of one sort or another, particularly "magic source" **lingyuan** (7 times), "magic pool" (3 times), magic veins (twice), magic spring (twice), and several references to "magic gully/ravine/strath," etc. (Cf. "Magic flows" above...) Fan Zhongyan enthused (1288)

Magic Source, unimaginably high!
You could scoop from the Dipper here!
Outsoaring the Sun, straight up to the 3 Radiances/
Lingering, then 1000-fathoms swift.
A pale rainbow dips to drink the torrent/

Cold swords huddle standing in the Sky.
Lightning flash, too fast for a blink/
Endless thunder, no dragon would dare doze.
Myriad fathoms, crag and cliff asunder/
Its whole course, peaks & forests doused.
Its steepness forces down flying birds/
Its cold brings Mtn demons to tears.
It must cleave straight off to the Sea/
No muddy waters allowed to iningle.

Yi Shunding wrought a wonderful mythopoeic landscape from a Lushan waterfall (1683); as with a hundred other examples, we lack space to quote it all, just one hyperbolic couplet from a section where Yi fancies how the waterfall will trouble creatrix Nuwa with the specter of another celestial inundation:

Clear welkin trailing upside-down, stars roosting in the Sea/
Sky-wanderer wants to return, but cannot find his Raft.

Hopefully, our small selection above will demonstrate how magical Chinese literati found Lushan's cataracts. In fact, the main way students of Chinese landscape recognize a Lushan landscape is the prominence of waterfalls. Dong Qichang (1555-1636) once gave his friend a "Lushan landscape"; his friend later commented: "Too bad there's no 1000-fathom waterfall; I just didn't recognize it as a Lushan painting!" (qu. in Fu 75, n.88)

Looking at Lushan landscapes, you will notice that their cascades appear very much a part of the **vaporous confluences** that feed and, sometimes, obscure them. Waterfalls, clouds, fog, and the like represent different members of the mysterious dragon, the multifarious beast symbolizing Lushan's water-cycle. Among innumerable poems limning Lushan's heraldic animal, we may adduce Zou Yuanbiao (fl.~1590; LSZ1474):

Spread a sutra on the rocks, clouds obscure the tiger;
Wash a bowl by the Yangzi, rains transform to dragons. (taming an autochthonous dragon as guardian for a temple pool became a stock item in Buddhist hagiography. For the most famous early example, see the legend of Huineng in Fahai's preface to the Platform Sutra: Yampolsky 62-63)

Wan Yi (fl.~1600), from a poem on "Dragongate Temple," under the Falls of Sword Alp (1485-6):
Clouds crossing forest and peak bear along a wild crane;
Cascades pelting wind and rain bring down the tarn's dragon.

Shu Tianxiang, from his poem on "Yellow Dragon Temple" (1647):
Hibernating dragons stir in rains' aftermath,
Slanting sunbeams bear the clouds along home.

Among several dragon-references in Yi Shunding's mythopoeic "Waterfall" poem (1683), consider:
Cascades like a Heavenly Dragon come down to hear the dharma-talk.

Or Wang Yitang's Visit to a friend at "Tiger-crouching Rock" (1727):

Oddly, this Crouching Tiger recalls your former roost;
Perhaps the hidden dragons still pace the throngs of **gloom**. (yin, rainclouds, etc.)

Literati found themselves and the qualities they most admired in such cloudstrewn landscapes. For a canonical example, enjoy Ouyang Xiu's (1007-1072) "Lushan's Lofty: A Song Presented to Liu Ningzhi"

(1290):

Ai! Lushan's lofty / How many million feet tall!?
Roots coiling how many hundred leagues?/
Soaring so distinctively above the Endless Jiang.
Endless Jiang comes racing along from the west below it;/
Here we find Raised Billow and Left Gourd; (parts of Lake Boyang)
Flooding combers, vast waves dashing together day and night.
Clouds dispel winds cease, watery mirror purified;
Moor the boat, climb the bank and gaze far-off;
Above scraping the blue vault with gloomy mists/
Below blotting the earth into primal chaos.
Try going off within its realm:/
Clambering up its stone stairs to peer into empty gorges.
Thousand cliffs, myriad straths—resounding with pine & juniper/
Suspended from cliffs & massive boulders fly gurgling flows.
Water music clamorously riles our ears/
Flying frosts in August spatter the Stone Bridge.
Ever & always you meet Transcendents and monks/
Once I despised them for aping nonsense, spouting noise.
Now I see only cinnabar roserack & emerald cliffwalls far & near setting off storied towers/
Dawn bells & dusk drums, dark mists enveloping pennant and streamer.
Hidden flowers and wild herbs—names unknown/
Winds blow, fogs soak, perfuming dell and gorge;
Now and then white cranes fly in pairs.
Go far-off in hidden search—no end to reach/
Ready to leave this world and its motley madness.
I envy you—buying fields, building a house, growing old at its foot/
Making fields & transplanting seedlings, brewing ale to fill your crock.
May the floating vapors & warm mtn mists ever assume a million guises/
Always to sit or lie facing your balconied window.
Your heart, massy and towering, conceals an Utmost Jewel/
The vulgar world can't appreciate jade and gems.
Spurred by fame, an official for 20 years/
Dark tunic & white hair—troubled throughout the whole empire.
Favor, fame & wealth—no reasons to bring oneself low/
Unless clear springs over white rocks harbored profound intent/
How could they ever descend from their towering heights?
Men with grandeur & moral stature like you are few/
To express it I'd need a brush enormous as the Endless Jiang!

This verse also neatly inweaves Lushan's misty **qi** with the lofty moral spirit **qijie** of a recluse.

You can gauge **vaporous confluences'** central appeal to Lushan's magic by reading literati's lovingly detailed catalogues of Lushan cloud-phenomena; they endlessly classified and described its "jade sash clouds" (hovering around the 700-800 meter middle of high peaks), "cloud-ladders" (that appear to climb

Lushan ridges as sunlight gathers power), "seas of clouds," "cloud cascades," or fogs that seem "chainlike at rest, smokelike in motion, light as fluff, vast as the ocean, white as cotton-floss." (see Lushan 1983:27; Lushan 1981:63ff; for another and more belle-lettristic extensive catalog, see Zhang Weibing's "Account of Viewing Clouds at Heavenly Pond," in LSLDYJ 1981:149-150).

Yun Jing capped his account of a first outing to Lushan by delighting in
a plait of clouds
that arose below Incense Burner Peak and proceeded to form catenulate globes. Presently they girdled the entire mountain; soon they merged into one, obscuring the mountain's midriff, while all above and below remained fresh-brewed emerald-green—I had never seen anything like it in my life! Such clouds, the auspices of rain, form the outflow of the mountain's **numinous magic (ling)**. (Yun 3.11b-12a; cf. Strassberg:416).

Yun then wrote a second account marvelling on a different nephelous formation at Buddha-hand Cliff near Manjusri Terrace. As Yun proceeded to five different sites nearby, strange belts of cloud would appear and engulf a level of mountain in a "satiny mist," then disperse into sunlight or rain. Again, Yun felt he had witnessed something entirely new and concluded by exulting: Perhaps no one has ever written of this before! (Yun 3.13a; cf. LSLDYJX:137, n.24)

Similarly, Shu Tianxiang (1757-1835), inveterate cloud-fancier, capped his fantasia on Lushan clouds by exclaiming:

I've a yen to carry these clouds back home/ And give them to my humble wife as a coverlet. (X154)

Shu's celebrated rhapsody on "Heavenly Pond" helped win him the epithet "Cloud-fool":

I wish to forsake grains and sup on clouds
Wish to unroll their coverlet and sleep on clouds
Wish to plait bamboos and nest among clouds
Wish to loll by my either and watch the clouds
Wish to sweep away all trace and nest among clouds
Wish to banish Cold and wear the clouds
Wish to shoulder the plow and till the clouds
Wish to plant bamboos and engender clouds
Wish to make a mountain and arouse clouds
And if I can make fog to bathe all things, then
I'll waft along and walk with clouds. (qu. in LSLDSX 1980:180-1)

Chinese literati found in Lushan an inexhaustible trove of delightful **qi**-transformations, e.g., Zeng Yu (1760-1831) celebrating East Grove's venerable Lohan Pine (X156):

Its **qi** forming Censer Peak's clouds/ Music like Stonebridge's cascade.

Or Zhang Jiuling (678-740) marvelling at Lushan's waterfalls:

Flying flows soak moving clouds/ Spraying froth startles flying birds
and concluding:

Magic alps multiplying graceful hues/ Flows from the void share spreading vapors. (1211)

Or Bao Zhao (415-466) gazing in wonder at Stone Gate: (X9)

Jasper waves chase the void and part: Roserack boulders strike the peaks and arise.

Huang Daozhou summed up Lushan's charms in this couplet (LS 1981:61):

With every rainfall 100 cascades: Lushan's streams/

Atop each peak 1000 guises: Lushan's clouds.

*

DAOISM

Buddhism hardly held a monopoly on a complex sacred mountain like Lushan. As Xu Xiake wended his way south, he passed many Daoist belvederes and sacred sites. Earliest surviving lore attributes the alp's name to a legendary recluse (and, in most accounts, seeker of **dao**) named Kuang, who hid out there—thus the name "Kuang's Hermitage," or "Hermitage Mtn." Various elaborations had Kuang seeking transcendence; in some versions the Daophilic rulers Primal Thearch of Qin (r.-221-213) and Martial Thearch of Han (r.-140-87) visited Lushan, left memorial stelae on "Ascend Welkin Peak," and, impressed with Lushan's "divine **magic**," enfeoffed Kuang as a duke (Shiji: Han Wudi benji; see Shuijingzhu: II,39.107) Magical hermits wasted little time in following Kuang's example. Dong Feng (who may have lived during the Later Han, or during the Jin, or who may have lived in **both**, spanning 300 years!) wandered about Lushan, gathering herbs, curing poor folk for free, and asking only that they planted his favorite apricot trees. Lushan once boasted many apricots, and later scholars tried to pin down "Dong Feng's Apricot Grove" to a few locations, of which the most popular choice stood near Lotus Peak, not far south from the Three Dragons. (LSZ 1896-8, 683-5 esp.) Luo Rujing (fl. 1410-1420) sang of the legendary "Apricot Grove" (1414)

Transcendent Dong, studying to live forever, planted apricot trees.
The apricot trees became a grove, and Transcendent Dong departed.
Brocade roserack trails to earth, drawn by dawn breeze;
Jewelled globes hang in the void, half-soaked by Fall rain.
Herb-cookers & alchemy furnaces locked under green moss;
The tiger lies in his grove: call, and he won't come out.
Where in the empty mtns can one go to seek his trace?
All you see—apricots blossoming in the East wind. ...

Lushan also became a focus for many mid-Yangzi local cults, some of which got incorporated into later Daoist rituals. For example, the filial son, demonifuge, and magic-carpet peripatetic Xu Sun (who may

have lived 239-374!? His cult lived on into the 19th century) also left traces at Lushan. Together with a kindred filial dragonslayer named Wu Meng (fl.340?), Xu helped rid Lushan of a monstrous serpent. Later Wu Meng challenged the god of Lushan, who controlled a magic creak that issued forth the winds and clouds of the region, and told him his time was up (Shuijing II:105-6). Wu explored Lushan and once:

Reached the 3 Stone Beam-bridges , several dozen staves in length yet less than a foot wide, over a dark abyss. Wu led his disciple up the mountain & crossed the Stone Bridges. He saw an old man seated under a cassia who offered him a jade cup filled with sweet dewy nectar. Then Wu went on and met several men, who set out Jade Creme for him. Wu's disciple stole a jewel, hoping to show it off to mortals of the age. The Bridges then shrank to a finger's-breadth. Wu made him return the jewel, then took his disciple by the hand, bade him close his eyes, and led him back across.

This account suggests a legendary "solution" to the whereabouts of Li Bai's fabled "3 Stone Bridges."

Indeed, by the mid-sixth century, poets already referred to Lushan's Stone Bridges as legendary, e.g. Zhang Zhengjian, who begins an ode about the difficulties of reaching Simple Still Belvedere by sighing:

Three Bridges' Gorge—always been inaccessible. (LSLDSX:12)

We can rest assured that when Li Bai, virtuoso of Six Dynasties verse, referred to his Stone Bridges, he assumed his listeners would not take him dead literally and tromp off after them! (see *infra*, p.9)

Xu Sun and Wu Meng did not always use a magic carpet (though Xu's shrine west of Nanchang used to have the title, "Magic Carpet Belvedere). Once Wu Meng crossed the Yangzi on a white feather (Jin shu95.***) Another time, when Wang Dun prepared to seize power, Xu, Wu, and their friend Guo Pu (264-324, famous poet, scholar, and magician) went to remonstrate; Wang killed Guo Pu and prepared to kill Xu and Wu. At this time:

Xu and Wu knew words would do no good, so they threw a cup into the air. It became a crane, which they sailed among the rafters. Wang was astonished and, as he gazed upward, the two made their escape.

They fled to the Yangzi and sought a boat, but no boatman would take them across. Xu said: just get a boat ready, and I'll sail it for you." He had 2 dragons clasp the boat and soar off with it, far away into the void. Xu warned the boatman: close your eyes—no peeking! They sailed to Lushan, where Xu wanted to see the sights at "Ascend Welkin Peak" [which his knowledgeable guide Wu presumably recommended]. They lowered to the summit and, when the gunwales scraped the treetops, the boatman's curiosity got the better of him, and he peeked. The dragons, infuriated, dropped their boat on the summit, where it fell apart, leaving only the keel intact ("the locals still call it Keelhaul Pond"). Xu and Wu then received a magic alchemical recipe from the boatman and hid away on "Ascend Welkin," where they became Earthly Transcendents (Jixianzhuan; see LSZ 696).

Later, folks got a little confused on **which** alp Xu and Wu left the magic keel; people associated it with a more northerly peak which became "Iron Boat Mtn," the stunning southern bulwark of Stone Gate. Among later poems on the subject, we may adduce one by Sun Ying'ao (fl.~1550; qu. in Zhang 95):

From Marchmount Lu's high peak, I gaze without end/
2 dragons flew off, the iron boat lay empty.
Heavenly wind, be so kind to lend your Whirlwind might/
Blow me off to Empyrean Depths and make me an old angler.

Cf. Wu Guolun (fl.~1560), who closed his ode to Iron Boat by celebrating the flow at Stone Gate (1453):
Ever since Iron Boat refused to fly off/ Alp & marsh still resound with the roar of Twin Dragons. (close)

The Record of Hunting Spirits (1.9a) also credits Wu with controlling winds on neighboring Pengze (Boyang) Lake, simply by throwing a magic talisman on the roof of its Commandery office. Miyakawa has cleverly demonstrated that Xu and Wu, like other locally worshipped magicians such as Luan Ba (fl. 145) and An Shigao (fl.150), both of whom slew huge pythons whose baleful **qi** had caused havoc among the populace, demonstrated the crucial importance of Mount Lu in controlling weather along Lake Boyang—in early medieval times athwart the chief north-south (Gan River to Mei Pass and Guangzhou) and east-west (Yangzi) trade routes. For merchants, envoys, and pilgrims, such powers amply deserved shrines and generous offerings to avoid capsizing on the dangerous, storm-and-floodprone waters of the mid-Yangzi region. Southern Daoists accommodated these (less threatening) popular cults and made Xu Yun the focus of a worship that flourished into the 19th century. (see Miyakawa in Welch 1972; Boltz 81-3 et seq; Eberhard 1968 399ff; Akizuki:**; Schippers:passim). Other literati did not care so much for popular superstitions—they sometimes fueled major rebellions. For example, Su Shi spent a great deal of effort and **qi** himself to debunk the legend of magic echoes on Stone Bell, a Lushan outcropping astride the confluence of Lake Boyang and the Yangzi. (Su Shi wenji II, 11.370-1: "Shizhongshan ji") However, literati could not stem the tides of popular belief. Hu Shi, writing in 1928, laments that at Manjusri Terrace, where Neoconfucian titan Wang Yangming had written fine poems, now "only barefoot peasants come to kneel and pray to the Old Dame of Lushan." (Hu 1931:12)

Jiangxi province proved a hotbed for orthodox 6 Dynasties Daoism as well. Zhang Daoling supposedly founded his Celestial Master Sect atop Dragon-Tiger Mtn, south of Lushan. Ge Hong supposedly perfected his alchemy on "Triple Purity Alp," west of Lushan. And Lu Xiuqing (406-471) settled in Lushan's southern hills from 461-468, where he produced a major portion of the first Daoist Canon, the legendary "Three

Grottoes." The Emperor granted Lu a belvedere, which soon took Lu's honorific title, "Simple and Still."
As compiler extraordinaire and "founder" of the Lingbao ("Magic Treasure") Daoist school, Lu became a chief Daoist patriarch. Before he died, Lu supposedly asked his disciples not to bury him, but just to put his bones in an old cloth bag and toss them into the hills around "Simple and Still Belvedere." His disciples couldn't bear it and buried him properly, but named a nearby cliff "Cloth-bag Cliff," a name it still bears. Simple and Still survived—with numerous ups, downs, destructions, and renewals, into this century; when we passed nearby along the road, however, a cursory inquiry turned up no trace at all. But to medieval Chinese, it still represented a Daoist mecca, as this poem by Bai Juyi helps attest (among 28 poems in LSZ; 1236):

The cliffs white, where clouds still encamp/ The forest red, when leaves begin to fall.
Autumn's old, I wend my idle way/ Not knowing how far or near... (or: *This old one, in Autumn...*)
At dusk, I lodge at the **Magic** Grotto/ Lie and awaken: how dusty schemes have dissolved!
Fame and profit: forgotten at heart/ Market and court: gone from my dreams.
If even a short visit's like this/ How much more a lifelong hideaway!
How to ease midnight hunger pangs? A spoonful of *mica powder*. (ingredient for an alchemical elixir)

Or Qin Taoyu (1264):

Magic traces beyond the mundane, where few travellers venture/
A bamboo hut with its old bramble-door closed awry.
Myriad scrolls of Cinnabar Writs inscribed in vermilion/
1000-fold emerald peaks locked in virid mist.
A white ape weeps out dew, gathers her child and goes/
A dark crane honks up the wind, accompanies me home.
Fitting that its marble pylons' fame should ever persist/
At sunset only idle clouds fly in the void.

By Song times, poems with a marked *ubi sunt* theme begin to prevail, e.g. Wang Shipeng (1112-1171; p.1339) laments:

"Pay court to a Perfected One"—only this stone before His altar/
"Flowing Waters" still retain the notes from His strings.
I want to hear "Golden Cock," climb Golden Pylon:
Across Purple Welkin Peak white clouds stretch.

(Simple and Still had a rock called "Pay Court to the Perfected"; "Flowing Waters" puns on a famous zither tune—Lu Xiuqing won fame as a musician, too; Golden Cock, Golden Pylon, and Purple Welkin all name peaks in the vicinity of its belvedere)

In the 18th century Shang Pan (fl. 1740) could write:
Expounding the Canon, Pounding elixirs—no trace, now.
Ancient belvedere—piled vermilion cliffs and emerald rockwalls.
I want to discern Lushan's former sage's face/
Full of feeling, I stroke His 6-Dynasty pines. (1593)
(Lu planted legendary pines that survived into the 19th c., becoming sole **numinous** traces of his mana.)

By Tang times the main focus of Daoist worship had shifted to 3 other belvederes. The ancient worship of Lushan Mtn deities had never ceased, and in 731 the Mystic Emperor received an occult dream from the

"Guardian of Lushan." The guardian identified himself as an Inquisitional Envoy appointed by the Thearch on High and promised if, properly established in an abbey on Lushan, he would "bring good fortune to the people for 500 years to come." (LSZ 200; see Boltz 81-3) The Belvedere of Great Peace **Taiping Guan** grew into a large and thriving complex during the late Tang dynasty; nothing remains of it today but the foundation of a massive bell tower and 1 or 2 astronomical instruments in a local museum. We saw no trace at all, only the nearby Iron Buddha Temple, a large new priory that has received a great deal of patronage and pilgrim traffic from Shanghai in particular. To help imagine Taiping Belvedere's atmosphere, consider Qiwu Qian's poem (1228):

At dusk I reach my room at Jade Capital/
Dimdarkling, the Starry River trails low.
My soul unites with a butterfly in the Transcendent's chamber/ (alluding to Zhuangzi's famous dream)
At dawn I hear a winged being's cock-crow. ...

Or Guan Yunshi (fl.1300):

Up in the alps a pure breeze, below the alps—just dust/ Emerald sands, flowing waters—shallow in Spring.
I don't know who struck the moon beyond these pines/ Startling me from my Southern Splendor dream.
(1385; Zhuangzi dreamed of union with a butterfly; his text sometimes bears the Daoist title "Southern Splendor: Perfected Canon")

By Yuan times, Lushan tunes began to turn elegiac; see Zhan Yu's lovely lyric to the appropriately entitled tune, "Song of the Grotto Transcendent" (1779)

Where was it I once roved?
Blue-sky clouds trailed my every step.
I stepped among peach groves shattering in pink showers.
Swaying in the E. wind, drop on drop of jade spume bringing Spring alive:
My song finished, I conjured a blue serpent from my sleeve and flew off.

My brocade tunic now long-vanished.
Lushan's gotten old!
The font under bamboos speaks of ancient times.
Nothing measures up; days spent idly;
Spring remains among mist and roserack, but who'll share it?
Again I'll ride the wind yodelling on and ascending the Pure Capital.
Just as: fading moon passes west of the sky;
Bell and drum sound in Jade Tower.

Another focus of Daoism concerned Daoist priestess Li Tengcong ("Void-leaper"), daughter of PM Li Linfu (**-75*). With her friend Cai Xunzhen ("Seek the Perfected"; fl.~785), she dwelt near 9-pleat Screen; they used talismans and cinnabar elixirs to cure people's ailments. Later they "sloughed off [their mortal coil], leaving only a few hairpins and bamboo slips." The Seek Perfected Belvedere [Abbey] got dedicated to their memory; the shrine maintained its popularity for centuries, but no longer exists (LSZ 477-8,847-8).

Li Bai praised Li Tengcong in one poem and sent another poem to his wife, instructing her to entrust their daughter's education to Li:

Waters pound her mica-mill/ Winds sweep her cedar blossoms.
If she loves the finery of Li's secluded home/ Invite them together to toy with violet roserack. (1220)

Wang Ruan (fl.1140) speculated on Li's choice of heavenly vehicles (1341):

Floating clouds--it seems to my eyes she rode a tiger :
It doesn't seem she could rear up and comfortably mount a simurgh!

In the mid-seventeenth century, Zhang Kedu added perhaps the finest encomium for our daring Daoist princess (1527):

Her father dwelt in a palace, the daughter in an empty cave.
Flowing waters & peach blossoms in the Stone Chamber.
How many men have sunk into oblivion?
For numinous transcendence, all yield to "Void-leaper" Li!
Lushan (and the Jiangxi region in general) continued to serve as a focus of Daoism into the Soong and

beyond. Xu Sun's cult continued to flourish: Wang Anshi wrote a stela for his shrine, and the peripatetic sorcerer Bai Yuchan (fl. 1215), who also left poems on Lushan, wrote Xu's most popular hagiography (Schippers:814). Daoist sects—particularly ones fond of Thunder rites, magic, talismanic and textual prognostication, and immortality-seeking—flourished especially from the twelfth through fourteenth centuries (Boltz:176-85, 200,2009,218; Sun 1981:esp. 213,232), with Yuan master Yu Ji's "Mystic Teaching" forming a particularly colorful example. A late example of unorthodox Daoist influence concerns "Mad Daoist Zhou." His legend recounts that Zhou went insane early and hid on Lushan. But he emerged to affirm that Zhu Yuanzhang (r.1368-98) would become emperor. Later, Zhu fought Zhou Youliang for mid-Yangzi hegemony at the Yuan dynasty's bloody end. When Zhu became deathly ill during a key battle against his arch-rival, Zhou treated him at Lushan and cured him with a magic elixir.(LSZ commemorative poems:1667-8,1708; see also 402-3). Zhu then made much of the miracle to substantiate his own imperial credentials; he later lavishly patronized temples near the supposed whereabouts of the elusive madman. Today, you can still visit the "Imperial Stele Kiosk" Zhu erected in Zhou's memory; its couplet reads:

4 walls of cloudswept alp, Nine Channels as oar.
1 Kiosk of misty rain, myriad straths full of pine. (see Zhou 120-1)

Nearby stands the "Transcendent's Grotto" where Zhou supposedly perfected himself before "ascending to Heaven." This scenic area stands above the famous "99-Coils Road" up the west face of 7-League Gorge, which many consider the most beautiful scenery in all Lushan (see Zhou 122). In the end, the scenery

seems to have proved more enduring than the memory or worship of Lushan's many Daoist transcendents and adepts. During the 17th century, 18 Daoist belvederes still housed more than a thousand priests. (X:12,n.) Now Transcendent's Grotto offers the last outpost to a small coterie of 19 Daoist priests and priestesses—mostly Quanzhen adepts from the north, especially Manchuria—who offer prayers and pose with tourists. Within the shrine sits a statue of its tutelary saint, Lu Dongbin—"Lu once meditated here!"—and by the wisps of a few incense sticks we chatted a bit with the priests. They hope to enlarge their monastery, then eventually rebuild belvederes where Jianzhai and Taiping once stood. But their hopes seem exceptional; nearby we met 65 year-old Zhang Junling, who squatted by the tourist trail selling trigram divinations. The youthful Zhang seemed more typical of Daoists you meet in China; he had come up from Jiujiang to breathe pure air and cultivate his life-force. Zhang sought nothing more than a copy of the picture we took together.

HUMANISTS

Xu Xiake also proceeded southeast and dutifully paid a visit to White Deer Academy, where Neo-Confucianism got a large boost from the teaching of Zhu Xi (1130-1200); the mountainminded Xu had, characteristically, little to say. But Lushan's heritage of learned gentlemen in retirement (or even flight from politics) included more than Buddhists and Daoists. Tao Qian (365-427) quit his odious official post and farmed in the southwestern foothills of Mt. Lu. Though he never named the mountains explicitly, most see Lushan in Tao's most famous lines:

Picking chrysanthemums at the east hedge/ Far and slow—see Southern Alp.

Some locate the inspiration for Tao's magical "Peach Blossom Source" near King Kang's Gorge, among the rugged furrows northwest of Hanyang, Lushan's summit (see Lushan 1983:67).

During the Tang, Li Bo (fl. 785-805) spent 20 years in retirement in Lushan's eastern hills, where he and his brother established a study near White Deer Cave. Famous poets like Li Bai and Bai Juyi also have left traces in the form of "Study Halls" or "Thatched huts" dedicated to their memory. During the Song, Zhu Xi chose to renovate Li Bo's and received imperial support for his project. The White Deer Academy later became a Confucian Mecca to rival Buddhist temples and Daoist belvederes; it has become a prime symbol of neo-Confucian learning. Such complexity of cultural activities and traditions helps account for Lushan's enduring grip on Chinese minds. It also presents a complicated problem for we who seek answers to the

question: What is/was **ling** about Lushan? Indeed, what *wasn't*, at one time or another? Simply to answer: "its scenery" seems disingenuous; can we claim Lushan as "more magically beautiful" than, say, Divine Vulture or Tiantai? Nor can we simply answer "the numinous sacred power of its religious sites," since nowadays Putuo and Jiuhua have developed more powerful religious auras. A closer look at one set of eastern peaks can help point out a path through this cultural maze. When Chinese literati visited Lushan, they mostly (unlike Xu Xiake) came by boat, from the Yangzi or up the southern rivers, and crossed Boyang Lake. The Gazetteer teems with poems entitled "Gazing on Mt. Lu from a Boat," and literati found the most salient feature in that view in the eastern face of the "5 Old Men." These alps had their eastern slopes scoured dramatically by glaciers, and their steep, ravaged features left a tremendous impression on Chinese religious and cultural pilgrims. And who got there earliest to celebrate the "5 Old Men"? Again, Li Bai:

5 Old Men, southeastern peaks of Lushan. Blue sky paring forth golden lotuses.
All the lovely hues of 9 Channels—graspable together/ I will build my nest here among the cloudy pines.
(1221)

Li Bai's metaphor—sound familiar?—exerted a characteristically strong influence on later poets. But among the hundreds of references and many dozen poems entitled "5 Old Men," a different metaphorical path soon emerged. Li Zhong (fl.950) blazed an early path when, after terming Lushan a place of "magic brews" and cooling breezes, he closed:

Some year, if I can manage to retire here/ 5 Old Men will be my "connoisseurs of tone." (1279)

Very quickly this anthropomorphic conceit began to snowball. You find the 5 Old Men taking on a complex system of human attributes:

*Holding hands, as in Su Che's ode beginning: 5 Old Men holding hands, ready to ascend to Heaven.

*Enjoying old age, with many children, as in Kong Wuzhong (1312):

With the 3 *Radiances* they jointly give birth and rear/ *Sun, Moon, and stars*
The 4 Marchmounts are their little kids.

Or Guo Youlong (1586):

1000 peaks spread like silk: kids & grandkids bowing/ Myriad ages dark & hoary: singular whiskers and hair! (cf. 1642, 1656)

*Losing teeth, as in Yang Wanli (1346):

In what age did these 5 Old Men/ Climb the peaks and transform to stone?
How many Springs have they lived? Surely their teeth retain no strength.
Heaven gave them 5 jade breasts/ To supply their morning meal.
(probably snowcaps, although Chinese also called stalactites "stony breasts")

*Walking, as in Chao Buzhi's "Remembering Lushan" (1302):

5 Old Men can walk on this Earth/ Incense Censer daily offers up to Heaven.

*Looking happy, as in Li Dalin (1335):

Gracefully boned, hoary-faced 5 Old Men/ Gaze on me joyfully as an old friend. Or 1336:

5 Peaks blossoming out, like 5 old Men/ Whiskers & hair hoary, always lovely and in a fine mood.

*Hoping to join them as a sixth, as in Su Che's "6 Old Men Hall":

In their group, no room for an idle guest? Beyond mundane things, truly we'll become 6 brothers.

(1300 close) Or Wang Peng (1338):

Surely they'll let me join these other codgers/ next to 5 Old Men they'll find another peak. (close)

Cf. 1416

*Hoary, aged faces;

this appropriate metaphor for the rugged corrugations from ancient glaciers occurs at least a dozen times, e.g.:

Hoary-faced, standing erect since the Beginning of Time (1415)

Pockmother sees 5 Old Men/ Their faces all look pretty much alike!

(1504; Magu's center of worship--Magushan, south of Lushan)

The 5 Old Men, hoary-faced, ask about my former vows. (1550)

*Smiling, laughing, as in Su Shi (1293):

From 5 Old Men a hoary smile gapes open.

Or Wu Yongwei's (1735):

Among the clouds 5 Old Men's faces light up for me.

Or Li Tingrui's closure after he wonders about time and mortality (1777):

I ask the 5 Old Men—they just smile. (close)

Or monk Chaoyuan's extensive personification (1580), beginning with:

The 5 Old Men within my gaze laugh and come out to greet me.

Or this couplet by Li Gang (1083-1140), from X71:

Graceful-boned, hoaryheaded, the 5 Old Men/ Look on me delighted, like old friends.

*Whiteheaded, as in Jin Sheng's (1609): Kuang Lu waves to 5 Old Men/ Whiteheaded, they politely bow.

Or Guo Zhongyu's (1484):

In the gully pale clouds breed: The 5 Old Men's heads all turn white! (close; cf. 1559, 1651)

*Waving, beckoning; among many example, we recall Hu Guang's high-spirited closure (1410-1):

Someday when the 5 Old Men beckon to this recluse, I'll nest in their pines and cross Stone Bridge!

Or Zhu Yingdeng's conclusion (1430):

Drifting mists keep closing in before my eyes: 5 Old Men seem to beckon...

Or Cao Xuequan's closure (1496):

5 Old Men, with clean whiskers and brows/ Waving their hands, almost within reach.

I sent a thank-you to these 5 Old Men/ Our paths depart; our feelings grow ever stronger.

Or Di Fengzhu's (1547):

5 Old Men come out of their caves/ Beckoning me to join them for a chat.

*Bowling, as in Wang Siren's close (1470):

A bow to each peak, as they stand on high: Each of the 5 emerging from pale clouds in worship.

Or Lun Pinzhuo's (1557):

Afar I gaze on 5 Old Men emerging from the clouds/ We sit and take turns bowing, as hosts and guest.

Or Mao Deqi (1586):

So clearly, they bow en masse, emerging from windblown mist:

5 Old Men who've been together since before Antiquity.

*Eating and drinking, as in He Weina's (1547):

They've been dining on flying mists since who knows when.

Or Chen Dao's (1623):

Break open white rocks, boil up clear streams! I'll follow 5 Old men/ Suck in snow and dine on the wind...

*They have eyes, as in Gan Te's (1566) closure:

From time to time, 5 Old Men gaze on me/ With faces hoary and calm.

And I return the 5 Old Men's gaze/ Spirits refreshed; we'll get together again.

Or Jin Baoquan (1736):

The 5 Old Men in the clouds recognized me.

or Wang Zhaoming's closure (1718):

By what special favor do the 5 Old Men look on me with clear eyes!

*They wear hats, as in Zha Shenxing's description (1569):

5 Old Men, as of old, lining up hoary peaks.

Approaching: as if turbans wrapped around their snowy heads.

Leaving: as if doffing robes to bare their shoulders...

* 5 Old Men rubbing shoulders, like host and guest... (Dai Diyuan:1599)

* 5 Old Men raising their heads, newly wakened from sleep (Monk Taixu:1765)

* Wang Zhaoming, from an airplane! (1720)

5 Old Men lift their heads and laugh together: An old friend, suddenly flying in to visit!

Modern poet Xu Zhimo (1896-1931), whose plane fatally crashed into a mountain, wrote a long ode to the

5 Old Men full of "hoary locks," "vexed scowls," and "mad laughter"; Xu concluded:

These aren't mtn peaks, but the prayers of some ancient sage... (X:210).

So what? Didn't Chinese conceive of many other mountains in terms of pathetic fallacy? Yes, but none of the other "sacred alps" we have visited received anything like such consistent and nuanced characterization.

And this identification of landscape with human qualities distinctively marks Chinese appreciation of

Lushan from the beginning. Remember, they named the mountain after recluse Kuang: "Kuang's

Hermitage." And later the Mtn **becomes** Kuang, that first of reclusively minded scholars, e.g. Wu Wei

(1552-3):

Kuang Lu's face and eyes, vivid just a foot away.

Now I hoist my sail on Boyang Lake/ 5 Old Men's hoary faces vie to face me.

Or Fang Ti's closure (1629):

Waterfalls thunder in myriad straths/ Where can I find Mr. Kuang?

Or Liu Siwan's (1645):

Man of the mountains—Lord Kuang! Cranes for friends—retinue of apes.

Or Yi Shunding's scenic poem that modulates to (1685):

Milords Kuang: they, too, were men of strong feeling/
Sharing the same **qi**, they held hands and hurried from the human world.
Sad longings before the pines, thoughts on 1000 Springs/
As if seeing the brothers from that age.

Or Jin Baoquan (1738):

Lord Kuang certainly has soaring transcendent bones/ First to make this mountain his home. (close)

Or Huang Kan, after an unsuccessful attempt to climb Lushan's highest peak, Hanyang, concluding (1749):

Some other year, if Master Kuang will invite me/ I'll come here riding the wind to return to Jade Capital.
(Daoist Heaven)

Or Taixu (1765): Lord Kuang waves his hand to me amid the mist and rain.

In these lines, we can feel not only antiquarian allusions; Kuang the Hermit **becomes** his mountain hermitage, becomes its genius locus, and also becomes a role-model and metaphor for all likeminded literati, all men "with the same **qi**/character." Here we may recall the amazing statistic compiled by Jiang Xingyu (1978:70), who calculated that Lushan held more famous hermits than any other mountain!

Lushan antiquarianism itself—the concern with the mountain's cultural legacy and the identification/ absorption with famous characters, events, and lore from its vast history—plays an ever-increasing role in literati's alpine appreciations. They turn from the explicitly Daoist or Buddhist devotions, or from scenic description, toward humanist and, naturally, literati concerns, e.g. (Jiang Gao 1549, visiting sites associated with Tao Qian):

The locals don't recognize a Scholar Tao/ Banging drums before the shrine, they worship their Earth God!
(close)

When Jiang refers to Tao Qian, he has in mind a whole lineage of reclusive scholars to which he feels affiliated; the locals don't recognize or appreciate **him**, either. Or consider Dan Chongguang (1551) visiting scenic Jade Curtain Spring, admiring the water, and closing by admonishing readers not to envy other famous mountain springs, because:

Lu Yu's Tea Classic has long been lost.

The flow of his literary tradition concerns Dan more than the flow over Jade Curtain Cascade!

Or Li Yuecheng (1551), visiting the site of Bai Juyi's "Thatched Hut" and his "Flower Path":

This mountain arose with the Lotus Society/ The road's as levelled as his Thatched Hut.

For Li, Lushan really didn't **exist**—not on anyone's cultural map, anyway—until Huiyuan's Buddhist studies group put it there. And the alp's cultural mana always takes its measure from the relative presence and intensity of "sacred" cultural sites. And what a variety of sites Lushan has possessed! We find later literati visiting, say, Return to Lineage Temple and meditating back past Huiyuan and Wang Xizhi's Ink Pond, as Wu Wei does (1552), to ponder:

Further I've heard of Yu's writ, kept in a Stone Chamber/
I ought to clamber up the creepers to Purple Welkin's Summit! (close)

Wu chose his myth appropriately; since Lushan's bulwark divided Yangzi from lake and rivers to the southeast and "controlled" winds and rains over the lakes district (see Miyakawa), it fit that Chinese would fancy the legendary hydraulic engineer and creator of China's riverine system left his depth-markings and notes high on a Lushan peak (as Chinese lore records). Cao Longshu ([fl.~1760]1629) makes clever use of this myth in his Ode to "Great Yu's Stone Chamber" (allegedly atop Purple Welkin Peak—see LSLDSX: 179), which ends with very long, sonorous lines:

Why did Great Yu, after shaping 100 streams from the vast vagueness, turn to this 1000-fathom summit?
Wasn't it because the Great Flood indeed surged up to Heaven?
No wonder even today Lushan 's crown still spurts forth so many gushing springs!

Or consider Lun Pinzhuo's "Song of White Deer Grotto," where he turns from admiring the view of nearby "5 Old Men" (1551-2) to considering the White Deer Academy's history. In a few lines he mentions Li Bo, Zhou Dunyi, the Cheng brothers, and Zhu Xi, as well as a host of other scholars collectively as "hundreds of people." The he turns **back** to the scenery and:

Gazes from afar on 5 Old Men emerging from the clouds/ We sit & take turns bowing, as hosts & guest.
Lun's implicit metaphor of juxtaposition makes a perfect testimony to the giants of Neo-Confucianism. Not only have they and the mountains in a sense **co-created** to this site, they allow Lun to join the ceremony and co-participate in venerating his cultural tradition. Lun's trope looks even better when we recall—as Xu Xiake pointed out—that from the northwest the 5 Old Men appear as one ridge; only from the southeast can one perceive clearly their separate peaks. Hence, Lun has worked into his lines a strong sense of cultural continuity!

We see that, as poets tread their well-worn itinerary of "sacred sites," even as they echo and interminably reecho famous poems by ancients or friends, they echo, emulate, and worship literary and cultural models.

Thus, it makes sense when Qian Chenqun, echoing rhymes by some friends of his, ends a scenic poem with:

I inscribe this poem to requite the Ancients/ My impromptu offering yields an occult release. (1552 close). Conversely, when the human presence fades, the landscape can seem drained of magic, as Huang Yongnian (fl.1780) lamented (1610):

Banished Transcendent long gone, Su Shi buried deep/
Its Prime **Vital qi** daily plummets, Heaven/Nature's helpless.

But when Formalist literary scholar Weng Fanggang (1733-1818)—the fellow who claimed good poetry ought to have a "sinewy inscape" **jili** conveying the "spirit and tone" of a formal style supposed to accord with ancient models (see Liu 1974:94-5; Luo 1986:20)—visited Lu Shan, he left a series of 13 long poems on different sites, all appraising ancient calligraphic specimens on walls and stelae! Weng climaxes his outpouring of several thousand words by exclaiming of one specimen:

Look at this endless rainbow extending across all 4 walls: **This is** Lushan's Great Sea of Clouds! (1629) Lushan won much renown for its multifarious **qi**, for the unpredictable effusions of clouds and rain that roll out from its peaks and valleys. Lushan spends at least half the year wrapped in fog and clouds; many poems and famous lines celebrate--an sometimes exasperate or lament—its "Sea of Clouds." But Weng finds their magic best concentrated in calligraphic lines that, in turn, express with their "sinewy inscape" the formalized style/character of their creator. The meteorological, artistic, and human become inseparably bonded. This resonates powerfully with verities of Chinese literary and art theory. Recall, as John Hay aptly said, that Chinese care—not for the outward appearance of bodies—but for the conformations of their vital energies **qi**; not for the nude, but for the "energy artery pulses" **mo** in calligraphy; there they find the "spirit/forceful character" **shen** of art and its creator (Hay in Barlow 1994:64-68). Or consider Martin Powers answering the question "When Is a Landscape Like a Body?" (Yeh 1998: esp. 10-11) and finding that good art has **qiyun** (energetic movement) in which landscapes correlate with an artist's **qiyun**, also his "spirit consonance" and "character." Thus, landscapes embody human **qi** and, we might add, quality human works and cultural interaction embody the magic **lingqi** of their surroundings. No surprise that the term **lingqi**, uncommon at other "sacred sites," occurs 4 times in the Lushan Gazetteer, e.g. Bai Juyi's (1237):

First dawnrays on Lushan's peak/ Clear radiance gives forth **magic qi**.

Or Luo Hongxian (1448) visiting "Heavenly Pool":

The waters of Heavenly Pool abound with **magic qi**/
Plant bamboo, smelt cinnabar—bespeaking ancient traces.
(the waters, used for horticulture or in refining immortality elixirs, co-participate in **magical** human transformations of bodies and natural settings).

Or Cheng Songwan, protesting Western excavations and development during Lushan's "colonial period"

(1890-1930), after a long passage extolling Lushan's magic in mythological terms, i.e.:

I don't know how Lord Kuang could **sell** these Silvery Towers and Golden Pylons,
Offer them up as a toast to Thearch on High.
Nuwa built a citadel here in petition to the God.
Herdboy came down from Heaven to lead this Ox by the nose:
Now they've sliced up the ox's, hide into plots measured by the inch!
Nesting in these trees, in every nook, circulates a **magic qi**.
10 leagues of towers and terraces, myriad kinds of greenery.
Cinnabar tiles guiding the walls, flagged with cyan and red. (1689)

In his impassioned defense of Lushan's **natural** "architecture," Cheng denounces Western-style villas. The "Ox," by the way, refers also to Lushan's central "Ox Ridge" in the heart of Lushan's scenic district, the site of Western development after 1890 and now its tourist headquarters.

In his celebrated "Advice on Painting Landscapes," Guo Xi (d.~1090) referred to magical alps like

Lushan and explained:

A mountain has water as blood, foliage as hair, haze and clouds as its spirit and character [and rocks are Nature's bones]. Thus, a mtn gains life through water, its external beauty vegetation and its elegant charm through haze and clouds. Water has the mtn as its face, huts & pavilions as eyes and eyebrows, anglers as its soul. Thus, water gains its charm through the mtn, its vivacity through huts and pavilions, its ranging freedom through the anglers... (Bush 167)

Lushan poets quite agreed; consider, for example, Dai Ceyuan (1599) lauding Lushan's charms:
Truly, this famous alp has fountains as veins/ Grass and trees for hair and earth as its flesh.

Now you may recall how Ouyang Xiu deftly interwove Lushan's misty **qi** with the lofty moral spirit **qijie** of a recluse. Recall as well the "Huiyuan" poem that began our travel through Lushan. When Hui Yuan's White Lotus disciples climbed Stone Gate, they intimated a "**numinous spirit** beyond human comprehension" and found through meditation on Buddha's power a secret path from Lushan's scenery to the **Divine Vulture** Alp symbolizing enlightenment. The poem they produced concludes (1195):

We raised our heads and climbed the **Magic** Pylons/ Far & wee as if soaring in Great Purity.
Sitting upright, we revolve the Empty Wheel/ Spinning out a Canon of Mysteries.
Gods and transcendents share in creatures' transforming/ Best for all to disappear into darkness.
(Strassberg 68-9)

And Zong Bing, one of Huiyuan's disciples, showed Lushan's profound influence when he asserted that "Heaven and earth have **numinous magic**; Vitals spirits do not die." (Mingfolun:21/10b)

Zong's essay on "Landscape Painting" similarly observes that:

Although mtns and streams take solid presence as their stuff, they incline toward the **numinous**. For Zong, as for his master Huiyuan, Lushan's sublimity depends on the alp's spiritual essence commingling with the human soul's inner divinity—this manifest **ling**. (see Bush 1983:passim; cf Cahill in Naquin 1992 on Chinese notions of sublime:esp. 276-84) (See also Liu Zongyuan's comment on a hidden southern alp near his place of exile; Liu felt the alp's beauty justifies belief in some sort of divine creator of things, but sighs: "The **numinous magic** of its **qi** wouldn't allow it to become a Great Man, just this Thing; thus, they say in the Far South "few people, many rocks." Liu III:773, cited in Bush 1983:52)

We could quote endlessly to continue illustrating the infinite ramifications of Lushan's cultural mana. But let's conclude. As Liu Xie wrote in a famous declaration of the metaphysical power of literature, "Man is the most **magical** of all the myriad things." At Lushan the human factor becomes the measure for alpine magic. When the Prince of Teng built a tower nearby, Wang Bo celebrated its scenery, the building, and the literati gathered at the Prince's party by penning his immortal line: The land's **magical** and the people ennobled. This got echoed by many poets, e.g. Song martyr Wen Tianxiang (1236-1283), in his lyric to the tune River Moon Libation (X86):

The land numinous, still you find its people heroic.

And in its heyday Lushan, as Zhou Luanshu writes using a celebrated adage, "availed its own Sea of Clouds and pine-tree Billows and, commingling with the Grove of Scholars, produced a famous cultural mountain that "concentrated **divine magic** to nurture **graceful beauty (xiu)**." (95) We may end by recalling Su Shi's line about trying to "discern Lushan's true visage." Truly, it's not easy to capture Lushan's numinous magic in one easy phrase: we might try something about the transformative communion among human, natural, and divine **qi**. But let's let Su Shi have the last word, in his famous gatha written after a night at East Grove Temple, Shown to Abbot Changzong (WWG 1218; cf. translations in Francis Cook 197*, B. Grant in P. Harris 1999:106):

The stream voice comes from His vast, endless Tongue; (the Buddha, that is)
Mountain hues—aren't they his Pure, Immaculate Form. (hues=**se** suggest all Forms; "Form"=**shen**/body,
All 84,000 gathas during last night: Buddha's Dharmakaya)
The next day, how to bring them alive for you?

CONCLUSION

All five sacred sites we have examined share certain common characteristics:

A) A Founding myth of a great early Chinese monk (Huiyuan, Zhiyi) and/or connection with a foreign monk/bodhisattva: (Huili and Divine Vulture; Jin Qiaojue and Ksitigarbha; Egaku, the finger-burning Indian monk, and Guanyin's Potalaka).

B) Tea! Around Lingyin you see older men handroasting precious copper pans full of fresh leaves above a small fire, drying them to optimal readiness. Putuo also features some teafields—fewer, now that the buildup of sacred centers and tourist accommodations has squeezed out island agriculture. Tiantai, of course, marks a legendary cradle of tea cultivation in eastern China; its "cloud-fog tea," still ubiquitous on Heavenly Terrace's upper slopes, claims ancestry for all the tea in Japan. Jiuhua has fewer plantations, but its **Maofeng/furry-spike** variety enjoys a regional fame. And Lushan's cloud-fog tea has a national reputation. Now that the monasteries have all lost their traditional temple-lands, the tea-temple connection has weakened, though historically the ties had gotten quite prominent and important to the economic and ritual life of Buddhism (see esp. TTSYLZ 2.36; DN 204-5,209-10,219-20).

C) Common place names, due to common Buddhist lore, borrowing, etc. By the time you have visited several sacred (Buddhist) mountains, you have encountered so many places named "Lotus Peak," "Dragon Falls," "Guanyin Cave," "Tiger Creek," and the like, your head may start to spin. You find boulders and peaks that "Flew There" at Nine-flower and Huangshan as well as Lingyin; you find peaks named "Divine Vulture" at Lushan and Putuo as well as Lingyin; you find a "Heavenly Terrace" at Nine-flower as well as at Tiantai; and you find "Five (or more) Elders'" peaks at Nine-flower and Huangshan as well as at Lushan; you could expand this list indefinitely. You might suspect gross plagiarism of famous choronyms, but perhaps more factors come into play. Each of these sacred sites creates a magic *locus amoenus*, a purified microcosm of the spiritual universe. Certain gods, bodhisattvas, and numinous heraldic animals have spiritual powers; their names become, if you will, mantras that help invoke a sense of magic microcosm. In that sense, it may prove necessary for each site to possess, say, its own Guanyin Cave; rather, you might say each site needs to **share** in the magic invoked by Guanyin's name.

D) We have somewhat fancifully assigned each site its own "heraldic beast" and hue. If it helps you visualize their distinctive attributes, you might even work these into an analogue of the old Chinese Five Agents classification scheme for such qualities as colors, cardinal directions, heraldic animals, etc, e.g.:

5 elements "classification"		
	North: black , water	
	Lingyinsi--Vulture's black spine pointing toward W. Lake	
West: white , metal	Center: yellow , earth	East: blue-green , wood
Lushan: fogs, qi , dragon	Jiuhua: gold , Earthstore (crane)	Putuo: Ocean blue , forest green sea beasts
	South: red , fire bird	
	Tiantai: red earth, crane.	

These correspondences do not perfectly match traditional ones—the west conventionally harbors a white tiger, while dragons belonged in the east; the north harbored a snake and/or turtle, etc. But even slightly skewed correspondences may prove mnemonically helpful when we recall salient features of each sacred site. While our account singled out one heraldic beast per site, in truth we simplified by selecting what seemed the most distinctive critter. Actually, you find numinous creatures mentioned at all the sites. The founding myths of any sacred mountain will inevitably include tales of subduing dragons, tigers, serpents, and the like (for a good account of the symbolic meanings pregnant in such tales, see Miyakawa 1972). We could provide an extensive catalogue of verse couplets featuring all the above-named animals for each temple; by now you may excuse us from such a tedious demonstration. But you will want to keep in mind the distinctive complex of plants, animals, and cultural features that helped each site create its own unique numinous magic. In Benjamin Brose's felicitous phrase, such features weave a web best considered as a "sacred ecology." (Brose 2001:40)

E) Historical conditions: all five sites share in similar cyclic progressions from founding through zenith, retrenchment and hard times, followed by resurgent growth, and so on. Certain historical factors recur to catalyze key developments within the cycles. For example:

Lingyin rose to prominence when its mother-city, Hangzhou, became a metropolis in the tenth century; Putuo when its closest city, Ningbo, achieved ascendance as an international trading port after the twelfth century; Tiantai, which stands only a few hours from Hangzhou, Ningbo, Wenchou, and Linhai (the closest port), gained prominence at the end of the Southern Dynasties, after centuries of intensive economic and cultural development of the southeast; Jiuhua depended heavily on the patronage of the Huizhou merchant families so prominent in late imperial China (for data on this interconnection, see esp.

9HZ1997:419-425); and Lushan Buddhism rose to prominence during the Southern Dynasties when regional shipping along the Yangzi and Lake Boyang assumed major dynastic importance (see Miyakawa 1972). Subsequently, most followed the fortunes of their regions and empires. Times like the early Soong, the late Ming silver boom, and the High Qing proved beneficial to all temples. Conversely, despite the efforts of wise and pious abbots, all temples suffered during the collapses of the Southern Soong, the Yuan, the Ming, and the Qing. In particular, the devastation wrought during the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864), the decades of warlordism and colonialist invasion culminating in the war against Japan (1937-1945), and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) worked a triple calamity hard to match even in the long annals of traditional China. But broadly similar historical patterns do not discriminate the distinctive features that made each of these sites, successively, a capital for southeastern Chinese Buddhism in its respective age. Here we may well reconsider our initial question: What made them **ling**?

Some "got painted, lauded in song, ... so often/so well they became famous, became cultural icons" (Naquin 1992:19, DN:200-1 "the alps refine forth Daoists and Buddhists, while 'men of the dao' also refine forth 'scenery"; cf. 9HZ1997:xiii). James Cahill 263 makes the essential distinction between religious mtns whose mana derives from a bodhisattva—Putuo, Jiuhua—and mtns whose mana accretes from layers of literary and artistic attention & accomplishment—Lushan, Huangshan. We might add that some mtns combine these features in complex ways, so that religious mana and cultural cachet form a synthesis that in turn triggers further adulation... Lingyin and Tiantai (to some extent Lushan, not to mention Li Bai and Jiuhua) illustrate such processes.

How does this notion of **ling** relate to modern discussions of sacred mountains and pilgrimage? Yes, you can still find pockets of **ling** in today's world! A current outlook: In recent years the PRC government has found it profitable and good public relations not to suppress Buddhism. They now tolerate state-countenanced Buddhism as long as: it costs them nothing; temples cater to government tourism plans; bureaucrats rake off a high percentage of gate receipts; and they control the ordination/registration of monks and nuns. Temples now face something of a quandary: to rebuild and survive, to meet government and popular demands, they must attract many visitors. On the other hand, to rebuild a corps of well-trained clergy they need quiet and time for meditation/education/study/ religious devotion. These two needs conflict; to balance the two demands a difficult juggling act. Some temples have succumbed—or nearly

succumbed—to commercial exploitation of Buddhism; temples in/near big cities, like Shanghai's Yufosi, Zhenjiang's Jinshansi, and Hangzhou's Lingyinsi, have a particularly hard time. Some of the complexes we visited can adopt a division of labor, perhaps "sacrificing" one or two famous temples as tourist center/Buddhist museum, cash cow... Tiantai's Guoqing and Jiuhua's main temple complex serve as examples; the serious cultivation and contemplation centers that ultimately preserve Buddhist values and produce the monastic talents needed to revive Buddhism come from "peripheral," poorer cloisters, like Huading or Wannian and the caves and "backside" cloisters and huts on Jiuhua. For a relatively small center like Putuo, how to balance the madding crowd with peaceful spiritual retreat becomes a critical issue, one that clerics and abbots ponder often. Prof. Nengren of the Putuo Academy, for example, dreamed fervently of a solitary retreat hut above the Seagazing Tower atop Mei Cen's Peak.

This divide and specialize policy by no means offers a new or unique solution in Chinese history, just as the problem: how to accommodate disparate demands of government policy and popular beliefs reaches way back into Chinese Buddhist history; at a glance it seems generally to bear fruit. Particularly in a relatively isolated area like Tiantai, monks can still find peace and sacred space in which to perfect their dharma, even as temples make ends meet and rebuild. Geomantic concerns prove relevant here: when you found a temple, make sure it lies far enough from a big city to survive the tumultuous convulsions of revolution and progress. Site it in the hills, with a mountain in back and, just to make sure, a sheltering mountain in front. This may sound silly, but consider: on Lushan Donglinsi has hills in back and in front—it has survived. Guizongsi had mountains in back, but none in front; just a market town—it has perished. The same for Simple Still Belvedere; the same for Open Prior Temple. Of course, good *fengshui* alone could not save a temple from a Cultural Revolution; but we must remember that the pillars and icons of a temple have always proved fragile, transient. Chinese have built and rebuilt their temples; Guoqing has gone through any number of incarnations, Lingyin has burnt and risen from the ashes several times. Now we witness a new cycle of reconstruction and regrowth. Can we maintain an optimistic outlook for Chinese Buddhism?

Tempting to make a conservation simile. Chinese have deforested much of their land, but in recent years the government has grown alert to the dangers of such environmental depredation—particularly the threat of soil erosion affecting their ricebowl—and has launched an active, vigilant reforestation and "protect the

forests" campaign. Now you see slogans everywhere in the mountains, read the warnings threatening fines/imprisonment for starting fires, and meet foresters walking in the hills. If only these current policies can afford monasteries some quiet to serve as nurseries for growing new timber. Currently, at Chinese monasteries you see a very few hardy "oldgrowth" monks, seventy or eighty, who have survived recent upheavals against long odds and remain to pass on their wisdom and experience. At Tiantai, for example, monks speak reverently of Juehui, the recently deceased Gaoming abbot, or the ascetic monk Wenhua of Huading, or of Guoqing treasures—here they particularly mention present abbot Keming's predecessor, but also an 80+ year-old Zhejiang monk named Jinghua (now rather dotty), whom teachers at the Buddhist Academy praised highly for having transmitted essential Tiantai teachings that might otherwise have died out. Monks at Donglinsi, likewise, speak reverently of former abbot Guoyi; they now have a worthy successor Guoyi trained, eminent young Chuanyin; currently, however, he occupies a high administrative and teaching post in Beijing. This, by the way, illustrates another feature of current Chinese Buddhism: not enough highly trained, gifted monks to go around. A whole generation of "trees," from the late fifties through the early eighties, got entirely eradicated. Thus, education for a new seedbed generation remains critical, and the current commitment to maintaining provincial Buddhist Academies seems most necessary and a hopeful development. The living force of Buddhist faith will grow a new "forest," given an modicum of favorable conditions; that new growth will come primarily from the "nurseries" at East Grove and (Jiuhua's) Sweet Dew, from the red earth of Tiantai and the Blessed Spring of Putuo...

ACADEMY, CURRICULUM... Certain common features characterize the Buddhist academies we have seen and discussed with monks. They offer a 3 year curriculum, and some offer a further 3 year "graduate program." One sect's sutras will generally provide a distinctive cast to each academy, but all teach a general Mahayana curriculum; classical Chinese, calligraphy, English (occasionally Japanese) also figure prominently in a young monk or nun's education. Teaching monks lament the difficulty of inculcating traditional culture; students have radically different levels of cultural knowledge and generally possess little classical learning; debates continue about how to teach, and traditional recitation-memorization coexists uneasily with "progressive" seminar and question-answer formats. Students and teachers alike suffer from often poor or arduous teaching conditions; yet those very hardships help the devout maintain generally high esprit.

At smaller Tiantai, they must mix 15-year old students who have only a sketchy acquaintance of Old Chinese with experienced 20+-year old advanced scholars of Buddhism; they resolve this problem partly by holding individual sessions for advanced students, which of course adds to teachers' burdens. At larger Putuo they can divide students into "preparatory" (roughly college-entrance level) and "regular" (roughly, graduate-level) sections, each of three years' duration. On typical day at Tiantai students will attend morning assembly 4:40-5:30, begin class with sutra reading 7:15-7:50, study Buddhist history and philosophy during 3 class periods until 11:00am (each class beginning and ending with a short hymn); then study more hours in the afternoon—typically, Old Chinese, calligraphy, and English. They also occasionally have classes in Daoist philosophy and Japanese. Then they recite more sutras 4:15-4:45 and, after dinner, attend individual sessions, sit in quiet meditation from 7-8pm, study, and go to bed by 9:30. Classes impressed me first, because the students show great respect for their teachers and, second, because teaching methods make surprisingly large use of interactive give-and-take. As each class begins, a bell rings, the students stand, bow to their teacher, and sing a respectful hymn to teaching. Another bell and bows end the session. Yet teachers do not simply follow traditionally authoritarian educational methods; some instructors ask questions and engage the students in dialogue, encourage them to seek answers and express their opinions. One Classical Chinese teacher particularly impressed me by his wit, his searching questions, and the daring with which he used old texts to comment on current political and social issues that concerned him. His class imbibed a heady atmosphere of free, critical inquiry that astonished me. Really, I did not expect to find the spirit of Lu Xun alive and well in a mountain Buddhist academy!

Putuo maintains a similar schedule (both academies have half-day classes on Saturday); the preparatory section also studies English and calligraphy, while the graduate section focusses more on intensive studies of different sects and sutras; Putuo's graduates also have a class in comparative philosophy, which examines Western as well as Chinese thought. Prof. Nengren explained that, by the time advanced students leave Putuo, the academy expects them to have some familiarity with at least 30-40 major sutras. Teaching methods here, too, have advanced well beyond the old "memorize, listen, regurgitate" regimen; Nengren, for example, will spend a class on an important issue from, say, the Surangama Sutra, have students discuss and debate the issue, and play the role of moderator and, occasionally, Socratic questioner. He will then

sum up the day's findings. As Nengren says, he vows student won't leave the classroom until they have thoroughly understood the day's issue.

Chinese clerics tend to disparage the quality of contemporary monks; their professions of inadequacy in part betray a tendency to compare today's average with yesterday's famous paragons. My encounters revealed clerics of high ideals and standards, often of great intelligence and vision. Also, the variety of monks and motivations impressed me:

*the power of vows—we already discussed the case of Shihui, who tirelessly campaigns for funds to rebuild Heavenly Pool Temple, spending cold, damp nights meditating in the forests of Lushan. An impressive young monk at Lushan's East Grove Temple, Fade, also has made a vow. He worked on the Central Yangzi Dam project that has just flooded traditional temple sites in his native Ichang (in Hubei). Fade has vowed one day to rebuild and administer a Pure Land Temple above the dammed waters, a fitting compensation for his former career. Buddhist literature and the stories of many monks confirm the importance of vows to a Buddhist; these examples seem especially compelling.

*the power of mind to dispel illusions/demons—again, this forms a leitmotif in traditional literature. Some monks' very survival testifies how the enduring power of **prajna** wisdom can overcome an arduous life. Fahang in his cold cave and Yueqiu in his "cowshed" atop Heavenly Terrace provide unforgettable lessons how meditation can illumine the bleakest living conditions and, as Yueqiu repeatedly stressed, "smash delusions."

*Art still plays a role in the lives of many monks; after visiting many temples, you begin to feel that many traditional arts survive most and best on Buddhist mountains. Just on Tiantai, professors Chaoran—a poet—and Yuezhen—the Academy's chief administrator who teaches calligraphy and paints, illustrate the persistence of this traditional cultural connection. Like a classical literatus, Yuezhen stresses he practices brushwork for "self-cultivation." But the impressive products of his practice grace the walls of the Tiantai Academy; his paintings and scrolls enjoy considerable demand among the patrons of Tiantai temples.

*the role of reason/intellect—Not all the monks follow a path of simple faith or intuitive insight into **dharma**. Many would not call their Buddhism a religion at all; rather, a sort of intellectual discipline for finding truth about life, for discovering *how things are*. For example, Chaoran led an illustrious career as a hotshot young satellite communications engineer. While stationed in Manchuria, he began reading some

sutras and found their cosmology a convincing description of the way the universe exists and works.

Buddhist scripture first captivated the scientist in him, and faith followed. In just five years—after providing for his mother in exemplary fashion—Chaoran became a monk, completed his courses of study, and now teaches Buddhist theology and writes on Buddhist cosmology.

Chaoran followed a relatively straightforward path; many young intellectual adventurer-monks have walked more complicated routes. Not uncommon to meet monks under 25 who have crossed and recrossed China in search of the right teacher, of a different religious outlook, of the appropriate setting and inspiration for their spiritual odyssey. Dehui, a 23-year-old monk at the Tiantai Academy, studied in his native Zhejiang and at Putuo. Then he struck out for the Tibetan regions of western Sichuan province, studied with a Tantric monk for three years, lived in a cave, and picked up enough Tibetan to get initiated into the mysteries of Tantrism. The current leg of his journey finds him perfecting his Classical Chinese so he can enlarge his understanding of scripture; more pilgrimages lie ahead. One of his teachers, 25-year young Miaohai, has journeyed all over China in search of teachers. He has studied nearly every sect and doesn't plan to stay long at Tiantai. Soon he will "wander cloudlike" **yunyou** to Tibet, perhaps, or Wutaishan in the north, or back to see his venerated master in remotest Mongolia. Miaohai fondly speaks of his master's penetration, of his "dharma elder-brother" who has maintained an unsleeping meditative vigil for nine years! Professor Nengren speaks of his years at the Buddhist Academy in Beijing as a time where he spent little time sleeping, either. The intellectual demands of learning Buddhism comprehensively can challenge even the sharpest minds. Nengren's own spiritual pilgrimage led him to Sri Lanka, where he studied for four years. Adept in English, Nengren hopes one day to complete his teaching task on Putuo Island and bring his dharma to the West.

*Though we adduce each monk to illustrate a distinctive trait that stamps each man's Buddhist practice, actually many have an all-around balanced approach to Buddhism. To illustrate this, we might recall Yuntong, the former high-school teacher who now oversees Flowery Summit Monastery atop Heavenly Terrace. Yuntong stresses the need for a comprehensive program to train his monks; he has them meditate (Chan), recite invocations to Buddhas (Pure Land chants), and chant **dharanis** (Tantric protective spells). A strict disciplinarian, Yuntong also leads his charges in rebuilding walls, carrying nightsoil to their distant vegetable plots, and plowing through the arduous exertions of a poor mountain monk's life. This balanced

approach to cultivation—hand to mouth and heart to heart—also characterizes the training at Tiantai and Putuo Academies, where students engage faith, intellect, and physical exertion, all in devotion to the Buddha.

*Finally, we should observe the keen sense of mission you encounter among young monks, in particular. While i stayed at Tiantai's Academy, young monks would visit each evening to practice English and learn more about American life. Both Tiantai and Putuo organized "question-and-answer" classes to give students a chance to ask about Buddhism and life in the US. This proved quite challenging; in Putuo, for example, i found myself bombarded by sophisticated queries ranging from advanced Buddhist cultivation ("How will you feel when your cultivation has removed the physical impediments of your body and you exist as spiritual energy?") to the practice of Buddhism in America ("What characterizes the *distinctive religious bearing weiyi* of American monks?") to Buddhist cosmology ("How can we marry the insights of post-Heisenberg contemporary physics with the teachings of the Sutras?"). Until you've tried to field sharp inquiries from 140 earnest seminarians—monks *and* nuns, who asked most of the sample questions above—while 20 monk-professors sat by mutely to one side—you can scarcely imagine how carefully they have thought about their faith and the role it may play in the world. If they got the impression of American lay Buddhists as sincere, but not terribly knowledgeable about Buddhist doctrine and none too secure in their faith, then i hope this did not do American Buddhism a terrible injustice.

Soon you may meet a Chinese monk or nun, say in San Francisco helping in a Mission soup kitchen, studying at a Religion Department, trying to establish or expand a small temple. They reach out to us with a thousand compassionate arms, with a thousand wise eyes, with one voice asking: will you heed the dharma call? And even a relatively unpromising vulgarian like myself, someone without religious background or firm moral character, mired in greed ill will and ignorance, who has sinned schemed and blundered his way through 45 poorly spent years of karmic deeds, will find myself repeating this question. Can i become a Buddhist; can i better my life by heeding this call? Can you?

Bear in mind that most of China's monks and nuns take their tonsures as teenagers, or shortly after. At an age when American youths study for their driver's licenses and work for spending money, so they can join the mating game and the ratraces of adult existence, these boys and girls shave their heads, take exacting vows of poverty and chastity, and vow to save all sentient beings. Above all, it's in their inspiring energy

and selfless courage that i find remaining **numinous power**, the **ling** of southeastern China's major temples.

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