

## Tale 3

# “Zhenzhong ji” 枕中記<sup>1</sup> (Record within a Pillow)

by Shen Jiji 沈既濟  
translated by Bruce J. Knickerbocker

In the seventh year (719) of the Kaiyuan 元 era (713-742),<sup>2</sup> there was Lü Weng (Old Man Lü), who was a Daoist priest who had acquired the arts of the divine immortals.<sup>3</sup> While travelling on

<sup>1</sup> This translation is based on the text edited by Wang Meng'ou, *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, pp. 23-25. Wang's text is closely based on the text collected in *Wenyuan yinghua*, 883.7b-10a (presented to the throne in 987; hereafter WYYH), which is entitled “Zhenzhong ji”. For reasons beyond our scope here, this is the preferred, authoritative text. Another text collected in the *Taiping guangji*, 82.526-28 (presented to the throne in 977-78; hereafter TPGJ) is entitled “Lü Weng” 呂翁, and, rather than being attributed to Shen Jiji (as it is in the WYYH), a note appended to the end of the TPGJ text alleges that it was taken directly from the *Yiwen ji* 異聞 (ca. 874). In addition to these texts, other editions which have been consulted are listed under “Texts” in the bibliography following the “Translator's Note.” I have carefully consulted William H. Nienhauser, Jr.'s translation of this tale as well as the others listed in the bibliography below.

<sup>2</sup> Changed from the reign title Xiantian 先天 (“Preceding Heaven,” 712-13) in the twelfth month of 713, Kaiyuan (“Opened Prime”) is the second reign title of Emperor Xuanzong's 玄宗 rule (r. 712-756). For unknown reasons, TPGJ has “the nineteenth year of the Kaiyuan era (731)” as the date when this dream-tale takes place. *Lei shuo*, 28.5a simply reads “during the Kaiyuan era” 開元 .

<sup>3</sup> Like *Lei shuo*, 28.5a, which refers to Lü as Lü Gong 呂公 (Master Lü), the old Daoist is identified simply by his surname in this tale. As often happens in the process of the historical evolution of a story, later writers and story-tellers feel the need to supply the character with a name. In our case, in works such as

the road to Handan 邯鄲,<sup>4</sup> he stopped at a rest-lodge. He straightened his cap, loosened his sash, and, leaning against his sack, sat down. Presently, he saw a youth travelling along.<sup>5</sup> It was Scholar Lu 盧,<sup>6</sup> who was wearing a plain-cloth jacket<sup>7</sup> and riding a

Tang Xianzu's 湯顯祖 (1550-1617) play entitled "Handan ji" 邯鄲 (Record of Handan), the character of the Daoist priest came to be transformed into that of Lü Dongbin 呂洞賓 (also known as Lü Yan 呂巖), who since the Song dynasty had joined the group of the eight Daoist immortals and arguably became the most popular among them (on the legendary figure of Lü Dongbin and the propagation of his cult, see Farzeen Baldrian-Hussein, "Lü Dongbin in Northern Song Literature," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 2 [1986]: 133-69).

<sup>4</sup> During the Spring and Autumn period (722-468 B.C.), the city of Handan was first located in the state of Wei 衛 and was later part of the state of Jin 晉 (Tan Qixiang, 1.24). In the Warring States period (403-221 B.C.), it was the capital of the state of Zhao 趙 (Tan Qixiang, 1.38). During the Tang dynasty, it was located in the southwestern part of Hebei circuit (*Jiu Tang shu*, 39.1498), as it is today, at the site of the modern city bearing the same name (Tan Qixiang, 5.49).

<sup>5</sup> TPGJ has *yizhong shaonian* 邑少年, "a youth from the village," and *Lei shuo*, 28.5a paraphrastically reads 一少年, "a youth."

<sup>6</sup> *Sheng* 生, "scholar," was commonly used to designate literate men who did not possess degrees (see *Tangren chengwei* 人稱謂, [Xi'an: San Qin Chubanshe, 1987], p. 53). This echoes an early usage of the English term "scholar" describing "one whom the speaker regards as exceptionally learned. Often merely, one who is able to read and write" (see *The Oxford English Dictionary* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971], p. 2665). Lu 盧 was one of the great aristocratic surnames of the day (see n. 18 below).

<sup>7</sup> Reading *shu* 襖 for *duan* 短. Early texts often portray impoverished commoners wearing this type of clothing, and, as we can see in *Shiji*, 75.2353, such clothing is usually depicted in stark contrast to the longer robes of officials and the privileged retainers of early lords: "Now [the women of] Your Lordship's back palaces tread on damask silk gauze, while your knights cannot (even) obtain plain-cloth jackets" 今君後宮蹈綺縠，而士不得短褐 (this translation is slightly modified from William H. Nienhauser, Jr., et al., *The Grand Scribe's Records, Volume VII: The Memoirs of Pre-Han China*, p. 192). For more information on this clothing, see Zhou Feng 周峰, ed. *Zhongguo gudai fuzhuang cankao zuliao: Sui Tang Wudai bufen* 國古服裝參資料，隋 五 部分 (Beijing: Beijing Yanshan Chubanshe, 1987) and the illustration on p. 117; and Shen Congwen 從 從, ed. *Zhongguo gudai fushi yanjiu* 國古服飾 (Hong



black colt. He was on his way to reach the fields, and he also stopped in at the rest-lodge. He sat down with the old man on the mat, and they talked and laughed with extraordinary gusto.

After some time, Scholar Lu looked at his clothing and baggage,<sup>8</sup> which was worn-out and lowly, and then heaved a long sigh, saying, “As a great man living in a world not in harmony with him, I have come to such distressing straits as this!”

The old man said, “I observe that your body is without pain and without illness. Just now we were talking, laughing and reaching contentment, and yet you sigh over your straits. Why is this?”

The Scholar said, “This life of mine is simply insignificant. How can reaching contentment be spoken of?”

The old man said, “If this cannot be spoken of as reaching contentment, then what can be spoken of as reaching contentment?”

Kong: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1981), which contains on p. 173 a painting from Dunhuang that portrays this type of plain-cloth jacket.

<sup>8</sup> By using this rare noun-compound, Shen Jiji is arguably linking this tale with a story in the Daoist collection, the *Lie Zi* 子, and he elucidates shared thematic content and parallel linguistic terms, events and concepts. The fundamental meaning of *zhuang* 裝 in early Chinese sources is “to wrap,” and then it can also be used for many kinds of “wrapped bags” and those things people wrap themselves in—i.e., clothes. The isolated usage of *zhuang* in the sense of “travelling baggage” is quite common in early texts including *Hou Han shu*, 81:2670, *Jin shu*, 95:2476, and many others. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-72) and his team continued to use *zhuang* in this way in *Xin Tang shu*, 213:5995 and 225:6432. The pre-Tang usage of *yizhuang* 衣裝 as a noun-synonym compound meaning “clothes” is very rare, and one early occurrence is in *Hou Han shu*, 72:2332. On the other hand, *yizhuang* occurs as the noun-compound with the meaning “clothing and baggage” in passages in the *Lie Zi* (see *Lie Zi jishi* 子 釋, ch. 8, [Hong Kong: Taiping Shuju, 1965], p. 166), *Hou Han shu* 後漢書, 77:2491 as well as in Yan Shigu’s 顏師古 (581-645) commentary to the *Han shu* 漢書, 94:3770 and 94.3825.

[Lu] replied, “A gentleman living in the world ought to establish meritorious deeds and sow a name (for himself),<sup>9</sup> to be out [on the battlefield] as a general and in [the palace] as a minister,<sup>10</sup> to have rich caldrons arranged to dine from,<sup>11</sup> to select

<sup>9</sup> The linking of establishing merit with enduring fame has some very ancient roots in Chinese cultural history, and it finds its most pronounced and mature expression in the Confucian tradition. One very early source is a well-known story collected in the *Zuo zhuan* 左 傳 in which Mu Bao 穆豹, while visiting the state of Jin 晉, is asked the meaning of the ancient saying, “to die but not to perish” (*si er buxiu* 死而不朽), to which he answers:

I have heard that uppermost there is establishing virtue; next after that there is establishing merit; and next after that there is establishing words. If even after a long time these are not obliterated, then this is what is meant by the saying “not to perish” 豹聞曰， 上有立德，其次有立功，其次有立言。雖久不廢，此之謂不朽。(Yang Bojun 伯 君, *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan zhu* 春秋左 傳注 [Taipei: Hongye Wenhua, 1993], Xiang 24, pp. 1087-8.)

<sup>10</sup> The expression *chuijiang ruxiang* 出將入相—“being out (on the battlefield) as a general and in (the palace) as a minister”—is found only twice in the standard histories, both times in the *Jiu Tang shu* (see 106.3239-40; 174.4528). The first passage is particularly valuable for its listing of five chief ministers, two of whom—Zhang Yue 張 柬之 (667-730) and Xiao Song 蕭嵩 (ca. 669-749)—Shen Jiji uses as partial models on which to base the character of Lu, as I will discuss below. *Chuijiang ruxiang* was hardly a rare pattern of official advancement during this period of the mid-Tang dynasty: some twelve of the total thirty-six chief ministers during Xuanzong’s reign had attained the highest position in the central government by way of their successful careers as military governors on the frontier (see E.G. Pulleyblank, *The Background of the Rebellion of An Lushan* [London: Oxford University Press, 1955], Appendix V; and Pan Yihong, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan*, p. 154). Obviously, this career pattern had become an ideal and much aspired-to recipe for success and power, for the *Jiu Tang shu* passage goes on to say that, from 748 on, the powerful dictator Li Linfu 李 甫 (?–752) tried and eventually succeeded in persuading the Emperor to appoint all non-Chinese generals as military commissioners. Lin’s goal was to halt this pattern of official advancement by preventing military commissioners from gaining even more power in the central court which enabled them even greater political influence through their military success. Within three years, all frontier commands were under the control of foreign generals, the most powerful and famous of which was An Lushan 安祿山, setting the stage for the forthcoming rebellion (see also Twitchett, “Xuan Zong,” pp. 426-27).

[beautiful] sounds to listen to,<sup>12</sup> and to have the clan increasingly prosper and the family grow increasingly rich. Only then can you use the words “reaching contentment!” I once had my ambition set on learning, and enriched myself by roaming in the arts,<sup>13</sup> and I myself believed that during those years the green and the purple [robes of the official] were for the taking.<sup>14</sup> Now I have already reached my prime,<sup>15</sup> but still I labor in the ditches and the fields. If this is not being in straits, then what is it?” As he finished speaking, his eyes became misty and he longed to sleep.

At the time, the host [of the rest-lodge] had just begun to steam millet.<sup>16</sup> The old man then groped within his sack, took out a pillow and gave it to him (Lu), saying, “Recline yourself on my

<sup>11</sup> According to Wang Meng’ou, the intent of the phrase *lieding er shi* 鼎而食 is like that of a passage in *Shiji*, 112.2961, which reads: “Now if a (real) man does not live and have the five caldrons to dine from, then he will die by being boiled in them” 且丈夫生不五鼎食，死即當五鼎烹耳 (Wang, p. 27).

<sup>12</sup> *Tangren xiaoshuo xuanxi*, p. 4 reads *sheng* 聲 as “beautiful music;” and Fu Jifu translates it as “the singing of women” (p. 39).

<sup>13</sup> The WYYH text 志於 富於遊藝 paraphrases *Lunyu*, 2/4: “ambition set on learning” 志於 and 7/6: “roaming in the arts” 遊於藝. The TPGJ text was evidently edited to more precisely replicate the maxims of the *Lunyu*, reading: 志於 而遊於藝.

<sup>14</sup> As is understood from Yan Shigu’s commentary to the *Han shu*, 87.3566, in the Han dynasty *qingzi* 青紫 referred to the colors of the ribbons attached to the seals carried by officials holding the most eminent positions. However, by the time of the Tang dynasty the term had come to signify the color of the robes donned by high-ranking officials, with specific colors referring to specific positions (for more information, see *JTS*, 42.1785; 45.1951-53; for illustrations of T’ang official clothing, see *Zhongguo gudai fushi shi wuqian nian* 國古服飾五千年 [Hong Kong: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1984], pp. 79-80 and *Zhongguo gudai fushi shi* 國古服飾 [Shanghai: Zhongguo Xiju Chubanshe, 1984], pp. 86-7.

The TPGJ reads *zhuzi* 朱紫 (“vermilion and purple”) for 青紫, but, for all intents and purposes, the thrust of the meaning is the same.

<sup>15</sup> *Zhuang* 壯 indicates thirty years of age (see Wang Meng’ou, p. 27).

<sup>16</sup> For *shu* 黍 TPGJ reads *huangliang* 黃粱, another variety of millet. The importance of this textual variant, and its role in determining the authorship and textual history of this tale, will be discussed in the “Translator’s Note.”

pillow. It ought to allow you a glory and contentment like that of your ambitions.”

This pillow was of green porcelain, and holes were at both of its ends. As the Scholar lowered his head towards it, he perceived<sup>17</sup> that its holes were gradually becoming larger, brighter and clearer, he thereupon raised up his body, entered and then arrived at his home.

After several months, he married a girl from the Cui 崔 Clan of Qinghe 清河.<sup>18</sup> The girl's appearance was extremely beautiful, and the Scholar's wealth became greater and greater.<sup>19</sup> He was greatly pleased. From this time on, his clothes, baggage and equipage grew daily more attractive and magnificent.

<sup>17</sup> The texts of both the WYYH and the TPGJ read *jian* 見 “seeing.” However, immediately prior to this graph in the TPGJ text, there are the two graphs *meizhong* 寐, “while asleep” strongly suggesting that Lu is not in a waking state when he “sees” the pillow's holes gradually becoming larger, brighter and clearer, but rather that he is already beginning his dream at this point.

<sup>18</sup> During the Tang dynasty, the Cui clan of Qinghe was included among the seven powerful and prestigious clans of the old nobility. In an essay in his *Mengxi bitan* 溪談, Shen Kuo 括 (1031-95) enumerates these clans as follows:

Eventually, taking the registers of officials from previous generations as a basis, the Cui 崔 Clan of Boling 博陵, the Lu 盧 Clan of Fanyang 范陽, the Li 李 Clan of Longxi 隴西, and the Zheng 鄭 clan of Yingyang 滎陽 were designated as the “Lineages of the First Class.” During the reign of Gaozong 高宗 under the Tang (r. 650-83), the Wang 王 clan of Taiyuan 太原, the Cui 崔 clan of Qinghe 清河, and the Li 李 clan of Zhaojun 趙郡 were added to them to form the “Seven Great Surnames” (translated by Denis Twitchett, “The Composition of the Tang Ruling Class,” in *Perspectives on the Tang* pp. 55-6).

Qinghe was situated a few miles west of modern Qinghe in south-central Hebei (Tan Qixiang, 5.49).

<sup>19</sup> As Wang Meng'ou points out, Lu becomes wealthy with the dowry which the girl brings, which must surely be very great when considering the power and wealth of the prestigious Cui clan (p. 28). The TPGJ text confirms this reading: “The girl's appearance was extremely beautiful and her property was extremely abundant” 女容甚麗而產甚殷.

During the next year, he was elevated as a presented-scholar examination and was entered on the list of graduates. He cast off his plain-cloth jacket and became Palace Library Editor.<sup>20</sup> After taking part in the special examination established by imperial decree,<sup>21</sup> he was transferred to be Commandant of Weinan 渭 .<sup>22</sup> Presently, he was promoted to Investigating Censor,<sup>23</sup> and transferred to be Imperial Diarist<sup>24</sup> as Drafter in Charge of

<sup>20</sup> The official position *mijiao* 祕校, an abbreviated form of the title *jiao-shu lang* 校書郎 (editor) in the *mishu sheng* 祕書省 (the Palace Library), entailed editorial work on imperial documents. In the Tang dynasty, such appointments were typically reserved for new graduates of the presented-scholar examination. There were eight such positions which were of the ninth rank (see Hucker, pp. 375-6 and 142, entries 1575 and 742, respectively; Wang Meng’ou, p. 28; and *JTS*, 43.1855).

<sup>21</sup> The *WYYH* text has *ying zhi* 應制, which is more clearly read in the *TPGJ* text as *ying zhiju* 應制舉. *Zhiju* 制舉 refers to a special interview or examination given to very few choice presented-scholar graduates who are summoned by imperial decree. This examination was intended to determine individuals of outstanding ability for promotion to higher-ranking official positions (see *XTS*, 44.1159: 44.1169). The examination was sometimes personally attended by the Emperor (as in *JTS*, 8.182). The translation of the term is based on Robert des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens* (Paris: Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1932), p. 41.

<sup>22</sup> Although the position of *wei* 尉 was a common military one of the ninth rank which involved responsibilities more administrative than military in nature, this transfer certainly represents a promotion. Being posted at Weinan 渭南 county was particularly prestigious since it was located in the capital region (see Hucker, p. 564, entry 7657 and Xu, p. 30), approximately thirty miles northeast of Chang’an, at modern Weinan in Shaanxi province (Tan Qixiang, 5.41).

<sup>23</sup> *Jiancha yushi* 監察御 was a position of the eighth rank which gave the holder broad-ranging responsibilities in that upper-echelon government agency, the Censorate (*Yushi tai* 御臺). This agency maintained disciplinary surveillance over the whole of officialdom as well as regulated complaints and transgressions of a legal, military, economic, or religious nature (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #795, pp. 145-46; Wang, p. 29; and Xu, p. 30).

<sup>24</sup> The holder of the sixth-rank position of *qiju sheren* 起居舍人 shared the duty of recording the daily activities of the Emperor together with other Imperial Diarists called *qiju lang* 起居郎. The information which they recorded was later included in Imperial Diaries, which were used by scribes to compile official histories (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #622, p. 135; Wang, p. 29; and Xu, p. 30).

Imperial Edicts and Proclamations.<sup>25</sup> After three years, he went out [of the capital] to take charge of Tongzhou 同州,<sup>26</sup> and [then] promoted to Shepherd of Shan 陝 [prefecture].<sup>27</sup> By nature the Scholar was fond of construction projects, and from Shan (prefecture) he dug a canal for eighty *li* westward that aided the inaccessible [areas]. The local people profited from this and engraved a stone (stele) commemorating his virtues. He moved to govern Bianzhou 汴州, assuming [the position of] Investigation

<sup>25</sup> *Zhizhi gao* 知制誥 was a prestigious position in the Secretariat (*zhongshu sheng* 書省) which an official often held together with another position. The Drafter in Charge of Imperial Edicts and Proclamations had the special duty of presenting the edicts and proclamations to the Emperor (see *XTS*, 47.1211; Hucker, *Official Titles*, #955, p. 156; Wang, p. 29; and Xu, p. 30). The translation is modified from that of Robert des Rotours, *Traité des fonctionnaires et traité de l'armée* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1947), p. 182.

<sup>26</sup> Several commentators believe that the force of this phrase, “dian Tongzhou” 同州, conveys the meaning of taking up the position of *cishi* 刺史, Prefect—the head of a prefecture—which during the Tang was a position of the third or fourth rank, depending on the land and population size under jurisdiction (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #7567, pp. 558-59; Tan Qixiang, p. 328; Wang, p. 29; Xu, p. 30).

Tongzhou 同州 prefecture was located just outside the capital region about forty-five miles northeast of Chang’an at modern Dali 荔 prefecture in Shaanxi province (Tan Qixiang, 5.41).

<sup>27</sup> The ancient title of Shepherd (*mu* 牧) originated in the Zhou 周 dynasty when it referred to the official who oversaw one of the kingdom’s Nine Regions (*jiu zhou* 九州). By the time of the Tang, there were only a few positions which officially retained this title as it had been displaced by others such as Prefect (*Cishi* 刺史) or Area Commander (*Dudu* 都督). As in this case, prefects, area commanders and other comparable administrative officials were still sometimes unofficially referred to as shepherds (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #4041, p. 336 and #7110, p. 531; Wang, p. 29; Xu, p. 30). During the Tang, the prefecture of Shanzhou 陝州 was alternatively led by prefects, area commanders and military governors (*Jiedu shi* 節度使) (for example, see *XTS*, 4.89; 38.985; 50.1332; 71.2245; 217.6119). Shanzhou was located approximately 120 miles to the east of Chang’an at modern Shan 陝 county in the west part of Henan province (Tan Qixiang, 5.38; 5.44).

Commissioner of Henan 河 circuit.<sup>28</sup> [Thereafter] he was summoned to be Metropolitan Governor of Jingzhao 京兆.<sup>29</sup>

That year, the Spiritual and Martial Emperor<sup>30</sup> had just engaged the Rong and the Di peoples<sup>31</sup> to increase the extent of the border territories. It happened that Tufan’s 吐番<sup>32</sup> Ximeluo

<sup>28</sup> Investigation Commissioner (*Caifang shi* 採訪使) was one of several titles of the delegates of the central government who were in charge of the newly demarcated units of land called *Dao* 道 (circuits), each of which had jurisdiction over several prefectures (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #6826, p. 515; Xu, p. 31). In 733, the entire country was divided into fifteen such circuits. The Investigation Commissioner of Henan 河南 circuit was posted at Bianzhou 汴州 prefecture (*JTS*, 38.1385), corresponding roughly with the location of modern Kaifeng 開封 in Henan circuit. From 733 on, Henan circuit included not only modern Henan province, but also large areas of the provinces of Shandong, Anhui and Jiangsu (Tan Qixiang, 5.44).

<sup>29</sup> Since the Han dynasty, the title of Metropolitan Governor of Jingzhao yin 京兆尹 designated the administrative chief of the dynastic capital and its surrounding areas. In the beginning of the Kaiyuan era in the Tang, the Metropolitan Prefecture was renamed Jingzhao fu 京兆府, and came to include the capital, Chang’an, and its environs. The position of Metropolitan Governor, which administered this region, was one of the third rank (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #1190-92, p. 170; *JTS*, 4.1915-16). Ch’ang-an and its vicinity was located at modern Xi’an (Tan Qixiang, 5.41).

<sup>30</sup> The Spiritual and Martial Emperor (*shenwu huangdi* 武皇帝) was a title of reverence given to Emperor Hsüan-tsung in 739 (*JTS*, 8.171).

<sup>31</sup> In early texts like the *Guoyu* 國語 and the *Zuo zhuan* 左傳, the many and various Rong 戎 and Di 狄 tribes are found scattered inside the Chou territories and around them. In this tale, however, the expression *rong di* 戎狄 refers to the Turks, Tibetans and Uighurs along the western frontier (Wang, p. 29; Hsü, p. 31). This usage is found throughout the Tang official dynasties (as in *JTS*, 120.3462; 146.5232; *XTS*, 137.4606; 215.6028). For an overview of the situation regarding the Zhou dynasty period tribes, see James Legge’s prolegomena in *The Chinese Classics: Vol. 5, The Chun Qiu with the Zuo Zhuan* (rpt. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1960), pp. 122-35.

<sup>32</sup> Tibet, called Tufan or Tubo 吐番 in the Chinese sources, first rose as a unified and powerful kingdom under the Yarlung dynasty around the end of the sixth century. Prior to that, no dates can be assigned securely (see R. A. Stein, *Tibetan Civilization*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972, p. 45). From the

悉抹邏 (Stagra [Konlog]) and Mangbuzhi 莽布支 (Cogro Manpoci) of Zhulong 燭龍 had attacked and captured Gua 瓜 and Sha 沙.<sup>33</sup>

end of the sixth century on, Tibet continued to expand its territory (compare Tan Qixiang, 5.32, 5.35 and 5.36) so that, by 820, Tang China had lost large tracts of land in modern Gansu and Ningxia circuits to Tibet, which at that time extended up northward into modern Inner Mongolia (Tan Qixiang, 5.76-77). For more on the kingdom of Tibet during the early middle ages, see Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1987).

<sup>33</sup> The Tang standard histories (*JTS*, 99.3094; 103.3191-93; 196A.5229; *XTS*, 101.3953; 133.4547-48; 216A.6083-84) narrate that in 727 the Tibetan generals Ximeluo 悉抹邏 (written there as Xinuoluo 悉諾邏) and Mangbuzhi 莽布支 attacked, plundered, burned and took hostages from garrison towns in the prefecture of Guazhou 瓜州 (which was located in the eastern part of modern Anxi 安西 county in Gansu province [Tan Qixiang, 5.61]). Shazhou 沙州, the adjacent prefecture to the west (and better known as its later name of Dunhuang 敦煌, [Tan Qixiang, 5.61]) is not mentioned explicitly; however, later in that year the Tibetans did also attack—although unsuccessfully—the county of Changle 常, which was located near the border of Shazhou (Tan Qixiang, 5.61). Combined Tibetan forces then went on to raid throughout the region (*JTS*, 194B.5191; *XTS*, 215B.6067). Perfectly mirrored in our tale, this situation continued until the Emperor appointed Xiao Song 蕭嵩 (c. 669-749) the new military governor of Hexi. Like Scholar Lu, Xiao Song effectively organized defenses against the Tibetan incursions.

The names for Ximeluo and Mangbuzhi have also been rendered Stag sgra khon lod and Cog ro Manporje, respectively (see Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, p. 101). Ximeluo hailed from the Supi 蘇毗 area of the kingdom of Tibet (*XTS*, 216.6087; Tan Qixiang, 5.77), where he was apparently a prince (*JTS*, 110.3316; *XTS*, 216A.6087). Later on, a Chinese spy allegedly had been sent to Tibet to slander him, and this led to his execution during the winter of 729 (*JTS*, 196a.5229; *XTS*, 216A.6083).

Mangbuzhi's home seems to be indicated by his surname, Zhulong 燭龍. Zhulong was a Tang-controlled prefecture since 646 (previously Uighurian), and it was located at the modern city of Cita (Chita 赤塔) in the Buryat Autonomous Republic in the southeastern part of the Russian Federation in Asia (*JTS*, 38.1415; 191.5196; Tan Qixiang, 5.43). This Tibetan general continued to lead the combined Tibetan army for at least another decade (see Christopher I. Beckwith, *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*, pp. 110, 114, 116, 118).



Furthermore, Military Governor<sup>34</sup> Wang Junchuo 王 勣<sup>35</sup> had recently been killed, and the He Huang 河 湟<sup>36</sup> was shaken into turmoil. The Emperor, desiring a commander of talent, consequently appointed the Scholar Vice Censor-in-Chief<sup>37</sup> and Military Governor of Hexi 河 西 circuit.<sup>38</sup> Lu crushed the Rong rabble, cut off seven thousand heads, and opened up the land for

<sup>34</sup> The position of Military Governor (*jiedu shi* 節度使), particularly from the Kaiyuan era on, came to supplant and militarize the functions of the position of Area Commander (*dudu* 都督) in the northern, western and southwestern frontier regions where more militant policies were being implemented against non-Chinese border peoples (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #777, p. 144; Xu, p. 31). For a capsule summary of the development of this position and its growing importance during the post-An Lushan era, see Pan Yihong, *Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qaghan*, pp. 151-66.

<sup>35</sup> Wang Junchuo (d. 727) was a native of Changle county in Gua prefecture (see n. 33 above). While holding a lower rank at a frontier post, he was not treated respectfully by Uighurs and other Tiele tribes in the region. After becoming military governor of Hexi, he adopted a bellicose policy towards the Tibetans and these tribes, who in turn sent secret envoys to the Tang court to complain of him. When Wang heard of this, he reported that these tribes were planning to rebel. Emperor Xuanzong had the matter investigated, and the Uighurs were found guilty and their chieftains were exiled. Therefore, when Wang returned from attacking the Tibetans after their raids of 727 (during which Wang’s father had been taken hostage), a nephew of one of the exiled chieftains organized his people and killed Wang (*JTS*, 8.191; 103.3191-93; 195.5198; *XTS*, 5.133; 133.4547-48; 216.6083-84; 217A.6114).

<sup>36</sup> He Huang 河 湟 specifically refers to the lands lying between and around the He 河 (Yellow River) and the Huang 湟 River in modern Gansu and Qinghai provinces (Tan Qixiang, 5.61-62), and was generally used in the Tang to refer to “the land of the Western Rong 戎” (西戎地曰河湟; *XTS*, 216.6104)—that is to say, the land of the non-Chinese peoples living along the western frontier (see n. 31 above).

<sup>37</sup> *Yushi zhongcheng* 御 丞, a position of the fourth rank, was the second highest administrative position in the Censorate during the Tang (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #8174, p. 592; Xu, p. 32).

<sup>38</sup> Hexi 河 西 circuit was west of the Yellow River and covered areas of the modern provinces of Shaanxi, Gansu and Inner Mongolia (Tan Qixiang, 5.40-1 and 5.67-8).

nine hundred *li*. He built three great walled cities to shield the important strategic areas. The people of the frontier region erected a stone [stele] on Juyan 延 Mountain<sup>39</sup> to praise him.

He returned to the court, and was awarded an imperial document commemorating his meritorious service.<sup>40</sup> He was shown imperial favor and ritual treatment which was extremely

<sup>39</sup> There is no mention of a Juyan 居延 Mountain in the historical or geographical sources. In the Han, an outpost city called Juyan 居延 was established, and it was located near modern city of Ejin Qi in Inner Mongolia (Tan Qixiang, 2.33-34). In the Later Han, the regions surrounding this city and the lands extending far to the southwest were referred to as Juyan shuguo 居延屬國 (Tan Qixiang, 2.57-58), and this entire area was included in Gan circuit 甘州 during the Tang. (*JTS*, 25.1641; Tan Qixiang, 5.61-2; 5.75). Xu Shinian suggests that the Yanzhi 焉支 mountain range which was located in the southeastern part of Gan circuit (and southeast of modern Shandan 山丹) was at the time called Juyan (p. 32). I have not found any conclusive evidence which supports this contention, however. Incidentally, the area in Tang dynasty Gan circuit called Juyan is not to be confused with the area command bearing the same name which was established northeast of modern Beijing (*XTS*, 217.6145; 219.6174; Tan Qixiang, 5.42-43).

<sup>40</sup> At this time, the ritual commemoration called *cexun* 冊勳 entailed an imperial ceremony at which the Emperor personally conferred the official being honored with the documents. More general imperial documents known as *ce* 冊 (often written as 策, as in the *TPGJ* text and in other Tang sources) were used to confer appointments, emoluments and enfeoffments; however, *cexun* specifically bestowed honor on the meritorious servant, and seems to have followed a celebratory drinking ritual (*JTS*, 11.277; 120.3460; see also *XTS*, 173.5212 and *JTS*, 121.3483 where an appointment was indeed made; also helpful is the commentary of Wang, p. 30 and Xu, p. 32). These conditions are likewise found in the *locus classicus* occurrence of the term *cexun* in a passage in *Zuo zhuan* where Duke Huan 桓 of Lu 魯 (r. 711-694 B.C.) returns from a triumphant, peace-strengthening meeting with a Rong 戎 tribe. The passage continues:

Whenever the Duke sets out, he announces it in the ancestral temple. When he returns, he drinks [in celebration] of that. He sets down his drinking cup, and commemorates the merit of that on bamboo slips. This is the ritual. 凡公行，告于宗廟。反行，飲，舍爵，策勳焉。禮也。

The reading of *cexun* as a verb-noun compound is confirmed by Yang Bojun and Du Yu 預 (222-284; see Yang Bojun, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhu*, Huan 2, p. 91).

magnificent. He was transferred to be Vice Director in the Board of Civil Office,<sup>41</sup> and was [later] promoted to be the Minister of the Ministry of Revenue,<sup>42</sup> as well as the Censor-in-chief.<sup>43</sup> His renown at that time was pure and honorable; and many wished to closely associate [with him].

He was greatly envied by officials of the time, who employed ungrounded rumors to strike at him. He was demoted to become the Prefect of Duanzhou 端州 prefecture.<sup>44</sup> After three years, he was summoned to become Policy Advisor<sup>45</sup> and, not long after, Joint Manager of Affairs with the Secretariat-Chancellery.<sup>46</sup> He joined Secretariat Director Xiao Song<sup>47</sup> and Director of the

<sup>41</sup> During the Tang, the Board of Civil Office (*li bu* 吏部), one of the major agencies in the Department of State Affairs (*shangshu sheng* 尚書省), was in general charge of appointments, evaluations, promotions, demotions, titles and honors of officials. The position of *li bu shilang* 吏部侍郎, Vice Director in the Ministry of Personnel, was one of the fourth rank (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #3630 and 5278, pp. 306 and 426-27; Wang, p. 30; Xu, p. 32).

<sup>42</sup> *Hu bu shangshu* 戶部尚書, a third-rank position, was the head of the Ministry of Revenue (*shangshu* 尚書), a major central government agency responsible for land and population censuses, tax assessment and collection, and the storage and distribution of government revenues (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #2789, p. 258; Wang, p. 30; Xu, p. 32).

<sup>43</sup> *Yushi dafu* 御史大夫, head of the Censorate, was a position of the third rank (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #8181, p. 593; Wang, p. 30-1; Xu, p. 32-3).

<sup>44</sup> Duanzhou 端州 prefecture, very remote from the Tang political and cultural center, was located northwest of modern Hong Kong in Gaoyao 高要 county in Guangdong province (Tan Qixiang, 5. 69-70).

<sup>45</sup> *Changshi* 常侍 is an abbreviated form of *sanqi changshi* 散騎常侍, the title of two positions of the third rank in the Chancellery (*menxia sheng* 門下省), the top government agency responsible for remonstrating and advising the Emperor about proposals and policy decisions (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #3939, p. 329; Wang Meng'ou, p. 31; and Xu, p. 33).

<sup>46</sup> The position, also referred to by the unwieldy title *tong zhongshu menxia pingzhang shi* 同書門下章事, was essentially that of Senior Chief Minister (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, # 1617, p. 193; Wang Meng'ou, p. 31; and Xu, p. 33).

<sup>47</sup> See n. 10 above and his biographies in *JTS*, 99.3093-5; *XTS*, 101. 3949-52.

Chancellery Pei Guangting 裴光庭<sup>48</sup> in together controlling major government policy for over ten years. He received [the Emperor's] excellent plans and secret orders three times a day; presented revisions<sup>49</sup> when explaining and enriching;<sup>50</sup> and he was designated as a worthy Minister.

Those of equal rank were jealous of him<sup>51</sup> and once more made false accusations, [claiming] he had contacts with frontier commanders whose plans were lawless. An imperial edict ordered his imprisonment, and functionaries from [Metropolitan] Headquarters<sup>52</sup> led followers to his gate and quickly detained him. The Scholar was frightened and astounded by these unfathomable

<sup>48</sup> The biographies of Pei Guangting 裴光庭 (676-733) are in *JTS*, 84.2906-8; *XTS*, 108.4089-91. On the ministry of Xiao Song and Pei Guangting (729-33), see Denis Twitchett, "Xuan Zong (Reign 712-56)" (in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 3, Sui and Tang China, 589-906, Part 1*), pp. 393-95.

<sup>49</sup> *Xianti* 獻替 recalls the words of the famous minister Yan Ying 晏嬰 (d. 500 B.C.) to Duke Jing 景 of Qi 齊 (r. 547-490 B.C.): "Thus it is between rulers and ministers. When there is that which will not do in what the ruler says is to be done, the minister presents [i.e., points out] those things which will not do so as to correct those things which are to be done. When there is that which will do in what the ruler says is not to be done, the minister presents those things which will do so as to remove those things which will not do" 君臣亦然。君所謂可而有否焉，臣獻其否以成其可。君所謂否而有可焉，臣獻其可以去其否 (Yang Bojun, *Chunqiu Zuo Zhuan zhu*, Zhao 20, p. 1419).

<sup>50</sup> *Qiwo* 啟沃 echoes a phrase in the Yin 殷 dynasty (ca. 1600-ca. 1028 B.C.) King Wuding's 武 admonition to his newly appointed minister Fu Yue 傅 in the *Shang shu* 尚書: "Open your mind, and enrich my mind" 啟乃心，沃朕心 (see James Legge, *The Chinese Classics, Volume 3, "Shuo ming"* 命 1, p. 252).

<sup>51</sup> The phrase *tonglie haizhi* 同 害之 recalls an episode in the *Shiji* biography of Qu Yuan 屈 (340?-278 B.C.), the famous poet and minister of the state of Chu 楚: "The Grand Master Shangguan held the same rank as [Qu Yuan]. He strove for favor and was secretly envious of his abilities" 上官 夫與之同，爭寵而心害其能 (*Shiji*, 84.2481; the translation is that of William H. Nienhauser, Jr., et al., *The Grand Scribe's Records, Volume VII: The Memoirs of Pre-Han China*, p. 295). Much like Scholar Lu, Qu Yuan was slandered by the Grand Master and subsequently banished.

<sup>52</sup> Following Wang Meng'ou, p. 32.

events. He spoke to his wife, saying, “At my home East of the Mountains,<sup>53</sup> there are five *Qing*<sup>54</sup> of fine fields—enough to withstand cold and hunger. Why suffer pursuing an official’s salary? And now that it has been brought to this, I long to wear that plain-cloth jacket and ride that black colt while travelling on the road to Handan 邯鄲. Yet this cannot be won back.” He drew a knife to cut his own throat, but his wife came to his aid, seizing him, and sparing [his life]. Those who were implicated [in the plot] all died. Only the Scholar was protected by the eunuchs<sup>55</sup> so that his death sentence was commuted, and he was cast out to Huanzhou 驩州.<sup>56</sup> After several years, the Emperor learned of the injustice and once again sought him out to be Secretariat Director, enfeoffed him as Duke of Yanguo<sup>57</sup> with favor and purpose that was extraordinarily unusual.

<sup>53</sup> The term Shandong 山東 refers to the area east of the Taihang 太行 Mountains and covered large parts of the modern provinces of Shandong, Henan and Hepei (Hsü, p. 31; Fu, p. 41).

<sup>54</sup> One *qing* 頃 of land is equivalent to one hundred *mu* 畝, which in the Tang was roughly approximate to thirteen acres (*JTS*, 48.2088; Denis Twitchett, *Financial Administration under the Tang Dynasty* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963], p. xi). As pointed out by Uchiyama Chinari, under the Tang “equal land allocation system” (*Juntian* 均田), each able-bodied adult man (*dingnan* 男) is—in theory, at least—to receive one *qing* of arable land (*Zui To shosetsu kenkyu*, p. 341; confirmed in *JTS*, 48.2088, where it is recorded that this system was implemented in 624). Having five times the amount of land as the next Tang peasant would seem to indicate the relative fortune of Lu’s original life.

<sup>55</sup> *Zhongguan* 官 (literally, “palace official”) is a generic term for eunuch (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #1574, p. 191; and Wang, p. 32.).

<sup>56</sup> The prefecture of Huanzhou was located in the extreme southeast corner of the Tang empire in modern Vietnam (see Tan Qixiang, 5.73).

<sup>57</sup> Duke of Yanguo was merely a formal title unconnected with the Yan that was located in the vicinity of modern Beijing (see, Tan Qixiang, 3.41). By this time in the Tang, “feudal” (*fengjian* 封建) appointments were made to honor officials, and rarely involved the actual bestowal of territorial enfeoffments (see Xu, pp. 34-5; *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 3, Sui and Tang China, 589-906, Part 1*, pp. 210-12).

He begot five sons. They were called Jian 儉, Chuan , Wei , Ti 倜 and Yi 倚. All were talented and capable. Jian was entered on the list of graduates as a presented-scholar, and became an Auxiliary Secretary in the Bureau of Evaluations.<sup>58</sup> Chuan became an Attendant Censor,<sup>59</sup> Wei became an Assistant Minister in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices,<sup>60</sup> and Ti became Commandant of Wannian 萬 .<sup>61</sup> Yi was the worthiest—at the age of twenty-eight, he became Rectifier of Omissions.<sup>62</sup> Their marital alliances were all with the world's renowned clans, and he had over ten grandsons.

Twice he was exiled to desolate borderlands, and both times he [was recalled to] ascend as a pillar of state.<sup>63</sup> Going out and

<sup>58</sup> Essentially a Vice-director, the Auxiliary Secretary (*Yuanwai lang* 員外郎) worked with the Director of the Board of Evaluations (*Kaogong* 功) in maintaining personnel records of all officials whose service was being evaluated. This position was of the sixth rank (see Xu, p. 35; Wang, p. 32; Hucker, *Official Titles*, #3159, p. 278; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, pp. 28 and 59).

<sup>59</sup> *Shi yushi* 侍御 was a position of the sixth rank in the Tang. It was the third highest-ranking post in the Censorate and held broad-ranging surveillance and impeachment powers (see Xu, p. 35; Hucker, *Official Titles*, #5350, p. 431; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p. 296).

<sup>60</sup> *Taichang cheng* 常丞 was a position of the fifth rank in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices, one of the nine courts charged with overseeing the conduct of state sacrificial ceremonies (see Wang, p. 33, Xu, p. 35; Hucker, *Official Titles*, #6145, p. 476; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p. 318-19).

<sup>61</sup> Wannian county was located just south of the Tang capital in modern Shaanxi province (see Tan Qixiang, 5.41).

<sup>62</sup> The term *Zuo xiang* 左襄 is not found in the standard histories. Commentators have put forth various conflicting interpretations about its significance here, but the most reasonable appears to be that it refers to the position, *Zuo buque* 左闕, a position of the seventh rank in the Chancellery. Although not very highly-ranked, this post was considered prestigious because of its proximity to the Emperor (see Hsü, p. 35; Wang, p. 33; Hucker, *Official Titles*, #4777, pp. 391-92; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p. 151).

<sup>63</sup> *Taixuan* 臺鉉 (sometimes written as 台鉉) is a metaphor used to describe an important high-ranking official, often chief ministers. *Tai* refers to three stars in Ursa Major (*santai* 台) as well as to the three legs of a tripod, both of which

entering, in court and out, he wound and soared through the halls of state<sup>64</sup> for over fifty years with exalted magnificence and glorious brilliance. By nature he was inclined to extravagance and indulgence, and he was extremely fond of comfort and pleasure. The sounds and sights of his harem were all of the topmost beauty and elegance. From beginning to end, he was bestowed with fine lands, excellent mansions, beautiful women and famous horses—innumerable beyond count.

In his later years, he gradually grew feeble and old, and repeatedly requested his resignation,<sup>65</sup> but this was not allowed. He became ill, and people from the imperial palace, in inquiring after him, followed in one another’s footsteps on the roads. There was no famous physician or superior medicine that did not reach

are metaphors for the three highest dignitaries of state, the *san gong* 三公 (“three Dukes,” see n. 73 below). *Xuan* refers to the rings attached to tripods which are used to raise the vessels (see Wang, p. 33; Xu, p. 35). In the Tang histories, *taixuan* is used in an imperial reply to describe Guo Ziyi 郭子儀 (697-781), Shen Jiji’s elder statesman (*JTS*, 120.3461), and in the concluding remarks of the biography of Shen’s friend Lu Zhi 陸贄 (754-805; *JTS*, 139.3818).

<sup>64</sup> *Taige* 臺閣 has been used throughout the official histories to designate both the departments of state affairs and the highest ranking dignitaries who were positioned there (see des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p. 185 n. 2). In the Tang histories it is used primarily to refer to the three major departments of the central government: the Censorate (*yushi tai* 御史臺), the Secretariat (*zhongshu sheng* 中書省), and the Chancellery (*menxia sheng* 門下省) (see, for example, *XTS*, 47.1211; 116.4231; 123.4372; 203.5785).

<sup>65</sup> *Qi haigu* 乞骸骨 (literally, “begging for one’s skeletal bones”) is a term which has been long used by high-ranking vassals and officials to request resignation and return to their homelands to lay their bones to rest (Wang, p. 33; Fu, pp. 38-9). Wang Meng’ou cites the relevant example in the *Shiji* (112.2952) of a memorial submitted to the throne by the Marquis of Pingjin 平津, Gongsun Hong 公孫弘 (ca. 200-121), who was of advanced age, very ill, and believed that he had warranted no merit to the Emperor as a marquis. The passage in his memorial reads:

The conduct and ability of Your vassal, Hong, has not been adequate of praise . . . . I wish to return the seals of the marquisate and request my resignation (*Qi haigu* 乞骸骨) so that the road will be cleared for those who are worthy.

him. On the verge of death, he submitted a memorial to the throne, which read:

Your servant was originally a common scholar from East of the Mountains, with fields and gardens as his pleasures. By chance he encountered sagely fate, and obtained a series of official posts in succession. Beyond measure, he has received extraordinary rewards, special positions, and extensive favors. While out [of court], he held caducei and imperial *jing* banners;<sup>66</sup> and on entering [court], he was elevated to be the Chief Bulwark of the State.<sup>67</sup> In handling affairs<sup>68</sup> in and out [of court], he has passed through the many seasons of many years. He has disgraced Heavenly favor<sup>69</sup> by not augmenting Your sagely influence. He has been responsible for the chariot, but has bequeathed [only] plunder;<sup>70</sup> treading on thin [ice] has

<sup>66</sup> The phrase *chu yong jiejing* 出擁節旌 refers to Lu's appointments outside the capital and particularly to his appointment as Military Governor. During the Tang, military governors were given a pair of caducei (*jie* 節) and a pair of banners (*jing* 旌) upon commission. The *jing* banners were often ornamented with tassels made with feathers or oxtails. For more information, see des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, pp. 165-68; 646-48.

<sup>67</sup> *Taifu* 臺輔 was an unofficial reference to one of the highest-ranking officials in the central government, such as a chief minister (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, # 6160, p. 477).

<sup>68</sup> *Zhouxuan* 周旋, which can also be translated "Touring around" (see Xu, p. 42).

<sup>69</sup> *Tianen* 天恩 for which TPGJ reads *enzao* 恩造, "favor brought upon him."

<sup>70</sup> The self-deprecatory phrase *fusheng yikou* 負乘貽寇 derives from the section on the "Jie" 解 hexagram in the *Classic of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經, Hexagram 40, 6/3), which reads: "Burdened and riding a chariot will cause plunder to arrive" (負且乘，致寇)，which the TPGJ version once more matches more closely (cf. *fusheng zhikou* 負乘致寇). The famous Han literati, Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 (ca. 179-ca. 104 B.C.), elucidates this classical phrase as follows:

Those who ride in chariots have the position of a gentleman. Those who bear burdens have the affairs of lesser people. This means those who occupy the position of a gentleman and yet behave as a common person will certainly find calamity arriving upon them.



increased his worries;<sup>71</sup> and each day he dreads another day so that he does not notice that old age has arrived.<sup>72</sup> This year he passes eighty [holding] the position highest among the three [in charge of] affairs.<sup>73</sup> But the bell and the clepsydra are simultaneously ceasing, and his tendons and bones are all aged. Lingering for a long time and drowning in dire straits, his time to tarry is swiftly being spent. Looking back, he has no successful achievement to submit to repay [Your Majesty’s] radiant blessings, and he has fruitlessly carried Your profound favor. [Now] he is forever taking leave of this sagely dynasty. With unbearable feelings of attachment to the ultimate, he respectfully offers this declaration to express his gratitude.

An imperial mandate replied:

My Excellency has with eminent virtue performed as Our Primary Bulwark: when out [of court] you upheld Us as hedge and pillar; when in [court] you assisted in harmony and

乘車者，君子之位也。負擔者， 人之事也。此言居君子之位，而為庶人之行者，其患禍必 也。(Han shu, 56.2521).

<sup>71</sup> The image of treading on thin ice (*lǚ bō* 履薄) alludes to Mao, #195 and #196, both of which close with the following admonishing couplet (although #195 does insert one more in line between):

We should be apprehensive and careful, 戰戰兢兢  
As if we were treading on thin ice. 如履薄冰

The TPGJ text accords with the penultimate line of the poem by reading *lǚ bō zhanjing* 履薄戰兢 (“treading on thin [ice], he is apprehensive and careful”) for *lǚ bō zeng you* 履薄增憂 (“treading on thin [ice] has increased his worries”) in the WYYH text.

<sup>72</sup> *Bu zhi lao zhi* 不知老 , an echo of a passage in *Lunyu*, 7/19 in which Confucius describes himself as one who “does not notice that old age is about to arrive” 不知老之將 . TPGJ once again more closely mirrors the classical source, and in this instance does so exactly.

<sup>73</sup> “The three (in charge of) affairs” (*san shi* 事) is an expression extending back to the *Classic of Poetry* (Mao #194) and refers to “the three Dukes” (*san gong* 公) who are traditionally regarded as the three most powerful officials in the central government.

prosperity. The ascending peace of [the last] two dozen years has truly relied on My Excellency. Recently you have contracted this illness, and We have daily spoken of your recovery. How is it that this is such a deep-seated chronic illness? We are very much taken up with sympathy for you. Now We have ordered Calvary General-in-chief Gao Lishi 高力士<sup>74</sup> to go to your mansion to inquire after and visit you. He will make efforts in contributing stone needles.<sup>75</sup> For Our sake, take care of yourself. We especially hope for nothing rash,<sup>76</sup> and look forward to your recovery.

That evening he passed away.

Scholar Lu yawned, stretched, and awakened to see that he himself was just then lying down in the rest-lodge. Old Man Lü was sitting by his side and the host [of the lodge] was steaming the millet which was not yet cooked. [Everything] that he sensed was as before. The Scholar was startled, but got up, saying, “Could it all have been a dream in my sleep?”

The old man said to the Scholar, “The contentments of human life are surely like that.”

The Scholar was lost in thought for a great while. [Then] he thanked the old man and said, “Now, the ways of favor and disgrace, the fatefulness of failure and success, the principles of

<sup>74</sup> Gao Lishi served Hsüan-tsung as a loyal and trusted eunuch for nearly fifty years. His biographies are in *JTS*, 184.4757-59 and *XTS*, 207.5858-61. *Piaoqi da jiangjun* 驃騎 將軍 is an honorary title of the first rank for military officers (see Hucker, *Official Titles*, #4620, p. 380; des Rotours, *Le Traité des examens*, p. 99). On Gao Lishi's appointment as Calvary General-in-chief, see *JTS*, 9.222.

<sup>75</sup> *Zhenshi* 鍼石 are implements used in therapeutic acupuncture. In this context, however, the term connotes Gao Lishi's trying to help out medically in a broader sense and not specifically with regard to the particular medical techniques that are indicated here (see Hsü, p. 37; Tan Qixiang, p. 328).

<sup>76</sup> *Wu wang* 無妄: The allusion here is to the *Classic of Changes* (*Yijing*, 25/9/5) which reads: “When there is illness without recklessness, there is joy without medicine” (*wu wang zhi ji, wu yao yu xi* 無妄之疾，勿藥有喜).

gain and loss, and the emotions of death and life—I have thoroughly known them. This is how you, venerable sir, have checked my desires.<sup>77</sup> Dare I not accept this lesson?”

He touched his forehead to the ground, bowed twice, and left.

<sup>77</sup> *Zhi wuyu* 窒吾欲: The allusion here is once again to the *Classic of Changes* (*Yijing*, 41) once again which reads “The superior man accordingly restrains his anger and checks his desires” (*Junzi yi cheng fen zhi yu* 君子以懲忿窒欲).

## Translator's Note

### Historicizing the Dream World and Parabolizing the Waking World: Shen Jiji and His “Zhenzhong ji” (Record within a Pillow)

Why did an official historian, Shen Jiji (*ca.* 740-*ca.* 803), write a tale such as “Zhenzhong ji” (Record within a Pillow)? His biographies, contained in the Tang dynasty standard histories, seem to lend a few clues in offering the following information about his life:<sup>78</sup>

Shen Jiji was a native of Wu 吳 County in Su 蘇 prefecture.<sup>79</sup> He was broadly versed in a multitude of texts, and his historical writing was particularly fine. Attendant Gentleman Yang Yan 楊炎 (727-81) of the Board of Civil Office met and praised him. In the beginning of the Jianzhong 建中 era (780-84), Yang Yan became Chief Minister and recommended [Shen] Jiji as “a talent worthy of the historian’s post.” [Shen Jiji] was summoned and appointed as Reminder of the Left<sup>80</sup> and as Senior Compiler in the Bureau of Historiography.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>78</sup> These biographies are in *JTS*, 149.4034-39 and *XTS*, 132.4538-42. Three excellent studies of Shen’s life which I have also made use of are Wang Meng’ou’s “‘Zhenzhong ji’ ji qi zuozhe,” pp. 7-16; Wang’s “Shen Jiji shengping ji qi zuopin bushu;” and Uchiyama Chinari’s, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, pp. 326-49.

<sup>79</sup> Modern Suzhou 蘇州 in Jiangsu 江蘇 province (see Tan Qixiang, 5.55).

<sup>80</sup> *Zuo shiyi* 左拾遺 was a position of the eighth rank in the Chancellery. There were six Reminders in this department, and they were responsible for the regulation and distribution of proposals and for monitoring neglected affairs in imperial policy. See *XTS*, 47.1207; des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires*, pp. 151-2 and 187; Hucker, *Official Titles*, #3939, p. 329.

<sup>81</sup> The Bureau of Historiography (*Shiguan* 館) was established in 629. It was operated under the auspices of the Chancellery and was responsible for both the compilation of the histories of previous reigns as well as the continuing compilation of the current reign. During Shen Jiji’s day, there were usually very

The official accounts also relate that Shen’s patron, Yang Yan, committed criminal offenses less than two years after his appointment as Chief Minister. Yang Yan was subsequently demoted and banished to the remote and undesirable region of Ya 崖 prefecture.<sup>82</sup> Shen Jiji was likewise exiled and demoted to a minor position in the Bureau of Finances<sup>83</sup> in Chu 處 prefecture.<sup>84</sup> Then, after a period of time left unspecified in the official biographies (but very likely during the general amnesty of 785), he was once again brought into the capital, where he took what was apparently his last position as Vice-director of the Board of Rites.<sup>85</sup>

We know that Shen Jiji was a scion of the well-known, influential Shen family of Wukang 康 in Wuxing 吳興. This branch of the Shen family also produced such significant historical figures as Shen Junliang 諒, a chief minister during the reign of Empress Wu Zetian 則 (r. 690-705), the mother of Emperor Dezong 宗 (r. 779-805), as well as literary notables like the poet Shen Yüeh 約 (441-513) and Shen Yazhi 亞 (781-832), the poet and writer of tales who was Shen Jiji’s cousin. Shen Jiji’s own

few Senior Compilers (修撰), most likely between two and four. See *JTS*, 43.1852-53; *XTS*, 47.1208, 1212, 1214; Hucker, *Official Titles*, # 5272, p. 426; des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires*, pp. 189 and 199-204; McMullen, *State and Scholars*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>82</sup> Located on modern Hainan 海南 island (Tan Qixiang, 5.69).

<sup>83</sup> *Sihu* 司戶 was a local administrative agency responsible for a wide range of day-to-day financial matters. See *XTS*, 49.1317-18; des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires*, pp. 694-96; Hucker, *Official Titles*, # 2798, p. 259.

<sup>84</sup> Located in modern Zhejiang 浙江 province (Tan Qixiang, 5.55).

<sup>85</sup> The Board of Rites (*Libu* 禮部) was the central administrative agency responsible for overseeing and codifying all rituals and sacrifices, for regulating visits of foreign ambassadors, and for managing the civil service examination recruitment system. This organization was supervised by a Director (*Langzhong* 郎) and a Vice-director (*Yuan wailang* 員外郎), a position of the sixth rank. See *XTS*, 46.1185; Hucker, *Official Titles*, # 3631, pp. 306-07; des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires*, pp. 80-87.

grandfather, Shen Qijia 齊 , had once served as an assistant in the imperial library and later as a provincial administrator at the Bureau of Finances in Quan 泉 prefecture.<sup>86</sup> A collection of writings, now lost, is attributed to him in the standard histories.<sup>87</sup> As for Shen Jiji's father, Shen Chaozong 朝宗, it is known that towards the end of the Tianbao 寶 era (742-756) he held the relatively petty position of master of records in Wuyi 義 county in Wu 婺 prefecture.<sup>88</sup> This was probably his final post; Shen Chaozong seems to have had a somewhat less than illustrious official career. Compared with towering figures which the Shen family of Wuxing had produced, this particular branch of the family had fallen on hard times. Thus, given these rather dismal prospects, Shen Jiji presumably had to rely largely on himself. Without an active network of official contacts, his best chance of entering the desired realm of officialdom was to immerse himself—perhaps totally untutored—in an extensive number of readings. Wang Meng'ou has therefore suggested that this might well be the meaning behind the standard histories' claim that Shen “was broadly versed in a multitude of texts.”<sup>89</sup>

Very little is known for certain about Shen Jiji's early life. We know that his son, the poet and official historian Shen Chuanshi (d. 827), was born in 769 when Shen Jiji was nearly thirty years of age.<sup>90</sup> We also know from the colophon of his only other extant tale, “Renshi zhuan” 任氏 ,<sup>91</sup> that he was living in

<sup>86</sup> Located in modern Fujian 福建 province (Tan Qixiang, 5.56).

<sup>87</sup> The title *Shen Qijia ji* 齊家 a collection in ten *juan* which bears his name, is listed in the bibliographical catalogues of the *JTS*, 47.2073 and the *XTS*, 60.1597.

<sup>88</sup> Located near modern Jinhua 金華 city in Zhejiang province (Tan Qixiang, 5.55).

<sup>89</sup> “Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe,” p. 9.

<sup>90</sup> *JTS*, 149.4037. The official biography of Shen Chuanshi is linked with his father's.

<sup>91</sup> In Wang Meng'ou, ed. *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, p. 47.

Zhongling 鐘 (modern Nanchang 昌 city in Jiang 江 circuit) during the Dali 曆 era (766-780), sometime before heading to the capital in 788 to take a position in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices.

There is one phrase not translated above which is contained only in the *New History of The Tang dynasty* biography. It states that Shen Jiji’s “classical learning was extensively clear” (*Jingxue gaiming* 該明).<sup>92</sup> This suggests that Shen may have entered officialdom by passing the clarification of the classics (*mingjing* 明 ) examination. In Shen’s day, this examination was second in prestige only to highly-coveted presented-scholar (*jinshi* 進 ) examination. The clarification of the classics examination tested the examinee’s exegesis and rote knowledge of the classical Confucian canons,<sup>93</sup> subject matter which Shen Jiji was very comfortable with. It is highly unlikely that he ever passed the presented-scholar examination, since his name is not among the names of the successful graduates listed in the standard histories. In this connection, Wang Meng’ou points out that there is not one piece of poetry attributed to Shen Jiji, nor is there one poem that has been presented to him by a friend, as was the custom among literati poets. Since the presented-scholar examination contained a section which tested skills in the literary composition of poetry (*shi* 詩) and prose-poetry (*fu* 賦),<sup>94</sup> Shen, who was apparently at a disadvantage with respect to *belles-lettres* composition, may very well never have sat for this examination.<sup>95</sup> Shen’s dissatisfaction with the official examination system and the methods of selecting officials current in his day is clearly borne out in several of his other pieces of writing, including the *Treatise on Selection* (*Xuanju*

<sup>92</sup> See *XTS*, 132.4538.

<sup>93</sup> See *JTS*, 43.1829 and *XTS*, 44.1161-62.

<sup>94</sup> See *JTS*, 43.1829 and *XTS*, 44.1166-69.

<sup>95</sup> See Wang Meng’ou, “‘Zhenzhong ji’ ji qi zuozhe,” p. 9; and his “Shen Jiji shengping ji qi zuopin bushu,” p. 2.

zhi 舉 ),<sup>96</sup> which he submitted to the throne in 779 when he held the post of Chief Musician in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices.<sup>97</sup> In this piece, Shen Jiji historically reviewed the function of composition skills in the official examination and selection process. His highly critical proposal was to de-emphasize *belles-lettres* and stress the classics and more practical genres instead. This placed Shen in eminent company: around this time, other scholar-officials who put forth similar proposals for reform included Jia Zhi 賈 (718-772), Lu Zhi 贄 (754-805) and Shen's friend, Du You (735-812). Du, perhaps under Shen's influence in these matters, preserved quite a few of the memorial submissions by Shen and the others in his *Tong dian*.<sup>98</sup>

By the time Emperor Dezong ascended the throne in 779, Shen Jiji had produced two memorials that he had submitted to the court. In addition to the already mentioned *Treatise on Selection*, his other memorial criticized the Tang national history which had been compiled by Wu Jing 吳兢 (670-749), proposing that Empress

<sup>96</sup> XTS, 58.1477 lists it in ten *juan*. Fragments of this work have been preserved in *Zizhi tongjian*, 226.7268.779.3 and *Tong dian*, 18.101.1-102.1. Some of Shen's other later writings which treat these subjects include *Deliberations on Selection Presented to the Throne* (*Shang Xuanju yi* 上選舉議), *Miscellaneous Deliberations on Selection* (*Xuanju zayi* 選舉雜議), and *Discourse on Composition in Examinations* (*Cike lun* 詞科 ). Fragments of these writings have been preserved in *Complete Prose of the Tang* (*Quan Tang wen* ), 476.14a, together with a few other of Shen's official compositions.

<sup>97</sup> This date and the post are given in *Zizhi tongjian*, 226.7268.779.3; the position is confirmed in XTS, 45.1178. The position of Chief Musician (*Xuelü lang* 協律郎) in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (*Taichang si* 常寺) was of the eighth rank and was responsible for harmonizing musical notes (see des Rotours, *Traité des Fonctionnaires*, pp. 323-24; Hucker, *Official Titles*, # 6145, p. 476). Wang Meng'ou and Uchiyama both suggest that, since this is most likely not an entry-level position, Shen Jiji probably had been in officialdom for some time before 779 (see Wang, "Shen Jiji shengping ji qi zuopin bushu," p. 2; Uchiyama, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, p. 331).

<sup>98</sup> See McMullen, *State and Scholars*, pp. 203-4, 241-42.



Wu be downgraded in the Tang official records.<sup>99</sup> It is reasonable to assume that it was the strength of these writings which attracted the appreciative attention of reform-minded court officials like Yang Yan, who recommended Shen and his fine historical talent for promotion. Shen had finally reached a highly-valued milestone of the Tang scholar community. After striding onto this sovereign historical stage, Shen Jiji held his posts in the Chancellery and the Bureau of Historiography for about a year and a half, from early 780 to the end of 781. During this time, he compiled historical records of the new reign period. The result was the *Veritable Records of the Jianzhong Era* (*Jianzhong shilu* 實), a work in ten *juan*<sup>100</sup> which the Emperor and his Chief Minister, Yang Yan, no doubt assigned to the historian to enshrine their glorious actions. However, it was not long before the glorious events of the drama unfolding on the stage turned into those of tragedy.

Before the new Emperor personally installed him as Chief Minister in 779, Yang Yan had been a well-known financial administrator.<sup>101</sup> His patron was the brilliant but supremely corrupt Yuan Zai 元載 (d. 777),<sup>102</sup> who, having served as chief minister for both Emperors Suzong 肅宗 (r. 756-763) and Daizong 宗 (r. 763-779), had the ways and means to support and successively promote Yang Yan. When Yuan Zai's corruption and abuses of power reached unbearable proportions in 777, he was apprehended, prosecuted and executed largely through the machinations of his protégé and former friend, Liu Yan 晏 (*ca.*

<sup>99</sup> Fragments of this memorial, *Deliberations on the Inappropriateness of Raising [Empress Wu] Zetian in the Basic Annals* (*Zetian buyi cheng benji yi* 則天不宜稱本紀議), are contained in *Complete Prose of the Tang*, 476.14a and in Shen's official biographies (*JTS*, 149.4034-36 and *XTS*, 132.4538-39.).

<sup>100</sup> *JTS*, 149.4037; *XTS*, 58.1472.

<sup>101</sup> Yang Yan's official biographies are in *JTS*, 118.3418-26; *XTS*, 145.4722-29.

<sup>102</sup> Yuan Zai's official biographies are in *JTS*, 118.3409-14; *XTS*, 145.4711-15.

715-80).<sup>103</sup> Yuan Zai's corpse was mutilated, his mansion razed to the ground, his family members slaughtered, and even his ancestral temple was levelled. Yang Yan had been very intimate with Yuan Zai—they were both from the district of Fengxiang and Yang Yan's mother was Yuan's relative. According to another source, the two were so close that, when Yuan in his later years took a new concubine, he allowed only Yang Yan to watch her dance and sing; the two men then extemporized matching poems to celebrate the occasion.<sup>104</sup> In the aftermath of Yuan Zai's downfall, Yang Yan faced the further humility of being demoted to a minor provincial post. However, with the passing of some two years and of Emperor Daizong, the new Emperor, Dezong, who had always appreciated Yang Yan's literary and calligraphic pieces, as well as his landscape paintings, summoned him back to court as Chief Minister. The vigorous new Emperor was fully prepared for Yang's outpouring of far-reaching ideas and proposals on economic and political reform, but this was not the case with the Chief Minister who had gained sole ascendancy in the vacuum that followed Yuan Zai's death—Liu Yan, Yang's detested archenemy.

The Emperor desired immediate proposals to rectify pressing economic and political problems, and Yang Yan responded in kind with a series of memorials, seeking to curb the enormous power wielded by imperial eunuchs and, toward the end of 779, to replace Liu Yen's fiscal policies with his own well-known "two-tax system" (*liangshui* 兩稅).<sup>105</sup> Undoubtedly, Yang Yan did sincerely want to improve the current conditions of the empire, but he was also certainly motivated to avenge the inglorious and

<sup>103</sup> Liu Yan's official biographies are in *JTS*, 123.3511-16; *XTS*, 149.4793-99.

<sup>104</sup> *Tangshi jishi* 詩紀事 (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 1965), 32.504.

<sup>105</sup> On this system, see Denis C. Twitchett, *Financial Administration under the Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 39-48, 157-60; for the dating of the memorial, see p. 337 n. 50.

ignoble demise of his benefactor, Yuan Zai. Shen Jiji probably appeared at the imperial court right in the middle of this vendetta, just as an edict was issued in early 780 which implicated Liu Yan in a eunuch scheme to replace the heir to the throne. Liu Yan was removed from office and banished to Zhong 忠 circuit where Yang Yan arranged for his murder.

Not long after, news of the unjust death of Liu Yan was in the air at the court. In a state of consternation, Yang Yan sent members of his coterie out among the circuits to disseminate a message slandering Liu Yan and attempting to justify his being put to death by attributing it to the Emperor’s loathing of him. The Emperor soon discovered this. He considered Yang Yan’s execution, but had him demoted instead in mid-781. The uneducated and unpleasant-looking Lu Qi 杞 (*fl.* 780-83)<sup>106</sup> was brought in as a new Chief Minister. He and Yang Yan feuded incessantly and disagreed about all sorts of personal and professional matters. Moreover, it is a distinct possibility that Lu Qi’s object was to avenge Liu Yan’s death.<sup>107</sup> Events thus came to a head when in the tenth month of 781 an edict was issued accusing Yang Yan of financial corruption and of usurping imperial power. He was subsequently prosecuted and banished to Ya prefecture.

Members of Yang’s faction were banished as well, and Shen Jiji was among those who were banished. In the colophon at the end of “Renshi zhuan,” Shen identifies some of his travelling companions on the journey to the southeast late in 781. Among them were Pei Ji 裴 (*fl.* 777-81)—who had also belonged to Yuan Zai’s faction—and Sun Cheng 孫成 (*fl.* 779-81), both of whom were at the very heart of Yang Yan’s faction and were among the men

<sup>106</sup> Lu Qi has no official biography in the standard histories. He is throughout referred to as a “treacherous official,” and was unscrupulous and very unpopular (as an example, see XTS, 52.1352-53).

<sup>107</sup> See Wei Chuhou 韋處厚 (773–828), “Qing ming cha Li Fengji pengdang shu” 請 察李逢吉朋黨書, in *Complete Prose of the Tang*, ch. 716.

he had dispatched to elude the blame for Liu Yan's murder. The very famous and influential prose writer, Lu Chun 淳—better known by his later name, Lu Zhi 贇 (754-805)—was also on the journey.<sup>108</sup> While they were going into political exile, these men evidently tried to divert their attention from their unpleasant predicament and from the enormous problems at the imperial court by entertaining one another in a spirit of literary camaraderie. Shen Jiji recalls that:

as we were floating down the Ying 滎 River and crossed the Huai 淮 River,<sup>109</sup> the boats were side by side and we flowed with the current. We feasted by day and talked all night, with each of us asking the other for another bizarre yarn.<sup>110</sup>

Under these conditions, Shen Jiji told the tale of Renshi, and his companions urged him to commit it to bamboo and silk.

Yet, however distracted Shen may have been on his journey into exile, he was no doubt utterly devastated when the news reached him that his benefactor, Yang Yan, had been murdered some one hundred *li* from the destination in Ya prefecture where he was to be banished. Yang Yan's fleeting career as chief minister, which dazzled with power, fame and glory, was abruptly cut short after a mere two years — together with his life. Shen Jiji, coming from a relatively impoverished family and being rather disadvantaged academically, had struggled for years to realize the most sought-after and highly-valued goals of his day, and all of his efforts seem to have been rewarded when he was finally

<sup>108</sup> For more on the identities of Shen's travelling companions, see Wang Meng'ou, "'Zhenzhong ji' ji qi zuozhe," pp. 11-13; and Uchiyama Chinari, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, pp. 333, 335-36.

<sup>109</sup> These rivers provided a waterway to the southeast, flowing—as they do today—from the center of modern Henan 河南 province down through Anhui 安徽 province (Tan Qixiang, 5.32-33).

<sup>110</sup> In Wang Meng'ou, ed. *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, p. 47.

appreciated and recognized by Yang Yan. Shen could take advantage of this fortunate stroke of fate by riding on the crest of Yang Yan’s success and further develop his skills and abilities and make a name for himself. He obviously felt very intimate with Yang, and he eulogized him and was probably responsible for the glowing parts of his official biographies.<sup>111</sup> But in less than two years, everything that he had eagerly aspired to suddenly vanished with the untimely end of his patron. Shen was left not only embroiled in the fickle stream of ups and downs characterizing officialdom, but presumably also left keenly questioning the meaning of his past endeavors. All the ideals which he held dear, all the splendor, fame and glory of officialdom, must surely have seemed illusory, evaporating with the elusive quality of a dream. Wracked with the profound psychological despair that attends the stripping away of life’s greatest hopes and most cherished ambitions, Shen Jiji was doubtless intensely disoriented by a state of confusion which radically challenged his own deeply-rooted values and convictions. Thus, banished and in a state of mind akin to this, in late-781 or early-782<sup>112</sup> Shen composed “Record within a Pillow” with the intention of “checking the desire” of the many young men in his day who aspired to the lofty goals of officialdom.<sup>113</sup> Composing this tale may also have had a much-needed cathartic effect on Shen, for he probably was very grateful to have conjured

<sup>111</sup> For an analysis, see Wang Meng’ou, “‘Zhenzhong ji’ zai Tang chuanqi zhong diwei zai rending” 在 奇 地位 再 認 定 *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu tongxun* 1.1 (1991), pp. 14-5.

<sup>112</sup> The most thorough discussion of the dating of the tales’s composition is that by Wang Meng’ou, “Du Shen Jiji ‘Zhenzhong ji’ bukao” 讀 *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan (chuangkan hao)* (1991), pp. 4-10.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Wang Meng’ou, *Tangren xiaoshuo jiaoshi*, p. 36; Wang Meng’ou, “‘Zhenzhong ji’ ji qi zuozhe,” p. 16; Uchiyama Chinari, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, pp. 334, 342, 346; and Bian Xiaoxuan 卞孝萱, “Zhenzhong ji” 叢, in *Tangdai wenshi luncong* 叢, pp. 24-5.

up some wise man like the old Daoist Lü to guide him on his way and, as in the tale, say, “The contentments of human life are all like that.”

Certainly Shen Jiji’s son, Shen Chuanshi 申傳世, seems to have heeded his father’s warning to curb the desire for honored, powerful and eminent official positions. He passed the presented-scholar’s examination in 806 (at least three years after Shen Jiji’s death),<sup>114</sup> and went on to become a Hanlin 翰林 scholar and a grand secretary. But when he was offered the more powerful position of scholar-in-attendance in the Hanlin, he declined because he believed that the appointment would lead to a chief ministership, a position which he politely claimed he was not capable of<sup>115</sup>—and which he was probably admonished to keep away from.

“Record within a Pillow” tells of an alternative world. Writers of early Chinese literature commonly employed this device.<sup>116</sup> In this particular tale, the alternative world is the dream world which is experienced by the Scholar named Lu. Lu’s dream world is framed by the actual waking world which he and the old man Lü participate in. This world-within-a-world creates a tripartite structure in which the primary waking world embodies the secondary dream world. The two worlds are clearly separated,

<sup>114</sup> Wang Meng’ou, “Zhenzhong ji’ ji qi zuozhe,” p. 14.

<sup>115</sup> *JTS*, 149.4037; *XTS*, 132.4540-541.

<sup>116</sup> In a study of alternative worlds in Six dynasties and Tang fiction, Ye Qingbing 葉慶炳 distinguishes four types of early stories which make use of this structural device: stories about the netherworld (*mingjie* 冥界), stories about the world of the immortals (*hsien-hsiang* 仙鄉), stories of pure fantasy (*huanjing* 幻境), and dream stories (*mengjing* 夢境). The following discussion of the structure of “Record within a Pillow” is indebted to some points made in Ye’s article (“Liuchao zhi Tangdai de dajie jiegou xiaoshuo” 六朝 他界結構, *Taida Zhongwen xuebao* 3 [1989]: 7-28) and in Y. W. Ma’s article, “Fact and Fantasy in Tang Tales,” *CLEAR* 2.2 (July 1980): 167-81, which contains a discussion of this tale (see pp. 171-73; 175-77).

and Lu leaves the waking world of the rest-lodge on the road to Han-tan and enters the dream world through the Daoist priest's ceramic pillow. The dream world comprises the transitional stage, and the inner and outer waking world frames are rejoined when Lu awakes to discover that his dream had elapsed in less than the time it takes the host of the rest-lodge to steam some millet.

Although the passing of time in the waking world was fleeting, the dream world which Lu experiences seems to him to unfold as the palpable events of a monumental historical life lived for more than fifty years. As Lu lives out the desired life of his ambitions in the dream world, the events occur linearly over time, and a good many of them appear historically accurate, involving actual locations, conditions and people. In narrating Lu's experiences in the dream world, Shen Jiji adopted the prosaic, matter-of-fact writing style which had come to characterize official biographies in the standard histories.<sup>117</sup> He adheres to the various conventions of this style, accounting for Lu's examination successes, his marital alliance, his military and official successes and setbacks, the noteworthy achievements of his male heirs, and even memorials to and from the throne. In fact, the dream world section of the tale so closely reproduces the dynastic biographic style that, were it included in an official history, a seasoned reader would possibly not notice the difference. Unlike the fictitious, parable-like quality which marks the waking world narrative in the tale, Shen consciously attempted to lend such historical verisimilitude to the dream world that it would impress the reader as an account that might truly appear in the histories. Li Zhao 肇 (*fl.* 806-820) was struck by the historiographical nature of the dream section that is embodied within the very different

<sup>117</sup> For an excellent recent study on Chinese official biographies, or *liezhuan* ("arranged traditions"), see Denis C. Twitchett, "Biographies," in *The Writing of Official History under the Tang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 62-83.

waking world narrative; for, not long after Shen Jiji's death, he remarked in his *Supplements to the Tang National Histories* (*Tang guoshi bu* )::

Shen Jiji composed "Record within a Pillow" in the genre of Zhuangzi's 莊子 allegories. Han Yu 韓愈 (768-824) composed "An Account of Mao Ying" (Mao Ying zhuan 毛 傳), and his writing is particularly lofty and not inferior to [that of] the [Grand] Scribe, [Sima] Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145-ca. 85 B.C.). Both pieces truly have the talent of excellent historians.<sup>118</sup>

As a professional historian, Shen Jiji no doubt understood very well that the past is largely known through written history, and that a record of a meritorious life which the historian passes on to the future generations is what comes to define the real fabric of that life. For the average literati in traditional China, historical biographies often served as inspirational models to aspire to. The Tang historian, Liu Zhiji 劉 幾 (661-721) expressed these concepts very vividly, as follows:

If the professional historian is not forgone, and the bamboo and silk of their records survive, then even though a man himself has perished and vanished into the void, his deeds are as if they still survive, bright and clear as the stars of the Milky Way. As a result, scholars who come after can sit and open the wrappers and boxes [which hold the histories] and encounter in spirit all the men of antiquity; without leaving their own houses they can exhaust [the lessons of] a thousand years. When they read about a worthy exemplar, they think of emulating him. When they read of an unworthy one, they inwardly examine themselves.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>118</sup> In *Biji xiaoshuo daguan* 觀 (Taipei: Xinxing shuju, 1962), 1.3.4a.

<sup>119</sup> *Shitong* 通 [Generalities on History], 710; *SPPY* edition, 11.303. The translation is slightly modified from Denis Twitchett, "Biographies," p. 77; who in turn slightly modified his translation from E. G. Pulleyblank, "Chinese



Scholar Lu also understands that a meritorious life can achieve everlasting future renown. Hence, when the Daoist priest asks him for his definition of contentment and success, the very first thing which the Scholar thinks of is “to establish meritorious deeds and sow a name.” In other words, in establishing merit, his name would be enshrined in the histories and passed on in renown to future generations. Shen Jiji knew of this powerful effect of the otherwise often flat and dry dynastic biographic style, and he knew how it traditionally impacted on the reader, who, in reading it as authentic history, participates in it by reliving his own ambitions and dreams.<sup>120</sup>

Of course, it is not only writing style which sways readers, but also other additional aspects such as narrative form and content. The allegorical nature of “Record within a Pillow” has long been noticed and the search for the “true” allegorical identity of Scholar Lu has recently become the subject of a rather heated debate.<sup>121</sup> The character of Lu has been variously interpreted as representing Shen Jiji’s patron, Yang Yan, Yang Yan’s patron, Yuan Zai, their contemporary elder statesman Guo Ziyi, the chief

Historical Criticism: Liu Zhiji and Sima Guang,” in W. G. Beasley and E. G. Pulleyblank, *Historians of China and Japan* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 144.

<sup>120</sup> For this last point, I am indebted to Daniel Hsieh’s article entitled “Induced Dreams, Reading, and the Rhetoric of ‘Chen-chung chi’” *TkR* 27.1 (Autumn 1996), p. 88. In this article, Hsieh further elaborates the power of the orthodox style of official biographical writing on educated readers and its relation to “Record within a Pillow” (see especially pp. 79-89).

<sup>121</sup> In this connection, see especially Bian Xiaoxuan 卞孝萱, “‘Zhenzhong ji’ zhujiao yuanxing sanshuo zhiyi” 主角型 質疑 *Xibei Shida xuebao* (*shehui kexue ban*) (1993.6), pp. 49-55. Bian Xiaoxuan argues vigorously against identifying the character of Scholar Lu with Zhang Yue (as in Ding Fanzhen 範鎮, “‘Zhenzhong ji’ de zhujiao yanjiu” 主角 , in *Tangdai wenxue yanjiu* [Guangzhou: Guangxi shifan daxue Chubanshe, 1994]), with Guo Ziyi (as in Wang Meng’ou, “Du Shen Jiji ‘Zhenzhong ji’ bukao”), and with Yuan Zai (as in various Wang Meng’ou studies and in Uchiyama Chinari, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, pp. 341-45).

minister and poet from two generations earlier, Zhang Yue, or a composite of various Tang historical figures.

The overall career pattern of the dreaming Lu certainly bears many similarities with that of Zhang Yue,<sup>122</sup> as Uchiyama Chinari has noticed.<sup>123</sup> Like Lu, Zhang Yue's first post in officialdom was Palace Library Editor, and he rose all the way up to great prominence in the Kaiyuan era, becoming Chief Minister and the Duke of Yanguo in appreciation of his meritorious services. He also had a checkered career. He was demoted to a series of posts in the circuits, and then was transferred to the northeastern frontier to supervise military operations. Later on, despite several years of forced resignation, he was restored to high-ranking posts in the capital and basked in great imperial favor until the end of his life. When he passed away, the Emperor honored him by ordering three days of official state mourning.

Very specific parallels between Lu's dreamed experiences and events in the life of Xiao Song (ca. 669-749)<sup>124</sup> have been noted by nearly every scholar who has written on "Record within a Pillow." Xiao Song embodied Scholar Lu's cherished ideal of "being out (on the battlefield) as a general and in (the palace) as a minister" (*chujiang ruxiang* 將相) to an even greater extent than did the more literary-minded and relatively pacifistic Zhang Yue. His early life did not resemble Lu's in the least, as he was a descendent of the royal house of Liang, entering officialdom through hereditary privilege and with little learning. He, however, held several posts similar to Lu such as Commandant, Investigating Censor, and Prefect. The most striking parallel passage in Xiao Song's biography is the description of the Tibetan incursion into the He and Huang River valley region in 727, and Xiao's role in quelling it. Although the account in the official

<sup>122</sup> Biographies in *JTS*, 97.3049-57; *XTS*, 125.4404-11.

<sup>123</sup> *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, p. 342.

<sup>124</sup> Biographies in *JTS*, 99.3093-95; *XTS*, 101.3949-52.

history is more detailed, the major events, persons and places are reflected in Shen Jiji’s tale, and some phrases are even repeated verbatim. After the murder of Wang Junche, Xiao Song, like Lu, was appointed Military Governor of Hexi circuit. He strengthened defenses in the region by building great walled cities, rallying the people and making key changes in military personnel. In the following year, he personally led one of the attacks to crush the Tibetan army, and was rewarded by the pleased Emperor Xuanzong with unparalleled favors and an appointment as a chief minister at the very end of 728, and then finally becoming Senior Chief Minister (Jointly Manager of Affairs with the Secretariat-Chancellery) — a post which had been vacant since Zhang Yue’s retirement — shortly before the death of Zhang Yue. Later on, Xiao Song too was enfeoffed as Duke of Yanguo and lived out his life to an age beyond eighty.

On one level, Scholar Lu’s more literary (*wen* 文) side is represented by Zhang Yue, and his more martial (*wu* 武) side by Xiao Song. Shen Jiji seems to have designed his portrait of the Lu character by partially basing it on the lives of these towering historical figures of the two previous generations, thus combining the literary with the martial. But we also ought to consider the parallels between the careers of Zhang Yue and Xiao Song against those of Guo Ziyi and Yang Yan. Just as Xiao Song was appointed Chief Minister around the time of Zhang Yue’s death, so Yang Yan’s Chief Ministership was terminated at the time of Guo Ziyi’s death. Inversely, Yang Yan’s more literary and administrative talents parallel those of Zhang Yue, and Guo Ziyi’s more military achievements those of Xiao Song. Furthermore, the transfer of power in both cases marked a new era at the inner court, with Xiao Song’s new ministry being wholly aristocratic for the very first time during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong,<sup>125</sup> and with the

<sup>125</sup> See *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 3, Sui and Tang China, 589–906, Part 1*, p. 392.

new, practical policies advocated by Yang Yan displacing the old ones symbolized by Guo Ziyi and Liu Yan.

As an official historian, Shen Jiji had direct access to the historical archives, and therefore knew well the historical events of the Kaiyuan era almost exactly fifty years before. Yet, as Bian Xiaoxuan has pointed out, there are several minor historical inconsistencies in the tale, particularly in the Xiao Song “layer.” Shen may have deliberately injected these inconsistencies into the narrative to make the reader aware that the events in the tale do not actually reflect the history of the Kaiyuan era, but instead reflect the events of Shen’s own day during the ministership of Yang Yan.<sup>126</sup> As a writer of literary tales, Shen was supremely aware that if he were to explicitly base the character of Lu on the lives of his patrons, Yang Yan and Yuan Zai, all allegorical power would be lost on the reader. To effectively drive home his point, he rooted Lu’s dream experiences in parallel conditions fifty years earlier and changed the ill-fated ends which befell his patrons to one more fortunate for Lu.<sup>127</sup>

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that there are several similarities between the life of the character, Lu, and the lives of Yuan Zai and his protégé, Yang Yan. Lu’s life before entering the dream world resembles Yuan Zai’s early life as attested to in his official biographies.<sup>128</sup> Although the reasons given in the two biographical accounts differ, Yuan’s family became impoverished, and he spent much of his youth working in the fields. Also like Lu, he was fond of learning, good at composition, and liked to roam the philosophies and histories. He entered officialdom not through the presented-scholar’s examination but through the less usual channel of the special examinations on the Daoist classics given under the reign of Xuanzong. As Chief Minister, he sent Liu

<sup>126</sup> “Zhenzhong ji,” p. 21.

<sup>127</sup> Wang Meng’ou, “Zhenzhong ji’ ji qi zuozhe,” p. 16.

<sup>128</sup> Yuan Zai’s official biographies are in *JTS*, 118.3409-14; *XTS*, 145.4711-15.

Yan to successfully restore the canal transportation system. Previously, he had been a prefect in the northwestern frontier region and, thus, one of his primary concerns was defence against foreign incursions. In 773, he proposed that walled towns be built in Yuan 原 prefecture and that the Tang capital be moved to the south to assure better defence. Although his proposals were rejected, these actions must have influenced Shen Jiji in his description of the tale’s Lu as “by nature being fond of construction projects...” and as “digging a canal for eighty *li* westward that bypassed the inaccessible [areas].” Yuan Zai’s proposal of building walled cities in the northwest may even have reminded Shen of Xiao Song’s construction of great walled cities and his stemming of the Tibetan incursion decades earlier, and particularly so when considering that it was Yang Yan himself who reinstated the exact same proposal in the second month of 781.<sup>129</sup>

The first part of Yang Yan’s official biographies reads very much like the life Lu dreams, and some expressions and official titles are exactly replicated. Sometime after Yang “casts off his plain-cloth jacket, ... he was appointed as Imperial Diarist ... He was (later) promoted to be Director of the Board of Civil Office and Drafter in Charge of Imperial Edicts and Proclamations.” Among other posts held in common with Lu, Yang Yan was, of course, appointed Chief Minister, and “the world unanimously looked upon him as a worthy (Chief) Minister.” Also as with Lu, there were those who slandered of him with “ungrounded rumors,” and he was demoted and banished twice. Yang Yan was murdered on his way to his second post of banishment. Lu, however, luckily escaped this fate by having his death sentence commuted, and, after several years of banishment, was restored to high-ranking posts in the capital, and was enfeoffed as Duke of Yanguo, living out a life long past the age of eighty.

<sup>129</sup> Yang Yan’s official biographies are in *JTS*, 118.3418-26; *XTS*, 145.4722-29.

Whether or not one agrees with Bian Xiaoxuan that Shen Jiji exalts his lost benefactor in “Record within a Pillow” by restoring to him a perfect life, whole and without disgrace,<sup>130</sup> Shen would have been hard put to find a better model than Guo Ziyi<sup>131</sup> to complete the life Lu lives. Guo Ziyi was the preeminent loyalist general of the post-rebellion period and a highly-admired senior statesman when Yang Yan and Shen Jiji entered the inner court. In fact, he was so highly-admired that his portrait was included in the military temple of the semi-legendary Chou figure of Taigong

<sup>132</sup> only a few months after his death, and the Emperor himself compared him to Taigong. Like many others in his day, Shen Jiji was no doubt greatly moved when this gigantic and glorious figure passed away during the sixth month of 781, less than one month before Yang Yan was demoted. The third and final shock of Yang’s murder in the tenth month of that year prompted Shen to compose “Record within a Pillow,” when the image of Guo Ziyi still loomed fresh in his mind.

Hence, the style and content of the final part of Shen’s tale very closely mirrors Guo Ziyi’s biography. Among his descendants, his eight sons and seven nephews all became important officials of the inner court, and he had dozens of grandsons. His residence in Chang’an occupied one-quarter of the ward it was in, and three thousand of his family members dwelt there. Then his biography relates the following passage which is strikingly similar to the matching one in the tale:

From beginning to end, he was bestowed with fine lands, beautiful vessels, renowned gardens, excellent lodges, music and women, valuable trinkets... innumerable beyond reckoning.

<sup>130</sup> “Zhenzhong ji,” pp. 23-4.

<sup>131</sup> Guo Ziyi’s biography is in *JTS*, 120.3449-66.

<sup>132</sup> See *Shiji*, Chapter 32.

There is also the series of memorials submitted by Guo Ziyi to the throne requesting his resignation, and these are accompanied by several imperial replies. The tone, content and style of these documents apparently stirred Shen Jiji; for, from them, he seems to have appropriated a good number of phrases and expressions. Guo wants to “beg for his bones and preserve his remaining teeth.” He humbles his conduct and virtue as unworthy of the imperial kindness that has been shown him. “He has been responsible for the chariot, but he has bequeathed (only) plunder.” The Emperor’s reply is a kind refusal which also notifies Guo that a eunuch will visit him with medicines and needles. This continues several times until the new Emperor Dezong allows him to retire. When Guo Ziyi did pass away, the Emperor ordered five days of state mourning, and praised him in a memorial with such honorific designations as “pillar of state.”

There are, of course, dream stories which predate Shen Jiji’s tale, but “Record within a Pillow” is the earliest example we have of a well-developed dream story in Chinese literature.<sup>133</sup> It seems that Shen Jiji derived the basic structure of his tale from a Six Dynasties anecdote.<sup>134</sup> In this anecdote, a merchant named Yang Lin visits a temple where a priest directs him to a jade pillow.

<sup>133</sup> See, for example, the remarks by Ye Qingbing, “Liuchao zhi Tangdai,” pp. 17-18.

<sup>134</sup> This anecdote is entitled “Yang Lin” in *TPGJ*, 283.2254, where the original source is attributed to Liu Yiqing’s 劉義慶 (403-444) now extant work *Youming lu* 幽錄. It is also recorded in Yueshi 悅史 later (930-1007) *Taiping huanyu ji* 寰宇記 (N.p.: Jinling Shujü, 1882), 126.6a, which gives an additional source as Gan Bao’s 干寶 (*fl.* 320) *Soushen ji* 搜神記. However, the anecdote does not exist in modern editions of *Soushen ji*.

Wang Meng’ou (“Zhenzhong ji’ ji qi zuozhe,” pp. 5-6) and David Knechtges (“Dream Adventure Stories,” pp. 108-09) are among those scholars who have noted the connection between “Record within a Pillow” and the “Yang Lin” anecdote. *Youming lu* was certainly circulating during Shen Jiji’s time. See Wang Meng’ou, “Zhenzhong ji’ ji qi zuozhe,” p. 5 for a brief sketch of the transmission of *Youming lu* through the Sui, Tang and the Five Dynasties.

Yang Lin enters the pillow through a crack, and sees magnificent buildings and palaces. He meets a powerful official inside one of the buildings, and the official marries him to his beautiful daughter. The couple have six children, and each becomes a Palace Library Editor. Several decades pass, and Yang Lin finds that he has no desire to return to his native land. Then, suddenly, as if awakening from a dream, he finds that he is still next to the pillow, where he sits for a long time in distress.

Although Shen Jiji retained some elements of this matter-of-factly narrated anecdote and much of its rudimentary structure, he breathed new life into the original story by adding a large number of details, embellishments and changes, one of which is obviously the character of Lu. As we have seen, the Scholar, Lu, embraces the lofty hopes and dreams which very much reflect some of the achievements of Shen Jiji's contemporaries, Yang Yan, Yuan Zai and Guo Ziyi as well as the historical figures of Xiao Song and Zhang Yue from two generations earlier. In essence, Lu is the embodiment of the Tang scholar community's primary focus of ambition: to succeed in an official career as a powerful military leader and an influential policy advisor in the Tang imperial court. Shen Jiji himself wrote in 779 of this ambitious pursuit:

Becoming an official is like ascending as an immortal; not becoming an official is like sinking to the abyss. The delights and pleasures (of the official) and the grief and suffering (of the other) are as far from one another as heaven and earth.<sup>135</sup>

<sup>135</sup> A passage from *Treatise on Selection*, preserved by Shen's friend, Du You 佑 (735-812) in *Tong dian* 通典, (*Guoxue jiben congshu* ed. [Taipei rpt.: Xinxing Shuju, 1962], 18.101.1). This passage can also be found in *Complete Prose of the Tang* (*Quan Tang wen* 全唐文), 476.14a. Fragments of this work of Shen's have also been preserved in *Zizhi tongjian*, 226.7268.779.3. On the friendship between Shen Jiji and Du You, see Du Mu 杜牧 (803-852), ed. *Fanchuan wenji* 樊川文集 (Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Chubanshe, 1978), 14.11a-b.



Lu represents the pursuit of these Tang scholar-official ideals and his dream the fulfillment of them. The fabric of Lu’s overwhelming desire to pursue the fame, fortune and glory of an official career is woven into his realistic dream—complete with its grave setbacks—in which he ascends resplendently to the divine heights of officialdom.

The old Daoist priest, Old Man Lü, represents the wise man who can penetrate the meaning of human life. He allows Scholar Lu to dream and guides him toward enlightenment. For the dream to be effective, the dreamer must be a young person like Lu; for if he had already travelled too far along the road of life toward old age, then the full significance of the dream may have been lost upon him. Because Lu is in the very prime of his life, just setting out on his adult life-path and still very innocent regarding what may lie ahead, Old Man Lü permits him to experience a dream which inevitably has full effect on him. By having Lu live out a complete lifetime during the time it takes to steam millet, the Daoist allows the Scholar to fathom very quickly and very clearly the actual face of human reality. If Lu were an older man whose life journey was nearly over, then the dreamed experience might simply have been or seemed to be a recollection of his own past rather than of future possibilities.

At the climax of the tale, when Lu re-enters the waking world to find himself still lying down next to the pillow in the rest-lodge with Old Man Lü by his side and the millet not yet done — finding all things precisely as they were before he entered the dream world — he realizes that the entire life he had experienced was but a dream. He becomes agitated after awhile and asks, “Could it all have been a dream in my sleep?” And the old Daoist’s response is perhaps the most surprising of all: “The contentments of human life are all like that.” A concealed awareness seems to underlie Old Man Lü’s words, which seem to express that all which Scholar Lu had experienced in the dream

world was as clear to him as the back of his hand. It is as if Lü had been part of an audience observing the dramatic events of Lu's dream-life unfold on a stage. It could only be that the dream which the Scholar experienced was akin to that which the old man had already experienced in some manner in the past—that all the ups and downs, successes and failures, pleasure and pain which Lu experienced were also those which he had encountered. On the basis of this uncanny empathy with Lu's dreamed experiences, the old priest is able to instruct the younger man in a law previously undisclosed to him. Otherwise unable to communicate this lesson verbally, Old Man Lü could only instruct Lu through the medium of a vivid and thoroughly realistic dream experience reinforced by his own shared empathetic experiences.

At the very end of the tale, Scholar Lu evidently becomes totally aware of the awe-inspiring and tragic nature of the human condition. He is lost in thought for a long time before he thanks the old man and says:

Now, the ways of favor and disgrace, the fatefulness of failure and success, the principle of gain and loss, and the emotions of death and life — I thoroughly understand them. This is how you, venerable sir, have checked my desires. Dare I not accept this lesson?

Then he bows and departs, leaving the reader to pause in thought.

The two waking world frames are set entirely in a rest-lodge on the road to Handan. Shen Jiji uses this place-name to allude to a story in the Daoist classic, *Zhuang zi*.<sup>136</sup> This story tells of a young boy who goes to Handan to learn its inhabitants' wonderful way of walking. But he fails to fully master the Handan walk and also forgets his original way of walking. When he

<sup>136</sup> 17.79-80. *SPPY* edition. This allusion has been pointed out by Uchiyama, *Zui Tô shôsetsu kenkyû*, p. 341, and by William H. Nienhauser, Jr., "The World inside a Pillow," p. 435.

realizes that he has lost the ability to walk, he is forced to crawl all the way back to his home in Shouling 壽 (in the state of Yan ). Scholar Lu in the dream world resembles the boy from Shouling in several respects. Just as the boy is overly presumptuous in going a way that differs from his true nature in attempting to learn another way of walking, so Lu is presumptuous in considering himself a gentleman worthy of what he perceives is a wonderfully prestigious and prosperous life. In Handan, the boy finds himself having lost his natural and original way of walking; and in the dream world (*his* Handan), Lu finds himself having traded in his miserable plain-cloth jacket for luxurious official robes, his black colt for magnificent chariots, and his fine farmland for spectacular mansions. In the dream world—even *before* he is ultimately afforded enlightenment—he realizes that he has lost the simple nature and plain innocence of his true, original life. When his career plunges to its lowest point and he faces the greatest danger and disgrace in the dream world, he is about to commit suicide and he cries out to his wife in fear and desperation:

At my home East of the Mountains, there are five *qing* of fine fields — enough to withstand cold and hunger. Why do I suffer by pursuing an official’s salary? And now that it has come to this, I long to wear that plain-cloth jacket and ride that black colt while travelling on the road to Handan. Yet this cannot be won back.

But in the dream world, Lu apparently does not take the lesson to heart. He is saved and eventually restored, and lives out his lengthy life as a powerful and honored official.

There remains one other very significant allusion in the tale. Shen Jiji uses clothing and baggage (*yizhuang* ) as a symbol of Lu’s ascent as he crosses over from the waking world to the dream world. First, there is the old Daoist who sits down in the rest-lodge and leans on his baggage. Then, after enjoying each other’s

company for a while, the Scholar realizes how dirty and shabby his clothes and his baggage are. It is this realization which puts him in a discontented mood and which leads Old Man Lü to offer the pillow and the dream world to Lu. Lu's clothes and baggage not only signal his entry into the dream world but also trace his rise there when, after marrying into a wealthy and prestigious family, "his clothes, baggage and equipage grew daily more attractive and magnificent." The rare term for "clothes and baggage," *yizhuang*,<sup>137</sup> is also an allusion to a story in another Daoist classic of the third or fourth century, *Lie Zi* .<sup>138</sup> Neatly corresponding with "Record within a Pillow," this story takes place on the road to Handan where the great Confucian scholar Niu Que 牛缺 meets some bandits. They take everything he has: his clothes and baggage (*yizhuang*), and his chariot and horses — the sort of things that Lu had first come to acquire during his rise in the dream world. But Niu Que, unruffled, walked away showing no worry or regret. The curious bandits ran after him to find out why, and Niu told them that a gentleman does not risk his life for possessions. Afterwards, the bandits talked it over with one another and decided, "With his worthiness, if he goes to see the Lord of Zhao 趙, he will certainly get us into trouble. It would be best to kill him," which they did. Niu Que, like Lu, proudly considered himself a worthy gentleman, and, while Lu loses the simplicity of his original nature, Niu indeed loses his life. Perhaps Shen Jiji intended for his readers to take this warning to heart, and (unlike Niu Que) react appropriately and spontaneously to the conditions and times one finds oneself in, rather than trying to mold them according to one's self-estimation or desired ambitions. The catastrophe of Niu Que, furthermore, somewhat resembles the demise of Shen's benefactors, Yang Yan and Yuan Zai. All considered themselves worthy scholars, and all were murdered by

<sup>137</sup> See n. 8 above.

<sup>138</sup> Yang Bojun 伯 , ed. *Lie Zi jishi*, 8.166.

(in Shen Jiji's eyes) petty bandits. The way the bandits talked with one another, fearful of retribution from Niu and the Lord of Zhao, may have been the way Yuan Zai and Yang Yan's political adversaries spoke with one another. The bandits let Niu Que go and then, on second thought, they decide to pursue and kill him. This echoes the demise of Yang and Yen, who were both demoted and, in entering banishment, murdered.

Nonetheless, the dream world finally comes into contact again with the waking world precisely when the aged Lu passes away and Scholar Lu awakens. The boundary between dream-sleep and waking mirrors that between death and life, and Lu crosses back over carrying with him the experiences and memories commemorating a rich fifty-year life full of power, fame and glory, all of which have instantaneously vanished, and all of which have occurred, paradoxically, in a fleeting instant. Lu's lofty desires are "checked" after he has experienced the fulfillment of his ideals, lived out a full lifetime, and dies. Now he thoroughly understands life's vicissitudes, its gains and losses, successes and failures—and, most of all, death. Old Man Lü has led the Scholar on a journey towards death's wisdom. On awakening, Lu by no means experiences the slightest sense of "rebirth," but rather an intense form of psychological death, and this experience is reconfirmed by the sight and the words of the aged Daoist. The Scholar has experienced the one basic and unalterable fact of life: that of the inevitable, unrelenting process from birth to death.