
*A Religious Leader in the Tang:
Chengguan's Biography*



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Imre Hamar

Tokyo
The International Institute for Buddhist Studies
of
The International College for Advanced Buddhist Studies
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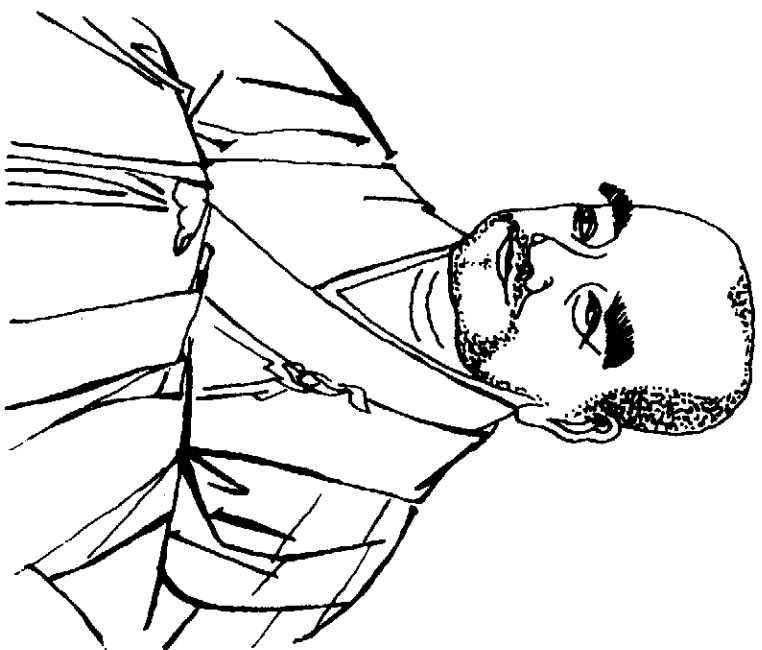
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INTRODUCTION*

According to Chinese Buddhist tradition, Chengguan 澄觀 was the fourth patriarch of the Huayan school, which flourished under the Tang dynasty but became less significant after its collapse. Chengguan was a monk of vast erudition. His works abound with references to both Buddhist books and Chinese classics and, thus, bear witness to his complete mastery of the scholarship of his day. Like his many predecessors, he wrote commentaries on the *Huayanjing*, the scripture, which is regarded by followers of the Huayan school as the consummate expression of the Truth realized by Buddha in his enlightenment. His voluminous commentaries represent not only painstakingly detailed elaborations of the text of a scripture, but also a collection of Buddhist learning of that age. This must be the reason why his works gained wide currency and became authoritative for later generations. Unfortunately, his commentaries have yet to be thoroughly studied by modern scholars.¹ He was a greatly influ-

* My research on Chengguan's biography and his teachings was supported by grants of the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation and OTKA (F029471).

¹ Robert M. Gimello has an ongoing project with several other scholars on "Commentaries in China", and he studies Chengguan's commentary on the last chapter of the *Huayanjing*, *Ru fajie pin* 入法界品 (*Gaṇḍavyūha*). I recently studied his commentary on the chapter entitled *Rulai chuxian pin* 如來出現品, *Manifestation of the Tathāgata*.

ential thinker, he elaborated on the theory of the four *dharma-dhātu*, which synthesizes two special Huayan tenets, i.e. the nature-origination (*xingqi* 性起) and the dependant arising of the *dharma-dhātu* (*fajie yuanci* 法界緣起).² Despite his achievements as an exegete, it would be wrong to surmise that he was solely a scholar or a philosopher. He studied under Vinaya masters, and made vows to keep even stricter regulations than those required of an ordained monk. He held assemblies to preach Huayan teachings to monks and lay people alike, and to perform Huayan rituals. Moreover, he was an accomplished master of meditation. Due to his power of concentration, his corpse is said not to have decayed after his death. In addition to his career as a Buddhist monk, he was associated with high-ranking officials and emperors. In acknowledgement of his merits, he received titles such as controller of monks and national preceptor, and he was invited to the court to lecture on Huayan before the emperors. The literati respected him as a personal teacher, and asked him to write works to clarify difficult problems in Huayan Buddhism.

As Chengguan was such an eminent monk, his biography can be found in several Buddhist or official historical sources, such as collections of biographies of eminent monks, Buddhist chronicles and local gazetteers. As the authors of these works had access to different sources, and had their own perspectives on Chengguan's life and his Buddhist career, these biographies are not in agreement on several questions. In the following study we will discuss the aspects of Chengguan's life mentioned above by

² For a discussion of this topic, see Hamar 1998. Kojima Taizan proposed the theory that there were two Huayan lineages: the practice-oriented lineage of Wutaishan and the theory-oriented lineage of Zhongnanshan. He supposes that Chengguan linked these two lineages. See Kojima 1991.

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referring to and collating all the available sources. Unlike earlier scholarly biographies, which avoided a discussion of difficult problems in reconstructing Chengguan's life, we will emphasize those data that are obscure, or contradictory.³ In some cases, we can offer solutions to these problems, but in other cases we can only point these ambiguities out.

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³ A very detailed biography of Chengguan was written by Kamata Shigeo, to whom I am greatly indebted. See Kamata 1965: 151–234. For an English summary of this biography, see Gregory 1991: 58–68.

I. SOURCES

1. Lu Changyuan's *Preface to Chengguan's Commentary*

The earliest extant biographical source on Chengguan is Lu Changyuan's 陸長源 *Preface to Chengguan's Commentary*. It was handed down through a manuscript of Chengguan's *Commentary* in Japan. It is dated to the Kamakura period, and is among the holdings of the Kanazawa Library.⁴ Lu Changyuan is mentioned in Chengguan's biographies as one of the high-ranking officials with whom he was associated; it is therefore entirely possible that he wrote a preface to the *Commentary*. After explaining the title of the *sūtra* character by character, Lu summarizes Chengguan's life from the very beginning to the time when, having completed the *Commentary*, he preached at the Great Chongfu 崇福 monastery of the Northern Capital (Taiyuan) by invitation of Li Ziliang 李自良. First of all, we have to consider the date of the *Preface*. In it Lu is referred to as the Prefect of Ruzhou 汝州, and his official biography states that he held this office before 794. Thus, he must have composed the *Preface* before this time, much earlier than Chengguan's death.

Examining the data that the *Preface* furnishes, we can conclude that in some regards it resembles our next source, the *Stūpa Inscription*. According to this, Chengguan left lay life at the age of nine, and it lists the Buddhist works that he studied. In addition, we find sentences that are almost identical with the biography included in the *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳.

⁴ See Takahashi 1975.

In the *Song gaoseng zhuan* we read:

年甫十一依寶林寺今應天山禪師出家。誦法華經。十四遇恩得度便隸此寺。

"He was only eleven years of age when he left lay life under the guidance of Meditation Master Pei of Baolinsi (which is called Yingtianshan now). He recited the *Lotus Sūtra*. At the age of fourteen, he received official ordination, and became registered at this monastery."

In the *Preface* it reads:

九歲依當州寶林寺禪師誦經。至十四遇恩得度。隸居寶林寺。

"At the age of nine, in his district under the guidance of Meditation Master Pei of Baolinsi he recited scriptures. At the age of fourteen, he received official ordination, and became registered at the Baolin monastery."

The *Song gaoseng zhuan* says:

遍尋名山旁求祕藏。梯航既具壺奧必臻。

"He visited the famous mountains to search for secret teachings. He travelled to distant places to know the great mystery."

The *Preface* adds only one character:

遍尋名山悉旁求祕藏。梯航既具壺奧必臻。

"He visited the famous mountains to search for secret teachings *everywhere*. He travelled to distant places to know the great mystery."

These findings suggest that Zanning either used this *Preface* or the same source that Lu did. They imply that Chengguan's first biography had been compiled before he died. This would explain why the *Stupa Inscription*, as we will see below, states that Zheng Yuting 鄭餘慶 (746–820) wrote a biography of Chengguan in ten *juan*, even though he died before Chengguan.

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2. Inscription of the Stūpa of Marvellous Awakening (*Miaojue taji* 妙覺塔記)

The title of the inscription is *The Inscription of the Stūpa of Marvellous Awakening, which was rebuilt in the Huayansi during the Yuan dynasty, and which [is made for] the National Teacher Qingliang of the Great Tang dynasty, who was the Commentator of the Old and New Huayanjing, the Great Master of Translation of Buddhist Scriptures, and served as Controller of Monks in the Capital* (Dayuan Huayansi chongxiu Taitang Huayan xinjiu liangjing shuzhu fanjing da jiaoshou chong shangdu sengtong qingliang guoshi miaojue taji 大元華嚴寺重修太唐華嚴新舊兩經疏主翻經大教授充上都僧統清涼國師妙覺塔記). Chengguan's stūpa was rebuilt during the Yuan dynasty in the ninth year of the Zhiyuan period 至元 (1272) according to the inscription. This is attested by *The Bronze and Stone Inscriptions of Guanzhong* (*Guanzhong jinshi ji* 關中金石記).⁵ A monk of the Huayansi, Guoan 果安, gave the rubbing of this inscription to Yūki Reimon, who published a picture of it.⁶ It was later published and edited by Kamata Shigeo.⁷ The seven-meter-high, seven-layered, hexagonal brick stūpa next to Dushun's stūpa has remained in the form of the Qing reconstruction. During the modern reconstruction of the stūpa, a picture was taken of the lower part of it, which is said to have been built in the Yuan dynasty. Another picture shows a stone case from the base of the stūpa, which is not

⁵ Bi Yuan 畢沅 (1730–1797) listed 797 inscriptions of Shaanxi 陝西 from the Qin to Yuan dynasties in eight *juan*. See Ciyuan 1771.

⁶ Yūki 1935. The photograph is also found in Tokiwa 1975: section 9, pp. 75–76.

⁷ A photo of the rubbing can be found at the beginning of his book (1965). For the edition, see 157–158.

dated. In the next two pictures we can see a gilt bronze Buddha statue found in the *stūpa*, and a jade vase with *śaṛīras* excavated from an underground palace (*digong* 地宮).⁸ The Huayansi, which is located at Chang'an xian 長安縣, 15 kilometres from Xi'an, collapsed due to a landslide during the Qianlong period, and only recently was a small temple rebuilt with only one shrine, where the stele is kept. In his book on Huayansi, Chang Yao 暢耀 includes an edition of the inscription. It is basically identical with Kamata's text, but it has more illegible characters, and the punctuation is sometimes different.⁹ However, Chang Yao also edited the ending of the inscription, which describes the circumstances of the establishment of the stele and lists the names of those involved in this work. This is missing from Kamata's edition, and only Elisa Cohen provided it on the basis of the photograph in Kamata's book.¹⁰ Her edition seems to be more reliable than Chang's. Masaki Chikusa has also provided an edition and Japanese translation of this text.¹¹

It is said that Xing Jixiang 行吉祥 of Longchuan 龍川, a direct disciple (*dizi* 嫡子) of Yong'an 永安, who was, indirectly, a disciple (*yuansun* 遠孫) of Qingliang 清涼, wanted to rebuild the *stūpa*. Xing Jixiang was unknown to history until the recent discovery of his epitaph in Baimasi cun 白馬寺村,¹² as Buddhist historiographical works related to this period fail to mention his name.¹³ According to this short biographical source,

⁸ For the pictures, see the beginning of Chang's book.
⁹ See Chang 1993: 131–134.

¹⁰ See Cohen 1998: 226–227. She provides a translation, though it contains some errors.
¹¹ Chikusa 1997: 7–8.

¹² For a report on this discovery of the tomb of the Monk of Longchuan, see Xu 1983.

¹³ Such as *Fozu Lidai Tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載 T 49, 2036; *Daming Gaoseng zhuan* 大明高僧傳 T 50, 2062; *Buxu gaoseng zhuan* 補續高僧傳.

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Xingyu 行育, a monk from Longchuan, was of Jurchen descent. Emperor Khubilai conferred on him the red *saṅghāi* robes (*chiseng qieji* 赤僧伽梨) and the title of Great Master of Preaching the Teaching (*fuzong hongjiao* 扶宗弘教), in recognition of his merits in the Buddhist-Daoist debate. After the Mongolian conquest of South China, he was appointed supervisor of Buddhist affairs in all circuits of South China (*zongshe jianghuai zhulu sengshi* 總攝江淮諸路僧事). At the request of the Imperial Preceptor, he managed the reconstruction of Baimasi, where he later became the abbot.¹⁴ He died in the second year of the Yuanzhen period (1296). His master was Yong'an Rou 永安柔, who is identified as Shanrou 善柔 of the Yong'an monastery.¹⁵ He is said to have understood the subtle meaning of Huayan at the age of twenty. He held Huayan assemblies on Wutaishan, and later expounded on Huayan in the capital.

By the time Xingyu wanted to rebuild the *siupa*, it lay in ruins, the stele lost and scattered; thus, nothing remained to examine (*tafei bei wang man bu ke* 塔廢碑亡漫不可考). He went from Yanjing 燕京 to Lintao 臨洮 of Gansu to meet the Imperial Preceptor, who was none other than the great Sa-skyapa lama, 'Phags-pa (1235–1280), nephew of Sa-skyapa Pandita. During 1271–1273, 'Phags-pa resided at Lintao (Shingkun), and established a temple there.¹⁶ 'Phags-pa agreed to carry out this work, he gave one silver sceptre, and ordered Xionghian 雄辯, controller of monks in Shaanxi, and Master Qian 遷, the five-district superintendent, to accomplish this task. Xionghian

¹⁴ For a detailed account of his life, see Chikusa 1997.

¹⁵ For his epitaph and biography, see *Xuelou ji* 雪樓集 21. and *Buxu gaoseng zhuan* 4. The epitaph lists Xingyu as Shanrou's disciple, but his biography in the *Buxu gaoseng zhuan* does not mention it. This must have been the reason why Xingyu's name fell into oblivion. See Chikusa 4.

¹⁶ See Petech 650.

is known to history.¹⁷ He was a monk from Yunnan who went to the North after Khubilai had occupied Yunnan. He stayed there for twenty-five years, and received the title Hongjing 洪鏡 from the emperor. After his return to Yunnan, he translated Buddhist scriptures into the local language (*bo* 蠻). He was very active in disseminating Buddhism, and his lectures attracted large crowds. He died in 1301 at the age of seventy-three.

When Xiongbian and Master Qian arrived at Zhongnanshan, they were looking for the remains of his *stūpa*, but could find only the stone base (*shizuo* 石座). Chengguan's *śārīras* were collected from monks and families of local officials who received them from the Huayansi after the Imperial army had left. The *śārīras* were placed in a jade vase which was provided by the wife of a local official. Presumably, this jade vase was found in the *stūpa* with *śārīras*, and photographed. After a procession was held and offerings were made in Chang'an, the *śārīras* were brought to the temple. Elisa Cohen suggests that Chengguan's original *stūpa* was somewhere on Zhongnanshan, where according to his biography he was first taken to a grotto, and only during the restoration of Yuan time was its stone base transferred to the Huayansi.¹⁸ However, even if this story about the grotto is true – but I suspect that it only served to support the legend that two Indian gods took one of his forty teeth after his death – a *stūpa* was later built in his honour to be placed in the Huayansi where he resided. The inscription says that his *śārīras* were received in the Huayansi, suggesting that his *stūpa* must have been there. Furthermore, Zhongnanshan did not only mean the mountain, but the region near Zhongnanshan as well. During the Tang there were forests surrounding the mountain; these, therefore, formed one unit with the mountain.

¹⁷ See *Xin xu gaoseng zhuan* 新續高僧傳, 2. Chen 1962: 4.

¹⁸ See Cohen 1998: 231–232.

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The reconstruction of Chengguan's pagoda sheds light on two aspects of Chinese Buddhism during the Yuan dynasty. First of all, it symbolizes that Huayan, and especially Chengguan's, teachings gained wide currency in Northern China. Xingyu was held in high esteem by the Emperor who granted him a title and an office. In addition, he was a renowned teacher of his time, as twenty-two students of his are listed in his epitaph. However, it was not only in clerical circles that Huayan Buddhism flourished, but also among the aristocrats. This is attested by the generous support of wives of aristocrats to the reconstruction of Chengguan's pagoda. Due to the influence of Chan Buddhism, the significance of the lineage strengthened in Huayan. Second, it was unclear given the Tibetan Buddhist dominance at the Yuan court what role 'Phags-pa played in Chinese Buddhism. His participation in the Buddhist–Daoist debate¹⁹ and his rendition of the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya* from Tibetan into Chinese²⁰ are well known, but his involvement in the affairs of the Chinese Buddhist community is less documented. Here we are told that before Xingyu started the reconstruction, he went to a distant place to receive 'Phags-pa's permission. He approved the reconstruction, supported it financially and ordered local Buddhist officials to assist Xingyu in accomplishing this work. In addition, in Xingyu's biography we read that he reconstructed the White Horse Monastery, regarded as the first Buddhist monastery in China, at the request of 'Phags-pa. These two cases show that he played an important role in reviving Chinese Buddhism.

¹⁹ The Daoist lost the debate due to 'Phags-pa's reasoning. See Jan 1982: 391–393.

²⁰ See T 45, 1904. This work was not influential among Chinese Buddhists.

Japanese and Western scholars long believed that the author of the inscription was Pei Xiu 裴休 (787?-860),²¹ the famous minister of the Tang dynasty, who was a disciple of Zongmi 宗密 (780-841), the fifth patriarch of the Huayan school. Recently, Elisa Cohen called this attribution into question, and pointed out that since the *Stele Inscription of the National Teacher Qingliang* (*Qingliang guoshi beiming* 清涼國師碑銘), authored by Peixiu and preserved in both the *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文²² and two Buddhist historiographical works, *Longxing Fojiao Biannian Tonglun* 隆興佛教編年通論²³ and *Fozu Lidai Tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載²⁴, is a eulogistic and not a biographical work,²⁵ it is completely different from the *Siipa Inscription*. She argues that in *Quan Tangwen* the eulogistic *ming*s of Zongmi and Duanfu 端甫 (770-836) by Pei Xiu are preceded by biographical introductions, but in Chengguan's case only the *ming* is found. The compiler of Song Gaoseng Zhuan, Zanning 贊寧 (919-1001), relied on these introductions in writing the biographies, but we find no references to a similar source in Chengguan's biography. She suggests that Peixiu might have written only the eulogy, and not the biographical account of Chengguan, or if he did write it, then the earliest extant version of it is from the Yuan dynasty, found as the restored *Siipa Inscription*, or in Purui's 普瑞 work *Huayan xuantan hui xuanji* 華嚴懸談會

²¹ For Pei Xiu's biography, see *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (hereafter JTSh) 177. 4952-4953, *Xin tangshu* 新唐書 (hereafter XTSh) 182. 5371-5372. For a modern treatment of his life, see Yoshikawa 1992. Yamazaki 1969. Maspero 1914: 4-6. For Pei Xiu and Zongmi, see Gregory 1991: 73-77.

²² 743.

²³ XZJ 130: 670b17-671a16.

²⁴ T 2036: 49.634c28-635a20.

²⁵ It does, however, include some references to Chengguan's life.

that the author²¹ the famous of Zongmi 宗密. Recently, id pointed out *each*er *Qing*-*lu*), authored *n* 全唐文²² *ixing* *Fojiao* *l Fozu Lidai* a biographi- *l* *Inscription*. *igs* of Zong- *eded* by bio- *ly* the *ming* *ning* 贊寧 the biogra- *e* in Cheng- *ave* written Chengguan, *f* it is from *ption*, or in *駁* 懸談會

; (hereafter *fter* XTSh) *see* Yoshi- *pei* Xiu and

's life.

玄記.²⁶ Purui quotes the *Śūpa Inscription* (*Miaojué taji yun* 妙覺塔記 云), but in fact it is not identical with the text of the *Śūpa Inscription* we have.

I agree with Elisa Cohen's suggestion that the *Śūpa Inscription* was ultimately written by Yin Jixiang. At the end of the inscription it says that after the *śūpa* was completed, Yin Jixiang was ordered to make the inscription (*ta cheng ming Yin Jixiang ji zhi* 塔成命印吉祥記之). However, he deemed this task too difficult to undertake, and flatly refused, but finally, acting under pressure, he composed the outline (*gu shu genggai* 姑迭梗概). Thus, it is quite obvious that it was he who was the author of the *Śūpa Inscription* and not Pei Xiu. Nonetheless, even if we accept Yin Jixiang's authorship, we should still investigate his sources for his biography of Chengguan. The inscription mentions two sources:

若夫序清涼之世系師承、美清涼之道德功行、已具載於相國鄭公餘慶十卷之文、裴公休妙覺之碑矣。茲毋庸贊云。

"It is not necessary here to praise Qingliang's masters, his virtue and his meritorious deeds, as these are exhaustively recorded in the ten-*juan* text by Zheng Yüqing, the minister of state, and on the stele of the [*śūpa* of] Marvellous Awakening [written] by Pei Xiu."

This is the first source to report that there was a biography written by Zheng Yüqing in ten *juan*. The other source on Chengguan mentioned in the inscription is Pei Xiu's stele discussed above. It is impossible to decide whether the stele that Yin Jixiang knew included a biography, or was only a eulogy. However, the possibility that this biography was known to Yin Jixiang cannot be completely ruled out, as some quotations from it are extant in Song sources. Jinshui Jingyuan 晉水淨源 (1011–

²⁶ XZJ 12: 7a15–9a13. The quotation concludes with the remark that the text is abridged (*shang lüe ji wen* 上略記文).

1088) writes in the *Zhaolun jijie lingmo chao* 肇論集解令模鈔²⁷:

四絕者,文出裴休述清涼國師妙覺塔記。彼文云:肇公四絕論,生公十四科,玩味亡數,若驪龍之戲珠也。

"The term, 'Four Excellent [Treatises]' originates from the inscription on the *stūpa* of Marvellous Awakening of the Cool National Teacher written by Pei Xiu. The text reads: [Chengguan] tested the flavour of the *Four Excellent Treatises* by Sengzhao and the *Fourteen Divisions* by Daosheng tirelessly, just as the black dragon plays with a pearl."

This passage in the inscription by Yin Jixiang reads as follows: 長安四絕論生公十四科終南法界觀天台止觀康藏還源觀,耽玩不捨,如龍戲珠也。

"He indulged in playing with the *Four Excellent Treatises of Chang'an*, the *Fourteen Divisions* by Daosheng, *The Discernment of Dharma-dhātu* of [Dushun] of [Mt.] Zhongnan, *The Cessation and Contemplation* of Tiantai, *The Discernment of Returning to the Source* of Kang [Fa]zang. He handled these works as the dragon plays with a pearl."

Ruan Yue 阮閱 writes in the *Shihua zongui* 詩話總龜 (1123):²⁸

裴休為其塔云:元和五年授僧統印,歷九宗聖世,為七帝門師,俗壽一百二者也。

"The *Stūpa Inscription* made by Pei Xiu says: In the fifth year of the Yuanhe period, [he] received the seal of controller of monks, he lived under nine emperors, and was the personal

²⁷ This work remained in Japan. See Kamata 1965: 359, 602.

²⁸ Ruan Yue cites *Danyang ji* 丹陽集 by Ge Shengzhong 葛勝仲 (1077–1144), but the extant version of *Danyang ji* does not contain this passage. Ge Lifang 葛立方 also cites it in the *Yunyu yangqiu* 韻語陽秋, 746. For these works, see Roe Jae-seong 1990: 173–174.

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teacher of seven emperors, his lifespan was one hundred and two years."

In the *Inscription*:

憲宗元和庚寅授僧統印... 歷九宗聖世, 為七帝門師, 俗壽一百二者也

"In the *gengyin* year of the Yuanhe period, [he] received the seal of controller of monks... he lived under nine emperors, and was the personal teacher of seven emperors, his lifespan was one hundred and two years."

It is evident that these citations are not from the eulogy, but from a biographical work by Pei Xiu, or, at least, attributed to Pei Xiu. It is interesting to note that Jingyuan's work is the first source to refer to this biography as a *Stūpa Inscription (taji 塔記)* and not as a stele inscription (*beiming 碑銘*). Ruan Yue does not use the word stele either, but he refers to it as *taming 塔銘*.

Furthermore, at the beginning of the *Stūpa Inscription* from the Yuan dynasty, we read that Yin Jixiang collected (*ji 集*) it, which might mean that he actually reconstructed it from references in various earlier works, and he might have added biographical data from other extant biographies of Chengguan.

3. Buddhist historiographical works

a) Song dynasty

The Song dynasty was the heyday of Buddhist historiographical works; more than fifty books relating the history of the Buddhist community were written between 960 and 1278.²⁹ In recon-

²⁹ For a discussion of these works, see Jan 1964.

structing Chengguan's biography, I will use the following Buddhist historiographical works from the Song dynasty:

- i. *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳³⁰
- ii. *Guang qingliang zhuan* 廣清涼傳³¹
- iii. *Longxing fojiao biannian tonglun* 隆興佛教編年通論³²
- iv. *Shimen zheng tong* 釋門正統³³
- v. *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統記³⁴

i. *Song gaoseng zhuan*

The Song Biographies of Eminent Monks was written under imperial order by Zanning 贊寧 (919–1002), a monk of the Vinaya school, to continue two earlier collections, *The Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳)³⁵ by Huijiao 慧皎 (497–554) and *The Further Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳)³⁶ by Daoxuan 道宣 (696–667). Zanning completed his work in 988. He divided the 531 biographies into ten categories: 1. translators (*yijing* 譯經); 2. exegetes (*yijie* 義解); 3. practitioners of meditations (*xichan* 習禪); 4. interpreters of regulations (*minglü* 明律); 5. protectors of the Dharma (*hufa* 護法); 6. miracleworkers (*gantong* 神通); 7. those who sacrifice their bodies (*yishen* 遺身); 8. reciters (*dasong* 讀誦); 9. those who accumulate merit (*xingfu* 興福); 10. others (*zake* 雜科).³⁷ It is no wonder that Chengguan's biography is found in

³⁰ T 50, 2061: 737a4–c20.

³¹ T 51, 2099: 1120a13–b2.

³² XZJ 130: 335d2–336b12.

³³ XZJ 130: 456a17–c6.

³⁴ T 49, 2035: 293b3–c4.

³⁵ T 50, 2059.

³⁶ T 50, 2060.

³⁷ For a recent account of these works, see Kieschnick 1997.

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the exegetes section, as he became famous for his commentaries on the *Huayanjing*. As discussed above, Zanning did not refer to Pei Xiu's inscription in Chengguan's biography. However, he quoted from Chengguan's *Account of Conduct* (*xingzhuang* 形狀) written by his disciple, Qingmian 清沔, when listing the ten vows he took. The existence of this work is attested by Üich'ön 義天 (1055–1101) who takes it up in his catalogue along with Pei Xiu's epitaph:

清涼形狀一卷清沔述，
清涼碑文一卷與形狀亦有不同待勘裴休述³⁸

"*Qingliang's Account of Conduct* in one *juan* authored by Qingmian,
Qingliang's Epitaph in one *juan* by Pei Xiu, which is not identical with the *Account of Conduct*, thus it is to be collated."

Usually, the first biography of a person compiled soon after his or her death was the *Account of Conduct* on which the epitaph and later biographies in historiographical works were composed.³⁹ Üich'ön remarks that there are differences between the *Account of Conduct* and the *Epitaph*. Unfortunately, we do not know the differences between the two sources, as the *Account of Conduct* is not extant.

In the Song dynasty Purui was very critical of *The Song Biographies of Eminent Monks*:
又大宋高僧傳中有贊寧僧統所述之傳事多錯謬，不須繁引。⁴⁰

"Furthermore [Chengguan's biography] is found in the *Song Biographies of Eminent Monks*. The biographies that Zanning, controller of monks, wrote contain many errors; therefore, it is unnecessary to cite in detail."

³⁸ *Xinbian zhuzong jiaozang zonglu* 新編諸宗教藏總錄 T 55, 2184: 1168a17–18.

³⁹ See Shinohara 1988: 121–122.

⁴⁰ XZJ 12: 9a13–15.

As we will see below, there are discrepancies of great importance between Chengguan's biography in *The Song Biographies of Eminent Monks* and the *Stupa Inscription*.

ii. *Guang qingliang zhuan*

The Extended History of Mt. Qingliang describes the monasteries on Wutaishan and the eminent monks who lived there. It was written in 1060 by Yanyi 延一 who sojourned on Wutaishan at that time. It is more comprehensive than the earlier work on Wutaishan, the *Old History of Mt. Qingliang* (*Gu Qingliang zhuan* 古清涼傳)⁴¹ written by Huixiang 慧祥, who travelled to Wutaishan in 667. It cites several sources from the Tang and Song dynasties.⁴² These two works along with *A Further Record of Qingliang* (*Xu Qingliang zhuan* 續清涼傳)⁴³ composed by Zhang Shangying 張商英 in 1088⁴⁴ formed a Wutaishan trilogy. As Chengguan lived on Wutaishan for ten years, and wrote his commentary on the *Huayanjing* there, he became associated with this mountain to such an extent that he was called the National Preceptor Qingliang. His biography adds much detail to the circumstances in which he composed his commentary, but contains mistakes on other aspects of his life.⁴⁵

iii. *Longxing fojiao biannian tonglun*

The Buddhist chronicles first appeared during the Song dynasty. Zuxiu 祖琇 completed his Buddhist chronicle, *A Compre-*

⁴¹ T 51, 2098.

⁴² See Birnbaum 1986: 120.

⁴³ T 51, 2100.

⁴⁴ For a discussion of this work, see Gimello 1992.

⁴⁵ For Chengguan's biography in the *Guang Qingliang zhuan*, see T 51, 2099: 1120a13–b26.

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hensive Discussion of the Chronicle of Buddhism in the Longxing Period, in 1164. He gave an account of Buddhism from the Later Han up to 960, and gave priority to the Chan school, but mentioned famous masters of other schools and outstanding Buddhist members of the literati and supporters of Buddhism.⁴⁶

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A special series of Chan works, entitled *Transmission of the Lamp*, was produced in Song in order to legitimize the Chan school by tracing back the Chan teaching to Buddha. The first of them is *The Record of the Transmission of the Lamp in the Jingde Period* (*Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄),⁴⁷ written by Daoyuan 道源 in 1004. Although Chengguan's biography is not found here, his teaching of the essential tenet of the mind, which he gave in answer to Emperor Shunzong's question (*Da Shunzong xinyao famen* 答順宗心要法門), is recorded.⁴⁸

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In these Chan works, Zhiyi 智顗, the founder of the Tiantai school, is described as a follower of *dhyāna* practice, not as a patriarch of the Tiantai school, provoking a sharp response from Tiantai circles. They criticized these Chan histories, and established their own version of the transmission of Buddhist teaching by composing their own historiographical books.⁴⁹ First, a lay follower of the school, Wu Keji 吳克己 (1140–1214), authored

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The Correct Genealogy of Buddhist Schools (*Shimen zheng tong* 釋門正統) between 1195 and 1214. This was expanded and revised by Zongjian 宗鑑 in the 1330s. It is the first Buddhist

⁴⁶ See Schmidt-Glintzer 1982: 139–142.

⁴⁷ T 51, 2076.

⁴⁸ T 51, 2076: 459b22–c22.

⁴⁹ For the dispute between the two schools, see Chen 1983: 122–125.

historiographical work to follow the structure of official histories.⁵⁰ The chronicle (*benji* 本紀) includes the biographies of Buddha and Indian patriarchs, while the hereditary houses (*shijia* 世家) relate the biographies of their famous disciples. Zongjian wrote treatises (*zhi* 志), and composed biographies (*liezhuan* 列傳) of the Tiantai masters and their lay followers. Chengguan's biography, along with biographies of the Huayan and Chan masters, is found in the records section (*zaiji* 載記). This section was first used in the *Jinshu* 晉書 to record the history of barbarians. By applying this title, Zongjian intended to emphasize that according to Tiantai tradition, these masters, however eminent they might be, are not part of the orthodox lineage.

v. *Fozu tongji*

Not long after the completion of *Shimen Zhengtong*, another Tiantai history, *The Record of the Succession of Buddhas and Patriarchs*, was written by Zhipan 志磐 between 1258 and 1269. This is the most voluminous history of the Tiantai school, which is based on both Buddhist and non-Buddhist sources. Like its predecessor it adopted the division of official histories.⁵¹ Chengguan's biography, which is found in the *Treatise of Teachings of the Schools* (*Zhuzong lijiao zhi* 諸宗教志), closely follows the text in *Shimen zhengtong*.

⁵⁰ See Jan 1964: 371. For an outline of the text, see Schmidt-Glintzer 1982: 98–108.

⁵¹ See Jan 1963, Schmidt-Glintzer 1982: 108–113, Chen 1983: 121–129. For a translation of a part of this book, see Jan 1966.

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Puri 普瑞, *Huayan xuantan hui xuanji* 華嚴懸談會玄
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Juean 覺岸, *Shishi ji guliue* 釋氏稽古略⁵⁵
Qu Ruji 瞿汝稷, *Zhiyue lu* 指月錄⁵⁶
Zhencheng 鎮澄, *Qingliangshan zhi* 清涼山志⁵⁷
Shenseng zhuan 神僧傳⁵⁸

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Xufa 續法, *Fajie wuzu lueji* 法界五祖略記⁵⁹
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⁵² See T 49, 2036: 465b21–23, 609b22–610a2, 616b20–c4, 634c10–635b1.

⁵³ See XZJ 133: 521b5–522b17.

⁵⁴ See XZJ 12: 7a15–9a14.

⁵⁵ See T 49. 2037: 821b2–28.

⁵⁶ See XZJ 143: 28a18–29a12.

⁵⁷ See juan 3.

⁵⁸ See T 50, 2064: 1004b23–c11.

⁵⁹ See XZJ 134. 275b6–277a9.

⁶⁰ See XZJ 134: 608a14–b13.

4. Gazetteers

Even if Chengguan's biographies in local gazetteers must have been based on Buddhist sources, and thereby provide no new information, it might be interesting to see which aspects of his life were emphasized and which sources were used in these works. I list a few gazetteers where his biography is found:⁶¹

- Shanxi tongzhi* 山西通志 160.
Shanxi tongzhi 陝西通志 65.
Zhejiang tongzhi 浙江通志 200.
Shaoxingfu zhi 紹興府志 69.
Chongxiu Anhui tongzhi 重修安徽通志 348.

In reconstructing Chengguan's biography I used Song Buddhist historiographical works and his *Stupa Inscription* which must have relied on sources that were not known or used by an earlier writer of his biography. I also refer to the late *Fajiezong wuzu lieji*, as this is the most detailed version of his biography. The other works repeat the information found in the above sources, provide no genuine data, and therefore are not taken into consideration. Here are the reference works in order of appearance:

- 988 *Song gaoseng zhuan* (hereafter SGZ)
 1060 *Guang qingliang zhuan* (hereafter GQZ)
 1164 *Longxing fojiao bianmian tonglu* (hereafter LFBT)
 1237 *Shimen zhengtong* (hereafter SZ)
 1269 *Fozu tongji* (hereafter FT)
 1272 *Miaojue taji* (hereafter MT)
 1680 *Fajiezong wuzu lieji* (hereafter FWL)

⁶¹ It is very convenient to search for biographies of Buddhist monks and Daoist priests in gazetteers in Su 1998.

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II. CHENG GUAN'S CRITICAL BIOGRAPHY

1. First period (736–776): education

Monastic education

He was surnamed Xiahou 夏侯, and his *zi* was Daxiu 大休.⁶² He was a native of Yuezhou Shanyin 越州山陰 or Yuezhou Guiji 會稽.⁶³ He was born in 738. The MT says that he was nine years of age when Tizhen 體真, a meditation practitioner 禪德, who is otherwise unknown to the Buddhist historians, became his master in the Baolin 寶林 monastery. One year later, Chengguan completely understood the Tripitaka, and he was ordained at the age of 11 owing to the favour of the emperor (*enda* 恩度). After he had reached the required age,⁶⁴ he received full ordination in 757.⁶⁵ To show his erudition in Buddhist literature, the

⁶² All sources agree on this except the GOZ, which attributes the Dai 戴 family name to him.

⁶³ The first piece of information is furnished by the SGZ, and the latter by MT, SZ, FT. The GOZ combines them by saying that he was born in Yuezhou Guiji Shanyin xian. When, during the Sui dynasty, Guiji jun 郡 was given the name Yuezhou, Shanyin and Guiji became united. From Ming to 1912 it was called Shaoxing fu 紹興府, and later Shaoxing xian 縣. See Ciyuan 499, 1623.

⁶⁴ According to the *Vinaya*, the minimum age of full ordination is twenty, but Welch reports cases of people being ordained under this age in modern times. 300–301.

⁶⁵ The SZ agrees with the MT. The three stages (*tongxing* 童行 or postulant, *śrāmanera* or novice, *bhikṣu* or full monk) of a Buddhist career are very clear in the case of Chengguan. For an introduction to the ordination system in China, see Ch'en 1964: 245–248.

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following are listed as works that he explained: the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*,⁶⁶ the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra* (T 14, 475), the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* (T 12, 374; 375; 376), the *Sūtra of Perfect Awakening* (T 17, 842) and other *sūtras*, altogether fourteen, and *Mahāyānaśraddhoṣṭhāda* (T 32, 1666; 1667), *Yogācārabhūmi* (T 30, 1579), *Nyāyapraveśa* (T 32, 1630), *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* (T 31, 1585), and other commentaries numbering nine in all, as well as the *Excellent Treatises of Chang'an* (*Chang'an si juelun* 長安四絕論)⁶⁷, the *Fourteen Divisions of Daosheng* (*Sheng-gong shisi ke* 生公十四科)⁶⁸, the *Discernment of Dharma-dhātu*, *Tiantai meditation* (T 46, 1911) and *Returning to the Source* (T 45, 1876) by Fazang.⁶⁹ It is worth noting that Chengguan in fact referred to all the works mentioned above but the *Sūtra of Perfect Awakening*. Chengguan's disciple, Zongmi, wrote several commentaries on this scripture, which was mainly studied by Chan monks. As the author of the inscription presumably intended to create a strong affiliation between Chengguan and Chan Buddhism, he attributed the study of this scripture to him.

According to the SGZ, Chengguan left home to become a monk at the age of eleven under Chan master Pei 裴 in the Baolin

⁶⁶ For a recent summary on the *Prajñā sūtras*, see Lehnert 1999: 32–73.

⁶⁷ Jinshui Jingyuan 晉水淨源 (1011–1088) identifies these treatises as the *Zhaolun* 肇論. See Kamata 1965: 602; Wei 230.

⁶⁸ According to Ūich'ōn's catalogue, it was a work written by Daosheng in one *juan*. See T 55, 2184: 1177c5. Chengguan refers to this work in his *Subcommentary*. See T 36, 1736: 197a25, 318c23, 400a11.

⁶⁹ The FWL adds *Lotus Sūtra* (T 9, 262; 263; 265), *Raṇagotravibhāga* (T 31, 1611), *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* (T 29, 1558), *Mūlamanḍyanaka-kārikā* (T 30, 1564) and *Śaśāstra* (T 30, 1569).

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monastery, which was called Yingtian shan 應天山⁷⁰ at the time of the composition of SGZ. The Baolin si was a monastery in Guiji, which was called Yingtian after its reconstruction in the first year of the Qianfu 乾符 period (874). It gained its name from a 23-zhang 丈 high pagoda.⁷¹ Chan master Pei must have been Xuanyan's 玄儼⁷² disciple, Hongpei 洪歸, who is said to have lived in the Baolin monastery. Chengguan belonged to this monastery (*li ci si* 隸此寺), which means that he was registered here.⁷³ He recited the *Lotus Sūtra* here.⁷⁴ This statement makes sense as an ordinary postulant had to recite a *sūtra* – frequently the *Lotus Sūtra* – for the novitiate exam.⁷⁵

After Chengguan had become a full monk, he paid visits to renowned masters of his time to study the teachings of various schools. The MT lists the following masters as his teachers: Tan-yi 曇一, Chan master Changzhao 常照, Wuning 無名 (722–793), Fashen 法詵 (718–778). In the second year of the Zhide 至德 period (757), Chengguan received full ordination and the

⁷⁰ Kamata Shigeo erroneously identifies Yingtian shan as a mountain in Sichuan province on which the Baolin monastery was built. See Kamata 1965: 159. The FT has Yingtian si 寺, clearly indicating that it was a monastery.

⁷¹ The relevant passages from *Jiatai Guiji zhi* 嘉泰會稽志 and *Baoqing Guiji xuzhi* 寶慶會稽續志 are cited in Chen 1983: 312.

⁷² He was one of Daoxuan's 道宣 disciples, the founder of the *Vinaya* school. See T 50, 2061: 795c27.

⁷³ The *lijī* 隸籍 was the registry of monks. See Nakamura 1975: 1437.

⁷⁴ The FT agrees with the SGZ. The GQZ is rather different from all other sources. It says that he left home at the age of thirteen and that he mastered the Confucian classics immediately. This must be a mistake, for the other sources agree, as will be discussed below, that he started to study non-Buddhist works later.

⁷⁵ See Ch'en 1964: 246. The FWL says that he was ordained after receiving imperial favour and passing the exam on *sūtra* (*shijing* 試經).

Nanshan *Vinaya*⁷⁶ teachings from Tanyi⁷⁷. In fact, Tanyi was part of the Dongta 東塔 school, which was separated from the Xiangbu⁷⁸ school, and he criticized both Nanshan and Xiangbu. Chengguan's association with the Dongta school is confirmed by his citation⁷⁹ from the commentary on *Vinaya* written by Huaizu 懷素,⁸⁰ who was the founder of the Dongta school.⁸¹ Chengguan must have studied under Tanyi in the Kaiyuan 開元 monastery⁸² located in Guiji, as Tanyi had been living here since 737.

Next, under Chan master Changzhao, the disciple of Tanyi, he took the *bodhisattva* precepts,⁸³ and, in addition, he took ten

⁷⁶ The Nanshan school was named for the Zhongnanshan 終南山, where the founder, Daoxuan lived. See Mochizuki 1955: 3999.

⁷⁷ For his epitaph by Liang Su 梁肅, see QTW 520, or *Quan Tang Cui* 全唐粹 62. For his biography in SGZ, see T 50, 2061: 798a21–799a14. Here Chengguan is not found among Tanyi's disciples, but his other two teachers, Changzhao, and the Tian'ai patriarch, Zhanran, are included.

⁷⁸ It was named for Xiangzhou 相州 where the founder, Fali 法礪 lived. See Mochizuki: 3108.

⁷⁹ See T 36, 1736: 36c19–22.

⁸⁰ For his biography in SGZ, see T 50, 2061: 792b25–793a10.

⁸¹ It was named for the Eastern Pagoda of Chongfu si 崇福寺 in Chang'an, which was the centre of the school. Tanyi studied under Daiang 大亮, who was the disciple of the founder of the Western Pagoda school (Xita 西塔). Manyi 滿意. Nanshan, Xiangbu and Dongta are called the three schools of the *Vinaya* (*Sanli zong* 三律宗). See Mochizuki: 3900.

⁸² It must have been one of the state-supported monasteries which formed a network, all bearing the designation Kaiyuan after the name of the era. See Weinstein 1987: 53–54.

⁸³ Several canonical works played an important role in the formation of the bodhisattva precept. One of them is the *Sūtra of Brahma's Net* (*Fanwang jing* 梵網經 T 24, 1484), which includes ten major interdictions and forty-eight minor ones. See Faure 1998: 91. For the practice of taking *bodhisattva* precepts, see Welch 1967: 294, Prip-Moeller 1937: 324–326.

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II. Chengguan's critical biography

great vows. However, no detailed information is given concern-
ing the content of his vows. The *Huayan xuantan hui xuanji*⁸⁴ in-
terpolates the MT by listing the ten vows, which are taken, sup-
posedly, from the LFBT,⁸⁵ which is the first source to list these
vows. These are as follows: 1. I will not renounce the clerical
life. 2. In my thoughts I will not disobey the *Taishāgata's* Law. 3.
I will not turn my back on the *sūtra* of the *dharmadhatu* while
sitting. 4. I will not let my nature become defiled by the realm of
desires. 5. I will not enter a nunnery. 6. I will not touch the bed
of a layman. 7. I will not watch improper splendour. 8. I will not
eat after noon. 9. I will not put down the rosary. 10. During the
nights I will not be separated from my robes and alms bowl.

The SGZ also furnishes us with a set of vows that Chengguan
is supposed to have taken, quoting from his *Xingzhuang* written
by Qingmian. 1. I will always reside in a monastery, possessing
only three robes and an alms bowl, and not accumulating wealth.
2. I will not seek the fame of my times. 3. I will not look at
women. 4. I will not stay in a lay household. 5. I will not give up
reciting the *Lotus Sūtra*. 6. I will always read the *Mahāvāna*
scriptures, and do good for living beings. 7. I will always explain
the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*. 8. During days and nights I will not lie
down throughout my life. 9. I will not seek fame to delude others
by boasting of my goodness. 10. I will not give up compassion
to save the *dharmadhatu*. The SGZ concludes that he never
broke his vows. In the LFBT the vows are exclusively concerned
with Chengguan's strict monastic discipline, while the vows in
SGZ not only emphasize this aspect but also his altruistic attitude
toward sentient beings (6, 7, 10). If he really took these vows while
receiving *bodhisattva* precepts – though the SGZ does not con-
firm this – the vows in SGZ would fit much better into this con-
text. As the existence of the *Xingzhuang* is attested by Ūich'ōn's

⁸⁴ XZJ 12: 7b8–12.

⁸⁵ XZJ 130: 605a16–b2.

catalogue, priority should rather be given to it than to LFBT in this matter. It is also important to note that vows connected to the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* (SGZ: 7, LFBT: 3) might have been a later interpolation, as this scripture does not seem to play a particularly important role in his early career.

After completing his *Vinaya* studies, Chengguan studied under Wuming 無名 (722–793),⁸⁶ a disciple of Heze Shenhui 荷澤神會 (670–762), who represented the Southern school of Chan. They might have met in Luoyang, or in the south when Wuming went to Nintoushan and Tiantaishan near the region where Chengguan lived. In 790, Wuming went to Wutaishan, and he did not take up a fixed residence there. As Chengguan had stayed on Wutaishan since 776, they might have met there again. Wuming died there in the Foguangsi 佛光寺, where a *stūpa* was built for him. In his biography in the SGZ Chengguan is not mentioned as his disciple, but *The Transmission of the Lamp in the Jingde Period* describes Chengguan as the only person who inherited Wuming's teaching.⁸⁷

He learnt Huayan from Dashen 大讞 of the Eastern Capital, i.e. Luoyang, who is identical with Fashen 法讞 (718–778).⁸⁸ Luoyang might have been his birthplace, as according to his biographies he lived in the Tianzhu si 天竺寺 in Hangzhou. In addition, he is said to have preached in Suzhou 蘇州 in 747, and in Changzhou 常州 in 767. The Japanese monk, Gyōnen 凝然, regards Fashen as a disciple of Huiyuan 慧苑, who was the heir to Fazang's teachings.⁸⁹ This is confirmed by his alleged com-

⁸⁶ For his biography in SGZ, see T 50, 2061: 817a18–b9. Dumoulin 1988: 329.

⁸⁷ See T. 51, 2076: 301b27.

⁸⁸ For his biography, see QTW 918, and SGZ T 50, 2061: 736a20–b13. The SGZ mentions Chengguan as his disciple, but the epitaph does not.

⁸⁹ See Kamata 1965: 183–184.

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II. Chengguan's critical biography

mentary on Huiyuan's major writing, the *Kandingji* 刊定記.⁹⁰ Chengguan seems to have studied under him in the south, and not in Luoyang as the SZ and FT state.⁹¹ Chengguan mastered the Huayan teaching so easily that it was enough to hear a tenet once to be able to teach it himself the next time. His master told him: "The *dharma-dhātu* is completely in you." It is interesting to note that Chengguan often refers to the Huayan masters Dushun, Zhiyan, Fazang and Huiyuan in his works, but never mentions Fashen. This might suggest that he was not so influential in the Huayan lineage.

The SGZ credits Chengguan with a much broader education in Buddhist philosophy and praxis. In addition to Tanyi, Wuming and Fashen, discussed above, the following masters are listed as his teachers: Li 醴, Xuanbi 玄璧, Fazang of Huainan 淮南法藏, Huiliang of Chengdu 成都慧量, Zhanran 湛然, Huizhong 慧忠, Faqin 法欽, Huiyun 慧雲. Before visiting Tanyi in the Qianyan 乾元 period (758–760), Chengguan is said to have studied the teaching of the Xiangbu school under master Li 醴⁹² in the Qixia 棲霞 monastery of Runzhou 潤州 (now Zhenjiang xian 鎮江縣, Jiangsu province). Except for this data, master Li is unknown in the history of Chinese Buddhism.

Chengguan went to Jinling 金陵 (now Nanjing) where the teachings of the Guanhe branch of the Sanlun school were passed on to him by Xuanbi 玄璧. Owing to Chengguan's efforts, the

⁹⁰ Fashen authored five works: 1. *Commentary on the Avatamsaka Sutra* (*Huayanjing yiji* 華嚴經義記); 2. *Explanation of the Kandingji* (*Kandingji cuanshi* 刊定記纂釋); 3. *Commentary on the precepts of nuns* (*Nijieben shu* 尼戒本疏); 4. *Commentary on the Vimalakīrti Sūtra* (*Weimojing shu* 維摩經疏); 5. *Commentary on the Sūtra of Brahmā's Net* (*Fanwangjing shu* 梵網經疏). These works have not survived, only some citations in other works. See Kamata 1965: 184–187.

⁹¹ Both have 造東京受難華於大詆.

⁹² The SZ and FT have 遭.

Sanlun school gained wide currency in the region south of Changjiang. We do not have the biography of Xuanbi.⁹³ In the Dali period (766–769) Chengguan went to the Wagan 瓦棺 monastery (Jiangning 江寧府 of Jiangsu province) where the *Awakening of Faith* and the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* were transmitted to him. In addition, under Fazang 法藏 of Huainan 淮南 – not to be confused with the third patriarch of the Huayan school – he studied Wǒnhyō's commentary on the *Awakening of Faith*.⁹⁴ Of Fazang of Huainan nothing is known. In 772, Chengguan proceeded to Shanxi 剡溪 to study Sanlun again under Huiliang 慧量 of Chengdu, who is otherwise unknown.

In 775, he went to Suzhou to study Tiantai meditation and commentaries on the *Lotus*, *Vimalakīrti* and other *sūtras* under Zhanran, the famous Tiantai patriarch. Chengguan is neither listed as Zhanran's disciple in the biography of Zhanran in SGZ nor in FT.⁹⁵ However, in the biography of Yuanhao 元浩, who was Zhanran's main disciple (the one who entered the room), Chengguan is mentioned as his fellow student.⁹⁶ The FT and the SZ say that Chengguan was one of the forty monks of Jiang 江 and

⁹³ Kamata Shigeo identifies Xuanbi with Master Bi under whom Shanfu 善伏 studied four *sūtras* and three *śāstras* in the Liushui 流水 monastery of Suzhou. T 50, 2060: 603a3–4. See Kamata 1965: 175. However, Shanfu died in 660, more than a hundred years before Chengguan's alleged study under Xuanbi; therefore, Master Bi cannot be identical with Xuanbi.

⁹⁴ He wrote two commentaries on this work: *Dasheng qixinlun bieji* 大乘起信論別記 (T 44, 1845) and *Qixinlun shu* 起信論疏 (T 44, 1844). The SGZ must refer to the latter. For an English translation, see Park 1979.

⁹⁵ For Zhanran's biography in SGZ and FT, see T 50, 2061: 739b–40a and T 49, 2035: 188c–9b respectively.

⁹⁶ Chengguan and Yuanhao were like two disciples of Confucius, You 游 and Xia 夏. T 50, 2061: 740b21–22.

II. Chengguan's critical biography

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Huai 淮 who accompanied Zhanran to Wutaishan.⁹⁷ The other sources do not confirm this information but Chengguan is known to have travelled to Wutaishan in 776, thus making this statement possible. Tiantai philosophy had a great impact on Chengguan as is reflected in his works.⁹⁸ The SZ and the FT say that Zhanran wrote the *Zhiguan Yili* 止觀義例 (T 46, 1913) and *Jinbei Lun* 金碑論 (T 46, 1932) in order to refute Chengguan's view that inanimate objects do not possess a Buddha nature. This stands in sharp contrast to Zhanran's newly advocated teaching.⁹⁹ Some scholars¹⁰⁰ accept this but Kamata Shigeo has shown that, in fact, Chengguan went one step further than his predecessors by propagating the Buddha nature of inanimate objects.¹⁰¹ The influence of Huayan thinking on Zhanran which might have inspired these works cannot be attributed to Chengguan, as Huayan concepts are found in his other work, *Zhiguan Dayi* 止觀大意 (T 46, 1914), which he authored before meeting Chengguan.¹⁰²

The SGZ goes on to say that Chengguan studied under Niutou-shan Master Zhong 牛頭山忠師. Master Zhong is Huizhong 慧忠 (683–769),¹⁰³ the fifth patriarch of the Niutou school of Chan. Huizhong look over the community of Mt. Niutou from his master, Zhiwei 智威 (646–722), after his move to Jinling. How-

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⁹⁷ See T 49, 2035: 293b27–29; XZJ 130: 912a3–5. Hibi 1975: 74–75.

⁹⁸ See Kamata 1965: 423–474.

⁹⁹ See T 49.189a; XZJ 130.377. For Zhanran's view on Buddha nature, see Benická 2002: 10–16.

¹⁰⁰ See Lai 1993: 35 and Sakamoto 1959.

¹⁰¹ See Kamata 1965: 442–454.

¹⁰² Hibi Senshō has proven that this work was written in 761. See Hibi 1965. In this essay he uses the Huayan term *zhenru suiyan bubian* 真如隨緣不變 which means that the absolute is dependant arising but it does not change. T 46, 1914: 460b.

¹⁰³ For his biography, see T 50, 2061: 834c–835b; T 51, 2076: 229a–230b. McRae 1983: 180–182.

ever, in 742, Huizhong, at the request of the prefectural magistrate, moved to the Zhuangyan monastery of Jinling, where he had been ordained and where he would eventually die. Chengguan's studies under him could certainly not have taken place after studying Tiantai with Zhanran, as Huizhong had died before that time. The teaching must have been dated to the time when Chengguan studied Sanlun with Xuanbi in Jinling, and must have taken place in the Zhuangyan monastery. In the *Jingde Chuandeng lu*, Huizhong is said to have had thirty-six disciples, who preached in Southeast China, but Chengguan is not listed among them.¹⁰⁴ Even if they met in Jinling, Chengguan might have gone to Mt. Niutou, as he described this place in his *Subcommentary*.

Twenty *li* south of Jinling there is a mountain called Oxhead. The reason why it is called that is that it has twin peaks. Its name has been changed throughout the successive dynasties. It was called Twin Watchtower, Heavenly Watchtower, Southern Altar, Cave of Immortals. According to a local gazetteer (*yudi zhi* 地域誌) this mountain is 1400 *chi* high and 47 *li* in circumference (*zhouhui* 周迴).¹⁰⁵

He also called on the other master of the Niutou school, Fajin 法欽,¹⁰⁶ who took up residence at Mt. Jing (Yuhang xian, Zhejiang), and they supposedly met there. In addition, we are told that he mastered the Southern school (*nanzong* 南宗) of Chan under Wuning, and the Northern school (*beizong* 北宗) under Huiyun 慧雲, of whom no biography is found. Uj Hakuju

¹⁰⁴ T 51, 2076: 223c–224a. Of his disciples only Taibai Guanzong is known 太白觀宗 (731–809). For his epitaph, see QTW 721.

¹⁰⁵ See T 36, 1736: 604a24–28.

¹⁰⁶ For his epitaph by Li Jifu 李吉甫 (760–814), see QTW 512. For his biography, see SGZ T 50, 2061: 764b–765a. *Jingde chuandeng lu* 51, 2076: 230a–b; McRae 1983: 191–195.

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II. Chengguan's critical biography

asserts that if they met in 775 he could be one of Puji's 普寂 (651–739) disciples.¹⁰⁷ Chengguan was certainly familiar with the tenets of the Northern school as he refers to them with the phrase “the Northern school says”.¹⁰⁸

As we have seen above, he studied under the masters of various Chan schools. This being the case, scholars have attempted to decide which school he could have belonged to. In his work, *The Essence of the Mind*, Takamine Ryōshū has found the influence of the Southern school, and therefore identified him as the heir of Shenhui.¹⁰⁹ Kamata Shigeo, on the other hand, argued that he criticized both the Southern and Northern schools from the standpoint of the Niutou school.¹¹⁰ In fact, Chengguan claims that his teaching is neither of the Northern school, nor of the Southern school but of the school of the mind (*xinzhong* 心宗).¹¹¹ Yoshizu Yoshhide thinks that Chengguan cannot be associated exclusively with any one of the Chan schools as he evaluated the Chan teaching from the standpoint of the Huayan school.¹¹²

It is interesting to note that the MT gives only Wuning as his Chan teacher, whereas the LFBT names the two masters of the Niutou school. If his *Stupa Inscription* was written by Peixiu, the reason might be his close friendship with Zongmi, Chengguan's main disciple, who was the fifth patriarch of the Huayan school as well as the patriarch of the Heze Shenhui school. Peixiu, I surmise, wished to give priority to the Shenhui school in Chengguan's biography as Wuning was also a part of it. The LFBT being a Chan chronicle, sectarianism must have played an important role in its assessment of his teachers.

¹⁰⁷ See Kamata 1965: 180.

¹⁰⁸ See, for example, T 36, 1736: 261c17.

¹⁰⁹ See Takamine 1956: 89–91.

¹¹⁰ See Kamata 1961.

¹¹¹ See Kamata 1965: 486–496.

¹¹² See Yoshizu 1980b; 1985b: 249–266.

Finally, concerning his monastic education, I would assert that it took place in Jiangsu and Zhejiang, as his birth place, the monastery where he became a novice and monk and all the places he went to study can be located in this region. It must have been the starting point of his pilgrimage to Wutaishan in 776. Before discussing the second period of his life, we must come to his secular education and his alleged participation in translation.

Education in secular works

The MT says that Chengguan began to study secular works during his sojourn on Wutaishan. The SGZ does not confirm this, but it is clear that it happened after he mastered the Buddhist teachings. The following thought led him to realize the importance of the secular works. "On the fifth level the sage learns worldly methods, realizes the *Taḥatā* and his mind rest on the realm of Buddha. He receives wisdom after his enlightenment, and the idea of serving the world arises. I am on the level of learning, how could I forget about it?" This passage sheds light on Chengguan's motivation for studying secular literature. He intended to draw on the Chinese non-Buddhist works to gain a better understanding of Buddhist teaching.

He is said to have studied the Confucian Canon (*jing* 經), the historical works (*chuan* 傳), philosophical writings (*zi* 子) and philology (*xiaoxue cangya* 小學蒼雅).¹¹³ In addition, he studied Indian culture: Siddham script (*xian* 悉曇), heretical philosophies (*zhubu yizhi* 諸部異執), the four *Vedas* (*siwei* 四圍), the five sciences (*wuming* 五明), mantra (*mizhou* 祕咒) and rituals (*yigui* 儀軌).

¹¹³ At the end of the Han dynasty three dictionaries were edited as one book, which came to be known as *Cangya*. See Cihai 19, 1467.

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Chengguan's erudition on Chinese classical works is proven by the ample quotations from them in his *Subcommentary on the Avatamsaka Sūtra*. In an effort to illustrate the meaning of certain passages of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, he cites the following books: *Book of Odes*, *Book of Documents*, *Book of Change*, *Zuozhuan*, *Erya*, *Rites of Zhou*, *Book of Filial Piety*, *Daodejing*, *Zhuangzi*, *Liezi*, *Analects*, *Guanzi*, *Records of the Historian*, *Chronicle of the Han Dynasty*, *Guangya* and *Shuowen jiezi*. While quoting these books he maintains his distance by saying: "I only borrow the words but do not adopt their meaning."¹¹⁴ Chengguan was on good terms with high-ranking officials, as we will see below; it was, therefore, important for him to assist them in understanding Buddhist tenets through these allusions to Confucian and Daoist literature. However, he emphasized the primacy of Buddhist teaching over indigenous thought.¹¹⁵

Concerning his knowledge of Indian culture, it must have originated from Buddhist works and reports by foreign translators. A variety of the *Brahmi* script was used in China for writing Sanskrit mantra and *dhāraṇī*. It came to be known as Siddham script, of which we have the earliest documentary evidence from the seventh century.¹¹⁶ Chengguan was acquainted with this script; this, however, does not imply that he learned the language as well. It is interesting to note that Chinese monks generally believed that by mastering the writing they knew the language.¹¹⁷ A description of Siddham script including Siddham letters can be found in Chengguan's *Commentary* and *Subcommentary*.¹¹⁸ Finally, he remarks that since *Brahmā* created writing to teach living beings at the beginning of the kalpa, the script has not

¹¹⁴ See T 36, 1736: 2b9 or 3b13.

¹¹⁵ For further treatment of this topic, see Hamar 1999.

¹¹⁶ See van Gulik 1956: 47.

¹¹⁷ See van Gulik 1956: 44–45.

¹¹⁸ T 35, 1735: 747c4–24; T 36, 1736: 435b20–436a18.

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changed, whereas the writing in China has. Chengguan's knowledge of Siddham script may indicate the impact of Tantra on his thought. As Wutaishan – owing to Amoghavajra's efforts as well as imperial support – became the centre of Tantrism at approximately the time that Chengguan stayed there,¹¹⁹ it must therefore have influenced him. If we accept that he assisted Amoghavajra in his translation, discussed below, this could also be a source of his knowledge of this script.

Chengguan provides a detailed account of the Indian heretical views, while discussing the second of the ten principles (*shizong* 十宗), i.e. the existence of dharmas and nonexistence of ego (*fayou wowu* 法有我無).¹²⁰ Fazang used this category for the *Sarvāstivāda*, as its main tenet is that the dharmas exist while the ego does not.¹²¹ Under this heading Chengguan discussed not only the teaching of *Sarvāstivāda* but also the Indian heretical views and indigenous Chinese philosophy. This can be attributed to the influence of Huiyuan 慧苑, who was Fazang's disciple. In his classification of teachings, Huiyuan divides the teachings into four sections, the first of which is "the heretical teachings that cannot apprehend the Absolute" (*mizhen yizhi jiao* 迷真異執教). He first summarizes the Indian heretical views, then turns to the indigenous Chinese philosophy.¹²² Chengguan criticized Huiyuan severely for being at variance with Fazang's five teachings, and hence he discarded Huiyuan's classification. However, he also took up this topic in his *Opus Magnum*. The reason why he touches upon this question at the second principle is that *Sarvāstivāda* refuted the erroneous causality (*xieyin* 邪因) and acausality (*wuyin* 無因) of heretical philosophies. He provides a summary of the main teachings of the following eleven Indian

¹¹⁹ See Birnbaum 1983: 30–33.

¹²⁰ See Hamar 1998: 13.

¹²¹ T 35, 1733: 116b8–11.

¹²² XZJ 5: 23b11–26b6.

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II. Chengguan's critical biography

schools: 1. Shulun 數論 (*sāṃkhya*);¹²³ 2. Shenglun 勝論 (*vaiśeṣika*); 3. ascetics and brāhmaṇas (*tuhui waidao poluomen* 塗灰外道婆羅門); 4. *Weituo lunshi* 毘陀論師 (*vedavādin*); 5. *Ancha lunshi* 安荼論師 (*andavādin*); 6. *Shisan waidao* 時散外道 (*kālavādin*); 7. *Fang lunshi* 方論師 (*digvādin*); 8. *Shunshi lunshi* 順世論師 (*lokāyata*); 9. *Yinli lunshi* 因力論師; 10. *Suzuo lunshi* 宿作論師 (*nirgrantha*); 11. *Wuyin lunshi* 無因論師. In discussing these schools, Chengguan often refers to the *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*,¹²⁴ and its commentary, *Yogācārabhūmi Śāstra*, *Āryaśāsanaprakaraṇa*, *Śata Śāstra*. In Chengguan's works we find two references to *Vedas*¹²⁵ and several references to the five sciences (linguistics, handicrafts, medicine, logic and religion). In referring to the five sciences he draws on the *Yogācārabhūmi Śāstra*.¹²⁶

Translation

The MT says that Chengguan translated *sūtras* in the *wushen* year (768) of the Dali period. The LFBT adds that he worked on imperial orders with Amoghavajra as a stylist (*runwen dade* 潤文大德). The FWL goes on to say that the translation was completed in 771 in the Xingshan si 興善寺, the place where Amoghavajra stayed in the capital. He translated seventy-seven works in one hundred and twenty *juan*. This last piece of data is certainly an interpolation. We find in Amoghavajra's biography that

¹²³ He often cites the main work of Sāṃkhya, *The Treatise of The Golden Seventy* (*Jin qishi lun* 金七十論), a Chinese translation of which is found in the Taishō. See T 54, 2137. For a French translation, see Takakusu 1904.

¹²⁴ For the discussion of the heretical views in its English translation, see Wei 29–46.

¹²⁵ See T 36, 1736: 216b8. and 658c5–11.

¹²⁶ T 36, 1736: 775a19–b13.

on the Emperor's birthday in 771 he presented the *sūtras* he had translated and wrote a memorial in which he says that from the Tianbao period up to the present he had translated seventy-seven works in one hundred and twenty *juan*.¹²⁷

The question whether Chengguan was one of Amoghavajra's assistants in translation has yet to be answered. Around this time Amoghavajra translated two works, *Miyan jing* 密嚴經 (T 16, 682) and *Renwang jing* 仁王經 (T 8, 246).¹²⁸ Some of his assistants in translating the *Renwang jing* are listed in Amoghavajra's memorial but Chengguan is not included.¹²⁹ However, we know that this *sūtra*, especially the chapter entitled *Protection of the country* (*Huguopin* 護國品), in which kings are told to recite this *sūtra* in case of natural or social disturbances, had a great impact on Emperor Daizong. He often fed more than one hundred monks in the palace in order to have them expound on this *sūtra* whenever necessary.¹³⁰ We cannot exclude the possibility that Chengguan was present in the capital at that time.

There is one more piece of data which will serve to confirm his participation in translation under Amoghavajra. According to the MT, Chengguan lived under nine emperors (Xuanzong 玄宗, Xiaozong 肅宗, Daizong 代宗, Dezong 德宗, Shunzong 順宗, Xianzong 憲宗, Muzong 穆宗, Jingzong 敬宗 and Wenzong 文宗) and served as imperial preceptor to seven of them. In accordance with this information, Chengguan is supposed to have been Emperor Daizong's teacher. As such, he might have joined the translation team. According to the SGZ, Wuzhu 無著 studied Huayan under Chengguan at the Yunhua si 雲華寺 in the capital before he left for Wutaishan in 767.¹³¹ Unfortunately,

¹²⁷ See Chou 1944–1945: 297–298.

¹²⁸ See Chou 1944–1945: 296.

¹²⁹ T 52, 2120: 831b28.

¹³⁰ See Chou 1944–1945: 296 (n. 61).

¹³¹ T 50, 2061: 836c3–4.

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II. Chengguan's critical biography

Wuzhu's biography in the *Qingliang Zhuan* does not confirm this.¹³² Even if Chengguan lived in the capital and took part in the translation, it is very dubious that he taught the emperor, as he would only receive nationwide recognition after completing his *Commentary* on the *Huayanjing*. Concerning Chengguan's arrival at the capital, we can be certain that this happened in 796 when Emperor Dezong summoned him. The question of whether it was his first visit is open to debate.

2. Second period (776–796): on Wutaishan

Pilgrimage

According to the MT, Chengguan went to Wutaishan after completing his Huayan studies under Fashen. When he read the chapter called *The abode of Bodhisattvas* of *Huayanjing*, he thought that the radiance of *Mañjuśrī* was reflected on Wutaishan. He therefore did not consider ten thousand *li* a long way and, yielding to his fate, stayed there. After he arrived, he settled down in the Huayansi 華嚴寺¹³³ and remained for ten years. The SGZ says that in 776 he made a vow to go to Wutaishan. After visiting the sacred places he proceeded to Emeishan 峨嵋

¹³² Wuzhu is said to have studied under Huizhong in Jinling. T 51, 2099: 1111b29.

¹³³ This is one of the oldest and most important monasteries on Wutaishan. According to a legend, it was founded at the time of Emperor Ming of the Han dynasty. First it was known as Dafujingjiu si 大孚靈鷲寺. Its name was changed to Dahuayan si 大華嚴寺 in honour of the new translation of *Avatamsaka Sūtra* by Śikṣānanda. Now it is called Xiantong si 顯通寺. See Birnbaum 1986: 125.

ll, the other famous Buddhist sacred mountain, to besech Samantabhadra, the protector of the mountain, to appear. From Emeishan he is said to have returned to Wutaishan where he stayed at the Huayansi. Here he practised the *vaipulya* ritual of confession (*fangdeng chanfa* 方等懺法).¹³⁴ The GQZ says that Chengguan stayed at the *Prajñā* Hall (*banruo yuan* 般若院) of the Huayansi and studied the *Huayanjing*.

The report about Chengguan's pilgrimage to Emeishan, repeated in SZ and FT, may be called into question on the grounds of his autobiographical references in the *Commentary* and *Subcommentary*. In commenting on *The abode of Bodhisattvas*, he writes:

When I was young, I read this scripture; each time I came to this text, I closed the scrolls with a sigh. Therefore, I did not consider ten thousand *li* a long way; yielding to my fate I resided in the sacred region. I was prompted to stay for ten years.¹³⁵

In the *Subcommentary* he further elaborates:

First, I discuss the reason why I went to this mountain. The reason was the text which says that the Bodhisattva resides on this mountain. At that time rebellions and bandits caused confusion, soldiers with spears were ever swarming like bees, the roads were filled with wolves [people of an evil nature], mountains and rivers obstructed the way. Yet

¹³⁴ The *vaipulya*, which means broad, refers to *Mahāvāna* Buddhism. The word *chan* is a transliteration of the Sanskrit word *kṣamā* which means patience, and refers to the repentance of sins. Monks have to admit their sins in the presence of other monks. See Kuo 1994: 22–23. The *vaipulya* ritual of confession must refer to the practice that a monk engaged in *vaipulya* meditation makes repentance of his sins. See Nakamura 1975: 842, 1224.

¹³⁵ T 35, 1735: 859c19–22.

II. Chengguan's critical biography

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I travelled without fear. Thus I say "yielding to my fate I re-
 sided" although the way is five thousand *li*, ten thousand *li*
 there and back. Originally, I had planned to stay for a short
 time, but days passed very quickly in the sacred region.
 I wrote the *Commentary* for fifteen years, ten of them
 here.¹³⁶

The MT borrows the words from the *Commentary* saying that
 "I did not consider ten thousand *li* a long way and, yielding to
 my fate, I stayed there." Of course, the statement that the journey
 was ten thousand *li* is not to be taken literally, even if the *Sub-*
commentary explains that it was five thousand *li* there and five
 thousand *li* back. However, he writes that the mountain is one
 thousand and six hundred *li* from Chang'an.¹³⁷ Therefore, he ap-
 parently did not set out from here. Chengguan does not mention
 his pilgrimage to Emeishan. He says that he intended to spend
 only a short time on Wutaishan, but he was captivated by the
 mountain to such an extent that he did not realize the passing of
 time, and in the end remained for ten years.

In addition, these passages shed light on the length of his
 sojourn on Wutaishan. The MT says that he stayed for ten years
 on the mountain, a piece of information which must have been
 taken from the *Commentary*. The *Commentary* was completed in
 787, and if we accept that he set out for Wutaishan in 776 as the
 SGZ states, he actually spent ten years on the mountain prior to
 finishing his work. However, after completing his *Commentary*
 he remained there for another five years, as we will see below. It
 is also noteworthy that Chengguan needed fifteen years in all to
 compose his book, and therefore started writing it five years
 before going to Wutaishan.

¹³⁶ T 36, 1736: 601a12-17.

¹³⁷ T 36, 1736: 601a18-19.

Commentary on the Huayanjing

Chengguan's major work is his *Commentary on the Avatamsaka Sūtra* and its *Subcommentary*. In the Buddhist tradition his name came to be associated with his *Commentary*. He is frequently mentioned as the Commentator (*shuzhu* 疏主) of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* or simply the Commentator. The historical works, except for SZ and FT, give a detailed description of the composition of this book. Of his biographies the GQZ furnishes the most information on this question. As Chengguan wrote it on Wutaishan, the author of GQZ, Yanyi, who stayed there, must have had access to some data or legends preserved on the mountain.

The MT says that the monks on the mountain (*shanmen jing-lü* 山門淨侶) asked Chengguan to spread the teachings. He replied that the distinct teaching of one vehicle was very difficult to explain. Fazang had established his school based upon this teaching. His follower – surely a reference to Huiyuan – could not understand its secret meaning. As the master died without finishing his work, his teachings declined. As he saw that the followers of the Huayan teachings were confused, he could not remain silent. According to the SGZ, he started to explain the *Huayanjing* at the request of the abbot of Huayan si, Xianlin 賢林. He hesitated for a while, as the text of the old commentary was rather complicated and its meaning had not been sufficiently elaborated upon (*wenfan yiyue* 文繁義約). Both sources refer to the *Kanding ji* 刊定記, the first commentary on the eighty-fascicle *Huayanjing*. Fazang started on this work, but died before he could complete it. It was finished by Huiyuan but he modified his master's teaching in many respects. His classification of teachings, as we have seen above, included external teachings as well. He expounded on two sets of ten profound gates, one connected with the phenomenal world, one with the absolute. In his *Commentary*, Chengguan frequently refers to these inventions, and sharply criticizes them.

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The GQZ tells us that upon writing his *Commentary* Chengguan moved to the *Prajñā* Hall and made the following request of the monks. "It is a rare chance for me through the kalpas to come to this sacred region. I would like to make a retreat in order to compose the *Commentary* with a clear mind. Could you build a pavilion for me where I could write the *Commentary*?" His request was granted, and the pavilion was completed within a short period of time. Wuzhu 無著 of Wenzhou 溫州 made a calligraphy in the style of Wang Xizhi on the ridge. Chengguan established his hall to write the *Commentary* (*zhishu daochang* 制疏道場), and on the eighth day of the fourth month in the first year of the Xingyuan 興元 period (784) he prayed for good signs. According to the LFBT and FWL, this took place in the fourth year of the Jianzhong 建中 period (783).

All sources agree that Chengguan had a dream of a golden man or image.¹³⁸ The MT says that this golden image (*jinxiang* 金像) was as high as a mountain, had a face like the full moon and floated in the air. Chengguan held its face in both hands and swallowed it, and then awoke. According to SGZ, he saw a golden man (*jiren* 金人), whom he embraced and swallowed at once without chewing. When he awoke, his body was covered with sweat. He rejoiced, as swallowing the light meant verification that his work would be bright everywhere. The LFBT mentions a golden apparition (*jirong* 金容). The GQZ tells us that he ate the golden man starting at the head and awoke by the time he reached the legs. He thought that this auspicious sign must have been sent by a great Bodhisattva (*dasheng* 大聖), a possible

¹³⁸ Dreams play an important role in the biographies of Chinese monks and nuns. See Faure 1991: 209–230. In the Buddhist Canon dreams are often described and explained. See von Müller 1992. China has a remarkable tradition of literature on dreams, i.e. dream-books, medical literature, Daoist and Buddhist sources. See Strickmann 1988.

reference to *Manjūśrī*. He had tasted the Huayan teaching where by he realized its pure meaning.

The MT says that after his dream, he started to write the *Commentary*, and that he felt as if spirits were assisting him in his work. He began in the *jiazi* year of the Yuanxing 元興 period under Dezong and finished in the *dingmao* year of the Zhenyuan 貞元 period. The SGZ provides a more accurate date: he worked from the first month of the first year (784) of the Yuanxing period to the twelfth month of the third year (787) of the Zhenyuan period. The *Commentary* consisted of twenty fascicles (*zhou* 軸). The *Commentary* in the Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist Canon seems to contradict this data as it consists of sixty fascicles (*juan* 卷). However, the Kanazawa Library collection includes a manuscript dated to the Kamakura period consisting of ten fascicles, each of which is divided into an upper (*shang* 上) and a lower (*xia* 下) part.¹³⁹ This version apparently preserved the original division of the work. According to the GQZ, he washed his hands and rinsed his mouth after he had awoken. He went to the teaching hall where he burnt incense and made offerings to give thanks for the auspicious sign. Chengguan is said to have received a text on the seven places and nine assemblies.¹⁴⁰ He finished on the fifth day of the eleventh month in the *dingmao* year of the Zhenyuan 貞元 period. The text mistakes zhen 貞 for zheng 正.

To celebrate the completion of the *Commentary*, Chengguan held a feast for one thousand monks. Before he started to explain the *Commentary*, he had a dream. In his dream he turned into a dragon: his head was lying on the Southern Terrace, his tail coiled

¹³⁹ See Takahashi 1975: 15–16.

¹⁴⁰ The preaching of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* happened in seven different places during nine assemblies.

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around the Northern Terrace,¹⁴¹ his scales and mane were splendid. The dragon transformed into many dragons, and they emanated light, spreading it everywhere. Chengguan regarded this dream as a good sign for the spread of his teaching. According to the GQZ, before he had this dream, he had prayed for a sign regarding the dissemination of his teaching.

The MT says that his work was a great success. The four classes of Buddhist believers (monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen) assembled to listen to this teaching. The crowd asked Chengguan to elaborate further, as it was too obscure for them. Granting their request, he made *Suishu yanyi chao* 隨疏演義鈔 in forty fascicles and *Suiwen Shoujing* 隨文手鏡 in one hundred fascicles with Sengrui 僧睿, Zhikai 智愷 and others of his disciples. According to the SGZ, in the first month of the Zhenyuan period, the abbot of the monastery asked Chengguan to explain the new commentary. In the GQZ we read that in 788 Ma Sui 馬遂, the military governor (*jiedushi* 節度使) of Bingzhou 并州,¹⁴² and Wang Chaoguang 王朝光, the governor (*dudu* 都督) of Daizhou 代州,¹⁴³ went to Wutaishan to make offerings and ask Chengguan to explain the Commentary and that each day witnessed the presence of one thousand monks. From the biography of Zhijun 智顓 in the SGZ we know that he was the chief lecturer (*jiangzhu* 講主) who provided the financial support for these assemblies and the food for one thousand monks.¹⁴⁴ The SGZ says that at the request of Li Ziliang 李自良, the military governor of Hedong 河東 province, Cheng-

¹⁴¹ This refers to the two terraces of Wutaishan, between which the distance is about twelve miles. See Gimello 1992: 97.

¹⁴² This is the region of Fen 汾 river in Shanxi province. See Ciyuan: 540.

¹⁴³ It belonged to Taiyuanfu 太原府, which is Bingzhou mentioned above. See Ciyuan 92.

¹⁴⁴ T 50, 2061: 881b3–6.

guan went to the Chongfu 崇福 monastery¹⁴⁵ in 791. As the headquarters of Hedong province was Taiyuan, near Wutaishan, Chengguan must have gone there. He must have stayed here until he was summoned to the capital to assist in the translation of the forty-fascicle *Huayanjing* in 796.

3. Third period: in the capital

Translation of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*

The MT simply says that in the *bingzi* year of the Zhenyuan period (796) Chengguan translated a *sūtra*, and that the purple robe was bestowed upon him.¹⁴⁶ According to the SGZ, Emperor Dezong ordered Li Fuguang to summon Chengguan to the capital in order to translate the forty-fascicle *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, presented by the King of *Qāra* (Wuchaguo 烏茶國), with *Prajñā*¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ To celebrate the foundation of the Tang Dynasty, five temples were established in Yangzhou, Jingnan, Taiyuan and the two capitals, each bearing the same name, Chongfu si. See Foguang 4517.

¹⁴⁶ Empress Wu was the first to bestow purple robes on monks in recognition of their merit. See Weinstein 1987: 192, n. 21.

¹⁴⁷ *Prajñā* originated from Northern India, and first arrived in China in 781. He started to translate Buddhist works with a Nestorian priest, which turned out to be unsuccessful, as the translations were impregnated with Nestorian texts. To remedy this, in 788 Dezong ordered eight eminent Chinese monks to assist him in his work. He returned to India to bring Buddhist scriptures to China. He arrived in China in 792. In 796, he began the translation of the forty-fascicle *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, which is actually the last chapter of the *sūtra*, the *Gaṇḍavyūha*. Ten monks assisted him in his work. See Weinstein 1987: 97–98.

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II. Chengguan's critical biography

of *Kapiśa* (Jibin 闍寶). Chengguan asked if he could go the following year. This request was granted. Thus, he went to Pujin 蒲津 (Yongqi 永濟 county in Shanxi province) where Secretariat Director Liang 梁 provided for his needs. He resided in the Qiyan 棲嚴 monastery¹⁴⁸ on Mt. Zhongtiao 中條. Before his arrival, a mad Chan monk predicted that a great bodhisattva would arrive. It turned out to be Chengguan. In the fifth month, Huo Xianming 霍仙鳴, the imperial envoy (*zhongshi* 中使), urged Chengguan to go to the capital. Upon his arrival the emperor treated him with great respect, and led him to the Hall of Translation. The translation commenced in 796 in the Chongfu 崇福 monastery, and was completed in the second month of 798.¹⁴⁹ The emperor ordered him to make a commentary on the new translation. He retreated to the Caotang 草堂 monastery on Mt. Zhongnan, near Chang'an, to write it. After its completion the emperor ordered that it should be explained in Both Halves of Chang'an.

The LFBT states that Lishen 李詵, the military governor of Hedong province, and the secretary (*shangshu* 尚書) of the Ministry of Rites, greeted Chengguan upon his arrival in the capital. The emperor attended the Hall of Translation every day, and when he was unable to go, he sent the monk Jiguang 寂光 to excuse him.

His clerical ranks and titles

In the MT we read that first in the *simao* year (799) of the Zhenyuan period the title Imperial Preceptor Qingliang (*Qingliang guoshi hao* 清涼國師號) was conferred on Chengguan,

¹⁴⁸ This monastery was founded in the Jiande 建德 period (572–577) of the Northern Zhou dynasty. See Foguang 5052.

¹⁴⁹ T 49, 2035: 380a12–24.

and then in the *gengyin* year (810) of the Yuanhe period of Emperor Xianzong he was given the seal of controller of monks (*sengtong yin* 僧統印). According to the LFBT, after the new translation of the *Avatamsaka Sūtra* had been completed, Emperor Dezong ordered Chengguan to explain the central concept of the scripture. The emperor was so delighted with his teaching that he granted him the purple robe and the title Master of Buddhist Teaching (*jiaoshou heshang* 教授和尚). Emperor Dezong, on his birthday in the fourth month of 799, invited the Huayan master to the palace to lecture at the Court. Chengguan is said to have been able to cool the emperor's mind, and, thus, the title Qingliang (Cool) Imperial Preceptor was conferred on him. According to the FT, this took place in 795.¹⁵⁰ In 810, Emperor Xianzong summoned Chengguan, and asked him about the meaning of *dharma-dhātu*. After this audience, Chengguan was appointed controller of monks. The LFBT includes the speeches that Chengguan is supposed to have delivered on these occasions.¹⁵¹

The SZ and the FT follow the LFBT, but they do not mention the purple robe. The FWL says that Chengguan was the recorder of clergy (*senglu* 僧錄)¹⁵² rather than controller of monks. It is important to note that the SGZ does not furnish any information about Chengguan's appointment as controller of monks, though the author, Zanning, in his other work, *The Brief History of the Buddhist Offices under the Song* (*Dasong seng shilue* 大宋僧史略), discussed the history of clerical offices.

Chengguan's appointment as controller of monks has long been debated. The reason for this is a passage in *The Brief History of the Buddhist Offices under the Song*. It tells us that in the

¹⁵⁰ T 49, 2035: 380a6–8.

¹⁵¹ See XZJ 130.612a1–11. 614a4–b12. 626b4–10.

¹⁵² The *senglusi* 僧錄司 was a government office responsible for the numbers and morals of monks and nuns. See Hucker 1985: 405.

period of Emperor Muzong, Weiying was appointed an official for the Hanlin Academy (*Hanlin daizhao* 翰林待詔) and controller of monks. However, the Yuanhe period does not fall under the reign of Muzong but under that of Xianzong. Michibata Ryōshū and Yamazaki Hiroshi assert that the name of the emperor is erroneous in the text, and hence date Weiying's appointment to the first year (806) of the Yuanhe period of Xianzong.¹⁵³ They both conclude that in fact Weiying was the monk who assumed the duties of controller of monks since it was only an honorific title for Chengguan.

Nakatomi Toshiharu holds another view arguing that there was no intercalary month in either the first year of the Yuanhe period of Xianzong or the first year of the Changqing period of Muzong.¹⁵⁴ However, there was an intercalary month in the fifteenth year of the Yuanhe period, the year that Muzong ascended to the throne. Thus, Chengguan was appointed controller of monks ten years earlier than Weiying. According to the SGZ, Chengguan died during the Yuanhe period, and Weiying was therefore appointed after Chengguan's death. Although this reasoning seems to be very clear, and could solve the problem of the double appointment, we should bear in mind that the MT and most of the sources date Chengguan's death to the third year (837) of the Kaicheng period of Wenzong 文宗. The dating of the SGZ seems to be erroneous.

The Brief History of the Buddhist Offices under the Song says that because of his strange behaviour Weiying was not found to be fit for the office of controller of monks, and was relieved of his duty. This office came to be abolished, and the office of recorder of clergy was established. Enmin, the Japanese monk, who went to China in 838, confirms this, since he does not list it

intercalary month of the first year of the Yuanhe period of Emperor Muzong 穆宗. Weiying 惟英 of the Longxing 龍興 monastery was appointed an official for the Hanlin Academy (*Hanlin daizhao* 翰林待詔) and controller of monks. However, the Yuanhe period does not fall under the reign of Muzong but under that of Xianzong. Michibata Ryōshū and Yamazaki Hiroshi assert that the name of the emperor is erroneous in the text, and hence date Weiying's appointment to the first year (806) of the Yuanhe period of Xianzong.¹⁵³ They both conclude that in fact Weiying was the monk who assumed the duties of controller of monks since it was only an honorific title for Chengguan.

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¹⁵³ See Michibata 1985: 135–136; Yamazaki 1942: 628–631.

¹⁵⁴ See Nakatomi 1960.

among the clerical offices.¹⁵⁵ This might be the reason why the FWL says that Chengguan was the recorder of clergy.

Roe Jae-seong points out that not long after Muzong ascended to the throne the monk Darong 大通, an official from the Hanlin Academy, was beaten to death. Weiyang took his place in the Hanlin Academy and was appointed controller of monks. Roe suggests that Chengguan's appointment as controller of monks must have been related to the eunuch-general Tutu Chengcui's 吐突承璀 appointment as commissioner of good works (*gongdeshi* 功德使) for both halves of Chang'an in 807.¹⁵⁶ He was killed when Emperor Xianzong died under unclear circumstances.¹⁵⁷ After Tutu's death it was only an honorific title for Chengguan.

His association with emperors and high-ranking officials

As we have seen above, Chengguan was summoned to the court several times to explain Huayan teachings to the emperors. On these occasions, in recognition of his talent, he was granted various titles. He is said to have been the personal instructor (*menshi* 門師) of seven emperors. As the SGZ states, the emperor ordered him to take part in a new translation of the *Huayanjing*, and to write a commentary on it, which was explained in both halves of the capital. By order of the emperor, he authored

¹⁵⁵ Ennin mentions three Buddhist officials: Buddhist chief (*sengzheng* 僧正), recorder of clergy (*senglu* 僧錄) and monastery supervisor (*jiansi* 監寺). See Reischauer 1955: 75. (I used Hucker's rendition of *sengzheng* and *senglu*.)

¹⁵⁶ See Roe 1989. Weinstein 1987: 100.

¹⁵⁷ The traditional historians regarded the eunuch Chen Hongzhi as the emperor's murderer, but this cannot be proven. The other view is that he died of a drug overdose, as he had been searching for long-life elixirs. See Dalby 1979: 634–635.

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the *Definitive Meaning* (*Liaoyi* 了義), *The Essence of the Mind* (*Xinyao* 心要) and *Stories About Eating Meat and Being Punished* (*Shi rou dezui yinyuan* 食肉得罪因緣), each in one ¹⁵⁸ *juan*.

In the second half of the Tang, the power of the central government decreased, and the influence of the military governors increased, some of them becoming independent of the court. Therefore, it was not enough for the prosperity of the Buddhist community to gain the support of emperors, but religious leaders, such as Chengguan, also had to be on good terms with these rural officials, whose attitude toward Buddhism must have had a bearing on its development in China. He gave instruction to these high-ranking officials, and in response to their questions wrote several works to elucidate Buddhist doctrines.

According to MT, Chengguan wrote seventeen *juan* at the request of the following high-ranking officials: the minister of state (*xiangguo* 相國) Zheng Yuqing 鄭餘慶 (746–820),¹⁵⁹ the prince of Nankang 南康 章皋,¹⁶⁰ the surveillance commissioner in Yuezhou (*Yuezhou guancha* 越州觀察) Meng Jian 孟簡 (d. 824),¹⁶¹ the famous poet of Tang, who served as left reminder (*zuoshi* 左拾遺), Bai Juyi 白居易 (772–846).¹⁶²

The LFBT provides the titles of works that Chengguan was supposed to have authored in response to requests by officials. The minister of state Qi Kang 齊抗 (730–804),¹⁶³ Zheng Yu-

¹⁵⁸ The first and the third works are not extant.

¹⁵⁹ For his official biography, see JTS 158.4163–4167 and XTS 165.5059–561.

¹⁶⁰ For his official biography, see JTS and XTS 158.4933–4937.

¹⁶¹ For his official biography, see JTS 163.4257–4258 and XTS 160.4968–4969.

¹⁶² Bai Juyi was influenced by Buddhism. See Watson 1988; Shinohara 1959; Hachiya 1988.

¹⁶³ For his official biography, see JTS 136.3756–3757 and XTS 128.4471–4472.

qing and Gao Ying 高郢¹⁶⁴ asked the Huayan master to write *The Outline of the Huayan* (*Huayan gangyao* 華嚴綱要) in three *juan*.¹⁶⁵ The minister of state Li Jifu 李吉甫 (758–814),¹⁶⁶ the vice director (*shilang* 侍郎) Gui Deng 歸登 (754–820)¹⁶⁷ and Commandant-escort (*fuma* 駙馬)¹⁶⁸ Du Cong 杜琮 asked him to write *The Essence of the Truth* (*Zhengyao* 正要) in one *juan*.¹⁶⁹ At the request of the prince of Nankang Yu 玉 Wei-gao and minister of state Wu Yuanheng 武元衡 (758–815),¹⁷⁰ he wrote *The Mystical Mirror of Discernment of Dharma-dhātu* in one *juan*.¹⁷¹ The vice director of the Department of State Affairs (*puye* 僕射), Gao Chongwen 高崇文, asked him to write *Jingdeng shuowen* 鏡燈說文 in one *juan*.¹⁷² Minister of education (*situ* 司徒) Yan Shou 嚴綬, minister of works (*sikong* 司空) Zheng Yuan 鄭元 and prefect (*cishi* 刺史) Lu Changyuan 陸長源¹⁷³ asked him to write *The Perfect Interfusion of the Three Bodhisattvas* (*Sansheng yuanrong* 三聖圓融) in one *juan*.¹⁷⁴ Military governor (*jiedushi* 節度使) Xue Hua 薛華,

¹⁶⁴ For his official biography, see JTS 147.3975–3977 and XTS 165.5070–5074

¹⁶⁵ This work is among the holdings of the Kanazawa Bunko.

¹⁶⁶ For his official biography, see JTS 148.3992–3997 and XTS 146.4738–4744.

¹⁶⁷ For his official biography, see JTS 149.4019–4020 and XTS 164.5038–5039.

¹⁶⁸ The office of *fuma* must refer to the office of *fuma duwei* 都尉.

See Hucker 1985: 219.

¹⁶⁹ It is not extant.

¹⁷⁰ For his official biography, see 158.4159–4162 and XTS 152.4833–4835.

¹⁷¹ T 45, 1883.

¹⁷² It is not extant.

¹⁷³ For his official biography, see JTS 145.3937–3938 and XTS 151.4822–4823.

¹⁷⁴ T 45, 1882. For translations of this short essay, see Gimello 1996 and Girard 1991. For a discussion of this work, see Suyama 1992.

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II. Chengguan's critical biography

surveillance commissioner Meng Jian, drafter in the secretariat (*zhongshu* 中書) Qian Hui 錢徽 (755-829)¹⁷⁵ and supervising secretary (*yishi* 給事) Du Gao 杜羔 asked him to produce the *Seven Abodes and Nine Assemblies* (*Qichu jiuhui* 七處九會).¹⁷⁶

The SGZ states that minister of state Qi Hang 齊杭 [correctly Qi Kang 抗] and the chamberlain for ceremonies, Wei Junou 韋舉牟 (749-801),¹⁷⁷ were close friends of Chengguan's, and the following officials admired his magnanimity, and followed his instructions: Wu Yuanheng, minister of state Zheng Yin 鄭綱 (752-829),¹⁷⁸ minister of state Li Jifu 李吉甫,¹⁷⁹ minister of state Quan Deyu 權德輿 (759-815),¹⁸⁰ minister of state Li Fengji 李逢吉 (758-835),¹⁸¹ the vice director (*shilang* 侍郎) of the Ministry of War, Gui Deng, the military governor of Xiangyang 襄陽, Yan Shou 嚴綬, the surveillance commis-sioner in Yuezhou, Meng Jian, and Wei Dan 韋丹¹⁸² of Hongzhou 洪州. As we have seen above, he also had close ties to the military governor of Hedong, Li Ziliang,¹⁸³ who invited him to teach at the Chongfusi in 791. In addition, it states that at the re-

¹⁷⁵ For his official biography, see JTS 168.4382-4386 and XTS 177.5271-5273.

¹⁷⁶ T 36, 1738.

¹⁷⁷ For his official biography, see JTS 135.3728-3729 and XTS 167.5109-5110.

¹⁷⁸ For his official biography, see JTS 159.4180-4181 and XTS 165.5074-5076.

¹⁷⁹ For his official biography, see JTS 148.3992-3997 and XTS 146.4735-4737.

¹⁸⁰ For his official biography, see JTS 148.4001-4005 and XTS 165.5076-5080.

¹⁸¹ For his official biography, see JTS 167.4365-4368. and XTS 174.5221-5223.

¹⁸² For his official biography, see XTS 197.5629-5630.

¹⁸³ For his official biography, see JTS 146.3957-3958 and XTS 159.4950.

quest of minister of state Qi, he composed *The Outline of the Huayanjing* and *The Mystical Mirror of Discernment of Dharma-dhātu* each in one *juan* and *The Perfect Interfusion of the Three Bodhisattvas* as well as other separately circulated commentaries on *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, *Lotus Sūtra*, *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* and *Madhyamaka Śāstra*.¹⁸⁴ In the case of *Outline* and *Mystical Mirror*, the SGZ is not in agreement with the LFBT.

Chengguan's association with the literati is reflected in his writings and especially in his *Subcommentary* on the *Huayanjing*, which abounds with references to Confucian and Daoist books. He often quoted from the Chinese classics as an aid to understanding Buddhist tenets, and, we might conclude, to make these teachings more attractive to learned society. On the other hand, in doing so, he emphasized the priority of Buddhist tenets, condemning those who claimed that the three teachings (Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism) were identical. Due to the political situation, in particular the lack of a powerful central administration, he made some concessions to indigenous philosophical and religious traditions, but he upheld the superior position of Buddhism.

His death

The MT says that in the *jíwēi* year (839) of the Kaicheng period Chengguan summoned his best disciples, Baoyin 寶印, Haian 海岸 and others, and gave them his teaching 付法. However, his last words are not recorded. He died at the age of one hundred and two. According to his will, on the twenty-seventh day of the same month his body was to be taken to a cavern (*shishi* 石室) on Zhongnanshan. When he died, the emperor suspended business at Court, and the officials wore mourning garments. And here follows a legend. Not long after his death, in

¹⁸⁴ Only his commentaries on *Avatamsaka Sūtra* are extant.

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Congjing 惠嶺 an Indian monk happened to see two spirits walk-
ing above the earth. The monk stopped them with magic spells,
and the spirits identified themselves as spirits of a *Mañjuśrī* shrine
in Northern India, and said that they had come to receive the
front tooth of the Huayan Bodhisattva in order to make offerings
to it. After this report the cavern was opened, and Chengguan's
front tooth was indeed missing – he had only thirty-nine teeth (!).
His body was cremated, but his tongue could not be burnt. After
the cremation, several thousand bright *śāṭaras* were received. By
order of Emperor Wenzong 文宗, Pei Xiu wrote an epitaph,
while Shen Yuanji 沈元及 made a likeness of him in clay. His
pagoda was called the *Pagoda of Marvellous Awakening*.

According to SGZ, he died much earlier, in the Yuanhe pe-
riod (806–820), in his seventies and it does not mention either
the legend, or the circumstances of his burial. The LFBT dates
his death to 838, and records his last words.

As Yoshikawa Tadao has shown, this text, without referring
to Chengguan, is found in Pei Xiu's foreword to the *Introduction
of the Collected Chan Works* (*Chanyuan zhu quanji duxu* 禪源
諸詮集都序) by Zongmi.¹⁸⁵ He surmises that his last words
had been recorded in his *Account of Conduct*, and Pei Xiu cited
it.¹⁸⁶ However, this may be called into doubt, as it is not con-
firmed by other sources. It is also possible that the LFBT bor-

¹⁸⁵ Zongmi's introduction must have been composed before 835, as
after the Sweet Dew Incident (see Gregory 1991: 85–88) he gave
up writing and devoted himself to meditation. Zongmi originally
planned to add a fourth basket containing Chan writings to the tra-
ditional three baskets of Buddhist scriptures. Finally, his introduc-
tion with the collection was not published, and the collection was
lost. Fortunately, Zongmi's Introduction, which is an early history
of Chan teachings, was copied by Peixiu in 857, and who gave the
text to Laosu 老宿, a monk of the Taiyi Yanchang 太一延昌
monastery. See Broughton 1975: 79–82.

¹⁸⁶ See Yoshikawa 1992: 140–141.

rows these words from the foreword. It does not mention the cavern, but states that after his death his body was placed into the pagoda. The legend is basically identical with that of the MT. The SZ and the FT state succinctly that "he was buried in a cavern of Zhongnanshan, and his pagoda is called *Marvellous Awakening*". However, they do not record the legend, nor do they explain why his mortal remains were moved, if ever, from the cavern to the pagoda. The FWL gives another version of his burial. It says that his body was placed in a pagoda (*feng quanshen ta* 奉全身塔), and when, after the report, it was opened, his body was lustrous like dew and his countenance seemed to be that of a live body. This suggests that his body was naturally mummified without the use of any preservation method. Buddhist historians recorded several cases of natural mummification, which is attributed to the wisdom and practice of meditation among those deceased monks.¹⁸⁷ The FWL states that his likeness (*zhenyi* 真儀) was taken to the Daxingtang 大興唐 monastery. Emperor Wenzong is said to have written a eulogy (*zan* 讚) for Chengguan, which is recorded in Buddhist histories.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁷ Bo Sengguang and Zhu Tanyou were Chan monks who possessed thaumaturgical powers, and after their deaths their bodies suffered no decay. See *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 T 50, 2059: 395c5–296b16. The famous Tantric master Shanwuwei (*śubhakarasiṃha*) died in 735, but he was buried only in 740. In these five years his body suffered no decay. See SGZ T 50, 2061: 716a12–17. For an English translation, see Chou 1945: 271–272. In addition to natural mummies, we also find artificial mummies in the history of Chinese Buddhism. Eminent Chan masters were mummified and enshrined in order to serve as a representation of enlightenment. See Sharf 1992, Faure 1991: 150–155.

¹⁸⁸ *Fozu lidai tongzai* T 49, 2039: 635a22–b1.

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III. CONCLUSION: ONE OR TWO CHENGGUANS?

As we have seen above, there are several discrepancies among the different versions of Chengguan's biography. We have differing information on his masters, pilgrimage, offices, date of death and burial. In some of the cases, this might be the result of mistakes in the sources. Sometimes it might be attributed to the different perspectives of the authors. The writer of the MT intended to establish Chengguan's strong affiliation with the Heze Shenhui lineage by listing only Wuning as his Chan master. As is known, Chengguan's disciple, Zongmi, was not only the patriarch of the Huayan school but also the patriarch of this Chan school; it is no surprise that Peixiu, Zongmi's disciple, – if we accept his authorship – wished to emphasize this aspect of his erudition. The SGZ discusses the lives of eminent monks under ten headings. Consequently, it highlights aspects of biographies that substantiate its classification.¹⁸⁹ Chengguan was described as an exegete, and not as a miracleworker or a practitioner of meditation. This might be the reason why it omits the legend of the spirits who came for his front tooth, and his natural mumification, which is supposed to be the result of achievements in meditation.

However, some of the variances, such as the date of his death, lead to another problem. According to the *Shihua Zongui* 詩話

¹⁸⁹ See Gimello 1976: 68.

總龜 from the Song there were four monks called Chengguan.¹⁹⁰ The first is Chengguan of Luoyang, about whom Han Yu, the famous anti-Buddhist Confucianist scholar wrote a poem (*Song Chengguan shi* 送澄觀詩).¹⁹¹ In this letter Han Yu praised Chengguan's talent, and urged him to return to a lay life in order to apply his outstanding abilities as an official in the civil service. The second is the Huayan patriarch, the subject of this article. The third is the Protector of the Nation Great Master (*Zhenguo Dashi* 鎮國大師) in the *Record of the Transmission of the Lamp*, who taught the emperor the essence of the mind. The fourth is the Chengguan of Wutaishan, who was the inheritor of the Chan teaching of Wuning. It goes on to say that even though he seems to be identical with the Chengguan of Guji, it is not because the sayings of the Chengguan of Wutaishan were not recorded. This stands in contrast to Chengguan of the Huayan school, who was, in fact, a prolific writer; he, therefore, cannot be said not to have transmitted his teachings.

In contrast to the *Shihua Zongui*, other Song sources argue that Han Yu wrote this poem to the patriarch of the Huayan school. Qisong 契嵩 (1007–1072) believes that Han Yu composed it in order to express his contempt for Buddhism. He therefore surmises that in fact he did not send it to Chengguan.¹⁹² The LFBT, however, states that Han Yu must have respected Chengguan, as he was a National Teacher, and several high-ranking officials received his teachings.¹⁹³ Kamata Shigeo has pointed out numerous references to Chengguan of Sizhou 泗州,¹⁹⁴ and that this monk is not identical with the Huayan patriarch.

¹⁹⁰ See Roe 1990.

¹⁹¹ This poem is included in *Changli ji* 昌黎集 7. For a German translation of this poem, see von Zach 178–179.

¹⁹² See *Tanjin wenji* 鄧津文集 T 52, 2115: 737a8–24.

¹⁹³ XZJ 130: 614b18–615a12.

¹⁹⁴ See Kamata 1993.

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III. Conclusion: one or two Chengguans?

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as one of the disciples of Tanpin 曇 (723–798) of the Qixia 棲霞 monastery in Tanpin's epitaph.¹⁹⁵ He is called Chengguan of the Kaiyuan 開元 monastery of Linhuai 臨淮. In a bell inscription at the Kaiyuan monastery it is said that whenever the buildings of monasteries were damaged by fire or water, Chengguan made the restoration.¹⁹⁶ Kamata concludes that the SGZ must have mistaken the date of death of this monk for that of the Huayan patriarch. Moreover, The SGZ must have made the same mistake in describing other events of his life. As we have seen above, the Huayan patriarch is said to have studied in the Qixia and Waguan 瓦官 monasteries. The other Chengguan was the disciple of Tanpin who was associated with the Qixia monastery and died in the Waguan monastery. However, this problem is not exclusive to the SGZ, as other sources (FT, SZ, FWL) provide this information as well.

¹⁹⁵ See *Sheshan qixiasi Li Dade bei* 攝山棲霞律大德碑, QTW 742, *Wenyuan yinghua* 文苑英華 864.

¹⁹⁶ See Li Ao 李翱, *Sizhou Kaiyuansi zhongming bingxu* 泗州開元寺鐘銘并序, QTW 637, *Wenyuan yinghua* 789, *Tang Li Wengong quanji* 唐李文公全集 17.

APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

Inscription of the *Śūpa* of Marvellous Awakening

The Inscription of the *Śūpa* of Marvellous Awakening, which was rebuilt in the Huayansi during the Yuan dynasty, and which [is made for] the Qingliang National Teacher of the Great Tang dynasty, who was the Commentator of the Old and New *Huayanjing*, the Great Master of Translation of Buddhist Scriptures, and served as controller of Monks in the Capital

It was authored by Yin Jixiang, the chief lecturer monk of the Changchun Chan monastery of Jingzhao prefecture, with the reward of the emperor, and carved by Yu Jixiang, the supervisor of three districts (Jingzhao, Yan'an and Fengxiang).

The master's name was Chengguan, his style was Daxiu, and his secular surname was Xiahou. He was a native of Yuezhou Guiji. At the age of nine the great master Tizhen, a master of meditation, became his master at the Baolin monastery of Yuezhou. After one year he completely understood the Tripiṭaka. At the age of eleven he received official ordination. He took on the blessings of the robes, and he could see the truth with his penetrating mind. Then he expounded on fourteen *sūtras* (the *Prājñāpāramitā Sūtra*, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra*, the *Sūtra of Perfect Awakening*, etc.) and nine *śāstras* (*Mahāyānaśraddhoṭpāda*, *Yogācārabhūmi*, *Nyāyapraveśa*, *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*, etc.), and he indulged in playing with the *Four Excellent Treatises of Chang'an*, the *Fourteen Divi-*

sions by Daosheng, *The Discernment of Dharma-dhātu* of [Dushun] of [Mt.] Zhongnan, *The Cessation and Contemplation of Tiantai*, *The Discernment of Returning to the Source* of Kang [Fazang]. He handled these works as the dragon plays with a pearl.

When he reached the required age, he received full ordination. After he had received the teachings of the Nanshan school from great master Tanyi, he lectured on the *Vinayapitaka*. Under Chan master Changzhao he took the bodhisattva precepts, and made ten great vows. These were not empty words for him, but he really practised them. Practice and understanding were completely interfused, and he was endowed with religious merit. Thereafter, he sought out great master Wuning, and he received his permission to practise Chan. He mastered the principles and the explanations, and his understanding was the most penetrating. As regarding discernment and explication of the truth, there is no one superior to *Huayanjing*, he went to receive instruction in the profound meaning [of Huayan] from the monk Dashen of the Eastern Capital. What he heard once, he could lecture the next time. Shen said: "The whole *dharma-dhātu* is found in you." When he came to the chapter of *The Abodes [of the Bodhisattvas]*, he mused upon the idea that in the world of phenomena *Mañjuśrī* illuminates the Wutaishan]. Thus, he did not regard ten thousand *li* as distant, and was not afraid of the hazards of the journey. He took up residence at the Great Huayan monastery, and lived there for ten years.

The monks of the monastery respectfully asked him to elaborate on the teachings. Giving his consent, he said: "How can it be said to be easy to talk about the distinct teaching of the one vehicle? The Head of Sages [Fazang] established his school based on this teaching, but his disciples could not comprehend its subtle meaning. It is regrettable that when a man dies, the Dharma is obstructed, since he did not hand down complete works. How can I remain in silence at this time, when his spirit-

tual interiors are confused?" He further thought that on the fifth level a sage [bodhisatva], who dwells in the realm of Buddhas and realized the *Tathatā*, with his "wisdom acquired afterwards" turns to the ordinary world, and strives for worldly knowledge. Therefore, he read the Classics and the philosophical and historical works of Confucianism, as well as the sayings of Laozi and Zhuangzi of Daoism. He mastered both the style of Chinese writing and the *Brahmī* script of India.

When he intended to compose the *Great Commentary*, he prayed to the sages for their blessing in the Hall of *Prajñā*. [In his dream] he saw a golden image straight like a mountain, its face like the full moon, standing lofty in the firmament. He held it up with both hands and swallowed its forehead, and then he awoke. After that he started to write, and he felt as if spirits were assisting him. Through his comprehension of the ten profound rules (simultaneous completion [etc.]), the four parts, faith, understanding, practice and realization, were in mutual correspondence from beginning to end, and the near [stages] and the distant [stages] [on the path of enlightenment] were in harmony. [The teaching of the ten profound rules] was like the moon of great brightness, which outshines the stars in the sky.

[Upon completing his work] he held a feast to celebrate. He was about to explain the commentary, when he suddenly had a dream in which he became a dragon. His head was lying on the Southern Terrace, his tail coiled around the Northern Terrace, his scales and mane illuminated the sky. It was brighter than the shining sun. After a while the dragon put forth effort, and transformed into many dragons, scattering light everywhere. [Cheng-guan] regarded this dream as a good sign for the spread of his teaching. Then he started to preach his new work. Clouds of five colours condensed in the sky, and the four groups of believers gathered. Some of them approached the master and kowtowing said: "The principles of the immense teaching are very profound, and the meaning of the commentary is very broad. We beseech

you to make further explanation, in order to dispel our grave confusion." With the help of enlightened leaders, Sengrui, Zhikai, etc., the *Subcommentary* was composed in forty *juan* and the *Hand-mirror* in one hundred *juan*. Chengguan transmitted these instructions orally.

Furthermore, at the request of minister of state Zheng Yuling, the prince of Nankang, Wei Gao, the surveillance commissioner in Yuezhou, Meng Jian, the left reminder, Bai Juyi, etc., he authored works of seventeen *juan* in order to clarify the purport of Huayan. For the recorder of clergy, great master Sui, he wrote more than thirty works related to the central topics of *Sūtra*, *Vinaya* and *Abhidharma*. On the occasions of the birthdays of seven emperors, he preached the Dharma to the emperors. He memorialized to the emperors in more than eighty *juan*.¹⁹⁷ The national teacher was born in the year of *wuyin* of the Kaiyuan period of Emperor Xuanzong. In the year of *wuzi* of the Tianbao period, he left lay life. In the year of *dingyou* of the Zhide period of Emperor Suzong, he took the vows of a monk. In the year of *wushen* of the Dali period of Emperor Daizong, he translated scriptures. In the year of *jiazi* of the Yuanxing period of Emperor Dezong, he started to write the *Commentary*, and finished it in the year of *dingmao* of the Zhenyuan period. In the year of *bingzi* of the Zhenyuan period, he was granted the purple robe in recognition of his merit in translating scriptures. In the year of *simao* he received the title "The National Teacher Qingjiang". Shunzong respected him as his teacher. When he asked him about the central concept of the *Great Sūtra*, his answer made him understand as clearly as an object is reflected in the clear mirror.

¹⁹⁷ These works are not extant, but the history of Chinese Buddhism includes such documents. See Amoghavajra's memorials T 52, 2120.

In the year of *gengyin* of the Yuanhe period of Emperor Xianzong, he was granted the seal of controller of monks. Emperor Muzong and Emperor Jingzong regarded him as their masters. They praised him saying: "[The wisdom] of our master is deep, extraordinary and shining like the flower of the *udumbara* tree. It is in accord with the capacity of its listeners, just like the *mani jewel*." In the year of *xinhai* of the Taihe period, Emperor Wenzong received the seal of the mind from the master. On the morning of the sixth day of the third month in the spring of the year of *siwei* of the Kaicheng period, he summoned his eminent disciples, the commentators of the three teachings, Master Baoyin, Haian, etc. After he had given them his teaching, he passed away.

He lived under nine emperors, and was the teacher of seven. He lived for one hundred and two years, and was a monk for eighty-three years. He was thirteen *chi* tall, his hands reached over his knees.¹⁹⁸ During the night his eyes emitted light, and during the day he did not blink. His speech was clear and elegant, and his behaviour was exemplary. His talent would have been enough for two writers. His erudition was sufficient for any of the nine philosophies. His works that were handed down amount to over four hundred *juan*. All his life he ate once a day. He explained the *Great Sūtra* from beginning to end over fifty times, and held open assemblies (*pañcavarsikā parisad*) fifteen times. Among his disciples who left lay life and became masters, Haian and Xuji were outstanding. He had more than one thousand disciples, but only Sengrui of the Eastern Capital and Zongmi of Guifeng could grasp the subtle meaning [of his teachings]. The others came with empty minds, and by the time they left they were filled [with his teachings].

Due to his power of meditation, in the twenty-one days after he was liberated from his corpse, the colour of his body re-

¹⁹⁸ The collection of biographies of eminent monks contains a few examples of this extreme height. See Kenney 2001.

mained glossy, and sat straight like a mountain. On the twenty-seventh day of that month, in accordance with his will his body was placed in a cavern of Zhongnanshan. The emperor suspended business at Court, and the high-ranking officials wore mourning garments. The other [events that took place] can be known.

Not long thereafter an Indian monk from the Western Region happened to see two [spirit]-messengers whose feet did not touch the earth. With magic spells he made them stop and questioned them. They answered that they were the spirits of a *Mañjuśrī* shrine in Northern India, and had come to the Eastern Land to receive the front tooth of the Huayan Bodhisattva in order to worship it. When he arrived in China, they opened the cavern to verify this, and his front tooth was actually missing. He had only thirty-nine teeth,¹⁹⁹ and [his body] was the colour of ice and frost.

With the cremation of his holy corpse, several thousand bright and glossy *śāriras* were obtained. His tongue, which could not be burnt, was like a red lotus. The *śāriras* were collected and buried. Emperor Wenzong ordered Pei Mei to compose his epitaph, and Shen Yuanji to make his statue. The pagoda was called *Marvellous Awakening*.

¹⁹⁹ Having forty even teeth is one of Buddha's thirty-two major physical perfections. See Griffiths 1994: 99–100.

APPENDIX B

Chengguan's biography in the SCZ*

The Biography of Chengguan who lived during the Tang dynasty
in the Qingliang monastery of Wutaishan of Daizhou

Master Chengguan was nicknamed Xiahou, a native of Yuezhou Shanyin. He was only eleven years of age when he left lay life under the guidance of Meditation Master Pei of Baolinsi (which is called Yingtianshan now). He recited the *Lotus Sūtra*. At the age of fourteen, owing to imperial favour, he was ordained, and became registered in this monastery. He was a man of exceptional talent, he was exempted from tiny duties. He visited the famous mountains in search of secret teachings (*mizang* 秘藏). He travelled to distant places to know the great mystery.

In the Qianyuan period, he studied the *Xiangbu Vinaya* under *Vinaya* Master Li in the Qixia monastery of Runzhou. In his own region, he mastered the *Nanshan Vinaya* under Tanyi. He went to Jinling where Master Xuanbi transmitted to him the teachings of the Guanhe branch of the Sanlun school. Due to Chengguan's effort Sanlun enjoyed wide currency in the region south of Changjiang. In the Dali period he went to the Waguan monastery where he became versed in the *Awakening of Faith* and the

* For an English summary of this biography, see Chang 1971: 238–240. For a Japanese translation, see Makita 1980: vol. 12, pp. 94–96.

Nirvāṇa [Sūtra]. From Fazang of Huainan, he received the commentary of Silla²⁰⁰ to the *Awakening of Faith*. Furthermore he studied Huayan under master Shen. In the seventh year [of the Dai period] he proceeded to Shanxi to study Sanlun under master Huiliang of Chengdu. In the tenth year he went to Suzhou; under master Zhanran he became proficient in Tiantai meditation, *Lotus Sūtra*, *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa Sūtra* as well as other *sūtras* and commentaries. He was endowed with the intellect of a sage and a celestial nature. He seemed to have thrown away yesterday the texts he studied, just like Bao Jing who remembered that he [had fallen] into the well [in his previous life].²⁰¹ It is known that [Chengguan] was the reincarnation of Cai Yong.²⁰² He called on master Zhong of Niutoushan, master Qin of Jingshan and master Wuning of Luoyang to inquire about the Chan teaching of the Southern school. He visited Chan master Huiyun to understand the profound principle of the Northern school.

Chengguan told himself: "On the fifth level the sage learns worldly methods, realizes the *Tathatā* and his mind rests on the realm of Buddha. He receives wisdom after his enlightenment, and the idea of serving the world comes to him. I am on the level of learning, how could I ignore it?" Therefore he mastered classics, commentaries, philosophy, history, philology, lexicography [of China], and the Siddham script, heretical philosophies, the

²⁰⁰ The term *Haidong*, East of the Sea, usually refers to Silla. The origin of this term is obscure. See Forte 2000: 28, n. 57.

²⁰¹ At the age of five, Bao Jing told his parents that he had once been the child of the Li family, but was drowned in the well when he was nine. When they called on the Li family, they verified the story. See *Jinshu* 95.

²⁰² Cai Yong (133–192) was an eminent scholar of the Han dynasty. See Beck 1986: 340.

Four *Vedas*, mantras, and rituals of India. He could compose all kinds of writings. His manifold talent was granted by Heaven.

In the eleventh year of the Dali period, he took a vow to travel to Wutaishan. On his pilgrimage to the peaks, several auspicious signs appeared. Then he went to Emeishan to beseech Samantabhadra to make himself manifest. He ascended to dangerous and high mountains in order to gaze at his holy form. Shortly thereafter, he returned to Wutaishan and lived in the Great Huayan monastery. He concentrated on the practice of *Mahāyāna* penance. At that time, abbot Xianlin asked him to expound on the *Great Sūtra* and elucidate the commentaries. He hesitated long, as he knew that the old commentaries were voluminous, and that their meaning was elusive. He thought: "*Mañjuśrī* and *Samantabhadra* represent wisdom and principle, respectively, while *Vairocana* is their union. The central purport of Huayan is that all practices are interconnected. I have travelled to the realm of *Samantabhadra* and resided in the homeland of *Mañjuśrī*. If I do not comment on [the *sūtra* of] *Vairocana*, I will be ungrateful for the kindness of the two sages."

When he was about to compose the commentary, in his dream he saw a golden man, who was straight and bright like the sun. Chengguan embraced and swallowed him without chewing. When he awoke, he was sweaty and content, since he regarded swallowing light as evidence that [his work] will clarify thoroughly [the meaning of the *sūtra*]. He commenced writing in the first month of the first year of the Xingyuan period and came to an end in the twelfth month of the third year of the Zhenyuan period. It consisted of twenty scrolls. He held a feast for over a thousand monks to celebrate its completion. Afterwards he frequently wondered whether it would circulate. Suddenly in the night he dreamt that he had become a dragon. His head was lying on the Southern Terrace, his tail coiled around the Northern Terrace. It was soaring in the sky, its scales and mane were brighter than sun. After a while, it was wriggling, and trans-

formed into over a thousand small dragons. As they scattered, they spread brilliance in the sky. [He thought] that this symbolized the dissemination of his teachings.

In the fourth year, abbot Xianlin asked him to explain the new commentary. In the seventh year, the military governor of Hedong, Li Ziliang, invited him to preach at the Chongfu monastery. Emperor Dezong sent the envoy of the Court, Li Fuguang, to summon Chengguan to the capital in order to translate the last section of the *Huayanjing* in forty juan presented by the king of *Qdra* with *Prajñā* of *Kapiśa*. Chengguan earnestly remonstrated, and implored him that he should be allowed to go the following year. After this was granted, he prepared for the journey to Pujin 蒲津. Secretariat director Liang entreated him to stay. Thus, he took up residence in the Qiyan monastery on Mt. Zhongtiao. In the monastery there was a Chan monk of curly eyebrows and shaved head. His style was that of the Foolish Man. He wore short clothes of coarse woolen stuff, and held a long whip in his hand. He was singing in the manner of a madman, and was speaking with confused words. However, his prophecies²⁰³ never failed. Before Chengguan arrived, the mad monk had urged the other monks to make preparations saying: "Shortly, a bodhisattva will come here." Moreover, Sanzhi general and deers of wall-painting incessantly made apparition.²⁰⁴ After Chengguan arrived, these came to an end.

In the fifth month, the imperial commissioner, Huo Xianming, urged Chengguan to go to the capital. When he arrived, the emperor held him in high esteem, led him to the place of translation to correct the text. In addition, he ordered him to make a commentary on it. In the Caotang monastery of Zhongnanshan, he completed it in ten *juan*. Then he ordered him to

²⁰³ The text has zhian 指斥, but *Shenseng zhuan* 神僧傳 gives the variant of zhichi 指斥.

²⁰⁴ The translation of this sentence is rather tentative.

teach it once in both halves of the capital. At that time in front of the hall there was a pond where five lotuses grew, and each of them had three joint flowers. The people admired and praised it.

Shortly after that, he took part in the translation of the *Sūtra of Protecting the Country* as a stylist. Emperor Shunzong received his teachings in the Eastern Palace, and ordered him to compose the *Definitive Meaning, The Essence of the Mind* and *Stories about Eating Meat and Being Punished* in one *juan* each. When he arrived at Chang'an, he was received with particular deference. Minister of state Qi Hang and the chamberlain for ceremonies, Wei Jumou, were close friends of Chengguan's. Wu Yuanheng, minister of state Zheng Yin, minister of state Li Jifu, minister of state Quan Deyu, minister of state Li Fengji, the vice director of the Ministry of War, Gui Deng, the military governor of Xiangyang, Yan Shou, the surveillance commissioner in Yuezhou, Meng Jian, and Wei Dan of Hongzhou admired his magnanimity, and followed his instructions.

He died during the Yuanhe period at the age of over seventy. He transmitted his teachings to about one hundred disciples, and he had over one thousand disciples who were able to preach. Chengguan drew a picture of the Lotus-womb World in the *Prajñā* Hall of the newly established Yunhua monastery. He wrote the *Subcommentary* in forty *juan*. At the request of minister of state Qi, he composed *The Outline of the Huayanjing* and *The Mystical Mirror of Discernment of Dharma-dhātu* each in one *juan* and *The Perfect Interfusion of the Three Bodhisattvas* as well as other separately circulated commentaries on *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, *Lotus Sūtra*, *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* and *Mūlamadhyamaka Śāstra* in thirty *juan*. In the course of twelve open assemblies (*pañcavarṣikā pariṣad*) held by him, the statues and pictures that were made and the scriptures that were copied cannot be described entirely.

His disciple, Qingmian, recorded his usual behavior in the *Account of Conduct*, saying: "Chengguan took the following ten

vows: 1. I will always reside in a monastery, possessing only three robes and alms bowl, and not accumulating wealth. 2. I will not seek the fame of my time. 3. I will not look at women. 4. I will not stay at a lay household. 5. I will not give up reciting the *Lotus Sūtra*. 6. I will always read the *Mahāyāna* scriptures, and do good for living beings. 7. I will always explain the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*. 8. During days and nights I will not lie down throughout my life. 9. I will not seek fame to delude others by boasting of my goodness. 10. I will not give up compassion to save the *dharma-dhātu*. To the end of his life, he lived in accordance with these vows".

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