

ESCHATOLOGY IN MING-QING SECTARIAN PRECIOUS VOLUMES (*BAOJUAN*)
AND ITS DAOIST ELEMENTS

By

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ABSTRACT

The Ming-Qing era (1368-1912) was an important period in the history of Chinese popular religious sects. Modern scholars have paid attention to their development for a long time, and have conducted a lot of studies, some of which deal with the relationship of popular sects to Daoism. Few scholars focus on Daoist elements in sectarian eschatology although it is one of the important themes of sectarian teachings in the Ming and Qing. What are the contents of Daoist eschatology? Are there any similarities and differences between Daoist and sectarian views on the end of the world and collective suffering and salvation? What was the early development of sectarian eschatology? The intention of this thesis is to investigate these issues.

This thesis is mainly based on textual studies; the two main kinds of primary sources are the Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties (220 A.D.-589) collected in the *Daoist Canon* (*Daozang* 道藏), and precious volumes (*baojuan* 寶卷), the scriptures of popular sects. The Six-Dynasties period was a chaotic period after the collapse of the Han empire (206 B.C.-220 A.D.), a dynasty that had been one of golden ages of Chinese history. The scriptures composed during this period present us with contemporary understandings of collective sufferings and prophecies. *Baojuan* literature appeared in the mid-Ming, and was devoted to sectarian doctrines and myths.

From the discussions of this thesis, it can be concluded that the eschatological belief was not exclusive to the common people in China, and it was an indigenous tradition shared by ordinary sectarian members and literati Daoist believers. Although there are exceptions in early scriptures, in most Ming-Qing precious volumes the explanation of disasters and the expectation of a blissful age came from Daoist tradition. Buddhist terminology and narratives about universal crises made a contribution to

sectarian eschatology, but sectarian writers do not adopt many important Buddhist philosophical ideas.

Compared with their Daoist counterparts, Buddhist borrowings are superficial.

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INTRODUCTION

The Ming-Qing era (1368-1912) was an important period in the history of Chinese popular sects.¹ The title of Ming dynasty, *Ming* 明, was related to the Han Shangtong's 韓山童 title (d.1355), the Da Mingwang 明王 (the great king of light), and Zhu Yuanzheng 朱元璋 (1328-1398) was once the member of the Hongjun 紅軍 (Red army).² Although Zhu prohibited all activities of popular sects after he founded the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), sectarian movements were never extinguished completely.³ The mid Ming is regarded as the beginning of the new development of Chinese popular sects. Unlike those in the late Yuan, which were active in Jiangxi 江西 in the south and Hebei 河北 in the north, from approximately the Zhengde 正德

¹ I shall take Daniel L. Overmyer's definition of popular sects. "Popular religious sects proclaiming deliverance for all who respond have appeared in many cultures. They have usually been characterized by leaders claiming divine authority who initiate vernacular preaching, simplified rituals and scriptures, and systems of congregational organization." Daniel L. Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion: Dissenting Sects in Late Traditional China* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1976), p. 1.

² The forces that rose up against the Yuan Dynasty are called the Hongjun because of the red turbans they worn; they were the members of the White Lotus Tradition (*bailian jiao* 白蓮教), which is regarded as a synonym for popular religions. B. J. ter Haar has conducted a thorough research on the changes of contents of this term. He thinks that the contents of the term changed from the Song to the Ming; the believers of the *bailian jiao* in the Song and Yuan Dynasties were literati and officials, who practiced the recitation of Amitābha's name (Amituofo 阿彌陀佛) in gatherings of varied sizes. In the late Yuan and the Ming, the term referred to magical techniques and was usually related to rebellions.

Han Shangtong's grandfather was already one of the leaders of the White Lotus Tradition in the late Yuan; Han preached the imminent descent of Maitreya. Liu Futong 劉福通 and other sect leaders proclaimed that Han was the eighth-generation descendant of the Song Emperor Huizong 徽宗 (reigned in 1101-1126) and therefore should be the lord of China. They rose up, and Han claimed to be the King of Light. After Han was killed, his son Han Liner 韓林兒 became the Xiao mingwang 小明王 (the little king of light or junior king of light). He appealed to Zhang Yuanzheng for help, and he later died by drowning in 1366. It is commonly thought that there is Buddhist influence, especially Maitreya belief, on the titles Da mingwang (the great king of light) and Xiao mingwang (the little king of light), but whether there is Manichaean influence is controversial. Ma Xisha 馬西沙 thinks that these two titles originated in a Manichaean text, the *Da Xiao mingwang chuxi jing* 大小明王出世經 (The scripture on the descents of the Great and the Little Kings of Light). B. J. ter Haar, however, asserts that Buddhism had already provided abundant material in messianism, and Han's title must be influenced by the myth of the Prince Moonlight (Yueguang tongzi 月光童子), who is claimed to appear with Maitreya. B. J. ter Haar, *The White Lotus Teachings in Chinese Religious History* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992), pp. 114-170. Daniel L. Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion: Dissenting Sects in Late Traditional China*, pp. 98-102. Ma Xisha 馬西沙 & Han Bingfang 韓秉方, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi* 中國民間宗教史 (History of Chinese popular religions) (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1992), pp. 148-156.

³ Tang Saier 唐賽兒, for example, rose up in Shandong 山東 in the eighteenth year of the Yongle 永樂 reign (1402); she claimed to be *fomu* 佛母 (the mother of Buddha). For the details of the prohibition, read Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 156-157, and B. J. ter Haar, *The White Lotus Teachings in Chinese Religious History*, pp. 123-125.

reign (1506-1521), popular sects bloomed throughout China.⁴ Popular sects adopted various names, but seldom called themselves *bailian jiao* 白蓮教 (the white lotus tradition) again.⁵ In this period, Luo Qing's 羅清 (1443-1527) Wuwei jiao 無為教 (Nonactivism sect), which had the teachings of popularized Chan Buddhism with a strong emphasis on the human mind, was formed, and many other sects followed.⁶ Besides, a new sectarian literature, *baojuan* 寶卷 (precious volumes), and a new supreme sectarian goddess, Wusheng laomu 無生老母 (the eternal venerable mother), appeared.⁷ The *bianwen* 變文 (transformation texts) are one of the antecedents of *baojuan*; both literatures are written in prose and seven-character verse.⁸ Precious volumes are devoted to sectarian myths of the creation by the Eternal Venerable Mother and sectarian secrets of returning to one's source and protecting one from misfortunes, which will be discussed in chapter two of this thesis. From the Zhangde reign of the Ming to the Kanxi 康熙 reign (1662-1722) of the Qing, precious volumes, many of which were bound in the accordion (*jingzhe* 經折, lit. sūtra folded) or palm-leaf (*fanqie* 梵篋) style with large print like Buddhist

⁴ The members of popular sects in the south usually had dharma names (*faming* 法名) that included the characters *pu* 普 (universality), *jue* 覺 (awareness), *miao* 妙 (wonderfulness), and *dao* 道 (way). Those in the north did not. It is hard to distinguish the sects in the south that appeared in the mid-Ming and later from those in the north. The adoption of dharma names also appeared among the believers in the north. Pu Wenqi 濮文起, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian* 中國民間秘密宗教辭典 (A dictionary of Chinese popular secret religions) (Chengdou: Xichuan cishu chubanshe, 1996), p. 9. Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao* 中國民間秘密宗教 (Popular secret religions in China) (Taipei: Nantian shuju youxian gongsi, 1996), p. 37.

⁵ Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao*, p. 42.

⁶ For the contents of Luo's teachings, read Daniel L. Overmyer's "Wu-wei Sect Scripture by Lo Ch'ing" in his book *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries* (London: Harvard University, 1999), pp. 92-135. I shall discuss the eschatology described in Luo's scriptures in chapter 3 of this thesis.

⁷ Daniel L. Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion: Dissenting Sects in Late Traditional China*, p. 102. B. J. ter Haar, *The White Lotus Teachings in Chinese Religious History*, p. 140.

⁸ Precious volumes are not exclusive to popular sects for spreading their teachings; some of them are written by ordinary people dealing with narrative stories and ethical exhortations. The *Jiwu hen baojuan* 繼母狠寶卷 (The precious volumes on the cruelty of a step mother), for example, discusses a step mother's mistreating her step children, which is one of the common themes of narrative *baojuan*. For more examples of this kind of *baojuan*, read Zeng Ziliang's 曾子良 "Baojuan zhi yanjiu 寶卷之研究 (A study of precious volumes)", master thesis, National Chengchi University, 1975, pp. 78-81. The *baojuan* is reprinted in Fang Buhe 方步和, ed., *Hexi baojuan zhenben jiaozhu yanjiu* 河西寶卷真本校注研究 (A collated and annotated study of the authentic versions of the precious volumes in Hexi) (Lanzhou: Lanzhou daxue chubanshe, 1992), pp. 165-208.

and Daoist scriptures, were published with the support of the donations of sectarian believers.⁹ The publication of some scriptures involved the court.¹⁰ After the Kanxi reign, the state severely suppressed popular sects, and confiscated and destroyed their scriptures. Some sectarian books were destroyed by the owners who were afraid of being caught. Therefore, precious volumes were reprinted and copied by hand frequently in order to maintain a steady supply, but few of them composed during this period are extant.¹¹

As that with Buddhism, the relationship of Ming-Qing popular sects to Daoism was close and complex, and has attracted the attention of modern scholars for a long time. The alternative name of the Vast Yang sect (Hongyang jiao 弘陽教) Hunyuan jiao 混元教 (The sect [established in] the chaotic prime), for example, contains the Daoist term *hunyuan* 混元. The masters of the sect had contact with Daoist monasteries, and would be invited to carry out rituals when common people could not afford the ones by Daoist priests.¹² The scriptures and confessions (*chan* 懺) used by the sect were Daoist texts or were based on them. Therefore, Ma Xisha relates the Vast Yang sect to “the secularization of Daoism (*daojiao de shisu hua* 道教的世俗化)”.¹³ The appearance of Daoism in the Han Dynasty is viewed as the origin of Chinese

⁹ The translations of the terms *jingzhe* and *fanqie* are taken from Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 51, and William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1982), p. 353, respectively.

¹⁰ Some scriptures of the Hongyang jiao 弘陽教 (Vast yang sect), for example, were published by the Palace Printing Bureau because of support from some palace eunuchs.

¹¹ Che Xilun 車錫倫, *Zhongguo baojuan zongmu* 中國寶卷總目 (A general bibliography of Chinese precious volumes) (Beijing: Beijing yanshan chubanshe, 2000), pp. 11-13. Susan Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion in China: the Eight Trigrams Uprising of 1813* (New Haven: Yale University, 1976), p. 20.

¹² The Vast Yang sect was founded by Han Taihu 韓太湖 in the twenty-second year of the Wanli 萬曆 reign (1594) in the Ming. For the background of the sect, read Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, pp. 92-94. For the scriptures of the sect, read note 222. The Daoist term *hunyuan* refers to one vital force of chaotic prime (*hunyuan yi qi* 混元一氣) appearing before the *yang* and *yin* have divided. Zhang Zhizhe 張志哲, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian* 道教文化辭典 (Dictionary of Daoist culture) (Shanghai: Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1994), p. 138. Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, p. 492-493.

¹³ Ma Xisha, *Qingdai Bagua jiao* 清代八卦教 (The Eight Trigrams sect in the Qing Dynasty) (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 1989), pp. 29-32.

sectarian tradition.¹⁴ Ming-Qing sectarianism is also thought to be a vulgarized form of Daoism, and the teachings and scriptures of popular sects can show common people's understanding of the religion.¹⁵ Even now popular sectarianism is often mixed up with Daoism, and this arouses Daoist believers' annoyance.¹⁶

Modern scholars have done much research on Daoist influence on sectarian doctrines, organization, and the ways of cultivation from various angles. We have learnt the close relationship of the sects such as the Yellow Heaven Way (Huangtian dao 黃天道 or Huangtian dao 皇天道; Imperial Heaven Dao) and Vast Yang sect to Daoism in Ma Xisha's book about the Eight Trigrams sect (Bagua jiao 八卦教), published in 1989, where he explains the religious context in late Ming and early Qing, in which the Bagua jiao arose.¹⁷ He thinks that the appearance of diverse sects and the boom in sectarianism during this period resulted from the contemporary development of Daoism to a certain extent. There was a rapid increase in Daoist priests, but there had not been enough Daoist monasteries since the mid-Ming. Hence a lot of priests wandered around and carried out rituals for common people. They set up various sects and claimed to be their founders.¹⁸ Ma Xisha as well as Han Bingfang 韓秉方 further the study on the relationship between Daoism and sectarianism in their book *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao*

¹⁴ Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao*, pp. 4-7. Pu Wenqi, *Minjian zongjiao yu jieshe* 民間宗教與結社 (Popular sects and assembly) (Beijing: Guoji wenhua chubangongshi, 1994), pp. 7-10. Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 1-16. Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 47.

¹⁵ Okuzaki Hiroshi 奥崎裕司, "Minzhong dao jiao 民眾道教 (Popular Daoism)", trans. Zhu Yueli 朱越利, *Dao jiao* 道教 (Daoism), ed. Fukui Kojun 福井康順, Yamazaki Hiroshi 山崎宏, Kimura Eiichi 木村英一, & Sakai Tadao 酒井忠夫 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1992), vol.2, pp. 103-128.

¹⁶ Hua Yi 華頤, "Dao jiao yu mimi zong jiao ying jia qu fen 道教與秘密宗教應加區分 (Daoism should be distinguished from secret religions)", *Zhongguo dao jiao* 中國道教 (Chinese Daoism) 4 (1989): 15.

¹⁷ The Yellow Heaven way was founded by Li Bin 李賓 (d.1562) in the Jiajing 嘉靖 reign of the Ming (1522-1566), who had a dharma name Puming 普明. He was at first a farmer, and later served as a guard soldier. He and his wife were buried in a pagoda in Bitian si 碧天寺 (Green heaven temple) in Zhili 直隸, which became the centre of the worship of the sect. The Eight Trigrams sect was established by Liu Zuochen 劉佐臣 in Shandong, who was probably born in the early Tianqi 天啓 reign (1621-1627) and died before the forty-fifth year of the Kanxi reign (1706). Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 930-935. Pu Wenqi 濮文起, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, p. 173.

¹⁸ Ma Xisha, *Qingdai bagua jiao*, pp. 9-44.

shi 中國民間宗教史 (History of Chinese popular religions) published in 1992. This book is based on abundant sources and provides a thorough history of Chinese sectarianism.¹⁹ Apart from these two books, we can also learn Daoist influence on a number of sects in a series of articles written by Han Bingfang.²⁰ Modern scholars' studies often deal with Daoist impact on general Chinese popular sectarianism, not on particular popular sects, in different perspectives. Noguchi Tetsuro 野口鐵郎 points out that the bureaucracy of deities created by popular sects and the magic arts practiced by their believers contain Daoist attributes.²¹ The *Daojiao yu minjian zongjiao yanjiu lunji* 道教與民間宗教研究論集 (A collection of research discourses on Daoism and popular religions) includes some articles which discuss Daoist influence on Chinese popular sects. Lai Chi Tim 黎志添 (Li Zhitian), for example, focuses on the Six Dynasties, not the Ming-Qing era; however, the distinction between Six-Dynasties Tianshi Daoism (Tianshi dao 天師道; Celestial Master Daoism) and popular worship he raises is still useful in knowing the features of popular sects in the Ming and Qing. He thinks that the belief in the Dao and following precepts were the two standards raised by the believers of Tianshi Daoism in order to

¹⁹ Ma Xisha 馬西沙 & Han Bingfang 韓秉方, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi* 中國民間宗教史 (History of Chinese popular religions) (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1992). Wang Jianchuan 王見川 and Jiang Canteng 江燦騰 have written a review of this book. Wang Jianchuan & Jiang Canteng, "Zhongguo minjian zongjiao yanjiu de lizuo – ping Ma Xisha Han Bingfang zhu *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi* 中國民間宗教研究的力作——評馬西沙、韓秉方著《中國民間宗教史》 (A powerful book in the studies of Chinese popular religions: a review of the *History of Chinese popular religions* written by Ma Xisha and Han Bingfang)", *Ming Qing yilai minjian zongjiao de tansuo – jinian Dai Xuanzhi jiaoshou luanwen ji* 明清以來民間宗教的探索：紀念戴玄之教授論文集 (Researches on popular religions [established] since the Ming and Qing – a compilation of articles in memory of Professor Dai Xuanzhi), ed. Wang Jianchuan & Jiang Zhushan 蔣竹山 (Taipei: Shangding wenhua chubanshe, 1996), pp. 1-10 in an appendix.

²⁰ They are collected in Wang Ka 王卡, ed., *Zhongguo daojiao jichu zhishi* 中國道教基礎知識 (Elementary knowledge of Chinese Daoism) (Beijing: Zhongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1999). They are also reprinted in Wang Ka, ed., *Daojiao sanbai ti* 道教三百題 (Three hundred topics about Daoism) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2000).

²¹ Noguchi Tetsuro 野口鐵郎, Feng Zuozhe 馮佐哲 trans. "Daojiao he minzhong zongjiao jieshe 道教和民眾宗教結社 (Daoism and popular religious sects)", *Daojiao* 道教 (Daoism), ed. Fukui Kojun 福井康順, Yamazaki Hiroshi 山崎宏, Kimura Eiichi 木村英一, & Sakai Tadao 酒井忠夫 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1992), vol.2, pp. 162-199.

distinguish themselves from those of popular cults.²² The article of Professor Daniel L.

Overmyer in the above book covers the influence of Quanzhen Daoism 全真道 (Complete perfection Daoism) on precious volumes. He focuses his discussion on Quanzhen terminology and the practices of the cultivation of inner elixir found in *baojuan*.²³ His studies are continued in his book *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries* published in 1999.²⁴ Ma Xisha's "Daojiao yu Qingdai Bagua jiao 道教與清代八卦教 (Daoism and the Eight Trigrams sect in the Qing)" is based on his book about the Eight Trigrams sect we mentioned above. In this article, he devotes a part to the sect members' cultivation of inner elixir and traces this to Daoism.²⁵

Eschatology is one of the important themes of sectarian teachings in the Ming and Qing. However, Buddhist elements in it, especially those borrowed from Maitreya belief, usually attract modern scholars.²⁶ Few scholars pay attention to Daoist ones. Richard Shek and Li

²² Lai Chi Tim (Li Zhitian), "Liuchao Tianshi dao yu minjian zongjiao jisi 六朝天師道與民間宗教祭祀 (Six-Dynasties Celestial Master Daoism and the rituals of popular cults)", *Daojiao yu minjian zongjiao yanjiu lunji*, ed. Li Zhitian (Hong Kong: Xuefeng wenhua shiye, 1999), pp. 11-39.

²³ Daniel L. Overmyer, "Quanzhen Daoist Influence on Sectarian 'Precious Volumes' (*Baojuan*) from the Seventeenth Century", *Daojiao yu minjian zongjiao yanjiu lunji*, ed. Lai Chi Tim (Hong Kong: Xuefeng wenhua shiye, 1999), pp. 73-93.

²⁴ Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from Sixteenth to Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 47-50, pp. 195-200, & pp. 232-237.

²⁵ Ma Xisha, "Daojiao yu Qingdai Bagua jiao", *Daojiao yu minjian zongjiao yanjiu lunji*, ed. In Lai Chi Tim (Hong Kong: Xuefeng wenhua shiye, 1999), pp. 94-117.

²⁶ Asai Motoi 淺井紀, "Precious Scrolls and Folk Sectarianism of the Ming-Qing Period", pp. 55-78. Suzuki Chūsei 鈴木中正, "Maitreya Beliefs in Folk Sects of the Ming and Qing Dynasties", pp. 79-116. Both articles are collected in the *Millenarianism in Asian History*, ed. Ishii Yoneo (Tokyo: Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, 1993). Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao*, pp. 10-16, pp. 20-21, pp. 162-165. Daniel L. Overmyer, *Folk Buddhist Religion: Dissenting Sects in Late Traditional China* (London: Harvard University, 1976), pp. 150-161.

I shall apply E. Zürcher's definition of the terms "messianism" and "eschatology", only the original meanings of which are used without elements from Christianity: "the complex of beliefs concerning a (usually violent) end of our world through the action of superhuman powers and the expectation of a Savior whose nature is clearly defined as divine, or at least belonging to a superhuman level of existence." Apparently E. Zürcher applies them without distinguishing them from each other. Another term "millennium" is the one Sinology scholars often use, although Anna Seidel thinks the term "millennium" less appropriate than the one "messianism" because the former focuses on the concept of a future golden age of a thousand-year reign. However, in one of her articles, which was composed later, these two terms are interchangeable in her introduction to recent studies to millennium. The definition of "millennium" adopted by Stephen R. Bokenkamp approximates to the above one applied by E. Zürcher. In the studies of universal destruction and a savior's advent in Chinese faiths, the above three terms are considered as synonyms. As shown in the following discussion of this thesis, the believers of eschatological faith did not only expect the end of corrupt world brought by supernatural power, but also the age of great peace ruled or inspected by

Fengmao 李豐楙 have discussed the relationship between Daoist eschatology and its sectarian counterpart. In his “Daoist Elements in Late Imperial Chinese Sectarianism”, there is a section called “eschatological vision and messianism”, in which Richard Shek quotes some passages from precious volumes and Daoist texts in order to show similarity between Daoist and sectarian eschatological accounts.²⁷ His discussion is not detailed and only few precious volumes and Daoist texts are studied, but it is the first exploration of Daoist elements in sectarian eschatology.²⁸ Li Fengmao talks about the historical development of Daoist eschatology in Six Dynasties and points out that Daoist eschatological tradition was continued in popular sects in late Ming. Like Shek, Li does not provide an investigation into many sectarian and Daoist texts, and he intends to display the similarities of Daoist and sectarian eschatological accounts, not the differences between them. Li’s research is on the historical context while Shek bases his study on textual material.²⁹

What are the contents of Daoist eschatology? Are there any similarities and differences between Daoist and sectarian views on the end of the world and collective suffering and salvation? What was the early development of sectarian eschatology? Although the studies of

a deity immediately after the end. E. Zürcher, “‘Prince Moonlight’ – Messianism and Eschatology in Early Medieval Chinese Buddhism”, *T’oung Pao* 68 (1982):1, note 2. Anna K. Seidel, “The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-tzu and Li Hung”, *History of Religions* 9 (1967):216. Anna Seidel, “Taoist Messianism”, *Numen: International Review for the History of Religions* 31 (1994):161-162. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, “Time after Time: Taoist Apocalyptic History and the Founding of T’ang Dynasty”, *Asia Major* 7 (1994):61-62, note 7.

²⁷ Richard Shek, “Daoist Elements in Late Imperial Chinese Sectarianism”, *Millenarianism in Asian History*, ed. Ishii Yoneo, pp. 125-130.

²⁸ The texts quoted in his discussion are *Puming rulai wuwei leyi baojuan* 普明如來無爲了義寶卷 (The precious volume of the Tathāgata Puming who thoroughly understands the meaning of Wuwei), *Gufo tianzhen kaozheng longhua baojing* 古佛天真考証龍華寶卷 (Dragon-flower precious scripture verified by the Ancient Buddha Tianzhen), and *Taishang dongyuan shenzhou jing* 太上洞淵神咒經 (The book of divine incantations of the depths of the abyss, [taught by] the Most High One). The first two are precious volumes composed in late Ming and early Qing respectively, and the last one is a Daoist text composed in the Six Dynasties. They are among the sources for this thesis.

²⁹ Li Fengmao, “Jiujie yu dujie: Daojiao yu Mingmo minjian zongjiao de moshi xingge 救劫與度劫：道教與明末民間宗教的末世性格 (Salvation from kalpic [disasters] and survival in kalpic [disasters]: features related to the eschatology of Daoism and popular religions in late Ming)”. In Lai Chi Tim, ed., *Daojiao yu minjian zongjiao yanjiu lunji* (Hong Kong: Xuefeng wenhua shiye, 1999), pp. 40-72.

Shek and Li affirm the Daoist influence, they do not tell us much about the answers to such questions. The purpose of this thesis therefore is to investigate these issues.

I am going to divide this thesis into three chapters. The first chapter, “Daoist Eschatological beliefs in the Six Dynasties (220 A.D. - 589)”, is intended to provide a complete picture of Daoist eschatology of this period. The Six-Dynasties period was a chaotic period after the collapse of the Han empire (206 B.C. – 220 A.D.), a dynasty that was one of the golden ages of Chinese history. Daoism came into being, according to Anna Seidel, as “a messianic religion of salvation that succeeded, during a period of crisis, in pouring the religious foundations of the Chinese empire into new vessels.”³⁰ The scriptures composed during this period present us with contemporary understanding of collective sufferings and prophecies. Therefore, the first chapter will be based on them and deals with three important themes in eschatology, which are contemporary understanding of crises in the world, the expectation of the coming of an era of peace and a messiah, and ideas about the salvation of an elect. Then we shall discuss the eschatological beliefs held by the contemporary Daoist schools.

The aim of the second chapter, “Comparison of the eschatology of Daoism and popular sects”, is to show how popular sects in the Ming-Qing era adopted and changed Daoist eschatological ideas. This chapter is devoted to the comparison between Daoism and sectarianism in the style of their apocalyptic accounts and in the three themes of chapter 1, noted above. Buddhist prophecies will be discussed here so that the role of Daoism can be manifested in contrast with that of Buddhism. One should, however, consult the research conducted by modern scholars for a complete picture of the relationship between Buddhism and Chinese sectarianism.³¹

³⁰ Anna Seidel, “Taoism: The Unofficial High Religion of China”, *Taoist Resources* 7(1997):51.

³¹ See note 26 for the researches.

Chapter three of this thesis, “The Early Development of Sectarian Eschatological Beliefs: An Study of the Eschatology in the *Huangji baojuan*, Luo Qing’s scripture, and the *Kaixin fayao*”, deals with the eschatological contents of two earliest sectarian scriptures, the *Huangji baojuan* and Luo Qing’s books, and a commentary on Luo’s books. The *Foshuo Huangji jieguo baojuan* 佛說皇極結果寶卷 (The precious volumes, expounded by the Buddha, on the [karmic] results of [the teaching of] the Imperial Ultimate [period]) is the earliest precious volume discovered so far. Luo Qing is one of the influential masters in the history of Chinese sectarianism; his eschatological discussions contain many Buddhist borrowings. The *Kaixin fayao* 開心法要 (The essence of dharma about opening the mind) is a continuation of Luo Qing’s teachings with new ideas. The study of these scriptures can reveal the early contents and trends of sectarian eschatology.

As shown above, I shall consult Daoist scriptures of the Six Dynasties for the picture of Daoist eschatology. Both political and social conditions were in disorder during this period. The following is a passage that tells us briefly how chaotic society was after the fall of the Han:

... Thereafter China fell into a period of division and chaos that lasted for more than 350 years.... Brief and tenuous unity was achieved in A.D. 280 by a state called Western Jin, which tried once again to restore feudalism to China.... The Jin government then had to flee from Loyang, its original capital, to Nanjing (Nanking), where it lingered on for a few more decades before being overthrown. Thereafter China was divided along north-south lines, with a series of short-lived native Chinese dynasties in the south with Nanjing as their capital, and an even more abysmal succession of barbarian dynasties in the north. China was a deeply divided and chaotic nation during this time, and the people of northern and southern China began to wonder if their once-great civilization would ever be unified again.... Life was hard in China during this period. National unity was lost, and the transportation and communication infrastructure of Han times fell into ruins. Money largely went out of circulation and the economy reverted to barter. (Transition from a monetarized economy to a barter system frequently entails a drastic drop in standard of living.) During this period, pastoral nomadic people first swept down into

China and ruled directly over portions of it. During the Han, the Xiongnu seldom if ever took territory away from China and ruled over it themselves; the Xiongnu and the pastoral nomads of their day were not sophisticated enough to learn the art and the science of efficiently governing a sedentary society....³²

Like Daoist scriptures during the Six Dynasties, sectarian ones were accompanied with the political and social troubles in the mid- and late Ming, although China was not divided into two parts during this period as it was during the Six Dynasties. People suffered from ineffective governance and economic hardship, which resulted from an unstable monetary system and therefore caused the rise of food prices and unemployment.³³ Daoist scriptures of the Six-Dynasties and Ming-Qing precious volumes certainly are not distinctive material if we only consider the times of their appearance, because in each dynasty of the Chinese history, especially at the end of the empire, there were times of hardship and people led lives of unrest. Besides, precious volumes still existed in the early Qing although, compared with the late Ming, it was peaceful. As we shall find in the following discussion, both literatures were intertwined with the explanation of universal suffering and the quest for salvation. Daoist scriptures contain the descriptions of the horrible world disturbed by demons and natural disasters and the predictions of the future age of the messiah, Li Hong 李弘 or Lord Lao. Only Daoist believers, or the moral, can survive and enjoy lives of plenty in his age.

There is a brief summary of the doctrines written in precious volumes.

Baojuan teaching is proclaimed to be a new revelation of primordial truth, long concealed but now available to all who believe, particularly those with the proper karmic affinity or destiny (*you yuan ren*). This revelation appears just before the chaos and destruction at the end of the *kalpa* or eon; the Buddha or the Mother has taken pity on wayward, suffering humans, and in the text has provided one last chance of deliverance.

³² The Xiongnu 匈奴 were ancient people. David C. Wright, *The History of China* (London: Greenwood Press, 2001), pp. 60-61.

³³ Ray Huang, "The Ming fiscal administration", *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. Denis Twitchett and Frederick W. Mote. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), vol. 8, *The Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644*, Part II, pp. 106-171.

Those with the proper belief and practice will survive to enjoy a transformed life in a new realm, free of all suffering. Those who miss the good news (*xiaoxi*) will be lost....³⁴

The Six-Dynasties Daoist texts and the Ming-Qing *baojuan* obviously are valuable sources for the study of Chinese eschatological beliefs because the flourishing of these apocalyptic literatures was rare in the history of Daoist and sectarianism. Hence, the Daoist texts composed in the Six Dynasties are included in the sources of scholars' studies of the picture of Daoist ideas of the messiah and universal destruction. The sectarian scriptures that have been discovered and the explorations of them are not as many as for their Daoist counterparts'; however, as mentioned above, Li Fengmao and Richard Shek have already noticed the similarity in the eschatological contents in the Six-Dynasties Daoist texts and in Ming-Qing *baojuan*.

The Daoist eschatological ideas that we shall discuss in the following chapter survived the end of the chaotic Six Dynasties. The founding of the Tang Dynasty (618-907) is related to Daoist expectation of the messiah after a miserable age.³⁵ The prediction of the duration of suffering with the concepts *yangjiu* 陽九 (yang nine) and *bailiu* 百六 (a hundred and six), which appear in our Daoist prophecies, were still used in the Song Dynasty (960-1279) although the length of the duration was different.³⁶ Two of our Daoist texts were collected in the *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 (The bookcase of the clouds with the seven labels), which was presented to the Song court by Zhang Junfang 張君房 (fl. 1008-1025).³⁷ This means that the apocalyptic texts were

³⁴ Daniel L. Overmyer, "Quanzhen Daoist Influence on Sectarian "Precious Volumes" (*Baojuan*) from the Seventeenth Century", p. 77.

³⁵ Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Time after Time: Taoist Apocalyptic History and the Founding of T'ang Dynasty", pp. 59-88.

³⁶ Zhang Shinan 張世南 (13th cent.), *Youhuan jiwen* 游宦紀聞 (Kwonderge recorded when serving as an official away from home), punctuated by Zhang Maopeng 張茂鵬 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), pp. 63-65.

³⁷ The *Taishang zhutian lingshu duming miaojing* 太上諸天靈書度命妙經 (The miraculous books of salvation in the numinous writing of the numerous heavens [spoken by] the Most High One, fasc. 26) and *Taishang dongxuan lingbao chishu yujue miaojing* 太上洞玄靈寶赤書玉訣妙經 (Lingbao wonderful scripture on jade secrets in red writing, [which is taught by] the Most High One, a Dongxuan scripture, fasc. 178). For the Daoist eschatological books collected in the *Yunji qiqian*, read Li Fengmao, "Liuchao daojiao de zhongmo lun – moshi yangjiu bailiu yu jieyun shuo 六朝道教的終末論 – 末世、陽九百六與劫運說 (Daoist eschatology in the Six Dynasties – ideas about the end of the world, [the faith of] yang six and hundred six, and doomed kalpas)". Chen Guying 陳鼓應, ed.,

considered to be important Daoist sources. Li Fengmao thinks that, being a Daoist encyclopedia, the *Yunji qiqian* was possibly circulated more widely among non-Daoists than other Daoist texts were, and infers that Daoist eschatology was therefore spread among society.³⁸ As mentioned above, not only ordinary people, but many Daoist priests also joined popular sects.³⁹ These suggest that ordinary people could therefore gain access to Daoist scriptures and learn Daoist ideas, although we have not discovered any evidence to prove that our Six-Dynasties Daoist scriptures were spread among popular sects in the Ming-Qing period.⁴⁰ As we shall find in chapter one, the prophecies of universal misery and a peaceful age were not exclusive to Daoist aristocrats in the Six Dynasties, but they were also believed by common members. Anna Seidel discovered that in 1112 a Li Hong led the masses and started a rebellion.⁴¹ Although we cannot find much Daoist eschatological literature by literati after the end of the Six Dynasties, this does not mean the extinction of the populace's hope for the messiah's arrival. Therefore, Michel Strickmann suggests that the Six-Dynasties eschatological beliefs made a contribution to Chinese tradition of apocalyptic movements.⁴² Some Japanese scholars think that there was a stream of the millennial quests in China, which include the Yellow Turban Rebellion raised by

Daojiao wenhua yanjiu 《道家文化研究》 (Studies on Daoist culture) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1996), vol. 9, p. 99.

³⁸ Li Fengmao, "Jiujie yu dujie: Daojiao yu Mingmo minjian zongjiao de moshi xingge", p. 54.

³⁹ Some Daoist priests, for example, entered Yizhu xiang jiao 一炷香教 (One-incense sect) and became the disciples of Dong Jishang 董吉升 (or Dong Jishang 董計升; 1619-1690), the founder of the sect. Some Daoist monasteries in Shandong and Zhili were occupied by the Daoist priests who had joined the sect. Ma Xisha, *Qingdai bagua jiao*, p. 35.

⁴⁰ The scriptures of the Zhenkong jiao 真空教 (Void sect), for example, contain quotations from two Daoist texts, *Gaoshang yudi xinyin jing* 高上玉帝心印經 (The scripture on the mental impression [given by] the Supreme-High Jade Emperor) and *Taishang laojun shou chang qingjing maojing* 太上老君說常清淨妙經 (The wonderful scripture on constant calmness expounded by the Most High Lord Lao). Noguchi Tetsuro, Feng Zuozhe trans. "Daojiao he minzhong zongjiao jieshe", p. 176. A number of terms and concepts in the *Yunji qiqian* such as *hunyuan* 混元 (chaotic prime) and cycles of cosmic time including the three stages of past, present, and future can be found in precious volumes. Daniel L. Overmyer, "Quanzhen Daoist Influence on Sectarian 'Precious Volumes' (*Baojuan*) from the Seventeenth Century", p. 78. It is possible that some Daoist books on alchemy practices were circulated among popular sects. See note 209.

⁴¹ Anna K. Seidel, "The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-tzu and Li Hung", pp. 244-245.

⁴² Anna Seidel, "Chronicle of Taoist Studies in the West 1950-1990", *Cahiers d' Extrême-Asie* 5 (1989-1990):292.

Great Peace Way (Taiping dao 太平道) and Ming-Qing popular sects.⁴³ In the context of the development of Chinese eschatology, we should not consider the Six Dynasties Daoist scriptures and Ming-Qing *baojuan*, two groups of religious texts that were composed in different periods, have no relation to other each.

This thesis is mainly based on textual studies. The two main kinds of primary sources are the Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties, which are collected in the *Daoist Canon* (*Daozang* 道藏), and precious volumes (*baojuan*), most of which were composed in the Ming and Qing. The present version of the *Daozang* is a collection of Daoist works compiled in the Ming by the order of the state. Many of the works were originally stored in the library of Shangqing zhengyi gong 上清正一宮 (The orthodox unity monastery of Grand Purity [Daoism]) in Jiangxi 江西. Similar collections of previous dynasties do not survive. The *Daoist Canon* therefore is an important source for our discussion of Daoism in the Six Dynasties.⁴⁴ The majority of the precious volumes studied in this thesis are doctrinal scriptures of popular sects, many of which are collected in the *Baojuan chuji* 寶卷初集 ("Precious volumes", first collection) and the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian* 明清民間宗教經卷文獻 (The Scriptures and Literature of Popular Religion in the Ming and Ching [Qing] Dynasties).⁴⁵ Some texts that cannot be found in these books were generously provided to me by Professor Daniel L. Overmyer. Precious volumes can be divided into a few types. Sectarian *baojuan* belong to only one of them, but they can provide us with more abundant material for studying popular eschatological views than those

⁴³ Mitsuiishi Zenkichi 三石善吉, Li Yuzheng 李遇政 trans., *Zhōngguó de qiānnián wángguó* 中國的千年王國 (The [movements for] a millennial state in China) (Shanghai: Shanghai sanlian shuju, 1997). Li Fengmao has discussed the views of Suzuki Chusei 鈴木中正, Noguchi Tetsuro, and Asai Motoi 淺井紀. Li Fengmao, "Jiujie yu dujie: Daojiao yu Mingmo minjian zongjiao de moshi xingge", pp. 43-44.

⁴⁴ For an introductory discussion of the *Daoist Canon*, see Kristofer Schipper & Francis Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*. Manuscript, pp. 3-7.

⁴⁵ *Baojuan chuji* 寶卷初集 ("Precious volumes", first collection), ed. Gao Ke 高可, Song Jun 宋軍, Zhang Xishun 張希舜 and Pu Wenqi 濮文起 (Shanxi: shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1994). Wang Jianchuan 王見川 & Lin Wenchuan 林萬傳, ed., *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian* 明清民間宗教經卷文獻 (The Scriptures and Literature of Popular Religion in the Ming and Ching Dynasties) (Taipei: Shin Wen Feng Print Co., 1999).

of the other types.⁴⁶ This thesis certainly cannot cover all Six-Dynasties Daoist texts and sectarian *baojuan*; it seems at least impossible to include all precious volumes, because many of them have been lost and destroyed over the centuries and the collections of them have not been published until recent decades.⁴⁷ I make a selection of Daoist and sectarian scriptures according to whether they are important to knowing the history of the Six-Dynasties Daoism and Ming-Qing sectarianism, which modern scholars' studies can show us, and to whether they contain plentiful sources relevant to our topic. *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty* edited by Kristofer Schipper and Franciscus Verellen, the *Daozang tiyao* 道藏提要 (Abstracts of the *Daozang*) edited by Ren Jiyu, and Professor Daniel L. Overmyer's *Folk Buddhist Religion: Dissenting Sects in Late Traditional China* provide introductory discussions of the contents of all the Daoist texts in the *Daozang* and many precious volumes; these books are important to the selection of material. A point that should be made here is that I consider the scriptures of the Five Elders (Wugong 五公) and the *Tian ci jiujie jing* 天賜救劫經 (Scripture on [how to] save oneself from the kalpa, granted by Heaven) to be part of sectarian *baojuan* of the Ming-Qing era⁴⁸, though their authorship is unclear. Some modern

⁴⁶ Modern scholars divide precious volumes into different categories. Generally speaking, early texts dating from the fifteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries focus on sectarian teachings; later texts are ethical in focus and narrative in form. Randall L. Nadeau, "Genre Classifications of Chinese Popular Religious Literature: *Pao-chüan*". *Journal of Chinese Religions* 21(1993):121-128.

⁴⁷ There are some other collections of *baojuan* published before the *Baojuan chuji* and *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*. There is, for example, the *Hexi baojuan zhenben jiaozhu yanjiu*, ed. Fang Bulhe 方步和. The *Baojuan chuji* and *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, however, contain many sectarian *baojuan* whereas most of scriptures in other collections are narrative ones.

⁴⁸ They are reprinted in volume 10 of the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*. It is said that the scriptures of the Five Elders are revealed by Wugong, namely the *Wugong mojie jing* 五公末劫經 (The scripture of the Five Elders about the last kalpa), the *Tiantai shan Wugong pusa lingjing* 天台山五公菩薩靈經 (Efficacious scripture [preached by] Five-Elders Bodhisattvas on the Mount Tiantai; hereafter the "*Tiantai shan lingjing*"), the *Dasheng Wugong zhuan tian tu jiujie zhenjing* 大聖五公轉天圖救劫真經 (Complete scripture on salvation from [the last] kalpa, [written in] heaven-changing pictures, [preached by] the Five Elders, Great Saints; hereafter the "*Dasheng Wugong jing*"), and the *Wugong tiange miaojing* 五公天閣妙經 (Wonderful scripture from the Five Elders' heavenly pavilion). All these texts have many alternative names, which can be found throughout the whole texts. The above-mentioned titles are those on the cover pages of the editions I read. They are called "five scriptures of the Five Elders (*Wugong jing wuzhong* 五公經五種)" in the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, but two of them are different editions of the *Wugong mojie jing*. Wang Jianchuan & Lin Wenchuan, ed., *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, vol. 1, pp. 3-5. The names of the Five Elders are as follows: the Venerable Zhi (Zhigong

scholars do not consider them to be precious volumes and even think that the scriptures of the Five Elders were composed in the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368).⁴⁹

志公 or Zhigong 誌公, i.e. Baozhi 寶誌), the Venerable Lang (Langgong 朗公), the Venerable Kang (Kanggong 康公), the Venerable Bao (Baogong 寶公), and the Venerable Hua (Huagong 化公). Except for Huagong, whose background is not known, the other four are Buddhist monks of the time from the age of Three Kingdoms (220-280) to the Sui Dynasty (581-618). For information about the Five Elders, read Yu Songqing 喻松青, “*Zhuantian tujing xintan* 《轉天圖經》新探 (New exploration of the *Scripture of Heaven-Changing Picture*)”, *Minjian mimi zongjiao jingjuan wenxian* 民間秘密宗教經卷研究 (Studies of scriptures of popular secret religions) (Taipei: Lianjing chubun shiye gongsi, 1994), pp. 41-44.

⁴⁹ For the views of modern scholars and the reasons why I treat these books as *baojuan* of the Ming-Qing period, read Appendix A.

CHAPTER 1: DAOIST ESCHATOLOGICAL BELIEFS IN THE SIX DYNASTIES (220 A.D. –589)

As mentioned above, the miserable lives of both the populace and aristocrats helped cause the explosion of Daoist eschatological works during this period; therefore, we cannot ignore Daoist scriptures of this time in a study of Daoist eschatology. In her “Chronicle of Taoist Studies in the West 1950-1990”, Anna Seidel points out that Daoist eschatology played an important role in Chinese religious activities in the Six Dynasties. Not only did it transform some basic tenets of Buddhist eschatology, but the popular messianism in this period also contained more Daoist than Buddhist elements.⁵⁰ We can find plentiful sources of apocalyptic works in Daoism in this period. Besides, although Buddhism began to widely spread throughout China then, its influence on Daoism was not great enough to alter Daoist messianism fundamentally and considerably.⁵¹ Daoist works of this period therefore can provide us primary doctrines of this indigenous religion in eschatology and messianic prophecy.⁵²

Hence, Daoist eschatology of the Six Dynasties has already aroused scholars’ attention. Anna Seidel, for instance, has written a few articles on Chinese messianism with references to Daoist sources. In addition to the sources in Daoist scriptures, she also discusses Chinese prophecies (*chen* 讖) and political affairs in the Han and the Six Dynasties.⁵³ E. Zürcher has made important studies of Buddho-Daoist messianism. He generalizes some Daoist themes in

⁵⁰ The Daoist belief in the advent of a divine redeemer after the total destruction of a corrupt world influenced Chinese Buddhist doctrines. For example, the future Buddha Maitreya was transformed into a savior who would descend to the world during cataclysms. For details, read Anna Seidel, “Chronicle of Taoist Studies in the West 1950-1990”, pp. 239 & 291, and the sources mentioned there.

⁵¹ Read Erik Zürcher, “Buddhist Influence on Early Taoism – a Survey of Scriptural Evidence”, *T’oung Pao* 66(1980):85-147 and the discussion of Buddhist influence on the Daoist eschatology on pp. 63-65.

⁵² Li Fengmao believes that Daoist eschatology after the Tang was based on that formed in the Six Dynasties without breakthroughs, but he has not given any discussion of this. Li Fengmao, “Liuchao daojiào de zhongmo lun – moshì yangjiù bailiú yú jiēyún shuō”, p. 83.

⁵³ Anna K. Seidel, “The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-tzu and Li Hung”, *History of Religions*, 9(1967):216-247. Anna Seidel, “Taoist Messianism”, *Numen: International Review for the History for the History of Religions*, 31(1994):161-174. Anna Seidel, “Imperial Treasures and Taoist Sacraments – Taoist Roots in the Apocrypha”, *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques* [Michel Strickmann ed., *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R. A. Stein*, vol. 2] 21(1980):291-371.

eschatology and then discusses how they influence the image of Bodhistva Yueguang (月光 “Prince Moonlight”, Candraprabha-kumāra), who becomes a messiah in Chinese Buddhism.⁵⁴ Stephen Bokenkamp pays attention to the relation between Daoist apocalypses and the founding of the Tang Dynasty.⁵⁵

Unlike these publications, my study in this chapter will exclusively deal with the Daoist scriptures containing messianic beliefs that I can find in the *Daozang* 道藏 (Daoist Canon), all of which were written during the Six Dynasties period.⁵⁶ I shall include the works that the scholars do not much discuss so that a complete picture of Daoist eschatology can be shown.⁵⁷ We shall discuss some ideas of the *Taiping jing* 太平經 (The scripture of great peace and prosperity). Then we shall go through three themes of eschatology: contemporary understanding of crises in the world, the expectation of the coming of an era of peace and the messiah Li Hong, and ideas about *zhongmin* 種民 (seed people). Next the Daoist texts will be divided into three groups of

⁵⁴ E. Zürcher, “‘Prince Moonlight’ – Messianism and Eschatology in Early Medieval Chinese Buddhism”, pp. 1-75. E. Zürcher, “Eschatology and Messianism in Early Chinese Buddhism”, *Leyden Studies in Sinology*, ed. W. L. Idema (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), p. 34-56.

⁵⁵ Stephen R. Bokenkamp, “Time after Time: Taoist Apocalyptic History and the Founding of T’ang Dynasty”, pp. 59-89.

⁵⁶ For the dates the scriptures in the *Daozang* were produced, see Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, manuscript, and Ren Jiyu ed. *Daozang tiyao* 道藏提要 (Abstracts of the *Daozang*) (Peking: Zhongguo shehui kexue chu ban she, 1991). Many titles of the texts in the *Daoist Canon* have been translated into English by scholars in *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*; therefore, most translations of the titles of Daoist texts will be taken from this book. I shall make some changes when the meanings of some terms of the original Chinese titles are not included in the scholars’ translations or when their translations of some terms need to be standardized. For those that are not from the book, I shall provide the translations of the scholars’ in notes after my own ones.

⁵⁷ The following Daoist texts are the sources the scholars usually study for Daoist messianism: *Laojun bianhua wuji jing* 老君變化無極經 (The scripture of the Limitless Transformations of the Lord Lao, fasc. 875), *Zhengyi tianshi gao Zhao Sheng koujue* 正一天師告趙昇口訣 (Oral (secret) Instructions Zhao Sheng, by the One-and-Orthodox Heavenly Master, fasc. 1003; hereafter “the *Gao Zhao Sheng Koujue*”), *Taishang dongyuan shenzhou jing* 太上洞淵神咒經 (The book of divine incantations of the depths of the abyss, [taught by] the Most High One, fasc. 170-173; hereafter “the *Shenzhoujing*”), *Laojun yinsong jie jing* 老君音誦誡經 (The book of the Hymnal Rules of the Lord Lao, fasc. 562), *Shangqing housheng daojun lieji* 上清後聖道君列紀 (Shangqing annals of the Latter-Day Saint, fasc. 198; hereafter “the *Daojun lieji*”), *Yuanzhi wulao chishu yupian zhenwen tianshu jing* 元始五老赤書玉篇真文天書經 (The scripture on the real writs of the Five Ancients of the Primordial Beginning, red writings in celestial script on jade tablets, fasc. 26; hereafter “the *Zhenwen tianshu jing*”), and *Taishang lingbao tiandi yundu ziran miaojing* 太上靈寶天地運度自然妙經 (Natural wonderful Lingbao scripture [spoken by] the Most High One on the rotation and salvation of Heaven and Earth, fasc. 166; hereafter “the *Ziran miaojing*”). Hans-Hermann Schmidt translates the *Ziran miaojing* as *Lingbao scripture on the laws of movement of Heaven and Earth*. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 257.

the three Daoist schools in the Six Dynasties, the *Tianshi* School 天師道 (Celestial Master Daoism), the Shangqing School 上清派 (Grand Purity School), and the Lingbao School 靈寶派 (Sacred Jewel School) so that the differences among the apocalyptic writings of the above schools can be clearly seen.⁵⁸

Part I: The *Taiping jing* (The scripture of great peace and prosperity)

It is worth mentioning some ideas in the *Taiping jing* that were inherited by the authors of the Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties.⁵⁹ Although a few versions with similar titles appeared in the Later Han Dynasty and later, only one of them is available to us now. In Chinese history, they have been interpreted as prophecies and linked with rebellions.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Li Fengmao has discussed the Daoist eschatological views of the schools separately; the differences among them however are not obvious in his discussion. Li Fengmao, "Chuancheng yu duiying: liuchao daoqing zhong moshi shuo de tichu yu yanbian 傳承與對應：六朝道經中「末世」說的提出與衍變 (Inheritance and response: changing doctrines about the end of the world in Six-Dynasty Daoist scriptures)", *Zhongguo wenzhe yanjiu jikan* (中國文哲研究集刊) 9(1996):109-130. Li Fengmao, "Liuchao daoqiao de dujiu guan – zhenjun zhongmin yu dushi 六朝道教的度救觀 -- 真君、種民與度世 (The View of Salvation in the Taoism of the Six Dynasties: Zhenjun (Messianic Emperor), the Selected people, and Salvation)", *Studies in Oriental Religions (Dongfan zongjiao yanjiu 東方宗教研究)* 10(1996):138-160. Li Fengmao, "Liuchao daoqiao de zhongmo lun – moshi yangjiu bailiu yu jieyun shuo", pp. 82-99.

⁵⁹ The first section (*jiabu* 甲部) comprises of segments of some Daoist texts composed in the Six Dynasties, and so it is considered to be added to the book later. Therefore, we shall not discuss it. Wang Ming, "Lun Taiping jing chao jiabu zhi wei 論《太平經鈔》甲部之偽 (Discussion on fabricated nature of the first section of the *Transcript of the Taiping jing*)", *Daojia he daoqiao sixiang yanjiu 道家和道教思想研究* (Studies of thoughts of philosophical school of Daoism and religion of Daoism) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui hexue chubanshe, 1994), p. 201-214.

⁶⁰ The first one was presented to the Han Emperor Cheng 漢成帝 (32-7 B.C.) by Gan Zhongke 甘忠可, and was named the *Tianguan li baoyuan taiping jing* 天官曆包元太平經 (Sacred book on great peace and preservation of the primitive [status of society according to] the calendar of celestial officers). Wang Mang 王莽 reinterpreted it when usurping the Han reign. The second one, the *Taiping qing ling shu* 太平青領書 (Book of great peace [written in] green [with the message about] leadership), was presented to the Han Emperor Shun 漢順帝 (A.D. 126-145) by Gong Chong 宮崇, and was later utilized by Zhang Jue 張角, the leader of the rebellion of the Yellow Turban. The present version collected in the *Daoist Canon* is that obtained by Zhou Zhixiang 周知響 in the Chen Dynasty. Anna Seidel, "Imperial Treasures and Taoist Sacraments – Taoist Roots in the Apocrypha", *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques* (Michel Strickmann ed., *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R. A. Stein*), vol. 2, 21(1980):291-371. Max Kaltenmark, "The Ideology of the T'ai-p'ing ching", *Facets of Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religion*, ed. Holmes Welch & Anna Seidel (London: Yale University, 1979), p. 19-52.

The author of the *Taiping jing* holds the firm belief that the natural world correlates with human behavior. This can be traced back to Dong Zhongshu 董仲書 and the ancient tradition of China in the *Yijing* 易經 (Book of changes).⁶¹

帝王其治不和，水旱無常，盜賊數起，反更急其刑罰，或增之重益紛紛，連結不解，民皆上呼天，縣官治乖亂，失節無常，萬物失傷，上感動蒼天，三光勃亂多變，列星亂行，故與至道可以救之者也，吾知天意不欺子也。天威一發，不可禁也。獲罪于天，令人夭死。

When the government of an emperor is not in order, floods and droughts arise abnormally, and robbers appear repeatedly. [If] the emperor [does not improve his government in order to erase the disasters,] but inflicts tortures and punishments [on the people] hastily instead, or increases generous benefit for them [for tempting them into submitting to him instead], and he links these together (i.e. regards these two ways as the solutions to chaos), and does not understand [his improper government as the true reason for chaos]. The people will all lament above to Heaven. The governing of magistrates in counties is in irregularity and disorder. The four seasons do not come on time. Myriad things (i.e. plants) lose [their growing season and therefore] are damaged. [People's laments] above move Heaven, [which makes] the Three Lights (*san guang* 三光, i.e. the sun, the moon, and stars) revolve suddenly in disorder [and their orbits] alter frequently. Many stars revolve rowdily. However, [the emperor's] acting in accord with the Supreme Dao can save people. I know that the will of Heaven does not deceive you. Once the might of Heaven is expressed, it cannot be stopped. When Heaven is offended, it makes people die early.⁶²

Although the authors of Daoist books do not lay the same emphasis on the importance of emperors' government as does the *Taiping jing*, they continue to hold the belief that human moral behavior will bring the harmony of natural phenomena. Therefore, their writings contain detailed depictions of human depravity, and calamities brought by Heaven as punishments.⁶³

⁶¹ Anna Seidel, "Taoism: The Unofficial High Religion of China", *Taoist Resources* 7(1997):44-45. Anna Seidel, "Imperial Treasures and Taoist Sacraments – Taoist Roots in the Apocrypha", p. 303.

⁶² Wang Ming 王明 ed., *Taiping jing hejiao* 太平經合校 (Combined and proofread [version of] the *Taiping jing*) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1960), p. 23.

⁶³ I shall discuss this point in part 1.

The author of the *Taiping jing* divides history into three antiquities (*sangu* 三古): high antiquity (*shanggu* 上古), middle antiquity (*zhonggu* 中古), and lower antiquity (*xiagu* 下古), which are the ages of the remote past, recent past, and present time, respectively.⁶⁴ He shows obvious nostalgia for the past, and thinks that there were not any natural disasters in that period. The age of high antiquity is the time of great peace, in which the emperors of great peace (*taiping zhi jun* 太平之君) govern with non-intervention (*wuwei* 無爲). They rule in accord with the will of Heaven (*tianxin* 天心). People in the period never encounter sickness and calamities, and gain long lives. In the period of *zhonggu*, humans start to become depraved. In the age of *xiagu*, people's corruption became more severe.⁶⁵ In the book, the author comments extensively on the behavior of people in the *xiagu* age by comparing them with people in the other two periods. Here is one example, in which he remarks on funerals held in the three ages:

上古之人理喪，但心至而已，送終不過生時，人心純樸，少疾病。中古理漸失法度，流就浮華，竭資財爲送終之具，而盛於祭祀，而鬼神益盛，民多疾疫，鬼物爲崇，不可止。下古更熾祀他鬼而興陰，事鬼神而害生民，臣秉君權，女子專家，兵革暴起，奸邪成黨，諂諛日興，政令日廢，君道不行，此皆興陰過陽，天道所惡，致此災咎，可不慎哉？

People in high antiquity arranged funerals only in order to express their feeling (i.e. sorrow). The expenditure on burying [the dead] did not exceed that spent by them when they were alive. People were simple and seldom got sick. In middle antiquity, the reason [for doing this] gradually lost its rules (i.e. people's lives gradually went beyond all reason). [People] degenerated into becoming luxurious. They exhausted their money in spending on implements for funerals. Therefore, [offerings for] worship became abundant, and ghosts and spirits multiplied. People got sick frequently [because] these ghosts caused harm. They could not be stopped. [People in] lower antiquity worship these (lit. *ta* 他) ghosts more numerously and therefore promote the *yin* (陰 i.e. harmful force). They serve (i.e. worship) ghosts and spirits, and they cause harm to the living. Officials take control of monarchical power. Women usurp [the authority over] families

⁶⁴ *Gu* 古 here means stages.

⁶⁵ Max Kaltenmark, "The Ideology of the *T'ai-p'ing ching*", pp. 22-23.

[instead of husbands]. Rebellions of soldiers rise suddenly. The unrighteous and the wicked form cliques. Flattery prospers day by day. Decrees of government are to no effect. Monarchical mandates (lit. monarchical path 君道) cannot be carried out. All these [misfortunes] result from [people's] boosting the *yin* more than the *yang* (陽 i.e. auspicious force). The Dao of Heaven hates [their behavior] and causes these disasters. Why are you not careful in [holding funerals]?⁶⁶

Although the three periods of history are seldom juxtaposed in our Daoist works, the contrast between the past and the present is important material for them.

Revealing the methods of establishing the era of great peace is the purpose of the author of the *Taiping jing* in writing it. Only people in the high antiquity of the three ages enjoy the state of *taiping* and obtain harmony of human world and natural world. The ideal state, however, does not exist in the remote past only, but will also come in the near future.⁶⁷

夫天興雨，必先有風雲，使人知之……今太平氣當至，恐人爲惡亂其治，故先覺之也。

When Heaven is going to cause rain, it certainly gives first wind and clouds so as to make people know the coming of the rain [in advance].... Now the *qi* of great peace should come. [Heaven] is afraid that people will do evil and confuse heavenly rule, so it makes people aware of it (i.e. the *qi*).⁶⁸

The author thinks that people in the past were sincere and acted in accordance to the will of Heaven, so there was no need for composing books (*wenshu* 文書). (Chapter 48) People should now "[compose] articles full of [the messages about] original beginning [of the world] and correct words 當實文本元正字" because "the present [is the time that] the *qi* of great peace is going to come 今者太平氣且至", the wording of which is similar to that quoted above.⁶⁹

Perhaps because the expectation of the peace in the future exist in the book and one of its

⁶⁶ Wang Ming, ed., *Taiping jing hejiao*, pp. 52-53.

⁶⁷ Max Kaltenmark, "The Ideology of the *T'ai-p'ing ching*", pp. 23-24.

⁶⁸ Wang Ming, ed., *Taiping jing hejiao*, p. 41.

⁶⁹ Wang Ming, ed., *Taiping jing hejiao*, p. 155.

versions is related to the rebellion of Yellow Turbans, the book is thought to contain revolutionary ideas.⁷⁰

Part II: General Eschatological Views in Daoism

a) Contemporary Understandings of Crises in the World in the Six Dynasties Period

Like the author of the *Taiping jing*, those of Daoist scriptures of this period show nostalgia for the past and condemn the society of the contemporary world, but they simply divide time into two stages: the present and the past, unlike what we find in the *Taiping jing*.⁷¹ In the past, people were moral and behaved in accordance with their social status; therefore, Heaven and Earth remained peaceful without any disaster. The *Nüqing guilu* 女青鬼律 (The code of Nüqing for [controlling] demons, fasc.563), a text of the Celestial Master Daoism, says the following at the beginning of the first chapter:

律曰：天地初生，元氣施行，萬神布氣，無有醜逆祲邪不正之鬼，男孝女貞，君禮臣忠，六合如一，無有患害。自後天皇元年以來，轉生百巧，不信大道，五方逆殺疫氣漸興，虎狼萬獸受氣長大，百蟲蛇魅與日滋甚。

The [code] says that when Heaven and Earth were just born, the primeval vital force (*yuanqi* 元氣) circulated. Ten thousand gods spread *qi*; there were no ugly, traitorous, evil (lit. *xian* 祲 = *yao* 妖?), wicked, and unrighteous ghosts. Males were filial and females were chaste. Emperors behaved righteously and officials were loyal. The six unities (*liuhe* 六合) [were joint together] as one whole (i.e. the universe remained peaceful); there were no calamities⁷². [However,] from the first year of the Heavenly Emperor's (Tianhuang 天皇) [reign], [people] have multiplied hundreds of skills (i.e.

⁷⁰ Li Fengmao, "Liuchao daojiang de dujiu guan – zhenjun zhongmin yu dushi", pp. 139-141. Li's view that the book is the source of Daoist revolutionary beliefs is controversial. One should be reminded that there are not many the passages about the coming peace in the book. Besides, it is thought to be a sacred book presented by Daoist masters to emperors, not to rebels. See note 60 and Sedié's article mentioned there.

⁷¹ The terms for the three antiquities are seldom used in the Daoist works of this period. The one "*xiagu*" appear in the *Santian neijie jing* 三天內解經 (The scripture of explanations of the essentials of the Three Heavens, fasc. 876), but the other two do not.

⁷² The six unities either mean the sun, the moon, and the four directions, or mean the universe.

ways of trickery) (*zhuan sheng baiqiao* 轉生百巧), and do not believe in the Great Dao.⁷³

The *qi* of traitorousness, slaughter, and epidemics in five directions gradually flourishes. Tigers, wolves, and ten thousand [savage] animals receive *qi* and grow up. Hundreds of kinds of worms, snakes, and demons multiply quickly day by day. (1a)

All the three schools hold the view that the age of depravity is present or is coming. In that time, cataclysms will be everywhere and numerous people will die; therefore, they should follow the methods mentioned in their scriptures for salvation.

The belief in the interaction between the universe and human affairs in the *Taiping jing* continues in the Daoist texts written in the Six Dynasties and is part of the foundation of their eschatology. “*Moshi* (the end of the world 末世)” here results from three causes.⁷⁴ Misbehavior, disbelief to the Dao, and exhaustion of the duration of the universe bring natural disasters. Chapter 6 of the *Nüqing guilu* begins with the following words said by the Celestial Master:

自頃年以來，陰陽不調，水旱不適，災變屢見者，皆由人事失理使其然也。

In recent times the *yin* and the *yang* are not in harmony. Floods and droughts come out of season. Cataclysms and misfortunes are often seen. All these are caused by the loss of reason in human affairs. (1a)

Then the master recounts how the Dao is disbelieved in the present, which will see the end of the world. His criticism is based on Confucian values; people are criticized for not acting in accordance with their social roles. They are competitive and do not obey Heaven and Earth.

They do not respect their teachers. The noble and the humble do not separate, and neither do the

⁷³ *Zhuan sheng* should be translated into “multiply”, instead of “be reborn”, because the whole sentence *zhuan sheng baiqiao* accuses people of creating hundreds ways of trickery, and it is not related to human rebirth. *Zhuan* here means “increase by double or more”. Luo Zhufeng 羅竹風, ed., *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大辭典 (Great Chinese dictionary) (Hong Kong: Sanlian shudian & Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1987), vol.9, p. 1314.

⁷⁴ The term *moshi* is commonly applied in the Daoist texts in this period such as the *Chisong zi zhang li* 赤松子章曆 (The petition almanac of Chisong zi (Master Chisong), fasc. 335-336), chapter 3, 30a, the *Taishang dongzhen zhihui shangpin dajie* 太上洞真智慧上品大戒 (Dongzhen great rules [belonging to] the superior class of wisdom [told to] the most high [Lord Lao], fasc. 77; hereafter “the *Shangpin dajie*”), 15b, and the *Nüqing guilu*, chapter 6, 1a. Hans-Hermann Schmidt translates the *Shangpin dajie* as *Great superior rules of wisdom*. The *Shangpin dajie* is a collection of Lingbao precepts taught to the Lord Lao by the Yuanzhi tianzun 元始天尊 (Heavenly Honorable One of the Primal Beginning), and should belong to the category of Daoist texts Dongxuan 洞玄 (The cavern of mystery) like other Lingbao scriptures, instead of Dongzhen 洞真 (The cavern of perfection, i.e. Shangqing school). Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 239. Ren Jiyu, ed. *Daozang tiyao*, p. 130.

virtuous and the evil. The wise have hidden away. Loyal people do not hold office.

Righteousness and virtue no longer exists. Besides the above scripture, judging human behavior by Confucian morality can be found in other Daoist texts.

In addition to misbehavior, humans' disbelieving Daoism, and so not having right faith (*zhengfa* 正法), is thought to be responsible for the chaotic state in the present. In the *Taiji zhenren jiaofu jiao lingbao zhajie weiyi zhujing yaojue* 太極真人教敷靈寶齋戒威儀諸經要訣 (Instructions from all the scriptures for the ritual of the Lingbao retreat, expounded by the Zhenren (perfect man) of the Great Bourne, fasc. 295; hereafter "the *Zhujing yaojue*"), the Perfect Man of the Great Ultimate condemns severely the people who follow heretical faiths, i.e. non-Daoism, and do not believe in the Dao, after he gives the detailed instructions about Lingbao *zhajie* (fasts and retreats 齋戒) and an account of its divine power. Such people attack Daoist doctrines, and declare Daoist scriptures and skills at cultivation as false. They have faith in practices of shamanism (*wushu* 巫術), and in the fabrications stated in miscellaneous non-Daoist books (*zashu* 雜書), and indulge themselves with worldly enjoyments. (15a-15b) Later in the text the author of the scripture criticizes the people for not really understanding Daoism and not taking right paths.

觀世爲道，希有欲齋戒轉經尋明師受讀請問義理信用奉行之者，多是浮華淺薄之人，聲色在心，志無大雅，好學小乘法。

[I] observe that nowadays among the people in this world whose behavior accords with the Dao, there are few who want to hold the *zhajie*, read (lit. *zhuan* 轉 revolve) [Daoist] scriptures, search for wise teachers (*mingshi* 明師), receive [instructions in] reciting [the scriptures], ask respectfully [the teacher's] meanings and principles [stated in the scriptures], believe them, and practice them. Most of them are fond of luxury and are superficial. [Desire for] beautiful sounds and sights occupy their minds; their aspirations

lack great refinement. They are fond of learning magic of the Small Vehicle (*xiaocheng* 小乘).⁷⁵ (17b-18a)

The author continues by saying that people will laugh at and attack those who aim at immortality (*xiandao* 仙道) and universal salvation (*tuji yiqie renmin* 圖濟一切人民). People who do not have such aims “can neither dissolve disasters nor remove misfortunes as our group (i.e. Lingbao believers) can do (不如我輩並能消災散禍也)”. The author does not mention clearly the contents of *xiaocheng*, so we cannot be sure if his comments are for followers of shamanism or for non-Lingbao devotees.⁷⁶ Since the Great Dao (*dadao* 大道) does not spread and right doctrines (*zhengfa* 正法) do not prosper, evil spirits arise and claim to be orthodox deities. (18a)

The *Santian neijie jing*, a text of Celestial Master Daoism, is another example of how the rise of non-Daoism is linked with contemporary misfortunes. A lot of passages in it deal with the mixing of three different religions, the Great Dao of Non-Intervention (*wuwei dadao* 無爲大道, i.e. Daoism), Buddhism (*Fodao* 佛道), and the Great Dao of Purity and Simplicity (*Qingyue dadao* 清約大道). The work results in Celestial Master Daoism’s competition with Buddhism in the Age of South-North Dynasties (*Nanbei chao* 南北朝). It was written by a Daoist master with the surname Xu 徐 during the Liu Song Dynasty 劉宋 (420-479). Both in the south and north Daoism faced the ever-growing popularity of Buddhism.⁷⁷ Therefore, during the Northern Wei

⁷⁵ “*Xiaocheng*” here does not mean Hinayana here, but mean coarse practices, of which no further explanation or examples are given in the scripture.

⁷⁶ The devotees of Lingbao Daoism regarded the practices with the goal of personal cultivation, not of saving others, as *xiaocheng*, and people could only be earthly divinities (*dixian* 地仙) by using them. The Lingbao belief was aimed at saving others, so its devotees could be celestial divinities (*tianxian* 天仙). Hu Fuchen 胡孚琛, *Weijin shenxian daojiao – Baopuzi neipian yanjiu* 魏晉神仙道教 - 《抱朴子內篇》研究 (Immortality Daoism in the Wei and Jin Dynasties - studies on the *Inner Chapters Book by Master Baopu*) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1989), p. 61.

⁷⁷ In order to resist Buddhism, Daoism devoted attention to spreading its own scriptures for lower-class society such as the *Laozi bianhua jing* 老子變化經 (The scripture on transformations of Laozi), the *Laozi xianger zhu* 老子想爾注 (Xianger’s commentary on the *Daode jing* (The scripture of Dao and virtue)), and the *Taiping jing*. Celestial Master Daoism also absorbed Buddhist ideas in its regulations and rituals. Anna Seidel, “Imperial Treasures and Taoist Sacraments – Taoist Roots in the Apocrypha”, p. 38. Hu Fuchen, *Weijin shenxian daojiao – Baopuzi neipian yanjiu*, pp. 53-54. Julian F. Pas, *Historical Dictionary of Taoism* (London: The Scarecrow Press, 1998), p. 20.

Dynasty (386-535), which was about the same period as the Liu Song Dynasty, persecution of Buddhism (*miefo* 滅佛) was carried out in 446. In the scripture, the faiths mentioned above are claimed to be established by the Lord Lao according to different features of regions. The vital force of the *yang* (*yang qi* 陽氣) in China is pure and hence people there believe in Daoism. Buddhism is depreciated in this work and is regarded as a teaching suitable only to the eighty-one regions in the West (*huguo bashiyi yu* 胡國八十一域, i.e. India), where the vital force of the *yin* (*yinqi* 陰氣) is dense. Severe precepts are necessary for restraining the *yinqi*. The *Qingyue dadao*, of which the contents are uncertain, is appropriate to the Chu 楚 (the present Hubei and northern Hunan) and Yue 越 (a part of modern Zhejiang and Jiangsu) because the vital force of the *yang* and the *yin* there are thin. (Chapter 1, 3a) Although the author thinks the confusion of the three faiths was the reason of decay of the Han Empire, he mainly criticizes Buddhism. In this scripture, the history during the time of the Emperor Ming (明帝) of the Later Han Dynasty is mentioned. The emperor dreamt of Buddha and then sent ambassadors to India for asking for Buddhist scriptures. After that time Buddhism spread in China. After the story of the emperor, the author says:

三道交錯，於是人民雜亂，中外相混，各有攸尚，或信邪廢真，禱祠鬼神，人事越錯於下，天氣勃亂在上，致天氣混濁，人民失其本真。

The three ways (i.e. faiths) mingle with each other and therefore people [from different regions] mix with each other. [The faiths of] the inner region (China) and outer regions (India) are confused with each other. Each one values his own [faith at will]. Or they believe in heresies, discard true [faith], and worship ghosts and [wicked] deities. Human affairs (*renshi* 人事) below transgress [the proprieties] and are improper; Heavenly vital force (*tianqi* 天氣) above is in disorder. They make Heavenly vital force chaotic and turbid. People lose their original genuineness [in nature]. (Chapter 1, 15b)

The Daoist masters in this period thought that a confusing intermixture of orthodox Daoism and heresies, or people's weak faith in Daoism, was one of the reflections of people's depraved

conduct. This, together with other ways of misbehavior, is within the sphere of human affairs. Hence, the condemnation of people's not following the *zhengfa* is sometimes mixed with that of people's corruption. For example, in the *Santian neijie jing*, intermarriage among other races is regarded as a reflection of confusion of faiths, and therefore humans and ghosts intermingle with each other (*rengui jiaocuo* 人鬼交錯). (Chapter 1, 5a)

As the result of human degeneracy in morality and faith, misfortunes are caused to exterminate the evil and separate them from the virtuous. Disasters are interpreted as a means of supporting morality. In the “Yuanshi wulao rang dajie hungshui zhao jiaolong shuiguan duzai zhenwen yujue 元始五老禳大劫洪水召蛟龍水官度災真文玉訣 (Jade secrets of perfect characters, [taught by] the Five Elders of Primal Beginning for removing the deluges of the great kalpa and summoning flood dragons and water divinities to deliver [people] from disasters)” collected in the *Taishang dongxuan lingbao chishu yujue miaojing* 太上洞玄靈寶赤書玉訣妙經 (Lingbao wonderful scripture on jade secrets in red writing, [which is taught by] the Most High One, a Dongxuan scripture, fasc. 178; hereafter “the *Yujue miaojing*”) contains a spell devoted to various deities, an account of its miraculous efficacy during floods, and instructions to apply it.⁷⁸ In the passage stating the power of the spell, the Dao, i.e. Lord Lao, says the following:

天地大劫之交，洪水四出，蕩穢除惡，萬無遺一。

During the interchange of great Heavenly and Earthly kalpas, deluges appear in the four directions for removing the corrupt and getting rid of the cruel; therefore among ten thousand people (i.e. the corrupt and the cruel) not one remains [in the world]. (Chapter 1, 19b)

In the spell, the message is mentioned again after the description of the universal destruction.

棄惡遺善，清濁永分。

⁷⁸ Hans-Hermann Schmidt translates the title as the *Lingbao scripture of the jade instructions on the red writing*. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 232.

[The purpose of calamities] is to discard the wicked and leave behind the virtuous [so that] purity (i.e. moral people) and turbidity (i.e. corrupt people) are separated from each other forever. (Chapter 1, 20a)

In the age of great peace, all evil ones will be wiped out and only virtuous people, or Daoist devotees, will remain.⁷⁹ Therefore, in the eschatological views of the Six Dynasties, miseries are dividers between the present age of corruption and the future era of great peace. They are regarded as sieves separating righteous humans from immoral ones.

The above views on the causes of disorders can be found in the tradition of the *Taiping jing*; they originate in the ancient Chinese belief that humans and nature, or Heaven, Earth and humans, are interrelated. The third reason is different from the above two, but it has an important role in the Daoist eschatology of the Six Dynasties. In addition to the sins of humans, the emergence of calamities is considered to be the result of exhaustion of the age of the world, which is a stage of a universal cycle. The *Taishang laojun zhong jing* 太上老君中經 (The middle scripture [given by] the Most High Lord Lao, fasc. 839) is composed of fifty-five chapters introducing divinities in two volumes.⁸⁰ Under the entry for the fifty-second god, there is a description of the cosmic cycle of prosperity and famine:

故天地之會四十五歲一小貴，九十歲一小飢；一百八十歲一大貴，三百六十歲一大飢；五百歲賢者一小千歲聖人一小聚，三千六百歲聖人大會；萬八千歲真人一小出治，三萬六千歲至極仙人一出治。三百六十萬歲天地一大合，元氣溟滓，濛鴻元形，人爲萬物，不知東西南北，人化爲禽獸，禽獸化爲人。

⁷⁹ The virtuous people or Daoist devotees are called "seed people (*zhongmin* 種民 or *zhongren* 種人)"; we shall discuss this term later. "The disorders should not be long. Sons of wolves (i.e. wicked people) should be removed. The reign of the Dao (*Daoyun* 道運) should proper. The age of great peace will come soon. At present [the evil] should be expelled, and the moral seed people (*zhongren*) should be left. 狼子宜除，道運應興，太平期近，今當驅除，留善種人。" (*Nüqing guilu*, chapter 6, 1a-1b)

⁸⁰ The contents of the text do not indicate which school, among Celestial Master Daoism, Lingbao Daoism, and Shangqing Daoism, it belongs to. Kristofer Schipper believes that it is a scripture written in the Later Han Dynasty. Ren Jiyu and Wang Ka, however, view it as a work produced in the Wei or Jin Dynasties. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 97. Ren Jiyu ed. *Daozang tiyao*, p. 924. Wang Ka 王卡, "Taishang laojun zhong jing". *Zhonghua da cidian* 中華道教大辭典 (Great dictionary of Chinese Daoism), ed. Hu Fuchen (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chu ban she, 1995), p. 343.

This text was treated as the middle chapter (*zhongjing*) and the *Daode jing* as the first and last chapters by the members of the Shangqing school. Kristofer Schipper translates the title as *Laozi's book of the Center*.

Therefore, in the meeting of Heaven and Earth, there is a [stage of] minor prosperity (*xiaogui* 小貴) every forty-five years. There is a [stage of] minor famine every ninety years. There is a [stage of] great prosperity every one hundred and eighty years. There is a [stage of] great famine every three hundred and sixty years. The wise and saints have a small gathering every five hundred and one thousand years respectively.⁸¹ In three thousand and six hundred years, there is great assembly for saints. In eighteen thousand, perfected ones emerge once for reigning a short time (*yi xiao chuzhi* 一小出治); in thirty-six thousand years, Ultimate Immortals (*zhiji shenren* 至極仙人) emerge to reign. In thirty-six million years, there is a great merger between Heaven and Earth. [During that period,] the primal vital force (*yuanqi* 元氣) will be in a primordial state (*mingxing* 溟滓).⁸² The chaotic state (lit. *menghong* 濛鴻 = *hongmeng* 鴻蒙) [returns to] its original form.⁸³ Humans will become [the same as] myriad things and not know (i.e. distinguish between) [the four directions of] the east, the west, the south, and the north. Humans will become animals; animals will become humans. (Chapter 2, 16b)

The duration of the cosmos varies in different scriptures. The *Dongxuan lingbao benxiang yundu jieqi jing* 洞玄靈寶本相運度劫期經 (Lingbao scripture on the origin and the appearance of the cosmic cycles and kalpa periods, a Dongxuan scripture, fasc. 165; hereafter “the *Yundu jieqi jing*”) contains another list of years. During the period from the creation of Heaven and Earth to their devastation, there are three primal ones (*sanyuan* 三元), nine misfortunes (*jiu e* 九厄), great disasters, and small disasters.⁸⁴ During each period of *yuan*, there are nine misfortunes, which consist of three cataclysms (*sanzai* 三災) and six calamities (*liuhai* 六害). Even in the *liuhai*, there are three small disasters (*san xiao zai* 三小災). During the serious cataclysms, half of people die; during small disasters, they suffer from expensive grain. In the description of above teachings, the author emphasizes frequently that the stages of cosmic cycle and the

⁸¹ The first *xiao* 小 is omitted because it is meaningless.

⁸² *Mingxing* is the *yuanqi* before the formation of Heaven and Earth. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 74.

⁸³ *Hongmeng* is the chaotic state before forming of the universe. Zhang Zhizhe, *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 64.

⁸⁴ *Sanyuan* is composed of three *jiazi* 甲子 (sixty years); *yuan* here is a unit of time.

mentioned disasters are doomed and unavoidable by adding the sentences “it cannot be altered (*yi* 移) 不可移”, “it cannot be changed (*duo* 奪) 不可奪”, “they [misfortunes] cannot be refused (*que* 卻) 不可卻之”, and “[calamities] cannot be prevented (*rang* 禳) 不可禳之”. (12a-13b) By stating in detail the amount of years in all three stages of three *yuan* and listing years of intervals between each disaster, the author gives a vivid picture of serious universal suffering caused by imminent cyclical misfortunes, and his advice urging people to convert to Daoism therefore sounds convincing.

However, not every scripture with the idea of cyclical crises contains long lists of time of universal prosperity and devastation. Sometimes only the term “*yangjiu* (yang nine 陽九)” is mentioned. In a calendar formed in the Han Dynasty for calculating normal and disaster years, “*yangjiu*” is originally short for nine years of drought. One *yuan* (*yi*yuan 一元), a cycle of an age, is composed of 4,617 years, in which there are five *yang* disasters (*yange* 陽厄, i.e. drought) and four yin disasters (*yine* 陰厄, i.e. flood). Nine years of drought will appear after the first 106 years in a *yuan*, and this period of disaster is called “*yangjiu*”.⁸⁵ Other disasters that are named “yin nine (*yinjiu* 陰九)”, “yang seven (*yangqi* 陽七)”, and so on follow the *yangjiu*, but only the term “yang nine” becomes a synonym of cyclical crises in the Daoist works in the Six Dynasties. Sometimes it is applied with the term “*bailiu* 百六 (hundred and six)”, which originally means a period of one hundred and six normal years before the *yang* nine.

唯學道求生，達運度極，致可以長存，復陽九之運。

Only by learning the Dao for seeking survival, understanding thoroughly the destiny [of miseries], and saving [oneself from] the apex [of destruction of the world], one can attain long life and [survive] the destiny of the *yang* nine. (*Taishang lingbao tiandi yundu ziran miaojing* 太上靈寶天地運度自然妙經 [The natural wonderful Lingbao scripture

⁸⁵ Stephen Bokenkamp has made a table of years of droughts and floods. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, “Time after Time: Taoist Apocalyptic History and the Founding of T’ang Dynasty” *Asia Major*, 7(1994):66. Hu Fuchen, *Weijin shenxian daojiào – Baopuzi neipian yangjiu*, p. 749.

[spoken by] the Most High One on the rotation and salvation of Heaven and Earth], fasc. 166; hereafter “the *Ziran miaojing*”, 1b).

玄都紫微上宮舊格，朱書白素上以佩身，履大陽九大百六大劫之交。

[The magic symbol should be written in] the old format of the *Ziwei* (purple profundity 紫微) Upper Palace of Mysterious Metropolis in red writing on white silk, and should be worn so that one can go through [without harm] the interchange of great misfortunes of the great *yang* nine and the great hundred and six. (*Yuanzhi wulao chishu yupian zhenwen tianshu jing* 元始五老赤書玉篇真文天書經 [The scripture on the real writs of the Five Ancients of the Primordial Beginning, red writings in celestial script on jade tablets], fasc. 26; hereafter “the *Zhenwen tianshu jing*”, chapter 2, 3b-4a.)

The authors of our Daoist works do not think that the idea of cyclical crises of the universe contradicts their attack on human mistakes. Condemnations of human misconduct and people's faith in non-Daoism sometimes are mingled with accounts of doomed destruction of the world. The authors hold these views on the causes of contemporary disorders at the same time. In the *Chisong zi zhang li*, for example, there are different petitions presented by Daoist masters on behalf of followers with various requests. The one for asking to remove the sufferings of the dead starts with an attack on the impure world, in which the way to heaven is blocked, and with a reference to difficulties in obeying Daoist precepts. The petition then says, “In addition, at present the *yangjiu* is encountered. The destiny [of miseries] is imminent; [humans] will be expelled. 加值今陽九，運促驅除。”(Chapter 6, 14b) Two petitions for praying for repelling harmful forces on behalf of officials and of families whose members recently die contain the following comments on contemporary people: People in the end of this period of terminal vulgarity (*mosu* 末俗) do not cultivate diligently and establish merits for returning above the generous favor of the Lord Lao. Most ways of their behavior violate morals; the records of their sin can be piled as high as a mountain. The current world (*shishi* 時世) is hypocritical and

corrupt; humans and ghosts mutually resort to cunning. The merits of mundane people (lit. flesh people 肉人 *rouren*) are few. Therefore the calamities cannot be prevented.⁸⁶

b) Expectation of the Coming of Peaceful Era and Messiahs

The relationship between the expectations of messiahs, especially Li Hong 李弘, in Daoist texts and the rebels who rose up under the names of the messiahs in the Six Dynasties is a topic which has drawn the attention of scholars.⁸⁷ The apocalyptic messages in Daoist works concerning the advent of the peaceful reign ruled by the messiah Li Hong and contemporary rebellions, of which the leaders claimed to be the masters of the new reigns, show that messianism and the pursuit of an everlasting ideal world were beliefs held by both the upper and lower classes in the Six Dynasties.⁸⁸

In Daoist texts, the title of the messiah Holy Ruler (Sheng jun 聖君) is integrally associated with expectation of the age of great peace. Living in the peaceful world, greeting the Holy Ruler (or the Ruler of Great Peace [Taiping jun 太平君]), and being seed people are three inseparable blessings promised to devotees if they follow the doctrines in the scriptures; being qualified to obtain them means that one can survive the imminent or present misfortunes and obtain immortality in the ideal world governed by the Holy Ruler.

⁸⁶ 「末俗不能勤修，建立功德，上報恩澤，百行多違，罪過山積。」 (Chapter 6, 18a-18b) 「便以時世偽濁，人鬼互權，肉人功薄，無以禳災。」 (Chapter 6, 22b)

⁸⁷ Tang Yongtong 湯用彤, “‘Yaozei’ Li Hong ‘妖賊’ 李弘 (‘Evil enemy’ Li Hong)”, under “Kangfu zhaji size 康復札記四則 (Four items of reading notes [written after] recovery)”, *Tang Yongtong xueshu lunwen ji* 湯用彤學術論文集 (Collection of Tang Yongtong’s academic discourses) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983), p. 209-314. Tang Zhangru 唐長孺, “Shiji yu daojing zhong suojian de Li Hong 史籍與道經中所見的李弘 ([The image of] Li Hong seen in historical books and Daoist scriptures), *Weijin nanbei chao shilun shiyi* 魏晉南北朝史論拾遺 (Supplementary amplifications of discourses on history of the Wei, Jin, and South-North Dynasties), Beijing, Zhonghua shuju, 1983, pp. 208-214. Wang Ming, “Nongmin qiye suo cheng de Li Hong he mile 農民起義所稱的李弘和彌勒 ([The incarnations of] Li Hong and Maitreya proclaimed to be by rebels in peasant uprisings)”, *Daojia he dao jiao sixiang yanjiu* (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui hexue chubanshe), p. 373-380.

⁸⁸ Anna Seidel, “Taoist Messianism”, *Numen: International Review for the History of Religions*, 31 (1994): 161-174.

令臣某得蒙過度三災九厄凶世惡年，萬姓歸仰，睹見太平，奉迎聖君，永為種民。

Please make the official (the Daoist master who carries out rituals) be able to receive the kindness [of Heaven so that] the three calamities (*sanzai* 三災), the nine disasters (*jiue* 九厄), the evil world, and the hard years can pass me by.⁸⁹ [Please make] myriad people convert to and respect [the Dao], see the peaceful [world], welcome respectfully the Holy Ruler, and be the seed people forever. (*Chisong zi zhang li*, chapter 4, 23a)

The *Zhenwen tianshu jing* says that the people who wear the magic symbols in the scripture can come through catastrophes, as shown in above quotation. Floods, fires, and various poisons cannot do them harm. “They can see the time of Great Peace and become the seed people of the Holy Ruler. 得見太平，為聖君種民。” (Chapter 2, 4a) The sentences with references to the promises of being seed people, greeting the Holy Ruler, and experiencing the peaceful age can be found throughout in the scripture. The *Shangqing sanyuan yujian sanyuan bujing* 上清三元玉檢三元布經 (Shangqing scripture of jade examinations of the three original ones [i.e. Heaven, Earth, and humans])⁹⁰, spread by the three [goddesses] original ones (i.e. the three sister goddesses: the Original Lords of White Purity, Yellow Purity, and Purple Purity 白素元君、黃素元君、紫素元君), fasc. 179; hereafter “the *Sanyuan bujing*”), a Shangqing work probably written in the Eastern Jin Dynasty, includes similar sentences.⁹¹ The followers who possess and apply the magic symbols of the *Xiayuan* 下元 (the lower original one) and of the *Zhongyuan* 中

⁸⁹ *Sanzai* are three kinds of calamities. Three great calamities (*da sanzai* 大三災) are storms, floods, and fires. Three little calamities (*xiao sanzai* 小三災) are famines, epidemics, and warfare. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 83. I cannot find the contents of the *jiue*.

⁹⁰ *Zhongyuan* (Earth) here means mountains; *xiayuan* (humans) here means immortals. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 167.

⁹¹ Both Isabelle Robinet and Wang Ka believe that the scripture was probably written in the Eastern Jin Dynasty. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua da cidian*, p. 240. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, pp. 167-168. Isabelle Robinet explains the title of the text, but does not mention the translation of the whole title. *Jian* 檢 here means the examination of the sacred writings about Heaven, Earth, and immortals. (2a-3a)

元 (the middle original one) are guaranteed to be able to greet the Holy Ruler in the Shangqing Palace (*Shangqing gong* 上清宮) in the age of great peace. (19b & 20b)

Except for the *Shangqing housheng daojun lieji* 上清後聖道君列紀 (Shangqing annals of the Latter-Day Saint, fasc. 198; hereafter “the *Daojun lieji*”), a biography of the Holy Ruler about his birth and his cultivation, our Daoist works do not contain detailed descriptions of him. The authors of some books simply write his name and the year he comes, but these two items vary in different scriptures. The Holy Ruler is thought to be Li Hong 李弘 or Li Zhi 李治; his given name is usually mentioned in the split characters *kou* 口 and *gong* 弓, or *san* 三 and *tai* 台.⁹² Except for that in the *Gao Zhao Sheng koujue*, which is the end of the year of Metal Horse (3a), the coming time of the age of peace is proclaimed the *renchen* 壬辰 year, the 29th year of sixty-year cycle formed by the Heavenly Stems and the Earthly Branches (*gan zhi* 干支).

聖帝既出治，期在壬辰始。

The Holy Emperor (Shengdi 聖帝) has already set out to reign; his time will begin in the *renchen* year. (*Ziran miaojing*, 6b)

Although Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 mentions the surname of the Holy Emperor only in his *Dongxuan lingbao zhenling weiye tu* 洞玄靈寶真靈位業圖 (Lingbao table of the ranks and achievements of perfect spirits, a Dongzhen scripture, fasc. 73; hereafter “the *Weiye tu*”), he ranks him among other Daoist divinities:⁹³

太極金闕帝君姓李，壬辰下教太平主。

⁹² The name Li Zhi is found in the *Nuqing guiliu* and the *Ziran miaojing*. The name Li Hong can be discovered in the *Laojun bianhua wuji jing* and the *Shenzhou jing*.

⁹³ Isabelle Robinet translates the title as *Table of degrees and functions of the spirits*. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 113.

The family name of the Lord Emperor of Imperial Palace of Great Ultimate is Li; he is the Master of Great Peace (Taiping zhu 太平主) and will descend and [spread] teachings in the *renchen* year.⁹⁴ (8a)

In the *Shenzhou jing*, the year of *renchen* of the contemporary sixty-year cycle is highlighted:

道言自今壬辰之年，必有真君，真君不遠。

The Dao says that since this *renchen* year there will be certainly a Perfect Ruler, and [the advent of] the Perfect Ruler is not far away. (Chapter 9, 2b)

The information about the Holy Ruler in the Daoist works usually is his name and the time he comes only, i.e. the arrival time of the age of great peace; this is very different from the *Daojun lieji*, the contents of which will be mentioned briefly in the next part about the features of Shangqing eschatology and appendix B.⁹⁵

Unlike those of the misfortunes at the end of the world, the accounts of the era of great peace are scarce in our Daoist texts. Only three of them contain detailed depictions of how the world will be in the ideal age: the *Daojun lieji*, the *Laojun yinsong jie jing*, and the *Shenzhou jing*. Among them, that in the *Shenzhou jing* is the most detailed. The Dao says in this text that in the reign of the Holy Ruler people in the world are blissful; they can live for three thousand years. Heaven and Earth are changed; the sun and the moon are rearranged and so they are brighter than ever. (10b) People live happily and morally.

真君出世，無爲而治，無有刀兵刑獄，聖人治世，人民豐樂，不貪錢財……道士爲大臣，男女貞潔，無有淫心，人民長大，亦不復如是。今之道士耳，不覺自異，其形端正長大。人長一丈三尺，真君一丈六尺，面目光澤。人中無有姿醜，了了視之無厭。

⁹⁴ In addition to the Lord Emperor of Imperial Palace above, it is strange that there is another divinity called the Yousheng jinqie dichen housheng xuanyuan daojun 右聖金闕帝晨後聖玄元道君 (Mysterious Original Lord Dao of Latter[-Heaven] Saint [who is] the Emperor Chen 晨 (Morning) of Imperial Palace of Right[-Heaven] Saint) in the *Weiyue tu*. "He should descend and be born during the destiny of *renchen*. 壬辰運當下生 (5a);" he occupies the right position of the second rank (*dier youwei* 第二右位) in the hierarchy of deities. The former one holds the central position of the third rank (*disan zhongwei* 第三中位). Both entries seem to be of the Holy Emperor. *Jinqie* 金闕 should be interpreted as imperial palaces instead of golden imperial gates, its literal meaning. It means either dwellings of immortals or deities in heavens or imperial palaces of emperors in earth. Luo Zhufeng, ed., *Hanyu da cidian*, vol. 11, p. 1191.

⁹⁵ My translation of the text is based on Stephen R. Bokenkamp's. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures*, (Berkeley: University of California, 1999), p. 339-362.

The Perfect Ruler descends to the world and rules with non-intervention. There are no warfare, torture, and imprisonment. The Sage (i.e. the Perfect Ruler) governs the world; people enjoy lives of plenty and happiness. They are not greedy for wealth.... Daoist masters become ministers. Males and females are chaste and pure without licentious minds. They are tall and [therefore their appearances] are no longer the same [as those in the present]. At that time (lit. *jin* 今) the Daoist masters are not aware of their own differences: their forms are dignified and large. They are one *zhang* (丈, a unit of length, 1 *zhang* = 3½ metres) and three feet tall. The Perfect Ruler is one *zhang* and six feet tall and his face is lustrous. Among people, no one is pretty or ugly [because they all are pretty]. It is never boring to look at them (lit. *liaoliao* 了了 = *jiujiu* 久久?). (Chapter 1, 10b-11a)

Rare and legendary animals such as phoenixes and white cranes become livestock, and common livestock like horses and cattle will no longer exist. (11a) In order to obtain bliss in the age of great peace, people should convert to the teachings of the *Shenzhou jing*.

Although the Holy Ruler is described as the master of age of great peace in the future, he does not take the role of the ruler of the world, as said in the other two texts. Instead he is the supervisor of the rulers he appoints, and he designates immortals to the appropriate transcendental positions in bureaucracy of deities and assigns them to control the world. In the *Daojun lieji*, we read:

然後聖君當復料其麤妙，擢以補官僚者，或位爲仙伯，或拜爲諸侯，助聖教民，埋氣布德，或封掌一邑，委政一國……聖君乃隨才署置，以爲大小諸侯，各皆有秩以君種民也。諸侯一年一朝上清見聖君以受事也，聖君五年一下遊以幸諸侯，察種民而聽仙理焉。

Then the Holy Ruler will evaluate their (immortality learner; *xuexian zhe* 學仙者) thoughtlessness or their subtlety again. Those who can be made officials for filling vacancies in bureaucracy will be promoted to transcendental earls or will be designated as dukes. They will assist the Holy [Ruler] in teaching people, and will arrange the vital force and spread inner Dao (*de* 德). Or some of them will be granted control of a county or will be entrusted with government of a country.... The Holy Ruler will arrange

[promotion] and appoint people [to appropriate positions] according to their talent. They will be made high feudal lords and low feudal lords. All will have their official ranks so that they will be able to govern the seed people. Every feudal lord will be granted an audience with the Holy Ruler each year in Grand Purity [Heaven] (*Shangqing* 上清) and will receive orders from him. The Holy Ruler will descend so as to visit them once in five years. He will inspect [the lives of] seed people and judge the rule of immortals.

(4b-5b)

Although Kou Qianzhi 寇謙之 (365-448) denies Li Hong to be the form manifested by the Lord Lao (Laojun 老君) in his *Laojun yinsong jie jing*, and criticizes the rebels for claiming to be Li Hong and the incarnation of the Lord Lao, the image of the Lord Lao in his work is influenced by messianic prophecy spread in the Six Dynasties.⁹⁶

吾治在崑崙山山上……天地人民鬼神令屬於我，我豈用作地上一城之主也？我不願之。若我應出形之時，宜欲攻易天地，經典故法屬皆殄滅，更出新正命，應長生之者，賜給神藥昇仙度世，隨我左右，惡人化善，遇我之者盡皆延年。若國王天子治民有功，輒使伏社如故。若治民失法，明聖代之安民，平定之後，還當昇舉伏宅崑崙。

The seat of my government is on Mount Kunlun 崑崙 (legendary dwelling of immortals).... Heaven, Earth, people, spirits, and deities all are ordered by me. Why do I still want to be a master of a city? I am not willing to do so. When I should come out and reveal [my true] form is the appropriate [time] to change diligently Heaven and Earth and destroy all antiquated doctrines in scriptures. [I shall] also give new orthodox mandates [to Daoist masters]. Those who should attain immortality will be granted efficacious medicines for ascending to immortal [lives], coming through the [calamities in the] world, and accompanying me on my sides. The evil will become moral. The ages of those who meet me will be extended. If the rulers of countries, Heaven's sons, make merits by governing their people [properly], I shall then make them serve (lit. *fu* 伏=*fu* 服?) the countries (*she* 社=*sheji* 社稷) as before. If they rule people inappropriately, [I

⁹⁶ Kou Qianzhi was a famous Daoist priest of the Celestial Master Daoism in the early Northern Wei Dynasty. He claimed to be appointed as the Celestial Master by the Lord Lao in the second year of Shenrui 神瑞 reign (415). In the first year of Shiguang 始光 reign (424), he suggested to the Emperor Wu the reformation of the Celestial Master Daoism. He absorbed Confucian percepts and abandoned the hereditary appointment to Dao officials (*daoguan* 道官). The Tianshi Daoism reformed by Kou is called the Northern Celestial Master Daoism (Bei tianshi dao 北天師道). Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 191. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua da cidian*, p. 85.

shall make] enlightened saints replace them and comfort people. After I settle them down, I shall ascend to and completely hide in my residence in Mount Kunlun again. (5a-5b)

Although Kou Qianzhi condemns the belief that Li Hong is the messiah, he does not deny messianic apocalypse. As we are told in the above quotation, the Lord Lao will come to the world and will be the messiah one day. He will not transform himself into Li Hong or Liu Ju 劉舉 when he comes.⁹⁷ The expectation of the messiah and the perfect age can still be discovered. As shown in both above quotations from the two scriptures, the Holy Ruler and the Lord Lao, in the picture of the future ideal age, will not rule the world directly, but will only appoint appropriate immortals as rulers. The relevant depiction in the *Shenzhou jing* is too simple. We cannot judge by it if the text contains the same idea.⁹⁸

We should notice that in the prophecies in the Six Dynasties the messiah Li Hong has an obvious role in the ideal world in the future, but he does not necessarily perform the tasks of salvation in the present world. In the *Daojun lieji*, a text dedicated to him, the Holy Ruler is a savior who gives a sacred message (the text) to people who have potential as immortals and orders twenty-four Perfect Men (*zhenren* 真人), under Wang Yuanyou's 王遠游 supervision, to spread teachings in the world. (6b-8a) However, in the other scriptures, other deities such as the Lord Lao and the Yuanshi tianzun are saviors who reveal valuable message that can deliver people from disasters. People who convert to Daoist teachings, which are usually not spoken by the Holy Ruler, can undergo calamities without being harmed. The *Yujue miaojing*, for example, is said to be true writings (*zhenwen* 真文) revealed to the Lord Lao by the Yuanshi tianzun.

⁹⁷ Liu Ju and Li Hong were the names usually adopted by the rebels in the Six Dynasties. The rebels who took the name Liu Ju, or Liu Ni 劉尼, did not claim themselves to be the incarnations of the Lord Lao, but the descendants of the royal family of the Han Dynasty. The prophecy that "the Liu will prosper (i.e. take sovereignty) again, and the Li will assist them (劉氏復興, 李氏爲輔。)" circulated in the Late Han and Six Dynasties. Wang Ka 王卡, ed., *Zhonggao dao jiao jichu zhishi* 中國道教基礎知識 (Elementary knowledge of Chinese Daoism) (Beijing: Zhongjiao wenhua chubanshe, 1999), p. 23-24.

⁹⁸ "Deities (*shenren* 神人) will enforce [heavenly] law; immortals (*xianren* 仙人) will be their assistants. 神人治法, 仙人爲佐。" (Chapter 9. 2b)

People who would like to be released from miseries such as floods, disorderly rotation of constellations, and harm caused by ghosts and demons need to apply the sacred scripts dedicated to the Five Elders of Primal Beginning, i.e. the Five Rulers of Five Directions. Then various deities of five directions will appear and drive away disasters and harmful forces. The *Zhenwen tianshu jing* is described as a revealed text given by the Yuanshi tianzun to the Lord Lao.

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[The Yuanshi tianzun] summons and orders the Five Emperors to analyze and establish the *yin* and the *yang*, to predict and estimate kalpa assembling (*jiehui* 劫會), to change and correct sources of rivers, to examine and record [the list of people who will be] delivered by Heaven, and to choose seed people. (Chapter 1, 6a-6b)

In the scriptures, the Five Rulers play prominent role in salvation. The “perfect writing (*zhenwen* 真文)” composed in seal characters (*zhuanwen* 篆文) and released by the Rulers are thought to be efficacious in driving away suffering of great kalpas and little kalpas. During every period in which a kind of vital forces managed by each of the Five Rulers operates (lit. *yunguan* 運關, operate gate), one Emperor will be in power (*yongshi* 用事) and descend in order to teach and transform people (*jiaohua* 教化). A certain number of people will be delivered and will be appointed for filling vacancies for immortal official positions (*yi bu xianguan* 以補仙官) in each age of the Five Rulers. Misfortunes have to be removed by the sacred writing of the Rulers in correspondence with the time in which they happen. More examples can be found in other texts. As shown above, in the sphere of salvation in Daoist eschatology in the Six Dynasties, the Holy Ruler does not have conspicuous role. Although he is thought to be the master of the era of great peace in the future, he is seldom linked with the contemporary work of redeeming humans. Unlike the Holy Ruler, the Lord Lao is usually regarded as a savior revealing doctrines and methods of redemption in Daoist messianic prophecies, although there is a popular tradition in the Six Dynasties that Li Hong is an incarnation of the Lord Lao. However,

in the *Laojun yinsong jie jing*, the Lord Lao is in charge of tasks of salvation in both contemporary and future ages: appointing Kou Qianzhi as the new Celestial Master, ordering him to spread teachings, and being the master of the future ideal world.

We can infer that the work of salvation in the eschatology in the Six Dynasties can be divided into two parts: guaranteeing people peaceful lives forever and delivering them from contemporary sufferings by spreading the teachings. As shown in the scriptures, the latter is not the exclusive work of the Holy Ruler, and is mostly done by other deities. Ruling in the age of Great Peace is thought to be charged by the Holy Ruler. The purpose of the scriptures is to exhort corrupt humans to lead virtuous lives or convert to Daoist beliefs, and eventually free humans from suffering; therefore, divine revelation of religious practices to believers becomes the important theme of these scriptures. The advent of the future peaceful world is an attraction for followers. Perhaps this is the reason why there are not as many descriptions of the future harmonious age as they are statements about the importance of devotion and various religious practices. One has to meet requirements in religious cultivation before one can live in the era of great peace, and salvation has to be completed in the present world before Li Hong or the Lord Lao can do his work in the future world!⁹⁹

c) The Idea of Seed People

Although the concept of *zhongmin* is essential in Daoist eschatology in the Six Dynasties and this term is often applied in the texts, the definition of the term *zhongmin* is never given in them. The authors seem to have assumed that their readers already know this term and do not

⁹⁹ Therefore, in eschatological beliefs in the Six Dynasties, Li Hong or the Lord Lao is not the only one who takes on messianic tasks; other deities also take part in the Daoist scheme of eschatological salvation. From this point of view, they can be regarded as messiahs too. Besides, the belief that divided duties of salvation are carried out by different deities (or people) was not held by the rebels in the Six Dynasties; hence a number of them carried out rebellions under the name of Li Hong or the Lord Lao. This can be considered as one of the criteria for distinguishing the beliefs of the rebels and that of the Daoist believers of upper society, but it certainly needs more research to confirm.

raise questions about it.¹⁰⁰ Modern scholars take their definition from the Daoist texts and think that the term refers to the elect who can survive the catastrophes of world destruction and repopulate a new world.¹⁰¹

As mentioned before, being seed people is inseparable from enjoying lives in the age of great peace and greeting the Holy Ruler in the Daoist messianic prophecy; they all are the promises given to believers who follow Daoist doctrines. We can infer that “seed people” are the identity given to the people who qualify for coming through the destructive misfortunes and enjoying lives in the age of great peace forever. The definition above showing what *zhongmin* are is vague; we cannot judge from it whether *zhongmin* are transcendental beings or whether they are only humans who enjoy long lives in the perfect world. From the ways the term is used in the Daoist texts, it is shown that the authors of the Six Dynasties period do not share common answers to this question.

Zhongmin are sometimes regarded as immortals. The *Dongzhen taishang shang huangmin ji dingzhen yulu* 洞真太上上皇民籍定真玉錄 (Precious register on which are fixed the [names of] the Zhenren of the Population record of the Most High Supreme Sovereign, a Dongzhen scripture, fasc. 1031; hereafter “the *Dingzhen yulu*”), a Shingqing text, includes the exhortations of the Lord Lao of Great Supremacy (Taishang daojun 太上道君), parts of which are as follows:

¹⁰⁰ There is a passage about the definition of seed people in the first chapter of the version *Taiping jing* edited by Wang Ming: “Only those who accumulate [the merits of] virtues can avoid it (destruction of the world) and forever be the seed people. The intelligence and knowledge of the seed people still vary and are poor without general sameness [in their level]. It is still necessary [for them] to have masters and rulers (*shijun* 師君). [If] rulers are holy and masters are bright, transformation by [right] teaching will not die. [The people] accumulate [the accomplishments in] their cultivation and become saints; therefore they are called seed people. Seed people are a group [of humans who] are holy and wise and attain immortality. 唯積善者免之、長為種民。種民智識、尚有差降、未同浹一、猶須師君。君聖師明、教化不死、積鍊成聖、故號種民。種民、聖賢長生之類也。” Wang Ming ed., *Taiping jing hejiao*, pp. 1-2. Chapter 1 is taken from the *Taiping jingchao* 太平經鈔 (Transcript of the *Taiping jing*, fasc. 746-755) edited by Luqiu Fangyuan 閻丘方遠 of the late Tang Dynasty. As shown in the later discussion, ideas about seed people vary in different works. It is difficult to judge if these words were composed in the Six Dynasties.

¹⁰¹ E. Zürcher, “‘Prince Moonlight’ – Messianism and Eschatology in Early Medieval Chinese Buddhism”, p. 5, note 10. Terry F. Kleeman, *Great Perfection: Religion and Ethnicity in a Chinese Millennial Kingdom* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1998), p. 73. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, “Time after Time: Taoist Apocalyptic History and the Founding of T’ang Dynasty”, p.69. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scripture*, p. 157.

又父母愛念，令其雋秀，從師學問，智慧神通，求得仙聖，爲道種人。

Besides, parental love and consideration make them (Daoist learners) talented and outstanding. They follow masters in learning knowledge so that [they can have] wisdom and supernatural power. They can also attain immortality and holiness and be seed people (*zhongren* 種人) of the Dao. (1b)

大劫未周，其間小劫，功德怠者，身名俱退，必失斯文，亦不值仙；功進德精，得文無失，保爲種人，不退不減。

When great kalpas do not yet circulate, at this time little kalpas [appear]. Both the status and the reputation of those who are remiss in [accumulating] merits will degenerate. Then they will certainly lose this writing and will not be worthy of immortality. [People who make] progress in [gaining] merits and concentrate on [refining their] virtue can attain the writing without loss. [They are] guaranteed to be seed people without regression and decrease [in their status and reputation]. (5b)

The scripture tells us that seed people are on the Registration Record of Imperial People Written on White Bamboo Slips and Green Rolls (*Baijian qinglu huangmin jilu* 白簡青籙皇民籍籙). (6a)

“Seed people” here obviously is synonymous with immortals. The term with such an interpretation can be found in the Lingbao text, the *Zhenwen tianshu jing*.

度學者之身，玄都宿有金名，皆得見此文，佩之得免大災，爲聖君種民，皆白日昇天，上朝玄都上宮。功德未備，即得尸解，轉輪成仙，隨運沉浮，與真結緣。

[Jade Magic Symbol of Three Original [Ones] from Five Elders of the Primordial Beginning (“*Yuanzhi wulao sanyuan yufu* 元始五老三元玉符”) and Lingbao Jade Pieces (“*Lingbao yupian* 靈寶玉篇”)] will save the bodies of Daoist learners. People with their names written in gold and recorded in Constellations of Mysterious Metropolis can all see this writing. If they wear it, they can avoid great misfortunes and be seed people of the Holy Ruler. They will all ascend to heaven during daytime (*bairi shengtian* 白日升天) and will have audiences above [with the Holy Ruler] in High Palace of Mysterious Metropolis (*Xuandu shanggong* 玄都上宮). Those with insufficient merits will immediately attain liberation from their bodies (*shijie* 尸解) and will turn into immortals in their next lives (lit. *zhuanlun* 轉輪 turning wheels). They will make

progress or regress according to their fates, and form karmic affinities with the Perfect One (i.e. unite with the Dao) [sooner or later]. (Chapter 2, 17b)

As shown above, *zhongmin* include both upper immortals, who can ascend to heaven with both spirits and bodies, and lower immortals, whose incomplete purification will be carried on after rebirth in the Palace of Red Fire or in the Court of Liquid Fire.¹⁰²

In the future ideal world of messianic prophecies in some Daoist texts, seed people are important members of the social hierarchy. They are either candidates for divine officials or the subjects of divine bureaucracy. In the *Daojun lieji*, seed people simply are the virtuous, not Daoist learners; therefore, they do not hold any divine positions.

滅惡人已於水火，存慈善已爲種民，學始者爲仙使，得道者爲仙官。

[During the year of *renchen*,] the wicked will have already been destroyed in fires and floods; the moral will remain and become seed people. Beginners in [Daoist] learning will be transcendental messengers (*xianshi* 仙使); the people who have attained the Dao will be transcendental officials (*xianguan* 仙官). (4b)

The way the author uses the term indicates that he sticks to the meaning of character “*min* (民 the populace)” of the term “*zhongmin*”. Unlike that in the *Daojun lieji*, the term “seed people” in the *Dongxuan lingbao ziran jiutian shengshen zhangjing* 洞玄靈寶自然九天生神章經 (Lingbao Stanzas of the life spirits of the nine heavens, which is formed naturally and a Dongxuan scripture, fasc. 165; hereafter “the *Jiutian shengshen zhangjing*”) is used when referring to qualified candidates for divine office:¹⁰³

大運將期，數終甲申，洪流蕩穢，凶災彌天，三官鼓筆，料別種人，考筭功過，善忠當分。自赤明以來至上皇元年，依元陽玉匱受度者應二十四萬人。開皇以後至甲申，諸天選序，仙曹空廢，官僚不充，遊散職司，皆應選人，依元陽玉曆當於三代更料，有心積善建功爲三界所舉，五帝所保，名在上天者，取十萬人以充其任，又當別舉一十二萬人，以充儲官。

¹⁰² Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, trans. Phyllis Brook (Stanford: Stanford University, 1997), p. 127-138. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua Daojiao da cidian*, p.608. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 727.

¹⁰³ The translation of the title Kristofer Schipper provides, which is the *Stanzas of the life spirits of the nine heavens*, does not include the meanings of the whole Chinese title. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 235.

The day of great doom will come; destiny (i.e. age) [of the world] will end in the *jiashen* year (甲申, the 21st year of the sixty-year cycle). Deluges will remove abominations; the sky will overflow with violent disasters. The Three Officers (Heaven, Earth, and Water Officers) will wield pens; they will evaluate seed people and distinguish them [from the vicious]. Merits and sins will be examined and estimated; the moral and the evil will certainly be separated. From the years of the Chiming (Crimson Brightness 赤明) reign to the first year of the reign of the High Sovereign (Shanghuang 上皇)¹⁰⁴, there should be two hundred and forty thousand people who receive deliverance according to the *Yuanyang yugui* ([Register of] original yang in jade cabinet 元陽玉匱). From the years of the Kaihuang (Beginning of empire 開皇) to the year of *jiashen*, various Heavens will elect and rank [divine officials]. The transcendental offices lay idle and are abandoned; the officials are insufficient. Their official duties are unstable and confused. [Appropriate] people should be selected to hold all [positions]. [The merits of] one's three [ancestral] generations should be estimated twice according to the *Yuanyang luli* (Jade calendar of original yang 元陽玉曆). One hundred of those who are commended by the [deities in] the Three Regions (*sanjie* 三界)¹⁰⁵ and recommended by the Five Emperors with guarantees [of their good behavior] due to their efforts to accumulate [accomplishments of] virtues and accomplish merits and whose names are [written] on [the rolls in] heaven will be elected to fill the positions. In addition, a hundred and twenty thousand people will be recommended for filling [vacancies for] supplementary officials. (5b)

In addition to the numbers of seed people appointed, the author of the scripture states the standards for choosing them. People are judged by their participation in religious activities and their attributes or some causes indicating their predestined acquisition of immortality. The author makes a long list of these criteria. Those who have registered in heaven, have special

¹⁰⁴ *Chiming* and *Kaihuang*, which appear later in the text, are names of Daoist fabricated reigns. The High Sovereign is the Celestial Emperor (Tiandi 天帝). Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 108 & p. 277.

¹⁰⁵ *Sanjie* has different sets of meanings: 1) the Non-Limitless Realm (Wuji jie 無極界), the Realm of Great Ultimate (Taiji jie 太極界), and the Present Realm (Xianshi jie 現世界); 2) the Heaven Realm (Tianjie 天界), the Earth Realm (Dijie 地界), and the Water Realm (Shuijie 水界); 3) the Realm of Desire (Yujie 欲界), the Realm of Form (Sejie 色界), and the Realm of the Formless (Wuse jie 無色界). Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 94.

bones and forms that are the same as those of immortals, or have *nirvāna* causation (*miedu yinyuan* 滅度因緣) when being reborn can be seed people.¹⁰⁶ Those who have gained merits by taking part in the following Daoist practices can also be the elect: holding earnest affection for the Three Precious Ones (*sanbao* 三寶), worshiping them, accumulating merits by holding fasts and obeying precepts, contributing money in constructing Daoist halls, helping the poor and all beings, and building up merits for the Three Masters (*sanshi* 三師).¹⁰⁷ (5b-6a) The Three Officers will “all record the seed [people’s] names in advance (皆逆注種名)”. (6a) Apart from the living, the dead in the Nine Offices of Dimness (*Jiuyou zhifu* 九幽之府) will be selected to be *zhongmin*.¹⁰⁸ Deliverance is not limited to the living; therefore, the author says that the period after calamities is the time when “the living and the dead will join up; the virtuous and the evil will be separated. 生死交會，善惡分判。” (6a) “People’s merits and sins will be evaluated fairly [by various deities] so that [the decisions on] their being alive and dead will be without bias. 功過平等使生死無偏。” From the description of the standards, we can see how the requirements for adepts are set by the author; these are what people should do to survive in the overwhelming calamities. In the *Daojun lieji*, moral conduct is necessary for being seed people; in the *Jiutian shengshen zhangjing*, the emphasis is placed on one’s religious cultivation. The selection of the seed people is limited to the Daoist adepts. In Daoist eschatology in the Six Dynasties, the requirements for obtaining deliverance, as shown above, are not fixed.

¹⁰⁶ *Miedu* (*nirvāna*: extinction of reincarnation and escape from suffering) and *yinyuan* (causes) both are Buddhist terms. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* (London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1982), pp. 206 & 405.

¹⁰⁷ *Sanbao* are the deified forms of three elements that generate myriad beings. They are the Lord Tianbao 天寶 (Heavenly Preciousness), the Lord Lingbao 靈寶 (Spiritual Preciousness), and the Lord Shenbao 神寶 (Divine Preciousness). The *Shengshen zhangjing* gives detailed information on them and how they form myriad beings. *Sanshi* are three Lingbao teachers, namely the master of Lingbao scriptures (*jing* 經), the master of registers (*ji* 籍), and the master of redemption (*du* 度). They are regarded as three forms of the Lord Lao’s transformation. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 873.

¹⁰⁸ The *Jiuyou zhifu* is the dwelling of spirits, which is divided into nine offices of eight directions and the center. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua daojiao da cidian*, p.489.

The interpretation and application of the term seed people not only vary in different scriptures of different schools, but are also inconsistent in the works of the same schools. Daoist theocracy first appeared during the time of Zhang Ling 張陵 (34-156). His territory was divided into twenty-four districts (*zhi* 治; parishes), which were ruled by libationers (*jijiu* 祭酒). They functioned like local officials. In 215 CE, Zhang's son, Zhang Lu 張魯, surrendered to Cao Cao 曹操 and ended the theocratic state. The situation of Zhang Lu and several tens of thousands of believers after they were moved to Changan and the areas surrounding it is not known, but the parishes decayed and were accompanied with the ever-declining authority of Celestial Master Daoism.¹⁰⁹ The *Laojun yinsong jie jing* and the “Dadao jialing jie 大道家令戒 (Orders and precepts for families of great Dao)”, collected in the *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiaojie kejing* 正一法文天師教戒科經 (Classified scriptures on doctrines and precepts, [given by] the celestial master, [which is] mandate writing of orthodox-unity, fasc. 563; hereafter “the *Jiaojie kejing*”), were composed in the same historical context with similar purpose, which was to reestablish regulations for restricting the people of the parishes and the officials of the theocracy.¹¹⁰ However, the way the term *zhongmin* is applied in one of them is not totally the same as that in the other. Kou Qianzhi applies the term “seed people” to the elect among both libationers and the Subjects of Dao (*Daomin* 道民) in his *Laojun yinsong jie jing*.

吾當敕下九州四海之內土地真官之神騰籍戶，言其有祭酒道民奉法有功，然後於中方有當簡擇種民，錄名文昌官中。

I (the Lord Lao) shall order below the deities of earth perfect officers (*tudi zhenguan zhi shen* 土地真官之神) within the nine prefectures and four seas to transcribe (lit. *teng* 騰

¹⁰⁹ For the history and religious practices of Celestial Master Daoism, read the following materials: Terry F. Kleeman, *Great Perfection: Religion and Ethnicity in a Chinese Millennial Kingdom*, pp. 61-80. Julian F. Pas, *Historical Dictionary of Taoism*, pp. 16-20 & pp. 155-158. Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, pp. 53-77. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scripture*, pp. 149-135.

¹¹⁰ Stephen R. Bokenkamp has translated the “Dadao jialing jie” in his *Early Daoist Scripture* (pp. 165-185). Kristofer Schipper does not provide a translation of the title in his introduction to the *Jiaojie kejing*. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, pp. 126-127.

= *teng* 騰) registers of households and report [to me the list of] the libationers and the subjects of the Dao who make merits by obeying rules. Some who should be seed people among them will then be chosen (lit. *jian* 簡 = *jian* 揀); their names will be recorded in the Wenchang gong (Palace of Literary Prosperity 文昌). (4a)

Unlike Kou Qianzhi, the author of the “Dadao jialing jie” restricts his usage of the term *zhongmin* to the reformed former people of the parishes (*xin gumin* 新故民), a group classified to contrast with the former people (*gumin* 故民), who disobey precepts and are totally depraved.¹¹¹ The admonishments in the text are composed for two groups of readers, male and female officers of various ranks (*zhuzhi nanmu guan* 諸職男女官), and the reformed former people of the parishes. The former are asked to stop increasing posts in officialdom of Tianshi Daoism at will. (17a-18b) The latter are requested to follow Confucian morals; they are promised that all disasters they encounter will be removed and they will be seed people in the future age. The passages, in which the term is used, are listed as follows:

新故民戶見世知變，便能改心，爲善行義則善矣，可見太平，度脫厄難之中，爲後世種民。

If the reformed former people [of the parishes] see the [present corrupt] world and know [it is time to] change, they can then change their minds. [If people] do good deeds and practice righteousness, they can turn moral and can see the age of the great peace [soon]. They can be saved and can be freed from misfortunes and difficulties, and can be the seed people of the later age. (15a)

諸新故民戶男女老壯自今正元二年正月七日已去，其能壯事守善，能如要言，臣忠子孝，夫信婦貞，兄敬弟順，內無二心，便可爲善，得種民矣。種民難中，亦當助其力。

From the present, the seventh day of the first month in the second year of the Zhengyuan Period (正元 Orthodox Prime 255 CE), the reformed former people [of the parishes]

¹¹¹ I do not translate “*xin gumin*” into “the prior and the new families” as Stephen R. Bokenkamp does in his *Early Daoist Scriptures* (p. 173), and interpret it as a term for one whole group of people instead because the author of the text makes a remarkable contrast in comments on the *gumin* and the *xin gumin*. *Gumin* are criticized severely in the text, and *xin gumin* are those on whom he sets hope that they will obey morality. Besides, Bokenkamp’s translation may give readers an indication that there were still new households joining the Celestial Master Daoism in the Wei Dynasty, the time when the text was produced, but we do not have evidence to prove it.

including all males, females, the old, and those in prime of life should expand their duties (*shi* 事) and obey morality. They should act in accord with [the following] important words: officers should be loyal; sons should carry out filial responsibilities. Husbands should be trustworthy; wives should be chaste. Elder brothers should be respectful; younger brothers should be obedient. Do not be of two minds [about obeying these principles]. [If they have done so,] they then can be virtuous and obtain [the status of] seed people. [If any] seed people are involved in troubles, [they] should use their strength to help [each other]. (16b-17a)

但當戶戶自相化以忠孝……從今日之善行，災消無病，得爲後世種民……今傳吾教，令新故民皆明吾心，勿相負也。

Only if all households transform themselves and each other [by using the values of] loyalty and filial responsibility...and do the good deeds [I teach] today, will misfortunes disappear and diseases not exist, and will they be the seed people of the later age.... My teachings should be spread now so that all reformed former people [of the parishes] are made to understand my wish and not to be heartless to each other. (18b-19b)

Unlike Kou Qianzhi, the author uses the term only when referring to the moral ordinary Daoist believers, but not to the holders of positions in the hierarchy of Celestial Master Daoism.

The above discussion shows the diversity of interpretation of the character *min* (people 民) in Daoist eschatology of the Six Dynasties. Only two of our Daoist texts give us hints in understanding the meaning of character “*zhong* (seed 種)”. In a depiction of the creation of the world in the “*Dadao jialing jie*”, we can find the following passage:

大道者，包囊天地係養群生制御萬機者也。無形無像，混混沌沌，自然生百千萬種，非人所能名……易稱：有天地，然後有萬物。有萬物，然後有男女。有男女，然後有夫婦。有夫婦，然後有父子。父子者，欲係百姓，使種姓不絕耳。

The great Dao is that one which envelops and embraces Heaven and Earth, is [closely] related to and nourishes all living beings, and controls and manages the myriad organisms. It has no form or image, and is in a state of turbid chaos. It naturally gives birth to myriad species (or seeds 種 *zhong*). [They are so many] that humans cannot name them [all].... *The Book of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經) says that Heaven and Earth exist, and then there are the myriad things. The myriad things exist and then there are males

and females. Males and females exist and then there are husbands and wives. Husbands and wives exist and then there are fathers and sons. The purpose of [the existence of] fathers and sons is to continue (*xi* 係 = *xi* 繫) hundreds generations (or ordinary people) and cause various kinds of the populace (or seeds of families, i.e. descendants 種姓 *zhongxing*) not to become extinct. (12a-12b)

The meaning above does not appear in the author's exhortation to the ordinary members of the Celestial Master Daoism, as shown in the last paragraph. It is used to describe the members of parishes, without suggesting that they are responsible for reproducing humans. The *Yundu jieqi jing* also contains a passage explaining the character *zhong*:

炎明曰：「……一切眾生悉有道性，雖有其性而無其真，當運滅盡，其性如何？」曰：「滅盡運終，一切眾生普生慈心志存道場，當斯末劫，周時得道。唯有種子泡生而漂，終不死也。何以故？以重其種，故一切萬類亦留其種，終不普昇也。」

Yanming 炎明 asks, "...All living beings have the nature of the Dao (*daoxing* 道性). Although they have the nature, they do not have actual [attainment of the Dao]. When the destiny (i.e. age) [of the world] is destroyed and is exhausted, how will [the beings embracing] the nature be [in the end]?" [The Lingbao tianjun (靈寶天尊 Heavenly Lord of Lingbao)] answers, "[The process of] destruction will end and the doom will finish. All beings with kindness to all living beings and determined minds in maintaining ritual grounds and performing Daoist rituals (*daochang* 道場) will acquire the Dao during this last kalpa, in which time is complete (i.e. ends). Only seeds (*zhongzi* 種子) will be able to float [in the floods] and remain alive. They will be able to drift and will not die in the end. What is the reason [why they do not die]? They are valued because they are seeds (*zhong*). The seeds of all myriad species therefore have to remain and will not universally ascend [to heaven]." (14a)

This idea about the nature of the Dao within every being obviously comes from Buddhism.

Although we cannot know the whole picture of the original usage of the term "*zhongmin*" from the above fragments, a part of it can be inferred. *Zhong* contains the meaning of propagation of species, as shown in the above passages, but this meaning is seldom emphasized in the Daoist texts. The original content of *zhongmin* may have little connection with salvation. It may only

include a group of humans used as germs for reproduction after universal calamities. Their existence is not due to their devotion or virtues, and they can only stay in the mundane world and wait for recreation of the world. In Daoist messianic apocalypses in the Six Dynasties, *zhongmin* becomes the identity given to the people who can escape the distress of world-wide destruction and can enjoy lives in the age of great peace as the reward for their support of Daoism or being virtuous; the original function of seed people in continuing human generations is rarely mentioned. Perhaps propagation is not significant to the people who can enjoy longevity in the ideal world!

Part III: Features of eschatology of different schools

a) Celestial Master Daoism

In our texts from Tianshi Daoism, we can find that the development of this sect in the Six Dynasties deeply influenced its eschatology. In this period, the school underwent great transformation in its hierarchy and doctrines. In addition to resisting Buddhism and popular cults, it had to renew its restraints on its followers, who had been undisciplined since Zhang Lu submitted to Cao Cao. Hence, a number of Tianshi messianic texts directly reflect the crises the sect encountered and its response. The texts of the sect are not only sources of Daoist eschatology, but also provide abundant material for research on its history in this chaotic age. In the following, we shall discuss how the history of the sect affects the picture of the present world and the revelation of future utopia in our Tianshi works, and how the relation between the school and popular cults influences the eschatological views of the school. The Shangqing and Lingbao texts do not mirror contemporary history as much as the Tianshi texts do. Because the above crises did not carry the same significance to the Shangqing and Lingbao as to the Tianshi, or they did not endanger their authority as much as that of the Tianshi, the features of Tianshi

eschatology we are going to discuss do not become parts of the prophecies of the other two traditions.

The authors of our Tianshi scriptures view the establishment of the school in the Han Dynasty as the salvation activity of the Lord Lao in delivering humans from distress resulting from their corruption and their faith in heresies. Unfortunately, salvation schemes such as bestowing sacred books and appointing Zhang Daoling as the Celestial Master did not work. Failure in salvation attempts results in severe condemnation of the believers' weak faith and misbehavior, which becomes one of the major parts of accounts of the depraved world in these books. Hence, the revelation of the texts is because the attempts of salvation in the past failed. The "Dadao jialing jie" contains fabricated elements in its account of the Tianshi history. The age beginning from the Yellow Emperor (Huangdi 黃帝) is regarded as Lower Antiquity, which is full of worldly desires and spiritual impurity. The disorders emerging in every period are thought to result from disbelief in the Dao. Therefore, the Dao appears several times in order to reveal doctrines to sages. The author then states various historical and legendary affairs and declares them to have been done by the Lord Lao for saving humans from cosmic devastation: granting the *Taiping jing* to Gan Ji 干吉 in the late Zhou, composing the *Five-thousand-character Writing* (*Wuqian wen* 五千文, i.e. *Daode jing*), bestowing it on Yin Xi 尹喜, giving the *Huangshi zhi shu* 黃石之書 (Book of [revered Mr.] Yellow Stones) to Zhang Liang 張良, and assigning Zhang Daoling to be Celestial Master, forming a new image of the Newly Appeared Lord Lao (Xinchu Laojun 新出老君), and establishing twenty-four parishes. (13a-14b) Unfortunately, these attempts were not successful. Therefore, the uprising of the Yellow Turbans and various misfortunes claimed many lives. (14b-15a) The "Yangping zhi 陽平治 (Parish of Yangping)", collected in the *Jiaojie kejing*, is composed of the advice to libationers

and people of the parish (*zhimin* 治民) given by a Celestial Master.¹¹² We are told that the purpose of the Tianshi belief is to lead the people with potential to become immortals to ascend to heaven and be delivered (*shengdu* 升度). However, the believers are refractory and do not distinguish between right and wrong. (20b) Then we can read the following:

吾從太上老君周行八極，按行民間，選索種民，了不可得。百姓汝曹無有應人種者也。

I (the Celestial Master) follow the Lord Lao of the Grand Supreme in traveling around the remotest places in the eight directions (*baji* 八極) and touring regularly in the mundane world to order to select and find the seed people, but cannot find one [after the search is] completed. Among you, the populace, there is none who should be the seeds of humans (*renzhong* 人種). (20b)

The terminology and expressions here are common in Daoist eschatology. The Celestial Master continues the text by criticizing various forms of misconduct by his followers and the libationers. Both are told that they occupy themselves in fulfilling different worldly desires, and that their behavior is not in accord with the Dao. The libationers also spread teachings in their own ways. Therefore he warns that, of ten libationers and the office holders, three or four will be punished and die in the coming three years. (21a-22b) From this description, we can know that the Celestial Master has lost control of the whole parish. In the Tianshi dao eschatological texts, attacks on the members' depravity are often mixed with embellished hagiographies of Laozi, who devotes himself to salvation.

In addition to the picture of the present world, the prediction of the future utopian age in the Tianshi texts is influenced by the school's historical context. The *Laojun yinsong jie jing* was written by Kou Qianzhi in face of the uprisings, of which some leaders claimed to be Li Hong, the incarnation of Laozi. He clearly points out that the new age of the messiah, the Lord Lao,

¹¹² The parish of Yangping, located at the present Sichuan, was ruled by Zhang Daoling and his descendants. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua dao jiao da cidian*, p. 1678.

has not yet come.¹¹³ Then he denies that Li Hong or any mundane person has the forms taken by the Lord Lao, and confirms that the latter's true form will be shown when he appears in the world as a master of future age.¹¹⁴

但言老君當治，李弘應出，天下縱橫返逆者，眾稱名李弘，歲歲有之，其中精感鬼神，白日人見惑亂，萬民稱鬼神語，愚民信之，誑詐萬端，稱官設號，蟻聚人眾，壞亂土地，稱劉舉者甚多，稱李弘者亦復不少。

[Some people] however say that the Lord Lao should reign and Li Hong should appear. Among the treacherous people who sweep away the world, many claim to be Li Hong. [This rumor] appears every year. Among the people [who claim to be Li Hong], there are some who are skilled in communication with ghosts and spirits. People see them [communicate with ghosts and spirits] daytime and will be bewildered and misled. Myriad people speak the language of ghosts and spirits (i.e. become spirit mediums); innocent ordinary people believe in their words. [These wicked ones] deceive others with multitudinous [ways]. They claim to be officials and set up titles [of their own reigns]; they assemble innumerable people [in order to rise up] and destroy and disturb agriculture (lit. *tudi* 土地 lands). There are rather many people who claim to be Liu Ju; those who declare themselves to be Li Hong are also many. (4b)

Kou Qianzhi continues this by saying that Laozi disdains ruling the mundane world, as mentioned above. (5a-5b) Then he lists every auspicious sign and deity that appears when the Lord Lao descends to the world. By exaggerated depiction of them, Kou emphasizes again that the age of the Lord Lao has not come yet and the present age that is full of deceptions and treacheries certainly is not the right time. (5b-6a) As mentioned above, Kou does not deny the advent of the messiah. The idea of denying Li Hong as the messiah or as an incarnation of Laozi does not affect the other Daoist eschatological texts in the Six Dynasties. In the *Santian neijie jing*, a Tianshi text written in the Liu Song Dynasty, about the same time as the Northern Wei Dynasty (425-451), it is said that Laozi comes to the world and becomes the teachers of

¹¹³ "My (Lord Lao) time has not come yet; I (lit. body) should not be seen in the world. 吾數未至，不應見身於世。" (3a)

¹¹⁴ For the numbers of the uprisings and their historical records, read Tang Yongtong's "'Yaozei' Li Hong" & Wang Ming's "Nongmin qiyi suo cheng de li hong he mile".

emperors in different reigns in various images. Among them, Laozi once becomes Li Hong with the byname Jiu Yang 九陽. (Chapter 1, 3a-3b) The *Laojun bianhua wuji jing*, another Tianshi text probably produced in the late Six Dynasties, contains a similar idea.¹¹⁵ The text tells us that in the Former Han Dynasty Laozi takes “*mu zi* (木子, the split characters for Li 李)” as his surname and “*kou gong* (口弓, the split characters for Hong 弘)” as his taboo name. It also says that Laozi in this incarnation assists the Three Celestial Masters in establishing twenty-four parishes in Shu 蜀 prefecture (the present Sichuan). (2a) The original identity of the Holy Ruler is seldom discussed.

The members of the Tianshi school are promised that they can return to their native parishes (*benzhi* 本治) in the future ideal age; this promise cannot be found in the Shangqing and Lingbao texts. The *Niqing guiliu* writes:

天下散民中有孝順忠信可書六十日鬼名……鬼不敢干。天下太平，送還本治。

Among the scattered people (*sanmin* 散民) in the world, those who are filially responsible, obedient, loyal, and trustworthy can write the names of ghosts of the sixty days....¹¹⁶ Ghosts dare not then disturb them. They will be sent back to their own parishes when the world is in peace. (Chapter 1, 9a)

祭酒領錄，條列上天，有勞顯報，位登神仙……百姓樂善，得爲善人，時還本鄉，以安國土。

[During the age of great peace] libationers will receive registers and [their names] will be listed in entries in heaven. Their accomplishments will be made public and returned, and they will be ranked as immortals.... People who find pleasure in doing good deeds can become moral people. During that time they will be able to return to their native places and settle down in the country. (Chapter 6, 1b)

In his reformation of the Tianshi school, Kou Qianzhi proposed discarding the names of twenty-four parishes in writing memorials (*biaozhang* 表章), which can be traced back to the Tianshi

¹¹⁵ Ren Jiyu, ed., *Daozang tiyao*, p. 943.

¹¹⁶ In lunar calendar, every sixty days designated with the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches form a cycle.

theocracy in Sichuan; the memorials guarantee the believers will be able to return to their native parishes in the time of great peace. (*Laojun yinsong jie jing*, 19b-20a) We do not know the format of these old memorials is, but we can be certain from Kou's remarks that in the Age of Southern Empires and Northern Empires the ordinary members of the school commonly longed for returning to their native lands. Therefore, in the prophecies of future utopia structured by the school, they are promised that they can do so. It is very likely that they are those who accompanied Zhang Daoling to Changan from Sichuan. Not having the members who had experienced migration, the authors of Shangqing and Lingbao Daoism do not mention this item in their messianic promises.

The relation between Celestial Master Daoism and popular cults (*wu* 巫) was complicated in the Han and Six Dynasties: on one hand, the former battled against the latter and considered the latter evil and excessive (*yinsi* 淫祀); on the other hand the former absorbed some elements of the latter.¹¹⁷ In the Tianshi eschatological picture, we can discover that the deities worshipped in the popular cults become devastating forces. They are blamed for all sicknesses and calamities. However, they have been brought under control. They become subordinates of gods in the divine hierarchy and they are responsible for carrying out missions given by gods at the end of the world. The Celestial Masters have authority to dispatch ghosts after they have been granted orthodox teachings and power from the Lord Lao. The *Gao Zhao Sheng koujue* tells us that,

今九天俱立，使六天出治，隨世分佈……三天悲怒……使太上老君絕世，更立正一盟威之道，太上開化，不以吾輕賤小人，受吾真法，爲百鬼主者，使開二十四治，以應二十四氣……上官命嚴，命放六天故氣，三官百鬼以大兵大病虎狼蛇虺百毒，驅除天下。

¹¹⁷ Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, pp. 62-65. Rolf A. Stein, "Religious Taoism and Popular Religion from the Second to Seventh Centuries", *Facets of Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religion*, ed. Holmes Welch & Anna Seidel (London: Yale University, 1979), p. 53-81.

Today all the Nine Heavens (*jiu tian* 九天) are established (i.e. prosper); they make [the stale *qi* of] the Six Heavens (*liu tian* 六天) appear and reign [the world]; it spreads throughout the world.... The Three Heavens (*san tian* 三天) are extremely annoyed....¹¹⁸ They made the Lord Lao of Grand Superiority vanish in the world. He also established the Way of Orthodox Unity of [resting on] the Authority of the Pledge (Zhengyi mengwei zhi dao 正一盟威之道). The Supreme High [Laozi] established conversion [by Daoist teachings] and disregarded my being a mediocre person of unimportance and of humble status. He taught me perfect doctrines, [designated] me as the master of myriad ghosts, and made me establish twenty-four parishes in accord with the *qi* of the twenty-four parishes.... The orders of superior officers (?) are severe. They order that the stale *qi* of the Six Heavens should be released. Myriad ghosts of the Three Officers repel [the wicked of] the world with great weapons, serious illnesses, tigers, wolves, snakes, *hui* (虺, a kind of poisonous snake), and a myriad toxic [animals]. (1a-1b)

The author of the *Nüqing guilu* regards all the spirits of all beings, which include mountains, tigers, and spirits of humans with untimely and sudden death as ghosts (*gui* 鬼); they are the objects of worship in popular cults.¹¹⁹ The mediums of popular cults are also viewed as deviant forces.¹²⁰ In the text, they are subordinates of the Celestial Master Zhang Daoling, and are totally kept under restraint by him.

天師稽首，敢承先王之道，制民敕鬼，今當以盟威正一之氣女青鬼律，役使天下邪魅妖妖，助道興化。

[After] the Celestial Master kowtowed, he dared to succeed to the way of the Ancient Emperor (the Yellow Emperor?) for restricting people and controlling ghosts. Now he applies the *qi* of Orthodox Unity of [resting on] the Authority of the Pledge (Zhengyi mengwei zhi qi 正一盟威之氣) and the *Nüqing guilu* to order devils (*xie* 邪), monsters

¹¹⁸ *Jiutian* are spirits worshipped by shamans. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 82. The law Zhang Daoling received from the Lord Lao in A.D. 165 was regarded as that of the Three Heavens, representing goodness; the *qi* of the Six Heavens were stale and evil. It was associated with the popular cults and was responsible for the decadence of the world. The Master and his successors had responsibility of repelling this stale *qi*. Rolf A. Stein, "Religious Taoism and Popular Religion from the Second to Seventh Centuries", p. 59. Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, p. 55.

¹¹⁹ These spirits embrace dead generals.

¹²⁰ They are called "the ghosts of sorcerers and unjust spirit mediums (lit. *daoshi* 道士, the term of *daoshi* here does not mean Daoist masters, but only means the practitioners of popular cults). 巫師不正道士之鬼" (Chapter 4, 1b)

(*mei* 魅), demons (*yao* 妖), and the ones with untimely deaths¹²¹ to assist the Dao in aiding transformation [of people to goodness]. (Chapter 4, 1a)

In the eschatology of the Tianshi school, people are persuaded to convert to its teaching with the threat of these harmful forces and are motivated by the desire to attain the identity of “seed people”. Chapter 6 of the scripture begins with the Celestial Master’s criticism of human misbehavior and statement of advantage of conversion. Then it continues with the following passage:

今遣五主，各領萬鬼，分布天下，誅除凶惡。被誅不得稱狂，察之不得妄救。鬼若濫誤謬加善人，主者解釋，祐而護之。鬼若不去，嚴加收治。

[The Celestial Master] now orders the five masters [of five directions] to lead myriad ghosts and scatter them throughout the world in order to kill and destroy the ferocious and the wicked.¹²² Those who are killed should not claim to be treated unjustly.¹²³ If other people discover [that the ferocious and the wicked are killed], they should not save them rashly. If ghosts impose [punishments] on the virtuous recklessly, mistakenly, and presumptuously, the masters will release, help, and protect them. If the ghosts do not go away, [the masters] will severely detain and punish them. (Chapter 6, 2a)

Although the ghosts do not have high rank, they bring people great threats. Nearly every creature and thing can turn to a harmful spirit. However, from the view of the Tianshi school, the popular cults are still thought to be rivals instead of complements. At the end of chapter 5, the text provides fourteen codes, six of which are for banning popular cults.

……不得祠祭故氣。不得指鬼呼神……不得兩心不正。不得妄傳鬼教……不得與鬼通同……不得入俗勝真。

...Do not worship stale *qi* (*guqi* 故氣); do not point at ghosts and call them gods.... Do not be of two minds about [learning the Dao and believe] unjust [faiths].... Do not recklessly spread teachings about ghosts (*guijiao* 鬼教). Do not communicate with

¹²¹ Literally, it is a character with “*dai* 歹” on the left and “*yang* 羊” on the right, the meaning of which I cannot find. Perhaps it is a misprint for “*yao* 妖”.

¹²² The masters of the five directions are responsible for spreading various sicknesses such as heart diseases and carbuncles. (2a-2b)

¹²³ Literally, the character is *kuang* 狂 and the term *chengkuang* 稱狂 should be translated into “give arrogant tones of voice”. But it seems that *kuang* is a misprint for *wang* 枉 (injustice).

ghosts and join up with them.... Do not take part in vulgar [faiths] and [think that they] overpower the true [teachings] (i.e. Daoism). (Chapter 5, 4b)

The elements of popular cults are absorbed in the Tianshi eschatology probably because people fear the disasters ghosts bring more than the punishments gods impose, as the text says!

天道以鬼助神施氣，人畏鬼不畏神，詭託名於彼，自號其位，人間鬼存無神，百其語言。

The Heavenly Way uses ghosts for assisting gods in spreading *qi*; humans are afraid of ghosts but do not revere gods. [The former] deceive [humans] and use the names of the latter; they appoint themselves to the positions they name. In [minds of people in] the mundane world, ghosts count (lit. *cun* 存) but gods are not respected (lit. *wu* 無 do not exist). [Humans' wild] interpretations [of ghost worship] are various. (Chapter 1, 8b-9a)

In a prominent Lingbao text, the *Lingbao wuliang duren shangpin miaojing* 靈寶無量度人上品妙經 (Wondrous scripture of the upper chapters on limitless salvation, a Lingbao [scripture], fasc. 1; hereafter "the *Shangpin miaojing*"), there is a list of names of the demon kings of the five directions.¹²⁴ (10a) Unlike the five masters in the *Nüqing huilu*, as cited above, the five kings in this Lingbao work are responsible for "severely controlling the Divine Elder of Northern Fengdou (Beifeng shengong 北酆神公, i.e. the minister of purgatory) 嚴攝北酆神公" "They are ordered to drive away all inauspicious [beings]. 受命普掃不祥" (10a) They apparently do not spread calamities so as to purify the human world. Shangqing Daoism also maintains a similar attitude towards the gods of popular cults.¹²⁵ These two schools were not as closely related to popular cults as the Tianshi school was in the Six Dynasties; hence, their scriptures

¹²⁴ The entire scripture consists of sixty-one chapters (*juan* 卷), which are compiled in fascicles 1 to 13 of the *Daoist Canon*; except for the first one, the remaining chapters were not composed until after the Tang. Therefore, I shall not discuss them. Michel Strickmann, "The Longest Taoist Scripture", *History of Religions*, 17(1978): 332. Stephen R. Bokenkamp has translated the one in fascicle 87, which is nearly identical to chapter 1. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, *Early Daoist Scriptures*, pp. 405-432. John Lagerway does not provide a translation of the title in his introduction to the text. My translation is based on Stephen R. Bokenkamp's. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 229-230.

¹²⁵ Michel Strickmann, "On the Alchemy of T'ao Hung-ching", *Facets of Taoism: Essays in Chinese Religion*, ed. Holmes Welch & Anna Seidel (London: Yale University, 1979), p. 180-181.

written in this time do not include such descriptions of destruction, in which the spirits of popular cults are ordered to drive away the depraved.

b) The Shangqing School

The *Daojun lieji* and the *Shangqing santian zhengfa jing* 上清三天正法經 (Shangqing scripture on orthodox doctrines of the three heavens), collected in the *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 (The bookcase of the clouds with the seven labels) (1004-1007) of the Song Dynasty, are the materials discussed when modern scholars study the apocalyptic notions of the Shangqing school in the Six Dynasties.¹²⁶ Although the *Shangqing santian zhengfa jing* provides abundant sources of the notions of great kalpas (*dajie* 大劫) and intermediate kalpas (*xiaojie* 小劫), we are not certain of the time of its publication and therefore the text will not be mentioned here.¹²⁷ In addition to the *Daojun lieji*, the scope of our discussion will include some other Shangqing texts.

One will be disappointed to find that the Shangqing texts, except for the *Daojun lieji*, do not contain elaborate depictions of universal ruin as do the writings of the other two schools. In the

¹²⁶ Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, pp. 160-161. Anna K. Seidel, "The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-tzu and Li Hung", pp. 243-244. Anna Seidel, "Taoist Messianism", pp. 171-172. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Time after Time: Taoist Apocalyptic History and the Founding of T'ang Dynasty", pp. 68-71.

¹²⁷ The text, which contains detailed description of universal ruin, is very much unlike other Shangqing texts. This feature of the texts will be shown in the following discussion. Hence, the *Shangqing Santian Zhengfa jing* was probably not composed in the Six Dynasties. The same can be said about a fragment quoted in chapter 3 of the *Yunji qiqian*. The book contains a list of various paradises, one of which is the "Heaven of Chosen People (*zhongmin tian* 種民天)". Anna K. Seidel thinks that its emergence slows the change of Daoist notion about the utopia; the rebels' perfect state becomes a heaven. It is accessible only to those who transcend their earthly lives as immortals and it is governed by the Holy Ruler as emperor. Anna K. Seidel, "The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-tzu and Li Hung", pp. 243-244. Zhang Junfang, the author of the *Yunji qiqian*, neither mentions the title of the text from which the fragment comes nor the time it is produced. I cannot be sure if it is written in the Six Dynasties; the idea of the heaven does not appear in the Shangqing texts I read. The notions of various heavens (Thirty-six Heavens 三十六天 or Thirty-two Heavens 三十二天) might have been formed in the late Six Dynasties. The *Shangpin miaojing* contains the names of the Thirty-two Heavens (chapter 1, 8a-9b), but they are not annotated by Yan Dong 嚴東 of fifth century. They could have been added to the scripture during the mid-sixth century. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 230. Among the heavens in the text, there is none named *zhongmin tian*; therefore, the idea of this heaven might have been formed after the Six Dynasties.

Shangqing texts I have read, there are only a few sentences directly related to eschatology.¹²⁸

Here is the longest passage I can find:

定真玉錄，自然之文，出乎無始，終乎無終，大劫一改，得道之真，積功累德，必佩斯文，名入其中，身受其氣，是爲真真，不可毀矣。大劫未周，其間小劫，功德怠者，身名俱退，必失斯文，亦不值仙。功進德怠，得文無失，保爲種人，不退不減。若功德智慧輕重不同，二十四萬之外，又有十二萬人，合三十六萬，一劫之所成也。功德微薄，不入三十六萬，便後劫爲期耳。

The *Dingzhen yulu* (Jade register of unchangeable perfection 定真玉錄), [a piece of] natural writing, was created in the non-beginning time and ends in the endless time [of the universe]. Once great kalpas pass (lit. *gai* 改), [adepts] will obtain the perfection of the Dao. [If they] accumulate merits and pile up virtues, [they will certainly be able to] wear this scripture [at their waists as a talisman] (i.e. *Dingzhen yulu*). Then their names will be written [in the Register] and their bodies will receive the *qi* [of the Register]. [This scripture] is really true, so it should not be destroyed. During the time when great kalpas have not finished, there are intermediate kalpas. People who are lazy in [accumulating merits] will regress in bodily [purification] and reputation. They will certainly lose this text and are not worthy to be immortals. Those who make progress in [accumulating] merits and perform excellence in virtue can keep the text without loss. They are guaranteed to be seed people. They do not regress [in doing merits and virtue]. Since (lit. *ruo* 若) their merits and wisdom vary in degree, there will be an extra [quota of] one hundred and twenty thousand people after [the original one of] two hundred and forty thousand people is set. In total, there are three hundred and sixty thousand people. All

¹²⁸ The Shangqing texts are: *Huangtian shangqing jinque dijun lingshu ziwen shangqing* 皇天上清金闕帝君靈書紫文上經 (High scripture [written in] efficacious books and purple script on the Lord Emperor of Shangqing Imperial Palace [dwelling in] the imperial heaven, fasc. 342; hereafter "the *Ziwen shangqing*"), *Sanyuan yujian sanyuan bujing*, *Dongzhen taishang shenhu yinwen* 洞真太上神虎隱文 (Secret scripture of the divine tiger [taught by] the Most High One, a Dongzhen scripture, fasc. 1031; hereafter "the *Shenhu yinwen*"), *Shangqing danjing daojing yindi bashu jing* 上清丹景道精隱地八術經 (The Shangqing scripture of the Dao essence of cinnabar effulgence [containing] the eight methods for hiding in the earth, fasc. 1039; hereafter "the *Yindi bashu jing*"), *Dingzhen yulu*, *Sanyuan bujing*, *Dongzhen taishang shenhu yujing* 洞真太上神虎玉經 (Jade scripture of divine tiger [taught by] the Most High One, a Dongzhen scripture, fasc. 1031; hereafter "the *Shenhu yujing*"). *Jing* 景 is the name of eight spirits (*bajing* 八景; Eight Effulgences) dwelling in bodies of adepts. For an introduction to the eight spirits, read Michel Strickmann, "On the Alchemy of T'ao Hung-ching", pp. 173-174. Isabelle Robinet translates the *Ziwen shangqing* into *Marvelous scripture in purple characters of the Lord Emperor of the Golden Gate* and does not provide the translation of the *Shenhu yujing*. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, pp. 159-160, pp. 195-196.

are the ones who will have completed [their cultivation] in a kalpa.¹²⁹ People whose merits and virtues are scanty cannot enter this group of three hundred and sixty thousand people and have to wait for a later kalpa. (*Dingzhen yulu*, 5a-5b)

The Shangqing texts do not provide statements of cosmic misfortunes, and the authors do not persuade their readers to carry out the practices in the texts by amplifying forthcoming universal destruction. Sentences about messianic prediction can still be found, but they are much less than those in the Tianshi and Lingbao works.

However, Shangqing texts still enrich the Daoist eschatology in the Six Dynasties with their accounts of the Holy Ruler. The authors of the texts usually state long lines of transmission of scriptures by various gods so as to show that the existence of the texts can be traced back to revered sources in ancient times.¹³⁰ Among them, the Holy Ruler can be found. He receives magic symbols or sacred writing from the Heavenly Emperor of Grand Subtlety (Taiwei tiandi 太微天帝 or Taiwei dijun 太微帝君), or the Lord Lao, directly or indirectly, and teaches it to the Green Lad Lord (Qingtong jun 青童君).¹³¹ In the lines of the transmission mentioned in the texts, we can learn about the Holy Emperor.

太上大道君曰：李山淵德合七聖，爲金闕之主，方當參謁十天，理命億兆，定中元於玄機，制陰陽以齊首，拔真擢領，封河召海，斷任死生，把執天威¹³²，馘滅六天，總罰三官，罰執北帝……

The Great Lord Dao of High Superiority (i.e. the Lord Lao) says, “The virtue of Li Shanyuan 李山淵¹³³ is in harmony with that of seven sages (*qisheng* 七聖 ?) (i.e. is highly commended as the sages) and is the Master of Imperial Palace. He takes responsibility for [granting] audiences [to the transcendental beings] in the Ten Heavens

¹²⁹ Kalpa here means a period from the creation of the cosmos to its ruin, unlike great kalpas and intermediate kalpas, which are mentioned earlier and mean disasters.

¹³⁰ The same can be said about other Shangqing texts. Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, p. 126.

¹³¹ *Ziwen shangqing*, 1a-1b. *Shenhu yinwen*, 4b. *Yindi bashu jing*, chapter 2. 1a-1b.

¹³² The original character in the version I read is *mie* 滅 without the three dot strokes on the left. It is a misprint for *wei* 威.

¹³³ This is one of the Holy Emperor's bynames. *Daojun lieji*, 1a.

(Shitian 十天)¹³⁴ and dealing with [the affairs of] the myriad people. He fixes the *zhongyuan* 中元 (medieval prime)¹³⁵ according to mysterious principles (*xuanji* 玄機)¹³⁶. He establishes the *yin* and the *yang* so as to harmonize [myriad beings in] the beginning [of the world]. He chooses Perfect [Men] and promotes prominent ones; he enfeoffes rivers and can summon [the creatures in] the sea. He judges and is responsible for [decisions about] life and death; he controls heavenly might. [He is in charge of] destroying (lit. *guo mie* 馘滅, the former character means cutting off left ears of enemies during warfare) the Six Heavens. He takes overall responsibility to punish the Three Officers, and can punish and catch the Northern Emperor [of Fengdu]....” (*Shenhu yinwen*, 4b)

After introducing the Holy Emperor, the author continues by stating that the Lord Lao and the Emperor of Taiwei teach him divine power and the Perfect Magic Symbol of the Golden Tiger (*jinhu zhenfu* 金虎真符) for destroying demons and leading gods. (5a) In the picture of the transmission of magic or sacred message, the Holy Emperor is described as the one granted power by high gods, and is ranked among the deities transmitting sacred message to followers in mundane world.

The picture of Shangqing eschatology is not complete if our studies do not include the *Daojun lieji*. The work is dedicated to the Holy Emperor with elaborate embellishments and flowery expressions. His image is fully formed; it is very much unlike the vague ones in other Daoist texts, which only mention that his name and the time of his age will arrive. We shall discover that the purpose of the whole text is to demonstrate the path to immortality, and the author devotes his main attention to the process of how one can turn into an immortal by diligent

¹³⁴ The author gives no explanation of what Ten Heavens are. It is likely that the *shitian* are ten cavern-heavens (*dongtian* 洞天) located at ten mountains, which are regarded as dwellings of immortals. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 1199. Tao Hongjing 陶弘景 divides the other world into seven levels. The sixth one is cavern-heavens in which terrestrial immortals and postulants for perfection dwell. Michel Strickmann, “On the Alchemy of T’ao Hung-ching”, p. 180.

¹³⁵ The meaning of *zhongyuan* here is uncertain. It may refer to the earth since the Three Primes (*sanyuan* 三元) are interpreted as Heaven, Earth, and Water. The term should be interpreted as a natural object because it should be correspond to the term *yinyang* 陰陽 (yin and yang) in the next sentence.

¹³⁶ Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wen hua cidian*, p. 88.

cultivation with single-mindedness. The description of the Holy Emperor's role in the future world, as quoted in the above discussion, is to display the role of remarkable glory he gains in reward for his cultivation. From this point of view, we can then understand why the author writes in detail the process of the Holy Emperor's cultivation, which includes using various Shangqing practices and receiving a number of scriptures of the school from high deities, and why he highlights the Emperor's single-mindedness in penetrating the truth.¹³⁷ After the author shows the prominent role of the Holy Emperor in the future world on 6a, he writes in a tone of explanation:

蓋聖君之學道也，備嘗艱苦。承師塗炭，履飢寒之切，已蹈水火之輾軋，寫私念於五親，累經天帝之大試，皆心堅正任，死生必期，萬邪不能犯其神，千妖不能惑其真。爾乃精誠玄暢，靈神合應，故上皇告訣，天尊授道。

It is because the Holy Ruler has undergone all difficulties and sufferings when he studied the Dao. He received [teachings from] masters [after] he endured great sufferings. He experienced keen pain of hunger and cold, and went through obstacles of floods and fires. He gave up (lit. *xie* 寫 = *she* 捨 ?) his personal sentiment towards his five close relations (*wuqin* 五親).¹³⁸ He repeatedly received serious trials from heavenly sovereigns, and [the results of all of which] showed that his mind was firm and his righteousness [could enable him to assume celestial] duties. [He understood] that the time of birth and death were certainly fixed; [only by attainment of immortality one could transcend them.] Myriad demons could not violate his [inner] spirit; one thousand monsters could not bewilder his perfect [nature]. He (lit. *er* 爾) was absolutely sincere and [his comprehension of] the mystery [of the Dao] was unimpeded. Potent gods united with and responded to him. Therefore, the High Sovereign (Tianhuang 天皇) told him [holy] secrets, and the Heavenly Honorable One (Tianjun 天尊) taught him the Dao. (6a)¹³⁹

¹³⁷ We can find, for example, the *Dadong zhenjing* 大洞真經 (The perfect scripture of great cavern), the *Shangqing jinqing lingshu ziwen* 上清金闕靈書紫文 (The efficacious writing written in purple characters of Shangqing imperial palace), and the *Taishang yinshu* 太上隱書 (The hidden writing [taught by] the Most High [Lord Lao]). For more, read Ren Jiyu, ed., *Daozang tiyao*, p. 327.

¹³⁸ I cannot find the meaning of *wuqin*. It should be a synonym of *wulun* 五倫, which means four kinds of relationship between monarchs and officers, fathers and sons, husbands and wives, elder brothers and younger brothers, and the relation among friends.

¹³⁹ The description of how the Holy Ruler devoted himself to studying the Dao can also be found on 2a.

The process of his attainment of Dao “cannot be recorded in detail on documents of bamboo slips with brushes in ink. 非復簡札翰墨所能縷載。” The author hence now “writes one thousandth [of the story of his cultivation] and, sketchily and briefly notes his traces in order to transmit them to [those with immortal] bones and marks, those who should attain immortality. 粗書千分之一，略舉標跡以傳骨相、當仙之子。” The names of people who see this scripture will be reported to the deities in the Heaven of Grand Purity, and they will be promoted to ministers (*qing* 卿). (6a-6b) This section can be considered the main propose of the work; therefore, the author not only states the names of the Emperor’s representative, who is responsible for spreading the text, and of his subordinates, but he also mentions the sacred texts containing divine secrets and the physical marks that can show if people are destined for immortality. These contents occupy the text from p. 6b until the last page. The final goals of religious practice, which are complete liberation from worldly limitations and absolute freedom in the other world with a glorious position in it, are also promoted in the text.¹⁴⁰

Although the Holy Emperor is granted [the right to] govern the populace and take care of myriad living things below,¹⁴¹ he [travels] freely the Golden Imperial Palace on his own. He locates his palace and office at the [Region of] Shangqing (Grand Purity), and settles his body in the Great Void (Taixu 太虛).¹⁴² He travels unrestrainedly to the Five Cities (Wucheng 五城)¹⁴³; he examines and manages the Ten Heavens [so people in] hundreds of regions [experience] peace. (5b)

聖君雖封掌兆民，下眄萬生，故自逍遙金闕，宮館上清，棲形太虛，遨遊五城，察照十天，百方太平也。

¹⁴⁰ For the other world existence Daoist adepts longed for in the Six Dynasties, see Hu Fuchen, *Weijin shenxian daojiao – Baopuzi neipian yanjiu*, pp. 124-130.

¹⁴¹ “Gu 故” is omitted here because the character is meaningless.

¹⁴² *Taixu* means either the primordial state of *qi* or the vast universe. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua daojiao da cidian*, p. 450. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 85.

¹⁴³ Wucheng are the cities established by the Yellow Emperor in Kunlan for receiving immortals. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua daojiao da cidian*, p. 1588.

We can conclude that the author bases this text on the myth of this future master spread in the Six Dynasties, and makes Li Hong an example in order to demonstrate how a human becomes a transcendental being.¹⁴⁴ His reign in the future utopia and his transcendental liberation are rewards for diligent practice. Holding positions in the divine bureaucracy in the future world becomes attraction for converting to the Shangqing tradition. It seems that the longing for immortality overrides the concern for universal calamities in the text. Escape from the destruction of the world becomes subordinate to transforming from an ordinary human into a transcendental being.

Although the accounts of eschatology in the Shangqing tradition are much less detailed than those of other two schools, it would be unconvincing for us to assert that eschatology in the Six Dynasties did not deeply affect the members of the school, mainly aristocrats, or that it did not stimulate their concern as much as that of the members of other schools.¹⁴⁵ The *Zhengao* 真誥 (Declarations by perfect men, fasc. 637-640) compiled by Tao Hongjing contains messages given by the Lady Wei (魏夫人 or Wei Huachuan 魏華存) and the gods of the Shangqing to Yang Xi 楊羲. The first eighteen chapters of the version collected in the *Daozang* are considered to have been written in the Jin Dynasty.¹⁴⁶ Chapter 6, which is entitled “Fuzhu xu 服朮敘 (Prolegomena on the ingestion of atractylis)”, tells us of the aristocrats’ pursuit of immortality under the pressure of imminent misfortunes.¹⁴⁷

旦頃以來，殺氣蔽天，惡煙弭景，邪魔橫起，百疾雜臻，或風寒關結，或流腫種痼，不期而禍，意外而病生者，比日而來集。夫朮氣則式遏鬼律，吐煙則鎮折邪

¹⁴⁴ In the Wei and Jin Dynasties, transcendental beings were no longer regarded as superhuman, but ordinary men who attained longevity through their cultivation. Hu Fuchen, *Weijin shenxian daojiao – Baopuzi neipian yanjiu*, pp. 136-138.

¹⁴⁵ Both the Shangqing and Lingbao Daoism were composed of southern aristocrats: therefore, the former played an important role in the formation of the latter. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, “Sources of the Ling-pao Scriptures”, *Mélanges Chinois et Bouddhiques*, 1980(21) (Michel Strickmann ed., *Tantric and Taoist Studies in Honour of R. A. Stein*, vol. 2), pp. 442-449. Michel Strickmann, “On the Alchemy of T’ao Hung-ching”, p. 187-188.

¹⁴⁶ Chen Guofu 陳國符, *Daozang yuanliu kao* 道藏流源考 (Examination of origins and developments of the *Daozang*) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1963), vol. 1, p7.

¹⁴⁷ The translation of the title is taken from Michel Strickmann, “On the Alchemy of T’ao Hung-ching”, p. 154.

節，強內攝魂，益血生腦，逐惡致真，守精衛命，餐其餌則靈柔四敷，榮輸輕盈，服其丸散則百病瘳除，五藏含液，所以長遠視久而更明也。古人名之爲山精之赤，山薑之精。《太上導仙銘》曰：「子欲長生當服山精之子，欲輕翔當服山薑。」此之謂也，我非謂諸物皆當減朮爲益也。且朮氣之用是今時所要，末世多疾宜當服御耳。夫道雖內足猶畏外事之禍，形有外充者亦或中崩之弊。張單偏致殆，可鑒乎？朮亦可以長生永壽，二可以卻萬魔之枉疾。我見山林隱逸得服此道，千年八百，比肩於五岳矣。

During only a very short time (*dangqing* 旦頃), the vital force of slaughter has covered the sky, and a vicious vapor has destroyed the landscape. Evil demons turbulently appear; a hundred kinds of sicknesses are mixed and imminent. [People suffer from] chills and arthritis (*kuanjie* 關結 = *kuanjie* 關節), or they suffer from infectious tumors and various diseases. [Misfortunes] unexpectedly gather. Those who are sick accidentally come and gather every day. [If one ingests] the *qi* of atractylis (*zhu* 朮), [one can] diminish and stop nutrition for ghosts (*guijin* 鬼津?). [If one] gives up mundane life (*tuyin* 吐煙; *yin* = *yinhuo* 煙火 mundane lives), [one can] suppress and reduce evil restraints (*xiejie* 邪節). [Ingestion of atractylis] can strengthen inner [organs], nourish souls, benefit blood, promote (lit. *sheng* 生) [suppleness of] minds, drive away demons, lead [to people's attainment of] perfection, safeguard essences, and protect lives. Eating the food [made of atractylis] can make [a state of] suppleness and flexibility spread [throughout bodies], advance circulation (*rongshu* 榮輸?), and [cause] nimbleness. [If one] ingests the pills and powder [made of atractylis], one can recover from and remove hundreds of diseases, and one's five organs (*wuzang* 五藏) will contain fluid (*hanye* 含液).¹⁴⁸ [The path to] longevity (*changyuan shijiu* 長遠視久 = *changshang jiushi* 長生久視) therefore is clearer. People in ancient time call it (atractylis) "Crimson [Substance] of Mountain Essence (*Shanjing zhi chi* 山精之赤)" or "Mountain-ginger Essence (*Shanjiang zhi jing* 山薑之精)".¹⁴⁹ The *Taishang dao-xian ming* 太上導仙銘 (Inscription about leading to immortality [taught by] the Most High One) says, "If you want longevity, you should ingest the Seeds of Mountain Essence (*Shanjing zhizi* 山精之子). If you want to be so light and soar [above], you should ingest Mountain Ginger (*Shanjiang* 山薑)." ¹⁵⁰ These

¹⁴⁸ The meaning of *hanye* is not clear here; *ye* may mean *yuye* 玉液 (jade fluid), fluid of kidneys.

¹⁴⁹ There is a kind of food in Daoist dietetics called "*shanjing bing* 山精餅 (mountain-essence cake)", the ingredient of which is atractylis. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua dao-jiao da cidian*, p. 920.

¹⁵⁰ I cannot find any information about the *Taishang dao-xian ming*; it is probably lost now.

are the atractylis we are talking about. I do not mean that all other things are not as good as (*jian* 減) atractylis in benefiting [bodies]. Besides, the use of the *qi* of atractylis is necessary in the present. There are many diseases during the last kalpa; we should ingest and manage (*yu* 御) [the *qi*]. Although the Dao can complete one's internal [organs], one still needs to worry about accidents outside [of one's body]. [Being judged] outwardly, one's appearance may [show that one is] energetic, but one may suffer from faults resulting in untimely death. Zhang Chan 張單 was partial toward [perfection of appearance only, but his inner frailty] caused him death.¹⁵¹ Why do we not learn our lessons? [Ingesting] atractylis can also lead to longevity and everlasting existence. Besides, it can remove the unjust sicknesses spread by myriads of demons. I find that since hermits living in mountains and forests ingest [atractylis in] this way, they can live for a thousand and eight hundred years. Their lives can be as long as the Five Mountains.¹⁵² (3b-4b)

This passage shows that the pursuit of immortality is motivated by the fear of disasters happening in the last age. Michel Strickmann thinks that the Shangqing members believed this eschatology because they were limited in promotion to office after the Jin government was firmly established in the south. When the northerners held the positions with the real power, the southerners could come to prominence only in religious movements and learning and technological expertise, especially in the *Rites* (*Liji* 禮記), the *Yijing*, portents, and calendars.¹⁵³

Shangqing followers commonly had the expectation of being reborn in the reign of the Holy Ruler. The fragments revealed by the Lord Wang of the Western City (Xicheng wangjun 西城王君) and the Lady of Purple Beginning (Ziyuan furen 紫元夫人) in chapter 6 of the *Zhengao*

¹⁵¹ Zhang Chan should be a Daoist who died from unsuccessful alchemy in the Jin Dynasty or before, but I cannot find any information about him.

¹⁵² The five mountains (*wuyue* 五嶽) are Taishan 泰山, Huashan 華山, Hengshan 衡山, Hengshan 恒山, and Songshan 嵩山.

¹⁵³ Michel Strickmann, "On the Alchemy of T'ao Hung-ching", p. 186-187.

contain references to the aspiration to be born in his reign.¹⁵⁴ Both are about the difficulty in studying the Dao. Here is the one told by the Lady of Purple Beginning:

天下有五難：貧窮惠施難也；豪富學道難也；制命不死難也；得見洞經難也；生值壬辰後聖世難也。

There are five difficulties in the world. It is difficult to benefit others when one is poor. It is difficult to study the Dao when one is rich. It is difficult to control one's own life and not to die. It is difficult to obtain and read cavern scriptures (*dongjing* 洞經).¹⁵⁵ It is difficult to be born in and meet the world of the Latter[-day] Holy [Ruler] in the year of *renchen*. (8a)

The one revealed by the Lord Wang contains similar ideas. In a sequence of difficulties that one will encounter in the world, being alive in the age of great peace during the *renchen* year is considered to be most valuable and most difficult to attain.

既得值有道之君生學道之家，有慈仁善心難也。善心既發，信道德長生者難也。既信道德長生，值太平壬辰之運爲難也，可不勗哉？

Although one encounters a just ruler and is born in a family who studies the Dao, it is difficult for one to be kind and generous. Although one's good mind appears, it is difficult for one to believe in the Dao and inner virtue and [to pursue] longevity. Although one believes in the Dao and inner virtue and [pursues] longevity, it is difficult for one to encounter the destiny of great peace in the *renchen* year. Why do we not prompt [each other to pursue immortality so that we can live in the age of great peace]? (6b-7a)

The wish is also clearly expressed in the *Daojun lieji*. That is why the author of that text encourages believers in Shangqing cultivation by saying repeatedly that they can be promoted to be divine officers in the age of the Holy Ruler.

¹⁵⁴ The Lord Wang is Wang Yuanyou 王遠遊, the disciple of the Lord of Green Lad. See the *Daojun lieji*. I cannot find any information about the Lady of Purple Beginning.

¹⁵⁵ Cavern scriptures (*dongjing*) possibly mean the Daoist texts of the three categories. Lu Xiujing 陸修靜 divided Daoist scriptures into the Three Caverns (*sandong* 三洞) in the fifth century, each of which represented one of the leading schools of Daoism at that time. The Cavern of Perfection (*dongzhen*) contains the Shangqing scriptures; the Cavern of Mystery (*dongxuan*) contains the Lingbao texts. The Cavern of Spirit contains the talismans and explanations of the Three Sovereigns (*sanhuang* 三皇), to which the Tianshi texts belong. Livia Kohn, *The Taoist Experience: an Anthology* (New York: State University of New York, 1993), p. 65-66.

Facing crises in the last age, Shangqing followers were prone to seek personal salvation, withdraw from mundane world, and lead the lives of recluses. This attitude is shown in the following fragment.

太虛真人曰：飯凡人百不如飯一善人，飯善人千不如飯一學道者。寒栖山林者益當以爲意。

The Perfect Man of Grand Mystery (Taixu zhenren 太虛真人) says, “Bestowing rice on a hundred ordinary people is not as good as bestowing rice on a moral person. Bestowing rice on a thousand moral people is not as good as bestowing rice on a Daoist student.”

People who dwell in mountains and forests (i.e. hermits) frugally should pay more attention to this principle. (*Zhengao*, chapter 6, 8a)

Chapter 14 of the *Zhengao* contains introductions of a number of recluses. For example, Ping Zhongjie 平仲節, a Daoist learner, led the life of a recluse and became a disciple of the Lord Song 宋君 on Mount Cang 蒼山 because the north fell to barbarian tribes. (9a)

名山五嶽中學道者數百萬人……而長在五嶽名山者乃亦不可稱數，或爲仙官使掌名山者亦復有數千。

Daoist students in the famous Five Mountains amount to several millions.... Besides, people who have lived in these famous Five Mountains for a long time are also innumerable. There are also several thousands of people who are divine officers and rule famous mountains. (10a-10b)

These recluses are much different from the believers of other two schools. As we have discussed above, the purpose of a number of Tianshi texts in the Six Dynasties is to urge sect members to lead lives of virtue and to restore the authority of Celestial Masters. The Lingbao tradition insisted the universal salvation and attacked those in pursuit of personal salvation. They could only attain immortality of a lower rank. The Shangqing school emphasized technical and mystical practices carried out on an individual basis. The participation of the believer in salvation was completely private, without the intervention of any other humans.¹⁵⁶ This attitude

¹⁵⁶ Isabelle Robinet, *Taoism: Growth of a Religion*, pp. 130, 153-155. Hu Fuchen, *Weijin shenxian daojiao – Baopuzi neipian yanjiu*, p. 61.

may be the reason why Shangqing eschatology does not include much exhortation to people asking them to convert to the school, and nor much explanation of universal ruin. The eschatology of the school is directly addressed to the methods of escaping cosmic misfortunes, not to the reasons for disorders in the last kalpa, which were already common in the Six Dynasties.

c) The Lingbao School

Like the Tianshi school, the Lingbao school provides abundant sources for the Six-Dynasty eschatology. We can discover that some notable characteristics of the Lingbao eschatological scriptures distinguish them from those of other two schools. Unlike those of the Tianshi, which are mingled with accounts of the historical context of the school, the Lingbao messianic predictions contain a lot of fabrications about the past.¹⁵⁷ Besides, there is strong influence from Buddhism and the theory of five phases.¹⁵⁸

The Lingbao scriptures contain many eschatological descriptions like those of the Tianshi tradition. They are, however, distinctive because the origins of the scriptures are usually emphasized and related to the remote past. This feature makes the Lingbao messianic prophecies unique in style. It can be generally concluded that the Tianshi eschatology is mingled with accounts of its history, although the latter is often exaggerated and mixed with some imaginary elements, as shown in the discussion above. Therefore, the Tianshi texts are often used as sources for studies of the history of the school. In their scriptures, comments are made on the contemporary world; corruption exists in the present age in contrast with the moral world in the past. Our Lingbao texts, however, contain numerous myths and embellishments that

¹⁵⁷ I shall include the Tianshi and Lingbao tradition only when talking this point because the Shangqing scriptures do not provide much material on eschatology, as I mentioned above.

¹⁵⁸ I mainly consult the works of Erik Zürcher and Stephen R. Bokenkamp in my discussion of the Buddhist influence on the Lingbao scriptures. Erik Zürcher, "Buddhist Influence on Early Taoism – a Survey of Scriptural Evidence", *T'oung Pao* 66 (1980):85-147. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Sources of the Ling-pao Scriptures", pp. 434-486.

exaggerate the origin of the texts, which are traced back to the formation of the cosmos and have existed since then. For instance, the author of the *Jiutian shengshen zhangjing* says:

九天生神章乃三洞飛玄之氣，三合成音，結成靈文，混合百神隱韻內名，生氣結形。

The *Jiutian shangshen zhang* 九天生神章 (Stanzas of the life spirits of the nine heavens) is the *qi* of flying mystery (*feixuan zhiqi* 飛玄之氣) [coming from] the Three Caverns (*sandong* 三洞). The three [*qi*] combine and form music; they produce efficacious writing [that is the *Jiutian shangshen zhang*]. [The text] is mingled with hidden rhyme of a hundred divinities and their secret names; it produces *qi* and generates the forms of [the myriad things]. (2b-3a)

The Three Caverns here are the Great Cavern (*dadong* 大洞), Cavernous Mystery (*dongxuan* 洞玄), and Cavernous Spirit (*dongshen* 洞神). The meanings of these terms are not given in the text, but they are connected to the three *qi* (the personified forms: Tianbao jun 天寶君 [Heavenly Precious Lord], Lingbao jun 靈寶君 [Spiritual Precious Lord], and Shenbao jun 神寶君 [Divine Precious Lord]) that generate the universe.¹⁵⁹ (1a-1b) Some Lingbao texts are thought to exist or to have been produced during the ages of high deities. For example, the *Yundu jieqi jing* is considered to have been written by the Heavenly Honorable One of Lingbao (Lingbao tianjun 靈寶天尊) during the first year of Chiming (Crimson Brightness). (1b-2b) The texts are traced back to the formation of the universe or the time of supreme deities so that they can be dignified and thought to embody great power. This style influences the contents of the Lingbao eschatology. In order to exaggerate the divine might of the texts, the authors often link them with a legendary age in which people can enjoy peace and happiness. In the *Yundu jieqi jing*, we read:

¹⁵⁹ The author just mentions, "The Tianbao jun is a venerable deity of the Great Cavern.... The Lingbao jun is a venerable deity of the Cavernous Mystery.... The Shenbao is a venerable deity of the Cavernous Spirit 天寶君者，則大洞之尊神... 靈寶君者，則洞玄之尊神... 神寶者，則洞神之尊神。". (1a-1b) The three caverns may be the names of dwellings of these divinities.

天尊告曰：此土男女無辜，壽命長遠，而無中夭者。吾昔在赤明元年於此土中撰天景大混自然文字，以火鍊其字形，流精水池，故有字形國人，男女三年一詣火池身形，即飲其水腹中，三年調節，故人命壽長遠以此……從今以去天運當促，真文還收太芒上京紫微宮中，其後人民短促，五濁躁競，眾邪野道，競來擾亂，國主貪暴，兵革妄興，疫氣流行，助其威虐，人民疾病，死亡狼籍，是男是女，任命生死，不以道理。

The Heavenly Honorable One of Lingbao tells [Yanming], “Males and females in this land are innocent and live long without early death. I wrote the Natural Writing of Heavenly Scenes and Great Chaos (*tianjing dahun ziran wenzi* 天景大混自然文字) in this land in the first year of Chiming, refined the characters with fire, and [formed] the Water Pool of Flowing Essence (*liu jing shuichi* 流精水池). Therefore, there are people of the Nation of Forms and Characters (*Zixing guo* 字形國). Males and females [there] go to the fire pool (= *liu jing shuichi*?) every three years, bathe their bodies, immediately drink the water [of the pool, and hence make their] bellies [full of the water]. The water regulates [their bodies once every] three years; therefore, human lives can be so long (three hundred and sixty thousand years old).... From the present on, heavenly destiny should be imminent and the perfect writing should be returned to the palaces of *Taimang* (Great Awn 太芒), *Shangjing* (High Capital 上京), and *Ziwei* (Purple Profundity).¹⁶⁰ After this, human lives will shorten and the five impurities (*wuzhuo* 五濁) will rush to compete (i.e. appear in a hurry).¹⁶¹ Various wicked [thoughts] and unorthodox teachings will rush to disturb [people]. Emperors will be greedy and cruel; warfare will be recklessly stirred up. The *qi* of epidemics will circulate and help them (ghosts?) to threaten and abuse [people]. People will be sick and [the bodies of] dead [people] will be disorderly scattered. No matter whether one is male or female, one's birth and death will be decided by destiny and will not be judged by the order of the Dao....” (1b-2a)

¹⁶⁰ I cannot find the meanings of *Taimang* and *Shangjing*, but they should be the names of constellations, like the *Ziwei*.

¹⁶¹ *Wuzhuo* are five kinds weaknesses of humans and hindrances they encounter: 1) impurity of worry (*fanna zhuo* 煩惱濁): humans have the shortcomings of wrong desire (*tan* 貪), hate (*chen* 嗔), and ignorance (*chi* 痴); 2) impurity of views (*jianzhuo* 見濁): humans distinguish between things and cling to their own views, or they hold heretical views; 3) impurity of life (*mingzhuo* 命濁): humans' lifespan is limited; 4) impurity of birth and death (*shengsi zhuo* 生死濁): everyone has to experience birth and death; 5) impurity of destiny (*shiyun zhuo* 時運濁): every one has to endure calamities during the last age. Hu Fuchen, ed. *Zhonghua dao jiao da ci dian*, p. 472. Zhongguo dao jiao xiehui 中國道教協會 (Association of Chinese Daoism) & Suzhou dao jiao xiehui 蘇州道教協會 (Association of Suzhou Daoism), ed., *Dao jiao da ci dian* 道教大辭典 (Great Daoist dictionary) (Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 1994), p. 223.

The existence of rare scenes and animals in the land is also due to the divine power of the sacred text. (2a) It is striking that a very similar story can be found in the *Taishang zhutian lingshu duming miaojing* 太上諸天靈書度命妙經 (The miraculous books of salvation in the numinous writing of the numerous heavens [spoken by] the Most High One, fasc. 26; hereafter “the *Duming miaojing*”).¹⁶² For this text, however, there are five imaginary lands instead of one.¹⁶³ People in these lands can also enjoy longevity and happy lives until the Heavenly Honorable One of Primal Beginning leaves, and the perfect writing created in the remote past is hidden.¹⁶⁴

吾過去後，真文隱藏，運度當促，五濁躁競，萬惡並至，感念來生，生在其中，甘心履罪，展轉五道，長苦八難，更相殘害，憂惱切身，不見經法，不遭聖文，任命生死，甚可哀傷！

After I leave, the perfect writing will be hidden. The doom that every one has to go through will be imminent; the five impurities will rush to compete. A myriad devils will arrive at the same time. [People] desire to [be reborn in] the coming lives. Being alive in it (i.e. the time of doom), one has to resign oneself to experiencing sins, passing through the five paths (*wudao* 五道), and [enduring] lasting sufferings of the eight difficulties (*banan* 八難).¹⁶⁵ People will also cruelly harm each other; worry presses on them. They

¹⁶² My translation of the title is based on Ursula-Angelika Cedzich's, which is *Most high miraculous book of salvation in the numinous writing of the numerous heavens*. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 246.

¹⁶³ Although the emperors of the lands are called the Lord Emperors of Five Elders (Wulao dijun 五老帝君, 10a) and four of them are located in four directions, it is not clearly mentioned if the remaining one is the land of the center. (1a-3a) Besides, the other four lands are introduced in dialogue between the Heavenly Honorable One of Primal Beginning and the four emperors of the four directions, whose images are formed according to the notion of five phases. The description of the remaining one, however, is made by the Heavenly Honorable One and the Lord Dao of Grand Supremacy, who does not belong to the five emperors of five phases.

¹⁶⁴ In addition to the contents of the stories of the two texts, some details of descriptions of imagined lands are similar. In the *Duming miaojing*, there are trees in the eastern land, which will produce spiritual music of cavern tones (*dongzhang lingyin* 洞章靈音) when being blown by the wind. Besides, when phoenixes in nine colors sing, people will kowtow and bow to the direction from which the songs come (lit. *liyin* 禮音 worship songs). (3b) In the southern land, if people visit the Fire-refinement Pool (*huolian zhichi* 火煉之池) every three years in order to refine their bodies, they will not then be old. (5a) In the *Yundu jieqi jing*, we can also find divine trees and phoenixes. The Natural Writing of Heavenly Scenes and Great Chaos is carved on the former, and the latter can produce unusual songs. When people hear the songs, they will look in the direction of the songs and worship the phoenixes (*wangyin er li* 望音而禮). (1a) There is a fire pool: after people bathe in it, they can enjoy longevity, as shown in above quotation. (1b-2a)

¹⁶⁵ The term *wudao* originate in a Buddhist term *liudao* (六道), which means the six paths of sentient existences. *Wudao* in Daoism are five ways of transmigration which one arrives according to one's karma: Heavenly realm (*tiandao* 天道), human realm (*rendao* 人道), purgatory realm (*diyu dao* 地獄道), hungry-ghost realm (*egui dao* 餓鬼道), and animal realm (*chusheng dao* 畜生道). The *asura* realm (*axiuluo dao* 阿修羅道) in *liudao* is omitted

will neither see [orthodox] scriptures and teachings nor meet sacred writing; their birth and death will be decided by fate. They are much to be pitied! (2a)

In the both texts, we are told that due to his compassion, the supreme god produces sacred texts. People who practice and recite the text will be delivered from calamities.¹⁶⁶ Although such an account cannot be found in other two Lingbao scriptures, the *Taishang dongxuan lingbao zhenwen yaojie shangjing* 太上洞玄靈寶真文要解上經 (The supreme scripture with essential explanations [which is written in] perfect writing [and spoken by] the Most High One, a Dongzhen scripture of the Lingbao school, fasc. 167; hereafter “the *Yaojie shangjing*”) and the *Shangpin miaojing*, they contain the similar notion that the universe is maintained by a hallowed text.¹⁶⁷

天地長存不傾者，元始命五老上真以靈寶真文封於五嶽之洞，以安神鎮靈，制命河源，致洪泉不涌，大災不行。

Heaven and earth can exist long and do not fall because [the Heavenly Honorable One of] Primal Beginning orders the Five Elders of High Perfection (Wulao shangzhen 五老上真) to put the Lingbao perfect writing in the caverns of the Five Mountains and seal them in order to pacify deities and appease (*zhen* 鎮 = *zhenfu* 鎮撫) spirits and to control and order [gods of] sources of rivers. Therefore, flooding springs will not arise and great calamities will not occur. (*Yaojie shangjing*, 1a-1b)

赤明開圖，運度自然，元始安鎮，敷落五篇，赤書玉字，八威龍文，保制劫運，使天長存……

[The reign of] Chiming begins (lit. *kaitu* 開圖 = extend boundary); the destiny revolves [in its] natural [course and the end of the world does not come]. [It is because the Heavenly Honorable One of] Primal Beginning stabilizes [it]. [He] elaborates and writes

here. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua dao jiao da cidian*, p. 471. *Banan* is also taken from Buddhism and means eight difficult conditions to learn the Dao. Unlike those in Buddhism, the eight conditions have varied meanings. For details, read Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua dao jiao da cidian*, p. 474.

¹⁶⁶ In order to highlight the divine power of the text, the authors of both scriptures tell us first that its existence maintains longevity and people's blissful lives, and it will be hidden with the supreme deity. Then they write that the same text will be bestowed by the supreme deity and appear again in order to save people from the corrupt world of the future.

¹⁶⁷ My translation is based on Ursula-Angelika Cedzich's, which is *Supreme scripture with essential explanations on the most high Lingbao writs*. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 251.

five pieces of red texts in jade characters (*chishu yuzhi* 赤書玉字), [which is] dragon writing, mighty in all the eight [directions]. It can protect [the world] and control kalpic destiny, and can make heaven long exist.... (*Shangpin miaojing*, 10b-11a)

We can infer some general differences between the eschatology of the Lingbao and that of the Tianshi traditions.¹⁶⁸ The texts of both these schools contain descriptions of a corrupt age and misfortunes people encounter, and the contents of these themes in their scriptures are similar. However, as shown above, Lingbao eschatological narrative is provided with completely imaginary context, whereas the Tianshi eschatology contains the history of the school, which is usually embellished with fictitious accounts. This is probably because the Lingbao Daoism was newly established in the Six Dynasties and lacked a history of its tradition as did Tianshi Daoism. In addition, misbehavior, accompanied with universal catastrophes, is claimed to happen in the future instead of already existing in the present, as we find in Tianshi scriptures. The contemporary age in the Lingbao scriptures does not impress readers with human immorality and evil as much as it does in the Tianshi works. Besides, human corruption in the Lingbao scriptures originates in the departure of supreme deities and divine scriptures. Viewing from this angle, we can infer that humans do not bear full responsibility for causing cosmic disasters!

Buddhist influence in messianic prophecy of the school is another feature of the Lingbao eschatology. Although we can find Buddhist borrowings in the scriptures of other two schools, they do not appear so frequently than they do in the Lingbao works. Lingbao Daoism was exposed to strong Buddhist influence in its formative age. It came into being as a reaction against the other major southern Daoist movement, that of the Shangqing revelations.¹⁶⁹ In our

¹⁶⁸ We can find exceptions in Lingbao works. For example, the author of the *Ziran miaojing* does not mention that the creation and ruin of the universe are produced by supreme deity.

¹⁶⁹ Erik Zürcher has made a good point in explaining why the impact of Buddhism on Shangqing scriptures is less noticeable. He thinks that Shangqing Daoism was the reaction of the southern aristocracy against the invaders of the northern aristocrats and their ideology, which included Buddhism. However, he does not mention why the Tianshi tradition contains little Buddhist influence. The school was active in the north until it migrated to the south with the imperial house and many official families after Luoyang 洛陽 was captured in 311CE. The north was the region where Buddhism and the Tianshi Daoism were active, but it is strange that the former did not much affect the latter.

Lingbao works, we can find a lot of Buddhist terminology and read that some of scriptures are revealed in sermons given by the Yuanshi tianzun in assemblies of various gods and immortals. This is reminiscent of Mahāyāna sūtras, which usually contain a stereotyped opening and closing formula.¹⁷⁰ In the sūtras, the audience is large and is composed of bodhisttvas, supernatural beings of all classes, kings, and religious leaders. Sermons begin with a question of a person from the audience, and take the form of a dialogue. The whole texts are full of embellishing features such as miraculous happenings of all kinds and extreme numbers. They also include some versified portions (*gāthās* 偈). After sermons, the authors usually state the immediate effects obtained by some people. We can find some of these features in the Lingbao works. For example, the *Duming miaojing* is thought to most resemble Buddhist texts among Lingbao scriptures produced in the age of southern and northern empires.¹⁷¹ It begins with a sermon given by the Yuanshi tianzun (Heavenly Honorable One of Primal Beginning) to the Great Sages of various heavens in the House of Long Happiness (Changle she 長樂舍). A part of the text is written in dialogue between the Heavenly Honorable One and various gods such as the Most High Lord of the Dao (Taishang daojun 太上道君) and the Emperors of the Four Directions.¹⁷² The closing sentences resemble those found in Buddhist sūtras.¹⁷³ In the whole text, there are many Buddhist terms such as *sushi yinyuan* 宿世因緣 (causes accumulated from former existences), *jile* 極樂 (utmost bliss), and *shifang* 十方 (ten directions). In addition, the

Most of the Daoist works Erik Zürcher studied for his "Buddhist Influence on Early Taoism – a Survey of Scriptural Evidence" belong to the Lingbao tradition. (pp. 144-147)

¹⁷⁰ The opening formula is usually "Thus I have heard (如是我聞)". The closing formula is not standardized but it usually tells us that the audience rejoiced after listening to the sermon and left. For details, read Erik Zürcher's work, pp. 99-100 & note 16.

¹⁷¹ Erik Zürcher, "Buddhist Influence on Early Taoism – a Survey of Scriptural Evidence", p. 101.

¹⁷² The first part (1a-9b) concerns reasons why people in the lands of the Emperors and the Most High Lord of the Dao can enjoy happiness and longevity, and the questions of the Heavenly Honorable One to these deities. The second part (10a-19b) is composed of a sermon of the Heavenly Honorable One on miracles the text brings, a narrative of his saving believers, and petitions addressed to the deities.

¹⁷³ "The Most High Lord of the Dao, the great sages from ten directions, and the honorable gods of ultimate perfection bowed [to the Heavenly Honorable One] at the same time, received [his] instructions, and left. 太上道君、十方大聖、至真尊神一時稽首，受命而去。" (19b)

descriptions of the lands presided over by the five deities are influenced by those of Amitābha's world.¹⁷⁴

The borrowings from Buddhism in Lingbao eschatology are superficial. They just polish the scriptures and do not play an important role in forming Daoist attitude towards cosmic ruin and salvation. For example, the term *sushi yinyuan* in the *Duming miaojing* is not interpreted as karmic causes accumulated from one's former existences, but is used to describe the kindness of the Heavenly Honorable One in granting the *Lingbao zhenwen* 靈寶真文 (Perfect writ of Lingbao) to support people's happy lives. (2a-4a) The idea that the scripture is a sacred object is not taken from Buddhism.¹⁷⁵ In order to avoid misfortunes, one should value the scripture and recite the petitions in it.¹⁷⁶ The depictions of the lands are enriched by that of the Amitābha's world, but they are formed mainly according to the traditional five-phase theory. Therefore, we can find the Fire-refinement Pool (*huolian zhi chi* 火鍊之池 5a), the Jade-Section Golden Pool (*yuzhang jinzhang* 玉章金池 6b), and the Cold Pool (*hanchi* 寒池 8b) in the southern, western, and northern lands accordingly, the Trees of Green Forest (*qinglin zhishu* 青林之樹 3b) in the eastern land, and other ornaments based on the five phases. The space concept of Buddhism *shifang* is not as prominent as the notion of five phases, which we shall discuss next, and the author uses it only when referring to the innumerable audience which gathers for listening to the Heavenly Honorable One's sermon. The most noticeable impact from Buddhism in Lingbao eschatology is found in expression; therefore, messianic prophecies of the Lingbao are often revealed in dialogue between supreme deities and other gods or Daoist learners. However, the Lingbao views on causes of universal disasters and the paths to salvation are still in accord with the Daoist tradition and doctrines of other Daoist schools.

¹⁷⁴ Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Sources of the Ling-pao Scriptures", pp. 472-473.

¹⁷⁵ Erik Zürcher, "Buddhist Influence on Early Taoism – a Survey of Scriptural Evidence", p. 105.

¹⁷⁶ This idea can also be found in other Lingbao works such as the *Shangpin miaojing* and the *Ziran miaojing*.

One piece of evidence that demonstrates the predominant influence of Chinese native tradition on Lingbao eschatology is the common adoption of Five-Emperor faith in our Lingbao scriptures, which originates in the five-phases concept. Stephen R. Bokenkamp points out that the Han five-phases concept deeply influences Lingbao scriptures. This can be traced in the *Taishang lingbao wufu xu* 太上靈寶五符序 (The preface of the five Lingbao talismans [spoken by] the Most High One, fasc. 183), which is viewed as the ancestor of Lingbao works.¹⁷⁷ Although the entire work does not exclusively deal with incantations dedicated to the Five Emperors, we can still read in it methods of cultivation and religious practices formed with the basis of the cult for them.¹⁷⁸ In our Lingbao scriptures, a great deal of religious rituals and cultivation practices dedicated to the Emperors is recorded and considered to be able to deliver people during the time of universal destruction. The Five Emperors are neither thought to be the monarchs of the future world, as I mentioned above, nor described as messengers who bring the prophecy of the universal end, but they are usually associated with salvation carried out in the present age. The religious practices dedicated to them are revealed by the supreme deity, Yuanzhi tianzun or Lingbao tianzun. In some Lingbao works, the whole world and heaven are

¹⁷⁷ Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Sources of the Ling-pao Scriptures", p. 454. Although the whole text is entitled "preface (*zu* 序)", only the section from 1a to 11b is preface. Ren Jiyu, ed., *Daozang tiyao*, p. 288. Although the Lingbao tradition arose only a few decades later than the Shangqing and the concept of Five Phases has long history, it is unknown why the latter is not influenced so strongly by the concept as was former.

¹⁷⁸ For example, we can find methods of ingesting the *qi* of five directions (chapter 1, 11b-14b), the talismans given by the Emperors for leading lives of recluses (chapter 3, 8b-11b), and meditation on the Emperors (chapter 1, 16b-18b). An account of images of Five Emperors is also given on 14b in chapter 1. Stephen R. Bokenkamp thinks that the cult for the Emperors and the five-phase notion affecting the Lingbao works is those fully developed in the Han dynasty. However, one will discover that the five-phase concept in our Lingbao scriptures does not strictly adhere to the one developed in the Han. Except for the *Taishang lingbao wufu xu*, no mention of the five historical monarchs (Yellow Emperor 黃帝, Zhuanxu 顓頊, Emperor Ku 帝嚳, Emperor Yao 帝堯, and Emperor Shun 帝舜) and linking them with the Emperors can be found in our texts. Besides, the authors of the texts pay no attention to the sequence of five phases in theory of reciprocal production or reciprocal destruction, which is used by Han scholars in order to claim the Han Empire's orthodox role in continuing the reign of the Zhou Dynasty. Confucians after Dong Zhongshu 董仲舒 generally thought that the Han Dynasty continued government of the Zhou, not the Qin. The *Duming miaojing* is one of the examples showing that the Five-phase concept in the Lingbao works is primitive. See endnote 3 on p. 60. Qian Mu 錢穆, "Ping Gu Jiegang 'wude zhongshi shuo xia de zhengzhi he lishi' 評顧頡剛五德終始說下的政治和歷史 (Comment on Gu Jiegang's 'Politics and History under Doctrines of Five-Virtue [Cycle of] Beginnings and Ends')", *Gushi bian* 古史辯 (Debates on ancient history), ed. Gu Jiegang (Hong Kong: Taiping shuju, 1963), vol. 5, pp. 617-630. Stephen R. Bokenkamp, "Sources of the Ling-pao Scriptures", pp. 452-454.

divided into the spheres of the five directions governed by the Five Emperors, who are subordinates of the supreme god. Worship and practices for them and their inferiors can protect believers from all disasters; therefore, incantations or sacred texts of the five directions coexist with the same importance, and believers need to recite them all. For example, in the *Yaojie shangjing*, the divine incantations for the Five Heavens can bring one the same blessing, enable one to attain immortality, and drive away evil forces and misfortunes. (6a-7a) In some Lingbao scriptures, the five-phases cosmology enriches the description of misfortunes. Disasters are described according to directions, seasons, and elements of the five phases. In chapter 2 of the *Zhenwen tianshu jing*, we read five successive periods of time in which the Five Emperors rule and their *qi* dominate. During the period of the East Emperor, nine primal ones (*jiuyuan* 九元) in the Nine Qi of Green Heaven (*Jiuqi qingtian* 九氣青天) operate. The *qi* interchange with each other; one measure (*yidu* 一度) consists of twelve times of interchange. After three thousand and three hundred measures and nine thousand and nine hundred measures, intermediate disasters of *bailiu* and great disasters of *bailiu* appear accordingly.¹⁷⁹ Green *qi* prospers and yellow *qi* is eroded. During the former, harvests are good but people suffer hunger; during the latter, grains are destroyed. Mention of harvests is made here because plants are a substance similar to wood, the element of the east. Depictions of phenomena of calamities created on the basis of elements of other three directions can also be found in the accounts of the periods of other Emperors. For example, during the little *yangjiu* and little *bailiu* in the time of South Emperor, fire emerges in soil and even gold and jade are burned. During the great *yangjiu* and great *bailiu*, fire disappears, and floods come. (4b-7b) Believers therefore should recite appropriate sacred texts and apply the incantations for five directions in which misfortunes happen. The “Zhenwen chishu yujue 真文赤書玉訣 (Five pieces of the perfect writing in red

¹⁷⁹ For explanations of the *bailiu* and *yangjiu*, see pp. 30-32 of this thesis.

script about jade knack)” in the *Yujue miaojing* are used for asking the deities of directions to control floods and demons in their spheres. (Chapter 1, 8a-16a) In another set of sacred secrets, lights have to be lit and silk fabrics with an incantation (18a-18b) written on them have to be burned; the quantity of them needs to accord with the direction in which misfortunes appear. For instance, we can read the following for disasters happening in the east:

假令東方，則然九燈，亦可九十燈，亦可九百燈，用金龍一兩一枚。災在東方，用青繒九十尺，九日九夜。

If [calamities in] the east, [one need to] light nine lamps, or ninety lamps, or nine hundred lamps, and use a golden dragon of one *liang* 兩 (an unit of weight) [and station it in the east]. If disasters appear in the east, use nine-foot green silk fabric [and burn it for] nine days and nights. (18b)

The “Yuanshi wulao zhenling qiuxian rangzai chishu yujue 元始五老鎮靈求仙禳災赤書玉訣 (Jade secret [written in] red writing and [spoken by] the five elders of primal beginning on subduing spirits, requesting immortality, and preventing misfortunes)” includes instructions to apply the “Chishu zhenwen 赤書真文 (Perfect writing written in red script)” for the five directions.¹⁸⁰ Believers have to write the appropriate perfect script and put it in the correct direction if disasters appear in a certain direction and in certain time. For example, we read the following for repressing disasters in the east:

國土東方及春三月有災，欲使東鄉安鎮，當赤書青石上，鎮東方九日，其災自滅，凶逆自消，一方仁人… …

[If] there are misfortunes in the east of the nation or in the three months of the spring and one wants to soothe [people] and repress [misfortunes] in eastern villages, one should write [the perfect script for the east] in red on a green rock and [make it] garrison the east (i.e. place it in the east) for nine days. The misfortunes will naturally be destroyed. The

¹⁸⁰ The “Chishu zhenwen” for Five Emperors mentioned in the instructions are not included; they should not be the incantation called the “Lingbao bawei zhence 靈寶八威神策 (Lingbao divine essay of might in eight [directions])”, which is placed prior to it, because the latter is only written in one paragraph and is not addressed to the Emperors separately. All sacred texts that have the characters “yujue 玉訣 (jade secret)” in their titles and are stated in the same chapter of the scripture contain incantations chanted by believers.

fierce and the traitorous will naturally disappear. Good people will [emerge] in this direction. (Chapter 1, 26b)

One should note that the five-phase notion in our Lingbao works is diverse without becoming rigid. Although five heavens ruled by the five deities are mentioned in the *Duming miaojing* (1a-9b), we can only find four texts for the four directions in the “Zhutian lingshu duming pinzhang 諸天靈書度命品章 (Essay composed of chapters about salvation, written in efficacious script of various heavens)” at the end of the scripture. (15b-18b) Only Thirty-two Heavens of four directions and Thirty-two Emperors appear in the *Shangpin miaojing*, but there is no mention of heavens of the center. (Chapter 1, 7b-10b) Due to the deep influence of the five-phase concept on the Lingbao works, rituals and religious practices for preventing and removing calamities became varied and complicated. This feature is worth our attention when we study Lingbao eschatology.

Conclusion

Abundant works about universal miseries and messianic prophecy in Daoist tradition in the Six Dynasties were brought into being because of the contemporary context of chaotic society and potential disunity. We can summarize from above discussion the following features of Daoist eschatology in this period.

The authors' focus is laid on religious practices, for both universal salvation and personal deliverance; these practices should be carried out in the present world instead of in an ideal utopia in the future; therefore, the accounts of the present are much more diverse than those of the future. Discussions of religious practices, criteria for judging if one should be saved, and deities whom one should worship for salvation vary in different scriptures. Since the Daoist authors are eager to persuade people to be aware of universal ruin, they make various explanations of misfortunes, which do not completely harmonize with each other. Periodic destruction of the cosmos, departure of holy scriptures, and human corruption are thought to be

reasons for calamities in some Daoist scriptures although the existence of the first two implies that the universal destruction is destined and denies the importance of human causes. Exhortations about morality are not convincing if the first two also appear. Although the narrations of a future utopia are much fewer and are still vague, their contents are consistent among different Daoist schools. Kou Qianzhi denies that Li Hong will be the master of future age, but he does not reject the messianic apocalypse. Besides, views about Li Hong as the messiah do not only appear in Tianshi Daoism, some members of which were ordinary people, but they were also held by the aristocrats of the Lingbao and the Shangqing. Therefore, we can conclude that Daoism in the Six Dynasties formed its own tradition in eschatology and it was widely accepted by different classes of society among different schools.¹⁸¹

As shown in the above discussion, expressions in the Six-Dynasty eschatology vary in different schools. In the Tianshi Daoism, messianic predictions are usually mingled with exhortations of Celestial Masters and the Lord Lao to the members of the school. Shangqing writers do not provide much description of universal ruin, but desire for immortality and religious practices with this purpose that they focus in the texts can be regarded as reflections of their worry about contemporary crises and of their hope to withdraw from the mundane world. Lingbao eschatology is often expressed in revelations from supreme deities to their subordinates, and is influenced by Buddhism and five-phases theory. However, one cannot find distinct differences in the eschatological views held by different schools. This feature will be more noticeable when we look at the *Shenzhou jing*¹⁸², which is viewed as a text of the Daoism of the

¹⁸¹ The use of the term *zhongmin* and the mention of the messiah Li Hong become the criteria for judging the dates of Daoist works. One reason why Wang Ming thinks that the first chapter of the present version of the *Taiping jing* was added later is the use of the term *zhongmin* in the chapter. This term was created after the Han. Wang Ming, "Lun taiping jing chao jiabu zhi wei", p. 213. Whether there is a mention of Li Hong in chapter 1 and 5 in the *Shenzhou jing* becomes an important key to judging the date they were written. Ōfuchi Ninji considers them to be composed before the Liu Song Dynasty because only these two chapters in the present version of the *Daozang* do not contain references to Li Hong, but Christine Mollier finds they do contain in the Dunhuang manuscripts. John Lagerway, "Early Taoist Apocalypse", *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 6 (1991-1992):214.

¹⁸² E. Zürcher, Anna K. Seidel, and Li Feng-mao have studied this scripture in their articles when discussing Daoist apocalyptic works. E. Zürcher, "Eschatology and Messianism in Early Chinese Buddhism", *Leyden Studies in*

Li Family (Lijia Dao 李家道), the teachings of which circulated in the Jiangnan region in the Six Dynasties.¹⁸³ From this scripture, we can discover that the eschatological beliefs held by this popular Daoist sect are consistent with those of the above three schools. Like other eschatological texts of the three schools, the *Shenzhou jing* also includes repeated exhortation about morality, and reference to the advent of the messiah Li Hong and the imminent elimination of the corrupt by demons and ghosts. The Lord Lao promises in this scripture that he will send various deities to the mundane world and order them to protect humans from disasters (Chapter 7, 3a-3b); the Holy Ruler also dispatches Wang Yuanyou and twenty-four Perfect Men to the world for spreading sacred messages in the *Daojun lieji*, as mentioned above. The number of people who will attain immortality is mentioned in the *Shenzhou jing* (Chapter 3, 8b, & Chapter 4, 9b), just like what we find in other Daoist works. The *Shenzhou jing* does not provide unique elements of Daoist explanations of cosmic destruction and salvation. The distinction between it and other Daoist eschatological works does not appear in its contents, but is in its close relation to popular cults and its simple expression. For example, like those in the Tianshi tradition, in the *Shenzhou jing*, spirits who are worshipped in popular cults are viewed as subordinates of the Lord Lao and are ordered to eliminate the wicked. However, Nü Wa 女媧 and Zhu Rong 祝融 are thought to belong to the Great Ghosts of Five Supernatural Powers (Wutong dagui 五通大鬼) who are composed of emperors and prime ministers since the time of Fu Xi 伏羲 (Chapter 7, 5b-6a). Zhu Rong is regarded as one of the Five Emperors in Daoism, and Nü Wa is never thought

Sinology, ed. W. L. Idema (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1981), p. 36. E. Zürcher, "'Prince Moonlight' – Messianism and Eschatology in Early Medieval Chinese Buddhism", *T'oung Pao* 1982(68), p. 3. Anna K. Seidel, "The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-tzu and Li Hung", pp.237-240. Li Fengmao 李豐楙, "The View of Spirit World and its Subjugation in the *Tung-yüan shen-chou jing* (*Dongyuan shenzhou jing*) (《洞淵神咒經》的神魔觀及其剋治說)", *Studies in Oriental Religions* 東方宗教研究 2 (1991):113-155. Li Fengmao, "Chuangcheng yu duiying: liuchao daoqing zhong moshi shuo de tichu yu yanbian", pp. 109-113.

¹⁸³ The Lijia Dao is thought to be a sect of Tianshi Daoism, the founder of which is Li Babai 李八百 (Babai means eight hundred years, the length of his age). The Changli 昌利 and Pinggang 平崗 parishes among Zhang Daoling's twenty-four parishes are the places where it is said that Li cultivated and attained immortality respectively. For details, read Anna K. Seidel, "The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-tzu and Li Hung", pp. 230-233, & Wang Ka 王卡, ed., *Zhonggao daoqiao jichu zhishi*, pp. 21-24.

to be a harmful force.¹⁸⁴ The messianic predictions and condemnations of human dissoluteness in the *Shenzhou jing* are in accord with what we find in other Daoist eschatological scriptures, although it comes from a Daoist sect that is closely related to some popular movements in the Six Dynasties.¹⁸⁵ Christine Mollier therefore thinks that it “comprises all the characteristics of apocalyptic drama”.¹⁸⁶

From the above studies, we can conclude that not only did Daoist schools provide much eschatological literature in the Six Dynasties, but they also formed a general tradition of interpretation of universal crises and expectation of a future utopia.

¹⁸⁴ The *wutong dagui* are not the Wutong shen (Five deities of supernatural powers 五通神), which consist of five spirits. Beliefs about the Wutong shen were formed in the Yuan and Song Dynasties. According to the *Shenzhou jing*, there are thirty-nine thousand spirits in the *wutong dagui*. The members of the *wutong dagui* mentioned are not emperors and prime ministers as the text says; Nü Wa and Zhu Rong are a legendary creator of the world and the deity of the south respectively. It is said that Wang Jian 王翳, Bai Qi 白起, and Chu Kuang 楚狂 (original name was Lu Tong 陸通) belong to them, but the first two were the generals of the Qi Dynasty and the last one was a recluse in the Chu state in the Warring States period.

¹⁸⁵ The prophecies of the sect that either Li Tuo 李脫 or Li Hong would be the messiah stimulated some popular activities. For example, a person called Li Kuan 李寬 claimed to be Li Babai and established a reputation by faith healing in the east of the Changjiang River 長江. Ania K. Seidel, “The Image of the Perfect Ruler in Early Taoist Messianism: Lao-tzu and Li Hung”, p. 232. Wang Ka, ed., *Zhonggao daojiao jichu zhishi*, pp. 22-23.

¹⁸⁶ Her introduction to the scripture can be found in Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen, ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, manuscript, pp. 288-291.

CHAPTER 2: COMPARISON OF THE ESCHATOLOGY OF DAOISM AND POPULAR SECTS

We shall compare the Daoist beliefs, which we have studied in last chapter, with sectarian ones in eschatology. This chapter will first focus on the style of Daoist and sectarian writing on universal disasters. Then I shall discuss the following three themes in *baojuan*, the relevant contents of which in Daoism have been gone through in chapter one: popular sects' understanding of crises of the world, their expectation of the peaceful age and the messiah, and the descriptions of believers. Our materials for this chapter are precious volumes composed in the Ming and Qing Dynasties.¹⁸⁷ The discussion of these themes can show how sectarian writers absorb Daoist elements in their scriptures and how they change these elements. The differences between the two religions in eschatology are as important as the parallels between them because the popular sects in the Ming and Qing Dynasties do not merely copy Daoist and Buddhist ideas in their scriptures, but use them as parts of their own teachings.

Besides the sectarian beliefs, I shall examine some Buddhist concepts. There are a lot of borrowings from Buddhism and Daoism in sectarian writings. These two religions have provided abundant notions and terms for them. Some Daoist elements of the sectarian eschatology can hardly be discussed unless they are compared with Buddhist counterparts. I shall mainly consult the *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 (Exquisite forests in dharma gardens) by Daoshi 道世 of the Tang (?-683) and the *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (An integrated record about the Buddha and Patriarchs) by Zhipan 志磐 of the Southern Song (cf. 1265-74).¹⁸⁸ These two books contain many quotations from Buddhist scriptures. The *Fayuan zhulin*, for example, is compiled

¹⁸⁷ Most precious volumes appearing in this thesis have been studied or introduced in Daniel Overmyer's *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. I shall take the translations of the titles of them from this book, and shall mention in notes which pages the precious volumes can be found in it.

¹⁸⁸ Mingfu 明復, *Zhongguo foxue renming cidian* 中國佛學人名辭典 (Dictionary of Chinese Buddhism names) (Taipei, Fangzhou chubanshe, 1974), p. 1 & p. 146. Ciyi 慈怡, ed., *Foguang da cidian* 佛光大辭典 (Great dictionary [published by] the Buddha's Light [International Association]) (Taipei: Foguang wenhua shiye youxian gongsi, 1988), vol.6, p. 5622.

from the sources of more than four hundred Buddhist scriptures. Some of them are lost at present.¹⁸⁹ These books provide much material for contemporary Buddhist dictionaries in the definitions of many Buddhist terms and are two important reference books in Buddhism.

Part I: Comparison of Some Features of Writings on Universal Disasters

a) Comparison of Daoist and Sectarian Scriptures

We shall first examine the Daoist concept of time applied in precious volumes. As said in chapter one, in Daoism history is divided into linear periods. In the *Taiping jing*, we can read a great deal of depictions of the remote past, recent past, and present. Daoist writers in the Six Dynasties simply considered the past to be one stage instead of two. They did not place an emphasis on the future age as much as on the past and present, but they generally believed that great peace was coming in the near future. In precious volumes, time is also divided into three stages, in each of which the world is governed by a Buddha. The preface of the *Huangji jindan jiulian zhengxin guizhen huanxiang baojuan* 皇極金丹九蓮正信皈真還鄉寶卷 (The precious volume of the golden elixir and nine[-petaled] lotus of the Imperial Ultimate period [that leads to] rectifying belief, reverting to the real, and returning to [our] true home; hereafter “the *Jiulian* book”), reprinted in 1523, tells us that the Ancient Buddha (Gufo 古佛) created the predestined kaplas of three primes (*sanyuan jiesu* 三元劫數), in which the three Buddhas are in control of the universe.¹⁹⁰ In Chapter 10, we read about the length of the three Buddhas’ reigns. The time

¹⁸⁹ For the introduction to the two books, read Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 3, pp. 2654-2655 & vol.4, p. 3376.

¹⁹⁰ The authorship of the scripture is unknown although it is a hagiography of the author, who claims to be an incarnation of Maitreya. It neither mentions directly nor implies the name of the author; hence, modern scholars have different views on the authorship. For details, read Lian Lichang 連立昌, “*Jiulian jing kao* 《九蓮經》考 (A study of the *Jiulian* scripture)”, *Minjian zongjiao* 民間宗教 (Popular Religion) 2(Dec 1996):113-120. One of the reasons why it is not easy to determine its authorship is that the scripture was very popular in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, and it circulated among many popular sects such as the Dong dacheng jiao 東大乘教 (Eastern Mahāyāna Sect) and the Jinchuang jiao 金幢教 (Golden Pennant Sect, or Jintong jiao 金堂教 Golden Hall Sect). Many popular sectarian concepts can be found in the scripture. Pu Wenqi 濮文起 thinks that the *Gufo tianzhen kaozheng longhua baojing* 古佛天真考証龍華寶卷 (Dragon-flower precious scripture verified by the Ancient Buddha Tianzhen; hereafter, “the *Longhua jing*”) is based on it. Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian* 中

of the Buddha of the Past, the Lamplighter Buddha (Randeng fo 燃燈佛), lasts for 108,000 years and is called the Jiyan jie 極嚴劫 (Utmost Dignity kalpa).¹⁹¹ The Buddha of the Present, Śākyamuni, is in charge of the world for 27,000 years. The Buddha of the Future, Maitreya, will rule the world for 97,200 years, and his time is called the Xingxiu jie 星宿劫 (Constellation kalpa).

Apart from the three-stages division in history, the Daoist concept *sanyuan* 三元 (three primes) is adopted in precious volumes. *Yuan* is a Daoist unit of time, which is composed of sixty years (*jiazi*), and three *yuan* (*sanyuan*) lasts for 180 years. *Sanyuan* sometimes is interpreted as the three stages of time from the creation of the universe to the end. As I mentioned in last chapter, the *Yundu jieqi jing* tells us that in each period of *yuan* there are nine misfortunes (*jiu e*), which consist of three cataclysms (*sanzai*) and six calamities (*liuhai*). *Yuan* here is an immense length of a unit of time. The first period and the second one of the upper *yuan* (*shangyuan* 上元), for example, is composed of 9,9810,000 and 88,640,000 years respectively. (12b)¹⁹² The division of history into three Buddhas' stages is one of the most remarkable characteristics of *baojuan* contents; therefore, modern scholars discuss it in their

國民間秘密宗教辭典 (A dictionary of Chinese popular secret religions) (Chengdou: Sichuan dianshu chubanshe, 1996), p. 100. It is hence difficult to know which sect the *Jiulian jing* came from. For the discussion of the scripture, read Daniel Overmyer, "The Chiu-lien pao-ch'uan", *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 136-177, and Ma Xisha 馬西沙 & Han Bingfang 韓秉方, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi* 中國民間宗教史 (History of Chinese popular religions) (Shanghai: Renmin chubanshe, 1992), pp. 610-634. The two editions of the scripture are reprinted in Wang Jianchuan 王見川 & Lin Wanchuan 林萬傳, ed., *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian* 明清民間宗教經卷文獻 (The Scripture and Literature of Popular Religion in the Ming and Ching Dynasties) (Taipei: Shin Wen Feng Print Co., 1999), vol. 4 & 5.

¹⁹¹ The Lamplighter Buddha is also called Dīpamkara (Dingguang fo 定光佛 or 錠光佛, Lamp-light Buddha) in Buddhism. He is usually called Randeng fo instead of Dinguang fo in precious volumes, so I shall use the first name for the Buddha. Lamps with legs are called *ding* 錠; those without legs are called *deng* 燈. Ding Fubao 丁福保, ed., *Foxue da cidian* 佛學大辭典 (A great Buddhist dictionary) (Taipei: Shihua yinshua qiye youxian gongsi, 1989), vol. 1, p. 1265c.

¹⁹² There is a quotation from the *History of the Jin* (*Jinshu* 晉書) in the *Daojiao wenhua cidian*. It is said that the universe begins in the upper *yuan* and end in the lower *yuan* (*xiayuan* 下元). Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 272.

studies of the doctrines of popular sects.¹⁹³ The concept *sanyuan* can also be found in precious volumes. In the *Jili zhenyan* 機理真言 (True words on secret truth), for example, the three *yuan* periods are the three stages of the duration of the universe. *Jiazi* here is represented as symbolic animals (*shengxiao* 生肖) instead of sixty years. In the time of upper *yuan*, there are six symbolic animals only, which are the rat, ox, hare, sheep, horse, and cock. In the time of middle *yuan* (*zhongyuan* 中元), there are six more symbolic animals that are the dragon, tiger, snake, monkey, dog, and pig.¹⁹⁴ (p.930)

Although most sectarian writers divide history into linear stages in their books as Daoist writers do, they do not hold nostalgia for the past like the latter. There is little depiction of the past in *baojuan*. Compared with that of the present and future, the picture of the past is less detailed and seems less important to the believers of popular sects. The past ruled by the Lamplighter Buddha is usually juxtaposed with the present and the future ages ruled by the other two Buddhas; the writers of *baojuan*, however, seldom comment on this period. Many *baojuan* express obvious disgust at the present age because of human immorality and frequent calamities in this age, and long for the arrival of future peaceful age. The picture of the miserable present is usually in sharp contrast to that of the pleasant future instead of to that of the past. In the *Pujing rulai yaodi baojuan* 普靜如來鑰錠寶卷 (The precious volume of the Tathāgata Pujing who [holds] the key [to revealing the truth]; hereafter “the *Pujing baojuan*”), the author says that the past is peaceful, but, unlike Daoist writers, he does not mention that he prefers that the world to

¹⁹³ Susan Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion in China: the Eight Trigrams Uprising of 1813*, p. 10-12. Zhuang Jifa, “Run bayue—minjian mimi zongjiao de mojie yuyan 閏八月—民間秘密宗教的末劫預言 (The leap eighth month—the prophecy of the last kalpa [circulated among] popular secret religions)”, *Historical Monthly* (Lishi yuekan 歷史月刊) 87 (1995, Sept):61-64.

¹⁹⁴ The *Jili zhenyan* is collected in Wang Jianchuan & Lin Wanchuan, ed., *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, vol. 7, pp. 929-944. I cannot find it in either Che Xilun’s 車錫倫 *Zhongguo baojuan zongmu* 中國寶卷總目 (A general bibliography of Chinese precious volumes (Beijing: Beijing yanshan chubanshe, 2000) or Pu Wenqi’s *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*. It is circulated in the Golden Pennant Sect, which is thought to have been set up by Wang Zuotang 王佐堂 of Zhili 直隸 (the present Hebei 河北). The sect spread to Fujian and Taiwan in the early Qing. Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 634-640.

return to its ancient state.¹⁹⁵ In chapter 23, he gives the following description of the three periods:

三極週轉立人倫，無極立下青陽會，化顯掌教是燃燈，太極立下紅陽會，轉化釋迦掌教尊，皇極立下白陽會，八十一劫彌勒尊，三佛輪流有改變，一劫本是立百春，九劫燃燈他過去，一十八劫現在行，未來九九八十一，一百八十定三空，燃燈本是無相劫，莊嚴劫是釋迦尊，彌勒又安星宿劫……日月現在東西轉，過去西南東北昇，獸面人心頭有角，壽活千歲無死生，人面獸心遭短壽，七十者稀又轉輪，留下生老病死苦，賊盜生發釋迦尊，佛面佛心無老少……

The three apexes revolve and establish human relations. The Non-Ultimate [of the three apexes] has set up the Green Yang Assembly (Qingyang hui 青陽會); the one who manifested oneself, transformed oneself, and controlled teachings was the Lamplighter [Buddha]. The Grand Ultimate sets up the Red Yang Assemble (Hongyang hui 紅陽會). He transforms himself into Śākyamuni and becomes the honorable one who is in charge of teachings. The Imperial Ultimate will set up the White Yang Assemble (Baiyang hui 白陽會). Maitreya will be honored in [his] eighty-one kalpas. The three Buddhas [reign the world] in turn; there are changes [in each period]. A kalpa originally consists of a hundred of beginnings of spring (*li baichun* 立百春 = a hundred years?). [The duration of] the Lamplighter Buddha's age in which he [ruled the world] in the past is nine kalpas. The present period, composed of eighteen kalpas, operates now. The future [consists of] nine nine [kalpas], which is eighty-one kalpas. In [total] a hundred and eight kalpas (lit. *yibai bashi* 一百八十; a hundred and eighty), the three non-being stages are established. The Lamplighter [Buddha's age] originally is the Formless Kalpa (Wuxiang Jie 無相劫).

¹⁹⁵ The *Pujing baojuan* is a text of the Yellow Heaven Way (Huangtian dao 黃天道) written by the patriarch Zheng Guang 鄭光, with an alternative name Pujing 普靜, or possibly with his disciples. Pujing was a disciple of Puming 普明, the founder of the sect. Ma Xisha thinks that the scripture was composed in the reign of Wanli 萬曆 of the Ming (1573-1620). It contains the accounts of the lives of the patriarchs of the sect such as Pu Ming and his wife Pu Guang 普光. The *Pujing baojuan* is collected in Wang Jianchuan & Lin Wanchuan, ed., *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, vol. 4, and Gao Ke, Song Jun, Zhang Xishun, and Pu Wenqi, ed., *Baojuan chuji*, vol. 5. It was reprinted by the Nine Diagrams Way (Jiugong dao 九宮道) in the twenty-first year of the Republic China (1932); its title had been changed to *Yaodi fo baojuan* 鑰鐸佛寶卷 (The precious volume of the Buddha [who Holds] the Key) and it was punctuated. This is the edition collected in the *Baojuan chuji*. Che Xilun, *Zhongguo baojuan zongmu*, p. 354. The character *yao* 鑰 means locks. The one *di* 鐸 means the instrument for unfastening, and is the same as *shi* 匙. The term *yaodi* is a synonym for *yaoshi* 鑰匙 (key); therefore the *Pujing baojuan* is also called *Pujing rulai yaoshi baojuan* 普靜如來鑰匙寶卷. In Daoist inner alchemy, *yaoshi* refers to the *qi*. In popular sectarianism, *yaoshi* means the cultivation of inner alchemy. The *Pujing baojuan* was compared to the *tongtian yaoshi* 通天鑰匙 (the key to extraordinary power) because it contains many accounts of this practice. Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 425-428, pp. 436-437, & p. 633. Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian minji zongjiao*, pp. 218-219. Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao cidian*, p. 373.

The Dignity Kalpa (Zhuangyan jie 莊嚴劫) [is the period] in which Śākyamuni is honorable. Besides, Maitreya establishes the Constellation Kalpa.... At present the moon and the sun revolve back and forth between the east and the west; in the past they ascended from [all directions] the west, the south, the east, and the north. People had human minds with beastlike faces and horns on their heads. They could live for thousands years without birth and death. [At present] people have human faces but beastly minds; they have only a short time. People aged seventy are few, [and they have to] enter samsāra again. [Śākyamuni] left behind birth, oldness, illness, death, and suffering.¹⁹⁶ Thievery and robbery happen during the time of the Honorable Śākyamuni. [In the future, people] will have Buddhalike faces and minds without having youth and old age.... (Chapter 23, volume 2, pp.130-131)

History in this scripture is described as a linear process; the author does not mention that the world should return to its ancient state. Although the sectarian writers generally think that the present age is full of suffering and corruption, they do not usually blame them on the master of this period, Śākyamuni. There are however two exceptions. The *Gufo danglai xiasheng mile chushi baojuan* 古佛當來下生彌勒出西寶卷 (The precious volume concerning Maitreya's

¹⁹⁶ I add the subject Śākyamuni because the whole sentence is common in *baojuan*. I have mentioned it in one of my unpublished papers "A Study of Some Ming Sektarian Ideas in Three Sektarian Scriptures". Here is the relevant passage:

In addition to those listed in the Appendix A, there are some sentences in the *Jiulian jing*, which are the same as or similar to some the expressions in other precious volumes.

原身阿彌陀佛即是老君……立下金木水火土青陽會……天佛點護命菩薩釋迦教主下降王舍城中梵皇宮內摩耶聖母右肋下降生……留下生老病死苦……儒童孔夫子即是彌勒尊佛……留下仁義禮智信。

The original body of the Buddha Amitabha was exactly an appearance of the Lord Lao (Laojun).... [He] left (lit. li 立) behind (i.e. bequeath) [teachings about] metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, [the five phrases, and held] a Green Yang Great Assembly.... The Celestial Buddha (Tianfo 天真佛) selected the Lives-Protection Bodhisattva, the master Śākyamuni of teaching, to descend to the Indian palace, [located in] the city of imperial home, and to be born under the right side of the Holy Mother Moya's 摩耶 chest.... [Śākyamuni] left behind [teachings about] birth, oldness, illness, death, and suffering.... The Master Kong Rutong was exactly the Honorable Buddha Maitreya.... [He] left behind [the teachings about] humanity, righteousness, ritual propriety, wisdom and trustworthiness. (*Dingjie baojuan* 定劫寶卷 [Scripture for establishing the kalpas])

The underlined part can be found in chapter 7 of the *Jiulian jing*. What is surprising is that these expressions also exist in chapter 13 of the *Hunyuan hongyang fo rulai wuji piaogao zu linfan jing* 混元弘陽佛如來無極飄高祖臨凡經 (The scripture of the descent to the ordinary [world] of Piaogao, the Patriarch of the Limitless, the Chaotic Origin Vast Yang Buddha Tathagata) and in the *Xiaoshi zhenkong baojuan* 銷釋真空寶卷 (The precious volumes on [teaching of the Patriarch] Zhenkong). All these scriptures were published in the Ming and early Qing period. These authors might have read the *Jiulian jing*, or these expressions were familiar to the popular sects in the Ming.

Birth, oldness, illness, death, and suffering here in the *Pujing baojuan* obviously refer to the abominations that declared to be left behind by Saykyamuni, not the teachings about them, which is what the author of the *Dingjie baojuan* means. "A Study of Some Ming Sektarian Ideas in Three Sektarian Scriptures", unpublished, pp. 35-36.

appearing out of the West, the Ancient Buddha who is about to descend for rebirth; hereafter, “the *Mile chushi baojuan*”) and the *Mile xiasheng jing* 彌勒下生經 (The scripture on the descent of Maitreya) are two examples well demonstrating how sectarian writers contrast the corrupted present with the peaceful future and with a past age that is no longer significant in sectarian teachings.¹⁹⁷ The Lamplighter Buddha does not take an important role. The author of the *Mile xiasheng jing* tells us in chapter 1 that Śākyamuni and Maitreya have been brothers for three lives. They study together the Great Way and have attained perfect awareness and supreme Buddha wisdom (*sambodhi*). They hence discuss which of them will rule the world and deliver humans first. We are told that Śākyamuni is the younger brother of Maitreya, but the Lamplighter Buddha is not mentioned. The author of the *Mile chushi baojuan* borrows the content and wording of the story about Śākyamuni and Maitreya, except for adding the role of the Lamplighter Buddha. He is also the brother of the other two Buddhas and has finished governing the world.

蓋聞然(=燃)燈古佛彌勒世尊釋迦一母所生，三世古佛初始以來爲親兄弟，同修大道，共證菩提，十號具足，萬億同身，大功成就。

¹⁹⁷ The *Mile chushi baojuan* is the text of the Yuandun jiao 圓頓教 (Religion of complete and instantaneous enlightenment). Although there is a print date, the *bingshen* 丙辰 year of the Wanli reign (1616), in the preface of the scripture, Chi Xilun considers it as a Qing text. Daniel Overmyer says the same, because we can read the term *Qing mo* 清末 (the end of the Qing) in chapter 9. This book therefore must have been composed in the late nineteenth century. Che Xilun, ed., *Zhongguo baojuan zongmu*, p. 185. Daniel Overmyer, “The Chiu-lien pao-chüan”, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 402, note 6. For the discussion of the scripture, read Daniel Overmyer’s book, pp. 276-280. The complete edition can be found in the *Baojuan chuji* (vol. 19), and the incomplete one is collected in the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian* (vol. 7). There are two editions of the *Mile xiasheng jing*, which are collected in the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, vol. 7. The first one collected in the book contains a composition date, which is the 23th day of the first month in the ninth year of the Kangxi 康熙 reign (1662) in the preface. (7b, p. 188) On the cover page of the first edition, a reprint year, the thirty-first year of the Guangxu 光緒 reign (1905), can be found. These two editions do not contain completely the same wording. For example, we can find two titles, the *Mile zunjing* 彌勒尊經 (The honorable scripture of Maitreya) and the *Mile xiasheng jing*, in both editions. The first one tells us an alternative title of the scripture, *Foshou Mile shifo zun zhenjing* 佛說彌勒石佛尊真經 (Complete scripture expounded by the Buddha concerning Maitreya, who is the honorable Buddha Stone) (preface). The title in the second one however is the *Foshou Mile gufo zunjing* 佛說彌勒古佛尊經 (The honorable scripture expounded by the Buddha concerning Maitreya, who is the Ancient Buddha). The scripture includes a mention of the sudden emergence of it in the Wangs 王家莊 in Shansi 山西. (preface, 1b, p. 207); therefore, Ma Xisha thinks that it was composed by Wang Sen 王森 (1542-1619). Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, p. 627-628.

It is generally heard that the Ancient Lamplighter Buddha, the world-honored Maitreya, and Śākyamuni were given birth by one mother. Since the first beginning [of the world] [these] ancient Buddhas of three periods have been blood brothers and have been studying the Great Way together. They have attained together the perfect wisdom and have completed all the ten titles (*shihao* 十號) [of a Buddha]; they are of the same body (?) for myriads of [kalpas and have] the accomplishment of great merits.¹⁹⁸ (Chapter 1)

Then the text tells us that, after the Lamplighter Buddha has finished ruling the world, the three Buddhas discuss which one among Śākyamuni and Maitreya is going to deliver humans next. Both texts then deal with the varied ways of human misbehavior, which are caused by Śākyamuni's fault in stealing Maitreya's flower; the Lamplighter Buddha is not mentioned again.¹⁹⁹ So we see the past does not assume the same importance in precious volumes as it does in Daoist works; it is no longer insisted that we should return to this period.

Although sectarian writers have adopted the Daoist term *yuan* in their scriptures, they interpret *sanyuan* in a way different from what we find in Daoism. They seldom equate the three *yuan* ages with the three ages of the three Buddhas. They also usually show strong fear of the coming of the sixty years (*jiazi*) of the lower *yuan* (*xiayuan jiazi* 下元甲子). The term *xiayuan jiazi* is regarded as a synonym for the age full of miseries or the end of the world. Hence, the

¹⁹⁸ The ten titles of a Buddha are: 1) Tathāgata (Rulai 如來; the one who has taken the absolute way of cause and effect and attained the perfect wisdom); Arhat (Yinggong 應供; worthy of worship); Samyak-samuddha (Zhengpianzhi 正遍知; completely enlightened); Vidyācarana-sampauna (Minxingzu 明行足; the unexcelled universal enlightenment of the Buddha based upon the discipline, meditation, and wisdom regarded as feet); Sugata (Shanshi 善逝; well departed); Lokavid (Shijianjie 世間解; knower of the world); Anuttara (Wushangshi 無上士; the peerless nobleman); Purusa-dāmya-srathi (Diaoyu zhangfu 調御丈夫; to tame and control as a master does a wild elephant or horse, or as the Buddha brings the passions of men under control); Śāstā deva-manusyānām (Tianrenshi 天人師; teacher of devas and men); Buddha-lokanātha (Foshizun 佛世尊; the World-honored one). William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, pp. 52, 143, 165, 192, 210, 225, 263, 369, 377, & 457.

¹⁹⁹ Both texts contain the same criticism on Śākyamuni, who is blamed solely for the corruption of the present world. Besides, they have similar expressions in the background about Śākyamuni and Maitreya. In the *Mile xiasheng jing*, we read "At that moment, the honored Buddha Maitreya and the Buddha Śākyamuni had been blood brothers for three lives. They had been studying together the Great Way and attained together perfect awareness. They got supreme Buddha wisdom and completed all ten titles [of a Buddha]; the whole bodies [of them had been shining (?) for myriads [of kalpas (?)]. Since the [past] three lives they have the accomplishment of great merits. 爾時彌勒尊佛與釋迦牟尼佛三世以來為親兄弟，同修大道，同證菩提，無上正覺，十號具足，萬億周身，三世以來，大功成就……" (chapter 1) The language is similar to that of the above quotation. Besides, I cannot find similar condemnation of Śākyamuni in other sectarian books; therefore the author of the *Mile chushi baojia* must have consulted the *Mile xiasheng jing*.

description of *sanyuan* usually is confusing. The *Jili zhenyan*, for instance, does not contain a parallel in the account of the lower *yuan* after the author of the text tells us what symbolic animals there are in the first and second *yuan*, as mentioned above.²⁰⁰ In this period, there are smallpox deities (*doushen* 痘神) and Five Great Monsters (Wu damo 五大魔), who are sent by Heaven and are responsible for punishing immoral people. (pp.930 & 935) The lower *yuan* is always viewed as the age of the end of kalpa (*mojie* 末劫), and is connected with detailed prophecy of calamities happening during this period. In some precious volumes, only *xiayuan* is mentioned. In chapter 18 “Populace in the end of kalpa (Mojie zhongsheng 末劫眾生)” of the *Longhua jing*, the Eternal Mother tells Gong Chang 弓長, the writer of the scripture, that “the disastrous kalpa of the *xiayuan jiazi* has come. 下元甲子災劫到了。”²⁰¹ (40b) The book then deals with what and when misfortunes are going to happen in detail. The extreme anxiety caused by the imminent lower *yuan* can be found in most precious volumes in the Ming and Qing period.

There is another similarity in the concept of time in Daoist and sectarian eschatology; the calendar of the heavenly stems and the earthly branches (*tiangan dizhi* 天干地支) is used for designating years and days in prophecy. It is said that the Holy Ruler Li Hong will come in the *renchen* year, as mentioned in last chapter. The ten chapters of the *Shenzhou jing* tells us many years marked with *tiangan dizhi*, in which there will be varied calamities. In precious volumes,

²⁰⁰ He mentions that there are eighteen symbolic animals in the lower *yuan*, but does not tell us what they are.

²⁰¹ Gong Chang (the split-characters of the surname Zhang 張) was the leader of Yuandun jiao 圓頓教 (Religion of complete and instantaneous enlightenment). The *Longhua jing* was printed in early Qing period (the ninth year of Shunzhi 順治 reign, 1652). Richard Shek thinks the *Longhua jing* to be the most doctrinally developed texts on the Eternal Mother religion in the Ming and Qing. The Eternal Mother cult reached its mature form by early Qing when the *Longhua jing* was published. Thereafter, partly because of governmental vigilance and partly because of the loss of creative momentum, few new sectarian texts were composed. The Eternal Mother belief came to be encapsulated by the eight-character chant of “*Zhenkong jiaxiang, wusheng fumu* 真空家鄉，無生父母 (Nature Land of True Emptiness, the Eternal Venerable Parent)”. Richard Shek, “Eternal Mother Religion: Its Role in Late Imperial Chinese History”, *Proceedings on the Second International Conference on Sinology* (Taipei: Academia Sinica, 1989), pp. 485-486. For the discussion of the scripture, read Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 248-271. For the explanation of the alchemy practices stated in it, read Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 875-883.

the timetables showing the arrival of the last kalpa and the savior are also written with the heavenly stems and the earthly branches. *Baojuan* writers do not use *tiangan dizhi* only, but they also indicate years with the symbolic animals and the colors corresponding with the five phases (*wuxing* 五行). In chapter 6 of the *Mile xiasheng jing*, there is a prophecy of a series of disorders.

黑馬羊年。草賊生發。青猴雞歲。天下鬩鬩。赤犬赤豬。草賊作亂。江南江北。有被害之方。苦楚難當。黃鼠黃牛。相鬥相沖。起復生賊。白虎下天。白兔下世。大軍鬩動。東城出現。先取江左。次取江右。黑蛇化龍。漸見明白。萬姓死亡。人民減半。

In the black horse and sheep years (i.e. the *renwu* 壬午 and *guiwei* 癸未 years, the 19th and 20th year of sixty-year cycle), grass-[roots] bandits will appear. In the green monkey and cock years (i.e. the *jiashen* 甲申 and *yiyou* 乙酉 years, the 21st and 22nd years), the world will be full of noise of fighting²⁰². In the red dog and red pig years (i.e. the *bingxu* 丙戌 and *dinghai* 丁亥 years, the 23rd and 24th years), grass-[roots] bandits will rise. The south and the north of the River will be (lit. *you* 有) the places in where victims [of disorders are found]. It will be difficult to ward off (lit. *dang* 當 = *dang* 擋) [these] sufferings. In the yellow rat and yellow ox years (i.e. the *wuzi* 戊子 and *jichou* 己丑 years, the 25th and 26th years), [people] will fight and conflict with each other. They will rise up, and banditry will then appear. When the white tiger comes down from heaven and the white hare descends to the world (i.e. the *gengyin* 庚寅 and *xinmao* 辛卯 years, the 27th and 28th years, will come), great armies will stir up disturbance. They will appear in the east of the city (Dongcheng 東城) (?). They will first seize the left of the River (the east of the lower reaches of the Changjiang River, i.e. the Jiangdong 江東), and they then will take the right of the River (i.e. the west of the lower reaches of the River, i.e. the present Jiangxi 江西).²⁰³ When the black snake becomes the dragon, [the

²⁰² Literally it is the character formed from combination of the characters *men* 門 with *qi* 其. It may be a misprint for *hong* 鬩.

²⁰³ Luo Zhufeng, ed. *Hanyu da cidian*, vol. 5, pp. 916-917. For the location of Jiangdong, read note 457 in Appendix A.

chaotic state] will gradually become obvious. Common people will die and [the population of] people will be reduced by half....²⁰⁴

The author of the scripture then keeps on exaggerating the horror of misfortunes by writing the schedule of disorders with the colors and the symbolic animals. He also points out the time in the same way in which the messiah will descend and the peaceful age will come. Some writers use either the earthly branches or symbolic animals only, without the heavenly stems or the colors. Here is a passage from the third volume of the *Wugong tiange miaojing* 五公天閣妙經 (Wonderful scripture from the Five Elders' heavenly pavilion).²⁰⁵

時遇此寅卯年，火道長蛇大殺場，骸骨縱橫遍野田，不論貴賤堆如山。倘若立夏逢甲戌，又是瘟疫死人年，如此受難不堪言……虎兔之年江南災多少？死了無棺材。紅粉女紅血面，珠寶金玉化作塵。雖有田園無人受，南倉北庫化作塵……申酉夏秋末劫來，禾苗熟無人割……

At that moment when people encounter these *yin* 寅 and *mao* 卯 (the third and fourth earthly branch) years, a long fire snake (*huodao chengshe* 火道長蛇) (?) slaughters [people]. The bones [of the dead] will be laid in all directions throughout wild fields. Regardless whether they are noble or humble [when they are alive,] [they all will be dead] and their bones piled up will be as high as a mountain. If the beginning of the summer (*lixia* 立夏, the sixth or seventh day of the fifth month in Chinese calendar) meets the *jiaxu* 甲戌 (the 11th year of the sixty-year) (i.e. during the beginnings of the summer in the *jiaxu* year), it will be the year again in which epidemic [will happen] and people will die. [People] who have such sufferings will find it unbearable to put them into words.... How many calamities will there be in the Jiangnan 江南 (the south of the River, i.e. a region in the lower Changjiang valley) during the tiger and hare years? [There are so many that people who] have died [of calamities] have no coffins. Rouge-and-powder women (i.e. beauties) [will be hurt and] become red-blood faced. Jewelry, gold, and jade

²⁰⁴ The order of the black snake and the black dragon should be exchanged because the former corresponds to the *guiji* 癸卯 year (the 30th year of sixty-year cycle), and the latter corresponds to the *renchen* 壬辰 year (the 29th year). The black dragon year should come before the black snake year.

²⁰⁵ The scripture consists of three fascicle (*juan* 卷), the first two of which contain several pages only. The third one is longest and has thirteen pages. At the end of the scripture, there are Five-Elders magic pictures. We can read "the Great Nation of the Qing (Da qingguo 大清國)" in the preface; therefore it should be treated as a Qing *baojuan*. It is collected in volume 10 of the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*. There is no reference to it in Che Xilun's *Zhongguo baojuan zongmu*.

will turn into dust. Although there are farms and gardens, no one will receive them.

Southern grain storehouses and northern warehouses will turn into duct.... The last kalpa will come during the summer and the autumn of the *shen* 申 (the ninth earthly branch) and *you* 酉 (the tenth earthly branch) years. Seedlings of cereal crops will be ripe and no one will reap them....

The prophecies stated in Daoist scriptures and *baojuan* with heavenly stems and earthly branches can come true at any sixty-year cycle; they never become outdated and ineffectual although the scriptures were written long time ago. The horror of universal disasters and the longing for the arrival of the messiah, both of which are brought by the predictions, are renewed every time when a new sixty-year cycle starts. Those predictions in *baojuan* in which the years of earthly branches or symbolic animals are used only have the same effect. The terror and joy caused by the revelation of forthcoming disasters and the messiah's descent respectively, however, are stronger. The cycle of earthly branches or symbolic animals consist of twelve years only and repeat more frequently than the *jiazi* cycle, a new one of which starts every sixty years only. In the same volume of the *Wugong tiange miaojing*, we can find the following passage:

戌亥之年刀兵起，惡人相殺結怨愆。戌亥子丑寅卯與辰巳年，白骨滿荒田，更慮他時人絕種……

During the *xu* 戌 and *hai* 亥 years (the tenth and eleventh earthly branches), warfare will appear. Vicious people will kill each other, form feuds, and commit sins. During the *xu*, *hai*, *zi* 子, *chou* 丑, *yin* 寅, *mao* 卯, *chen* 辰, and *si* 巳 years (the first to the sixth, the tenth, and eleventh earthly branches), white bones will fill wild fields. What makes people more anxious will be that humans will be extinct at that time....

Eight years of the twelve-year cycle have been mentioned. It is foretold that people will encounter disasters almost every year. The adoption of the earthly-branch or symbolic-animal calendar can bring *baojuan* readers' stronger pressure to convert to sectarian teachings. In short, marking the time with the symbols in cyclic calendars in the prediction of the arrival of disasters and the messiah is one of the common features of Daoist and sectarian eschatology. Prophecies

can therefore be always effectual. The readers of *baojuan* and Daoist scriptures are threatened with the cyclic schedules of universal sufferings, which restart in every sixty years. Their hope for the coming of the messiah will be maintained all the time because the predictions about him will not be outdated. The difference between *baojuan* and Daoist scriptures is that in some *baojuan* the cyclic calendar adopted is shortened and repeats more frequently.

We shall now discuss how Daoist and *baojuan* writers describe universal crises. At the end of the *Laojun bianhua wuji jing*, the author comments that people do not act properly according to their status. Then he gives an account of the miserable world:

百川之流奔沼城，真來之衝難可當，火失其明日無光，封邑齊土國爲王，齊人感歎身摧傷，養羊爲虎鼠爲狼，變化姓字易其常，西度名水歷火行，深林還谷多毒霜，殺戮百草葉枯黃……

The currents from hundreds of rivers will run into marshy cities. It will be difficult to resist the force [of the currents] when they are really coming. Fire will lose its brightness and the sun will have no light. Granted control of the Qi territory 齊, [the feudal lord will claim to] be the emperor of the region (i.e. he will rise up).²⁰⁶ People of Qi will lament for injury to their bodies [from which they will suffer in the revolt]. Sheep raised [in farms] will turn to tigers, and rats will turn to wolves. People will change their surnames and *zi* 字 (names given at the age of twenty); their normal [lives] will be changed [during warfare]. They will cross famous rivers (*mingshui* 名水?) in the west and experience walking on fire. [The ways] back to valleys in forests will be full of poisonous frost, which will kill hundreds of plants and make leaves wither and yellow.... (7b-8a)

The *Shenzhou jing* contains lengthy repetitious warnings of disasters, many of which are caused by varied demons and monsters. Among the Six-Dynasties Daoist texts I have read, the descriptions of misfortunes in this scripture are most abundant. Here is a passage from chapter 8:

道言自今以去至庚辰之歲，有三萬六千惡鬼，鬼名天池，從者三萬，常行世間，枉殺良善。壬午年復有三千九百赤頭鬼，鬼名大頭，來下殺人，刀兵交興，世間云云，不可久處，四方災逆，六夷死盡，道法興盛，俗門衰微。甲申之年，人民死盡……道言至壬午年，天下悠悠，百姓苦惱，六夷交侵，人民不安，士女奔波，蜀漢浩浩，人民頓死……

²⁰⁶ Qi is a region including the north of the present Shandong 山東 and the southeast of Hebei 河北.

Dao says, “From the present to the *gengchen* 庚辰 year (the 17th year of the sixty-year cycle), there will be 36,000 vicious ghosts. Their names are Tianchi 天池 (Heavenly Pond), and they have 30,000 attendants. They will often travel in the mundane world and unjustly kill the moral and good. During the *renwu* year, there will also be 3,900 red-headed ghosts whose names are Datou 大頭 (Big head). They will descend [to the mundane world] and slaughter people. Wars [in different places] will arise by turns. [People] in the world will say that they will not able to stay long in such world. There will be disasters and revolts in all four directions. All people in six foreign tribes in the east (*yi* 夷) will die. Daoist magic skills will prosper [because people want to learn them in order to escape the sufferings]; vulgar sects (i.e. popular cults) will decline [because they are not effective in avoiding the disasters]. In the *jiashen* 甲申 year (the 21st year), all people will have died....” Dao says, “When the *renwu* 壬午 year (the 19th year) comes, the world will be in disorder (*yonyou* 悠悠), and common people will worry.²⁰⁷ Six foreign tribes in the east will invade [China] by turns. People will be anxious. Men and women will rush away. In Shuhan 蜀漢 (the present Sichuan 四川), flood will be raging (= *haohao* 浩浩).²⁰⁸ People will suddenly die....” (3a)

After the overstatement of these misfortunes, the author tells readers that they need to believe in the teachings in the scripture in order to escape sufferings. We can conclude some features of Daoist prediction of universal crises from the above two quotations. 1) The timetables of crises is designated with heavenly stems and earthly branches of the sixty cycle, instead of being marked clearly with exact years, as stated above. 2) It is said that calamities will happen at present or in the near future. 3) Daoist writers specify in their predictions where disasters will happen with the geographical names of China. 4) It is predicted that varied disasters will appear by turns or together during a very short time. The writers do not devote detailed discussion to one disaster. Instead they usually mention various disasters at the same time. We can conclude that the crises they mention are very diverse, but they describe them chaotically. Hence, the

²⁰⁷ Luo Zhufeng, ed. *Hanyu da cidian*, vol. 7, p. 532.

²⁰⁸ Luo Zhufeng, ed. *Hanyu da cidian*, vol. 5, p. 1215.

Chisong zi zhang li contains a great deal of petitions presented by Daoist masters on the behalf of followers for driving away various harmful forces. Ghosts are blamed for causing people quarrels (*koushe* 口舌), lawsuits (*guanshi* 官事), sicknesses resulting in sudden death (*baocu* 暴卒), and punishment and imprisonment (*xingyu* 刑獄) in the *Shenzhou jing*. People who are involved in these troubles should convert to Daoist teachings. (Chapter 6, 5a & 9a)

Among the four features of Daoist prediction listed above, in addition to the first characteristics that we have discussed above, all other three can also be found in sectarian eschatology. The *Mile Fo shuo Dizang Shiwang baojuan* 彌勒佛說地藏十王寶卷 (The precious volume preached by Maitreya on Dizang 地藏 and the Ten Kings; hereafter “the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan*”) tells us that “Now it is the last kalpa; the Literate Buddha Śākyamuni returned home in the *gengshen* 庚申 year of the Wanli 萬曆 reign (=1620) 現在末劫。釋迦文佛是萬曆庚申歸家。”²⁰⁹ (6a, p.32) The Eternal Mother orders Maitreya to descend

²⁰⁹ The translation is taken from Daniel Overmyer’s *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 343. For the discussion of this Huangtian dao 黃天道 (Yellow Heaven Way) text, read Daniel Overmyer’s *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 343-346. The edition of the scripture I read is collected in the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, (vol.7) It tells us that it was produced in the third year of the Chongzheng 崇禎 (1630) and reprinted in the thirteenth year of the Guangxu reign (1940). An eleven-page booklet is attached to this edition. On the first page of the booklet we can read the first line “[The purpose of this booklet] attached to [the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan*] is to remedy the inadequacies of the *Jinxian zhenglun* 金丹證論 (Demonstration and discussion on golden elixir) and the *Huiming jingshu* 慧命經書 (Scripture on [cultivating] clever lives). This makes those who have the will to be diligent [in alchemy cultivation] obtain the skills and the methods of starting making up the ingredients (*diaoyao* 調藥, i.e. mixing the essence [*jing* 精], the *qi*, and the spirit [*shen* 神]) and of the *xiaozhou tian* 小周天 (the process of transforming the essence into the *qi*). 附補金仙證論及慧命經書所不足之處。使苦志者得下手調藥及小周天之功法也。” The second sentence is written in small print. The booklet is divided into two parts, the first of which is entitled the “Weixian shuo 危險說 (Explanation of the danger [of taking alchemy practices])” and the second of which is called the “Hou weixian shou 後危險說 (Postscript to the “Explanation of the danger)”. At the end of the booklet, we can read “[This booklet] was written by Huayang 華陽 on the fifth days before the Dragon Boat Festival in the fourth year of the Jiaqing 嘉慶 reign (1799) in the Renshou Temple (Renshou si 仁壽寺) 嘉慶四年端陽前五日華陽著於北京仁壽寺” and “[The blocks of this booklet] were engraved in the twenty-fifth year of the Guangxu reign (1899) in the Jingxin Nunnery (Jingxin an 淨心菴) in the east of Shan 剡 (=the Shan river 剡溪 in the Zhejiang 浙江) 光緒二十五年剡東淨心菴鐫刻”. The *Jinxian zhenglun* and the *Huiming jing*, which does not contain the character *shu* in the title, are written by Liu Huayang 柳華陽, a Daoist master of the Qing (1736-?). Zhang Zhizhe says in the entry for the *Jinxian zhenglun* in his *Daojiao wenhua cidian* that the final chapter of this Daoist book is “Hou weixian shou”. The title is exactly the same as what we find in the booklet; therefore it is possible that it was compiled from Liu’s two books. If so, we can conclude that some Daoist books on alchemy practices were revealed and circulated among the popular sects in

immediately to the world because the three calamities are about to arise. The depictions of various disasters, which will be inflicted on the evil, can be found throughout the entire scripture. Here is one of them:

造下彌天重罪。於是三曹六部。一一記在簿上。善降祥瑞。惡降災殃。或遭瘟疫瘡疾。洩瀉風痰。疔毒麻瘋。疳癆沉痾。或逢刀兵火盜。官司口舌。兇災惡難。非事橫禍。種種惡難。連年磨折……

[Sinners] have committed monstrous serious sins; therefore the Three Departments (*sancao* 三曹) and the Six Boards (*Liubu* 六部) record every item of the sins on their books.²¹⁰ They drop auspiciousness and blessings down to the moral, and drop disasters and calamities down to the evil. [The evil] will encounter plagues, malaria, diarrhea, paralysis (*fengtān* 風痰 = *fengtān* 風癱?), the poison of furuncle (*dingdu* 疔毒), leprosy and tuberculosis (*malao* 麻癆), or [other] incurable, lasting illnesses. Or they will encounter warfare, fire, robbery, lawsuits (*guansi* 官司), or quarrels (*koushe* 口舌). They will suffer from vicious disasters and fierce difficulties, or abnormal accidents and unexpected misfortunes. They will have been afflicted with various kinds of vicious hardship year after year.... (volume 2, 37a, p.77)

The above list of varied sicknesses is reminiscent of that found in the *Shenzhou jing*. Besides, like Daoist writers, the author, of the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan* ranks lawsuits and quarrels as disasters appearing during the period of the transition to Maitreya's age. The whole chapter 18

the Qing. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 789, p. 754, & p. 504. Zhongguo daojiao xiehui & Suzhou daojiao xiehui, ed., *Daojiao da cidian*, 216.

²¹⁰ Using the character *cao* 曹 to refer to the celestial government is a popular tradition, which existed since the Han. *Cao* is a direct borrowing from the titles of Han governmental organizations. In the *Taiping jing*, we find Department of Fate (*mingcao* 命曹), Department of Longevity (*shoucao* 壽曹), Department of Good Deeds (*shancao* 善曹), and Department of Evil Deeds (*Ecao* 惡曹). The Three Departments (*sancao*) in the above quotation from the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan* should mean the departments of celestial government. This is consistent with the ancient Chinese tradition. I cannot find what these Three Departments are. In the Pervading Unity Way (Yiguan dao 一貫道), the *sancao* means three regions: heavenly regions, human regions, and earthly regions. The objects of salvation claimed by the sect are the beings in these three regions (universal salvation of the three regions; *sancao pudu* 三曹普度). In addition to the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan*, the term *sancao* can be found in the *Jiulian baojuan*. It refers to the celestial officers who are responsible for overseeing people's will to take religious cultivation. From these two texts, we can infer that the *sancao* (the Three Departments) can be equated to the Three Officers (*sanguan* 三官), the popular deities in Daoism and popular culture, and the term *sancao* possibly is the other name of *sanguan*. The later groups of deities are also responsible for overseeing human behavior. Yü Ying-shih 余英時, "'O Soul, Come Back!'" A Study in the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist China, *Harvard Journal of Asian Studies*, 47(1987):382-383. Li Shiyu 李世瑜, *Xianzai Huabei mimi zongjiao* 現在華北秘密宗教 (Secret religions in contemporary north China) (Taipei: Guting shuwu, 1975), p. 57. Wang Ka, ed., *Zhongguo daojiao jichu zhishi*, pp. 267-268.

of the *Longhua jing* deals with the Eternal Mother's prediction of the coming disasters at the end of kalpa and her revelation to the imperial-womb children (*huangtai ernü* 皇胎兒女) of how to escape them. She tells Gong Chang that the calamities have come in the *jiazi* of the lower *yuan* (*xiayuan jiazi*). In the *xinsi* 辛巳 year (the 18th of the sixty-year cycle), there will be famines, droughts, and floods, and there will be no harvests. In Shandong, people will eat humans, and wives and husbands will separate and so will sons and fathers. In the northern Zhili 直隸, people will die of famine. Not every mention of universal crises contains all the four features; some *baojuan* authors do not write the years and places in which the misfortunes are going to appear. However, like Daoist writers of the Six Dynasties, they think that diverse disasters will come at the same time at the end of kalpa.

Holding the same views, these two groups of authors interpret the Buddhist terms *sanzai* 三災 (three calamities) and *banan* 八難 (eight difficulties) in the same way. These two terms are borrowed in Daoist texts and precious volumes. In Buddhism, *sanzai* refers to fire, water, and wind, and *banan* means the eight conditions in which it is difficult to see a Buddha or hear his Dharma²¹¹. Both terms are however used as the collective nouns that refer to a group of disasters, and are often juxtaposed with other various disasters in our texts. The meaning of the term *banan* is distorted and no longer related to difficulties in learning teachings. In prophecies in Daoist texts of Six Dynasties and precious volumes, the terms sometimes simply refer to the simultaneous disasters in the profane world. The “Petition for Removing Three Calamities (Que sanzai zhang 卻三災章)” of the *Chisong zi zhang li* are not used for getting rid of three calamities only, but also other misfortunes, which include “public and private quarrels, floods, fires, tigers, wolves, worms, snacks and all various sufferings happening to the bodies (i.e. the

²¹¹ The eight conditions: in the hells; as hungry ghosts; as animals; in Uttarakuru (the northern continent where all is pleasant); in the long-life heavens (where life is long and easy); as deaf, blind, and dumb; as a worldly philosopher; in the intermediate period between a Buddha and his successor. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 41.

believers). 公私口舌水火虎狼蟲蛇一切眾厄在身”。(Chapter 3, 17b) The Heavenly Master can also use it for dissolving the danger of nine disasters (*jiue* 九厄) appearing in a period of *yuan* (i.e. five droughts and four floods)²¹² and hundreds of illnesses (*baibing* 百病). (18a-18b) The author in the *Jiulian jing* says that the three calamities (*sanzai*) come to the world during the time of transition between the Buddhas' ages. In addition to fires, floods, and winds, there are also other sufferings mentioned. The term *sanzai* simply is used for describing the world full of various crises. In the Daoist scriptures written in the Six Dynasties, the term *banan* refers to various misfortunes, not to eight difficult circumstances of learning the Dao.²¹³ Therefore, in the *Chisong zi zhang li*, it is juxtaposed with the other terms with similar meaning such as *wuzai* 五災 (five disasters), *liuhai* 六害 (six kinds of harm), and *shiku* 十苦 (ten sufferings).²¹⁴ This usage can also be found in precious volumes. In the *Jili zhenyan*, for example, the term is interpreted as eight misfortunes, including warfare, starvation, and imprisonment. (p.935) Eight misfortunes (*banan*) are also juxtaposed in the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan*, but they are written in seven-character verse.²¹⁵ (volume 1, 8b, p.33) Like the Daoist writers in the Six Dynasties, *baojuan* writers think that various natural disasters and misfortunes would come to the world at the same time at the end of the world. This is why they interpret the Buddhist terms *sanzai* and *banan* in the same way.

²¹² For disasters appearing a cycle in Daoism, read pp. 24-28 of chapter 1.

²¹³ The meaning of the term *banan* was probably changed later. In the dictionaries of Daoist terms I read, it has the meaning similar to that of the counterpart in Buddhism.

²¹⁴ *Chisong zi zhang li*, chapter 6, 5b & 8a.

²¹⁵ The eight misfortunes are as follows: 1) the demon kings will kill mankind; 2) wolves and tigers will be everywhere on mountains; 3) there will be thunder; 4) monsters will eat humans; 5) black smoke and wind will arise; 6) There will be thunder in immortals' dwellings (i.e. immortals' dwellings will not be peaceful); 7) flying knives will drop from heaven; 8) monkey and lion monsters will be released.

b) Comparison of Daoist and Sectarian Features to Buddhist Ones

No one can deny Buddhist influence on precious volumes, especially in *baojuan* writers' adoption of the term kalpa (*jie* 劫), a Buddhist unit of time. In sectarian writings, the length of Buddhas' reigns is measured with kalpas, and the present is described as *mojie* 末劫 (the end of kalpa). Besides, the character *jie* appears more frequently than *yuan*, and therefore Buddhist concept of time in precious volumes attracts modern scholars more than the Daoist term does.²¹⁶ The Buddhist expression “*guo xian weilai* 過現未來 (the past, the present, and the future)”, viewed as the three Buddha's ages, is often applied in *baojuan*. All these give readers an impression that Buddhist influence overwhelms that of Daoism in the views on time. Nevertheless, in Buddhism, it is seen that the entire cosmos passes through an ongoing series of cycles, instead of a linear process, which can be found in Daoism and teachings of popular sects in China. Jan Nattier has introduced Buddhist concept of time in her *Once Upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline*. She begins chapter 2 by these remarks:

The Buddhist religious tradition – indeed, Indian religious thought in general – is often described as lacking a true sense of history. Because the Indian view of time is cyclic rather than linear, so it is argued, no single historical event is decisive, no turning point unrepeatable, and no progress or decline in human culture truly significant. In short, the Buddhists, like the Hindus, simply have no interest in history. The contribution of Buddhism to human thought is thus not to be sought primarily in the realm of the historical, but in its perception of a reality transcending time, or of an unchanging pattern of flux.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ Susan Naquin, for example, discusses the concept of kalpa in writings of White Lotus religions, without mentioning Daoist influence. Susan Naquin, *Millenarian Rebellion in China: the Eight Trigrams Uprising of 1813* (New Haven: Yale University, 1976), p. 11.

²¹⁷ Jan Nattier, *Once Upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline* (Berkeley: Asian Humanities, 1991), p. 5.

Chapter 30 of the *Fozu tongji* tells us the processes of the past, the present, and the future, and deals with the present in detail.²¹⁸ The whole period of cosmic time undergoes four kalpas: *Vivarta kalpa* (*chengjie* 成劫; the formation kalpa), *Vivarta-siddha kalpa* (*zhujie* 住劫; the existence kalpa), *Samvarta kalpa* (*huaijie* 壞劫; the destruction kalpa), and *Samvarta-siddha kalpa* (*kongjie* 空劫; the annihilation kalpa). They are four stages of the formation of worlds to the end.²¹⁹ In each above kalpic cosmic period, there are twenty little kalpas (*xiaojie* 小劫; Skt. Antara-kalpa). The *Vivarta-siddha Kalpa* starts with diminution kalpa (*jianjie* 減劫) and ends with increment kalpa (*zengjie* 增劫), during which people's ages decrease from unlimited number to ten, and increase from ten to 80,000 respectively. The other eighteen are kalpas of increment and diminution (*zengjian jie* 增減劫), during which people's ages increase from ten to 80,000, and then decrease from 80,000 to ten.²²⁰ During the existence kalpa, humans experience the cyclic increase and decrease in age and the three little disasters (*xiao sanzai* 小三災; illness, warfare, and famine), which appear repeatedly in turn, and the Dharma of ten thousand Buddhas prospers and vanishes sequentially. In the present, *Bhadra kalpa* (*xianjie* 賢劫; the Sage Kalpa), the first Buddha is Krakucchanda (拘留孫 Juliusun) and the fourth Buddha is Śākyamuni, who is followed by Maitreya. In the destruction kalpa, the three great calamities (*dasan zai* 大三災; winds, floods, and fires) ruin gradually the sentient beings (*sattva*; *youqing* 有情) and finally the vessel world (*qishijie* 器世界).²²¹ Then the universe is vacant for twenty little kalpas. Another new cycle of cosmic development will start again after this. In Buddhist cosmology, the

²¹⁸ The *Fozu tongji* does not tell us every detail of the whole process from cosmic formation to the destruction. For example, it does not discuss much about *Vivarta kalpa*. Therefore, we have to consult other sources for our discussion.

²¹⁹ William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 224 & p. 237.

²²⁰ Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 3, p. 2812.

²²¹ *Qishijie* is the world as a vessel containing countries and peoples, i.e. the material world. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 446.

universe undergoes a series of unlimited cyclic stages, which are measured in an immense time scale.²²²

We can discover that, compared with those in Buddhism, the notions about time and historical development shown in Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties and precious volumes of the Ming-Qing period are much simpler. In Buddhism, the “*guo xian weilai*” are considered as three ages among unlimited cyclic ages only. In precious volumes, they represent all cosmic time. It is said that the universe linearly goes through three stages only. The reduction is formed according to Daoist notions about time. The time in precious volumes is measured with kalpa as it is in Buddhism, but the cosmic time is much shortened. In the preface of the *Jiulian baojuan*, the guarantee that “one will achieve Buddha position in the future eighty-one kalpas, accompany the golden lotus (i.e. the Ancient Buddha), and not be reborn below [in the mundane world] [當來八十一劫成佛位，相伴金蓮不下生。]” is made to the believers of the scripture. Eighty-one kalpas, the length of the reign of Maitreya, is represented as eternity by the writer, but this obviously cannot be found in Buddhism. Daoist notions about time therefore are important in the formation of the concept of time in *baojuan*, although this literature is ornamented with many Buddhist terms.

We should examine the features of Buddhist descriptions of universal disasters before we can understand thoroughly the importance of above-mentioned Daoist features in *baojuan*. The *Fayuan zhulin* tells us that, during the existence kalpa, the three little disasters appear in the world in turn. The order of the arrival of the disasters is different in various Buddhist

²²² Some illustrations are used in Buddhism for showing how immeasurably long a kalpa is. The length of a kalpa, for example, is as long as a mustard-seed kalpa (*jiezi jie* 芥子劫), which lasts for the time it would take to empty a city 100 yojanas (about 9 miles) square, by extracting a seed once every century. Or it is as long as a rock-wiping kalpa (*fushi jie* 拂石劫), which lasts for the time it would take to wear away an immense rock by rubbing it with a deva-garment (i.e. the garment of divine being, which is extremely light) once in a hundred years. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 147, p. 197, p. 260, & p. 280. Yiru 一如 (1351-1425), *Sanzhao fashu* 三藏法數 (Numbers [related to] the Dharma in *Tripitaka*) (Taipei: Ciyun shanzhuang, 1995), p. 247. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 3, pp. 2811-2812.

scriptures.²²³ According to the *Lishi apitan lun* (Discourse on the surpassing law of the establishment of the world 立世阿毘曇論), during the mid ninth kalpa, the illness kalpa (*jiyi jie* 疾疫劫; lit. epidemic disease kalpa) first appears and people suffer from various diseases.²²⁴ Humans do not have orthodox faith (*zhengfa* 正法). They are attached to desire and hold evil views; therefore, their bad karma increases and their age is reduced to ten only. Great countries are deserted, and few people live in small counties with great distance from each other. No one makes donation of remedies (*tangyao* 湯藥) and food. Numerous people die of illness in one night; their bodies are not buried and their white bones cover the earth. During the seven days at the end of the kalpa, almost all people die, except ten thousand people who do good deeds. Various good devas (*shan guishen* 善鬼神) protect them and regard them as the future seeds of humans (*danglai renzhong* 當來人種).²²⁵ After the seven days, great epidemic vanishes and all vicious ghosts go away. Their joyful minds arise when these people meet each other. They do good deeds and have moral minds. Therefore, the longest life span of humans becomes 20,000. Their good karma enables them to be reborn in the good states of existence after death. They are reincarnated in heavens as devas, and then as humans. After that, they return to heavens.²²⁶ The

²²³ The *Dīrghāgama* (*Chang ahan jing* 長阿含經), the long *āgamas*, for example, discusses the warfare kalpa, and then the famine kalpa and the disease kalpa. *Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:270a. The *Fozu tongji* discusses the famine kalpa first, and then the disease and the warfare kalpas. *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.49, no.2035:299b-299c.

²²⁴ The *Lishi apitan lun* is translated by Di Zhen 諦真 and is collected in volume 32 of the *Taishō Tripitaka*. It deals with Buddhist cosmology, which includes the discussion of the origin of Sumeruvāda (須彌山). Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 3, p. 2147. Abhidharma (*Apitan* 阿毘曇 or *Api damo* 阿毘達磨) is translated as surpassing law (*shengfa* 勝法), incomparable law (*wubi fa* 無比法), comparing the law (*duifa* 對法), or directional law (*xiangfa* 向法), which shows cause and effect. It is the discourse (*śāstras*), which discusses Buddhist philosophy or metaphysics and is defined as the law or truth which goes beyond or behind the law. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p288. Ren Jiyu 任繼愈, ed., *Zongjiao da cidian* 宗教大辭典 (Great dictionary of religions) (Shanghai: Shanghai cishu chubanshe, 1998), p. 21.

²²⁵ Good devas are the eight spirits who protect Buddhism. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 369.

²²⁶ *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:270a-270c. There are three good states of existences (*shandao* 善道): heaven state, the highest class of goodness rewarded with the deva life; human state, the middle class of goodness with a return to human life; *asura* (titanic demons; *axiulou* 阿修羅) state, the inferior class of goodness. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 62 & p. 285.

warfare kalpa (*daobing jie* 刀兵劫) will arise after the disease kalpa, and is followed by the famine kalpa (*jijin jie* 饑饉劫). The accounts of these two kalpas in the *Discourse on the surpassing law of the establishment of the world* are similar to that of the disease kalpa. The illness, the disastrous force that kills almost all humans, replaces by warfare during the warfare kalpa; it replaces by famine during the famine kalpa.²²⁷ At the end of each little disaster, humans will finally enjoy blessed lives, long life spans, and good reincarnations, all of which are caused by their good karma, after the disaster disappears and they lead moral lives. All descriptions of the little disasters have the same pattern. So, the order of the advent of the three great calamities during the destruction kalpa is standardized in our Buddhist scriptures. Fire will come up seven times after and before the flood. Flood will arise seven times before and after the wind. During the kalpa, the first of the four *dhyāna* heavens (*chuchen tian* 初禪天) will be destroyed after fire arises seven times. Then there will be a flood; after that there will be seven fires. After every seven fires, there will be a flood. After a flood appears seven times, the second *dhyāna* heaven (*erchen tian* 二禪天) will be destroyed, and there will be seven fires and then a wind. The third *dhyāna* heaven (*sanchen tian* 三禪天) will be ruined by the wind. There are 64 great calamities in total (56 fires, 7 floods, and 1 wind) in the destruction kalpa.²²⁸

We shall learn that Buddhist accounts do not carry any features of the description of universal crises that we find in Daoist texts and precious volumes. We certainly cannot expect that Buddhist scriptures contain heavenly stems and earthly branches and Chinese place names. Unlike Daoist texts and precious volumes, Buddhist scriptures do not clearly say that the three great calamities and the three little disasters come to the world right now or in near future. We

²²⁷ *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:270c-271b.

²²⁸ *Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:275b-275c. *Fozu tongji*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.49, no.2035:299b-299c. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 1, pp. 554-555 & vol. 3, pp. 2813. Only the fourth *dhyāna* heaven (*sichen tian* 四禪天) among the four *dhyāna* heavens will remain after the destruction kalpa, but it will vanish when the heaven destiny of it (*tianming* 天命) ends. The fourth *dhyāna* heaven cannot stay forever because of impermanence (*wuchang* 無常). *Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:275c.

can read in Buddhist scriptures that some special situations will happen during critical times.

The *Fozu tongji*, for example, reads:

減至三十歲。入末法三千一百年。人長三尺。時饑饉災起……減至二十歲。入末法四千一百年。人長二尺。時疾疫災起……減至十歲。入末法五千一百年。人長一尺。女人五月便嫁。時刀兵災起……(Chapter 31, 299b-299c)

[When humans' ages] decrease to thirty, [the world] has seen the age of degeneration of the Buddha-law (*mofo* 末法) for 3100 years. People are three feet tall only. At that time, the famine disaster appears.... [When humans' ages] decrease to twenty, [the world] has seen the age of degeneration of the Buddha-law for 4,100 years. People are two feet tall only. At that time, the disease disaster appears.... [When humans' ages] decrease to ten, [the world] has seen the age of degeneration of the Buddha-law for 5100 years. People are one foot tall only. Females marry when they are five-month old only. At that time, the warfare disaster occurs....

These situations cause readers to infer that the disasters are still far away.²²⁹ The end of the world, accompanied with the three great calamities, occurs even later and after immeasurable time in Buddhist predictions. Buddhist apocalypses therefore do not impress readers with the huge horror of imminent misfortunes as the predictions in Daoism and precious volumes do. Besides, compared with those of Daoism and sectarian writings, the accounts of universal disasters in Buddhist sūtras are well-organized and standardized. The three little disasters come up in the world one by one although their order is different in various Buddhist texts. The sequence of the arrival of the great calamities is the same in Buddhist texts; the fire arises first, and the flood and the wind then come up separately. In Daoist texts and precious volumes, it is said that the little disasters and great calamities appear together at the same time. The writers of

²²⁹ For example, according to the *Da piposha lun* 大毘婆沙論 (*Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā-sāstra*; an abbreviation of *Api damo da piposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論), the three little disasters come up when humans can live ten years only. The *Da piposha lun* is translated by Xuanzang 玄奘 and is collected in volume 217 of the *Taishō Tripitaka*. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 3, p. 2812 & p. 3642. Ren Jiyu, ed., *Zongjiao da cidian*, p. 151. Because Buddhist scriptures also contain the accounts of the situations appearing when Maitreya descends, Buddhists and modern scholars think that, according to Maitreya canons, Maitreya does not come at present, but in the remote future. Chen Hua 陳華, "Zhongguo lishi shang de Mile weilai jiushizhu 中國歷史上的彌勒: 未來佛與救世主 ([The image of] Maitreya, the future master and savior, in Chinese history)". *Lishi yuekan* 歷史月刊 (Historical Monthly), 86:58(1995). Jan Nattier, "The Meanings of the Maitreya Myth: A Typological Analysis", *Maitreya, the Future Buddha*, ed. Alan Sponberg & Helen Hardacre (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1988), p. 24.

them do not separate them into two groups of misfortunes coming up in different cosmic periods, as Buddhist writers do. Apart from the misfortunes described in Buddhist texts, many other disasters are created and declared to appear in the present or in the near future, as we mentioned above. Daoist and *baojuan* pictures do not carry any patterns of disasters as Buddhism ones do. It is astonishing that Daoist and *baojuan* writers have written much about various disasters, but the sorts of disasters in Buddhist predictions are relatively few.

Obviously, the Daoist mode of the description of misfortunes is greatly different from that of Buddhism. What makes *baojuan* writers adopt the indigenous mode instead of the foreign one? I cannot provide a complete answer to this question here, because this would involve the study of *baojuan* writers' knowledge of these two religions, and the availability of their canonical texts circulated among the popular sects.²³⁰ Studying these two topics is outside the scope of this thesis. If we do not take them into account, we shall learn that, by selecting Daoist pattern of narrative about the critical time instead of Buddhist one, *baojuan* writers can magnify the horror of the imminent destructions. By specifying the places and time of diverse disasters with the Chinese calendar and place names, the writers can horrify their readers and make them aware that converting to their sects immediately is the only way of escaping the universal ruin.

Part II: Comparison of Eschatological Teachings

a) Reasons for universal crises

In this part, I shall first examine the reasons *baojuan* writers provide for the end of the world, which are similar to those found in Daoist works. Then I shall discuss some new elements of sectarian eschatology, which can distinguish the explanations of universal miseries

²³⁰ It is not easy to study the whole picture of the Daoist and Buddhist texts circulated among the sects in the Ming and Qing from precious volumes only. Lo Qing quotes a large number of earlier books and tracts in his writings, but later *baojuan* writers do not quote other sources, except for a few who imitate Lo by citing him or the materials he quotes. Daniel Overmyer, "The Chiu-lien pao-ch'ian", *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 5.

in *baojuan* from that in Daoist tradition. As shown below, the ideas of hell and *mofa* 末法 (degeneration of the Buddha-law) are closely related to the accounts of the causes of disasters; therefore our final focus in this part is laid on how they are treated in Buddhist eschatology and how they are borrowed and changed in Daoist and sectarian texts.

i) Parallels and Differences in Daoist and Sectarian Explanations

Like the Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties, precious volumes contain many accounts of human misbehavior; human immorality is considered to be one of the causes of universal crises. As stated in chapter one, Daoist writers' criticisms of human corruption are based on Confucian values; the same can be said of sectarian writers' criticisms. We are told in *baojuan* that people at present do not act in accord with their status.²³¹ There is a passage written in verse (*ge* 歌) called "A song about the Mahāsattva [Guanyin 觀音]'s advice to people in the world 大士勸世歌" in the *Tianci jiujiu jing* 天賜救劫經 (The scripture on [how to] save oneself from the kalpa, granted by Heaven) and a part of it deals with people's lust for wealth.²³²

黎民百姓亂糊行……富貴貪財害貧賤。貧賤貪財昧良心。官長貪財□清正。差役貪財害良民。鄉長貪財害鄉里。匪徒貪財劫搶行。惡棍貪財害良善。學士貪財筆殺人。不遵法律無正道。一切貪財便虧心。

Common people act recklessly.... Rich [people] are greedy for wealth and [therefore] harm the poor and the humble. The poor and the humble are greedy for wealth and [therefore] act against their consciences. Officials and seniors are greedy for wealth and [therefore] are not incorruptible and upright. Official servants (*chaiyi* 差役) are greedy for wealth and [therefore] harm moral people. Country officers (*xiangzhang* 鄉長) are greedy for wealth and [therefore] harm their fellow villagers. Bandits are greedy for wealth and [therefore] robbery prospers. Bullies are greedy for wealth and [therefore]

²³¹ The *Mile chushi baojuan* contains the most detailed socially oriented criticism among sectarian *baojuan*. It has been discussed in Daniel Overmyer's *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 276-280.

²³² The *Tianci jiujiu jing* is collected in the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*. (vol.10) On the cover page, there is a reprint day, the *gengzi* 庚子 year of the Guangxu reign (1900).

harm moral people. Scholars are greedy for wealth and [therefore] kill others [by writing libels about others] with their pens [and making them be imprisoned]. They [all] do not obey the law and do not act in accord to right principles. All are greedy for wealth and therefore behave against their consciences. (2b-3a, pp.467-468)

Like Daoist writers in the Six Dynasties, *baojuan* writers think that the present is the age of corruption and people do not behave according to Confucian values.

Sectarian writers declare their teachings of their sects to be “right doctrines (*zhengfa* 正法)”, or “right way (*zhengdao* 正道)”, as Daoist writers do. The author of the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan* repeatedly urges people to “convert to the right way and become the disciples of the Imperial Apex (i.e. Yellow Heaven Way) 皈投正道，作為皇極弟子。” (volume 2, 9a, p.63)

The Vast Yang sect (*Hongyang jiao* 弘陽教) is described as the “Right-Teaching School of the Vast Yang (*Hongyang zhengjiao men* 弘陽正教門)” in their scriptures.²³³ Human’s disbelief to their own sects is as serious as the transgression of Confucian ethic, and both cause universal miseries. We can read the following in the *Mile chushi baojuan* of the Yuandun sect:

可歎迷失眾生飲酒食肉，不肯回心，在世眾生，人心萬惡，不信正道，天遣魔王下界，收滅中華惡人，疾病刀兵水火風災一切皆至。

It is regrettable that confused living beings drink and eat flesh, and do not reform their minds. The minds of all the living in the world are extremely evil; they do not believe the right way (i.e. Yuandun sect). Heaven orders demon kings to descend to [the mundane] region, and collect and remove the wicked in China. All disasters [such as] diseases, warfare, floods, fires, and winds will come to the world. (Chapter 2, 10a, p.319)

²³³ *Hongyang wudao mingxin jing* 弘陽悟道明心經 (The Vast Yang scripture on awakening to the Way and enlightening the mind; hereafter “the *Wudao mingxin jing*”), chapter 3, p. 58. Other Vast Yang scriptures such as the *Hongyang kugong wudao jing* 弘陽苦功悟道經 (The Vast Yang scripture on awakening to the Way through bitter toil; hereafter “the *Hongyang kugong jing*”) and the *Hongyang tanshi jing* 弘陽嘆世經 (The Vast Yang scripture of sorrow for the world) have the same preface. The preface tells us that the right teachings of the Vast Yang sect are rare and difficult to understand. This is also the theme of chapter 1 of the *Wudao mingxin jing*. For the discussion of the *Wudao mingxin jing*, read Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 332-334. For that of the other two texts, read pp. 332-328 and pp. 330-332.

In *baojuan* writers' condemnations, human disbelief in "right faith" means their leading lives of Buddhist monks and Daoist priests and their believing other popular sects.

Sectarian writers assert that their teachings are Dao 道 (Way), or Dharma, and their patriarchs are Buddhas. Many Buddhist and Daoist terms are also borrowed in their books. Buddhism, Daoism, and their believers, however, are often attacked and rejected. The Key Buddha of Tathāgata (Yaodi fo rulai 鑰鐺佛如來), Pujing, declares that his *Pujing baojuan* discusses "the penetration of the Way and cultivation (*wndao xiuxing* 悟道修行)" and "purification [brought by] conversion to the three [precious] ones (*qingjing sangui* 清淨三皈)". (Volume 1, chapter 7, 12a, p.56) He thinks that Buddhism and Daoism are inefficacious, and that their believers are misled and lose their true natures.²³⁴ (Volume 1, chapter 15, 28a, p.98) The real sangha does not refer to those who study scriptures, recite the Buddha's names (Amitāhba?), and wander around (*yunyou* 雲遊) or any other monks, but should refer to the three patriarchs of the Yellow Heaven Way.²³⁵ They have penetrated the true Way.²³⁶ (Volume 1, chapter 7, 12b-13b, pp.67-69) The author's vague, fragmentary remarks cannot give us a complete picture of views on these two religions held by the popular sects. The straightforward descriptions in the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan* 大聖彌勒化度寶卷 (The precious volume of salvation by the great saint Maitreya) and the *Mile chushi baojuan* tell us that monks' abandoning their family ties is one of the reasons

²³⁴ Besides these two religions, Confucianism is also criticized. It is said that people can hardly attain the same achievements of Confucius, the Lord Lao, and the Ancient Buddha (Śākyamuni?). Only the practices of Buddhism among the three religions are mentioned. Sitting down cross-legged in deep meditation (*canchan dazuo* 參禪打坐) and reading the Tripitaka are thought to be of no effect. (Volume 1, chapter 15, 28a, p. 98)

²³⁵ Puming, Puguang 普光, and Pujing. The term *sangui* in *qingjing sangui* should possibly mean conversion to the teachings of these three patriarchs. Puguang, née Wang, became the leader of the Yellow Heaven Way after her husband Puming, the founder of the sect, died. Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian nimen zongjiao*, pp. 217-218.

²³⁶ The attack on Buddhist masters can be found in the other text of the Yellow Heaven Way, the *Puming rulai wuwei leyi baojuan* 普明如來無爲了義寶卷 (The precious volume of the Tathāgata Puming who thoroughly understands the meaning of Wuwei; hereafter "the *Puming baojuan*"). It says that the sixth patriarch Huineng 慧能 of the Chan Buddhism has distorted the teachings of the first patriarch Damo 達摩. (chapter 36, p190) Scholars have different opinions of the authorship of the scripture. Some think that it is written by Puming; some consider it to be the text of Pujing. For the discussion of it, read Daniel Overmyer's *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 310-311, and Richard Shek's "Millenarianism Without Rebellion: the Huangtian Dao in the North China", *Modern China* 8(July 1982):319-324.

why they are attacked severely.²³⁷ A visit of Maitreya to a temple in Zhejiang 浙東 (the east of Zhejiang) is narrated in chapter 9 of the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan*. Maitreya's conversation with the monks there shows that, in the eyes of sectarian writers, monks do not take social responsibility: they are not loyal and do not support their filial duties. They should stay at home, attend to their parents, worship their ancestors, cultivate hard the soil, and get married for continuing and renewing their families. (66b-69b, pp.127-131) The monks are called the disciples of Śākyamuni, and the Buddhist practices such as sitting in deep mediation and reciting Buddhist scriptures and Buddha's name are thought to be taught by this Buddha.²³⁸ The author, however, claims that such practices are valueless. Maitreya says, "Since your master (Śākyamuni) and I rule mountains and rivers (i.e. the earth) and govern the world together, the number of you, traitorous disciples, who fall into purgatory is countless. 我與你師父同掌山河治世以來，你們逆徒墜落地獄不許其數。" Cultivation of inner alchemy is the way of turning misfortunes into blessings. "Chapter 5 [Discussing] Selected [Materials] About Buddhist Monks' and Daoist Priests' Enduring the [Last] Kalpa (Sengdao shoujie pinxuan diwu 僧道受劫品選第五)" of the *Mile chushi baojuan* deals with solely the misbehavior of Buddhist monk and Daoist priests. The author attacks them by describing the scene of their behavior seen by the Ancient Buddha Maitreya.

只見天下僧道住的名山洞府，居於雕樑畫棟硃臺漆椅，身穿綾羅紗緞綢衣，口喫不種梁食，受免糧田，享清閑福，上背父母恩義，次別四恩不報，或姦骨肉親人，或

²³⁷ The *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan* was possibly written in the eighteenth century, a later period of *baojuan* development. It has been discussed in Daniel L. Overmyer, "Messenger, Savior, and Revolutionary: Maitreya in Chinese Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", *Maitreya, the Future Buddha*, ed. Alan Sponberg & Helen Hardacre (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1988), pp. 123-124 & note 16. It is reprinted in volume 7 of the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*.

²³⁸ "[Recite] the *Śurangama [Sūtra]* (*Lingyan jing* 楞嚴經) by day and *Amitābha [sūtra]* (i.e. the *Smaller Sukhavati-Sūtra*; *Amituo jing* 阿彌陀經) at night. Repeat [the name of] the Buddha [Amitābha] by day and sit in deep mediation at night. [The purpose of doing these] is to penetrate [the matter of] life and death, accomplish the great affair (i.e. enlightenment), deliver and take one's parents from purgatory, and ascend to heaven together. 朝楞嚴晚彌陀，日念佛夜參禪，了生死，成大事，帶超父母，同登天堂。" (Chapter 9, 67a, p. 130) The possible reason why the monks and the Buddhist practices are connected with Śākyamuni is that the present age is thought to be his reign. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 403.

淫朋友良女，私通尼姑，殺生害命，不計其數，飲酒食肉，犯戒違法，亦爲喬賈，或做偷盜，又爲醫生，告狀興訟，趁奉官府，倚勢欺人，行善全無，作惡無數。

What [Maitreya] sees only is that Buddhist monks and Daoist priests in the world live in dwellings of caverns in famous mountains. They live in [the places in where] carved beams, ridgepoles decorated with drawings, vermilion terraces, and painted chairs are laid. They wear clothes made of silk, gauze, and satin. They eat but do not cultivate grains for food. They receive lands on which no grain tax are imposed [by emperors], and enjoy happiness in idleness. Firstly (lit. *shang* 上) they forget about (lit. *bei* 背; violate) their parents' kindness and their relation [to them]. Secondly, they abandon the four [kinds of] kindness (*sien* 四恩), and do not repay them.²³⁹ They have adulterous affairs with their flesh and blood (*gurou* 骨肉; the near kin) and relatives, or they have illicit relations with virtuous daughters (*liangnu* 良女) of their friends. They have illicit intercourse with nuns. The living beings they kill and the lives [of the living beings] they injure are numberless. They drink alcohol and eat meat; they violate the precepts and break the law. They also work as merchants, or thieves and robbers. They are quacks as well. They sue and bring lawsuits. They take advantage of favorable situations and flatter officers [in order to] rely on their power to bully others. They do not do good deeds at all, but have done numberless evils. (16a-16b, p. 161)

Those criticized above seem to include fake Buddhist monks and Daoist priests. The author's exaggerated account is reminiscent of the records of the corruption of the Buddhist and Daoist clergy in the Ming and Qing.²⁴⁰ They are often excluded from the possibility of salvation in

²³⁹ *Sien* is a Buddhist term, which refers to *guowang en* 國王恩 (the kindness of the king), *fumu en* 父母恩 (the kindness of parents), *shiyu en* 師友恩 (the kindness of teachers and friends), and *tanyue en* 檀越恩 (the kindness of almsgivers). Yiru, *Sanzhao fashu*, p. 157.

²⁴⁰ The corruption of a large number of corrupted Buddhist monks and Daoist priests aroused public hostility toward them in the Ming and Qing. It is concluded that this is the reason why many common people joined popular sects in order to seek salvation, not Daoism and Buddhism. Noguchi Tetsurō. Feng Zuozhe trans., "Daojiao he minzhong zongjiao jieshe 道教和民眾宗教結社 (Daoism and popular religious sects)", 166-168. Wang Ka, ed., *Zhongguo daojiao jichu zhishi*, pp. 83-85. A number of sect leaders and members in the Ming and Qing were Buddhist monks and Daoist priests. Li Xiangshan 李向善, for example, the founder of the Jiugong Way, led the life of a monk in the Nanshan Temple (Nanshan si 南山寺) in the Mount Wutai (Wutai shan 五台山). His hagiography can be found in the *Lishi baojuan* 立世寶卷 (The precious volume on establishing a [new] world), which was produced in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. The text is discussed in Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 274-275. Daniel L. Overmyer, "Messenger, Savior, and Revolutionary: Maitreya in Chinese Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", p. 127. Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao* 中國民間秘密宗教 (Popular secret

sectarian teachings. After the above-cited passage, the author of the *Mile chushi baojuan* continues by saying that they will be punished and extinguished unless they return to lay lives, convert to the Yuandun sect, and take filial responsibility. On the opening pages of the *Jiulian jing*, we read:

It (i.e. the *Jiulian jing*) does not save those with no karmic affinity, it does not save those who are not so destined, it doesn't save monks and nuns and nonbelievers (*waitao* 外道), and it doesn't save those who oppose this book. It only saves buddhas and patriarchs in each household [which here refers to sect member].²⁴¹

Sectarian teachings are the only key to salvation in the end of the world period; therefore, sect participants are superior to the adopters of other religions and have authority on preaching the "right faith".

The remarks on other popular sects in precious volumes are relatively fewer and less cutting. Generally, *baojuan* writers seldom make lengthy condemnations of other sects and the members of their sects. They call them "the ways of outsiders (*waidao* 外道)", "evil sects (*xiezhong* 邪宗)", "evil doctrines (*xiefu* 邪法)", or they simply use a neutral term "various schools and sects (*zhujia zongmen* 諸家宗門)" without mentioning specific sects. The *Guiyi zhujie tisheng genji* 皈依註解提聖根基 ([The scripture] on the annotation of conversion and the foundation of bringing oneself up to holiness) provides a statement of "right faith" and "separate schools and the faiths of outsiders (*biemin waijiao* 別門外教)".²⁴² The "right faith" is preached compassionately by the supreme god Eternal Grandfather (Laoye 老爺) for delivering universal living beings, nourishing and producing myriad things, forgiving humans their wickedness, and separating the

religions in China) (Taipei: Nantian shuju youxian gongsi, 1996), pp. 181-182. Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, p. 218.

²⁴¹ The translation is taken from Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 141.

²⁴² It is the text of the Jinchuang sect without chapter division. On the cover page of the edition collected in volume 7 of the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, the title of the scripture and a hall name Cunzhai fotang 存齋佛堂 (Fast-maintaining Buddhist hall) can be found in handwriting. Wang Jianchuan & Lin Wanchuan, ed., *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, vol. 1, p. 4.

good and the evil. The leaders of “separate schools and the faiths of outsiders” intend to gain false reputation (*xuming* 虛名); they deceive people into clinging to form (*youxiang* 有相, faith in eternity of form) and confuse the “right faith (i.e. the Jinchuang sect)”. They are the ways of outsiders and evil sects. Misled members believe in form and do not trust in their own true nature. (p.910) Gong Chang gives the following remarks in his *Longhua jing*:

對聖言說：其實難度。諸家宗門極多，狐假虎威，能談慣論，開言合道，不信後天正法……

[Gong Chang] said to the holy [Eternal Mother], “Actually it is difficult to deliver [people in the Eastern Land]. There are very many various schools and sects. They borrow others’ influence in order to pretend to be powerful. They are good talkers and are used to disputing; [therefore,] their words are [seemingly] in accord with the Dao when they start conversation. They do not believe in “the orthodox faith of the Latter Realm (*houtian zhengfa* 後天正法)”²⁴³” (volume 3, chapter 15, 16a)

那怕諸家門頭，大善知識，能談慣講，不過口頭三昧，末後一著難得了手，就是前天開荒……天下領船知識，難明古佛聖意。

Although the leaders of various schools and sects and moral senior intellects (*da shan zhishi* 善大知識) are good talker and are used to disputing; [their achievements are] merely the seeming concentration of the mind (*koutou sanmei* 口頭三昧).²⁴⁴ It is difficult for them to succeed in the final step (i.e. enlightenment). [Their practices] are exactly the opening-up cultivation of the Former Realm (*qiantian kaihuang xiuxing* 前天開荒修行).... The intellects who lead [Dharma] ships in the world can hardly understand the holy intention of the Ancient Buddha. (volume 3, chapter 15, 18a)

Baojuan writers think that the patriarchs of other sects pollute the world by pretending to be the masters of true beliefs, and the followers can never attain salvation but have only wasted their

²⁴³ In the *Longhua jing*, the Latter Realm is used for describing the magic and teachings the Eternal Mother transmits to Gong Chang and is contrasted with the Former Realm (*qiantian* 前天), which refers to those of other sects. Chapter 5 of the scripture discusses Gong Chang’s audience with the Eternal Mother in the Native Place (*jiaxiang* 家鄉). The Mother describes the teachings Patriarch Wang of Stone Buddha (Shifo Wangzu 石佛王祖) taught to Gong Chang as the “opening-up skills of the Former Realm (*qiantian kaihuang gongfu* 前天開荒功夫)”. Those transmitted by the Mother are called “the news for the Latter Realm (*houtian xiaoxi* 後天消息)”. (40b)

²⁴⁴ *Sanmei* (*samādhi*) means intent contemplation. The term here possibly is a misprint for another one *sanwei* 三昧, which means the three flavors. They are the monastic life, reading the scriptures, and meditation. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 62 & pp. 66-67.

efforts and money. In precious volumes, it is seldom stated that the members of other sects will be wiped out as Buddhist monks and Daoist priests will be. It seems that the writers tolerate the other popular sects and their criticisms of the followers and the masters of them are not as sharp as those of Buddhist monks and Daoist priests. Therefore, in the *Jiulian jing*, we are told that the patriarchs are sent down to the profane world by the Eternal Mother. In chapter 3, the Mother tells the future Buddha Maitreya that she has sent eighty-one false Amitābhas (*jia Mituo* 假彌陀), thirty-six fake *shouyuan* (*shouyuan* 收源, [the patriarchs] responsible for gathering together the primal ones), and the celestial demons of five-direction stars (*wudou tianmo* 五斗天魔) to the world.²⁴⁵ They are ordered to “spread (*hong* 烘 = *hong* 弘?) the reputation [of the right faith] and expound the doctrines (*hongmin chanjiao* 烘名闡教)” and spread the words of the Eternal Mother. Chapter 17 starts with Maitreya’s conversation with eight men. At present there are 3,000 divergent (*bangmen* 傍門) proclaiming their teaching and 1,000 petty teachings (*xiaojiao* 小教) contending for primacy. They all claim to be *shouyuan zu* 收圓祖 (the patriarch [responsible for] the collection [of mankind] and the completion of [salvation]). The eight men ask Maitreya when they will attain realization and return to the source (i.e. the Nature Place) in this disorder situation. He replies that the Mother has granted thirty-six patriarchs various valuables so that they can save humans in the world. However, these patriarchs do not “seek their roots and recognize the [true] Patriarch (i.e. the Mother) (尋根認祖)”, but use the title of the patriarch (*zuhao* 祖號; i.e. Maitreya). Sectarian writers state that only the members of their own sects only are permitted to enter the Native Place, and those of other sects are not allowed. Both the *Longhua jing* and the *Xiaoshi Muren kaishan baojuan* 銷釋木人開山寶卷 (The precious volume on Muren’s founding the [Yuandun] sect; hereafter “the *Muren baojuan*”),

²⁴⁵ The celestial demons seem to be created according to the lords of five-direction constellation, Daoist deities (*Wudou xingjun* 五斗星君), who are in control of stars in the five directions. For details of the Daoist deities, read Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 99.

written by Gong Chang's disciple, tells us that sectarian patriarchs will be examined.²⁴⁶ Only those with cultivation and attainments (*xiuzheng* 修証) will be admitted the Cloud City (*yuncheng* 雲城), paradise, and others will be repelled. Obviously only the members of the Yuandun sect belong to the former. (*Longhua ling*, chapter 10, *Muren kaishan baojuan*, chapter 11)

In precious volumes Buddhist monks and Daoist priests are often treated as sinners, and they are condemned for their ineffectual practices and mainly for the various ways of their misbehavior. However, the misdeeds of the leaders of other sects and their followers are mentioned much less frequently. The criticisms of them are less severe than those of the clergymen of the two orthodox religions. They are often urged to leave their sects only because their practices can hardly enable them to leave the profane world full of disasters.

Compared with sectarian writers, Daoist believers do not reject and are not completely intolerant of Buddhism and other Daoist schools. In the Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties, as shown in chapter 1, the Lingbao school criticizes the Shangqing school for aiming only at personal cultivation. The members of the latter school can still be earthly divinities. The Tianshi school say that Buddhism was set up by the Lord Lao after he goes to the west. In sectarian scriptures, however, it is said that people who believe in other sects and the two orthodox religions can hardly get any achievements in cultivation.

Baojuan writers hold the Daoist ancient belief that the universe interacts with human affairs. Therefore they often warn their readers that Heaven and deities, the inspectors for human misdeeds, will give disasters in order to punish the evil. Chapter 22 of the *Longhua jing* tells us various kinds of human misbehavior. They can be divided into three groups: being disrespectful

²⁴⁶ *Xiaoshi* is an usual expression applied in the titles of precious volumes, like another one *foshuo* 佛說 (Buddha preaches). In Buddhism, it means explanation. Pu Wenqi thinks that it can be interpreted as liberation (*xiao*) and the removal of disasters (*shi*). *Baojuan* writers possibly equate it to another term *xiaoshi* 消釋 (removal). Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, p. 352. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 445.

to and offending deities, disobeying Confucian values, and spoiling resources.²⁴⁷ Heaven hence is annoyed with humans and punish them by making them suffer.

人心改變，天心動怒，凡心改變，聖心無情，惱怒天神，降下災殃，三災八難，瘟疫流行，末劫臨頭，折磨眾生，百般苦楚……

People's minds have changed, [and thus] Heaven is angry. The nature of mundane people has changed, [and thus] the deities do not need to have mercy in their mind. [Humans' behavior] angers celestial deities, [who therefore] send down disasters. Three calamities, eight difficulties, and plagues circulate. The last kalpa is imminent and torments living beings, [who therefore have to endure] hundreds of kinds of sufferings... In the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan*, besides Heaven, natural phenomena are personified and deified; they become overseers. (chapter 2, 20a, p. 106 & chapter 3, 35b, p. 114) The Jade Emperor (Yudi 玉帝) was upgraded to the supreme deity of bureaucracy in outer world by Zhenzong 真宗 in the Song.²⁴⁸ In the *Tianci jiujiu jing*, the Jade Emperor takes the role of Heaven; he possesses the right to punish humans by sending down natural calamities and sufferings caused by vicious animals.²⁴⁹

In the Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties, the purposes of misfortunes are to exterminate the evil and separate them from the virtuous forever, as mentioned in chapter one. Although *baojuan* writers do not mention that misfortunes are used for dividing the moral from the evil, they clearly state that disasters are imposed on the evil in order to rid the world of them. The *Wugong mojie jing* reads as follow:

天差魔王巡天下，鬼神一切怕。天差魔王滅惡人，死盡化灰塵。積善之家長吉慶……凶惡滅盡。善者常存，增福延壽。惡心害眾，當時滅絕。

²⁴⁷ "People forsake and throw away five grains, rice, noodles, oil, and salt, and [wastefully] cut silks into pieces. They berate wind, scold rain, blame Heaven and hate Earth. They do not respect the three treasures (Buddha, Dharma, and monks): deceiving deities, destroying their images, slandering monks, and attacking Dharma. They bully and oppress good, moral people, and repeatedly take advantage of good people. They do not take filial responsibility for their parents and do not have affection toward their six kinds of relations. They are vicious-minded like tigers and hurt others with evil intentions. 拋撒五穀米麵油鹽，碎剪綾羅。呵風罵雨，怨天恨地，不敬三寶，欺神滅像，毀僧謗法。欺壓良善，欺弄好人，不孝父母，六親無情，心如狼虎，惡意傷人。"

²⁴⁸ Wang Ka, ed., *Zhongguo daojiao jichu zhishi*, pp. 262-263.

²⁴⁹ *Tianci jiujiu jing*, 5b-6b (p. 469), 10b (p. 471).

Heaven orders demon kings to inspect the world. Ghosts, deities, and all [living beings] are afraid. Heaven orders demon kings to exterminate the wicked, [who] will die out and turn into dust. Families who have accumulated good deeds will [enjoy] auspicious [lives] and rejoice forever.... All fierce and wicked people will be destroyed. Moral people will exist forever; their good fortune will increase and their lives will expand. [Those] who have evil will and harm others will be extinct at that time (12b-13a, p. 281, 21b-22a, p. 286)

Chapter 2 of the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan* contains the similar message that Heaven commands the Plague Board (Wenpu 瘟部) to “collect and exterminate the wicked 收滅惡人” in order to make the world return to peace. People can avoid sufferings only by repenting their sins and conducting themselves morally. (20a, p. 106) *Baojuan* writers often predict in a firm tone that moral people will certainly enjoy prosperity, and depraved ones will endure everlasting sufferings as the penalty for their sins. The *Pujing baojuan* reads:

眾人遭難，善歸天堂成佛，惡人遭懲往苦海裡翻，惡有惡報，善有善緣。

All people encounter difficulties. Good people will ascend to heaven and become buddhas; bad ones make (lit. *zao* 遭 = *zao* 造 ?) fault and will fall into and be tossed in the ocean of misery. The evil is rewarded with evil retribution, and the good is rewarded with good causes (*yuan* 緣)²⁵⁰. (volume 1, chapter 5, 10b, p. 63)

We would discover that eschatological descriptions in sectarian writings are closely related to the Chinese views on retributive justice; the appearance of disasters is described as a tool protecting morality and purifying the corrupt world. These are also the features of Daoist eschatology.²⁵¹

Apart from human depravity, sectarian writers consider the exhaustion of the world as the cause of universal disasters, as Daoist writers of the Six Dynasties do. However, they neither

²⁵⁰ *Yuan* here means the causes of good effects or simply good fortunes. In Buddhism, *yuan* (*pratyaya*) is the circumstantial, conditioning, or secondary cause, in contrast with *yin* 因 (*hetu*), which is the direct or fundamental cause. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 440.

²⁵¹ The Chinese concepts of retribution for sins and requital of good deeds can be traced back to the ancient tradition. They did not originate in Daoism or Buddhism, but they were enriched by these two religions. For details, read Liu Daochao 劉道超, *Zhongguo shan baoying xisu* 中國善惡報應習俗 (The Chinese custom of repaying good and bad [deeds]) (Taipei: Wenjin chubanshe, 1992), pp. 12-20, pp. 41-52, pp. 81-112.

hold the Daoist idea of *yang* nine nor generally create any delicate, complex notion of cyclic world-wide prosperity and destruction. The precious volumes I have read contain no schedule of the end of world; most of them include fragmentary mentions that the world is destined for decay and devastation. This is a necessary stage in cosmic process. The *Pujing baojuan* and the *Jiulian jing* contain similar explanations of disasters.

三世佛掌乾坤，輪流轉換。天有老，地有破，人有轉生。

The three Buddhas of three stages govern the *qian* 乾 (male element) and the *kun* 坤 (female element) (i.e. the universe) in rotation. Heaven will age; Earth will be destroyed. Humans have to be reborn. (*Pujing baojuan*, chapter 18, 33a-33b, pp. 108-109)

For all the three buddhas, there is a time of decay and destruction, and there are disasters in each of the three apex periods.... When there is destruction in Heaven, the stars are in disorder; when there is destruction on Earth, the myriad creatures cannot live. When there is destruction in the world, then [all in] the eight directions contend. When there is destruction among humans, then birth-and death are impure. At the interchange of the three periods of cosmic time, when the kalpa is complete, the three disasters arise and disorder the *sahā* world (*sahāloka*) [=this world of rebirth]. (*Jiulian jing*, chapter 11)²⁵²

After the above passages, both books continue with the descriptions of calamities. In the

Hunyuan hongyang fo rulai wuji piaogao zu linfan jing 混元弘陽佛如來無極飄高祖臨凡經

(The scripture of the descent to the ordinary [world] of Piaogao, the Patriarch of the Limitless, the Chaotic Origin Vast Yang Buddha Tathagata; hereafter “the *Piaogao jing*”), Piaogao, the founder of the Vast Yang sect, simply writes, “Heaven will be destroyed; Earth will decay.

Kindness and affection (*enqing* 恩情) will be cut off. 天有破，地有壞，恩情有斷。”²⁵³

(Chapter 2, p. 698) The language of the above quotations is reminiscent of the sentences in the Daoist text *Shangpin miaojing*, which reads:

²⁵² The translation is taken from Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 158.

²⁵³ The discussion of the scripture can be found in Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 328-330.

道言：夫天地運度亦有否終，日月五星亦有虧盈，至聖神人亦有休否，末學之夫亦有疾傷。

Dao says, "It is the destiny (*yundu* 運度 = *yundao* 運道?) of Heaven and Earth that they will also decay and end. The sun, the moon, and the five planets (*xuxing* 五星 = Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, and Saturn) will also wax and wane. The holiest immortals will also die and be weak. The literati in the last age (*moxue zhi fu* 末學之夫) will also get illness and injury. (chapter 1, 13b)

Sometimes *baojuan* writers contrast the impermanent existence of the universe with everlasting achievements and immortality the believers would gain after following sectarian practices. In chapter 3 of one of his other books, the *Hongyang tanshi jing*, Piaogao emphasizes that the world will fall into ruin, and so will all human bodies. Humans hence should give up the attachment to living in this impermanent world and convert to the Vast Yang teachings immediately in order to escape the last kalpa. (p. 727) In chapter 7, he repeats the same idea and mentions a number of Buddhas, Daoist saints, emperors, historical people as examples. They abandon the throne and worldly enjoyment, and take religious cultivation. (p. 733) The author of the *Mile chushi baojuan* mentions the impermanence of Heaven and Earth so as to set off the eternal existence of humans in the age of the future Buddha. Their hair and teeth will be renewed when they are 9,000 years old; their bodies will never decay. (Chapter 18) Human corruption and exhaustion of the world are thought to be the causes of calamities and not to contradict each other; therefore, they both appear in sectarian eschatology as they do in our Daoist works of the Six Dynasties.

There are some distinctive features of sectarian explanation of universal crises, which do not appear in Daoist eschatological works. *Baojuan* writers do not merely rewrite Daoist ideas in plain language. Not only do they base themselves on the causes provided in Daoist eschatology, but they also add some new elements and the borrowings from Buddhism. The Daoist ideas stated in last chapter and above are enriched and altered, and sectarian eschatology hence is different from the Daoist.

One of the remarkable differences between the condemnations of human depravity in precious volumes and in the Daoist works of the Six Dynasties is that in *baojuan* they are often mingled with sectarian cosmology. In *baojuan*, the formation and development of the profane world are accompanied by human degeneracy. We discover the views of popular sects on the origin of human corruption in their depictions of the process of the creation of world. *Baojuan* writers believe that humans lose their true nature and cling to worldly enjoyments since they have been living in this mundane world since it was created. In their eyes, humans' descent from the Native Place brings their degeneration. Wickedness has already appeared since the beginning of the world. This can be regarded as one of the reasons why sect believers generally do not hold nostalgia for the past.

The *Longhua jing* contains the most complete discussion of creation mythology in *baojuan* literature composed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²⁵⁴ In chapter 2, we are told that the Eternal Mother produces the *yin* and the *yang*, and names them Nüwa 女媧 and Fuxi 伏羲. They are ordered to get married, and then they give birth to 9,600,000,000 imperial-womb children. Since the Eastern Land is empty, the sons and daughters are ordered by the Eternal Mother to live there. They rely on their treasures and their light-covered bodies to travel back and forth between the Eastern Land and the Western Regions without the will to stay in the world. Therefore, the Eternal Mother ushers them to the Light-Removing Terrace (Xieguang Tai 卸光臺) of the Mount Brightness and Shadow (Yingming Shan 明影山), orders the Dharmapalas (Dharma Protectors) to take away their halos, their five-colored light, and the wheels they travel by and banishes them to the Eastern Land. The scripture then illogically says that the Eternal Mother solemnly tells her children to return immediately after having arrived in

²⁵⁴ Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 260.

the Land, but it does not provide any reason.²⁵⁵ It continues with an attack on the misdeeds of the children in the profane world:

The Mother heard that when they came to the Eastern Land they married, and wine, sex, wealth, and anger blocked their perfect hearts.... Sons and daughters of the Native Place were emotionally attached to the red dust [world]. They entered wombs [in rebirth] and buried their divine roots. Thus they have acted until today. Their Amitābha self-natures have fallen into the sea of suffering, where they have been profoundly lost and submerged [i.e., infatuated] for accumulated eons. Happy in the Eastern Land, they do not think of the Eternal One, and so are endlessly reborn and dying in samsāra.²⁵⁶

The account of the beginning of the world in the *Jiulian jing* is simpler without many embellishments. Since the world is desolate and empty without humans and other creatures, the World-Honored One (Shizun 世尊; Skt. Bhagavat) dispatches 9,600,000,000 immortals, buddhas, patriarchs, and bodhisattvas to the world. They are transformed into males and females, and form couples. Like the *Longhua jing*, the *Jiulian jing* then deals with human degeneration after it discusses how they come to the Eastern Land. It is said that they are greedy for worldly affections, and do not think of returning to their roots (the Native Place). They are lost and do not awake to their true natures. (chapter 1) In the *Guiyi zhujie tisheng genji*, it is said that the supreme god Eternal Grandfather scatters the jewels, wealth, five grains, flowers, and fruits of the Heaven region (*tianjie* 天界) over the Eastern Land in order to aid his sons and daughters (*ji ernü* 濟兒女) and stabilize the living beings in the world (*anding shijie xingming* 安定世界性命). However, there are wine, sex, wealth, and temper (*jiuse caiqi* 酒色財氣); his children are therefore attached to the world and deluded with the affiliations with this dust world (*chenyuan* 塵緣). They do not think of returning to the Native Place. (p. 911)

²⁵⁵ 「母設權智引兒女到影明山。卸光臺。令護法把兒女頂上圖光摘去。收下身中五彩。拘了腳下二崙。貶在東土。母在家鄉吩咐兒女。你到東土。即便迴程。」 (chapter 2)

²⁵⁶ The translation is taken from Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 262.

Following sectarian teachings, including leading moral lives, is interpreted as a road to return to the Native Place and reunion with the Eternal Mother, or other supreme gods. Not every sectarian scripture contains a complete picture of the creation of the world like those we discussed above. One discovers, however, that sectarian writers often give exhortation on morality in the scriptures in the name of the creator, and frequently mention the intimate relation between mother and children so as to make readers awake to their “real” identities and true natures. The author of the *Lishi baojuan*, for example, says firstly that various buddhas, patriarchs, and bodhisattvas are reborn and become common people in the world. Their bad karma increases more and more when they experience transmigration in many lives. Then he attacks various ways of human depravity, and tells us that the Eternal Mother has descended to the world in order to save the sons and daughters, 200,000, 000 of whom have returned to the Heavenly Palace. The Mother has also transmitted the Great Way (*dadao* 大道) to Li Xiangshan, the Shouyuan Patriarch (*Shouyuan zu* 收元祖; the patriarch responsible for collecting the primal [ones]), who has come to the mundane world and is responsible for delivering the remaining humans. (p. 7-8) The author of the *Puming baojuan* repeatedly urges readers to detach themselves from worldly sentiment and desire, not to commit crimes, and to follow the practices of inner alchemy, and promises them that they will reunite with the Eternal Mother and enjoy longevity in the Native Place.

Apart from the above reasons, which are stated in both Daoist and sectarian literatures, deities’ mistakes are thought to result in the coming of universal crises by *baojuan* writers. This is one of the features that distinguish the eschatological views in *baojuan* from those in Daoist works. Not only does the author of the *Longhua jing* emphasize that misfortunes result from human corruption, but he also mentions that the imperfect establishment of the world by deities

brings the three calamities and the eight difficulties.²⁵⁷ As stated above, although Śākyamuni is thought to be the master of the present, he is seldom blamed for the present sufferings in precious volumes, except in the *Mile chushi baojuan* and the *Mile xiasheng jing*. In these two texts, it is said that he are responsible for all miseries because he has stolen Maitreya's flower.²⁵⁸ In our discussion of sectarian creation mythology, one would easily infer that the Eternal Mother, or the creator, should assume part of responsibility for the end of the world and collective disasters. However, *baojuan* writers usually depict the Mother, as well as Maitreya, as the incarnation of great compassion, and seldom classify her with other deities, who are described as flesh and blood beings and would make mistakes occasionally. Therefore, she is not blamed at all although her dispatching the children to the world brings the corruption of mankind in the creation mythology of precious volumes. In addition, from the above-cited passages in which Heaven is often described as a severe punisher, we find that the Eternal Mother seldom takes this role. The image of the Mother as weeping in the Native Place for her children and longing for reunion with them appears in sectarian writings frequently.

²⁵⁷ In chapter 22, we are told that the sky lacks one more part (*tianshao yikong* 天少一空) when the Non-Appropriation Buddha (Wudang Fo 無當佛) establishes Heaven and Earth. The world has been depending on the Lord Lao's keeping the divine wind (*shenfeng* 神風) off. Zheng Nüwa 張女媧 and Li Fuxi 李伏羲 can repair Heaven and Earth but there is one hole fewer in the Southeast. The author then says, "The ancient sages could not get overall appropriateness even though they ruled Heaven and Earth, let alone we mundane people, [who are] the creatures in the earth [only, and definitely cannot create a perfect world]. 古聖人治天地未得全可，何況咱凡夫大地眾生。" The Lord Lao later leaves; the wind thus blows and misfortunes arise.

²⁵⁸ We can read the following in chapter 1 of the *Mile chushi baojuan*:

我心雖在入定，天眼亦見吾弟偷移龍華，其花不悅，光明減少。今將世界付與你管惜乎，嗚呼！偷花之意不能全美，三千年間眾生貧富苦樂不同，五穀少收，四民不安，國家爭競不甯，賊盜最多，世間眾生受苦無窮，後被魔王攪亂，再有三災八難，世間眾生又遭末劫，都是今日之過也。

[Maitreya says,] "Although I had entered into meditation, I could see with my heavenly eyes (the deva-eye; *tianyan* 天眼) that my brother [Śākyamuni] had secretly removed [my] dragon flower. Besides, the flower is not pleasant and its light becomes dim. Ruling and cherishing the world will be now assigned to you (Śākyamuni). Alas, the intention of stealing the flower cannot result in perfection [in ruling the world]. In the 3,000 years of [your reign], living beings suffer from distinction between the poor and the rich and between the sad and the happy. The harvests of five grains will be poor. People of the four classes (the gentry, peasants, workers, and merchants) will be uneasy. [People in] the state will compete and will not be calm. Most people are bandits. Living beings in the world will endure unlimited suffering. Then they will be disturbed by demon kings. Besides, there will be the three calamities and the eight difficulties. Living beings will also experience the last kalpa. All these results from the faults [you made] today. (7a-7b, pp. 313-314)

Similar account can be found in chapter 5 of the *Mile xiasheng jing*.

Not only do *baojuan* writers borrow the Confucian ethic, but they also absorb Buddhist precepts and interpret them in their own ways. Their attitudes towards killing living things can demonstrate this point. The Daoist writers of the Six Dynasties do not mention killing in their texts. The author of the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan*, for example, emphasizes that all living beings have Buddha natures and consciences, and they enjoy being alive and fear death. He also gives a list of points as follows.

論無始，生天地，人倫萬物。人與物，萬劫來，本是同生。人也是，佛也同，貪生怕死。論爲人，與物命，一體同視。邈太上，李老君，好生之德。體觀音，慈悲主，救苦之心。且人生，天地間，一場春夢。又何須，造惡孽，殺害生靈？

[Let me] discuss the non-beginning period, in which Heaven and Earth were born and so were human relations and the myriad things. Humans and [other] beings have originally been of the same root for ten thousand kalpas. Humans, as well as Buddhas, desire being alive and fear death. [Let me] argue that being humans is the same as being creatures (lit. *wuming* 物命; the lives of creatures); both should be treated in unity without distinction.

[We should] follow the virtue of loving the welfare [of all beings preached by] the Venerable Lord Li (i.e. the Lord Lao), which is the Most High One. [We should also] understand the Compassion Master Guanyin's mind about saving [all beings] from suffering. Besides, human lives in the world are [as short as] spring dreams. Why do we need to make vicious sins by killing living beings? (volume 1, 41a-41b, p. 49)

The author continues his text by mentioning that people should deliver their dead parents from purgatory and follow the cultivation of the Confucian school (*Rumen xiuxing* 儒門修行). Only confused people say that Heaven gives birth to animals in order to let humans eat their flesh. People who eat them will get retribution for their sins and will be punished in purgatory. (41b-42b, pp. 49-50) The saints of Daoism and the bodhisattvas of Buddhism are used for supporting fasting; the teachings of two religions and Confucianism are confused.

Since Confucian ethics and Buddhist precepts applied in precious volumes have been changed in various texts, it is difficult to judge whether sectarian teachings are subversive to the traditional society in China, or whether they are conservative. On one hand, as shown in the

contents of the texts, some popular sects challenged the imperial state and threatened the institution of families.²⁵⁹ The explicit statements of overthrowing the Qing state in the *Lishi baojuan* of the Jiugong dao is one of the few examples showing the subversiveness of sectarian doctrines. On the other hand, we can find some sentences in the texts written intentionally by *baojuan* writers for flattering the state and expressing their obedience to it. The Huangtian dao was thought to usurp privileges of the authority; the members of the sect however did not revolt and take any antigovernment actions.²⁶⁰ Besides, in the preface of the *Pujing baojuan*, Pujing writes that “firstly [the book] does not talk the prosperity and decline of the emperor (i.e. the state); secondly, it does not discuss army, horses (i.e. armaments), and warfare. 一不談國王興廢，二不論士馬刀兵。” He also wishes for the long reign of the emperor and a stable society in which people of every class are content with their own livelihoods without suffering from disasters and the social norms in morality are carried out properly. (p. 38) The picture of Piaogao’s receiving his eighty-one year old grandfather’s prostration in the *Hongyang tanshi jing* are used as an example showing the antinomian attitude of sectarian masters and members.²⁶¹ In the entire chapter 2 of his other text, *Hongyang wudao mingxin jing*, Piaogao affirms traditional ethical teachings; he first emphasizes the importance of responsibility and respect for the old. (pp. 39-44) Although Li Xiangshan expressed extreme political views in his *Lishi baojuan*, he made efforts to flatter the Qing government when he was the leader of the Jiugong dao. The

²⁵⁹ Richard Shek has made a thorough discussion of this point and raises some examples in precious volumes. Richard Shek, “Eternal Mother Religion: Its Role in Late Imperial Chinese History”, pp. 487-500.

²⁶⁰ Richard Shek, “Millenarianism Without Rebellion: the Huangtian Dao in the North China”, pp. 329-331. Yan Yuan 顏元 (1635-1704), *Sicun bian* 四存編 (Edited [book] on the maintenance of four things [i.e. human natures (*xing* 性), studies (*xue* 學), government (*zhi* 治), and human relation (*ren* 人)]) (Hong Kong: Dadong tushu gongsi, 1978), pp. 152-156.

²⁶¹ Richard Shek, “Eternal Mother Religion: Its Role in Late Imperial Chinese History”, p. 496. The picture does not exactly indicate that the Vast Yang Way is against the traditional familial institution. Chapter 14 of the text discusses the contents of the picture. It does not say clearly that Piaogao is the grandson. The grandfather does not meet the right teachings (i.e. the Vast Yang teachings) although he has taken religious cultivation for a long time. He should humbly ask those who know the right faith to be his teacher regardless of their ages. This is why he kowtows to his grandson. It is emphasized that the members of the sect should be equal regardless of their ages, and one should be venerated if one attains enlightenment earlier than others. There is no direct attack on the familial institution in the chapter.

legitimacy of the sect was accepted by some warlords during the time of Republic China.²⁶²

Many contradictory contents can be found in literal teachings of popular sects and are not consistent with their activities recorded in historical books. One can find both traditional and extreme concepts in the complex doctrines of the sects in the Ming and Qing. It is difficult to conclude that the sectarian teachings are in complete harmony with imperial political system and traditional familial one although the ethics of Confucianism and Buddhism have been absorbed. It is however not absolutely convincing if we judge that the sects were revolutionary forces in the Ming and Qing.

ii) The Ideas of Purgatory and *Mofa*

Although the Buddhist concept of purgatory was known in China in the Six Dynasties, certainly it was not referred to our Daoist works in this period as frequently as it is in sectarian literature in the Ming and Qing.²⁶³ In the Daoist apocalypses of the Six Dynasties, it is said that misfortunes come up for exterminating the evil and separating them from the virtuous. Getting rid of the evil can be interpreted as their extinction; there are few mentions of the Buddhist concepts of purgatory and retribution in the afterlife. Putting them in hell and making them suffer there are not mainstream ways of punishment in Daoist eschatology in the Six Dynasties. In some sectarian texts, we can take the same interpretation. We read the following in the *Mile xiasheng jing*:

人當抽換之時，天道魔王下世，抽換一切惡黨……世間僧道官吏人民，不忠、不孝、不公、不法之過，今當除惡留善。

²⁶² For the activities of the sect in the late Qing and the age of Republic China and its subversive ideas, read Kong Simeng 孔思孟 & Liu Zhongwei 陸仲偉, "Wanqing shidai Jiugong dao yanjiu 晚清時代九宮道研究 (Studies on the Way of Nine Diagrams in the late Qing)", *Minjian Zongjiao* 民間宗教 3 (1997, Dec): 10-23, and Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, pp. 124-126.

²⁶³ The idea of underworld had a long history in China. From about the eighth century B.C. on, the term Yellow Springs (*huangzhuang* 黃泉) began to be used in historical and literary writings and referred to the home of the dead. The concept of hell as the place for carrying out punishments in the afterlife was developed in China when Buddhism came. Yü Ying-shih, "'O Soul, Come Back!' A Study in the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist China", pp. 381-386.

In the time when mankind must be drawn out and replaced (*chouhuan* 抽換), Heaven will guide (*dao* 道= *dao* 導?) demon kings to the world. They will draw all wicked gangs out and replace them.... Buddhist monks, Daoist priests, officers, and common people in the world who have committed sins of disloyalty, filial irresponsibility, injustice, and unlawfulness [should be drawn out]. Now we should reject the bad and keep the good. (Chapter 3, 9a-9b, p. 211)

The prediction with similar message appears several times throughout the text. Purgatory is mentioned only when the author says that all penal facilities and precepts are established in order to transform the corruption of humans into goodness.²⁶⁴ He does not describe purgatory as a place in which sinners are put when Heaven sends demon kings to purify the world. (chapter 5, 15b, p. 214) We have cited above from the *Wugong mojie jing* the prophecy that Heaven will exterminate the immoral; similar ones can be found in other Five Elders scriptures.²⁶⁵ None of them contain references to purgatory.

The eschatological accounts in most precious volumes are enriched with the Buddhist elements; therefore the references to the calamities appearing at the end of the world are usually juxtaposed with the concepts of purgatory and *samsāra* (*lunhui* 輪迴) in the four forms of birth (*sisheng* 四生) and the six ways of sentient beings (*liudao* 六道).²⁶⁶ Entering purgatory or

²⁶⁴ We can read, "Famine, poverty, wealth, nobleness, and humbleness, which are managed by Śākyamuni, make [people] become bandits. [These are the reflections of] the injustice of humans' hearts. It is necessary to establish many precepts. Besides, official penalties and purgatory are ordered [to be set up]. All these are used for transforming the immoral. 釋迦所管饑饉貧窮。富貴尊卑。致為盜賊。是人心不直。須立許多戒律。又令官刑地獄。皆化不善。"

²⁶⁵ The sentence "Heaven will order [deities] to exterminate wicked people throughout the world (lit. *congrou* 從頭) no matter whether he is rich or poor 天使從頭滅惡人，不論富與貧。" appears in the *Wugong tiange miaojing* (volume 1, 4a), the *Dasheng Wugong jing* (p. 318), and the *Tiantai shan lingjing* (8a, p. 300). For the composition date of the Five Elders scripture, read Appendix A.

²⁶⁶ *Samāra* means transmigration in the six ways (*liudao* or *liuqu* 六趣), namely, the reincarnations are of the hells (*narka-gati*; *diyu qu* 地獄趣), of hungry ghosts (*preta-gati*; *egui qu* 餓鬼趣), of animals (*tiryagyonī-gati*; *chusheng qu* 畜生趣), of malevolent nature spirits (*asura-gati*; *axiuluo qu* 阿修羅趣), of human existence (*manusya-gati*; *renqu* 人趣), of deva existence (*deva-gati*; *tianqu* 天趣). The first three are the results of bad karma; the other three are the results of good karma. *Sisheng* are the four forms of birth as with mamalia, as with birds, as with worms and fishes, and as with moths from the chrysalis. In sectarian writings, the *sisheng* are regarded as four kinds of living beings with four forms of birth. Falling into the four forms means losing human forms, and it is regarded as a punishment inflicted on people with bad karma. In chapter 7 of the *Hongyang tanshi jing*, we are told that the

samsāra is considered to be punishments imposed on sinners. In the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan*, for example, the various calamities appearing in the imminent age of the universal misery include suffering in purgatory. In the apocalyptic accounts stated in most sectarian texts, the wicked need to endure both misfortunes in the last kalpa in profane world and the punishments in purgatory after death. After the above-cited passage about the corruption of Buddhist monks and Daoist priests, the *Mile chushi baojuan* reads, “these Buddhist monks and Daoist priests should (lit. *yin* 因 = *ying* 應) be drawn out and replaced, collected and destroyed; they should be turned over to purgatory and forever do not ascend to the paradise. 此等僧道因當抽換，收滅歸獄，永不超升。” (Chapter 5, 19a, p. 337) In precious volumes, it is predicted that sinners will endure sufferings in hell because of their bad karma, not simply be exterminated and disappear. In our Daoist works, we can see how the term *diyu* 地獄 (hell) is applied, although it does not appear frequently. The *Shenzhou jing* reads:

惡人無義……斬之不恕，死付地獄，或令身病不瘥。

The wicked are not righteous... Behead them without mercy. They will be handed over to hell after death, or they are made ill without recovery. (Chapter 8, 6a)

見人受經，反更互笑，此人入無盡地獄，獄中有一日七死七生，乃復令活，如此四十二劫，劫運乃出，出爲得人，六情不具。

When they (i.e. the wicked) see the people receive scriptures, they [do not follow them] but make jokes among them [of these people's receiving scriptures] instead. These people will enter the unlimited purgatory (lit. *wujin diyu* 無盡地獄 = *wujian diyu* 無間地獄).

creatures with womb birth (*taisheng* 胎生) are camels, mules, and horses and those with egg birth (*luansheng* 卵生) are birds. The beings with moisture birth (*shisheng* 濕生) are the creatures living in water; those with transformation birth (*huasheng* 化生) are flying insects. People who have reincarnated in these four forms can no longer be humans again. In chapter 15, Piaogao says that monks (*seng* 僧), nuns (*ni* 尼), Daoist masters (*dao* 道), and profane people (*su* 俗) who have committed sins will be reborn in these four forms. The Buddhist terms *sisheng* and *liudao* are apparently confused in sectarian teachings. In Buddhism, the forms of birth exist in the six ways of reincarnations (*sisheng liudao* 四生六道). For example, at the beginning of a kalpa, humans are reborn through transformation. In the north of the Ocean (*mahāsamudra-sāgara*; *dahai* 大海), there are four kinds of birds with the four forms of birth. They live in four directions and eat the dragons that are also born in the four forms. Yiru, *Sanzhao fashu*, p. 154 & p. 171. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous. *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* pp. 92, 138-139, 178, & 445

獄, the *avīci* hell?).²⁶⁷ In purgatory, they will experience birth seven times and death seven times in a day. Then they will be made to survive again. [They will have] such [sufferings] for forty-two kalpas. They will be released [from the purgatory] after their kalpic destiny. They will be released and be reborn as humans. However, they will not have all the six emotions [when they are reborn] (=they will not be fully human).²⁶⁸
(Chapter 10, 4b-5a)

The descriptions of hell certainly are not as detailed as they are in the works composed in the Ming and Qing. However, one would discover two common features of the concept of hell in the above quotations from this Six-Dynasty Daoist work and the sectarian texts. 1) Sinners have to suffer from various disasters in the end of the world and penalties in hell. 2) Obviously, in Daoist and sectarian eschatology, hell exists during the age of universal misery, and the function of it is to punish the evil, as that of calamities is. The concept of hell here is different from that in Buddhism. In Buddhism, we are told that, in the little disasters, wrongdoers will enter the three evil paths of transmigration (*san edao* 三惡道; the hells, hungry ghosts, and animals) as the result of their bad deeds. However, during the early stage of the destruction kalpa, hell will be ruined. The beings who have taken enough retribution for their bad karma in hell will be reborn as humans. Those who have not will be reborn in the hells of other worlds. Hell will decay when there are no sentient beings there. The other two evil ways will also then be destroyed.²⁶⁹ Apparently, the relevant part to purgatory in Buddhist stories of the end of the world has not completely been borrowed in Daoist and sectarian works. The role of hell in the periods of little disasters is linked with a noticeable function in morality, and is totally in harmony with the indigenous ethics-oriented eschatology in Daoism and sectarianism; therefore it has been kept. The accounts of the ruin of hell in the destruction kalpa have been omitted because they would

²⁶⁷ *Wujian diyu* (the *avīci* hell) is a Buddhist term. It refers to the last of the eight hot hells, in which punishment, pain, form, birth, death continue without intermission. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous. *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 383.

²⁶⁸ Six emotions are happiness (*xi* 喜), anger (*nu* 怒), grief (*ai* 哀), joy (*le* 樂), love (*ai* 愛), and hate (*wu* 惡). Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 97.

²⁶⁹ *Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:274b-274c. *Fozu tongji*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.49, no.2036:302a.

weaken the threat of hell to the wicked when they were taken. Hence, we can find the parallel in the application of the concept of hell in the Six-Dynasty Daoist and sectarian literatures although the former was composed long before the latter.

We shall now discuss how Daoism, Buddhism, and sectarianism treat the concept of *mofa* (the end of the Dharma) and how they predict the future of their faiths. Needless to say, the believers of all the three faiths generally declare that their own doctrines are orthodox. The term *mofa* originates from Buddhism; it refers to the final stage of the Buddha's Dharma or the period of the degeneration of the Buddha-law.²⁷⁰ The division of the duration of the Dharma into three periods is only known in East Asian Buddhism.²⁷¹ The other two stages are *zhengfa* 正法 (*saddharma*; the period of True Dharma) and *xiangfa* 像法 (*saddharma-pratirūpaka*; the period of Semblance Dharma). The period of *zhengfa* immediately follows the death of the Buddha, during which it is possible to attain enlightenment by practicing the Buddha's teachings. During the period of *xiangfa*, a few may still be able to reach the goal of enlightenment, but most Buddhists simply carry out the external forms of the religion.²⁷²

Before examining the original Buddhist contents of these three periods, we shall lay our focus on how they are applied in Daoism and sectarian teachings. In our Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties, the term *moshi* (the end of the world) can be found instead of *mofa*.²⁷³ As I mentioned in chapter 1 of this thesis, it is commonly applied in Daoist eschatology. Besides,

²⁷⁰ It is commonly assumed by Japanese and Western scholars that the Chinese term *mofa* is a translation of Sanskrit *saddharma-vipralopa*. Jan Nattier thinks it inappropriate because one can hardly find any equivalent in Buddhist sūtras. Jan Nattier, *Once Upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline*, pp. 90-94. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 191.

²⁷¹ Ding Fubao says that only the *Mahākaruṇā-puṇḍarīka sūtra* (*Dabei jing* 大悲經) deals with the three-stages of the duration of the Dharma. All other sūtras talk *zhengfa* and *xiangfa* only. However, I cannot find any mention of *mofa* in the sūtra. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, vol. 1, p. 829a.

²⁷² Jan Nattier, *Once Upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline*, pp. 65-66.

²⁷³ Besides *moshi*, the terms that consist of the character *mo* 末 (the end or last stage) are applied in the Daoist works: *mosu* 末俗 (the end of this vulgar world) (*Chisong zi zhang li*, Chapter 6, 18a), *shimo* 世末 (the end of the world) ("Dadao jialing jie", in *Zhengyi fawen tianshi jiaojie kejing*, 16b), *moyun zhi shi* 末運之世 (the world at the end of its destiny) (*Shenzhou jing*, 7a), and *moxue* 末學 (the style of studies in the end of the world) (*Shangpin miaojing*, chapter 1, 13b & 14b), for instance.

Daoist writers do not predict that their doctrines will decay and fall into ruin in the future. Their apocalyptic accounts mainly deal with the imminent misfortunes, the messiah, and his age, all of which have been discussed in last chapter. The Tianshi school encountered the crisis in the Six Dynasties that the Celestial Master was losing the influence on the followers and the libationers. We have read the Tianshi writers' criticisms of loose behavior of these two groups of people in their texts. They are similar to those in Buddhist scriptures. However, they do not foretell that their doctrines will disappear in this world. Daoist believers believe that the Dao will not be devastated and vanish in this world during the time of corruption.

The term *mofa* is familiar to the *baojuan* writers of the Ming and Qing and is often applied in their books. It is striking that they seldom keep its original Buddhist meaning. They always regard the term as a synonym of *moshi* and *mojie* (the end of the kalpa) and use it for describing the age of suffering instead of the final stage of their own doctrines or sects. We can read the following sentences in the *Puming baojuan* and in the *Jiulian baojuan*:

後五百年，末法眾生，苦業難逃，有緣有分，得遇黃天聖道……

In the later five hundred years [that is the age of] the end of the Dharma (*mofa*), all living beings can hardly escape the karma of suffering. Those with proper karmic affinity and destiny (*youyuan youfen* 有緣有分) can meet with the holy way of Yellow Heaven....

(*Puming baojua*, preface, p. 139)

Suddenly a time will come when the period of the end of the Dharma (*mofa*) will approach, and disasters of water, fire and wind will occur together. (*Jiulian baojuan*, chapter 6)

As the years of the end Dharma approach (*mofa*), the world will be in disaster, and swords and spears will be wielded everywhere. The people will be impoverished and terrorized by warlords and bandits. Domestic and wild animals will all be destroyed.²⁷⁴

(*Jiulian baojuan*, chapter 11)

²⁷⁴ The translations of the *Jiulian baojuan* are taken from Daniel Overmyer's *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 150 & p. 158. I have added the term *mofa* to them.

This usage, as well as the distorted meaning of *mofa*, is common in sectarian writings.²⁷⁵ In Buddhist cosmology, the orthodox teachings disappear and people can no longer meet with them during the period of the Final Dharma. As we shall find in the following discussion, the age of the end of the Dharma is not necessarily the time of disasters. During the time of great peace, there may not be the True Dharma. The term *xiangfa* (Semblance Dharma) is applied less frequently in sectarian writings. It does not refer to the second stage of the development of the Buddha's Dharma, but to the past age in which the right doctrines are transmitted incorrectly.

The *Dizang Shiwang baojuan* reads:

我佛留下神像佛相。是漢明帝夢見丈六金身。故作像法流傳。引進迷人。供養禮拜。見相作福。無非是誠敬而已。引人爲善。教人思善者。成佛成仙。人人禮拜。思惡者。做豬做狗。箇箇喫肉。此乃禮拜。是有漏之因。不能永享天福。難到淨土家鄉。

My Buddha (Śākyamuni) left behind Buddha's statues and forms. The Emperor Ming of the Han dreamt of a golden image of the Buddha that was sixteen feet tall; therefore, he created and circulated the Semblance Dharma (*xiangfa*).²⁷⁶ Confused people are misled by this. They make offerings and kowtow to [the statues], and make wishes for blessing when they see the forms. What they need [to make their wishes come true] is to be sincere and respectful only [when they worship the Buddha]. Those who teach others to think of being moral [by urging them to kowtow to the statues] can become buddhas and immortals. They will be worshipped by others. Those who [teach others to] think of doing evils [by urging them to worship the statues will be reborn] as pigs and dogs. All people eat [their] flesh. This is [the result of] worshipping [the forms]. This is the cause of distress (*āsrava*; *youlou* 有漏).²⁷⁷ [These people] cannot enjoy heavenly happiness forever. It is difficult for them to enter the Pure Land of the Native Place. (Volume 2, 19b-20a, p. 68)

²⁷⁵ More examples can be found in the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan* (chapter 12, 104a-105b, p. 148-149), *Mile chushi baojua* (chapter 18, pp. 406-408), and *Dizang Shiwang baojuan* (juan 2, 29b, p. 73).

²⁷⁶ The normal height of a Buddha in his transformation body (*huashen* 化身) is sixteen feet, which is said to be the height of Śākyamuni when he was on earth. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 54.

²⁷⁷ In Buddhism, all things are of *āsrava* nature; hence it means whatever is in the stream of births-and-deaths, and also means mortal life or births-and-deaths, i.e. mortality. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 214.

Obviously, the character “*xiang* (semblance)” in the term “*xiangfa*” here is interpreted as the statues (*xiang* 像) of Buddhas. In the *Mile chushi baojuan*, the term *xiangfa* is used for describing the age of Śākyamuni, in which the practices of monks and nuns are in vain. (preface, 6a, p. 311) The author of the *baojuan* juxtaposes the three stages of the development of the Dharma, but he represents them in his own ways.

正法年間佛度僧，像法之年亂傳行，如今末法僧不度，白衣說法度眾生。

During the period of True Dharma (*zhengfa*), the Buddha delivered monks. During the years of Semblance Dharma (*xiangfa*), [monks] transmitted [the teachings about] conduct (*xing* 行) misleadingly. At present, the age of the end of the Dharma (*mofa*), monks are not saved, and [people wearing] White Clothing preach the Dharma and saves all living beings. (Chapter 5, 19a, p. 337)

The above quotation is followed by explanatory seven-character verse. We are told that during the time of the Ancient Lamplighter Buddha, the period of True Dharma, monks can be universally saved. Śākyamuni takes the practices that make people cling to the forms (*zhuoxiang xiuxing* 著相修行). Some monks carry out the practices mistakenly, and other confused monks are misled and enter purgatory. Hence, during the last kalpa (*mojie*), Maitreya will not deliver monks and nuns, and they should return to profane lives and worship the Patriarch Changsheng 長生祖 (Patriarch Longevity). (19a-20a) The author of the *baojuan* equates the three stages of the development of the Dharma with the three periods of cosmic time.

The formation of the three-stage development of the Dharma in Chinese Buddhism took a long time, and it is possible that Daoist eschatology has played an important role in it.²⁷⁸ Among

²⁷⁸ Jan Nattier has examined the application of the term *mofa* in the *Taishō Tripitaka* and inferred the process of the formation of the three-stage history of the Dharma in Chinese Buddhism. In 847 scriptures, only 22 individual works contain the term, and it is not frequently used or serves as a major topic of discussion. The Chinese expression *moshi* occurs in the translations of Dharmarakṣa (Zhufahu 竺法護, cf. 266-313). The term *mofa* is a Chinese “apocryphal word”. It first appears in the texts translated by Kumārajīva (Jiunoluoshi 鳩摩羅什, 344-413) at the beginning of the fifth century. She thinks that the term *mofa* originated simply as a variant of *moshi*, and it required only a small leap of inference to conclude that *moshi* was meant as a reference to a discrete third period in the history of the Dharma, which was expressed more clearly by the term *mofa*. Once the term *mofa* gained some currency, Chinese Buddhist writers expounded on the nature and duration of this supposed third period. Therefore,

the four kalpas each period of cosmic time undergoes, only the existence kalpa contains the three stages because Buddhas will not come to the mundane world in other three kalpas (the formation kalpa, the destruction kalpa, and the annihilation kalpa).²⁷⁹ The Buddha's descent to the world does not necessarily occur in the prime of cosmic time. In the present *Bhadrakalpa*, the time from the first Buddha's emergence in the world to Śākyamuni's is the age in which human ages are decreasing.²⁸⁰ During the time when Śākyamuni appeared, living beings were suffering and the kalpa (i.e. little kalpa) was going to end. It is therefore said that "the Buddha encourages [the Dharma in] the world at the end of each kalpa (i.e. little kalpa), and at the beginning of a kalpa, the Cakravartī (zhuanluan wang 轉輪王) arises [in the world]. 劫末佛興世。劫初轉輪王出。"²⁸¹ Whether the Buddha descends depends on whether there are the conditions for people's conversion to Buddhism. Śākyamuni left the world because in the world there were no more people who had appropriate potentiality (*ji* 機) of responding to him and he could not deliver any more of them.²⁸² Besides, the prosperity and decline of the Buddha's Dharma do not necessarily correspond with those of the world. According to the *Fozu tongji*, Śākyamuni's True Dharma exists in the world for 1,400 years, in which human ages is decreasing from eighty-six

the three-period system first appeared in the sixth-century Chinese scholastic texts, not in the translations from Indian originals. Nanyue Huisi 南嶽慧思 (515-577), a best known teacher of Tiantai 天台 Buddhism, is the first one who set forth in writing a three-period system based on the concepts of *zhengfa*, *xiangfa*, and *mofa*. The term *moshi* is a common expression in Daoist apocalyptic works. If Nattier's observation is accepted, it is very likely that Daoist eschatology played an important role in the formation of the three-stage system of the history of the Dharma in Buddhism in the Six Dynasties. In Chinese Buddhism, the term *moshi* is regarded as a synonym for *mofa*. Possibly this is the reason why sectarian writers consider them to be interchangeable, but they simply use Daoist interpretation of *moshi* when using these terms and do not take Buddhist theory of the history of the Dharma. Jan Nattier, *Once Upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline*, pp. 101-111, note 106. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 2, p. 1942.

²⁷⁹ *Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:333a.

²⁸⁰ Krakucchanda appeared in the world when the life spans of humans shortened to 50,000. The second and third Buddhas Kanakamuni (Junahan mouni fo 俱那含牟尼佛) and Kāśyapa (Jiaye fo 伽葉佛) came to the world when humans could live 40,000 and 20,000 years respectively. Śākyamuni emerged in this world when the life spans of humans was 100 years only. *Fozu tongji*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.49, no.2035:299a-299b.

²⁸¹ *Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:334a.

²⁸² If one has appropriate potentiality (*ji*), which means one's good qualities (*shangen* 善根) are going to appear, the Buddha can respond to one (*yin* 應). If there is no potentiality and response in the world, the Buddha will not appear and no one can attain perfect enlightenment (*sambodhi*; *sanputi* 三菩提). Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, vol. 1, p. 807c & vol.2, p. 2350a-b. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 369 & p. 448. *Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:334a.

years to seventy-eight years. During the period of Final Dharma after Śākyamuni's departure and before Maitreya's descent, the life spans of humans will decrease to ten years and then it will begin to increase.²⁸³ It can therefore be concluded that Buddhist schedule of the development of the Dharma is not completely consistent with the history of Buddhist cosmology.

Hence, unlike sectarian and Daoist writers, the writers of Buddhist apocalyptic sūtras do not give their main attention to the sufferings of mankind in their description of the age in which the Dharma is about to vanish. Besides, the writers of the former two groups usually elaborate on common people's corruption and their disbelief to the teachings of the Daoist or sectarian faiths, and often blame them for universal misfortunes. Buddhist scholars, however, focus their discussion on various ways of misbehavior of Buddhist believers, especially the sangha, and their heterodox views in this period. The *Fayuan zhulin* contains the following quotations:

我之正法不依牆壁柱等而住。但依行法有情相續而住。問何故世尊不決定說法住時分耶。答欲顯正法隨行法者住久近故。謂行法者。若行正法常如佛在世時及如來滅度未久時者。則佛正法常住於世無有滅沒。若無如是行正法者。則彼正法速疾滅沒。

[Śākyamuni said,] "My true Dharma does not rely on walls, pillars, and so on to exist [in the world], but rely on the maintenance by sentient beings who carry out the Dharma." Being asked for what reasons the World-honored One decided not to discuss the duration of the existence of the Dharma, [Śākyamuni] answered, "[I do so] in order to show that [the duration of] the true Dharma depends on how long those who practice the teaching can exist. [I] mention those who practice the teaching [because] if they always carry out the true Dharma as they did when the Buddha was in the world and when the Tathāgata has attained *nirvāṇa* not long ago, the Buddha's true Dharma will exist in the world without extinction and disappearance. If there are no such people who can carry out the true Dharma, [at] that [moment when the Buddha leaves the world] the true Dharma will

²⁸³ *Fozu tongji*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.49, no.2035:299b-300a.

quickly be extinct and vanish. (*Xin posha lun* 新婆沙論 [New vibhāsā sūtra], 1009b-1009c)²⁸⁴

佛告阿難。我之佛法非餘能壞。是我法中諸惡比丘。猶如毒刺。破我三阿僧祇劫積行勤苦所集佛法。

The Buddha told Ānanda (Anan 阿難), “My Dharma cannot be destroyed by anything except various evil monks of my Dharma. [They act] like poisonous spines. They destroy the Buddha-laws that have been gathered with the [good] deeds, efforts, and sufferings that I accumulated [and experienced] in the three timeless periods of my bodhistva’s progress to Buddhahood. (*Lianhuamian jing* 蓮華面經 [The sūtra about Lianhuamian], 1010c)²⁸⁵

Although Tianshi writers condemn the weak faith of the members of the Tianshi Daoism in their writings, they do not make the prophecy that the school and the Tianshi doctrines are going to decline because of this. *Baojuan* writers seldom talk about the misdeeds of the believers of their own sects. Among the precious volumes I have read, only the *Foshuo jiapu baojuan* 佛說家譜寶卷 (The precious volume of the genealogy expounded by the Buddha), which is also called the *Tiaolü baojuan* 條律寶卷 (The precious volume of listed precepts), contains precepts for the sect members and leaders, but the author does not come to the conclusion that his sect will decay.²⁸⁶

The author of the *Jiulian jing* mentions that “the true doctrines have hidden and the evil ways (*modao* 魔道, i.e. heresies) are powerful 正法埋頭魔道強” and the Noninterference Patriarch

²⁸⁴ The *Xin posha lun* is the *Da piposha lun* translated by Xuanzang. The one translated by Daotai 道泰 in the time of the Northern Liang state (北涼, 398-439) is called the *Jiu posha lun* (Old vibhāsā sūtra 舊婆沙論). Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 4, p. 3855.

²⁸⁵ The *Lianhuamian jing* was translated by Narendrayasas (那連提耶舍 Nalantiyeshe) in the fourth year of the Kaihuang 開皇 reign of the Sui 隋 Dynasty (585). It is about the prediction given by the Buddha that Buddhist monks will be corrupt after his *nirvāṇa*. The Dharma will then be transmitted to Kashmir (Jibin 罽賓, modern Kabul). Later Pofu wang 破佛王 (the Emperor who destroys Buddhism) will appear and ruin the Dharma. His name in his previous life is Lianhuamian 蓮華面. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 7, p. 6151.

²⁸⁶ The *Foshuo jiapu baojuan* is reprinted in Wang Jianchuan & Jiang Zhushan 蔣竹山, ed., *Ming Qing yilai minjian zongjiao de tansuo – jinian Dai Xuanzhi jiaoshou luanwen ji* 明清以來民間宗教的探索：紀念戴玄之教授論文集 (Researches on popular religions [established] since the Ming and Qing – a compilation of articles in memory of Professor Dai Xuanzhi) (Taipei: Shangding wenhua chubanshe, 1996), pp. 43-78. It is a Ming text of the Dragon-Heaven Way (Longtian Dao 龍天道), which was established in the late Ming. Only the daughter-in-laws of a Liu family in Hebei 河北 inherited the position of the sect leader. Che Xilun, *Zhongguo baojuan zongmu*, p. 119.

(Wuwei zu 無爲祖), the incarnation of Maitreya, has to return to the heavenly palace (*tiangong* 天宮) because he has revealed the heavenly secret (*tianji* 天機). He however does not indicate the extinction of the doctrines. (chapter 22)

In the Buddhist apocalyptic sūtras, the narratives about sangha and lay Buddhists ([people who wear] white clothing; *baiyi* 白衣) exceed those about common people.²⁸⁷ The contents of the quotations in chapter 98 of the *Fayuan zhulin* can demonstrate this point. The one from the *Da wusu jing* 大五濁經 (The great sūtra on five vulgar [situations]) tells us the five chaotic states (*wuluan* 五亂) appearing after the Buddha's *nirvāṇa*.²⁸⁸ The first three are about the lay Buddhists' priority over monks: 1) monks follow the White Clothes and learn the Dharma from them; 2) the White Clothes become the heads of monks (lit. *shangzuo* 上座; the seat of honor) and monks are inferior;²⁸⁹ 3) people do not receive (*chengshou* 承受) the Dharma taught by monks, and consider the Dharma by the White Clothes to be supreme. Evil monks (*mojia biqiu* 魔家比丘) appear at present. People in the world think them to be the embodiments of true *mārga* (*daodi* 道諦) and take faith in them although they cheat and hypocritical. The canons of the Dharma are no longer understood.²⁹⁰ This is the fourth chaotic state. The fifth one is that monks in the near future (*danglai biqiu* 當來比丘) will raise animals and have wives, servants, and their own businesses, and they do not inherit the Dharma from their predecessors but criticize and argue with others.²⁹¹ These five chaotic states are regarded as those arising in the

²⁸⁷ The robes of early Indian monks were dyed so as to distinguish the garments of monks from the white garments of the laity and of *brāhmaṇa* (*poluomen* 婆羅門). *Brāhmaṇas* were the clerical caste among the four castes in India. They were called "the deities in the mundane world (*renjian zhi shen* 人間之神)". William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 304. Ren Jiyu, ed., *Zongjiao da cidian*, p. 592. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, vol. 1, p. 905b.

²⁸⁸ I cannot find any information about this sūtra.

²⁸⁹ William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 56.

²⁹⁰ *Daodi* is the dogma of the path leading to the extinction of passion. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 417.

²⁹¹ 佛涅槃後當有五亂。一者當來比丘從白衣學法。世之一亂。二者白衣上坐比丘處下。世之二亂。三者比丘說法不行承受。白衣說法以爲無上。世之三亂。四者魔家比丘自生現在。於世間以爲真道諦。佛法正典

age of the Final Dharma by Chinese Buddhists although the quotation in the *Fayuan zhulin* does not say in what specific time after Buddha's *nirvāṇa* they would occur.²⁹² As shown in above discussion, sectarian writers condemn the evils of monks and nuns. They often sum up the priority of the White Clothes over Buddhist monks in religious cultivation in a sentence that “the White Clothes preach the Dharma when the Dyed Garments (*ranyi* 染衣) listen (*baiyi shuofa ranyi ting* 白衣說法染衣聽)” or the ones similar to it. The term “the White Clothes” is sometimes replaced with “the Secular Clothes (*suyi* 俗衣)”²⁹³ Apparently, the expressions of the sentence and the contrast between these two groups of people are similar to those in Buddhist prophecies, although *baojuan* writers seldom elaborate on the comparison as Buddhist clergy do. There is no denying the fact that Buddhist terminology in the revelations of the end of the Dharma deeply influences the sectarian eschatology of the Ming and Qing. When we examine the application of the terms *ranyi* and *baiyi* in precious volumes, we shall notice that the Buddhist original interpretation of them has been changed. In Buddhist prophecies, the supremacy of the White Clothes over Buddhist monks and the assimilation of the latter into the former are considered as the phenomena of degeneracy in the period of the Final Dharma, and they are described in the tone of disapproval.²⁹⁴ It is never predicted that the White Clothes can

自爲不明。詐僞爲信。世之四亂。五者當來比丘畜養妻子奴僕治生。但諍訟不承佛教。世之五亂。(Fayuan zhulin, Taishō Tripitaka, vol.53, no.2122:1005c)

²⁹² Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 2, pp. 1942-1943. Yiru, *Sanzhao fashu*, p. 284.

²⁹³ The sentence is found in the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan*, chapter 12, 103a, p. 148. It also appears in the *Mile chushi baojuan* with a character *er* 而 added. “*Baiyi shuofa ranyi er ting* 白衣說法染衣而聽” (chapter 16, p. 394) The term *suyi* is used in the *Longhua jing*. “It is exactly [what I mean by the situation that] the Secular Clothes mount to platforms and preach the Dharma. It is exactly [what I mean by the situation that] the Dyed Garments listen to the Dharma and listen to sūtras 這便是，白衣人，登壇說法。這便是，染衣人，聞法聽經。” (chapter 24) Both the terms *baiyi* and *suyi* can sometimes be found in one precious volume. For example, besides the above sentence, we can find the one “The Secular Clothes preach the Dharma when the Dyed Garments listen [to them] (*suyi shuofa ranyi ting* 俗衣說法染衣聽)” in the *Mile chushi baojuan*, (chapter 18, p. 413)

²⁹⁴ The quotation from the *Mohe jing* 摩訶經 (The sūtra on Māyā; the short form of *Mohe moye jing* 摩訶摩耶經 the sūtra on Mahāmāyā) in the *Fayuan zhulin* provides a detailed account of Buddhist monks' adoption of the life style of laity. (Fayuan zhulin, Taishō Tripitaka, vol.53, no.2122:1006a-1006b) Mahāmāyā was the wife of Śuddhodana, and the mother of Śākyamuni. The sūtra tells us that Śākyamuni preaches to his mother when he ascends to the Trayastrimśās (*daoli tian* 切利天; the second of the desire-heavens). William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* pp. 436-437. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, vol.2, p. 2568a & p. 2578c. In Buddhist predictions, the change in the robes of Buddhist monks is an important reflection of

replace fully Buddhist monks. After the list of the five chaotic states, the *Da wusu jing* contains the criticism of the White Clothes:

今時屢見無識白衣。觸事不閑。詐爲知法。房室不捨然爲師範。愚癡俗人以用指南。虛棄功夫終勤無益。未來生世猶不免獄。

At present it is often seen that the unperceptive White Clothes (*wushi biyi* 無識白衣) occupy themselves with the affairs related to sensation (*chu* 觸) and pretend to know the Dharma.²⁹⁵ They do not abandon their houses, but they [claim] to be masters and examples. Silly, deluded, and vulgar people take them for guides. They waste and give up their efforts, and are diligent [in learning from the White Clothes] all the time [in their lives] without the benefit [of real religious cultivation]. In their next lives they are born in the future, they still cannot avoid [suffering] in the purgatory. (1005c)

The writers of precious volumes, however, appreciate the phenomenon that the White Clothes override the clergy of Daoism and Buddhism in the end of the world. They also urge the clergy to lead the lives of common people so as to attain enlightenment. Besides, the terms “the White Clothes” and “the Secular Clothes” sometimes refer to the patriarchs of popular sects, not to common sect members. This feature distinguishes sectarian eschatology from Buddhist one.²⁹⁶

The *Pujing baojuan* reads:

普天下立起他古佛道場。斷宰殺，無酒肉，念佛看經……登佛殿，俗衣人，陞堂說法。染衣聽，佛法演。

[The Buddha who Holds the Key (Yaodi fo 鑰錠佛)] sets up universally his ritual grounds [in the name] of Ancient Buddhist (*Gufu daochang* 古佛道場) in the world.²⁹⁷

[Members are requested to] stop slaughter, not to drink and eat meat, recite [the name of] the Buddha (Amitabha?), and study scriptures.... They mount to the Buddha's hall

the decline of the Buddhist teachings. Śākyamuni tells Mañjuśrī (Wenshu 文殊) and Guanyin to give monastic garments (*foyī* 法衣) to monks and teach them not to wear leather clothes after he leaves the world. (*Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:563b) In the *Mohe jing*, we read that, in the 1,300 years after the Buddha's *nirvāṇa*, the robes of monks turn white and are not dyed again. (1006b)

²⁹⁵ Sensation (*sparsā*) is one of the twelve links in the chain of existence (十二因緣). It is also used with the meaning of unclean (*zhuo* 濁). William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 481.

²⁹⁶ Sectarian books do not contain the definition of such terms; therefore it is sometimes difficult to judge from fragmentary accounts whether the writers use them for describing sect members or sect leaders.

²⁹⁷ For the explanation of the term *yaodi*, see note 185 of this thesis.

(*fodian* 佛殿). [In the hall,] the Secular Clothes (*suyi*) ascends [the platform of] the hall and preaches the Dharma. The Dyed Garments listen to the Buddha's Laws that are expounded. (volume 1, chapter 16, 29b, p. 101)

The term *suyi* here refers to the Buddha Yaodi, Pujing, who did not leave home, but handled secular affairs as a farmer (在家爲俗務莊農). (volume 2, chapter 21, 41b, p. 124) In Buddhist eschatology, although it is said that Buddhist monks will enter purgatory during the age of Final Dharma because of their corruption, the White Clothes or laymen are not considered to be fully enlightened people or the authorities on Buddhist teachings.²⁹⁸ This is very different from the views stated in sectarian eschatology.

Buddhist apocalyptic descriptions can generally be divided into two kinds according to their themes. The descriptions in first kind discuss the history of sentient beings and the vessel world (*qishijie*), and those in the second kind deal with the development of the Dharma. Sometimes they are mingled together. The contents of chapter 30 of the *Fozu tongji* can demonstrate this. However, the cosmic time of the universe and the existence and disappearance of the Dharma do not completely correspond with each other. One of the most remarkable differences among Daoist, sectarian, Buddhist eschatology is that the former two do not embody the apocalyptic stories of second kind. Although the writers of *baojuan* literature apply Buddhist terminology, they do not borrow the key ideas of the three-stage history of the Dharma. This parallel between Daoist and sectarian eschatology is intriguing because Buddhism already had become an inseparable part of Chinese culture in the Ming and Qing, unlike as it had been in the Six Dynasties.

²⁹⁸ The *Anan qimeng jing* 阿難七夢經 (The sūtra on Ānanda's seven dreams) deals with the Buddha's explanation of the seven dreams of Ānanda. The dreams are about the prospective misdeeds of Buddhist monks and the decline of Buddhist teachings. One of them tells us that the monks will go to hell after death and the White Clothes will ascend to heavens because of their unadulterated progress (*jingjin* 精進), not their attainment of Buddhahood. (*Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:1006a) William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms* p. 427.

b) The Expectation of the Coming of a Peaceful Era and Messiahs

In addition to the explanation of universal misery, another important component of sectarian eschatology in precious volumes is the discussion of the arrival of Maitreya, the future master of the world, and his reign. In this part, we shall compare the image and the peaceful world of this Buddha in sectarian writings with those of the Holy Ruler Li Hong in the Daoist works of the Six Dynasties.

Modern scholars have already noticed that the Buddhist belief in Maitreya has a tremendous impact in precious volumes. Therefore, before we focus our attention on the stories about how this Buddha spread among the popular sects, we should discuss some features of Buddhist worship of him. Jan Nattier tells us the four basic forms of the Maitreya myth, which are the Here/Later, There/Now, There/Later, and Here/Now modes. The believers of the first two versions expect to meet the Buddha on earth in the distant future after their death and to meet him immediately in his other-world paradise, the Tusita Heaven (Dushuai tian 都率天 or Doushuai tian 兜率天), respectively. Those of the third version long for rebirth in the heaven after their present lifetimes. All these three modes can be traced in Buddhist scriptures, but the fourth one cannot. The believers of the fourth version expect to meet the Buddha on earth during their present lifetimes. They rewrite the mainstream of the Maitreya myth and shorten the meantime from the present to the advent of the Buddha. It is said that he will come to the world in near future. Jan Nattier thinks that Daoist messianism of the Six Dynasties produced the Here/Now myth, which evolved during the Northern Wei 北魏 dynasty (386-534).²⁹⁹

²⁹⁹ Jan Nattier, "The Meanings of the Maitreya Myth: a Typological Analysis", *Maitreya, the Future Buddha*, ed. Alan Sponberg & Helen Hardacre (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1988), pp. 23-47. Some other scholars have also discussed the relation between Chinese Maitreya Belief and Daoist messianism in the Six Dynasties in their researches published at about time as Nattier's. Chang Chi-hao (Zhang Jihao) 張繼昊, "The *Mi-le* (Mile 彌勒; Maitreya) Worship and the Rebellion of *Ta-sheng* (Dasheng 大乘; Mahāyāna) Sect in the Northern Wei Period 北魏的彌勒信仰與大乘之亂", *Shih-Huo Monthly* (Shihuo yuekan 食貨月刊) 16(1986, no.3-4):166-168. Chen Hua 陳

Except for the Here/Later version, which turns into the Here/Now one because it is said that Maitreya's age will appear in near future instead of the distant future, all other three can apply to the promises given to sect believers. The There/Now and There/Later versions can often be found in the myth of the reunion between the Eternal Mother and her children and sometimes between the goddess and sect leaders. In the Buddhist Maitreya myth of the There/Now version discussed by Nattier, believers with outstanding achievements in religious cultivation can transcendently meet Maitreya in the Tusita Heaven in their lifetimes. In most precious volumes, humans are promised that they will reunite with the Mother in the Native Place, the other-world paradise. In some texts, we are told that patriarchs can ascend to heaven at any time in meditative trance. The *Longhua jing*, for example, says that both Gong Chang's religious cultivation and virtue are complete (*daode shuang quan* 道德雙全). He is therefore granted a mystical visit to the Native Place and an audience with the Mother when he is meditating. He also ascends to it when the Mother offers him supernatural valuables and teaches him the secrets of cultivation. (Chapter 4 & 5) The There/Later form is not clearly mentioned in precious volumes. However, the statements of the common members of popular sects tell us that they expected to meet the Eternal Mother after death through reciting scriptures in the Ming and Qing. The meditation practices appealed to some because they long for immediate audiences with the Mother.³⁰⁰ However, strictly speaking, the There/Now and There/Later versions cannot apply to the sectarian myth about Maitreya. Only the indigenous Here/Now one is relevant to the descriptions of the Buddha's images as the savior and messenger of the Eternal Mother, who has sent him to the world in an incarnation in a human form, and as the master of the future world.

華, "Monerchy and Buddhism: Imperial Rule and Maitreya Belief from the Northern Dynasty to Sui Dynasty 王政與佛法—北朝至隋代帝王統治與彌勒下生信仰", *Shih-Huo Monthly* 16(1988, no.11-12):423-424.

³⁰⁰ Jan Nattier, "The Meanings of the Maitreya Myth: a Typological Analysis", pp. 29-30. Daniel L. Overmyer, "Messenger, Savior, and Revolutionary: Maitreya in Chinese Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries", p. 112. Susan Naquin, "The Transmission of White Lotus Sectarianism in Late Imperial China", *Popular Culture in Late Imperial China*, ed. David Johnson, Andrew J. Nathan, and Evelyn S. Rawski (Berkeley: University of California, 1985), p. 275.

Although in sectarian cosmology Maitreya is considered to be the next ruler of the world after Śākyamuni, the contents of the promise to followers stated in most sectarian precious volumes are that they will ascend to paradise and reunite with the Eternal Mother forever. They are different from those in the Daoist works. People are promised to live in the peaceful age ruled by the Holy Ruler on earth. The *Wudao mingxin jing* reads:

無生老母廣有神通，常轉古真經，度脫兒女，早赴金城，無邊快樂，一片黃金，香風圍繞，一去不投東。

The Eternal Venerable Mother (Wusheng laomu 無生老母) has many supernatural powers; she often revolves ancient complete scriptures [in order to] deliver her children [and bring them to] the Golden City (Jincheng 金城, i.e. paradise) as early as possible. [In the City, they can enjoy] unlimited unhappiness; gold is everywhere, with fragrant wind blowing around. [They will] never be reborn in the Eastern Land once they go [to the Golden City]. (chapter 9, p. 164)

The guarantees to the believers that they will stay with the Eternal Mother in paradise can be found in various *baojuan*, although the wording is diverse. In some, however, the non-mainstream expectation of a utopia ruled by Maitreya in the mundane world can be found. The author of the *Foshuo jiapu baojuan* writes how the earthly paradise forms and designates its position by providing some imaginary geographical places. He reads:

到二千五百年限，有彌勒佛領十萬天人，在燕南趙北無影山前，牛溝之梁，東有安陽地，南有無木橋，西有鳳凰坡，北有無馬山，中有落廬泉。孤宿神村上有九九盤龍之像，下有八八飛鳳之形，落廬泉邊有陰陽二氣，天地至比，天氣下降，地氣上昇，二氣二氣，相接化出雲城。(chapter 8, p. 65)

When the deadline [for the end of] 2,500-year [reign of Śākyamuni] has arrived, Maitreya will lead 100,000 deities. In the front of the Shadowless Mountain of the Yannan Zhaobei 燕南趙北 (the place to the south of Yan 燕 and the north of Zhao 趙; the Zhao prefecture; the present Zhao county (Zhaoxian 趙縣) in Hebei), there is a bridge beside Ox Gully (Niugou *zi liang* 牛溝之梁?).³⁰¹ There are Peaceful-Yang Land (Anyang di 安陽地) in the east, Woodless Bridge (Wumu qiao 無木橋) in the south, Phoenix Slope

³⁰¹ Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, p. 365.

(Fenghuang po 鳳凰坡) in the west, Horseless Mountain (Wuma shan 無馬山) in the north, and Reed-falling (lit. *luolu* 落蘆 = *luolu* 落蘆?) Spring (Luolu 落蘆泉) in the centre. [In the air] above the Divine Village of Solitary Lodging (Gusu shencun 孤宿神村), there is a scene of ninety-nine wheeling dragons. There is a form of eighty-eight flying phoenixes [on the earth] below. At the edge of Reed-falling Spring there are two vital forces (*qi* 氣), *yin* and *yang*. Heaven and Earth end here (lit. *zhibi* 至比 = *zhici* 至此). The heavenly *qi* descends; the earthly *qi* ascends. [There are] two *qi*! [There are] two *qi*! They connect and turn into the Cloud City.

A similar passage can be found in the *Dingjie baojuan* with little variation of the names of geographical places and language.

The depictions of the peaceful world of Maitreya in some sectarian texts resemble those of the age of the Holy Ruler in Daoist writings. The above-mentioned Qing text *Mile xiasheng jing*, for example, includes a detailed picture of the peaceful age of the Buddha in the future:

今後吾當下生。先將布袋中。一切寶物。散滿世間……今蒙我佛之恩。遍地皆寶。如以花香供養天地。自然家家富足。自然處處和平。世間人民受三千年苦。吾下生後。當令天雨黃金白米。五朝十日……又見世間無益之木。盡皆除去。遍地高卑。所生樹木。皆有果食。大如斗。小如升。令人食之。養人紅顏。延人壽命。不病不夭。其味甘美。食之一飽。數日不饑……無寒無暑。無貧無富。人人端正。個個清奇。不淫不娼。不戲不亂。個個修行。人人念佛。令人長壽。自有三萬九千之歲。身形長大。生而能行。……大地如同天上。

I am going to descend [to the world] afterward. I shall first dispense all valuables in my cloth-bag throughout the world... Because of the kindness of the Buddha (Maitreya, lit. *wofu* 我佛), the valuables will be everywhere like the fragrance of flowers, which [is everywhere] in order to worship Heaven and Earth. Every household will be naturally rich and satisfied. It will be naturally peaceful everywhere. People in the world have endured pain for 3,000 years. After I descend [to the world], I shall make the sky sprinkle gold and polished rice for five days to ten days (*wuzhao shiri* 五朝十日)....

Besides, I shall remove all unprofitable trees I see in the world. Trees growing throughout highlands and lowlands will produce fruits for people to eat. The big fruits will weigh one *dou* 斗 (a bushel; ten Chinese pints); the small ones will weigh one *sheng* 升 (a Chinese pint). [I shall] make people eat them. [The fruits] will nourish people's

youth (*hongyan* 紅顏) and expand their ages. There [therefore] will be no illness and early death. The taste of the fruits will be pleasant. People will immediately be full when they eat the fruits; they will then not be hungry in a few days.... [In the world,] there will be not cold and heat, nor the poor and the rich. Every one will be dignified; [the appearance of] each one will be elegant and remarkable. They will not be licentious, take part in prostitution and opera-playing, and have illicit relationships. Every person will take up religious cultivation; every one will recite Buddha's name (Amitabha?). These will make people have longevity. They naturally have life spans of 39,000 years. Their bodies will be tall. They will be able to walk when they are born.... The earth will be the same as heaven (i.e. the earth will be as joyful as heaven).... (16a-16b, p. 214)

The prediction stated in the last chapter of the *Mile chushi baojuan* contains some similar ideas. It is also foretold that valuables will be everywhere because Maitreya will cover the earth with them when he rules the world (*zhishi* 治世). Trees will produce fruits, the big ones among which will weigh one *sheng* and the small ones will weigh one *zhong* 鍾 (approximate four pecks). People who eat one of them will not be hungry for a few days. There will be various medicines such as Moving-Rosy-Cloud Wine (*liuxia jiu* 流霞酒) and Death-Removal Pills (*quesi wan* 卻死丸). People who have taken them will be able to live long without death and ageing. They will also become holy beings (*chengsheng* 成聖). People at that time will not suffer from poverty, pain, and illness; they will live to the long age of 81,000 years. All of them will be pretty and wise and will have good qualities of kindness (*ren* 仁), justice (*yi* 義), propriety (*li* 禮), and wisdom (*zhi* 智). (pp. 416-417) The two pictures of the future world governed by Maitreya in the *Mile xiasheng jing* and the *Mile chushi baojuan* are reminiscent of the one of the peaceful age of the Holy Ruler in the *Shenzhou jing*, which we have viewed in last chapter.³⁰² Although the authors of the two precious volumes elaborate on people's great satisfaction in future lives because of the abundance of resources in the Maitreya's age by adding

³⁰² For the quotation from the *Shenzhou jing*, read pp. 35-36 of this thesis.

many embellishments, all the pictures of the texts contain the references to the live of plenty, longevity, and virtue and the outstanding appearances people will attain in the coming utopia.

In the *Daojun lieji*, the Holy Ruler is described as the master who will evaluate and appoint immortals to appropriate transcendental positions in the bureaucracy of deities.³⁰³ Maitreya is also claimed to have this parallel role in his future world in sectarian messianism. The *Lishi baojuan* says that the Muzi 木子 (the split-characters of the surname Li) will take the throne, and will ask the Shouyuan Patriarch to go to his golden palace and to protect the country.³⁰⁴ The Patriarch will “grant [the rank of] buddhas and distribute the positions [of bureaucracy] (*fengfo paiwei* 封佛派位)” to sect members according to their merits (*gonglao* 功勞).³⁰⁵ The leaders of the divisions of the Jiugong Way, the Eight Trigrams, will be assigned to defend the rulers in the frontier of the eight directions.³⁰⁶ The text then reads:

If he (the Shouyuan Patriarch) doesn't save, you won't make it to the Latter Realm, where there are civil and military positions, [and one can be] an official or a high minister. There is wealth and noble rank, with blessings and long life matching those of heaven itself. Those left behind, who entered the Way late, and who have accumulated no merit, only fall into the midst of human life, there to farm the fields. The hearts of the people of the Way were glad and they laughed aloud. Who would have thought that farmers could become high officials?³⁰⁷

Compared with that of the *Daojun lieji*, the promise here is plain and direct. Both texts show us that being appointed to positions in a divine bureaucracy had appeal for the Daoist and sectarian

³⁰³ For the discussion of the role of the Holy Ruler in the *Daojun lieji*, read p. 36 of this thesis.

³⁰⁴ Although it is said in the text that Li Xiangshan, the incarnation of Maitreya in this world, takes the surname Li, obviously the Muzi is not the same person as Li, the Shouyuan Patriarch. The text does not tell us who the Muzi is.

³⁰⁵ “The Shouyuan [Patriarch] knows who have many merits and who have few merits. He will grant buddha positions [to people] according to their merits without impartially. 誰功大誰功小收元知道，封佛位論功勞不向不偏。” (p. 17)

³⁰⁶ The Jiugong Way was set up by a member, Wang Zhenxiang 王真香, of the Eight-Trigrams Way (Bagua dao 八卦道) in the late Qing. This is possibly the reason why the eight divisions of the Bagua dao, which were formed according to the Eight Trigrams (*bagua*), is mentioned here. Kong Simeng & Liu Zhongwei, “Wanqing shidai Jiugong dao yanjiu”, pp. 4-5. For the relation between Wang Zhenxiang and Li Xiangshan, see note 309.

³⁰⁷ The translation is taken from Daniel L. Overmyer, “Messenger, Savior, and Revolutionary: Maitreya in Chinese Popular Religious Literature of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries”, p. 130.

believers from the Six Dynasties to the late Qing, and it was one of the important promises in Chinese messianism.

There is the expectation of impending blissful age established in this world by future master in both Six-Dynasties Daoist and some Ming-Qing sectarian apocalyptic myth. As stated above, this does not originate in orthodox Buddhist Maitreya belief. However, the Daoist works and *baojuan* contain a number of differences in the description of this age.

Baojuan writers do not generally assign any specific year for the arrival of Maitreya's peaceful reign, whereas Daoist writers in the Six Dynasties designate the *renchen* year. *Baojuan* writers usually do not mention the time of Maitreya's age with the exact year or with heavenly stems and earthly branches although some of them provide a series of years the prediction of coming disasters. Besides, the timing of the advents of the messiah and his world is different in Daoist and sectarian eschatology. The *Daojun lieji* tells us that the Holy Ruler appears when the world becomes calm. The wicked will have been exterminated and there will be only moral people in the world. In the *Laojun yinsong jie jing*, Kou Qianzhi writes that the current age is not the right time for the Lord Lao to come although the world is full of deceptions and treacheries. Kou predicts that the Lord Lao's arrival will be accompanied with the emergence of many auspicious signs and deities, and this will happen in the future instead of the present.³⁰⁸ In precious volumes, Maitreya comes to the human world during the time of hardship, and his world is set up so that the believers of sectarian teachings can enter it and escape disasters. In the *Lishi baojuan*, it is said that Maitreya appears in the world in an incarnation as Li Xiangshan, a person of humble rank.³⁰⁹ It says that he sets up the Jiugong Dao during the time of warfare

³⁰⁸ For the discussion of Kou's points in the text, read pp. 52-53 of this thesis.

³⁰⁹ According to the *Lishi baojuan*, Li Xiangshan was born in Zhao prefecture (Yannan Zhaobei) and had five brothers. His parents died at his age of five, and he was then reduced to begging and lodging in temples (*si* 寺) and shrines (*miao* 廟) until he met Dangren laomu 當人老母 (Venerable mother who directs [the salvation of] humans). Dangren laomu was Wang Zhenxiang, who claimed to be the incarnation of the Eternal Mother in the world. Like Li Xiangshan, she was a native of Ningjin county (Ningjin xian 寧晉縣). Kong Simeng & Liu Zhongwei, "Wanqing shidai Jiugong dao yanjiu", p. 3.

raised by some rebels who fight against the Qing government. Later the world is in total disorder because the descendant of the Ming imperial family will take revenge on the Qing state and will capture its capital. He however will not rule the world long because of his untimely death. Society will be in unrest again. The text then tells us that:

眼看著各道門男女遭難，李向善彌勒佛就要收元。從天宮落下來雲城一座，普天下善男女藏在裡邊。有寶的就放他雲城避難，無寶的想進去登天還難。

When watching the men and the women of various sects (*ge daomen* 各道門; i.e. the members of various sects) encountering difficulties, the Buddha Maitreya, Li Xianshan, is about to gather the primal [ones] (=humans). A Cloud City will descend from the heavenly palace. All moral men and women in the world can hide in it. People with the treasures (*bao* 寶) will be allowed to enter the Cloud City for escaping the disasters.³¹⁰ It is more difficult for those without the treasures to enter [the City] than for them to ascend heaven. (p. 15)

The same idea that Maitreya establishes the Cloud City so that the pious can enter it and avoid disasters can also be found in the *Foshuo jiapu baojuan* (chapter 8) and the *Dingjie baojuan*.³¹¹

The timing of the future master's age is different in Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties and precious volumes because the role of the messiah is different in these two literatures. As said in chapter one, in the Daoist messianism, the Holy Ruler does not necessarily perform the task of salvation in present world. In many *baojuan*, however, Maitreya is regarded as the sole savior sent by the Eternal Mother to the world in order to spread sacred messages. Other deities are relatively much less important in salvation in sectarian writings than in Daoist works in the Six

³¹⁰ The treasures are listed in the text. It is said that they have various functions such as protecting the believers, removing their sins, and enabling them to be officials. (pp. 10-13)

³¹¹ "[The pious] enter the Cloud City in order to escape the three calamities [sent down by] Heaven. 進雲城，躲避天三災。" (*Foshuo jiapu baojuan*, chapter 8) "Every [person] relies on his miraculous treasure (lit. *fabao* 法寶; the Dharma treasure) to defend [himself so that he can] enter the Cloud City. All will escape the three calamities, and the eight difficulties will not injure [them]. 各憑法寶掩進雲城，同躲三災，八難不侵。" (*Dingjie baojuan*)

Dynasties. Therefore, it is declared that Maitreya comes to the world during the time of distress instead of after the age of hardship.³¹²

According to orthodox Buddhism, Maitreya will come to the world during the peaceful age as the future master will in Daoism. However, their coming has different meanings in these two religions. In Daoism, the believers' enjoying blissful lives in the messiah's age is regarded as the rewards for their conversion to the religion and cultivation in Daoist practices. In his *Laojun yinsong jie jing*, Kou Qianzhi mentions that the Lord Lao will destroy all antiquated doctrines and give new mandates to Daoist masters in the future, but he does not elaborate on this point.³¹³ In the *Shenzhou jing* and the *Daojun lieji*, obtaining the blissful lives and transcendental positions in the bureaucracy of deities in the ideal world ruled by the Holy Ruler are the rewards for Daoist believers. Except in the *Daojun lieji*, the Holy Ruler does not have a role in the transmission of Daoist teachings at all in Daoist works. In Daoist eschatology the guarantee that the pious will live in his age can therefore be seen as the tool for repaying one's religious cultivation. The same can be said of the Maitreya's world established in the profane world in *baojuan* literature. In orthodox Buddhism, the coming of Maitreya's age is closely related to the development of the Buddhist teachings. In the *Fayuan zhulin*, we are told that the three little disasters (illness, warfare, and famine) will arise in turn, and the life spans of humans continuously increase and decrease. When each of the disasters comes up, humans suffer from it. They will then repent of their sins and become moral. Their ages will expand and their lives will be joyful. However, they will still suffer from seven diseases (*qibing* 七病), which are defecation and urinating, coldness, hotness, passion, sexual desire, hunger, and aging (*daxiao bianli hanre yinyu jilao* 大小便利寒熱淫慾飢老). Later they experience the time of distress again because their evil will arise again. If there were no Buddhas appearing in the world,

³¹² The idea that the future master comes to the world in order to carry out the task of salvation, not solely to be the master of the future world, spread already among common people in the Six Dynasties. For details, see note 99.

³¹³ For the relevant passage of the text, read pp. 37-38 of chapter 1.

humans would undergo a continuous cosmic cycle of prosperity and decline. The reduction of human spans can temporarily be stopped because of the emergence of Buddhas.³¹⁴ In the *Fozu tongji*, during the time of the Holy Cakravartīn (*zhuanlun shengwang* 轉輪聖王), the world is peaceful. Humans enjoy joyful lives and can live for 80,000 years, but they still have three diseases (*sanbing* 三病), which are taking drink and food (*yinshi* 飲食), defecation and urinating (*bianli* 便利), and aging (*shuailao* 衰老). When Maitreya descends to the world and preaches the Dharma, a large number of people will become *arhats* (*aluohan* 阿羅漢).³¹⁵ In other words, living in Maitreya's age should be more than getting pleasant life and enjoyment in human world as the reward for being moral or taking religious practices, because it is an opportunity to escape from the cosmic cycle and the six ways of reincarnation (*liudao*).³¹⁶ Therefore, the advent of Buddhas does not necessarily happen in the prime of the world.³¹⁷ In Daoist and sectarian eschatology, seeing the ages of the Holy Ruler and Maitreya is blissful and regarded as the

³¹⁴ *Fayuan zhulin*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122:270a-270c.

³¹⁵ *Arhat* is an enlightened man, who enters *nirvāṇa*, is not to be reborn, and has destroyed the karma of reincarnation. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 290.

³¹⁶ The Nandimitrāva-dāna (*Fazhu ji* 法住記 (The record of the persistence of the Dharma [in the world]) or *Da aluohan Nantimiduolao suoshuo fazhu ji* 大阿羅漢難提蜜多羅所說法住記 (The record of the persistence of the Dharma [in the world] spoken by the great arhat Nandikāvarta)) reads: "The Tathāgata Maitreya will have obtained *sambodhi* (the wisdom of a Buddha). He will hold assembly for three times for various disciples and preach the Dharma so as to make them escape birth and death and attain and experience *nirvāṇa*. 彌勒如來成正覺已。為聲聞眾三會說法令出生死得證涅槃。" The text was written by Nandikāvarta and translated by Xuanzang in 654. *Da aluohan Nantimiduolao suoshuo fazhu ji*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.49, no.2030:13c. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol.4, p. 3350.

³¹⁷ According to the *Fozu tongji*, Maitreya does not come to the world during the prime of the world. In his time, the life spans of humans are only 80,000 years. In the age of the Golden Cakravartī (*jin lunwang* 金輪王), which is prior to the time of the Holy Cakravartī, humans can live for 84,000 years. (300a)

Jan Nattier thinks that in orthodox Buddhist teachings, Maitreya should not be regarded as a messiah because his advent does not cause a radical change of the world. He arrives when the golden age has already appeared; his primary function is simply "to guarantee the continuity of the Buddhist tradition by preaching the same Dharma as those who have gone before". (p. 36) He is a successor of former Buddhas instead of a messiah. In view of the development of the Dharma stated above, Maitreya in fact is more than a successor of Śākyamuni. His presence in the peaceful age should not be thought to be meaningless. One would find that, in Buddhist eschatology, it is not emphasized that the function of the Dharma and of its existence in the world is to cause the golden age of the profane world or rescue it from disasters, but to deliver humans from the cycle of birth and death and make them attain enlightenment. Therefore, in the *Fazhu ji*, when the warfare kalpa occurs and people in Jambūdvīpa (Nanshanbu zhou 南瞻部州) can live only 10 years, the Dharma will temporarily disappear. The sixteen *arhats* who are assigned to the maintenance of the right Dharma after Śākyamuni's *nirvāṇa* will hide until people are moral and hate warfare and hurting each other. When the life spans of people expand and become one hundred, the arhats will appear among people and transmit the Dharma again. (13b-13b) Jan Nattier, "The Meanings of the Maitreya Myth: a Typological Analysis", pp. 34-36.

reward for people's conversion to the teachings. This is different from the meaning of Maitreya's descent to the world described in orthodox Buddhism.

Although the depictions of the entrance into the earthly ideal world established by Maitreya exist only in a few precious volumes, they are compatible with those of the ascent to other-world paradise, the mainstream promise to the sectarian followers in the literature. The *Mile chushi baojuan* tells us that the pious will go to paradise and see the Eternal Mother when the age of Maitreya in the world ends.

我佛治世八萬一千年滿，皇胎佛子箇箇功圓，人人成聖仙佛聖賢，齊赴雲城都斗宮中，參拜聖母，禮謝世尊，品選上乘，永劫不壞，同坐蓮心。

[The period of] my Buddha's (Maitreya) reigning over the world will finish after 81,000 years. All Buddha's sons of imperial womb (*huangtai fozhi* 皇胎佛子) will have completed their merits; each of them will be holy [and become] immortals, buddhas, and sacred saints. They will enter the Dudou gong 都斗宮 (metropolis bushel palace) of the Cloud City together and pay their respects to the Holy Mother and express reverently gratitude to the World-honored One (Shizun 世尊). They will be evaluated and selected to be of the top rank. [Their forms] will not decay in [the coming] kalpas forever. Together with [the Holy Mother], they will take the seats in the midst of the lotus. (chapter 18, p. 421)

After the account that the people with merits are appointed to the appropriate positions by the Shouyuan Patriarch, the *Lishi baojuan* says that they will enjoy worldly happiness (*hongfu* 紅福) in the red dust world and have descendants for 10,000 generations. They will become holy and go to the Spiritual Mountain (Lingshan 靈山 = paradise) after a hundred years. (p. 17) Besides, in sectarian eschatology, both the heavenly Native Place and the earthly paradise are full of ornate decorations and valuables. We can hardly distinguish between the descriptions of the scenes of these two places. In the *Foshuo jiapu baojuan*, for example, the earthly Cloud City established by Maitreya is the place where various buddas and immortals assemble and divine music (*tianyue* 仙樂) can be heard. There are many extraordinary plants. (chapter 8, pp. 66-68)

We can find similar items in the depictions of the Native Place in chapters 4 and 9 of the *Longhua jing*. The *Lishi baojuan* says that the Eternal Mother will appoint the pious to various positions according to their merits when they enter the Spiritual Mountain. Like the Shouyuan Patriarch, the Mother will read the book on merits (*gonglao bu* 功勞簿) and make the people with the fewest merits farm in human world. (pp. 17-18) We would discover that ascending to the Native Place after the pious have finished the lives in the earthly paradise is the continuation of the reward to them. Both places and the lives in them are recounted in sectarian teachings for attracting people. Therefore, they coexist in sectarian texts and the descriptions of them are very similar.

c) The Descriptions of Believers in Sectarian Eschatology

In this section, I shall treat some contents of the promises given to the believers in *baojuan* and compare them with those in the Daoist works. Before that, I shall first discuss the identity of the people who can escape disasters in *baojuan*.

As I have stated in chapter one, the definition of the term *zhongmin* (seed people) varies in different Daoist texts. Seed people are regarded as either immortals qualified for divine officials or the ordinary believers of Daoism, who will be the subjects of the Holy Ruler. The term sometimes refers to a group of people who will be responsible for reproducing humans in the future.³¹⁸ Inconsistency in the contents of the term in Daoist works possibly results from the fact that Daoist members were composed of ordinary people and gentry in the Six Dynasties. There is not a conspicuous term for the believers generally used in sectarian teachings as there is one in the Daoist works, which is *zhongmin*. Although various terms such as *huangtai ernü* 皇胎兒女 (the imperial womb children), *yuanren* 元人 (primal humans), and *shixiang ernü* 失鄉兒女 (the children who have lost [their awareness of the importance of returning to] the native place, i.e.

³¹⁸ Read pages 40 to 50 in chapter 1 for the discussion of the term.

the children away from the native place) are applied, unlike the term *zhongmin*, they are the titles of the identity that humans already possess when they are reborn in the Eastern Land, not the one given to them when entering the Native Place. Sectarian writers have the consistent, clear idea of the identity of the objects of salvation. In some precious volumes, it is clearly written that Buddhist monks and Daoist priests are rejected as the ones being rescued in this last kalpa, but this does not mean that they have no opportunity of attaining salvation at all. They are urged to return to lay life. Influenced by Buddhism, *baojuan* writers generally accept the idea of universal salvation, but they think that ordinary people have priority over other classes of society in receiving sacred messages. In the *Longhua jing*, the poor rank over imperial officials and the masters of other sects, which belong to the second class and the lowest classes.³¹⁹ (chapter 20) The *Guiyi zhujie tisheng genji* tells us explicitly the reason. The Eternal Grandfather (Laoye) does not give the sacred text (i.e. the *Guiyi zhujie tisheng genji*) to monks because they lead the lives of the recluses and so they would not save women. If the text was given to nuns, it would be inconvenient for them to save men. Prime ministers, officials, lay Buddhists (*jushi* 居士), and the rich despise the poor's humble status. It is claimed that lay people (*suji* 俗家; i.e. the poor) are the best choice of the Eternal Grandfather as the ones receiving the sacred scripture because they can first save poor men and women and then save the above groups of people. "Universal salvation (*tongjiao* 通教)" is the purpose of this "right teachings (*zhengjiao* 正教)". (p. 912) For this reason, the patriarch of popular sects, who is considered to be the incarnation of Maitreya in many sectarian books, is an ordinary person only.

Both Daoist and sectarian writers think that seed people, or sectarian believers, will not be hurt in universal crises and will enjoy longevity in the future. In Daoism, this means that their

³¹⁹ The *Longhua jing* says that "In the Dragon Flower Assembly, the deprived children, [who belong to] the superior class, will be tested. In the Dragon Flower Assembly, prime ministers and ministers, [who belong to] the second class, will be tested. In the Dragon Flower Assembly, the leaders of various gates (i.e. sects), [who belong to] the lowest class, will be tested. 龍華會，考上乘，貧兒貧女。龍華會，考中乘，宰相公卿。龍華會，考下乘，各門頭領。"

names are recorded in heaven or by divine officers, as the *Jiutian shengshen zhangjing* and the *Laojun yinsong jie jing* say.³²⁰ The readers are urged to believe in sectarian teachings in the precious volumes because their names will be registered in the celestial notice board (*tianbang* 天榜) and omitted in the records in purgatory. They will then enjoy long lives and leave the red dust world.³²¹

Apart from permanent existence, Daoist believers are also promised to hold the offices in divine bureaucracy in the future world. As shown in the discussion of the last chapter, seed people are the candidates for divine officers. Similar ideas can be found in sectarian messianism. The narratives about the earthly Cloud City set up by Maitreya and the heavenly Spiritual Mountain of the Eternal Mother in the *Lishi baojuan*, all of which have been talked above, can demonstrate this idea. In precious volumes, the believers in the Native Place are divided into “*sansheng* 三乘 (three categories)”, which are composed of “*jiupin* 九品 (nine classes)”.³²² In his *Longhua jing*, Gong Chang mentions all the titles of the nine classes, but he does not provide any details.³²³ (chapter 24) The three categories are used in the division of sect leaders and masters. The people of the top rank will accompany the Ancient Buddha; those without religious cultivation will be the stewards (*zhishi* 執事) of various Buddhas. (chapter 20) Muren, Gong

³²⁰ The relevant passages of *Jiutian shengshen zhangjing* (6a-6b) and the *Laojun yinsong jie jing* (4a) have been discussed in p. 45 and pp. 46-47. The ideas that one's name and conduct are recorded in heaven and the record of one's good and bad deeds result in one's longevity or early death can be traced back to the *Taiping jing*. These Chinese traditional ideas appear in both Daoist and sectarian writings. Yü Ying-shih, “O Soul, Come Back!” A Study in the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist China’, pp. 383-384.

³²¹ The author of the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan* writes that “One will enjoy happiness of a buddha when one's[name] is registered in Heaven (*tianbang guahao* 天榜掛號). One will leave the red dust world when one's [name] is omitted in [the records in] purgatory (*diyu chuming* 地獄除名). 天榜掛號享佛福，地府除名出紅塵。” (chapter 12, 106a, p. 149) The expressions *tianbang guahao* and *diyu chuming* can be found in the *Mile chushi baojuan* (chapter 2, pp. 321-322), and *Dizang Shiwang baojuan* (volume 2, 8b)

³²² *Sansheng* is a Buddhist term. It means the three vehicles which carry living beings across *samsāra* or mortality (births and deaths) to the shores of *nirvāṇa*. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 58.

³²³ The titles of the nine classes are: *hongmei pin* 紅梅品 (red-plum class), *zengji pin* 增級品 (rising-in-grade class), *xuanji pin* 玄級品 (mysterious-grade class), *yongshou pin* 永壽品 (forever-existence class), *changshou pin* 長壽品 (longevity class), *xushou pin* 續壽品 (age-continuation class), *xiuzhen pin* 修真品 (truth-cultivating class), *huiji pin* 慧級品 (wisdom-grade class), and *ronggui pin* 榮貴品 (glory-nobility class). These titles are also mentioned in the *Muren baojuan*. (chapter 24, p. 911)

Chang's disciple, also mentions the titles of the nine classes and the treatment of the people in the Native Place in his *Muren baojuan*. The Eternal Mother sets up both the nine classes and the three categories for "the children in the world who take religious cultivation (*dadi xiuxing ernü* 大地修行兒女)" in order to "measure the grades [of their cultivation] and decide the fruits [they deserve] (*liangji dingguo* 量級定果)". Those without merits (*wugong* 無功) will be the stewards (*zhishi*), who will be responsible for serving Buddhas. (chapter 24, pp. 910-911) Puming, the founder of the Yellow Heaven Way, opposes the division into the nine classes and the three categories because the children of the Mother come from the same origin and should be treated equally. (*Puming baojuan*, chapter 19, pp. 166-167) Pujing, his disciple, however, writes that people are placed in the nine classes and the three categories in divine bureaucracy according to their achievement in cultivation. People in the first three (*shangsheng* 上乘; the superior category), the second three (*zhongsheng* 中乘; the middle category), and the last three classes (*xiasheng* 下乘; the lowest category) will reside in different palaces. He gives a description of the divine bureaucracy according to the human counterpart in the imperial China:

九品舍靈一氣生，一般都是靈光照，各分氣象更不同，大光也是諸佛子，小光也是諸佛神，凡聖交泰無二樣，官員宰相一般同，耳聽萬歲是成宰，偏邦外國是官人，一般戴著烏紗帽，各樣俸祿更不同，善男信女聽寶卷，加功進步爭上乘……將凡比聖，原來一體同……

The living beings (lit. *sheling* 舍靈 = *hanling* 含靈) in the nine classes are given birth by one *qi*; they all are looked after by the spiritual light (*lingguang* 靈光).³²⁴ They have different forms of *qi* (*qixiang* 氣象?); therefore (lit. *geng* 更) they vary. Those with strong light are various sons of the Buddha. Those with weak light are also various buddha and deities. [The situations of] the promotion and demotion (*jiaotai* 交泰) in profane [bureaucracy] and in sacred [bureaucracy] are not different [from each other];

³²⁴ *Lingguang* probably means the Eternal Mother here.

officers and prime ministers are the same as [nobles].³²⁵ Hearing [the title] “Your Majesty (*wansui* 萬歲, lit. the one who takes the throne for thousands of years)” [of the supreme deity] with ears, they [all] will have become the prime ministers [in divine bureaucracy]. [Those appointed to the positions] in remote states and foreign countries are officials [only]. [Although] they all wear black gauze caps, their salaries vary. Moral men and pious women (i.e. the believers) should listen to [the teachings of this] precious volumes; they should work harder, make progress, and strive for [the positions in] the superior category.... [I now] contrast [the bureaucracy in] the profane [world] and [the one in] sacred [world]. Actually they are the same! (*Pujing baojuan*, volume 2, chapter 19, 37b, p. 116)

Many *baojuan* writers model their descriptions of the Native Place on the imperial government. In addition to the *Pujing baojuan* published in sixteenth century, this tradition can be found in sectarian texts of the eighteenth century.³²⁶ In the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan*, the three categories (*sansheng*) are compared to the three groups of participants who have passed the imperial examinations at three levels held in counties, provinces, and the capital: *xiucai* 秀才, *juren* 舉人, and *jinshi* 進士. The three categories are three grades of religious cultivation, which enable the believers to obtain more and more different supernatural powers. (chapter 5, 42a-44a, pp. 117-118) We would notice that the heavenly paradise, or the earthly one, described in the Six-Dynasty Daoist texts or the Ming-Qing precious volumes is a hierarchical society, which is made up of a master and his royal court. This would be especially noticeable in the statements of the guarantee that the believers will be appointed to divine positions in the ideal world. However, the status of ordinary people and of officers will be reversed in the sectarian eschatology; the former will be of the highest rank in the future society. These do not appear in

³²⁵ *Jiaotai* is a Daoist term. It means that the *qi* of Heaven and the one of Earth connect so as to nourish the myriad things. Here it should refer to promotion and demotion. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 38.

³²⁶ This tradition can be traced back to the earliest *baojuan*, the *Foshuo huangji jieguo baojuan* 佛說皇極結果寶卷 (The precious volumes, expounded by the Buddha, on the [karmic] results of [the teaching of] the Imperial Ultimate [period]). Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 51-91.

the peaceful world depicted by Daoist writers. This could be one of the reasons why sectarian teachings were thought to be subversive of the imperial state in China.

In chapter 1, I have pointed out that the pious of the Tianshi Daoism are promised the return to their native parishes in the future ideal age, but that this cannot be found in the Shangqing and Lingbao texts. The wish to return to the native place can also be found in *baojuan*. It is stated in the texts of many popular sects, not only in those of one or two sects. However, one can infer from the above discussion that the meaning of the term *jiaxiang* 家鄉 (the native place) in sectarian texts is different from that in the Tianshi works. It also refers to the heavenly paradise, in where the Eternal Mother dwells, not only to the place one is born in. In the creation mythology in *baojuan*, which we have discussed above, humans are sent down to the Eastern Land by the Eternal Mother. They originally live in paradise. The ultimate purposes of conversion to sectarian teachings and of taking religious cultivation are to go back to it and to reunite with the Eternal Mother. Therefore, the exhortations to return to it and to meet the Mother appear frequently in the texts. Here is one of the examples from the *Mile chushi baojuan*:

我歎眾生恹惶恹惶，迷失自己家鄉家鄉，娘望嬰兒早還鄉。

I sigh with regret [because] all living beings are troubled. [They are] troubled. They have lost [the way to] their own Native Place. [They are away from] the Native Place. The Mother hopes that her little children return to the Native Place as early as possible.
(chapter 16, 398)

The alternative title of the *Jiulian baojuan* is "*Huanxiang baojuan* 還鄉寶卷 (The precious volume on the return to the Native Place)". The interpretation of the term *jiaxiang* in *baojuan* is not totally the same as that in the Tianshi works; the term is attached to great significance in *baojuan*. Returning to the Native Place not only means going back to one's origin and to one's native village, but also means reuniting with the Mother and restoring one's closeness to her and one's original holiness, all of which are important components of sectarian eschatology.

As stated above, the believers of popular sects are told that they will lead lives of plenty in the near future, and a similar idea can be found in Daoist eschatology. There is no need to repeat it here. However, one would find a striking point in two precious volumes of the Yellow Heaven Way. The *Pujing baojuan* says the following:

鑰匙佛，開經開卷，丙戌年降世臨凡……不納皇糧，永不遭愆，五谷豐登……家家戶戶有餘糧……

The Buddha Yaodi (i.e. Pujing) opens scriptures and opens scrolls (i.e. he composes the *Pujing baojuan*). He comes to the world in *bingxu* 丙戌 year (the 23rd year of the sixty-year cycle).... [People] will not need to pay grain tax to the imperial government (*huangliang* 皇糧), [but they] will never be considered transgressors (*qian* 愆).³²⁷ [They will enjoy] plentiful harvests of five grains.... Every household has enough food and to spare. (vol. I, chapter 15, 28b, p. 99)

The *Mile chushi baojuan* contains similar ideas about the peaceful world of Maitreya.

那時纔成諸佛界，到處都是修行人……無有王法併官吏，不納皇梁共稅銀。

The world will not become the region of various Buddhas until at that time. People who practice religious cultivation will be everywhere.... There will be no imperial law and officials. People will not need to pay grain (lit. *huangliang* 皇梁) or silver taxes to the imperial government. (chapter 18, p. 419)

The guarantee that people will not need to pay tax in the future is not mentioned in every *baojuan*. However we can conclude from it and the above studies that the sectarian followers wish to become dignitaries in the hierarchical society in the future world, but they do not wish to face taxation. The taxation of the imperial system is not borrowed in the description of the ideal world in sectarian eschatology although the divine bureaucracy is modeled on that of the imperial state. From this we see that not paying taxes and returning to one's native place were important themes in both Tianshi Daoism and Ming and Qing sects.

³²⁷ The character *qian* means both transgression and the passing of the appointed time.

Conclusion

Apart from those noted above, there are many other Daoist elements in sectarian eschatology. We have quoted a part of “Fuzhu xu (Prolegomena on the ingestion of atractylis)” from the *Zhenggao* in chapter one in order to show Shangqing believers’ attitudes towards the contemporary disasters. It is said that taking atractylis can drive away various diseases, and it is especially useful during the time of the end of the world. On the closing pages of the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan*, there are three prescriptions. The author of the text says that people can take them when they encounter starvation and illness. One of the prescriptions, for example, is called “the prescription for assuring peace and prolonging lives (*baogan yanshou fang* 保安延壽方)”, and it is used for “specially curing the plagues [arising] in the four seasons and infectious seasonal diseases. 專治四時瘟疫傳染時氣。” The prescription of Five-Herb pills (*wuxiang wan* 五香丸) is “transmitted [to people] by immortals and secretly [recorded] in the *Daoist Canon* 仙傳秘於道藏”. (chapter 12, 108b-110b, pp. 150-151) So, both Daoists and the believers of popular sects advocated taking medicines in order to remove diseases and sufferings of the last age. The account of the Five Patriarchs (Wuzu 五祖) in the *Longhua jing* is another example showing Daoist influence on sectarian writings. The Five-Emperor faith, which originates in the five-phase concept, plays an important role in Lingbao texts. Although this group of deities does not appear in the *Longhua jing*, their images affect those of the Five Patriarchs. In the text, the Five Patriarchs are the personified forms of the five phases, and the description of them is based on the five-phase theory. They leave behind vegetables in the world in order to nourish humans. (chapter 14)

There are many striking similarities between Daoist and sectarian eschatology although the Daoist scriptures we studied in chapter 1 were composed in the Six Dynasties, about 1,000 years prior to the late Ming. The writers of both Daoism and popular sects predicted when calamities

would happen by using heavenly stems and earthly branches and that various disasters would appear at the same time. This feature is even more remarkable when we compare it with that of Buddhist apocalyptic texts. Besides, in the scriptures of Daoism and popular sects history is divided into three stages and is thought to develop in a linear process. Their writers think that human corruption is the cause of the universal misfortunes and distress; therefore there are a large number of exhortations about morality in their texts. The end of the world is also thought to be a cause for suffering, although logically this makes the exhortations less convincing. Unlike most Daoist believers, *baojuan* writers generally did not hold the belief that the ideal world was set up in the profane world by the future master, but many details of their descriptions of the heavenly Native Place are similar to those of the world of the Holy Ruler in the Daoist works. Apart from escaping disasters and attaining blissful lives, the believers of both Daoism in the Six Dynasties and popular sects in the Ming and Qing wanted to be appointed to divine offices and to return to their native places. However, in precious volumes, *jiaxiang* is equated with the heavenly paradise. There are certainly a lot of differences between Daoist and sectarian eschatology, but the above points are shared by the two traditions. We can conclude that Daoist texts in the Six Dynasties laid the foundations of sectarian teachings in eschatology, and provided many important ideas for them.

One may possibly infer from the discussion in this chapter that Buddhism did not influence precious volumes as strongly as Daoism. It is necessary to talk about briefly the role of Buddhism in sectarian eschatology although it is impossible to provide the whole picture here. Needless to say, the *baojuan* literature is a synthesis of Buddhism and Daoism with new sectarian ideas. Many researches of modern scholars have already shown this. The purpose of this chapter is not to reject the importance of Buddhism to the belief about the end of the world held by the popular sects in the Ming and Qing. They apply many Buddhist terms in their scriptures, but they rarely borrow all components of Buddhist cosmology and prediction of the

development of the Dharma. The pattern of sectarian eschatology is mainly based on that of Daoism. Compared with those from Daoism, the borrowings from Buddhism are superficial because many important ideas emphasized in Buddhist explanation and prediction of the future are not used. The *Dabei jing* is presented as Śākyamuni's conversation with his disciples.³²⁸ The Buddha tells them to protect the right Dharma after his *nirvāṇa*. His replies to them can reveal Buddhist explanation of the unavoidable destruction of the Dharma and the origin of this world. He says to his disciples:

一切所愛稱意等事。必歸磨滅不久離散。假使久住會亦有離……有爲諸法生法有法。覺知法分別起法。從因緣生。若不滅者。無有是處。

All the affairs that one loves and finds satisfying will be ground away and disappear; they will dissolve in a short time. Even though [it seems that] they persist [in the world] for long, they will disappear (lit. *li* 離 leave) [in the world one day].... All phenomenal dharmas (*youwei fa* 有爲法), including the dharmas of the living and things (*shengfa* 生法), the dharmas of the things that exist (*youfa* 有法), the dharmas formed through consciousness (*jue* 覺) and knowing (*zhi* 知) (*jue zhi fa* 覺知法), and the dharmas made of delusions arising from reasoning and teaching (*fenbie qi fa* 分別起法) arise because of primary and secondary causes (*yinyuan* 因緣). If [you say that] they do not end, you are completely wrong [because all these dharmas will end when the causes disappear].³²⁹ The world and all living beings are formed by the power of karma (*yeli* 業力). The twelve links in the chain of existence (*shier yinyuan* 十二因緣) occurs and therefore all living beings

³²⁸ It was translated by Narendrayaśas in the ninth year of the Tianbao 天保 reign in the Northern Qi Dynasty 北齊 (570) and contains five chapters. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 1, p. 862.

³²⁹ *Dabei jing*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol. 12, no. 380:951c. *Jue* means the application of the three kinds of perception of smell, taste, and touch with the ear, tongue, and body. *Zhi* means the application of the perception of ideas with the mind. *Jue zhi fa* should mean the dharmas formed through the perception of smell, taste, touch, and ideas. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, vol. 1, p. 1136a. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, pp. 140, 196, & 214.

Other Buddhist apocalyptic sutras such as the *Fazhu ji* and the *Folin niepan ji fazhu jing* 佛臨涅槃記法住經 (The sūtra of the persistence of the Dharma recorded before the Buddha's *nirvāṇa*), translated by Xuanzang, contain the same idea that the Dharma preached by Buddhas will not exist in the world forever and will certainly decay one day. *Fazhu ji*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol. 49, no. 2030:12c. *Folin niepan ji fazhu jing*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol. 12, no. 390:1112b-1113a.

appear.³³⁰ When various Buddhas appear in the world, they teach people that all phenomena are impermanent.

若諸眾生得聞生法。從生得解脫。得聞老病死憂悲苦惱法。從彼老病死憂悲苦惱法而得解脫……所謂諸行猶如光影。無常動轉不定不究竟。盡法變易法。假使諸佛滅度之後正法隱沒。亦復如是。

If all living beings hear the truth (or the Dharma) about birth [spoken by the Buddhas], they will attain liberation from birth. When they hear the truth about aging, illness, death, sorrow, and worry, they would attain liberation through their [knowing] the truth about aging, illness, death, sorrow, and worry.... By my words that various phenomena are like light and shadow, [I mean that they are] impermanent, changing, unfixed, and without extremity. [These are] the truth about the end and the truth about transformation. The right Dharma hides and disappears after the various Buddhas' *nirvāṇa*. If this happens, this is also [one of the reflections of impermanence].³³¹

The wise learn of impermanence from the Buddha's *nirvāṇa* and the unavoidable destruction of all beings. They therefore weary of the world and wish to leave it (*yanli* 厭離); they become monks and practice religious cultivation in order to attain perfect wisdom (*bodhi*).³³² After talking about this, the Buddha expounds various ways of religious cultivation that can be carried out by people after his departure, for attaining enlightenment and *nirvāṇa*. In the last chapter of the sūtra, he predicts that Buddhist monks will be corrupt and lay people will encounter five turbid conditions (*wuzhuo* 五濁) and suffer from natural disasters.³³³ However, if the monks and lay people will take the practices sincerely and devotedly in this period, they will still eventually

³³⁰ The twelve links in the chain of existence (the twelve *nidānas*) are as follows: *avidyā* (*wuming* 無明; ignorance), *samskāra* (*xing* 行; conception), *vijñāna* (*shi* 識; consciousness), *nāmarūpa* (*mingse* 名色; name and form), *sadāyatana* (*liuru* 六入; the six sense organs: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind), *sparsa* (*chu* 觸; touch), *vedanā* (*shou* 受; sensation), *trsnā* (*ai* 愛; desire), *upādāna* (*qu* 取; grasping), *bhava* (*you* 有; existing), *jāti* (*sheng* 生; birth), *jarāmarana* (*laosi* 老死; old age and death). William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 42.

³³¹ *Dabei jing*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol. 12, no. 380:947c.

³³² *Dabei jing*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol. 12, no. 380:947b-948a.

³³³ The *wuzhuo* are as follows: 1) *jiezhuo* 劫濁 (the kalpa in decay, when it suffers deterioration and gives rise to the ensuing form); 2) *jinzhuo* 見濁 (deterioration of view, egoism, etc.); 3) *fannaο zhuo* 煩惱濁 (the passions and delusions); 4) *zhongsheng zhuo* 眾生濁 (in consequence human miseries increase and happiness decreases); 5) *mingzhuo* 命濁 (human lifetime gradually diminishes to ten years). William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 122.

attain liberation. So, we see that Buddhist eschatology is inseparable from the philosophical ideas of the religion. Although it is not necessary for us to expect that *baojuan* writers would adopt Buddhist practices in their writings, it is interesting to note that they borrow Buddhist description of monks' misdeeds and lay people's sufferings only, but not Buddhist explanation of the birth of world and the destruction of the Dharma, which is supported by Buddhist theory on the impermanence of the world. Although they often insist that "Heaven and Earth will decay [one day] 天地有壞", they do not expound this point.³³⁴ They think that one will attain immortality and eternal bliss when one enters the everlasting Native Place and reunites with the Eternal Mother. The Buddhist idea about impermanence is reduced to a reason why people should convert to their teachings as soon as possible. In short, they do not apply Buddhist philosophical ideas, but only borrow the phenomena occurring in the world in the time of distress depicted in Buddhist scriptures and interpret them in their own ways. As shown in the discussion of this chapter, sectarian explanations of the end of the world are more similar to those found in Daoist works than to those in the Buddhist sūtras. Viewing from this perspective, we can conclude that Buddhist eschatology did not affect *baojuan* as much as Daoist ideas. Ming-Qing sectarian believers still explained the era of disasters in a traditional way, as Daoists did in the Six Dynasties period.

³³⁴ The sentence can be found in the *Dasheng Mile huadu baojuan* (chapter 5, 43a, p. 118). Passages with the same meaning are found written in precious volumes, such as the *Hongyang tanshi jing* (chapter 2, p. 727, chapter 9, p. 733) and the *Piaogao jing* (chapter 2, p. 698).

CHAPTER 3: THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF SECTARIAN ESCHATOLOGICAL BELIEFS: A STUDY OF THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE *HUANGJI BAOJUAN*, LUO QING'S SCRIPTURES, AND THE *KAIXIN FAYAO*

In this chapter, I shall deal with the eschatological contents of the early precious volumes, the *Foshuo huangji jieguo baojuan* 佛說皇極結果寶卷 (The precious volumes, expounded by the Buddha, on the [karmic] results of [the teaching of] the Imperial Ultimate [period]; hereafter “the *Huangji baojuan*”) and Luo Qing's (1443-1527) five books in six volumes (*wubu liuce* 五部六冊)³³⁵, and the *Kaixin fayao* 開心法要 (The essence of dharma about opening the mind, i.e. enlightenment). As I said in chapter two, sectarian precious volumes contain many similarities with Six-Dynasties Daoist texts in eschatology. The sectarian writers in the Ming-Qing era explained universal disasters and held the belief in a messiah in a similar way as Daoist writers did. Different from the eschatological beliefs in most precious volumes, those in Luo's works, however, are strongly influenced by Buddhist cosmology and prediction, and this feature is continued by Lanfeng 蘭風, a Luo Qing's follower, in his *Kaixin fayao*, a compilation of Lanfeng's annotations to Luo's books. Luo Qing's books and this commentary can show us a picture of non-mainstream adoption of Buddhist elements in sectarian eschatology.

The *Huangji baojuan* consists of two volumes. At the end of volume one, the date of publication, the fifth year of the Xuande 宣德 reign (1430), can be found. It is the oldest of *baojuan* literature discovered so far; therefore, it should be included in the objects of our studies of early sectarian eschatological accounts. It was first discovered by Professors Li Shiyu 李世瑜

³³⁵ The five books are *Kugong wudao jing* 苦功悟道經 (The scripture on awakening to the way through bitter toil; hereafter, the “*Kugong jing*”), *Tanshi wuwei juan* 歎世無爲卷 (The book of nonactivism in lamentation for the world; hereafter the “*Tanshi quan*”), *Poxie xianzheng yaoshi jing* 破邪顯正鑰匙經 (The scripture on the key to refuting heresy and showing evidence [for correct teaching]; hereafter the “*Poxie jing*”), *Zhengxin chuyi wu xiuzheng zizai baojuan* 正信除疑無修證自在寶卷 (The precious volume of self-determination, needing neither cultivation nor verification, which rectifies belief and dispels doubt; hereafter, the “*Zhengxin baojuan*”), and *Weiwei budong Taishan shengen jieguo baojuan* 巍巍不動太山深根結果寶卷 (The precious volume of deeply rooted karmic fruits, majestic and unmoved like Mount Tai; hereafter, the “*Taishan baojuan*”). Luo's books are given the general name *wubu liuce* because, except for the *Poxie baojuan* composed of two volumes, there is one volume in his other books.

and Daniel L. Overmyer in Mr. Lu Gong's 路工's collection of antiquities in 1991, and is reprinted in volume 10 of the *Baojuan chujī*.³³⁶ The whole scripture is written in dialogue between the Buddha and questioners, which include Buddhist monks, Daoist priests, and deities.³³⁷ According to Professor Overmyer's study, the basic message of the scripture is that it is a new revelation of a path to heaven for those with the right karma who believe and practice its rituals. Its orientation is external and bureaucratic; the path to heaven is blocked by many passes (*guan* 關), each guarded by deities and spirits, admitting only those with the proper documents.³³⁸ It is not necessary for us to go into detail of its contents since Professor Overmyer's study of the text has already covered these.

After the *Huangji baojuan*, we shall discuss the eschatology in Luo Qing's five books in six volumes and Lanfeng's comments on them, which can show us Ming-Qing non-mainstream apocalyptic views. Luo Qing was a man of Shandong 山東 and served in an army garrison for some time. The untimely death of his parents caused his pursuit of enlightenment, his story and experience of which were written in the five books in six volumes. They were first printed in the fourth year of the Zhengde 正德 reign (1509) in the Ming.³³⁹ Before the discovery of the

³³⁶ Daniel L. Overmyer, "An Early Model: the Bureaucracy of Salvation in a Fifteenth-Century Text, the 'Huangchi pao-ch'ian'", *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 51. Although this *baojuan* is important to the studies of precious volumes, not much research has been done out. The studies of this precious volume I have seen are Daniel L. Overmyer's & Thomas Shiyu Li's "The Oldest Chinese Sectarian Scripture, the *Precious Volume*, Expounded by the Buddha, on the results of [the Teaching of] the Imperial Ultimate [period] (*Fo Shuo Huang-chi Chieh-kuo pao-ch'ian*, pub. 1430)", collected in *Journal of Chinese Religions* [20 (1992): 17-31], and Daniel L. Overmyer's "An Early Model: the Bureaucracy of Salvation in a Fifteenth-Century Text, the 'Huangchi pao-ch'ian'" in the *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 51-91, only.

³³⁷ The dialogue described in the first chapter is made between a deity and the Ancient Buddha (Gufo), who is regarded as the supreme deity of the world. Others in following chapters are made by the Buddha, whose title is the Buddha Corresponding to Yang (Dangyang fo 當陽佛). He is not the incarnation of Maitreya. The title is mentioned in chapter 9. (p. 327) In the entire text, he is simply called *fo* 佛 (Buddha).

³³⁸ Daniel L. Overmyer, "An Early Model: the Bureaucracy of Salvation in a Fifteenth-Century Text, the 'Huangchi pao-ch'ian'", p. 54. For the discussion of the contents of the scripture, see the studies mentioned in note 336.

³³⁹ For the life of Luo Qing, see the *Kugong jing* and the following studies: Daniel L. Overmyer's "Wu-wei Sect Scripture by Lo Ch'ing", in *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 92-102. Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 166-173. Richard Shek, "Religion and Society in Late Ming: Sectarianism and Popular Thought in Sixteenth and Seventeenth

Huangji baojuan, Luo's scriptures were thought to be the earliest precious volumes. Possibly because there is abundant information about the influence of Luo Qing's teachings on popular sects and many sects asserted the relation to Luo Qing, there are many more studies of them conducted by modern scholars than those of other sectarian scriptures.³⁴⁰ The history of popular sectarianism in the Ming and Qing discussed by modern scholars usually begins with the exploration of Luo Qing and his religion, or the narration of Luo's sect is often prior to those of other popular sects.³⁴¹ I shall use the edition of Luo's book in the commentary of Lanfeng, the *Kaixin fayao*, which is reprinted in volume 1 of the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*.³⁴² Lanfeng, who lived in the time around the Wanli 萬曆 reign (1573-1620), claimed to be the twenty-sixth patriarch of the Linji school (Linji zong 臨濟宗) of Chan Buddhism. His original writings are not extant, but his ideas were written down by his disciple Wang Yuanjing 王源靜.³⁴³ Compared with the original writings of Luo Qing, Lanfeng's lengthy annotations constitute a large proportion of the *Kaixin fayao*. Lanfeng's writings are not the only sources of Luo Qing's followers' views on his teachings, but they can provide Buddhism-oriented

Century China." Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1980, pp. 203-223. Shek's studies also cover the image of Luo Qing in legends.

³⁴⁰ Japanese scholars have shown great interest in Luo Qing's religion and published a number of studies since 1940's. Richard Shek makes a list of these studies in his dissertation. Richard Shek, "Religion and Society in Late Ming: Sectarianism and Popular Thought in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century China", p. 202. There are also many others in English and Chinese. For example, we can find the following: Zheng Zhiming 鄭志明, *Wusheng laomu xinyang suyuan* 無生老母信仰溯源 (Sources of the Eternal Venerable Mother belief) (Taipei: Wenshizhe chubanshe, 1995). Randall L. Nadeau, "Popular Sectarianism in the Ming: Lo Ch'ing and His Religion of 'Non-Action,'" Ph.D. diss., University of British Columbia, 1990. Daniel L. Overmyer, "Boatmen and Buddhas: The Lo Chiao in Ming Dynasty China," *History of Religions* 17(1978):284-302.

³⁴¹ This can be found in the following studies: Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mini zongjiao*, Feng Zuozhe 馮佐哲 & Li Fuhau 李富華, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi* 中國民間宗教史 (The history of Chinese popular religious sects) (Taipei: Wenlù chubanshe, 1994).

³⁴² Another edition without Lanfeng's comments is collected in the *Baojuan chuiji* (vol. 1-3).

³⁴³ Richard Shek, "Religion and Society in Late Ming: Sectarianism and Popular Thought in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century China," pp. 233-235. The Linji school was founded by the monk Yixuan 義玄 in the Tang in the Hebei 河北; the school was named according to the Linji monastery (Linji yuan 臨濟院) established by him. It thrived most among the five schools of Chan Buddhism from the Song to the Ming. Han Bingfang thinks that there is little relation between this Buddhist school and Luo Qing. Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 240-241. The five schools are the Weiyang school (Weiyang zong 滄仰宗), Linji school (Linji zong 臨濟宗), Caodong school (Caodong zong 曹洞宗), Yunmen school (Yunmen zong 雲門宗), and Fayan school (Fayan zong 法眼宗). Ren Jiyu, ed., *Zongjiao da cidian*, p. 114.

eschatology written by a sectarian writer; therefore they will be included in our subjects of exploration in this chapter.³⁴⁴

Part I: The *Huangji baojuan*

The author has written the purpose of the book in the preface. Apart from revealing the ineffectiveness of evil sects and of heretical ways (*xiezhong waidao* 邪宗外道), the author points out the miraculous function of the text.

誠然是出世之良方，果重有成佛之妙意，躲三災不落頑空，避八難不遭惡趣。

[The teachings in this book] really are about the good methods of leaving the world.

Really [this book is] important [because] it has the wonderful meaning [enabling one] to attain buddhahood. [It can enable one] to escape the three calamities and not to sink into stupid void. [It can enable one] to avoid the eight difficulties and not to encounter evil paths. (p. 226)

In the entire text, the author focuses his main attention on appropriate documents one should send to divine bureaucracy if one aims at ascending to paradise and escaping disasters. One of the prerequisites for leaving the mundane world is to know the three Buddhas and the disasters happening in their reigns. In the first section “Hundun chufen tiandi pin 混沌初分天地品 (The chapter about the chaotic time in which heaven and earth were first divided)”, the Shihuang

³⁴⁴ Because the contents of the *Huangji baojuan* and Luo Qing's scriptures have already been discussed in Daniel L. Overmyer's *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, (pp. 51-135), I shall talk the contents of the *Kaixin fayao* only in the following of this chapter.

Apart from the *Kaixin fayao*, the following works written by other Luo Qing's followers can be found nowadays: Daming 大寧's the *Mingzong xiaoyi daben baojuan* 明宗孝義達本寶卷 (The precious volume explaining an intention [of teachings on] filial responsibility and justice [and helping one to] achieve one's original [aim]), Sun Zhenkong 孫真空's *Xiaoshi Zhenkong saoxin baojuan* 銷釋真空掃心寶卷 (The precious volume [expounded by] Zhenkong on removing [the doubts in] the mind), and Mingkong 明空's *Xiaoshi Yinkong shiji baojuan* 銷釋印空實際寶卷 (The precious volume explaining the true realm of [the Bodhisattva] Yinkong). According to Mingkong's *Foshuo sanhuang chufen tiandi tanshi baojuan* 佛說三皇初分天地嘆世寶卷 (The precious volume in lamentation for the world which was spoken by the Buddha when the Three Sovereignities first divided heaven and earth). Sun Zhenkong and he are the third and seventh patriarchs of the eight generations of Luo's followers respectively. Daming was a monk who had directly learnt from Luo Qing. For the other patriarchs and their works, see Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjiao zongjiao shi*, pp. 223-224. The *Mingzong xiaoyi daben baojuan* is reprinted in Wang Jianchuan & Lin Wenchuan, ed., *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, vol. 6. The other two *baojuan* can be found in volumes 18 and 19 of the *Baojuan chujing*. The *Xiaoshi Yinkong shiji baojuan* is discussed in Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 363-365.

zuntian 始皇尊天 (Venerable celestial one of primeval king = Shihuang tianzun 始皇天尊 [Celestial venerable one of primeval king]) asks the Ancient Buddha what the origin of the world, its beginning, and its end (*genben shimo* 根本始末) are, because the contemporary evil people in the Eastern Land do not know them at all.³⁴⁵ The expression *genben shimo* here means the messages about the three Buddhas and the three calamities and the eight disasters (*sanzai banan*). The Buddha says that confused people do not know the origin of the world.

For each of the three Buddhas there are the three calamities, and for each of the three apexes there are the eight difficulties. If this were not so, those who cultivate karmic blessings would not be as good as those who fall into evil actions, and those who do good would not be the equal of those who do bad. One wouldn't know who was true and who was false. (p. 233)³⁴⁶

During the time of the three calamities, heaven and earth will be destroyed and so will the myriad beings in the world. There will then be no humans and writing. The Ancient Buddha tells the Shihuang zuntian the following:

天地萬物都有敗壞，止只有雲盤都斗不動。雲盤都斗在有毀壞，可著誰安天立地？

There are decay and destruction for all heaven and earth and the myriad things. Only the Metropolis Dipper [Palace] of Cloud Realm (Dudou yunpan 都斗雲盤=paradise) is unchanging. If there was also (*zai* 在 = *zai* 再) destruction for the Metropolis Dipper [Palace] of Cloud Realm, who [else except me] could then be sent to set up heaven and establish earth? (p.234)

The author continues the text with the Ancient Buddha's explanation of the Three-Buddha cosmic history.

³⁴⁵ There is literally a character *zhi* 始 (beginning) at the end of the title. The chapters of the edition printed in the *Baojuan chuji* are not well organized. There are fourteen chapters only in two volumes, but in the preface it is said that there are fifteen. The section with the title "Hundun chufen tiandi pin zhi" possibly should be the first chapter. It also contains the conversation of the Buddha with a questioner, which is the form found in other chapters. The order of chapters of the *Huangji baojuan* in our discussion will be the same as that in the edition in the *Baojuan chuji*.

³⁴⁶ The translation is taken from Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 64.

心懷無極會燃燈佛掌青陽教，立玄爐，曾在皇極會攝頂光而鍛煉成三葉金蓮，轉九劫賢聖，以前過去了。太極會釋迦佛掌紅陽教，曾在無極會內攝身光而入玄爐，鍛煉五葉金蓮轉十八劫人緣。上有皇極，是彌勒佛掌白陽教，要治那八十劫賢聖立玄爐子攝內光而鍛煉那九葉金蓮。

[People should] bear in mind that the Lamplighter Buddha of the Non-Ultimate Assembly takes charge of the Green Yang Teachings and sets up a dark furnace. [He] has assimilated a halo round his head in the Imperial-Ultimate Assembly, and has refined and completed a three-leafed golden lotus. [He] revolves (controls) nine kalpas [and] virtuous sages (sic). The past [kalpas] have already passed. The Buddha Śākyamuni of Great-Ultimate Assembly takes charge of the Red Yang Teachings. [He] has assimilated body light and entered a dark furnace (sic) in the Non-Ultimate Assembly. [He] refines a five-leafed golden lotus and revolves [=controls] eighteen kalpas [and] relations with people (sic). There is still (*shang* 上 = *shang* 尙) the Imperial Ultimate Assembly. It is [an age in which] the Buddha Maitreya takes charge of the White Yang Teachings. In order to rule [in] that eight-one kalpas [and] virtuous men (sic) and establish a dark furnace, [he has to] assimilate internal light and refine that nine-leafed golden lotus. (pp. 234-235)

One can find some expressions confusing, and it is difficult to understand all the meanings. One however would also be astonished that the three stages of history ruled by the three Buddhas have already been formed in the *Huangji baojuan*, and the terms such as “imperial ultimate (*huangji* 皇極)”, “green yang teaching (*qingyang jiao* 青陽教)”, and “five-leafed golden lotus (*wuye jinlian* 五葉金蓮)”, which are associated with the three-Buddhas mythology and appear in later *baojuan*, are already used in this book. One of the differences between the three-stage cosmology depicted in the *Huangji baojuan* and the one in the later scriptures is that we are told in the *Huangji baojuan* the miserable time full of calamities appears during the end of each Buddha’s reign. This is generally not mentioned in other *baojuan*. It is usually insisted that universal sufferings come up in the world at the end of Śākyamuni’s time only.

燃燈三葉金蓮相，戊己玄爐鍛煉成，週流九劫青陽會，水火風災都放出……釋迦身光煉世界，一十八劫現當極，掌定風雲雷雨事，萬相諸神總掌持，看看天元劫數滿，又是彌勒掌星宿。

The Lamplighter [Buddha appeared in] a form of a three-leafed golden lotus, which was refined and completed in a *wuji* 戊己 dark furnace.³⁴⁷ [The teachings of the Non Ultimate] circulated for nine kalpas in a Green Yang Assembly. [During his time,] all the calamities of water, fire, and wind were released.... The body light of Śākyamuni refines the world. In the eighteen kalpas, the present apex appears. [He] is in charge of matters of wind, cloud, thunder, and rain. The myriad forms are chiefly controlled by various deities. [When it is] seen that Celestial Primordial destiny in which calamities must be encountered (*jieshu* 劫數 = *jieyun* 劫運) is finished, this is [the time of] Maitreya in charge of the Constellation [kalpas] (= the future kalpa) again. (p. 238)

Apart from that with the Yuanhuang zuntian, the Buddha's conversation with Ānanda, Kāśyapa, and Yiyang 已陽 (Cease and Yang) deals with the three Buddhas. The Buddha tells them the following:

一字佛三字佛四字佛六字佛無非是悠引迷人，持齋行善都不是了道法門成佛道路……你不知道然（=燃）燈佛三葉金蓮，念四字佛成聖，他是過去佛。釋迦佛五葉金蓮，念六字佛成真，這是見（=現）在的佛。咱脩的是九葉金蓮，該念十字佛纔了道，其餘一字三字不是正宗……傳你十字佛……跟佛同上九蓮天……十佛引奏畫樓殿，十佛接引入三真。

[The recitation of] one-character Buddha[-name], three-character Buddha[-name], four-character Buddha[-name], and six-character Buddha[-name] is for nothing, and it misleads confused people for a long time. Both maintaining fasts and doing good deeds are not the method (lit. *famen* 法門; dharma gate) of understanding the Dao and not the way of attaining buddhahood.... You do not know that the Lamplighter Buddha [was associated with] a three-leafed golden lotus and attained holiness by reciting four-character Buddha[-name]. He is the Buddha of the Past. The Buddha Śākyamuni [is associated with] a five-leafed golden lotus and has completed perfection (*changzhen* 成真) by reciting six-character Buddha-name. This is the Buddha of the Present. What we practice is the nine-leafed golden lotus [teachings]. It is only by reciting the ten-character Buddha-name that one completes the Way. The other one- and three-character recitations are not the orthodox tradition.... [Now I] teach you [the recitation] of the ten-

³⁴⁷ *Wu* is the fifth one of the tenth Heavenly Stems, and *ji* is the sixth one. *Wuji* is a term used in Daoist internal alchemy and refers to *yin* and *yang* of spleens. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 265.

character Buddha[-name].... [Then you can] accompany the Buddha [Maitreya] on the ascent to the Nine-[leafed] Lotus Heaven together [after you attain Buddhahood].... Ten Buddhas will lead music performance in a hall of painted tower. Ten deities will greet and usher [you] to the [Region of] Three Perfection [Ones] (*sanzhen* 三真).³⁴⁸ (chapter 6, pp. 295-297)

The author also talks the appropriate ways of cultivation one should take in Maitreya's time in chapter 9. The Buddha says that he has obtained the position of the Buddha Corresponding to Yang (Dangyang fo) after he has endured limitless suffering in the ten lives he is reborn. When Maitreya is going to be in charge of teaching (*zhangjiao* 掌教 = rule the world) in the coming eighty-one kalpas, people will understand the Dao by taking ten steps (*shibu* 十步) only, which can produce as many merits as they can obtain in their ten lives.³⁴⁹ (p. 327)

Like other *baojuan* writers, the author of the *Huangji baojuan* believes that the world is now in the end of Śākyamuni's time and the beginning of Maitreya's time. From the above quotations, one would discover that the three-Buddhas' cosmic time simply provides a historical context for his discussion of a proper path to heaven. The three Buddhas are not closely related to the tasks of descending to the mundane world, carrying out salvation, and revealing sacred messages to people. In the conclusion of the book after the last chapter, we read:

Three generation of Buddhas have all come to descend to earth; the Buddhas and bodhisattvas have together come to put [the world] in proper order. Dividing [their forms,] they have been born in subprefectures, cities, districts, and prefectures, and have scattered about in settlements [of villages] and townships. They have become head supervisors to save the lost of the world, selecting the superior [among them] to become patriarchs [for] the apexes.³⁵⁰ (p. 401)

The author does not mention Maitreya as a sole deity leading the task of salvation in his time.

The above quotation should be regarded as scriptural validation for the many local incarnations

³⁴⁸ A part of the translation is taken from Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 64.

³⁴⁹ For the contents of the ten steps, see p. 173 of this chapter.

³⁵⁰ The translation is taken from Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 90.

of Buddhas and bodhisattvas proclaimed by sectarian leaders and texts in the centuries to follow.³⁵¹ Maitreya does not take a prominent role in the book as he does in later precious volumes. He is mentioned only when the author insists that the practices of religious cultivation need to correspond with the development of history.

Compared with those of the three-Buddha reigns, the descriptions of calamities are fragmentary and primitive. The references to the disasters can be found throughout the entire scripture. Some questions raised by the interlocutors to the Buddha include the mentions of the three calamities (*sanzai*) and the eight difficulties (*banan*). The Buddha either is asked about the way of escaping these misfortunes or reveals the practices the interlocutors are mentioning to be ineffectual in ascending to heaven and helping them to escape these misfortunes. In chapter 1, the Man of the Dao named Yuanming 圓明 (Yuanming daoren 圓明道人; Completely Enlightened) tells the Buddha that he maintains fasts, obeys ethical principles (lit. *danshi danfei* 耽是耽非; be concerned about right and wrong), worships the sun and moon, and saves thousands of people. He asks the Buddha if he can escape the *sanzai banan*, demonstrate the attainment of the fruits, and pay his respects to the origin (= go to paradise) (*zhengguo chaoyuan* 証果朝元). The Buddha replies that he does not have proper documents and do not know proper procedures; therefore, he cannot avoid being harmed when the disasters appear.³⁵² In chapter 2, another Man of the Dao Wumen (Wumen daoren 無門道人; Gateless) asks the Buddha the similar question and is replied that he is ignorant of many key messages and procedures, so he will be unable to escape the misfortunes and to leave the mundane world. He involves himself in evil only. (p. 251-254) A similar question is raised in chapter 9. In chapter 5, we learn that only people who meet the teaching about *shouyuan* 收圓 (= *shouyuan* 收元; the collection of the

³⁵¹ Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 90.

³⁵² "Besides, you do not have plaques (*pai* 牌), titles (*hao* 號), personal documents (*qinwen* 親文?), and incense of cultivation (*xiuxing xianghuo* 修行香火) 你又無牌號親文修行香火。". (p. 244)

primal ones [humans])³⁵³ can escape the *sanzai banan*. Those who do not meet it are called the nine streams of the three religions (= Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism?) (*sanjiao jiuliu* 三教九流). They cannot escape misfortunes, as the myriad beings in the world cannot. (pp. 283-284) We would conclude from the above quotations that, unlike those in the later *baojuan*, the accounts of sufferings are much less detailed. The author of the *Huangji baojuan* starts a number of chapters in the book with the questions concerning disasters, as shown above. Besides, the prevention of harm in the time of the three disasters and the eight difficulties is already regarded as one of the aims of religious cultivation. However, he simply uses the term *sanzai banan* instead of elaborating on various disasters. He does not focus his attention on the description of the future disasters and hence the pressure of the coming suffering on readers is relatively weak. He gives lengthy, repetitious accounts of appropriate titles and documents, and insists on their importance. The theme about universal crises is not as striking in the *Huangji baojuan* as it is in later precious volumes.

In the book, there are a lot of ethical teachings and condemnations of heretics and the present world. In chapter 9, for example, the Buddha tells three interlocutors, Zaoxiang 早香 (Morning Incense), Wuming 悟明 (Awakened and Enlightened), and Wanfeng 萬峰 (Ten Thousand Peaks), that they cannot escape the disasters because they do not know the whole truth about the nature (*xing* 性).³⁵⁴ They neither know the origin of the nature nor the way of escaping disasters. The Buddha then preaches the ten steps (*shibu* 十步) of religious cultivation, the first six of which involve ethical teachings.

First you must worship Heaven and Earth diligently and attentively [offer] incense, and be filial and caring toward your parents. Second, you must ask that your basic nature (sic)

³⁵³ Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, p. 271.

³⁵⁴ The translation of the names of the interlocutors is taken from Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 61. The nature seems to be the origin of the world and the three Buddhas.

transcend the ordinary and holy, and [you must] reverence your predecessor [in the faith]. Third, know where to come to rest (*xialuo* 下落); do not cheat. Honor and respect superiors. Fourth, offer incense unceasingly in the four seasons and be friendly to fellow villagers. Fifth, know the four forms of purification, respond to celestial primal [ones] (*tianyuan* 天元), and be diligent and attentive in your occupations (*shengli* 生理). Sixth, receive the Ten Buddhas, know about the palaces [of heaven], and instruct your descendants [about them]. (pp. 328-329)³⁵⁵

The *Huangji baojuan* provides the explanation of the existence of heretics. In the section “Hundun chufen tiandi pin”, we are told that the Ancient Buddha sends down thirty-six men to the world and orders them to construct exclusively (*zhuanzao* 專造) the future world (*danglai shijie* 當來世界) and the causes of the Future Imperial Apex (*weilai huangji yin* 未來皇極因). However, they are expert at giving clever talk in an ingratiating manner (*qiaoyan lingse* 巧言令色), but do not know about religious practices. They are proud and ambitious. They do not know the right faith, but they claim themselves to be patriarchs (*zu* 祖). (pp. 235-236) In the entire scripture, the author repeatedly urges readers to lead a moral life and not to convert to heresies. However, he does not blame the coming of universal disasters on heretics and corrupt people. The explanation of the three calamities and the eight difficulties the author provides in the book are simpler than that in later *baojuan*. As the above quotation from “Hundun chufen tiandi pin” says, there are the three calamities and the eight difficulties in the three Buddha’s times. Universal crises are thought to be natural phenomena. He does not connect the corruption of the contemporary world with disasters. For example, after the statement of the ten steps in chapter 9, the author says that one can penetrate the Way 道 (Dao) and become a buddha by carrying them out. The chapter then continues with the three interlocutors’ question about the time one needs in carrying them out. (p. 330) In the entire chapter, the author does not mention

³⁵⁵ The translation is taken from Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 62-63.

the causes of *sanzai banan*. Ethical teachings and the condemnations of heresies and human misbehavior are not mixed with the explanation of sufferings in the *Huangji baojuan* as they are in later precious volumes.

Nevertheless, the usage of the term *mofa* (the Final Dharma) in the *Huangji* book is already the same as that in later precious volumes. As I discussed in chapter two, sectarian writers commonly refer to the term as the present corrupt time. It is simply equated to *moshi* (the end of the world) and *mojie* (the end of kalpa). The original Buddhist interpretation of the term is distorted. A similar usage can already be found in the *Huangji baojuan*. In chapter 11, the book reads:

如今末法年來，人心乖巧，不憑天理，不行正道，說的好，做的歹……說的正，做的邪。

[The Buddha says,] in the present years of Final Dharma (*mofa*), the human mind is disagreeable and tricky; people do not follow the principles of Heaven (*tianli* 天理) and do not carry out right ways. The things they say are moral, but the ways they act are vicious... The things they say are correct, but the ways they act are evil. (p. 349)

A similar attack on contemporary people, in which the term *mojie* is applied in the same way, has already been mentioned in the first section “Hundun chufen tiandi pin”. This shows that the author of the *Huangji baojuan* does not distinguish the term *mofa* from the one *moshi*.³⁵⁶ He does not use the term *mofa* for describing the age of decaying teachings. The term *zhengfa* refers to the teachings preached in the book, which is described as the only way of ascending to paradise and escaping misfortunes.³⁵⁷ The Buddhist idea of a three-division duration of Dharma is not borrowed here. This is what we find in the precious volumes composed in later time, as shown in chapter two.

³⁵⁶ “In the present age of the end of kalpa (*mojie*), the people who do good deeds are expert at giving clever talk but in an ingratiating manner... 如今末劫年來，修善之人專以巧言令色……” (p. 232)

³⁵⁷ In chapter 7, the author describes the book as “true orthodox teaching (*zhen zhengfa* 真正法)”. (p. 315)

Part II: Luo Qing's Six Volumes in Five Books

a) Luo Qing's Discussion of Disasters

Luo Qing is different from most sectarian writers; he quotes various Buddhist scriptures and preaches the lay-based Chan Buddhism with a strong emphasis on the human mind. His writings therefore are regarded as another class of *baojuan* in contrast to those of mainstream sectarian scriptures, which we have discussed in chapter two.³⁵⁸ The main purpose of Luo's writings is to urge people to awake to their own natures (*xing* 性) as the source of the universe in order to attain enlightenment and is to attack all other practices of cultivation, which are thought to be useless. His teachings do not contain many discussions of eschatology. They are thought not to be subversive, and the apocalyptic beliefs and rebellions of the sects that claimed to be related to him do not originate in his original teachings.³⁵⁹ Impermanent existence of the myriad things and their repetitious reincarnations in the four forms of birth (*sisheng*) and in six paths (*liudao*) in the mundane world cause Luo Qing's religious quest.³⁶⁰ In the following passage, Luo Qing emphasizes that humans with evil karma will suffer in *liudao* in various impermanent worlds,

³⁵⁸ Daniel L. Overmyer, "Values in Chinese Sectarian Literature: Ming and Ch'ing Pao-chüan", p. 220.

³⁵⁹ Richard Shek thinks that there were two groups of believers of Luo's teachings. Some people adhered to Luo's ideas completely or partly. Lanfeng and the Orthodox School of Nonactivity (Wuji zhengpai 無極正派, or Laoguan zaojiao 老官齋教 Vegetarian religion of venerable men) belong to this group. Members of the sect were vegetarians, and they were called *laoguan* 老官 (venerable men) by their village fellows. The edition of the *Kaxin fayao* in the *Ming Qing minjiao zongjiao jingjuan wenxian* was reprinted by Pushen 普伸 of the sect in the ninth year of the Shunzhi 順治 reign (1652). Luo Qing was deified in this time; therefore, Yin Jinan 殷繼南 (1527-1582), the founder of the Wuji zhengpai, was regarded as the incarnation of Luo Qing. (4b-5b, pp. 404-405). Richard Shek thinks that people of the other group held subversive beliefs. The sect leaders in later time such as Piaogao of the Vast Yang sect and Guiyuan 歸圓 of the Western Mahāyāna (Xi dacheng jiao 西大乘教) attempted to build up the reputation as popular religious leaders like Luo Qing; they therefore gave radical implication of his teachings. Liu Tianxu 劉天緒, who claimed to be the Master of the Nonactivist teaching (Wuwei jiaozhu 無爲教主), planned to rise up in Nanjing 南京 in the sixteenth year of the Wanli reign (1606). He predicted that heavenly monsters (*tianmo* 天魔) were going to descend to the world, and people were going to suffer all kinds of disasters. Rebellious elements of popular sects are thought not to originate in Luo Qing and his teachings. Richard Shek, "Religion and Society in Late Ming: Sectarianism and Popular Thought in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century China.", pp. 232-249. Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 240-351.

³⁶⁰ For the explanations of the terms *sisheng* and *liudao*, read note 266 of this thesis. Luo Qing's understanding of *sisheng liudao* is the same as other sectarian writers. In chapter 2 of the *Poxie baojuan*, we are told that people who are greedy for the things seen, heard, smelted, and tasted will be reborn in the four forms. The creatures with womb birth are camels, mules, horses, and elephants; those with egg birth are birds and beasts. The beings with moisture birth are fishes and soft-shelled turtles (*bie* 黿); those with transformation birth are mosquitoes, midges, and maggots. (2:31a-33b, pp. 530-531) His usage of the terms *sisheng* and *liudao* is the same as that found in other *baojuan*, which is stated in note 266 of this thesis.

but does not mention the sufferings caused by the great three calamities, the coming of which here only means the end of worlds.

若人先世聞說般若。已曾捨去。今世聞說。由宿力故。還復捨去。身語及心皆不和合。由斯造作愚痴。惡慧增長。墮大地獄。經歷百千俱胝那庾多劫。受諸大苦。三災起時。猶未畢故。死後轉生他方世界。遍歷十方。經無量劫。彼業稍微。從地獄出。次第受傍生餓鬼。二趣中。各經百千俱胝那庾多劫。至於三災轉生他方。普受諸苦。一失人身萬劫難。

If some one hears the sermon on *prajñā* (*bore* 般若; wisdom) and has already abandoned [the wisdom] in his previous lives, he will abandoned [the wisdom] again because of the power of [bad karma (?) resulting from his] former lives (*suli* 宿力) when he hears [the sermon]. All his body, words, and mind are not harmonious and suitable [for learning the truth (?)]. Because of such behavior of [this] silly, deluded person, his evil wisdom will enlarge. He will fall into great purgatory and experience various serious sufferings in thousands of millions kalpas (*baiqian juzhi nayuduo jie* 百千俱胝那庾多劫)³⁶¹. Because [such sufferings] still will not end yet when the three calamities (*sanzai*) arise, he will be reborn in other worlds when he dies (sic). [Then] he will experience [transmigration in] all [the worlds of] ten directions, and this will endure for unlimited kalpas. When his [bad] karma [deceases by] a small quantity, he will be released from purgatory. He will next endure [transmigration] as animals and hungry ghosts. In each [of these paths], he will experience thousands of millions kalpas. [This transmigration will continue] until the three calamities appear; [then] he will be reborn in [other worlds in] other directions and have all various sufferings. Once a person loses his human body, he will suffer in a myriad kalpas. (*Poxie jing*, 22:27b-28b, p. 644)

Unlike later precious volumes, Luo's books do not contain a lot of accounts of various kinds of disasters. The discussions about *sisheng* and *lindao* are much more than those about the age of calamities; the former two topics hence overshadow the last one. His books contain fragmentary descriptions of the time of cosmic decay only. Compared with that in later *baojuan*, the language applied in talking this theme is simple and monotonous. The terms "*sansai* (the three

³⁶¹ The expression, which appears twice in the quotation, is literally translated as: "kalpas composed of hundreds of thousands of *koī* (*juzhi* 俱胝; a crore: 100 millions) [which multiplies] 100,000 (*navuta*; *nayuduo* 那庾多) [times]. 百千俱胝那庾多劫" It means infinite time. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 247 & p. 322.

calamities)” and “*banan* (the eight difficulties)” are usually used in referring to universe misfortunes. This is what we find in the *Huangji baojuan*. There is however not enough evidence to suggest that contemporary eschatology in precious volumes was not yet developed. There are complete pictures of apocalypse in the *Jiulian baojuan*, which was published in 1523, only fourteen years after Luo Qing’s books. Besides, Daoist and Buddhist texts had already provided many eschatological expressions. The descriptions of the cosmic misfortunes are monotonous and sketchy in the *Huangji baojuan* and Luo Qing’s books because these books are not eschatology-oriented, and strictly speaking, they are not typical eschatological *baojuan*. Therefore, Luo Qing neither designates specific years in which calamities will come up with heavenly stems and earthly branches nor elaborates on a variety of the imminent disasters in his books.

We shall now discuss the contents of the discussions of disasters in Luo Qing’s books. Influenced by Buddhist cosmology, he emphasizes that heavenly regions will decay as the mundane world will. Chapter 4 of the *Poxie jing*, “Polan ji fangbian xiu sanshisan tian zhutian pin disi 破覽集方便修三十三天諸天品第四 (chapter 4 on refuting and viewing [the practices of] cultivation [which result from] conveniences [and enable one to ascend to] various thirty-three heavens)”, deals with the inevitable ruin of all thirty-three heavens (*sanshisan tian* 三十三天).³⁶²

諸天五衰相現。果報將盡。生大苦惱墮三惡道。譬如饑人噉雜毒。食初雖美。終成大患變壞。生大苦惱。輪迴三塗。準受諸苦。三界之中。無有一樂。諸天五衰相現。

The five forms of decay (*wushuai* 五衰) will appear in various heavens. When the retribution for good deeds of [people] are going to end, they will have serious worry and fall into [reincarnation into] the three evil paths. [The promises of the ascents to the heavens] are like miscellaneous poisons eaten by hungry people. Although they find

³⁶² See note 368 of this thesis for the Buddhist definition of the term.

them tasty when they first eat them, [eating them] eventually turns into a big disaster and the deterioration [in their future reincarnations]. They will have great anxiety. [People who long for rebirths in the heavens] will experience transmigration in the three [evil] paths, and certainly endure various sufferings. In the three realms (*sanjie* 三界), there are no any pleasures.³⁶³ The five forms of decays will appear in all the heavens. (4:62b, p. 545)

Then Luo Qing explains what the five forms of decay are.³⁶⁴ All the three realms will be destroyed when the three calamities arrive. Therefore, ascending to heavenly realms by obeying the five percepts and carrying out the ten good deeds (*wujie shishan* 五戒十善) are not the roads to enlightenment and to eternal freedom from transmigration.³⁶⁵ Carrying out morals is one of the practices by which one will cling to forms (*youxiang* 有相). The assertions about the doom of the heavens can be found in all his books.³⁶⁶ One would find the cosmology in Luo Qing's books different from that in other precious volumes. Later *baojuan* writers simply divide the whole cosmos into regions: the Native Place, the mundane world, and purgatory. As mentioned in chapter 2, there are universal crises and destruction in human world only; paradise and purgatory exist forever as the places of ever-lasting pleasure and punishment. Luo Qing's

³⁶³ The three realms are the realm of sensuous desire (*vujie* 欲界), the realm of form (*sejie* 色界), and the formless realm of pure spirit (*wu sejie* 無色界). William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 70.

³⁶⁴ The five forms are as follows: 1) flowers on the head wither; 2) eyes are blinked; 3) the light of the body go out; 4) there is sweat on armpits; 5) one backslides. (p. 89) In Buddhism, the contents of the five forms of decay vary in different scriptures. It is said that the five forms of decay happen to the living beings in heavens, not to heavens, when their lives in heavens are going to end. The quotations from the *Yinguo jing* 因果經 (The sūtra on causes and effects) in the *Fayuan zhulin* says that the five forms happen to Bodhisattva Shenhui 善慧 when he is going to descend to the world and become a Buddha. The five forms here include the first, second, and fourth ones mentioned above and other two forms. His clothes are covered with dirt, and he is not delighted to stay in heavens (*bule benzuo* 不樂本座; not delighted to stay in where they are). (vol.53, 339b-339c) William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 126. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p.546. Yiru, *Sanzhao fashu*, p.228.

³⁶⁵ The five percepts are the following: Do not kill, steal, commit adultery, lie, and take alcohol. The ten good deeds include the first four percepts and the following: Do not give improper remarks (*qiyu* 綺語), give evil speeches (*ekou* 惡口), give divisive words (*liangshe* 兩舌), be greedy, be angry, and hold evil views. Yiru, *Sanzhao fashu*, pp. 460-461. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 118.

³⁶⁶ The sentences "various six heavens of desire all have five forms of decay. There naturally is the disaster of wind in even the third *dhyāna* heaven. 六欲諸天俱五衰，三禪尚自有風災。" or similar ones appear repeatedly in the scriptures. *Zhengxin baojuan*, 14:38b, p. 738. *Poxie jing*, 1:28b, p. 528, 4:68b, p. 548, 22:33b, p. 646. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 136. For the calamities happening in the *dhyāna* heavens, read p. 103 and note 217 of chapter 2.

description of the universe contains noticeable Buddhist borrowing. The whole cosmos not only is composed of the above regions of three layers, but also contains other worlds and various heavens, as the quotation from chapter 22 of the *Poxie baojuan* says. Unless living beings, including deities, have attained enlightenment, they have to endure birth and death and the three calamities.

在上方做天人生老病死，三十三五衰現又有三災。六欲天那天王天福受盡，在牛領受罪托生螢虫。

Being a deva in the region above, one has to experience birth, aging, illness, and death. The five forms of decay appear in the thirty-three [heavens], and there are also the three calamities there. When the heavenly happiness enjoyed by that (sic) heavenly king in the heavens of desire is exhausted, he will suffer retribution in the region of ox and be reborn as fireflies. (*Tanshi baojuan*, 8:12a, p. 488)

Besides, in the *Taishan baojuan*, we are told that purgatory and the heavens will be destroyed one day. Lanfeng explains that the heavens will be hidden when the happiness people can enjoy there is exhausted, and purgatory will be destroyed when the three great calamities come up and the wicked have endured enough retribution there.³⁶⁷ (5:1b-2b, p. 803) Among the precious volumes I have read, Luo Qing's books are influenced most by Buddhist cosmology.³⁶⁸

In addition, Luo Qing considers collective sufferings to be produced by the source of the universe. In chapter 10 of the *Zhengxin baojuan*, he writes a piece of seven-character verse. "If

³⁶⁷ "天堂者。三界諸天，福盡則隱。地獄者……三災起時。孽盈則滅。故云天堂地獄都有敗壞。"

³⁶⁸ One would still discover that Luo Qing has distorted some Buddhist cosmological ideas. The terms "thirty-three heavens (*sanshisian tian*)", "six heavens of desire (*liu yutian*)", and "the three regions (*sanjie*)", for example, are not distinguished from each other in his books; they are referred to as heavens. In Buddhism, *liu yutian* (the six *devalokas*) consist of the heavens of the four deva-kings (Catur-mahārāja-kāyikas: Si tianwang tian 四天王天), the heaven of Indra (Trayastrimśās; Daoli tian 忉利天), the Yama heaven (Yama deva; Yemo tian 夜摩天), the Tusita Heaven (Doushuai tian 兜率天), Sunirmita (Lehua tian 樂化天), and the abode of Maheśvara (Paranirmita-vaśavartin; Tahuazizai tian 他化自在天). Sanshisian tian is another name of Trayastrimśās, which is located at the summit of Mt. Sumeru and surrounded by thirty-two deva-cities in the four directions; it should be translated as "the thirty-third heaven" instead of "the thirty-three heavens", which Luo Qing thinks to be a general term for all heavens. The Buddhist meaning of the three regions is far more complicated than that interpreted by Luo Qing. The realm of desire (*yujie* 欲界), one of the three realms, include souls in purgatory, hungry spirits, animals, asuras, men, and the above six heavens of desire. Indra (Dishitian 帝釋天) is the lord of the gods of the sky. William Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, pp. 134, 145, 165, 173, 188, 206, & 356. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, pp. 315, 276, & 650.

the supernatural power of [the Holy Patriarch of] the Limitless (Wuji shengzu 無極聖祖) was not great, from where would the three calamities (*sanzai*) and the eight difficulties (*banan*) come? 不是無極神通大，三災八難那里來？” It is said that the Holy Patriarch is the supreme deity and the source of all myriad things. Other sentences in the verse are written in the same pattern with the term *sanzai banan* replaced with those for natural phenomena, the saints and scriptures of the three orthodox religions (Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism), and other beings. All the creatures and things in the world transformed into being by the Holy Patriarch. (10:5b-6b)

Another piece of seven-character verse in the *Tanshi jing* contains the same messages. Here is a part of it:

三災八難佛能治，西天東土佛安排。四大神洲佛能治，三十三天佛安排。大千世界佛能治，風雲雪雨佛安排。地水火風佛能治，陰陽二氣佛安排。饑饉不收佛能治，生老病死佛安排。

The three calamities and the eight difficulties the Buddha (= the Holy Patriarch of the Limitless) is able to control; the Western Heaven and the Eastern Land the Buddha arranges. The four great divine continents³⁶⁹ the Buddha is able to control; the thirty-three heavens the Buddha arranges. All worlds (*daqian shijie* 大千世界)³⁷⁰ the Buddha is able to control; wind, cloud, snow, and rain the Buddha arranges. Earth, water, fire, and wind the Buddha is able to control; the two forces, *yin* and *yang*, the Buddha arranges. Famine (*jijian* 饑饉)³⁷¹ and crop failure the Buddha is able to control; birth, aging, illness, and death the Buddha arranges.³⁷² (2:13a)

The central points of Luo Qing's teaching are that Buddha nature lies in the mind of every one and is the source of all the myriad things, and when one is aware of this, one will attain

³⁶⁹ The four continents are in the four directions of the central Mt. Sumeru; they are Jambūdvīpa (Zhanbu zhou 瞻部洲), Pūrva-vidēha (Dongpi 東毘), Aparā-godānīya (Tihe 提訶), and Uttarakuru (Qulu 瞿盧). Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 173 & p. 178.

³⁷⁰ Mt. Sumeru and its seven surrounding continents, eight seas and ring of iron mountains form one small world. A thousand of these small chiliocosms form a medium chiliocosm; a thousand of these form a great chiliocosm (*daqian shijie*), which consists of 1,000,000,000 small worlds and is one Buddha-world. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 61. Here the term *daqian shijie* means all the worlds in the universe.

³⁷¹ Both the characters *ji* and *jian* mean crop failure.

³⁷² The translation is based on the discussion of this verse in Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 107.

enlightenment and escape the cycle of birth and death. Therefore, one can rid oneself of disasters by awakening.

不信現成觀自在，翻來覆去受災殃。

If one do not believe in his ready-completed *guan zizai* 觀自在 (lit. observe the world and be unrestrained)³⁷³, one will suffer from calamities [although one] flutters back and forth in order to escape them. (*Zhengxin baojuan*, 3:43a, p. 686)

只爲不信三災起，三災折磨苦眾生。只爲不信饑饉起，饑饉折磨苦眾生……

Only because [people] do not believe in [the original nature (*benxing* 本性)], the three calamities arise. The three calamities torture all miserable living beings. Only because [people] do not believe in [the original nature], famine arise. Famine tortures all miserable living beings.... (*Poxie baojuan*, 24:49b)

Luo Qing repeatedly highlights in his books the attributes of the nature. It is indestructible and exists prior to the universe.³⁷⁴ He does not attach great horror to calamities because they simply originate in the original nature. This is different from the eschatology described in later *baojuan*. Other sectarian writers think that the myriad things were created by the supreme deity, but do not declare that they have the same nature and source as calamities. The writers draw a clear distinction between disasters and other myriad things. The appearance of universal crises is due to humans' own fault.

Obviously, the eschatological pictures in Luo Qing's books are much simpler than those in later precious volumes. The cosmic and ethical discussions in mainstream precious volumes we discussed in last chapter are different from those in Luo Qing's books. Luo Qing does not apply

³⁷³ Guan zizai is another name of Bodhisattva Guanyin, which says that he is free from resistance, always observes the world, and removes people's sufferings. The term here means Buddha nature. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 218 & p. 489. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p. 2982 & p. 2984.

³⁷⁴ "The original face (= the original nature), which is the perfect man of formless (*wuxiang zhenren* 無相真人), exists unlimited kalpas ago. During unlimited kalpas, it is not destroyed forever. It exists forever. It cannot be cut off with knives, be pierced by arrows, be submerged by water, and be burnt away by fire. This light (the original face) exists before heaven and earth.... 本來面目。無相真人。從無量劫。無量劫永劫不壞。永劫長存。刀不能砍。箭不能穿。火不能燒。水不能淹。未有天地。先有此光……" (*Zhengxin baojuan*, 17:1a, p. 746) Similar sentences can be found in the *Poxie jing*, 22:34a, p. 647, 23:37b-38b, p. 649, the *Zhengxin baojuan*, 13:28b, p. 733, and the *Taishan baojuan*, 7:28b-29a, pp. 816-817.

the three-Buddhas history in his writings although it has already appeared in the *Huangji baojuan*. Buddhas are equal to the Buddha nature.

三世一切佛應作如是觀，心作諸如來。

All buddhas in the three ages (the past, present, and future) should be viewed reasonably³⁷⁵; the mind is [the same as] various Tathāgatas. (*Zhengxin baojuan*, 3:47a, p. 688)

空生稱長老。燃燈常照明。彌勒是同學，釋迦是長兄。名相有差別，法身同一形。

Subhūti (Kongsheng 空生) is addressed as venerable elder.³⁷⁶ Dīpamkara (Lamplighter) always shines. Maitreya is [my] schoolfellow, and Śākyamuni is [my] elder brother. There are differences in their names and appearances, but their dharma bodies are the same.³⁷⁷ (*Kugong jing*, 18:78a, p. 448)

According to Luo Qing's doctrines, one with the mind of distinction falls into *samsāra* (transmigration in the six ways and the four births); hence the three Buddhas are in identity and not viewed as the masters of the three cosmic stages. Unlike other precious volumes, the teachings in Luo Qing's five books are not connected with the development of history. There are no descriptions of historical stages from the past to the future or warnings that the world is approaching its end. The contemporary three-Buddhas cosmology does not have influence on these books. In addition, although Luo Qing writes lengthy condemnations of every class of society, he neither considers human immortality to be the causes of the three calamities and eight difficulties as sectarian writers do nor urges readers to be moral with the threat of forthcoming disasters. Human birth results from the combination of the four elements (*sida* 四大).³⁷⁸

自家人身不認。七尺骷髏到認。是一包膿血。是地水火風。風火散時無老少。

³⁷⁵ Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p. 1093.

³⁷⁶ Subhūti was one of the ten great pupils of the Buddha. He was allegedly the best exponent of Śūnyā (the void). Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 277 & p. 394.

³⁷⁷ The above quotation, without the sentences about Subhūti and Dīpamkara, also appears in the *Zhengxin baojuan* (22:25b, p. 758).

³⁷⁸ The four elements are earth, water, fire, and wind; they are substances all things are made of. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 173.

[You] do not recognize your own human body (the true nature), but recognize [your] seven-foot human skeleton [only, which exactly] is a bag of condensed blood and [is the combination of] earth, water, fire, and wind. When wind and fire scatter, there are no the old and the young (i.e. all humans die regardless whether they are old or young).

(*Taishan baojuan*, 7:25a, p. 815)

地水火風聚成四大，臨危地水火風還歸地水火風……自己真身。永劫不壞。山河有壞。這個安寧。無來無去。耀古騰今。地水火風都散了。凡所有相即是空。

When earth, water, fire, and wind assemble, they become four great [elements]. When one is going to die, earth, water, fire, and wind return to earth, water, fire, and wind (i.e. the elements return to their origins).... [Only] one's own true body does not decay forever. When mountains and rivers are destroyed, but it will be calm, without coming or going, and will get absolute freedom without restraint (lit. *yuegu tengjin* 耀古騰今; shine in the past and jump over the present). When earth, water, fire, and wind scatter, all phenomena are empty. (*Taishan baojuan*, 24:52a-53a, p. 872)

Birth and death here are regarded as natural phenomena; they do not involve the Eternal-Mother mythology and the idea that humans are detained in the Eastern Land because of their own corruption. In chapter five to chapter seven of the *Tan-shi baojuan*, Luo Qing addresses himself to the criticism of people of different classes. He makes detailed depiction of the ways of their wicked behavior and of the punishment in *samsāra* and purgatory. However, unlike sectarian writers in later time, he does not describe universal calamities as punishments inflicted on mankind. Disasters are not linked with morality, and not thought to occur for correcting human faults. For example, Luo Qing comments on the lives of officials in chapter seven. They kill people unjustly and lead luxurious lives during their lifetimes. When their predestined enjoyment of fine clothes and of official salaries ends, they will suffer from illness as the punishments of their bad karma, and no one can replace them. At death, they will abandon their children and go to purgatory alone. Those with serious sins will suffer in the *avīci* hell when others will be reborn in the four forms.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁹ For the meaning of the *avīci* hell, see note 267 of this thesis.

無量劫轉四生纔得出離，纔爲人作下業又撞四生。這一遭滾下去人身難得，六道裡一去了再不翻身。

They will leave [the four paths] after their reincarnations in the four [forms of] birth have rotated (i.e. they have been reborn in all the four forms of birth) in unlimited kalpas.

Although they just become humans, they will fall into the four forms of birth again when they commit bad karma. It is difficult to obtain human bodies (i.e. become humans) this time when they fall into [the four forms]. They can never return to [human] bodies when they enter the six ways. (*Tanshi jing*, 7:4b, p. 484)

Then Luo urges officials to leave the cycle of birth and death by converting to his teachings, and mentions a number of historical and legendary people as the examples who take religious cultivation.³⁸⁰ (6b-7a) Similar accounts can be found in chapters five, six, and nine, but officials are replaced with the poor, the rich, and robbers. In these chapters, he does not mention that disasters are intended for punishing these groups of people or for ridding the wicked from the world. For Luo Qing, being moral does not benefit one's attaining enlightenment. Obeying precepts (*chijie* 持戒) is an obstruction, because it produces love and hatred and people will then involve themselves in bad karma (*zuiye* 罪業). (*Poxie baojuan*, 18:61a, p. 625) He tells a story for explaining his points. The Bodhisattva Miaoji 妙吉 meets a man who are worried about entering purgatory because he has made karma of killing (*shaye* 殺業). The Bodhisattva brings him to the Buddha. The Buddha replies:

汝造殺業。爲過去耶。未來耶。現在耶。若起過去心者。過去已滅。若起未來心者。未來未至。若起現在心者。現在不住。三心俱不可得。即無起作於其罪福……你殺業渾身上業在何處，本無業強生業體是虛空。

When do you commit the karma of killing, in the past, present, or future? If the mind [of killing] appeared in the past, the past has gone. If the mind will appear in the future, the

³⁸⁰ The people Luo mentions include Zheng Liang 張良 (?-186 B.C.), with alternative name Zifang 子房, Aśoka (Ayuwang 阿育王), and Miaoshan 妙善. It is said that Miaoshan, an incarnation of Guanyī, is the third daughter of King Śubhavyūha (Miaozhuang wang 妙莊王). Aśoka was the grandson of Candragupta, who united India and reached the summit of his career in about 315 B.C. Aśoka reigned from about 274 to 237 B.C. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, pp. 234, 291, & 489. Zhang Liang was a noble of the Han 韓 state, which was destroyed by the Qin. He helped Liu Bang, the founder of the Han Dynasty (206B.C.-220A.D.), to establish the empire.

future has not yet arrived. If the mind appears in the present, the present does not stay. The mind in all the three periods is not obtainable (*bu kede* 不可得).³⁸¹ This means that it does not have effect on your sins and happiness.... You have made karma of killing, but, from head to foot, where can the karma be found? Originally there is no karma, [but people] unconvincingly produce [the idea] of karma [and they do not know that the true] body is empty. (*Poxie baojuan*, 18:63a-65a, pp. 626-627)

Luo Qing's view that the pursuit within the mind surpasses all other practices including obeying morals is accepted by Lanfeng. The later copies the above story in which the man is replaced with 500 bodhisattvas (*Zhengxin baojuan*, 3:49b-50a, p. 689), and declares that good deeds do not result in merits and bad deeds do not cause sins.³⁸² Therefore, although monks are not criticized for their wickedness in chapter 8 of the *Tanshi baojuan* as other classes are in other chapters, they still have to suffer from *samsāra* both in heavens and the four forms (i.e. the path of animals). In Luo Qing's ethical exhortations for the society, there is no reference to human misbehavior as the cause of universal crises. In short, Luo does not take the same approach in dealing with ethics and the formation of the myriad things as do other sectarian writers, who trace disasters to the birth of the world and to human misbehavior. He does not explore the reasons of calamities. Composed with those in other precious volumes, the eschatological pictures in his books are thin and incomplete.

There are still a couple of similarities with Luo Qing's books and other sectarian scriptures.

1) Although he neither predicts when the decay of the world will be nor explains why it will happen, he often declares in his books that, by spiritual awakening, one will no longer suffer from the three calamities and eight difficulties.

³⁸¹ The term *bu kede* is another name of *kong* 空 (the void). In Buddhism, it is said that the myriad things in the past, present, and future are unreal and unobtainable. All laws in the world are also changing and unobtainable without fixed substances. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 1, p. 538 & p. 963. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 105.

³⁸² 「行善元無功德。作惡亦無罪過。」 (*Taishan jing*, 6:16a, p. 810)

只爲退道諸趣轉，四生受苦苦無邊。苦口勸你歸家去，永無八難和三災。有病有危終退墮，不生不滅不輪迴。西方淨土常安樂，無苦無憂歸去來……有福有盡還有苦，有生有滅有輪迴。無爲福勝永無苦，永無八難和三災。

Because of regression in cultivation and reincarnations (lit. *zhuan* 轉; revolve around) in various paths, [humans] have to endure suffering which is unlimited. I strenuously urge you to return home. There will never be the three calamities and eight difficulties. [In heavens,] if there are illness and danger (i.e. death), there are finally regression [to human realm] and degeneration. If there are no birth and death, there is no *samsāra*. It is always happy in the Western Pure Land; you will never suffer and worry, and will go there unrestrainedly.... Although there is happiness [in heavens], it will have an end, and there is also suffering [there]. When there are birth and destruction, there is *samsāra*. The non-activity happiness (*wuwei fu* 無爲福) surpasses [all other kinds of happiness]; there is never suffering. There are no three calamities and eight difficulties forever! (*Poxie baojuan*, 22:32a-32b, p. 646)

For Luo Qing, calamities and the end of the universe are natural phenomena and one has to meet with them when one is in *samsāra*. Although Luo Qing's books do not provide abundant statements of universal misfortunes, escape from calamities is one of concerns in his teachings and is one of the achievements his believers can obtain. 2) Another similarity is that Luo Qing uses the term *mofa* (the end of dharma) in the same way as the author of the *Huangji baojuan* and other sectarian writers do.

遍相食噉是呆癡，那時追悔悔後遲。直下承當休錯過，食噉酒肉苦沉淪。末法娑婆八苦哉，互相食噉惡如豺。刀兵疾病遭饑饉，厭離閻浮歸去來。有智前劫歸家去，無智末劫好難熬。前劫家家都好過，末劫家家好難熬。有智得了金剛眼，自要離世歸去來。法身常住常不滅，厭離浮世歸去來。

All living beings (lit. *bianxiang* 遍相; all forms) who eat [flesh] are silly. It is too late when you regret [that you have eaten flesh] in that time (= at death?). You should confess right now and do not miss [the opportunity in the present]. You will fall into *samsāra* painfully if you eat flesh and drink. During the *mofa* [period], there will be eight distresses (*baku* 八苦) in the *sahā* (the world).³⁸³ [Humans] eat each other, and

³⁸³ The eight distresses are birth, age, sickness, death, parting with what we love, meeting with what we hate, unattained aims, and all the ill of the five *skandhas*. The five *skandhas* (*wuyun* 五蘊; five substances, i.e. the

they are as evil as jackals. They will experience warfare, illness, and famine. They should be tired of [staying in] Jambu (*yanfu* 閻浮), leave it, and return [to the Pure Land].³⁸⁴ Those with wisdom will return home before the last kalpa; those without wisdom can hardly bear [the misfortunes] during the end of the kalpa (*mojie*). Every household is happy before the kalpa; at the end of the kalpa every household suffers hardship. When those with wisdom have attained the Diamond Eye (the true nature), they naturally leave the world and return [to the Pure Land]. The Dharma Body always exists and is not destroyed forever. People [with it] will be tired of floating world (=human world), leave it, and return [to the Pure Land]. (*Taishan jing*, 1:27a-28b, p. 784)

This is the longest discussion of universal calamities in Luo Qing's five books in six volumes. Compared with the eschatological accounts in precious volumes we quoted in chapter 2, it is still sketchy. Luo does not tell us that the apocalypse will appear in near future or the present, but he uses the term *mofa* as a synonym for *mojie*, both of which here refer to a miserable age. This is the common usage in later *baojuan*.

b) Contemporary Eschatological Beliefs of Other Sects Described in Luo Qing's Five Books in Six Volumes

Luo's books contain some references to other popular faiths. We can conclude from them that the apocalyptic messages were already spread among common people. There are two relevant criticisms of popular eschatological beliefs in Luo's books. Chapter 19 of the *Zhengxin baojuan* deals with the Maitreya sect (Mile jiao 彌勒教). The "Po Mile jiao ji 破彌勒教偈 (Gāthā about refutation of Maitreya sect)" reads:

components of an intelligent being) are as follows: 1) *rūpa* (*se* 色; the physical form related to the five organs of sense); 2) *vedanā* (*shou* 受; the functioning of the mind or senses in connection with affairs and things); 3) *sañjñā* (*xiang* 想; the functioning of mind in distinguishing); 4) *samskāra* (*xing* 行; the functioning of mind in its processes regarding like and dislike, good and evil, etc.) 5) *viññāna* (*shi* 識; mental faculty in regard to perception and cognition). People have pain because they have five *skandhas*. It seems that the term *baku* here refers to eight disasters happening in the end of the world, and the original meanings in Buddhism and the content of the quotation from Luo's books are not harmonious. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 39 & p. 126. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p. 552. This sentence and the following three can also be found in the *Zhengxing jing* (14:39b, p. 739).

³⁸⁴ Jambu (*Yanfu* or *Zhanpu* 瞻部) is a lofty tree in Jambudvīpa, one of the seven continents surrounding the mountain Meru. The continent is the place in where humans reside. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 452. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p. 2674.

書佛咒彌勒教躲離邪法。入城中躲災難正是邪氣。書佛咒彌勒院正是誑語。凡所相皆虛妄永下無間……你行邪不打緊你下地獄。閃賺了好男女勞而無功。你說城是誑語邪魔外祟。你誑語是妖言永下無間。

[The members of] the Maitreya sect write incantations by the authority of the Buddha, but they cannot keep away themselves from heretical teachings. [The teachings tell them that they should] enter the City (*cheng* 城) for escaping disasters; this is exactly [the reflection of] evil force. [Those telling them] to write the incantations by the authority of the Buddha [and telling them that they are the members of] the Maitreya's monastery (Mile yuan 彌勒園 = the Maitreya sect) are exactly deceitful words. All the forms are unreal and false; [people who believe in them] will fall into the *avīci* hell forever.... It is not matter [to me] that you enter purgatory because you [deserve this for your] spreading heresies. [However, it is matter to me that] you have cheated good men and women who labor [to carry out the practices of the sect] but to no avail. Your words [that tell people to enter] the City are deceitful talks. [You are] evil monster and heretical harmful spirit. Your deceitful words are evil talks; you will fall into the *avīci* hell forever. (19:10a-10b, p. 750)

Lanfeng says that people are told to convert to the Maitreya sect and enter the Maitreya's monastery and the Silver City (Yincheng) so as to escape the great and small three calamities, accompany the Buddha in descending to the world, and become buddhas in the three Dragon-Flower Assemblies.³⁸⁵ The *Taishan baojuan* contains another criticism:

有一等愚痴呆種。胡說大三災起時。四生六道。都得歸家去了……這樣呆種永轉四生六道。不得翻身。要不是真實。此身當時身化膿血。³⁸⁶

There is a kind of silly, confused, and dull people. They say wildly that all [the living beings] in the four forms of birth (*sisheng*) and the six paths (*liudao*) can return home (i.e. paradise) when the great three calamities come up.... This kind of dull people will forever be in the cycle of the four forms of birth and the six paths, and will be unable to regain [human] bodies. [If my words] are false, this (i.e. my) body would immediately turn into pus and blood. (24:65a, p. 879)

³⁸⁵ 「有等愚迷邪種。誑立彌勒教。書符咒術。進入銀城。躲入銀城。躲大小三災難。隨彌勒下生龍華三會成佛。」 (Zhengxin baojuan, 19:10b, p. 750)

³⁸⁶ The second character *shen* 身 in this sentence is omitted in the scripture of the edition collected in the *Baojuan chuji*. (vol. 3, p. 635)

Luo Qing accuses these people severely and condemns them to be reborn as animals and beggars. The above quotations show us the development of sectarian eschatological beliefs during Luo Qing's time. Although Luo Qing does not provide many discussions of eschatological themes we stated in chapter 2, the members of the popular sects during his time already paid attention to the apocalypse. The idea that the members of the sects could enter the sacred city established by future Buddha Maitreya circulated in that time.³⁸⁷ We can conclude from Lanfeng's annotation that paradise, which is called *cheng* by Luo Qing, was considered to appear in heaven. The sectarian members were promised that they would become buddhas during the time of Maitreya. These eschatological messages described in later precious volumes had already been formed at the early stage of sectarian history in the Ming and Qing. Some sects transmitted the belief that all living beings would go to paradise when the doom of the world arrived. We cannot find it in our precious volumes. It seems to contradict the words in *baojuan* written by sectarian sects for persuading people to convert to the sects, because it would not be necessary to enter the sects if all living beings can go to paradise at end of the world. Both quotations indicate that the popular sects during Luo Qing's time were already concerned about the coming of calamities, and many common people believed eschatological messages. The messages were widespread to the extent that they aroused Luo Qing's attention and attack in his books.

Contemporary eschatological beliefs made an impact on Luo Qing. This can be found in the contents of the *Kugong jing*. This scripture is an autobiography about Luo Qing's religious pursuit. In chapters 3 and 4 of the scripture, we are told that Luo Qing's friend wrote to him and told him about a master. He found the master and asked to learn from him. After half a year, the master showed pity and told Luo Qing that Amitābha (Amituo fo 阿彌陀佛) was the Eternal Parent (Wusheng fumu 無生父母) and his land was in another country in heaven. By reciting the four characters, the Buddha's name, one could ascend to the heaven. In the following eight

³⁸⁷ For the city described in other precious volumes, see pp. 146-148 of this thesis.

years, Luo Qing recited the name day and night, but his mind was not enlightened and he could not obtain independence and spiritual freedom.³⁸⁸ (3:17b-19a, pp. 417-418) He was afraid that the recitation was too slow that the Eternal Parent could not hear, and that he could not recite the name at death. He came to the conclusion that

參破了不是實心中煩惱。三十三三災起不得安甯。彼國土往下參虛空無底。彼國土心恐怖不得安穩。尋思起不是實頑空境界。三災起彼國土不得脫身。識破了不是實煩惱不住。行一步走一步無處投奔。

After I thoroughly understood [the recitation of the Buddha's name, I realized that] it was not true, and I was worried. In the thirty-three heavens, there would be the three calamities; it was not peaceful [there]. [I tried to] penetrate [the realm] below the land of that country (Amitābha's land) [and found that] it was empty without a base.³⁸⁹ In the land of that country, one would be afraid without calm. After thinking about [the recitation, I realized that the land] was not true. It was the realm of stupidity and emptiness (*wankong* 頑空). One could not escape in the land of that country when the three calamities came up. Having realizing that [the land] was not true, I could not help worrying. [When I was going to] take further steps, I found that there was no path I could go! (4:21b-22a, pp. 419-420)

We are told in chapter 5 that Luo Qing then turned to the *Jingang keyi* 金剛科儀 (Ritual amplification of the Diamond Sūtra) he heard in the funeral ritual held in a neighbor's home for seeking spiritual freedom. Luo Qing learnt from the master about Amitābha's land and the recitation of the Buddha's name, but soon judged this practice inferior and the land destructible because this land will be ruined by the three calamities. This religious experience affects his views of other religious practices. Whether the practices can enable believers to ascend to the heaven which is resistant to calamities is one of the criteria for judging practices in Luo Qing's books. Therefore, he thinks that practices such as seated meditation, maintaining fasts, reciting scriptures, and carrying out the ten virtues are useless because people who carry them out can

³⁸⁸ The full translation of relevant passage in the *Kugong jing* can be found in Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 97-98.

³⁸⁹ According to Lanfeng's annotation, this sentence means that the land is unreal and false like a flower in the air or a bubble in the sea. It is not solid and not safe, so people who are reborn there are afraid and not peaceful. (4:22a)

only ascend to the thirty-three heavens, which will be destroyed one day by the three calamities. (*Tanshi baojuan*, 8:12a-14b, pp. 488-489) Facing the threat of the coming of universal crises, Luo Qing, like other sectarian writers, worries that people cannot escape calamities.

Part III) Lanfeng's *Kaixin fayao* and his Eschatological Views

Lanfeng and his *Kaixin fayao* seldom arouse modern scholars' attention in their studies on Luo Qing's books. They are usually mentioned for talking about the life of Luo and the spread of Luo's teachings among some Buddhist monks in the Ming and Qing.³⁹⁰ Wang Yuanqing declares that Lanfeng is the 26th patriarch of Linji school of Chan Buddhism in the *Kaixin fayao*. Although Wang Jianchuan thinks that he is not the leading master of the school, as Deqing 德清 (1546-1632) had already said, he accepts that he is a Buddhist monk.³⁹¹ As we shall find in the following discussion, Lanfeng applies a lot of Buddhist ideas in his writings, although he has distorted many of them. This indicates that he was a sectarian believer with rich Buddhist knowledge. Lanfeng was a contemporary of Luo Qing's children, Foguang 佛廣 and Fozheng 佛正.³⁹² His commentary can show us how he inherited the application of Buddhist ideas to

³⁹⁰ The *Kaixin fayao* contains a piece of ten-character verse called "Zushi xingjiao shizi miaosong 祖師行腳十字妙頌 (Ten-character wonderful eulogy about the patriarchal master's journey (i.e. life))". (*Kugong jing*, preface, 7a-8b) It is often used by modern scholars when discussing Luo's life. Wang Jianchuan & Jiang Zhushan, *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, vol. 1, p. 15.

³⁹¹ Deqing, with another name Hanshan 憨山, says that the lineage of the transmission of the Linji tradition is not clear, and criticizes Lanfeng for calling himself master. Therefore, Wang Jianchuan thinks that Lanfeng was not the leading master of the school. Wang Jianchuan, "Longhua jiao yuanliu tansuo 龍華教源流探索 (The research on the origin of the Dragon-Flower sect)". Han Bingfang, however, believes Wang Yuanqing, Lanfeng's disciple, who claims that Lanfeng is the 26th patriarch. Wang Jianchuan, *Taiwan de Zhaijiao yu Luantang 台灣的齋教與鸞堂* (The Vegetarian sect and the Phoenix hall in Taiwan) (Taipei: Nantian shuju youxian gongsi, 1996), pp. 10-11. Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, p. 240.

³⁹² "It was the twenty-sixth day of the first month when [Luo Qing] returned to the origin and produced fruit (i.e. passed away); he entered *nirvāṇa* calmly and died when sitting dignifiedly.... In the present, there are three people [in Luo's family] living; [two of them are] Fozheng and Foguang. The old grandmother (= Luo's wife) is in charge of a monastery dwelling (*anjū* 庵居) and transmits the light (i.e. Luo's teachings) as before. 是正月二十九還源結果, 入涅槃坦坦然坐化端嚴.....有三口現住世佛正佛廣, 老祖母掌庵居照舊傳燈。" (*Kugong jing*, preface, 8a, p. 413) After Luo Qing died in 1527, his daughter, Foguang, established the Dacheng jiao 大乘教 (the Mahāyāna sect), and his son, Fozheng, set up the Wuwei jiao 無為教 (the Nonactivity sect). The later sect was thought to be the orthodox school of Luo teachings in the Ming and Qing. Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, p. 252.

eschatology from Luo Qing in the Wanli reign of the Ming. Before we investigate Lanfeng's eschatological views, we shall make a brief survey of his *Kaixin fayao*.

Shortly after Luo Qing died, he was deified and glorified. This can be shown in the references to him in the *Kaixin fayao*. He is called the Wukong laozu 悟空老祖 (Venerable patriarch who has understood emptiness) and thought to be the incarnation of the supreme deity. In chapter 6 of the *Zhengxin baojuan*, Luo Qing lists some legendary virtuous people who are considered to be the forms of the manifestation of the Holy Patriarch of the Limitless in the world. (4:24b-30b, pp. 704-707) Lanfeng gives the following comment:

祖家出世。亦非常人。迺是真祖臨凡。將古勸今。願人改惡向善。

The Patriarch (zujia 祖家)'s appearance in the world is also extraordinary. It is exactly the Perfect Patriarch (zhenzu 真祖, i.e. the Holy Patriarch)'s descent to the profane [world]. He exhorts people in the present age with [the examples of people] in the past, and wishes people to abandon their evil and become moral. (4:25a, p. 705)

In the preface of the *Taishan baojuan*, we read

吾祖乃是古佛臨凡。言通古教。暗合諸經。非比常人。

[The birth of] my patriarch (i.e. Luo Qing) is the Ancient Buddha's descent to the profane world. [His] words accord with ancient teachings, and coincide secretly with various scriptures. [He] surpasses ordinary people! (5b, p. 773)

Therefore, it is said that Luo Qing has supernatural power to punish the people who disobey his teachings.³⁹³ In the whole *Kaixin fayao*, we find that Lanfeng often repeats Luo's ideas in lengthy language and recounts the stories of bodhisattvas and historical and legendary people that Luo Qing refers to. Many such stories are those circulated among the populace, but not recorded in Buddhist sūtras. The ones about Mulian's 目蓮 (Maudgalyāyana) entering purgatory

³⁹³ For example, after Luo Qing attacks the people who believe in the return to the paradise in the time of calamities, and thinks that they will fall into transmigration as animals (see p. 27 of this chapter), Lanfeng says "this is [the comment telling us that] the patriarch has discovered confused people.... Therefore, the patriarch points them and punishes (*dianfa* 點罰) such kinds of silly people.... 這是祖家見有迷人……故此祖家點罰這樣呆種。” (*Taishan baojuan*, 24:65a-65b, p. 879)

for saving his mother, for example, can be found.³⁹⁴ Lanfeng maintains Luo Qing's explanation of worldly phenomena and his method of attaining enlightenment. Therefore, he is thought to belong to a group of Luo's followers who adhere to his original teachings in contrast to another group who develops rebellious ideas.³⁹⁵ However, this does not mean that the *Kaixin fayao* is simply another edition of Luo Qing's scriptures with a set of lengthy comments that duplicate Luo's doctrines and contain no new ideas. Lanfeng thinks that many people do not know true teachings, and he hence makes a lot of remarks about people in the present (*jinren* 今人) and the members of the patriarch's school (*zumen* 祖門).³⁹⁶ Besides, he has amplified Luo Qing's statements with his own ideas. In chapter 4 of the *Poxie baojuan*, for example, Luo Qing says that there are the four states (*sixiang* 四相)³⁹⁷ and the five forms of decay in the mundane world and in heavens respectively. It would be better being in the lowest class of the religious achievement (*jiulian xiapin* 九蓮下品; lit. the lowest one of the nine [classes on the] lotus [platform])³⁹⁸ than coming to the world and being reborn.³⁹⁹ Lanfeng says that humans can

³⁹⁴ Maudgalyāyana is one of the ten major disciples of Śākyamuni and specially noted for miraculous powers. It is said in popular culture that he saves his mother, Qingti 青提, from suffering in purgatory. She does evils and attacks the Dharma during her lifetime, and so suffers in purgatory after death. In the story written in the *Kaixin fayao*, it is said that Mulian divides the legacy composed of 3,000 *guan* 貫 (a string of 1,000 cash) left by his father into three parts, and do business with one as a capital. He gives the other two to his mother, and asks her to donate one to monks. She does not listen to him and does many bad deeds; therefore, she falls into purgatory. (*Zhengxin baojuan*, 4:18a, p. 701, 4:22b-23b, pp. 403-704) Besides, there is a reference to a snail that leaves the cycle of birth and death because of believing the *Diamond sūtra*. (*Zhengxin baojuan*, 4:7a-7b, p. 696) The *Foshuo lisheng leyi baojuan* 佛說利生了義寶卷 (The precious volume, expounded by the Buddha for benefiting living beings, on the understanding of the meaning [of the truth]) is based on above contents of the stories. The snail takes religious cultivation and is reborn as Mulian. This *baojuan*, which consists of thirty-six chapters in two volumes, is a text of the Imperial Heaven Way produced in the Ming. It is collected in volume 5 of the *Ming Qing minjiao zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*. Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao*, p. 65. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 199.

³⁹⁵ See note 348 of this thesis.

³⁹⁶ In chapter 8 of the *Poxie baojuan*, for example, Lanfeng says that people who cling to forms or formless are "the unworthy sons of the patriarch's school (*zumen buxiao zhi zi* 祖門不肖之子)". (8:62a, p. 582) He also thinks that people in the present (*jinren*) recite scriptures but do not understand their teachings. Even though they understand the teachings, they do not obey and carry them out. (8:68a, p. 585) It is not clear whether the believers of the school and *jinren* belong to the same group.

³⁹⁷ There are several sets of the meanings of the four states (*avasthā*). The one Lanfeng mentions here is *guobao sixiang* 果報四相 (the four forms of retribution). Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 179 & p. 264.

³⁹⁸ Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p. 174.

³⁹⁹ 「人間四相難逃死，天上何曾免五衰。甯可九蓮居下品，不來浮世受胞胎。」

hardly escape the five forms in heavens and the four states, which are birth, aging, illness, death, and suffering, in the mundane world. Following Luo's sentence about the lowest class, Lanfeng explains that people of the Dacheng yuandun famen 大乘圓頓法門 (the sect of the complete and instantaneous enlightenment in Mahāyāna)⁴⁰⁰ do not take practices for obtaining grades in heavens and do not wish to have the stages of attainment (*guowei* 果位) of the three vehicles (*sancheng* 三乘).⁴⁰¹ Hence, according to Lanfeng, Luo Qing says that they do not wish to reborn in the world.⁴⁰² (58b, p. 548) We shall find that Lanfeng's explanation do not accord completely with Luo Qing's original meaning. The examination of all the differences between the ideas of Luo Qing and those of Lanfeng is certainly beyond the scope of our investigation in this chapter. We shall now deal with Lanfeng's eschatological views. Are Lanfeng's eschatological discussions as few as Luo's? Does Lanfeng explain universal misfortunes in the same way Luo does?

Obviously, Lanfeng discusses the age of distress more completely than Luo Qing, who only provides a rough account of it. After Luo gives a brief description of the miserable world in chapter 1 of the *Tanshi baojuan*, which has been quoted above, Lanfeng tells us that the duration of Śākyamuni's Dharma is divided into three periods, which are *zhengfa* (the period of True Dharma), *xiangfa* (the period of Semblance Dharma), and *mofa* (the end of the Dharma).⁴⁰³ He does not distinguish between the former two periods, and simply says that they last for 1,000 years, in which many people attain absolute freedom (*jietuo* 解脫), practice meditation

⁴⁰⁰ The Dacheng yuandun famen here is interpreted as the sect set up by Luo Qing. In the "Zushi xingjiao shizi miaosong", it is said that Luo has created "Yuandun zhengjiao 圓頓正教 (Orthodox teachings of the complete and instantaneous enlightenment)". (*Kugong jing*, preface, 8b, p. 413) It is different from the Yuandun jiao established by Gong Chang although they have similar names. See note 201 of this thesis for the sect and its scripture.

⁴⁰¹ *Sancheng* have different sets of meanings in Buddhism. It seems that the three vehicles here refer to the methods of becoming *sāvaka* (*shengwen* 聲聞; the hearer or obedient disciple), *pratyeka-buddha* (*yuanjue* 緣覺; the enlightened for self), and *bodhisattva*. Ren Jiyu, ed., *Zongjiao da cidian*, p. 650. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 58 & p. 264.

⁴⁰² 「人間四相者。生相。老相。病相。死相。是也。生老病死苦。人間難逃避也。天下受福。難免五衰相現。甯可九蓮居下品者。大乘圓頓法門。不修諸天品級。亦不想三乘果位。故云不求浮世受胞胎也。」

⁴⁰³ For the Buddhist explanation of these three periods, see p. 133 of chapter 2.

(*chanding* 禪定), hear many truths (*duowen* 多聞?), and cultivate the fruits for good fortune (*xiufu* 修福). During these two periods, people are happy. The period of the end of the Dharma lasts for 10,000 years, in which people do not carry out any above practices, and most of them are sad. They are fond of fighting; therefore, they suffer from the eight distresses.⁴⁰⁴ They kill and eat each other, and do ten bad deeds (*shie* 十惡).⁴⁰⁵ They experience the transmigration of the four forms of birth (lit. *sidao* 四道). When the *mofa* is about to arrive (*mofa jiang jin* 末法將盡), there will be the famine kalpa, illness kalpa, and warfare kalpa which are described as follows:

饑饉災者人壽至三十歲之時，方始建立起初之時，妙飲食不可復得，唯煎朽骨，共爲醺會，若遇一粒稻麥粟稗等子，重若摩尼寶珠藏置箱篋而護惜之，因此饑饉有情之類亡殞始盡，此之饑災，經七年七月七日，方乃得過，彼諸有情起下厭離，由此因緣壽不退減，饑饉遂息也，至於人壽二十歲時，斯時多有疫氣相續而生，彼諸有情悉皆殞沒，如是病災，經七月七日方及得過，彼諸有情起中厭離，由此因緣壽量無減，病災乃息也，至人壽十歲時，爾時有情展轉相見，各起猛利，殺害生靈，由此因緣，隨執草木，及以瓦石，皆成刀劍，更相殘害，經一七日，方乃得過，復有三種最極衰損，謂壽量衰損，依此衰損，資具衰損是也，彼諸有情起上厭離，是時諸趣有情次等盡沒……

The famine kalpa is not established until human age will be reduced to thirty. At first, delicate food and drink will not be able to be obtained again. [Humans] will be able to simmer decayed bones only when assembling in banquets. If they find (lit. *yu* 遇) a seed of rice, wheat, millet, barnyard grass (*bai* 稗), and so on, they will treasure it as if it was a bright luminous pearl. They will store it in a box, and protect and value it. Because of (lit. *yinci* 因此) the famine [kalpa], sentient beings will die almost (lit. *shi* 始 = *dai* 殆) completely. This famine disaster will last for seven years, seven months, and seven days until it goes away. [In] that [time] all sentient beings gradually⁴⁰⁶ will be tired of [the famine kalpa, and will wish to] abandon it. For this reason, their age will not decrease,

⁴⁰⁴ See note 383 of this chapter for the Buddhist definition of the term. Lanfeng applies the term in the same way as Luo Qing does. The term is referred as to eight kinds of disasters.

⁴⁰⁵ The ten bad deeds are the sins of breaking the precepts of good deeds, which are mentioned in note 365 of this thesis. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p. 2082.

⁴⁰⁶ Literally, there is a character *xia* 下 here, and another two *zhong* 中 and *shang* 上 in the sentences of its counterpart with the same meaning in the description of the illness kalpa and warfare kalpa. However, I do not know what they mean here.

and therefore the famine kalpa will vanish [then]. When human life span is twenty years, there will be much illness *qi* in that time. It will grow continuously. [In] that [time] all sentient beings will die out. Such a disaster of illness will last for seven months and seven days until it goes away. [In] that [time] sentient beings will gradually be tired [of the disaster and wish to] abandon it. For this reason, [their] age will not decrease; the disaster of illness therefore will vanish. While human life span is ten years in this time, sentient beings meet each other when time passes (*zhanzhuan* 展轉?). Each of them will produce a fierce (*mengli* 猛利)⁴⁰⁷ [mind]. They will kill living beings. For this reason, grasses, woods, tiles, and rocks [they] pick up everywhere will become knives and swords. They will also kill cruelly each other. [The warfare kalpa] will not pass until it lasts for seventeen days. There will be also three kinds of [things that are] most decayed and reduced (*shuaisun* 衰損). They are called *shouliang shuaisun* 壽量衰損 (the rottenness and reduction of age), *yizhi shuaisun* 依止衰損 (the rottenness and reduction of the dependence; lit. *yici shuaisun* 依此衰損), and *ziju shuaisun* 資具衰損 (the rottenness and reduction of property and of implements; lit. *zibei shuaisun* 資貝衰損).⁴⁰⁸ [In] that [time], all sentient beings will gradually be tired [of the warfare kalpa and wish to] abandon it. During this period, sentient beings in various paths will disappear (*mo* 沒 = die?) completely in succession....⁴⁰⁹ (1:27a-28a, p. 784)

The above description of the disasters comes from the *Yogācāryabhūmi-śāstra* (*Yujia shidi lun* 瑜伽師地論) and part of it can also be found in the *Fayuan zhulin* (271b-271c)⁴¹⁰. A similar description with fewer details is repeated in chapter 24 of the *Zhengxin baojuan*, but it says that human age will increase to 80,000 years, without the reference to the extinction of all living beings of the six paths. (39a-40b, p. 739) In chapter 1 of the *Taishan baojuan*, Lanfeng talks the

⁴⁰⁷ Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 359.

⁴⁰⁸ See note 410 of this thesis.

⁴⁰⁹ For the definition of the various paths, read note 266 of this thesis.

⁴¹⁰ This sūtra, with a shortened name *Yujia lun* 瑜伽論, was composed by Asanga (Aseng 阿僧) and translated by Xuanzang; it is said that the work was dictated to Asanga by Maitreya in the Tusita heaven. The sūtra is the foundation text of the Yogācāra (*Yujia zong* 瑜伽宗; esoteric sect) found by Asanga in the fourth century A.D.; it deals with the seventeen stages of religious cultivation (*shiqi di* 十七地) of the masters of the school. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 285 & p. 407. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 6, p. 5531. *Yogācāryabhūmi-śāstra*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.30, no.1579: 285c-286a. The original passage of the sūtra concerning the three little disasters can be found in Appendix C. According to the sūtra, the term *yici shuaisun* should be *yizhi shuaisun*. The biggest human body will be as small as one can grasp it by one hand (*yiwo* 一握). The term *zibei shuaisun* should be *ziju shuaisun*.

destruction of the first three *dhyāna* heavens (*chentian*) in the three great calamities, and mentions that his discussion of the calamities is quoted from the *Fayuan zhulin*. (14a-15a, pp. 777-778) One would find it striking that Lanfeng explains Luo Qing's teachings with borrowings from Buddhist apocalyptic stories and ideas of the development of Dharma. Compared with the relevant accounts in the *Yogācāryabhūmi-śāstra* and the *Fayuan zhulin*, one would discover that some original Buddhist ideas have been omitted in Lanfeng's discussion. As I stated in the last chapter, in Buddhism, the duration of the persistence of Dharma in the world does not completely accord with the development of the world. Lanfeng shortens the duration of universe, and simply equates the age of *mofo* to the diminution kalpa (*jianjie*).⁴¹¹ In the *Fozu tongji*, we are told that the age of *mofo* after the *nirvāṇa* of Śākyamuni sees both the decrease and increase in human age, and ends when Maitreya appears in the world.⁴¹² Besides, Lanfeng does not include the narrative about happiness and prosperity resulting from the human transformation from immorality to goodness after the warfare kalpa in the *Yogācāryabhūmi-śāstra*.⁴¹³ In the *Fayuan zhulin*, we are told that the fourth *dhyāna* heaven (*sichen tian*) can still remain after the three great calamities, and when the calamities are about to arise, living beings will ascend to higher regions because of their religious cultivation and virtue.⁴¹⁴ Therefore, we

⁴¹¹ For Buddhist explanation of the whole period of cosmic time, see pp. 103-105 of this thesis.

⁴¹² Zhipan, *Fozu tongji*, *Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.49, no.2035:299b-300b.

⁴¹³ After the warfare kalpa and the three things of rottenness and destruction (*shuaisun*), the sūtra reads as follows:
爾時有情展轉聚集起上厭離不復退滅。又能棄捨損滅壽量惡不善法。受行增長壽量善法。由此因緣壽量色力富樂自在皆漸增長。

In that time, sentient beings will gradually assemble when time passes. They will be tired [of the warfare kalpa and wish to] abandon [it.] [Human age hence] will not decrease again. Besides, they will be able to abandon immoral teachings, which are evil and reduce their age. They will receive and carry out moral methods, which will prolong their lives. For this reason, all their age, beauty (*seli* 色力), wealth, happiness, and freedom gradually increase. (286a)

Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p. 211.

⁴¹⁴ According to the quotation from the *Dīrghāgama* (*Chang ahan jing*) in the *Fayuan zhulin*, for example, when the fire among the three great calamities is about to appear, living beings in purgatory will be reborn in human realm after their retribution has finished. Humans will practice non-awareness (*xue* 覺) and non-pondering (*guan* 觀) (*wuxue wuguan* 無覺無觀), and will be reborn in Ābhāsvara (Light-sound heaven; Guangyin tian 光音天), which belongs to the second *dhyāna* heavens. Fire will destroy the realms lower than Ābhāsvara. All living beings in the paths of hells, animals, and asura, and in the realm of sensuous desire will ascend to the second *dhyāna* heaven. Awareness and pondering hindrances to the abstraction of the second stage (the second *dhyāna*; *dier chen* 第二禪)

are told that “the appearance of these fires, waters, and wind, [which are] the three great calamities, forces sentient beings, and makes them abandon the lands below and assemble in heavens above. 此水火風三大災起逼有情類。令捨下地集上天中。”⁴¹⁵ However, Lanfeng does not mention the above contents from the book. He takes horrifying pictures of collective misfortunes and the destruction of both the mundane world and heavens only from Buddhist sūtras. This shows that Lanfeng devotes much more attention to eschatological belief than Luo Qing.

As we pointed out above, Luo Qing does not view the present age as the end of cosmic time. He provides many accounts of the wicked behavior and miserable lives of every class of society, but he does not describe the present as the sole time of corruption in contrast to the past. Lanfeng, however, thinks that the present is *moji* 末季 (the end of age), in which the religious cultivation of humans is degenerating. He declares that the purpose of Luo Qing’s appearance in the world in this period is to reveal true teachings and deliver humans from repetitious reincarnations in the six paths.

今時修道之人。未出世來。四生轉劫。無量無數。今得出世。正當末季。幸遇無爲老祖。直指心地法門。

Before contemporary people who cultivate the Dao are reborn as humans (lit. *chushi* 出世)⁴¹⁶, they [have been reborn] in the four forms of birth for unlimited times in many kalpas (lit. *zhuanjie* 轉劫; the transition of kalpas). They are now able to reborn as humans. It is just the end of time (lit. *weiji* 末季 = *moji* 末季). They are fortunate to meet the Venerable Noninterference Master (Wuwei laozu 無爲老祖), who shows directly the methods of [understanding] the mind. (*Tanshi baojuan*, 31b, p. 474)

佛言。比丘比丘尼優婆塞優婆夷。發願惡言。誹謗正法……此輩無慚。真闍提外道。向如此誹謗。何況今時末代。去聖時遙。從上諸佛求道。棄捨國城妻子……

and above. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 202 & p. 481. Ciyi, ed., *Foguang da cidian*, vol. 7, p. 6801.

⁴¹⁵ *Fayuan zhulin, Taishō Tripitaka*, vol. 53, no. 2122:275b.

⁴¹⁶ The term *chushi* literally means departure from the world or appearance in the world. It here means being human again. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 166.

今人何故。反加毀謗。就是吾祖一出世來。一十三年苦行。受盡百般苦楚。魔人毀謗……

The Buddha says, “Monks, nuns, *upāsakas* (*youposai* 優婆塞), and *upāsikās* (*youpoyi* 優婆夷)⁴¹⁷ produce coarse language⁴¹⁸ and evil words, and slander the true teachings (*zhengfa*)....” These kinds [of people] had no shame; they were really [the people of] the heretical way of *chandi* 闍提⁴¹⁹, who slandered [true Dharma] in this way since the past, let alone in the present, [which is] the last age (*jinshi modai* 今時末代). It is far from the age of sages (*shengshi* 聖時). Various Buddhas sought for the Way since ancient times; they abandoned [their thrones of their] countries and cities, [and left] wives.... Why do people in the present [not believe in true Dharma] but slander it instead? Even when our patriarch appeared in the world, he underwent difficult cultivation for thirteen years and endured all kinds of sufferings. Evil people insulted him.... (*Tanshi baojuan*, 10:24a-24b, p. 494)

Therefore, Lanfeng’s criticisms of behavior and religious practices of contemporary people can be found throughout all his comments in Luo’s five books. In his view, the world in the present (*xianshi* 現世) is full of the eight winds (*bafeng* 八風) and the five desires (*wuyu* 五欲).⁴²⁰

(*Taishi baojuan*, 10:30b, p. 497) Besides, the content of the term *linwei* 臨危 ([the time of] encountering danger), which is commonly applies by Luo Qing and refers to death, is altered. In Lanfeng’s comments, it includes the time of calamities.⁴²¹

臨危者。無常之至也。非但無常到來有臨危。現在時時有臨危。日日有臨危。三災八難是臨危。人惡是非是臨危……若是有智之人。遇魔而不起念。遇三災而不动心……若能如是行得。現在無一時不放光明……臨危之時。無來無去……

⁴¹⁷ *Upāsakas* and *upāsikās* are male and female lay disciples who engage to observe the first five commandments. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 455.

⁴¹⁸ Literally, the character is made up of *feng* 分 on the top and *lu* 鹿 on the bottom. It is the misprint for *cu* 麤.

⁴¹⁹ The term should be the Buddhist one *icchantika* (*yichandi* 一闍提), which means enemies of the good without desire for Buddha-enlightenment. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 9.

⁴²⁰ The eight winds are the influences that fan the passions, i.e. gain (*li* 利), loss (*shuai* 衰), defamation (*hui* 毀), eulogy (*yu* 譽), praise (*cheng* 稱), ridicule (*ji* 譏), sorrow (*ku* 苦), and joy (*le* 樂). The five desires are those of wealth, sex, food-and-drink, fame, and sleep. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 41 & p. 121. Ding Fubao, ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p. 135.

⁴²¹ According to Luo Qing, the four elements (*sida*) of human bodies will scatter when humans die (*linwei*). (*Taishan baojuan*, 24:52a, p. 972)

[The time of] encountering danger (*linwei*) means the time when the demon messengers of death (*wuchang* 無常) come (i.e. death). There is not only [the time of] encountering danger when the *wuchang* comes, but there also are [the times of] encountering danger at any time in the present. There are [the times of] encountering danger every day. [The time of] the three calamities and eight difficulties is [the time of] encountering danger. [The time of enduring] human wickedness and quarrels is [the time of] encountering danger.... If the wise encounter evil, they do not produce a thought (*nian* 念). They encounter the three calamities, but do not raise any emotions (*dongxin* 動心).... [If others] are able to do these, [their nature] will give out light at any time in the present (?).... In the time of encountering danger, they will be without coming and without going (i.e. attain absolute freedom).... (*Taishan baojuan*, 7:30a, p. 817)

Unlike Lanfeng, Luo Qing neither considers the present age as the time of corruption in contrast to the past nor describes it as the last age full of misfortunes in his writings.

The cosmological ideas written by Lanfeng are complex; Luo Qing's are vague and incomplete. Luo simply relates the existence of all myriad things and of the universe to the abstract notion of the original nature, the personification of which is the Holy Patriarch of the Limitless. Unlike other *baojuan* writers, who believe the Eternal Mother mythology, he does not think that the formation of the universe results from human misbehavior or from the compassion of the creator with the aim of nourishing living beings. In the *Poxie baojuan*, he says that the world undergoes formation and destruction many times, and it is like a floating bridge (*fuqiao* 浮橋). "Various worlds are like flowers in the air; they arise randomly and end randomly (*luanqi luanmie* 亂起亂滅). 諸世界。是空花。亂起亂滅。" (24:42b, p. 651 & 44b, p. 652) However, Lanfeng expresses explicitly the view that there are two causes of the birth and destruction of the universe. Because of the karma of living beings and the power of the vow (*yuanli* 願力) of

various Buddhas, the myriad things and the world arise.⁴²² (*Poxie baojuan*, 24:42a, p. 651) He gives a picture of the formation of the world.

然忽生山河大地。真如不守自性。一念妄動。瞥生善惡。淨染之相。建立世界。眾生業果。三動相續。故有男女。即眾生相續。天地乾坤。水火春秋。陰陽風雨。即世界相續。諸佛地獄。五穀衣食酒肉豬羊。此即業果相續。所以諸佛垂慈攝化有情。周文王劃地爲牢。蕭丞相五刑調律。陽世囚牢。陰間地獄。皆是制伏眾生……

...However, mountains, rivers and the earth suddenly were formed, and eternal reality (*zhenru* 真如; i.e. the source of the world) did not maintain its original nature. Because a thought falsely appeared (*yinian wangdong* 一念妄動), goodness and evil (*shane* 善惡) and the forms of purity and pollution (*jingza zhi xiang* 淨染之相) were formed quickly. Therefore, the world was established. There were the fruits of all living beings' karma and the consequences (*xiangxu* 相續) of the three poisons⁴²³; there were hence men and women. They were the consequences of living beings. Heaven, earth, the *gan* 乾 (the male element), the *kun* 坤 (the female element), water, fire, spring, autumn, the *yin*, the *yang*, wind, and rain were the consequences of the world. The hells [in the worlds of] various Buddhas, five grains, clothes, food, wine, meat, pigs, and sheep were the consequences of the fruits of karma. Therefore, various Buddhas showed compassion, and accepted [the responsibility of] saving (*shehua* 攝化) sentient beings; [they manifested themselves as the following people]. The King Wen of the Zhou (Zhou Wenwang 周文王) marked the land as a prison. The prime minister Xiao (Xiao chengxiang 蕭丞相) [established] the five forms of punishment (*wuxing* 五刑) and tunes.⁴²⁴ Both prisons in the human world and purgatory in the Shadowy Realm (*yinjian*

⁴²² 「夫世界成壞。有二種因緣。一由眾生同業所感……二由諸佛願力所感……」

⁴²³ Literally, the term is *sandong* 三動 (three motions). It is a misprint for the Buddhist term *sandu* 三毒 (three poisons: wrong desire, anger, and stupidity) because this Buddhist term one can be found in another account of the formation of the universe in the *Poxie baojuan*, (24:42a, p. 651) The idea of *xiangxu* is borrowed from Buddhism. There are three consequences (*san xiangxu* 三相續): 1) *shijie xiangxu* 世界相續 (the consequences [causing the appearance of] the world; the worlds arise from the karma of existence); 2) *zhongsheng xiangxu* 眾生相續 (the consequences [causing the appearance of] all beings; all beings arise out of the five *skandhas*); 3) *yeguo xiangxu* 業果相續 (the consequences [causing the appearance of] the fruits of karma; punishments and rewards arise out of the causes of morality and wickedness). Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 69 & p. 71. Yiru, *Sanzhao fashu*, pp. 110-111. Ding Fubao ed., *Foxue da cidian*, p. 318.

⁴²⁴ The King Wen of the Zhou was the founder of the Zhou Dynasty (1111-249 B.C.). Xiao He (?-193 B.C.) was a prime minister in the early Han. The five forms of punishment are *yi* 剕 (cutting off the nose), *mo* 墨 (tattooing the face), *fei* 剕 (cutting off the feet), *gong* 宮 (castration), and *dapi* 大辟 (decapitation).

陰間) are [established] for controlling and subduing all living beings.... (*Kugong jing*, 15.60a-60b, p. 439)

Like Luo Qing, Lanfeng does not adopt the Eternal Mother mythology, but his cosmic views obviously are not the same as Luo's. The cosmic development results from human karma, and humans are blamed for the appearance of the world. Prisons in the human world, purgatory, and the punishments inflicted on mankind are established by Buddhas for correcting the faults of humans.⁴²⁵ Besides, in Lanfeng's view, calamities appear because of the false awakening (*wangjue* 妄覺) of humans, and people with bad karma will suffer during the time of misfortunes:

眾生妄覺即起惑造業。一切善惡天堂地獄。頂戴皮囊。穿形換殼。飲酒食肉。百味珍饈。布絹綾羅。遂心受用。只圖現在樂。不想過後苦。爲騾爲馬。索絆披鞍。三災八難。皆是自己所作。

Because of the false awakening of all living beings, there are immediately the delusion and the creation of [bad] karma [as well as] all morality, wickedness, paradise, and purgatory. [They use] officials' hats (*dingdai* 頂戴) and leather bags, wear forms and change shells (*chuanxing huanke* 穿形換殼 = changing clothes?), drink wine and eat meat, [eat] hundreds of delicacies, [wear clothes made of] cloth, *juan* 絹 (tough silk), and *lingluo* 綾羅 (silk fabric) (=fine clothes). They enjoy and use [them] at will and intend to have enjoyment in the present only, but do not think of having a suffering afterlife: becoming mules and horses, being roped with halters, being saddled⁴²⁶, [and encountering] the three calamities and eight difficulties. All these are caused by one self! (*Tanshi baojuan*, 2:13a-13b, p. 465)

天翻地覆。山倒海枯。眾生業識。在火災受火苦。在水災受水災苦。在風災受風災苦。受過三災之苦。罪業猶未畢。是故所以死了又生。生了又死。在三惡道中。

[During the time of the three calamities], heaven will toss and earth will overturn.

Mountains will collapse and the sea will dry up. [Because of] the activity-consciousness

⁴²⁵ In Buddhism, we are told that there are fights for foods, therefore there are the reward for morality and punishment for evil (*shangshan fae* 賞善罰惡) and weapons for beating, causing pain, and slaughtering (*kaochu shalu* 考楚殺戮). *Fayuan zhulin, Taishō Tripitaka*, vol.53, no.2122, 277a.

⁴²⁶ Literally, the character is made of *ma* 馬 and *an* 鞍. It is a misprint for *an* 鞍.

(*yeshi* 業識)⁴²⁷ of all living beings, they will suffer the pain [caused by] the disastrous fire in [the period of] the fire calamity. They will suffer the pain [caused by] the disastrous flood in [the period of] the water calamity. They will suffer the pain [caused by] the disastrous wind in [the period of] the wind calamity. They have not endured enough retribution for their bad karma after sufferings caused by the three calamities. For this reason, they will die and be born again, and be born and die again (i.e. experience the cycle of birth and death) in the three evil paths.⁴²⁸ (*Poxie baojuan*, 28a-28b, p. 644)

In the *Kaixin fayao*, Lanfeng's discussions of the formation of the universe are not as frequent as those found in other *baojuan*. However, like other sectarian writers, Lanfeng connects the birth of the cosmos and the myriad things with human faults and deities' intervention. Besides, he also thinks the wicked will be tortured in the time of calamities because of their misbehavior. These views cannot be found in Luo Qing's teachings, but are similar to those of other sectarian writers.⁴²⁹

Conclusion

The author of the *Huangji baojuan* does not pay as much attention to universal disasters as he does to a bureaucratic path to heaven. Unlike that in most *baojuan*, the eschatology in Luo's five books in six volumes and Lanfeng's *Kaixin fayao* contains many Buddhist borrowings. Therefore, these works do not refer to many central themes of other precious volumes in eschatology, which we have discussed in the last chapter. For example, in the *Huangji baojuan*, the role of supreme deity is not well-developed. Luo Qing and Lanfeng do not deal with the mythology of the Eternal Mother and Maitreya as do other precious volumes. However, there are some contents of these books which share some similarities with other precious volumes. In

⁴²⁷ The *yeshi* is a Buddhist term, which refers to "activity-consciousness in the sense that through the agency of ignorance an unenlightened mind begins to be disturbed." It seems that it simply means bad karma here. Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 404.

⁴²⁸ The three evil paths are the reincarnations of the hells, hungry ghosts, and animals. See note 266 of this thesis.

⁴²⁹ See p. 123 to p. 124 and note 264 of this thesis.

the *Huangji baojuan*, for example, although Maitreya is not the one to whom the supreme deity reveal sacred messages or the one who leads various deities into salvation in the mundane world, he is already considered as the future Buddha in the three-Buddhas cosmology, and only the practices corresponding with his age can lead to deliverance. Lanfeng rejects the prediction of Maitreya's descent to the world.⁴³⁰ However, his remarks on Luo Qing show that, soon after Luo's death, his believers deified him and thought the purpose of his appearance in the world was to perform the task of the salvation of humans. Besides, like the author of the *Huangji baojuan*, Lanfeng holds the view that various Buddhas descend to the world for saving humans.⁴³¹ We would discover that the sectarian leaders often claim themselves to be deities sent down to the world in order to carry out the task of salvation. Gong Chang and Piao Gao, for example, write in the *Longhua jing* and the *Piaogao jing* respectively that they are deities ordered by supreme deity, the Eternal Mother and the Venerable Patriarch of Chaotic Prime (Hunyuan laozu 混元老祖), to come to the world and deliver corrupted humans. Lanfeng is not different from other sectarian believers in the deification of sectarian founders by exaggerating their lives, which is one of the contents of sectarian eschatology.

In chapter two, we pointed out that *baojuan* writers' accounts of the holy bureaucracy and the entrance into it are based on the examination system of the imperial China. This tradition can also be traced back to the *Huangji baojuan* and Luo's books. As discussed in chapter two, the Native Place depicted in precious volumes is modeled on the imperial government.⁴³² In the *Huangji baojuan*, we are told that people have to undergo "three inspections and nine examinations (*sancha jiukao* 三查九考)" before attaining sagehood.⁴³³ The author tells the

⁴³⁰ 「求彌勒下生。當來受記成佛。即爲虛妄執著。無有是處。不免生死。」(*Poxie baojuan*, 14:29a, p. 609)

⁴³¹ 「教中遇三千諸佛。輪流下生度人。」(*Poxie baojuan*, 12:3a, p. 596)

⁴³² See pp. 157-160 of this thesis.

⁴³³ For the detailed discussion of the bureaucratic structure discussed in the *Huangji baojuan*, see Daniel L. Overmyer's "An Early Model: The Bureaucracy of Salvation in a Fifteenth-Century Text, the 'Huang-chi pao-chüan'" in *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 51-91.

confused people who do not believe this to look at the civil examination, in which candidates have to answer questions in Confucian classics (*jingshu* 經書), imperial edicts (*zhao* 詔), memorials (*biao* 表), and so on. The author also writes the following piece of verse:

The Most Honored One (i.e. the Buddha) opened up a selection arena and thrice examined essays. Those who are successful become officials; those who are not return home.⁴³⁴ (chapter 4, p. 279)

Luo Qing also mentions the civil examination:

承當無極歸家去，永無地獄放光明。舉場常出論題官，不著太極怎做官。太極變化書文字，不著文字怎做官。讀書多年解文字，解開文義進舉場。

People who take responsibility (*chengdan* 承當; i.e. convert to the teachings) [to understand] the Limitless (i.e. their original nature) can return home (i.e. paradise), and do not have [to enter] purgatory forever [because of their nature's] shining. In the fields for the imperial examination, there are often questions raised for [candidates for] officials. How can those who do not know (lit. *zhao* 著) the Grand Ultimate (*taiji* 太極 = the original nature) become officials? The Grand Ultimate turns into the characters on books; how one can become an official if one does not know the characters? [Candidates] have studied for years and have understood the characters. When they have understood the meanings of the characters, they enter the fields for imperial examination (i.e. participant in the examination). (*Taishan baojuan*, 17:23b, p. 858)

Becoming officials here means the attainment of enlightenment. Lanfeng writes that the contemporary examiners set up questions about the Grand Ultimate and Non-Ultimate (*Wuji* 無極). Those who understand them can become officials. The Men of Dao (*daoren* 道人) who do not know the nature are only those who give up themselves as hopeless (*ziqu* 自棄). (*Taishan baojuan*, 17:14b, p. 853) Unlike other *baojuan*, the *Huangji baojuan*, Luo Qing's books, and Lanfeng's annotations contain no mention of idea that believers will be granted divine official

⁴³⁴ The translation is taken from Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, p. 279.

positions, but it is obvious that the attainment of enlightenment or holy existence is compared to the success in the civil examination in these writings, as is continued in other sectarian scriptures.

From the above discussions of the *Huangji baojuan*, Luo Qing's five books in six volumes, and Lanfang's comments on Luo's teachings, we can infer some points of the trend of early sectarian eschatological belief. The simple discussion of eschatology in the *Huangji baojuan* indicates that during the Xuande reign, in which this scripture was published, the early sectarian believers had already considered universal disasters to be an unavoidable cosmic process, but they did not attach horror to its arrival as much as later believers did. Although the author of the *Huangji baojuan* and Luo Qing have very different approaches to religious cultivation, they have some similarities in eschatology. The main focus in their books is obviously not on the apocalypse. They neither explore the causes of calamities nor foretell the time of their arrival. There is also no elaboration of the variety of universal disasters in their writings; they simply apply the Buddhist idea of the three calamities and the eight difficulties (*sanzai banan*). However, we can still find their concern for universal misfortunes in their scriptures. They insist repeatedly that, except for the teachings they preach, other religious practices cannot enable one to escape calamities. Their followers are promised that they can rid themselves of calamities. Luo Qing and the author of the *Huangji baojuan* think that one of differences between believers in the correct teachings and those of heresies is that the people of the former group can prevent themselves from being harmed in calamities. Besides, they both assume that the arrival of calamities is a natural phenomenon, and humans must undergo it one day until they have left the profane world and ascended to paradise, or attained enlightenment. This worry about the collective miserable time happening in the future and the longing for escaping it are continued by later *baojuan* writers. In addition, in precious volumes composed later, the term *mofa* is applied in the same way as it is in the *Huangji baojuan* and Luo Qing's books.

As shown in above studies, many Buddhist ideas used in Luo Qing's books, however, appear neither in the *Huangji baojuan* nor in later precious volumes, and the popular apocalyptic views of other sects cause Luo irritation. We can infer that his beliefs diverge from those held by most sectarian believers in eschatology. Lanfeng is another sectarian writer who applies many Buddhist apocalyptic elements; his *Kaixin fayao* show us how Buddhist ideas are interpreted. Lanfeng's purpose in writing it is to explain Luo's teachings, but he does not adopt all Luo's ideas. The eschatology depicted by him is different from that of Luo Qing. The eschatological narratives provided by Lanfeng are more detailed than those in Luo's books. This indicates that Lanfeng attaches more importance to eschatology than do Luo Qing. In contents, there are some noticeable differences. Lanfeng considers the present age as the time of corruption under the threat of disasters. Besides, in the creation mythology, he connects the birth and the destruction of the universe with the misbehavior of humans. The penalties in the world are created by Buddhas in order to rectify human faults. The coming of disasters is blamed on them. Luo Qing does not mention these ideas in his books; the thin, incomplete eschatological contents in his books are supplemented by Lanfeng with Buddhist borrowings. It is not surprising that eschatology aroused Lanfeng's interest. During the time of Luo Qing, as shown in above discussions, sectarian belief in the impending coming of disasters had already appeared and was widely spread. The *Kaixin fayao* was composed a short time later than the *Jiulian baojuan*, in which a complete eschatology can be found.⁴³⁵ It seems natural that he focused his attention on cosmic disasters in his writings because of the common concern about its arrival held by sectarian believers.

In early *baojuan* history, we discover that Luo Qing's books are sectarian works in which the influence of Buddhist eschatology is stronger than that of its Daoist counterpart, and that

⁴³⁵ From the contents of the "Zushi xingjiao shizi miaosong", we can know that the *Kaixin fayao* was written after Luo's death (1527). The *Jiulian baojuan* was produced in 1523.

Lanfeng is influenced by Luo Qing and therefore adopts many Buddhist ideas in his eschatological description in his *Kaixin fayao*. As shown in chapter two, most sectarian writers obviously are different from them; Daoism has made a greater impact on them in their explanation of the end of the world and prediction of the messiah than Buddhism. Besides, in Luo Qing's and Lanfeng's works, the predictions deal with the destruction of the myriad things in the world only, but the disappearance of their teachings in the future is not mentioned. Unlike the writers of Buddhist prophecies, Luo Qing and Lanfeng do not include their teachings among the myriad impermanent things. This is what we find in other precious volumes.⁴³⁶ Viewing from this point, we can conclude that there is a similarity between Luo Qing's and Lanfeng's eschatological beliefs and those of other sectarian members.

⁴³⁶ See pp. 133-143 of chapter two.

CONCLUSION

We have examined Ming-Qing sectarian eschatology, its relationship with Daoist and Buddhist counterparts, and its early development. In chapter one, we have dealt with Daoist texts of the Six Dynasties and learnt that, inheriting the ideas in the *Taiping jing*, Daoist writers affirm the interrelation between natural phenomena and human behavior and consider history to be a linear process. They think that the world-wide decay and disasters result from human corruption in morality and faith (i.e. the disbelief to Daoism) and exhaustion of the age of the universe. Only the selected people (*zhongmin*; seed people) can live in the peaceful age of the Holy Ruler, who will appear in the *renchen* year. The Holy Ruler, however, is not described as the one who comes to contemporary world and takes the task of salvation. Daoist writers of the Six Dynasties share the same views about the causes of crises and the messiah's arrival, but their interpretation of the identity of *zhongmin* varies. *Zhongmin* sometimes are regarded as immortals who have attained merits in religious cultivation, or as qualified candidates for divine office. The term is sometimes referred to as the virtuous. Apocalyptic writings of Daoist schools have different features. Those of Celestial Master Daoism are deeply influenced by its history. They reflect the crises it faced in the Six Dynasties, its complex relationship with popular cults, and common members' longing for the return to their native places. The texts of the Shangqing school do not provide detailed exhortations of morality and warnings of universal destruction, but they can still reveal the members' hope to withdraw from the world through the religious cultivation carried out on an individual-basis. The scriptures of the Lingbao school usually are traced back to the origin of the universe. The departure of the texts brings human corruption and misfortunes. The borrowings from Buddhism are superficial; many terms are misrepresented. The traditional five-phases concept shapes the descriptions of disasters and heavens and the methods of religious cultivation and practices in our Lingbao texts.

In chapter two, we have discussed the similarities between Daoist and sectarian eschatology. Like Daoist ones, sectarian writers divide history into linear stages and predict a variety of simultaneous disasters with heavenly stems and earthly branches and Chinese place names. It is said that there are three cosmic stages charged by the three Buddhas. Besides, sectarian writers believe that universal suffering results from human misdeeds, their belief in heresies, and the exhaustion of the world. However, unlike those in Daoist writings, heresies here mean Daoism, Buddhism, and other sectarian teachings. The condemnation of human behavior is mingled with the myth of the creation by the Eternal Venerable Mother, and the formation and the development of the profane world are accompanied by human degeneracy. Therefore, there is no nostalgia for the past in sectarian writings as there is in Daoist. The exhortations of morality are based on both Confucian values and Buddhist percepts whereas the later usually are not found in Daoist texts of Six Dynasties. Some *baojuan* say that the coming of misfortunes is caused by deities' imperfect establishment of the world, and there is no such attack on deities in Daoist texts. The similarity between Daoist and sectarian understanding of the end of the world and universal crises cannot be clearly shown until we compare them with Buddhist counterpart. In Daoist and sectarian eschatology, purgatory is the place where the evil will endure endless suffering after they experience misfortunes in human world in the end of the world; it is, however, predicted in Buddhism that purgatory will be destroyed when the three great calamities come up. Like Daoist ones, sectarian writers do not hold the belief that their teachings will disappear one day although they use the terminology of Buddhist prophecies about the end of Dharma. The term *mofa* simply refers to the last stage of the world in *baojuan*. In Buddhist eschatology, the world will undergo an ongoing series of cycles, not three linear stages. Humans will experience a cyclic succession of the three little disasters in the existence kalpa, and the world will gradually be destroyed by the three great calamities in the destruction kalpa. The little disasters and the great calamities will not appear together at the same time as they will in

Daoist and sectarian eschatology. The believers in Daoist texts and most *baojuan* are promised that they can live in the age of the Holy Ruler and the Eternal Mother's paradise in reward for their morality and conversion to Daoism and popular sects. In Buddhism, meeting Maitreya in human world means the chance to escape the birth-and-death cycle and to attain enlightenment. Therefore, it is said that Daoist and sectarian believers will lead lives of plenty, enjoy long lives, and be appointed to divine posts; however, there is no such mention in Buddhism. The ideal world is described as a hierarchal society in Daoist texts and *baojuan*. Sectarian believers have the hope for the return to the native place as Daoist members do. Apart from one's native place, the term *jiaxiang* means paradise in precious volumes.

In chapter three, we have shown the early development of eschatological faith through the discussion of the contents of the *Huangji baojuan*, Luo Qing's books, and Lanfeng's *Kaixin fayao*. The myth of the Eternal Mother and the elaboration of universal crises are not found in the *Huangji baojuan*, but there are already the division of the cosmic time into three stages of the three Buddhas and the views that the world is now in the end of Śākyamuni's age. Besides, the text deals with the ways of escaping calamities. Different from mainstream sectarian *baojuan*, Luo's and Lanfeng's writings do not include any reference to the myths of the Eternal Mother and the three Buddhas. Luo Qing thinks that, apart from human world, there will also be disasters in heavens and purgatory, but there are no mentions of the impermanence of heavens and destruction of purgatory in later *baojuan*. He does not focus his main attention on the coming of universal calamities, and he does not consider them as punishments inflicted on human faults, but reflections of the power of the Holy Patriarch of the Limitless. Lanfeng's description of the end of the world is directly quoted from Buddhist apocalyptic texts. Human karma brings the birth and destruction of the universe. Unlike Luo, who does not view the present age as the end of cosmic time, Lanfeng thinks that it is already the end of the world and human cultivation is degenerating. There are noticeable borrowings from Buddhism in Luo's

and Lanfeng's writings, but Luo's and Lanfeng's eschatological beliefs still have some similarities with other *baojuan* writers'. The term *mofa* is used in the same way as it is in other *baojuan*. Besides, success in imperial examinations is compared to the achievement of religious cultivation. Like other *baojuan* writers, Lanfeng considers the penalties in the world to be created by Buddhas in order to rectify human faults, and the wicked will be tortured in the time of calamities. He focuses much more attention to apocalypse than the author of the *Huangji baojuan* and Luo Qing do; therefore his depiction of the impending coming disasters is most complete.

From above discussions in this thesis, we can conclude that eschatological belief was not exclusive to the common people, and it was an indigenous tradition shared by ordinary sectarian members and literati Daoist believers. Ming-Qing popular sects were influenced by Buddhist terminology and narratives about universal crises, but their explanation of disasters and their expectation of a blissful age came from Daoist tradition. It seems that most sectarian believers adopted easily the ethic-orientated understanding of disasters held by Daoist believers, which was not mixed with many complex philosophical ideas. As shown in chapter three, Luo Qing and Lanfeng, however, are exceptions; their eschatological discussions are strongly influenced by Buddhism. Nevertheless, many Buddhist teachings and terms are still misrepresented in their works, as they are in other sectarian scriptures. Lanfeng possibly should be a sectarian writer who had deepest Buddhist knowledge among Ming-Qing sectarian writers. The Buddhist terms he applies in the *Kaixin fayao*, which we have mentioned in chapter three, show that he is an adept in Buddhism.⁴³⁷ However, he quotes Buddhist texts, but does not provide the whole

⁴³⁷ Most of the sources Luo Qing quotes in his works appear to be popularizations of Buddhist texts and teachings. Many of those applied by Lanfeng, however, are canonical Buddhist texts; there are, for example, the *Fayuan zhulin*, the *Yogācāryabhūmi-śāstra* (*Yujiaoshi di luan*), and the *Vimalakīrti* (*Weimo jing* 維摩經) (*Taishan baojuan*, 47b, p. 794), the former two of which have been mentioned in chapter three. The *Vimalakīrti* is an apocryphal account of "conversations between Śākyamuni and some residents of Vaiśālī". Edward Soothill & Lewis Hodous, *A Dictionary of Chinese Buddhist Terms*, p. 427. Daniel L. Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scripture from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 103-105.

picture of Buddhist prophecies and omits many Buddhist ideas, as stated in chapter three. He also adds sectarian ideas to Buddhist terms. The characters *kong* 空 (emptiness) in the Buddhist concept of the emptiness kalpa (*kongjie*) is equated to the origin of the universe. Therefore, he writes,

成住壞空空不動，施爲造作作無窮。

[Among the kalpas of] formation, existence, destruction, and emptiness, [only] the [kalpa of] emptiness does not change. The things it (the emptiness) has given intervention in and created are unlimited. (*Zhengxin baojuan*, 2:29a, p. 679)

空無所依。能令三千大千世界。而得安住……依空安立世界。終有成住壞空。惟有此空性。無成無壞。

Emptiness has nothing to rely on, but is able to make all the worlds stay stably.... The worlds, which rely on emptiness to exist stably, have finally to undergo [the kalpas of] formation, existence, destruction, and emptiness. Only the nature of the emptiness does not have formation and destruction. (*Taishan baojuan*, 4:57b, p. 799)

In Lanfeng's writings, Buddhist cosmic accounts are distorted and simplified. As we said in chapter three, Lanfeng views the arrival of disasters as the punishment inflicted on the wicked as other *baojuan* writers do. Although the study of sectarian eschatology cannot be the sole example of explaining the relationship of popular sects to Buddhism and Daoism, it is certainly an important part of picture of the relationship among sectarianism and these two religions.

Although this thesis deals with precious volumes of the Ming-Qing era, sectarian eschatological belief continued to thrive after the end of the imperial period of China. It can be found among the popular sects that survived the fall of the Qing. The research on sects conducted by Li Shiyu in his *Xianzai Huabei mimi zongjiao* (Secret religions in contemporary north China) in the Republican period provides abundant information about the eschatological beliefs held by sectarian members during this time. The *Cihang baoxun* 慈航寶訓 (Precious admonishment of compassionate delivery) of the Yellow Heaven Way, composed in 1919 and reprinted in 1926, is a spirit-writing text spoken by a young girl when possessed by the

Bodhisattva.⁴³⁸ It tells us that the Imperial Lord Zao (Zao wangye 皂王爺 = Zao wangye 灶王爺, kitchen god?) has sent a report on human immorality to the Jade Emperor, who then intends to destroy all people. The Emperor changes his mind and spreads ten kinds of disasters after Bodhisattva Guanyin begs mercy of him. Only one third to one half of population will remain after the disasters. Therefore, in the scripture, Guanyin predicts these disasters, urges people to lead the lives of virtue, and reveals magic pictures used to prevent harm by the disasters.⁴³⁹ A similar message about salvation performed by Guanyin was also spread by the Way of Return to Oneness (Guiyi dao 皈一道).⁴⁴⁰ The Pervading Unity Way (Yiguan dao 一貫道), established in the late Qing, preached the coming of a miserable time, and combined the history of its sect with three-stage salvation scheme. During the Green Yang period, the Dao was transmitted to only emperors and Confucians such as the Yellow Emperor 黃帝 and Zisi 子思. During the Red Yang period, the Dao was spread to Buddhists by Śākayamuni, and no longer existed in China until Damo (Bodhidharma) came to China. After the Dao was transmitted to the heir of sixteen generations, the period ended. The White Yang period did not begin until the time of the seventeenth patriarch Lu Zhongyi 路中一 and the eighteenth patriarch Zhang Guangbi 張光璧.⁴⁴¹ Since then, the Dao would be transmitted universally, but this means that it would be taught to common people only, not to officials.⁴⁴²

⁴³⁸ Buddhas' and Bodhisattvas' delivering people from the cycle of birth and death is compared to *cihang* 慈航, the vessel that carries people from the cycle and is directed by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas out of compassion. Ren Jiyu ed., *Zongjiao da cidian*, p. 135.

⁴³⁹ Li Shiyu, *Xianzai Huabei mimi zongjiao*, p. 20.

⁴⁴⁰ The *Tianjiang jiuji wen* 天降救急文 (Script sent down by Heaven on salvation of [people in] emergency [needs]) discussed in Appendix A contains "An article for salvation in emergencies (Jiuji wen 救急文)", in which the similar story can be found. Li Shiyu, *Xianzai Huabei mimi zongjiao*, p. 144.

⁴⁴¹ The members of the Pervading Unity Way was formed by Wang Jueyi 王覺一 in or before early Guangxu 光緒 reign. They claimed that its sect could be traced back to Damo and had the following lineage of the transmission of the teachings: 1) Damo (d.536?); 2) Shengguang 神光 (=Huiké 慧可 487-593); 3) Puan 普庵 (=Sengcan 僧璨 ?-606); 4) Daoxin 道信 (580-651); 5) Hongren 弘忍 (602-675); 6) Huineng 慧能 (638-713); 7) Ma Daoyi 馬道一 (709-788); 8) Luo Weiqun 羅蔚群 (f.1667); 9) Huang Tingchen 黃廷臣 (f.1734); 10) Wu Zixiang 吳子祥 (1715-1784); 11) He Ruò 何若 (f.1789) 12) Yuan Zhiqian 袁志愼 (1760-1834); 13) Yang Shouyi 楊守一 (1796-1828) & Xu Jilan 徐繼闌 (?-1828); 14) Yao Hetian 姚鶴天 (f.1845); 15) Wang Jueyi (1821-1884); 16) Liu Zhigang 劉至剛 (d.1868);

Eschatological belief was also held by some new sects, which were established after the imperial period in China for delivering people in the time of the end of kalpa (*mojie*). The Mingming sheng dao 明明聖道 (The holy way of [Emperor] of Justice and Purity [i.e. the Eternal Mother]) was set up in the 1930's with a modernized organization of leaders, which was called "board of directors (*dongshi hui* 董事會)".⁴⁴³ The *Mingming sheng dao zongzhi* 明明聖道宗旨 (The intention of the Mingming sheng dao) reads:

查晚近世風日下，人心敗壞，倫常莫講……本來天良道德，喪失殆盡，以致罪盈乾坤，上干天怒，災劫連綿，特示警戒……白陽末劫，現降於世，大劫臨頭，人力何能挽救，幸蒙老母以眾生乃老母之原子，痛癢所關，不忍目睹眾生之將沉淪浩劫而不救……首宣母慈，繼振五常，在在示人以正道……既可為有益國家社會之良民，復可能脫免末劫而得尋求家鄉之正路。

It can be seen that, in the late [Qing] and the recent [age], public morals are degenerating day by day, and human mind is corrupt. [People] are apathetic about moral obligations... [Their] original conscience and goodness have been lost almost completely. This makes the world (lit. *gankun*) be filled with their sins. This offends Heaven above and causes its anger. [Heaven hence] gives special warnings [and] punishment [by giving out] continuous disasters.... The end of the kalpa [before] White Yang is now coming to the world. Great kalpic [disasters] are imminent. How can human power retrieve [this

17) Lu Zhongyi (1849-1925); 18) Zhang Guangbi (1887-1947). The first seven were the masters of Chan Buddhism. The eighth patriarchs to the fourteenth one were the masters of some popular sects. Luo Weiqun was a master of the Dacheng jiao (see note 392 of this thesis). Huang Tingchen and Wu Zixiang belonged to the Yuandun jiao. He Ruo was a disciple of Wu, and was the master of Yuan Zhiqian, who changed the name of the Dacheng jiao into the Green Lotus religion (Qinglian jiao 青蓮教). Yang Shouyi and Xu Jilan were the leaders of this sect at the same time. Yao Hetian of the Green Lotus religion was the teacher of Wang Jueyi. Wang Jueyi had already adopted the belief of three-Buddhas cosmology, but it seems that, during the time of Lu Zhongyi and Zhang Guangbi, the cosmology was changed and it said that the White Yang period had not begun until then. Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao*, pp. 124-130. Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, pp.374-377. Wang Jianchuan, "Xiantian dao qianqi shi chutan – jianlun qi yu Yiguan dao de guanxi 先天道前期史初探—兼論其與一貫道的關係 (Tentative exploration of the early history of the Former Heaven Way – with additional study of its relationship with the Pervading Unity Way)". *Taiwan de Zhaijiao yu Luantang*, pp. 75-114.

⁴⁴² Li Shiyu, *Xianzai Huabei mimi zongjiao*, pp. 57-58.

⁴⁴³ My discussion of the sect is based on Li Shiyu's "Mingming shengdao diaocha yanjiu 明明聖道調查研究 (An investigation of the Mingming sheng dao)". *Minjian zongjiao* 民間宗教 (Popular religions) 3(1997 Dec):71-91. The term *mingming* refers to the Eternal Mother, who has an alternative long name with redundant words Mingming shengdi wuliang qingxu zhizun zhisheng sanjie shifang wanling zhenzai 明明上帝無量清虛至尊至聖三界十方萬靈真宰 (Supreme emperor of justice (*ming*) and purity (*ming*). [who is] the most honorable of unlimited purity and void, holiest in the three realms, and the perfect master of the myriad spirits in the ten directions). An admonishment spoken by Maitreya when coming to the altar (*tanxun*) says that the first character *ming* in the title means justice and the second one means purity.

situation]? We are fortunate to meet with [the fact that] the Eternal Mother considers all living beings to be the primal sons of the Eternal Mother. [Their sufferings] are important to [the Eternal Mother]. She cannot bear to see that living beings will sink into great kalpic [disasters] without [having the chance of obtaining] salvation.... The first [aim of our organization] is to preach [the message about] the compassion of the Mother. The next [aim] is to promote [the spread of] the five principles of morality (*wuchang* 五常)⁴⁴⁴. [We aim at] showing the right Dao to people with all aspects [of our behavior].... [We intend] to be good citizens who benefit state and society, and to be able to escape the last kalpa and obtain the right way of searching out the Native Place.

The spirit-writings texts of the sect, the *tanxin* 壇訓 (Admonishment [spoken at] the altar) were dominated by the messages of the imminence of the last kalpa, of the condemnation of human misbehavior, and of the salvation carried out in the Eastern Land.

Eschatological themes cannot only be found in sectarian precious volumes, but also in narrative *baojuan*.⁴⁴⁵ The *Jiujie baojuan* 救劫寶卷 (The precious volume about the salvation in the [last] kalpa), with no division of chapters, can demonstrate this. It was produced after Gulang county 古浪 (in Gansu province 甘肅) saw an earthquake in 1927, which was followed by a famine.⁴⁴⁶ The scripture begins with the reasons why the Jade Emperor carries out calamities.

蓋聞此一段因果，出在民國十六年至十八年間。那時候我涼洲大地，天災人禍——大地震之後，又兵荒馬亂，戰火橫飛，民不聊生。那時候，世風日下，人心不古，不敬天地神靈，不孝父母，不尊師長，拋撒五穀，人心奸詐，喪盡天良，實屬十惡不赦。這一切都驚動了天庭。玉帝駕臨南天門外，用慧眼往下一看，不覺慘然淚下。遂欽命仙人傳下一道令來：凶神下界，盡收惡人。

It is generally known that this [story of] cause and effect was produced in the sixteenth year (1927) to the eighteenth year (1929) of the Republic period. In that time, there were natural and man-made calamities in our great land, Liangzhou 涼洲 (the present Gansu):

⁴⁴⁴ The five principles are benevolence, justice, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness.

⁴⁴⁵ For the classification of precious volumes, see Daniel L. Overmyer, "Values in Chinese Sectarian Literature: Ming and Ch'ing Pao-chüan", pp. 220-221. Randall L. Nadeau, "Genre Classification of Chinese Popular Religious Literature: Pao-chüan", pp. 121-128.

⁴⁴⁶ The *Jiujie baojuan* is reprinted in *Hexi baojuan zhenben jiaozhu yanjiu*, pp. 210-231.

After a great earthquake, there was also chaos of wars, and the flames of wars were everywhere. People lived in poverty. [This was because] public morals were degenerating day by day at that time. The human mind was not [as moral as those in] ancient times. They were not respectful to Heaven, Earth, and deities. They neither took filial responsibility nor respected teachers and elders. They forsook and threw away the five grains. Humans were deceitful, and their conscience was lost completely. They were extremely evil and not forgivable. All these already shocked the Heavenly Court (*tainting* 天庭). The Jade Emperor arrived at the outside of the Gate of Southern Heaven (Nantian men 南天門). As soon as he looked below at [the human world] with his wisdom-eyes, his tears fell down sadly and unconsciously. He then ordered immortals to transmit a mandate, which read, "Fierce deities should descend to the [human] realm for gathering all evil people". (p. 210)

The writer then summarizes the historical development of China in a piece of seven character verse, and ends it with a condemnation, which says that serious disasters and sufferings are caused by human wrongdoing. (pp. 210-211) We next read ten kalpic disasters (*shijie* 十劫) inflicted by the Jade Emperor as follows:

一大劫，天搖地動，壓死眾百姓成千上萬；二大劫，年年荒旱，曬得河干井枯，寸草不見；三大劫，各處的強盜作亂，只殺得百姓叫苦連天；四大劫，瘟神下凡，白喉症死去的人，無法計算；五大劫，洪水淹沒了武威大片；六大劫，刮大風天昏地暗，恨世人盡作惡不行善；七大劫，降白雨大如雞蛋，打死了豬和羊，地里禾田；八大劫，虎狼凶，把人咬慘，咬得那大街下人稀路斷；九大劫，糧食貴，人人親見，一斗糧，半斗錢，餓死黎民百千；十大劫，降禍災，洋槍大炮，打死了眾百姓，千千萬萬。

The first great kalpic [disaster was that] heaven shook and earth moved, and this pressed thousands of common people to the death. The second great kalpic [disaster was that] there were famines and droughts every year. Rivers and wells were dried up; a blade of grass could not be seen. The third great kalpic [disaster was that] bandits raised disorder everywhere. They slaughtered people and caused them to complain bitterly. The fourth great kalpic [disaster was that] epidemic deities came to the profane [world]. People who died of diphtheria were numberless. The fifth great kalpic [disaster was that] floods

overwhelmed a great stretch of land in Wuwei 武威 (in the province Gansu). The sixth great kalpic [disaster was that] strong winds blew and the whole sky was darkened. It was hateful that all people in the world did evils and did not do good deeds. The seventh great kalpic [disaster was that drops of] white rain (*baiyu* 白雨 = hailstones), which were as big as eggs, fell down. They hit pigs and sheep and caused them to die. [They fell] on earth [and into] the fields of grain. The eighth kalpic [disaster was that] tigers and wolves were fierce, and it was sad that they bit people. [They] bit [people] therefore there were few people on those major streets [in Gulang], and it was a desolate scene (lit. *duanlu* 斷路). The ninth great kalpic [disaster was that] grain was expensive and people saw this themselves. One *dou* (a measure unit) of grain cost half a *dou* money. Thousands of the common people starved to death. The tenth great kalpic [disaster was that] misfortunes were sent down. Western-style guns and artillery killed many common people. Millions of millions [people died]! (p. 212)

The writer continues the text by expounding various wrongdoings of people and describing their miserable lives. (pp. 212-214) Then he devotes his attention to two families of the town Dajing 大靖 in Gulang, Zhang San's 張三 and Yuan San's 袁三. Human wickedness has not disappeared completely; hence people of the town still suffer from many disasters in the seventeenth year of the Republic period (1928). They hear that it is the year of plenty in Zhongwei 中衛 (in Gansu province) so they run to there. Zhang San dies on the way, and his wife, née Chen 陳, continue the journey with their son and daughter. We are told that Mrs. Zhang is chaste, and therefore does not remarry, and works hard to bring up her children. Yuan San, however, sells his wife, née Wang 王, immorally for money. In the time of calamities, the wicked die and are tortured in purgatory. After all these people have been collected up (*shoujin* 收盡), the Jade Emperor orders that there will be good weather. Therefore, there are good

harvests, and people return to Dajing. The author ends the text with the moral of the story, which is that people should always be moral so as not to experience misfortunes. (pp. 229-230)

The text does not contain a prophecy of disasters, which had already occurred, nor any mentions of sectarian deities such as the Eternal Mother and the future Buddha Maitreya. However, it has some similarities with sectarian precious volumes. Like some sectarian texts such as the *Tianci jiujiu jing* and the *Cihang baoxun* we mentioned in chapter two and just above, the author of the text believes that disasters are given by the Jade Emperor for punishing the wicked and ridding the world of them. Besides, it is said in the *Jiujiu baojuan* that, during the miserable time, varied disasters come up at the same time, not one after the other. The author warns the readers to lead the lives of virtue by giving detailed descriptions of various misfortunes as many sectarian *baojuan* writers do.

We conclude that the faith in divine intervention in retributive justice, and belief that disasters are punishments inflicted on the immoral belong to Chinese tradition shared by both nonmembers and members of popular sects. Besides, the examination of the eschatological teachings of the Ming-Qing precious volumes and their Daoist elements is not only important to understanding sectarian teachings in the imperial period, but it also helps us to understand the society made up of sectarian believers and ordinary people in the Republic China.

APPENDIX A: THE *TIAN CI JIUJIE JING* AND THE SCRIPTURES OF THE FIVE ELDERS

In their *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, Wang Jianchuan and Lin Wenchuan divide the scriptures they have collected into three categories. The scriptures of Five Elders and the *Tian ci jiujie jing* are categorized into a group of “scriptures on salvation from [last] kalpa (*jiujie jing* 救劫經)”, which is also called “books on prophecy (*chenshu* 讖書; *yuyan shu* 預言書)”; the other two categories are “scriptures and documents of sects (*jiaomin jingquan wenxian* 教門經卷文獻)” and “morality books (*shanshu* 善書)”. Wang and Lin think that the scriptures of Five Elders were written in the Yuan Dynasty. Since they were reprinted in the Ming and the Qing, they are included in their book. The contents of the scriptures of Five Elders and the *Tian ci jiujie jing* are different from other sectarian *baojuan* in contents because they do not contain any reference to the Eternal Mother (Wusheng laowu 無生老母), who is thought to be the supreme goddess by popular sects, as many *baojuan* do. Besides, the connection of these books with popular sects is not clear. Although, unlike other sectarian *baojuan*, there is no account of the Eternal Mother in the scriptures of the Five Elders and the *Tian ci jiujie jing*, they include detailed pictures of the end of the world and universal crises, as other sectarian *baojuan* do. These contents were thought to be “subversive” by the imperial government. In the following, I shall discuss the reasons why these scriptures should be considered to be sectarian *baojuan* of the Ming-Qing era.

Part I: The *Tian ci jiujie jing* 天賜救劫經 (Scripture on [how to] save oneself from the kalpa, granted by the Heaven)

I regard the *Tian ci jiujie jing* as sectarian *baojuan* because I find the relationship between it and a text of a popular sect. The following are two quotations from the prefaces of the *Tian ci jiujie jing* and the *Tianjiang jiuji wen* 天降救急文 (Script sent down by Heaven on salvation of [people in] emergency [needs]), which are divided into several parts and put in the right and left

columns respectively. The former is reprinted in the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*; the latter was collected by Li Shiyu when he studied the Guiyi dao 皈一道 (Unity conversion way).⁴⁴⁷

<i>Tian ci jiuji jing</i> (<i>Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian</i> , vol. 10, p. 467.)	<i>Tianjiang jiuji wen</i> (<i>Xianzai Huabei mimi zongjiao</i> , p. 143.)
爾時 南普陀山忽然雷震從空降下一石碑，在鄭家莊前現出經一卷，此時有張公正李承相將仙經抄寫，二家室人誠心諷誦。又將此經傳與馬知府。馬知府全家不信，不過百日滿門滅。	爾時京城順天府，南海普陀山，忽然雷震，從空中落下一碑，在鄭家莊前，現出丹經一卷。時有李參政，即將此經抄回，合家虔誠諷誦；又將此經，送與馬知府家，彼家不信，過數日一門俱疫。

Both authors of the two texts begin their prefaces with a story in order to warn the people who do not believe the texts. A stele descended from the Mount Putuo 普陀 to the manor of Zheng family (Zhengjia zhuang 鄭家莊).⁴⁴⁸ An official surnamed Li and a man named Zhang Zheng 張正 copied the inscription of the stele; their families recited it with sincere hearts. The *Tianjiang jiuji wen* does not mention Zhang and his family. The inscription was then given to a Prefect Ma and his family, but they did not believe it. After a period of time, Ma and his family died out.

此時有彌勒尊佛在虛空中言：善哉！善哉！末劫之年以(已)今到了，天下人民十分之中要收八分，都是不敬天地日月三光，拋棄禮義廉恥八字，第一不敬天地，第二不孝父母，第三不尊長上，第四以強霸弱，第五欺孤滅寡，第六大稱小斗，第七欺壓良善，第八貪財利己(己)，第九騙人銀錢。第十謀人財產。至此世俗變亂，此乃末劫臨頭，便有善惡簿記付與 大羅天仙下界。查看此經，災難消除，不信者，但看虎卯二年，有田無人耕，有房無人座(坐)，五六月惡蛇蒲(鋪)	時有彌勒佛在空中言白，善哉善哉！於今乃末劫之年，天下人民，十收八九，都是不敬天地，不孝父母，不敬畏上，欺孤凌寡，以強壓弱，大秤小斗，欺害純良，貪財利己，騙人銀錢，拋散五穀，宰殺耕牛，應至於此。今將善惡著簿，付與大羅仙下界，查察有力行善者，並傳送此文，及供奉虔誦者，可免災厄。若有不信不敬者，但看兵燹之境，有田無人耕，有屋無人住，五六月惡蛇滿地出，八九月惡人滿地死。若人實力奉行此經，送傳頌者，不遭十難並十災：一災戈
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⁴⁴⁷ The term *guiyi* means converting to the faith of the unity of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. The Guiyi dao is an offshoot of the Xiantian dao 先天道 (Former heaven way) and was founded by Zhao Wenzhi 趙萬秩 in the late Qing. Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, p. 77. Li Shiyu, *Xianzai Huabei mimi zongjiao*, pp. 142-144.

⁴⁴⁸ The Mount Putuo in Zhejiang 浙江 has been the place where Guanyin is believed to manifest herself and preach Dharma since the Tang Dynasty. Ren Jiyu, ed., *Zongjiao da cidian*, p. 600.

地。信者不遭十惡，或有十愁，一愁刀兵將大動，二愁房屋被火焚，三愁晝夜不得安，四愁夫婦不團圓，五愁兒女有失散，六愁人死無人抬，七愁屍首無人埋，八愁有衣無人穿，九愁有飯無人吃，十愁末劫不太平。	動，二災煙火燃，三災日夜不安然，四災夫妻不團圓，五災兒女遭失散，六災惡人滿地攤，七災尸骨無人檢，八災有衣無人穿，九災有飯無人吃，十災不見太平年。
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Then both texts continue with Maitreya's condemnation of human immorality. Except for the last one, the bad deeds listed in the *Tian ci jiuji jing* are the same as those in the *Tianjiang jiuji wen*. The last one "plotting to seize others' property (*mou ren caichan* 謀人財產)" in the *Tian ci jiuji jing* is replaced with the misdeeds "forsaking and throwing away the five grains (*paosa wugu* 拋撒五穀)" and "butchering farm cattle (*zaisha gengniu* 宰殺耕牛)" in the *Tianjiang jiuji wen*. Both texts next tell us that the record of human deeds is now sent to the immortals of the Great Canopy Heaven (Dalao tian 大羅天).⁴⁴⁹ If people believe the scriptures, they can escape misfortunes. The picture of disasters in the *Tian ci jiuji jing* is very similar to that in the *Tianjiang jiuji wen*. The wording of the texts is almost the same.

眼前有 彌勒尊佛在靈山觀看末劫之年，到了山東，降出此經。	茲釋迦佛在山，觀見於末劫之年，又在山東降判此文。
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The texts next tell us their sources: Maitreya, or Śākyamuni, observes the disastrous age and then descends to Shandong and gives the scriptures.

關張二大帝糾察人間善惡，凡民多有虧心，往往不敬天地，不孝父母，不尊長上，重重惡積堆山，不留惡人，只想米價高仰。又說十愁之外，並遭十劫水火雷虎凍餓狼金木土就是十劫。	南海觀音大士法眼觀見眾生有難，彌勒佛令東嶽大帝關趙二將，糾察人間善惡。若有欺心咽咽，瞞心昧己，不忠不孝，遭此十災，先使米價大貴，降十難之外，還有十災，水災火災雷災風災虎災蛇災刀災瘟災飢災寒災。
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⁴⁴⁹ In Daoism, the Great Canopy Heaven is highest among the thirty-six heavens. In the Heaven, there is a Mount Yujing (Yujing shan 玉京山), on where eight trees grow. The trees are so large that they can cover eight directions of the sky. Therefore, the heaven is called the Great Canopy heaven. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, pp. 1202-1203.

In the *Tianci jiuji jing*, the Emperor Guan (Guandi 關帝), together with the Emperor Zhang (Zhangdi 張帝) inspects the mundane world.⁴⁵⁰ Various disasters are inflicted in order to punish the evil. In the *Tianjiang jiuji wen*, we are also told that the Bodhisattva Guanyin 觀音 (Avalokiteśvara) sees people suffer, and Maitreya orders Guan and the general Zhao 趙 to inspect the world.⁴⁵¹ The ten misfortunes (*shizai* 十災) are called *shijie* 十劫 (ten kalpic [disasters]) in the *Tianci jiuji jing*, and some of them mentioned in both texts are the same.

釋迦佛掌天下一萬三年，今已滿了，至此乃是彌勒尊佛座住，自庚申甲子年，五谷不登，人民有難，倘有不信者，難免惡蛇之災。末劫之後方見太平。此經有力刊刷(印)送人無力抄寫送人，自免劫難，神靈擁護。

釋迦佛掌天下，一萬二千年已滿，至此乃是彌勒佛接位。從庚申年起，天上人民多不向善，所以末⁴⁵²甲子，五穀不登，人民飢餓死。若有不信者，難解此劫，果能奉行，方見清平，白銀二兩，置米一石，積玉堆金，永享太平。有經而不傳誦者，難逃此災。

The texts say that Śākyamuni's reign has ended after more than ten thousand years, and it is now Maitreya's age. Then the disastrous age is mentioned again. In the *Tian ci jiuji jing*, it is said that there will be misfortunes in the *gengshen* 庚申 (the 57th year of the sixty-year cycle) and *jiazi* (the first year) years. The account in the *Tianjiang jiuji wen* is not totally the same: most people are immoral in the *gengshen* year, and disasters will come up in the *jiazi* year. Both texts, then, tell readers how to escape disasters. They need to print or copy by hand the *Tian ci jiuji jing* for distributing it to others. In the *Tianjiang jiuji wen*, they are told to believe it; people who have it but do not do so will be unable to escape disasters.

These two passages have very similar language and structure. The quotation from the *Tian ci jiuji jing* seems to be a simplified form of that from the *Tianjiang jiuji wen*. It is possible that one of the authors has read the other text, or that these two scriptures have the same material as

⁴⁵⁰ I cannot find the background of Zhangdi. It may be Zhang Fei 張飛 (?-271), who formed sworn brotherhood with Guandī in a pledge.

⁴⁵¹ The general Zhao, Zhao Gongming 趙公明, and Guan Yu 關羽 belong to the deities of Dharma Protection (*hufa* 護法) in Daoism. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 932.

⁴⁵² A character “jie 劫” should be omitted here so that the sentence is understandable.

their source. Both texts may have been produced in the Qing. As mentioned in the quotations, both writings were believed to be produced by direct revelations from Maitreya and Śākyamuni when they descended to human world. "In the Numinous Mountain (Lingshan 靈山), the venerated Buddha Maitreya watched [people] in [these] years of last kalpa. He went to Shandong; he descended [to the altar dedicated to him and] produced this scripture. 彌勒尊佛在靈山觀看末劫之年，到了山東，降出此經。"⁴⁵³ "In that time, in the Mountain, Śākyamuni watched [people] in the years of last kalpa. He also descended [to the altar dedicated to him] and produced (lit. *pan* 判; judge) this text 茲釋迦佛在山，觀見於末劫之年，又在山東降判此文。". (*Tianjiang jiuji wen*, p. 144) They are spirit-writing texts (*fujī* 扶箕). Many precious volumes of the nineteenth century were written in this way; therefore, it is possible that these two texts were composed in this period.⁴⁵⁴

Part II: The scriptures of the Five Elders

Wugong mojie jing 五公末劫經 (The scripture of the Five Elders about the last kalpa)

Tiantai shan Wugong pusa lingjing 天台山五公菩薩靈經 (Efficacious scripture [preached by] Five Elder Bodhisattvas on the Mount Tiantai; hereafter the "*Tiantai shan lingjing*")

Dasheng Wugong zhuantian tu jiuji zhenjing 大聖五公轉天圖救劫真經 (Complete scripture of salvation from [the last] kalpa, [written in] heaven-changing pictures, [preached by] Five Elders, Great Saints; hereafter the "*Dasheng Wugong jing*")

Wugong tiange miaojing 五公天閣妙經 (Wonderful scripture from the Five Elders' heavenly pavilion)

Before we discuss the scriptures of the Five Elders, we should view the points made by modern scholars for supporting their inferences that these scriptures were written in the Tang.

⁴⁵³ There are some verses about the exhortation to mortality given by Guanyin, Jade Emperor (Yudi 玉帝), and the Five Elders after the preface of the *Tian ci jiuji jing*. Besides, the text contains some stories of the people who believe it and of those who do not. It is said that the Jade Emperor descended to the world in the thirteenth year of the Guangxu reign (1887) and discovered that there were not any moral people. (p. 471) This is the latest date provided by this text. Therefore, the text was produced after this year.

⁴⁵⁴ For the introduction to spirit writing *baojuan*, read Daniel L. Overmyer, "Values in Chinese Sectarian Literature: Ming and Ch'ing *Pao-chüan*", pp. 220-221.

Ke Yuxian 柯毓賢 is the earliest scholar I know who pays attention to the *Tiantai shan lingjing*, one of the Five Elder scriptures. In his “*Zhuantian tujing kao* 『轉天圖經』考 (Examination of the *Scripture of Heaven-Changing Picture* (another title of the *Tiantai shan lingjing*))” published in 1983, he considers it to be a Tang text.⁴⁵⁵ Although some years of the Ming and Qing Dynasties are mentioned on the first few pages and at the end of the text, he thinks that they were not written by the author, but added to the book by others.⁴⁵⁶ He raises two reasons why he thinks that the text was composed in the Tang: 1) It contains references to the decline of “Great Tang (Da Tang 大唐)”, the fall of “Muzi 木子 (a divided form of the character Li 李, the surname of royal family in the Tang)”, and the disorder happening in the eastern and western capitals of the Tang, Luoyang 洛陽 and Changan 長安; 2) it contains five- and seven-character verse, which is the writing style of *bianwen* 變文 (transformation texts) of the Tang. He also makes some observations about the contents of the text: 1) the text circulated in the region around Mount Tiantai (Tiantai shan 天台山) of the Zhejiang 浙江 because it advocates the idea that the “holy master (*shengzhu* 聖主)” will appear in the Jiangdong 江東 (the eastern Changjiang River 長江);⁴⁵⁷ 2) prophecies of the appearances of the great peaceful age and the holy master in the hare and tiger years (i.e. the *yin* 卯 and *mao* 寅 year; the third and fourth earthly branches) are repeated throughout the text. Ke calls the belief in the prophecies “*maoyin xinyang* 卯寅信仰 (*maoyin* [-year] faith)”; 3) the term “*Mingwang* 明王 (king of light)” is a

⁴⁵⁵ Ke Yuxian, “*Zhuantian tujing kao* (Examination of the *Scripture of Heaven-Changing Picture*)”, *Shih-Huo Monthly* 食貨月刊, 13:9-15 (1983, no.5-6).

⁴⁵⁶ In the edition printed in the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, we can find the thirty-third year of the Guangxu reign (1907) on the first page of the preface (p. 297) and the 58th year (*xinyou* 辛酉) of the Xianfeng 咸豐 reign (1861) in a short introductory article written by a Way Man Zeshan (Zeshan daoren 澤山道人) (p. 299). Both Zeshan and the scripture say that it was found in the tenth year of the Hongwu 洪武 reign (1377). (p. 299 & p. 310)

⁴⁵⁷ I am afraid that Ke Yuxian has mixed up the place name Zhedong up with Jiangdong. In Nanjing 南京 and Wuhu 蕪湖, Changjiang River is divided into two tributaries flowing in the directions south by southwest and north by northeast. The region on the south tributaries is called Jiangdong, which includes Zhejiang. In the Three-Kingdoms period (220-280), the whole area under domination of the Eastern Wu State (Dongwu 東吳 222-280) was also called Jiangdong. In the text, it is said that the Holy Man will arise in Jiangdong, not Zhedong. Luo Zhufeng, ed., *Hanyu da cidian*, vol. 5, p. 918.

special name that originates in Manichaeism.⁴⁵⁸ In the text, the King of Light has an imperial title Luoping 羅平.⁴⁵⁹ Ke infers that Dong Chang 董昌 (?-896) ordered a shaman to produce the *Tiantai shan lingjing* for political propaganda in the Tang, because Dong revolted in eastern Zhejiang and the imperial title he used was Luoping.⁴⁶⁰ Dong also accepted that the peaceful age would come in the hare and tiger years. Since the Song Dynasty (960-1279), the imperial government had given orders several times to ban and to destroy the text, which was under the name *Wugong jing*. Ke Yuxian thinks that in the late Qing the state did not notice this text, and so it was reprinted by the populace, who simply regarded it as a mortality book.⁴⁶¹ Yu Songqing accepts Ke Yuxian's views on the composition date of the text, but she considers another rebel

⁴⁵⁸ It is also thought that the term comes from Buddhism. See note 2 of the introduction.

⁴⁵⁹ According to official historical books, Luoping is a name of a kind of birds which have four eyes and three feet. Their appearance was viewed as a bad omen; people therefore drew pictures of them and offered sacrifices to them in order to get rid of disasters. Some rebels in this period used Luoping as their imperial titles. Ke Yuxian, "Zhuantian tujing kao", p. 13.

⁴⁶⁰ Dong Chang was the prefecture of Hangzhou 杭州; he claimed to be the monarch of the great Yue (Dayue 大越) in the second year of the Ganning 乾寧 reign (895) and was defeated by Qian Liu 錢鏐 in the next year. See note 462 for the background of Qian. Zhang Huizhi 張鴻之, Shen Qiwei, and Liu Dezhong 劉德重, ed., *Zhongguo lidai renming da cidian* 中國歷史人名大辭典 (Great dictionary of biographies in Chinese history) (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1992), vol. 2, p. 2252.

⁴⁶¹ Ke's views that it did not attract the attention of the Qing government and was circulated freely are not correct. See note 467. Although Ke has changed his views later and believes that the text was written by Qiu Fu 裘甫 (?-860) in at least thirty-six years earlier, he maintains his conclusion that the text was composed in the Tang. His other articles are based on this conclusion. Apart from the Five Elders, Guanyin is the only deity mentioned in the *Tiantai shan lingjing*; believers are told to recite the Bodhisattva's name in order to escape from disasters. (p. 301) Ke concludes in his article written in 1993 from this that the Guanyin worship was popular in the south, where the text circulated, when Maitreya faith spread in the north, where the White Lotus Sects (Bailian jiao 白蓮教) were active in the Yuan. This is not true because Guanyin worship was already widely accepted in the north in the Six Dynasties. The number of the statues of Guanyin made in the Northern Dynasties (Beichao 北朝) is 171 when that of the statues of Maitreya is 150. Ke Yuxian, "「Zhuantian tujing」 xukao—Qiu Fu Dong Chang yu wuxi dao 「轉天圖經」續考—裘甫、董昌與巫覡道 (A continuation of research on the *Scripture of Heaven-Changing Picture*—Qiu Fu, Dong Chang, and Shamanism)", *Shih-Huo Monthly* 16(1978, no. 9-10):10-17. Ke Yuxian, "The Rebellion of Wang Fa-en (Wan Faen) In the Early Southern Song and Its Relation To the Classic Illustrating the Revolution of Heaven (南宋初年王法恩之亂及其轉天圖經之關係)", *Studies in Oriental Religions* (東方宗教研究), New Series, 1(1990):183-195. Ke Yuxian, "'Ming Wang (Mingwang 明王: king of light)' and 'Lo-p'ing Wang (Luoping wang 羅平王; Luoping king)' as reflected in the Chuan-t'ien t'u ching (*Zhuantian tu jing*; *Scripture of heaven-changing picture*) ('明王'與「羅平王」—以〈轉天圖經〉為中心之考察)", *Studies in Oriental Religions*, New Series, 3(1993):99-105. Ke Yuxian, "A Reconsideration of 'Ming Wang' Belief 明王信仰之再考察", *Studies in Oriental Religions*, New Series, 5(1996):198-211. Chang Chi-hao, "The *Mi-le* Worship and the Rebellion of *Ta-sheng* Sect in the North Wei Period", pp. 155-175. Qiu Fu rose up in the thirteenth year of the Dazong 大中 reign (859) during the late Tang dynasty; he was defeated and captured by Wang Shi 王式, a Tang official. Zhang Huizhi, Shen Qiwei, and Liu Dezhong, ed., *Zhongguo lidai renming da cidian*, vol. 2, p. 2402.

Qian Liu 錢鏐 (852-932) of the late Tang to be the author.⁴⁶² Besides the *Tiantai shan lingjing*, Wang Jianchuan and Lin Wenchuan believe that all other Five-Elder scriptures they find were written by the early Yuan.⁴⁶³ Pu Wenqi thinks that the *Wugong mojie jing*, one of the Five-Elder Scriptures, is a book of prophecy that circulated in the Ming and Qing.⁴⁶⁴ The *Dasheng Wugong jing* can be found in Che Xilun's bibliography of Chinese precious volumes; he obviously classifies it as a *baojuan*.⁴⁶⁵

I shall not provide here a thorough discussion of all the Five-Elders Scriptures, but shall talk only of the reasons I consider them to be written in the Ming and Qing. A complete understanding of them certainly needs detailed exploration and abundant evidence in further studies.

Is the *Scripture of the Five Elders*, which is found in the lists of banned books in historical records, exactly one of the scriptures available in the present? Unfortunately we are told the title only without any information about its contents. We shall be confused by many titles found

⁴⁶² Yu Songqing agrees with some of Ke's points. Because of the application of five- and seven-character verse and the references to the surname of Tang royal family, the capitals of the Tang, and the *yinmao* faith in the text, she thinks that it is a Tang text, which is influenced by Manichaeism. Yu Songqing 喻松青, "Zhuantian tujing xintan", pp. 35-111. The main text, without the preface, the introductory article written by Zeshan, inscriptions, and Five-Elders magic pictures (Fugong fu 五公符), is reprinted after Yu's article in her book *Minjian mimi zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, (pp. 111-134). Qian Liu was the founder of the Wuyue 吳越 state (the present Zhejiang province and the southwest of Jiangsu province) during the period of Five Dynasties. He was made the duke of Wuyue (Wuyue wang 吳越王) in the first year of the Kaiping 開平 reign (907) in the Later Liang 梁 dynasty (907-923), and he claimed to be the monarch of Wuyue state later. He was on his throne for forty-one years. Zhang Huizhi, Shen Qiwei, and Liu Dezong, ed., *Zhongguo lidai renming da cidian*, vol. 2, p. 1910.

⁴⁶³ They find that the title *Five-Elders Scripture* (*Wugong jing* 五公經) appear in the list of books banned by the government in the first eighteen years (1271-1289) of the Yuan Dynasty. Wang Jianchuan & Lin Wenchuan, ed., *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*, vol. 1, p. 5.

⁴⁶⁴ Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, p. 337.

⁴⁶⁵ The bibliography has an entry for the *Dasheng wugong jiejie jiushi zhenjing* 大聖五公解結(劫?)救世真經 (Perfect scripture, [taught by] the Five Elders of the Great Saints, on dissolving kalpic [disasters] and saving the world), which should be the *Dasheng Wugong jing*. Its alternative title *Dasheng wugong yanshuo tiantu xingzhi maojing* 大聖五公演說天圖形旨妙經 (Wonderful scripture, preached by the Five Elders, Great Saints, on the form and purpose of the heaven picture) mentioned in the bibliography is almost the same as that found in our scripture, which is *Dasheng wugong yanshuo zhuantian tu xingshou miaojing* 大聖五公演說轉天圖形首妙經 (Wonderful scripture, preached by the Five Elders, Great Saints, on the form and beginning of the Changing-Heaven picture). The edition mentioned in the bibliography is attached to the "Wugong xinsuo jiujiu baochan 五公新說救劫寶懺 (Precious repentance for saving [people] from kalpa newly preach by the Five Elders)", the title of which is also very similar to that of the attachment to the *Dasheng Wugong jing*. The title of the attachment does not have the characters *jiujiu*. Che Xilun's *Zhongguo baojuan zongmu*, pp. 37.

throughout every one of the scriptures. Every scripture contains sacred messages revealed by the Five Elders; therefore, all of the scriptures can be called the *Scripture of Five Elders*.⁴⁶⁶ The references to the title *Wugong jing* in historical records therefore cannot be viewed as solid evidence to prove that the scriptures were written before the Yuan. Besides, if the scriptures of Five Elders had been composed by the Yuan, it is unconvincing that they would still have been available to the populace in the late Qing after being banned by the government in the Song, Yuan, and Ming Dynasties.⁴⁶⁷

All four scriptures of the Five Elders have very similar contents; all have plenty of depictions of universal disorders and calamities, which did not appear in Changan and Luoyang only.⁴⁶⁸ The obscure sentences about implication for the holy master's name can be found in all the scriptures.⁴⁶⁹ The above-mentioned points about the *Tiantai shan lingjing* that Ke raises can apply to all other scriptures of the Five Elders; therefore, the *Tiantai shan lingjing* is not unique among all the scriptures. Ke's points are inadequate in proving that it was written in the late Tang. However, it seems inappropriate for us to infer that all these scriptures were composed in

⁴⁶⁶ Pu Wenqi also writes the title *Wugong jing* only when introducing the *Wugong mojie jing* in his *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao cidian*. Readers can know however what scripture he refers to because the passages he quotes are from the *Wugong mojie jing*. Ma Xisha thinks that the *Wugong jing* was produced in the late Five-Dynasties Age or in the early Song, and it was still transmitted in the Qing because the *Wugong jing* was banned in the Song and Qing. He also quotes a passage from it, which is the *Wugong mojie jing* of our scripture. Ma Xisha, *Qingdai Bagua jiao*, pp. 156-157. Pu Wenqi, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao cidian*, p. 337.

⁴⁶⁷ The title *Wugong jing* also appears in the list of books obtained by Qing officers when they arrested sectarian members. They thought it "evil, absurd, and rebellious (*yaowang beini* 妖妄悖逆)". Ma Xisha & Han Bingfang, *Zhongguo minjian zongjiao shi*, pp. 389-400, & p. 1184. We still cannot be sure if it is the one banned by the government in earlier dynasties, or if it is one of the scriptures collected in the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*.

⁴⁶⁸ It is said that calamities and disorders will also appear in other places. For example, the author of the *Tiantai shan lingjing*, which is the one studied by Ke Yuxian and Yu Songqing, does not describe only the sufferings in Changan and Luoyang; he also mentions those in other places such as Bashu 巴蜀, Wuyue 吳越, and Yangchu 揚楚. (p. 305) "The three calamities will appear in the east; there will be eight difficulties in the northwest. Arrogant robbers will rise in the south of the Changjiang river. 東方發三災, 西北有八難, 狂賊起江南." (p. 305) The author predicts that disasters will happen in all directions, not in Changan and Luoyang only.

⁴⁶⁹ In the *Tiantai shan lingjing*, we can find the sentences "一木連丁口 (lit. meaning: one (yi 一) [piece of] wood (mu 木) is connected with people (dingkou 丁口: a man is called ding 丁, and a woman is called kou 口.), p. 301)", "懸針直向腹裏生 (lit. meanings: Suspended (xuan 懸) needle (zhen 針) points vertically (zhixiang 直向) and grow in the belly (fu 腹), p. 301)", and "長弓無弦空自放 (lit. meaning: Long (chang 長) bow (gong 弓) shoot itself in air without bowstrings (xian 弦), p. 301)". They also appear in other scriptures of the Five Elders with some characters changed. We should notice that the term *changgong* is a common divided form of the surname Zhang 張 in precious volumes.

the same period. It is difficult to assert that they all could have circulated among and been reprinted by the populace in the late Qing if they had first appeared in the Tang.

Is the term *Mingwang* a title of the future master exclusively applied in the Tang, as Ke Yuxian and Yu Songqing say? The term *Mingwang* can be found in the precious volumes of the Ming-Qing era although it is not commonly used. “[People] will meet *Mingwang* (king of light or wise king) after they escape eight difficulties. 躲了八難見明王。” (*Jiapu baojuan* 家譜寶卷 (Genealogy precious volume), chapter 7, p. 62) “[People] can worship *Mingwang* in the Divine Village of Solitary Lodging (Gusu shencun 孤宿神村). 孤宿神村拜明王。”⁴⁷⁰ (*Jiapu baojuan*, chapter 8, p. 66; *Dingjie baojuan* 定劫寶卷 [Scripture for Establishing the Kalpa]) Besides *Mingwang*, the author of the *Tiantai shan lingjing* uses the terms *Mingjun* 明君 (wise ruler) (p. 301), *Mingdi jing* 明帝君 (wise lord of emperor) (p. 301), *Shengzu* 聖主 (holy master) (p.302 & p. 309), *Shengming wang* 聖明王 (holy wise king) (p. 307), and *Shengren* 聖人 (holy man) (p. 309), as the authors of other Five-Elder scriptures do. We should not attach great importance to the term *Mingwang*, which is only one of various terms for the future master.

The Five-Elder scriptures have some of the writing styles features of Ming-Qing precious volumes. Transformation texts influenced precious volumes. Both groups of literature are composed in alternating sections of prose and seven-character verse, but sectarian *baojuan* are not based on stories.⁴⁷¹ This feature can be found in the *Tiantai shan lingjing* and other Five-Elder scriptures. Besides, the author of the *Tiantai shan lingjing* juxtaposes various disasters and numbers them in verse.

一愁天下少人種，二愁世間稀人行。三愁田地無人耕，四愁五穀無人嘗。五愁九州刀兵起，六愁狼虎亂縱橫。七愁郡黎多疾病，八愁日月不分明。九愁黑風巡世界，十愁神佛無人請。

⁴⁷⁰ In the text, Gusu shencun is the place in where Maitreya establishes the Cloud City. See pp. 146-147 of this thesis.

⁴⁷¹ Daniel Overmyer, *Precious Volumes: An Introduction to Chinese Sectarian Scriptures from the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 26-27.

The first worry is [the situation in which] there will not be many human seeds in the world; the second worry is [the situation in which] few people will be walking on the earth. The third worry is [the situation in which] no one will cultivate farms; the fourth worry is [the situation in which] no one will eat the five grains. The fifth worry is [the situation in which] warfare will arise in nine prefectures (*zhou* 州); the sixth worry is [the situation in which] wolves and tigers will move unrestrainedly and freely. The seventh worry is [the situation in which] common people will suffer from many diseases in districts (*jun* 郡); the eighth worry is [the situation in which] the sun will not be distinguished from the moon [because sunlight will be as dim as moonlight]. The ninth worry is [the situation in which] black winds will circle (lit. *xun* 巡; tour) the world; the tenth worry is [the situation in which] no one will ask deities and Buddhas [to help them because humans will have died out]. (24b, p. 308)

After the above passage, we can read the “shiyou shiku ge 十憂十哭歌 (A song about ten annoyances and ten things that make one cry)”, in which sufferings and misfortunes are numbered. (25a, p. 309) *Baojuan* authors also describe and list universal disasters with numbers. The *Mile zunjing*, for example, reads:

一愁水火刀兵死，二愁人間絕煙火。三愁疾病瘟瘍死，四愁男女不團圓。五愁天下人民亂，六愁有路無人行。七愁滿山虎狼走，八愁晝夜不安寧。九愁遍地好人稀，十愁不見太平春。(4b)

The first worry is [the situation in which people] will die of floods, fires, and warfare; the second worry is [the situation in which] signs of human habitation will have vanished in the world. The third worry is [the situation in which people] will die from diseases, seasonal febrile diseases (*wen* 瘟), and ulcers (*yang* 瘍)⁴⁷²; the fourth worry is [the situation in which] men and women (husbands and wives?) will not reunite. The fifth worry is [the situation in which] people will be in disorder in the world; the sixth worry is [the situation in which] there will be no people walking in streets. The seventh worry is [the situation in which] wolves and tigers will move throughout mountains; the eighth worry is [the situation in which humans] will not be calm by day and by night. The ninth

⁴⁷² Literally, the character is the one 疔 with *huang* 皇, which cannot be found in dictionaries.

worry is [the situation in which] there will be so few people everywhere; the tenth worry is [the situation in which people] will not see the spring of the peaceful age.

The author of the *Dizang Shiwang baojuan* also lists eight difficulties (*banan*) in seven-character verse.⁴⁷³ Therefore, it seems reasonable for us to conclude from the similar writing style of precious volumes and of the Five-Elder scriptures that they both belong to the same literature.

Are the contents of the Five-Elder scriptures unique so they have no parallels in precious volumes? In the sectarian writings I have read, the Five Elders obviously are not as important as Maitreya and the Eternal Mother because they are not usually mentioned. They only appear in the *Tian ci jiujie jing* and the *Gufo shang tianti jing* 古佛上天梯經 (Scripture, [taught by] the Ancient Buddha, [used for climbing] the ladder to Heaven).⁴⁷⁴ Except for the *Tiantai shan lingjing*, it is said that Maitreya is the incarnation of one of the Five Elders in all scriptures of Five Elders, but the Eternal Mother is not mentioned at all. However, whether a scripture deals with the faith of Eternal Mother should not be one of the criteria of judging if it can be called sectarian *baojuan*.⁴⁷⁵

The Five-Elders scriptures deal with the *yinmao* belief in detail. The prediction that calamities and peaceful age will arrive in the hare and tiger years is not usually found in precious volumes. I find that only the *Lishi baojuan* 立世寶卷 (The precious volume of establishing the

⁴⁷³ For the contents of the eight difficulties, see note 215 of this thesis.

⁴⁷⁴ In the *Tian ci jiujie jing*, we are told that the Five-Elders Bodhisattvas pity the miserable people in last kalpa and so give a piece of five-character in verse (*ga* 歌) about exhortation. (8b-9a, pp. 470-471). The *Gufo shang tianti jing* is a scripture of Jinchuang jiao, collected in volume 7 of the *Ming Qing minjian zongjiao jingjuan wenxian*. On the opening page, it is said that the Heavenly Honorable One of Supreme Holiness (Shangsheng tianzun 上聖天尊), Seven Patriarchs of Tathāgata (? Qizu nulai 七祖如來), the Five Elders, and two other Elders gather and preach about the *jiazi* age in the lower *yuan* (*xiayuan jiazi*). (p. 901) The term *shangtianti* 上天梯 (climbing the ladder to heaven) is a Daoist term used in alchemical cultivation; it means the ascent of the *qi* of perfect prime (*zhenyuan zhi qi* 真元之氣) from the sacrum (*weilu* 尾閭) to the centre of the top of the head (*niwan* 泥丸). The popular sects interpreted it literally as the ascent to heaven. Only if one leads a moral life, can one enter heaven. Pu Wenqi, ed., *Zhongguo minjian mimi zongjiao cidian*, p. 258. Hu Fuchen, ed., *Zhonghua daojiao da cidian*, p. 1163. For the explanation of *xiayuan jiazi*, see pp. 88-89 of this thesis.

⁴⁷⁵ For example, in the *Taiyang kaitian liji yihua zhufu guiyi baojuan* 太陽開天立極億化諸佛歸一寶卷 (Precious volume on the Sun's opening heaven, establishing apexes, transforming itself into various Buddhas with one hundred million [ways], and returning to unity), the sun replaces the Eternal Mother and becomes the supreme deity. It is a text of the Yellow Heaven Way (Huangtian Dao 黃天道) and is reprinted in volume 7 of the *Baojuan chujī*.

world) among the sectarian scriptures I have read contains the mention of this prediction. The *baojuan* says that “I tell [you] these words but you do not believe them. Confused people can hardly escape the tiger and the *mao* (i.e. hare) years. If one can escape the tiger and the *mao* years, one will exactly be a living immortal in heaven. 我說這話你不信，迷人難躲虎卯年。若是躲過虎卯年，就是天上活神仙。”⁴⁷⁶ (p. 3) People nowadays still hold the belief that disasters happen and the future master will arrive in the hare year. It is called *maojie* 卯劫 (*mao kalpa*). It is believed that Guanyin will descend to the mundane world in this year and save people from suffering; therefore, the stories about Guanyin’s manifestations and about the prophecies she reveals increase in that time. The Bodhisattva is therefore given the name “*Maojie* Guanyin 卯劫觀音 (*Mao-kalpa* Guanyin)”. Not only does Guanyin manifest herself and predict the arrival of disasters, but she also teaches people how to disperse sufferings. The belief about the *mao* (hare) year as the time of disasters and as the time of the messiah’s appearance is not totally the same as that stated in the scriptures of the Five Elders, which involves both the hare and the tiger years.⁴⁷⁷ The *yinmao* belief probably has been circulating since the Ming-Qing. We can conclude that the contents of the Five-Elders scriptures have parallels in precious volumes although they do not commonly appear in sectarian writings. Besides, as mentioned above, the imperial government considered them to be radical and subversive. This is also how it viewed sectarian precious volumes.

For the above reasons, I think that it is reasonable to classify the Five-Elder scriptures as sectarian writings of the Ming and Qing.

⁴⁷⁶ Gao Ke, Song Jun, Zheng Xishun, and Pu Wenqi, ed., *Baojuan chuj*, vol.20.

⁴⁷⁷ Zheng Zhiming, “Moshi yuyan yu maojie Guanyin 末世預言與卯劫觀音 (Prophecies of the end of the world and *Mao-kalpa* Guanyin)”, *Historical Monthly* 歷史月刊 89 (1995, Sept):65-68. Zheng Zhiming also mentions the *Dasheng Wugong jing* in his discussion of the faith about the *mao kalpa*.

APPENDIX B: INTRODUCTION TO THE CONTENTS OF THE *SHANGQING HOUSHENG DAOJUN LIEJI* (FASC. 198)

The text can be divided into two parts: the first part is a hagiography of the Holy Ruler (1a-9a), and the second part is a narration of the Lord Green Lad about physical signs that indicate one's potential in attaining immortality.⁴⁷⁸ (9b-13a) The text begins with the Holy Ruler's biography, dealing with his birth, his attainment of immortality, and his entering the transcendental bureaucracy. These contents occupy the entire work from 1a to 3b. The Holy Ruler had different names, which were Xuanshui 玄水, Zhiguang 子光, and Shanyuan 山淵. He was a descendant of the Earth Sovereign (Dihuang 地皇).⁴⁷⁹ His mother, née Li, was pregnant when she dreamed of green clouds and that the sun and the moon winded themselves around her. Various dragons spit out water onto his washing tank when he was bathed. From five years of age, he started diligently his cultivation. At twenty-one he withdrew from the world and lived in the mountains. The Heavenly Monarch (Tiandi 天帝) was moved by his cultivation, and therefore descended to the world and taught him the *Dadong zhenjing* 大洞真經 (Perfect scripture of great cavern).⁴⁸⁰ (2a) The Ziwei shangzhen tiandi yuqing jun 紫微上真天帝玉清君 (Lord Yuqing (Jade Purity 玉清), High Perfect Heavenly Emperor of Ziwei (purple profundity 紫微)) ordered the Eight Spirits of Effulgence (Bajing) to receive him in the Palace of Grand Purity, and granted him a divine position.⁴⁸¹ He was designated as the Shangqing jinque housheng dijun 上清金闕後聖帝君 (Lord Emperor, the Holy one of Latter[-Heaven] of Shangqing Imperial Palace). His name was registered in the Heaven of Grand Purity because he was honorable; he

⁴⁷⁸ Ren Jiyu ed. *Daozang tiyao*, p328.

⁴⁷⁹ The Earth Sovereign is one of the Three Sovereigns in legendary ancient times.

⁴⁸⁰ It is regarded as the most important work among the Shangqing scriptures. It contains the taboo names and charms of thirty-nine high deities: its followers can ascend to Grand Purity Heaven and save their ancestors from the seven generations back both by reciting the text and meditating on the deities. Hu Fuchen & others, ed., *Daojiao tonglun – jianlun daojiao xueshuo* 道教通論—兼論道教學說 (General discussions on Daoism with additional discussions on Daoist ideas (ie. Daoist philosophies)) (Jinan: Qilu shushe, 1991), p. 448-449.

⁴⁸¹ For the explanation of Bajing, read note 127.

could visit freely the region of Grand Ultimate (*taiji* 太極) because he could rule transcendental beings. He could preside over the Ten Heavens because he could govern and grant titles to the populace and could inspect cavern-heavens, the residences of divinities.⁴⁸² (3a-3b) Like a statement of the Holy Ruler's cultivation, which shows how a human obtained immortality by Shangqing practices, the accounts of valuable presents the Lord Yuqing granted to him and auspicious signs that appeared when he toured are also lengthy and flowery.⁴⁸³ By providing these details, the author can reveal how dignified and powerful the Holy Ruler became after strenuous cultivation.

Then the text deals with the Holy Ruler's duties in the future age: descending on the sixth day of the third month in the *renchen* year, which will be the exact day of the advent of the great peace era, and governing the populace. When his era comes, all the wicked will be exterminated and only moral people will remain and be the chosen people (*zhongmin*). The Holy Ruler will make inspections from Qingcheng 青城 (a mountain in Sichuan 四川) to the places beyond the south of Long 隴 (i.e. Gansu 甘肅) and Longzhu 龍燭 (? , lit. dragon candle). (4a) During his reign, people will be appointed to positions in bureaucracy of divinities according to accomplishments in their cultivation of the Dao. Those who start studying Daoism will be divine messengers; those who have attained the Dao will become divine officials. If one has practiced some Shangqing scriptures (4a & 5a), one will not be hurt by three calamities and will see the time of great peace.⁴⁸⁴ (4a) The *Daojun lieji*, which is also called *Efficacious Skills of*

⁴⁸² For the explanation of the Ten Heavens, read note 133.

⁴⁸³ The practices such as inhaling essences of natural phenomena (e.g. sunlight and light from rosy clouds (*xia* 霞)), safeguarding (*shou* 守) one's embryo (*tai* 胎) and spirit (*shen* 神), taking fasts, and taking mental tours of visualization in the other world are mentioned.

⁴⁸⁴ For the explanation of three calamities, read note 89. The names of Shangqing scriptures are mentioned in abbreviated form in this text. For example, the names "Baisu 八素 (eight simple ones, i.e. good liquid)" and "Jiuzhen 九真 (nine kinds of perfect immortals in the Shangqing Heaven) are short for the *Baisu zhenjing* 八素真經 (Perfect writing of good liquid) and *Jiuzhen zhongjing huanglao baidao miyan* 九真中經黃老八道秘言 (Secret words about eight paths of the Huanglao [Daoism], [written in] the middle scripture of nine kinds of perfect immortals) respectively. The Shangqing works appear in full names on 8a-8b. Zhang Zhizhe, ed., *Daojiao wenhua cidian*, p. 192.

Mysterious Text (*Xuanwen lingshu* 玄文靈術), is hidden in the Shangqing Palace and will be spread for three times only in seven hundred years. (4b) It will be taught to those whose names are registered and who have immortal bones (*xiangu* 仙骨). People without the physical signs of immortals will not possess it. (4b) The author of the text gives repetitious accounts of the Shangqing texts for cultivation and of the Holy Ruler's designating adepts of Shangqing practices as divine positions in the future world (4b-5b) in order to encourage people to convert to Shangqing Daoism. They will be certainly rewarded by the Holy Ruler by granting them divine positions. This is the main purpose of the text; therefore, the author emphasizes that the Holy Ruler had undergone severe examinations given by the Heavenly Monarch and his determination was fully demonstrated. So, the Holy Ruler became an example to the Shangqing followers. (6a)

The author then focuses on divine power the text can give to the followers if they possess it and on the names of divine conveyers who are responsible for spreading sacred teachings. (6b-9a) Since holding divine positions is valuable, sacred messages revealed in the text are transmitted to the people with potential as immortals. The Lord Green Lad of the Fangzhu Eastern Palace (Fangzhu donggong qingtong jun 方諸東宮青童君) composed the text and transmitted it to his disciple Wong Yuanyou 王遠遊, who revealed it to the people who had "[immortal] bones and forms and should be immortals (骨相應仙) (6b)".⁴⁸⁵ This text only appears three times in seven hundred years. People who worship the text and do not reveal it to others can attain liberation from corpses during the daytime. Their turbid natures and impure *po* 魄 (*yin* souls) will be erased. They will go through floods, epidemics, fires, and warfare without injury; mountain spirits and demons cannot cause him any harm. The Holy Ruler orders Wang Yuanyou to find the people who have divine bones and can study the Dao with single-mindedness and sincerity,

⁴⁸⁵ Mount Fangzhu is the parish where the Lord Green Lad governs: it is located in the Eastern Sea (Donghai 東海). Wang Ming, "Lun taiping jing chao jiabu zhi wei", p. 202.

to teach them the text. The *Daojun lieji* is granted to Wang only. Twenty-four Perfect Men (*zhenren* 真人) are sent down to the world and ordered to spread teachings as Wang's subordinates. They can transmit the text to people with Wang's permission. The names of these Perfect Men will be either altered or hidden; only those who can practice the text sincerely and diligently meet them and know their real names. (8a-7b) The author then writes a list of Shangqing scriptures, by practicing which people can become nobles, officers, and perfect men in the divine bureaucracy, and a list of the names and titles of Twenty-four Perfect Men.

The second part of the text involves an account given by the Lord Green Lad on the physical signs and marks that distinguish people with the potential to become immortals (9b-13a). People who have these signs and marks will be eager to attain immortality. Their ancestors have accumulated many merits; therefore they are destined for transcendental liberation. They devote themselves to cultivation and are not greedy for wealth and luxurious lives. Those without such signs and virtues can never succeed in being immortals.

APPENDIX C: THE PASSAGE ON THE LITTLE DISASTERS FROM THE
YOGĀCĀRYABHŪMI-ŚĀSTRA (YUJIA SHIDI LUN 瑜伽師地論)

又此中劫復有三種小災出現。謂儉病刀。儉災者。所謂人壽三十歲時。方始建立。當爾之時。精妙飲食不可復得。唯煎煮朽骨共爲譙會。若遇得一粒稻麥粟稗等子。重若末尼。藏置箱篋而守護之。彼諸有情多無氣勢。蹶僵在地不復能起。由此飢儉有。情之類亡沒殆盡。此之儉災。經七年七月七日七夜方乃得過。彼諸有情復共聚集起下厭離。由此因緣壽不退減儉災遂息。又若人壽二十歲時。本起厭患今乃退捨。爾時多有疫氣障癘。災橫熱惱相續而生。彼諸有情遇此諸病多悉殞沒。如是病災。經七月七日七夜方乃得過。彼諸有情而生。彼諸有情遇此諸病多悉殞沒。如是病災。經七月七日七夜方乃得過。彼諸有情復共聚集起中厭離。由此因緣壽量無減病災乃息。又人壽十歲時。本起厭患今還退捨。爾時有情展轉相見。各起猛利殺害之心。由此因緣隨執草木及以瓦石。皆成最極銳利刀劍。更相殘害死喪略盡。如是刀災。極經七日方乃得過。爾時有情復有三種最極衰損。謂壽量衰損。依止衰損。資具衰損。壽量衰損者。所謂壽量極至十歲。依止衰損者。謂其身量極至一桡或復一握。資具衰損者。爾時有情唯以粟稗爲食中第一。以髮毳爲衣中第一。以鐵爲莊嚴中第一。五種上味悉皆隱沒。所謂酥蜜油鹽等味及甘蔗變味。爾時有情展轉聚集起上厭離不復退減又能棄捨損減壽量惡不善法。受行增長壽量善法。由此因緣壽量色力富樂自在皆漸增長。乃至壽量經八萬歲。如是二十減二十增。合四十增減便出住劫。(285c-286a)

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⁴⁸⁶ Some of my *baojuan* copies listed here are generously provided to me by Professor Daniel L. Overmyer.

⁴⁸⁷ My translation is based on Kristofer Schipper's explanation of the title. Kristofer Schipper & Franciscus Verellen ed., *The Taoist Canon: A Study of Taoist Literature in the Daozang of the Ming Dynasty*, p. 240.

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