Zeitschrift: Asiatische Studien : Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft = Études asiatiques : revue de la Société Suisse-Asie

Herausgeber: Schweizerische Asiengesellschaft

Band: 18-19 (1965)

Heft: 1-4

Artikel: Lu Hsi-hsing : a Confucian scholar, Taoist priest and Buddhist devotee of the sixteenth century

Autor: Ts'un-Yan, Liu

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-145992

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LU HSI-HSING: A CONFUCIAN SCHOLAR, TAOIST PRIEST AND BUDDHIST DEVOTEE OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

LIU TS'UN-YAN

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, CANBERRA

Lu Hsi-hsing [1][1] (*T* [2] Ch'ang-kêng, *H* [3] Fang-hu Wai-shih or 'Unofficial Historian of the Fairy Mt. Fang-hu' and [4] Yün-k'ung Chü shih or 'the Buddhist Devotee Who Believes that the Five Attributes of A Human Being Are Non-existent'), 1520–c. 1601, Confucian scholar, Taoist priest, Buddhist devotee, and the author of the 100-chapter popular fiction *Fêng-shên Yen-i* [5], was born in the 15th year of Chêng-tê in the reign of the Emperor Wu-tsung. His native city was Hsing-hua District [6] in Yangchow. Although some of his works are found in the 'Memoir on Literary Works' *(Yi-wên Chih)* of the *Ming Shih* (98), there is no biography of him in this official history. Nor is even the above-quoted data concerning him mentioned in other biographies of him. It was deduced from a short foreword written by himself for his book *Lêng-yen-ching Shu-Chih* [7] 'The Principles of the Śūraṅgama Sūtra' which is included in the 1st Series of the 'Second Collection of the Tripitaka in Chinese' [8], published in Japan. This religious work in ten *chüan* deals mainly with the famous Tantric text. It is at the end of this note that it is stated that 'in the 29th year of Wan-li, the cyclical year being *hsin-ch'ou* [9] (1601), in the 5th moon, Lu Hsi-hsing, alias Ch'ang-kêng, writes (this foreword) in the boat on the Lu River [10] when he is 82.' On an average eighty-two *sui* (81) is quite a ripe old age for a Chinese, an age when one may well be not too strong or energetic and may be incapable of strenuous activity. It is particularly surprising therefore that in his eighties, Lu was able to travel, exposing himself to scorching sunshine on the North Canal near present-day T'ung-hsien [11], a city which lies to the

1. The Chinese characters will be found at the end of this article.

east of, and not far away from Peking. Perhaps he was a man who knew the elixir of longevity, a preparation that was long sought by the Ming emperors from the hands of Taoist priests for the lengthening of their otherwise profligate and short lives. The most notorious case of this sort was witnessed in the life of Emperor Shih-tsung whose reign-period from 1522 to 1566 coincided with half of the period of Lu's life. From 1524, the 3rd year of his reign, the Emperor made an indulgence of not receiving his ministers, and in and after 1542 he even denied his royal presence to the palaces and apartments and lived in the Hsi-yüan [12], an imperial summer-resort situated in the western suburb of the capital, entirely surrounding himself with the Taoist sorcerers who were in his favour. It was the same sovereign who promoted Taoist priests to the post of Minister of the Board of Rites in the court. Accidentally or otherwise, the Confucian scholar Lu Hsi-hsing forsook his scholarly robes to become a Taoist priest after having failed nine times in the state examination, an ingenious system which provided the main way for scholars to enter the civil service and serve their mother country in those days.

Lu was not necessarily a dull-minded or indolent man. As his literary works, including the studies of *Lao-tzŭ* and *Chuang-tzŭ*, are recorded in the *Ming Shih*, this and the fact that his fame as a writer vied even with that of Tsung Ch'ên [13] (*T* [14] Tzŭ-hsiang, 1525–1560, *chin-shih* 1550), a great contemporary writer and one of his best friends, make it difficult to say that he was lacking in talent and ability which were prerequisites for the pursuit of traditional scholastic and literary studies. Perhaps it was providence that he was destined to be some time after his middle age a Taoist priest gifted with insight and innovatory ideas, and, what was more, the author of one of the most popular works of fiction of the time, the 100-chapter novel *Fêng-shên Yen-i*, or 'Investiture of the Gods.'

To be exact, Lu's examination-career did not go badly at first. According to the 'Annals of Hsing-hua District' (ed. 1852 based on materials of still earlier records) when 'Lu was a youth in the village school he had a philosophical bent. He was a very distinguished candidate in the Im-

perial District Examination. But when after nine attempts he could not pass the Imperial Provincial Examination he gave up his scholarly robes, put on the Taoist cap and went out tramping.' As Tsung Ch'ên was also a native of Hsing-hua and was about four years younger than Lu, as we may learn from his biography, a study of Tsung's early life may help us to find out about the friendship between them and tell us something about the miserable circumstances of Lu's early life. It is no exaggeration to say that Tsung was highly renowned in the orthodox literary field as he was one of the so-called *Chung-yüan Ch'i-tzŭ* [15] or the seven leading prose-writers of Chung-yüan. Although the same 'Annals of Hsing-hua' praises Lu by saying that 'among his contemporaries, Tsung Ch'ên was the most talented, but Lu Hsi-hsing was a writer of great fame with many works published, and Tsung Ch'ên had to yield the first place to him in this repect,' in the 'Annals of Yangchow-fu' (ed. 1810) there is more material about Tsung than about our frustrated scholar. In one item of the Yangchow 'Annals' quoting materials from the earlier K'ang-hsi edition (1682) of the 'District Annals,' we are informed that 'when Tsung Ch'ên was studying in the college of their native district some swallows came and nested in a lamp of lotus shape (*lien-hua têng* [16]) hanging in his quarters. He was then congratulated by his schoolmates: "This is an auspicious omen for your *lien-têng* (i.e., [17] a term which signifies 'success in two successive examinations')." And in the cyclical years *chi-yu* and *kêng-hsü* (1549–50), Tsung actually passed the Provincial and Court Examinations one immediately following the other and the prophesy was thus fulfilled.' The fact that Tsung passed the Imperial Court Examination and got his *chin-shih* degree in 1550 is also recorded in the *Ming Shih* (287, under Li P'an-lung [18]). When Tsung passed this final examination he was 25 and Lu was 30. Since Lu was never successful in his many attempts to pass the Provincial Examination, the second hurdle to be overcome, it may be reasonable for us to believe that their friendship began when they were together in the college of their native district.

Lu Hsi-hsing's father, who was a diviner through the study of the Book of Change, died when Hsi-hsing was only a child and he was taught to learn the classics by his mother, no doubt a well-educated lady in those days when most of her sex were illiterate and were only instructed with moral teachings in the performances of feminine virtues and household duties. To console his mother and to relieve her from the heavy burden of the family Lu was anxious to pass at least the second examination. If successful in his attempt he would at least be able to earn the immediate respect of the local magistrate and some country squires, receiving a certain amount of financial help from them, directly or indirectly. He might even be given some privileges in the form of a monopoly of a part of public works in his native district, or, should he be unprincipled enough, he might practise some legal chicanery on the strength of his newly acquired friendship with the officials and the gentry. Such practices were common enough at that time. But Lu, being a scholar of both integrity and philosophical bent, would never have dreamt of such things which he probably regarded as vulgar and offensive even if his luck had been any better. So far as luck is concerned, it seems to us that both he and his friend Tsung Ch'ên were not very fortunate at first, for not only did Lu fail many times in this kaleidscopic task that required one to burn the midnight oil, but even the other scholar who was said to enjoy the auspicious omen also failed at least once in Yangchow. The fact was recorded by Tsung's own hand in a piece entitled *Lu Ch'ang-kêng Mu Fu-jên Hsü* [19] 'A Short Biography of Madame Lu, Lu Ch'ang-kêng's Beloved Mother,' a paragraph of which reads:

Ch'ang-kêng and I took part in the examination at Yangchow-fu, but unfortunately, both of us failed and then returned home. He sighed dolefully and said, 'Only heaven knows why I sigh for the loss of a humble degree! Yet I cannot help thinking that my dear mother, a widow, has taught me diligently, and I have achieved nothing to console her or my dear father's spirit.'

From these words we may understand how deeply his failure distressed him. Although the above article is undated, it is believed that this episode must have happened not long before 1550, in which year Tsung eventually passed his final examination and was appointed to an official post in the capital, later coming back to Hsing-hua on sick leave however. When he came back, Lu often called on him in a small boat, and again, according to Tsung:

During the night he sighed several times. 'Why do you sigh?' I asked. He replied, 'My mother is getting old, and I ...'

This may have been the turning point in his career when Lu finally, and perhaps painfully, determined to relinquish all his hopes of joining officialdom and devote himself to his own Taoist pursuits and perhaps also to the study of Chinese popular literature, then still accorded a very low position, the authors of story-books or novelettes being generally despised by the more prosperous intellectuals. At which monastery or Taoist temple Lu was initiated we cannot tell, as there is no sufficient evidence, but in the 'District Annals' it is recorded that a signboard hung on the top of the entrance-gate of the Temple for the Service of the Planet Mars (*huo-hsing miao* [20]) which was situated at the Ssŭ-t'u Li ([21] or Lane of the Grand-duke) was inscribed by his hand. If it was not done in his early days, it must naturally have been something he did in his old age.

The 'District Annals' informs us that Lu 'went out tramping.' But what kind of Taoist priest can he have been? In the Ming dynasty, following the administrative structure of preceding dynasties, an office called *Tao-lu Ssŭ* [22], Department for the Registration of Taoist priests was set up in 1382, in the 15th year of the reign of the 1st Emperor Hung-wu, and an officer whose rank was of the regular sixth grade was charged with the work of this Department whose office was situated at the Ch'ao-t'ien Monastery [23], Monastery of Heavenly Worshipping, in the capital, under the supervision of the Minister of the Board of Rites. Sub-offices of the same nature were established in the different grades of

local governments. At that time Taoist priests were largely divided, as they had been divided in Juchên Chin and Mongol Yüan dynasties, into two categories: the *ch'üan-chên* [24], Thoroughly Pure, and the *chêng-i* [25], Orthodox One, with all of their members loosely subject to the control of the government. The Taoist priests of the *ch'üan-chên* sect were devoted to the study of the absorption of a sufficient dose of the elixir of everlasting life, in addition to their constant physical exercises of abdominal inhalation which is common to some exotic religious practice such as that of Tantrism, and the comparatively indigenous belief of the conservation of the sperm. The Taoist priests of the *chêng-i* sect claimed the Celestial Master Chang Ling [26] of the Later Hand dynasty to be their founder and their first patriarch, he being a man who had hailed from the mountainous regions of Szechwan and had been succeeded by his son and grandson who were both military and religious leaders of that part of China during the period of the Three Kingdoms. However, the real origin of this sect is still obscure and the succession of its patriarchship has been without doubt interrupted more than once. It was not until the 11th century that some members of the Chang clan reappeared and settled down on Lung-hu Shan [27], Mt. Dragon and Tiger, in Kiangsi, on which palaces of the Celestial Master were built, and the Taoist hierarchy re-organised with some sort of official recognition from the Sung emperors, two of whom were particularly ardent Taoists. And since then the sect has continued right into present times. Even now a member of the family sojourning in Taiwan is still honoured as the head of this sect. (i.e., the 63rd hereditary Chang *T'ien-shih*, Chang Ên-p'u [28], *T* [29] Jui-ling, *H* [30] Ho-ch'in, 1894 ...). The Celestial Master as well as his subordinate officers rely mainly on the power of their charms which are either printed or written with finger or brush dipped into pure water or melted cinnabar, and the imprint of an efficacious seal, and which are alleged to be able to cure disease and exorcise evil spirits.

The term *chin-tan* [31], golden pills, as it appears in the titles of many of Lu's works, refers to the elixir of immortality which includes both

the drug known as 'external pill' and that known as 'internal pill,' the latter being considered even more valuable than the former since it consists of the embryonic accumulation of *ch'i* in the abdomen near the navel as a result of the constant practice of abdominal respiration and hypnotic trances. This was the elixir which every Taoist-priest of the *ch'üan-chên* sect sought. The beginning of the *ch'üan-chên* sect was said to be in the early part of the Southern Sung dynasty after the capital was shifted far southwards to Lin-an, the beautiful and wealthy metropolis Hangchow, under the oppressive threats and the invasions of the Juchên Tartars who overran a great amount of Chinese territory after the downfall of Pien-liang, the capital of Northern Sung, in 1126. The founder of this school was Wang Chê [32] who was said to have learned this doctrine personally from Lü Yen [33] or Lü Tung-pin [34], a Taoist master of late T'ang times in the second half of the 9th century who later on became a fabulously important character in the history of Taoism and popular literature. However, Wang Chê and his seven known disciples were all northerners. Historically speaking, Wang arrived at Ning-hai-chou [35] in Shantung in 1168, where his few disciples built a monastery for him and whence he started to preach the doctrine of *ch'üan-chên*. Among his disciples the most famous one was perhaps Ch'iu Ch'u-chi [36] who was once summoned by Jenghiz Khan to his tent near the Himalayas, in order that he might provide enlightenment for the Khan. But in the south since the Northern Sung dynasty there had been another group of Taoist priests who advocated putting more effort into the 'cultivation' of the internal pills of immortality. The most famous Taoist priests among this southern school, as opposed to the *ch'üan-chên* which was prevalent in the north, were Liu Ts'ao [37] (*H* [38] Hai-ch'an), his disciple Chang Po-tuan [39] (*H* [40] Tzŭ-yang), and later on Po Hai-ch'iung [41] (*H* [42] Yü-ch'an), who lived in Southern Sung times. Liu Ts'ao also claimed that he had learnt the doctrine from Lü Yen, and although these two schools diverged somewhat at first the followers of them in later generations, particularly after the large-scale burning of Taoist texts in 1281

managed, however, to amalgamate themselves harmoniously into one sect, and the term *ch'üan-chên* had by then long ceased to be associated with geographical division. Lu Hsi-hsing of the 16th century might be called a *ch'üan-chên* only in a loose sense, as among his ten works recorded in the 'District Annals' is the *Chang Tzŭ-yang Chin-tan Ssŭ-pai Tzŭ Ts'ê-shu* [43] 'Remarks on the Four-hundred Characters On the Invisible Golden Pills,' which was a commentary on the original work of Chang Po-tuan an early leader of the southern school. Lu might also be called a *ch'üan-chên* because although he had been married and had at least two sons, he deserted them when he went continuously rambling from mountain to mountain, province to province in search of the purplish elixir fungus, whereas with the *chêng-i* priests at Mt. Dragon and Tiger, whose official titles granted by the imperial mandate were subject to hereditary succession, the desire to have a wife to continue their family line was permitted fulfilment. In the Ming dynasty, although the 'refining' of golden pills, the practice of other methods of alchemy including sometimes the compilation of recipes of aphrodisiacs, and the use of various physical exercises were particularly encouraged by several emperors, and there were ministers who were promoted because they had presented remarkable drugs to the court, there was generally no discrimination between Taoist priests of the *chêng-i* sect and those of the *ch'üan-chên* sect in the eyes of the sovereign and society at large. It was under such circumstances that Lu began his unpredictable career which continued for about fifty years. He did not, however, rise very high or gain the favour of the sovereign in the above manner, and it may well be that it was against his will to do so, but he was able to create and maintain friendly relations both with some ministers in the capital and with some officials in his native district and other places during his long life of wandering. He once wrote eight elegies (*Pa-ai* [44]) for his dead friends of which only seven are extant, and in which there is one dedicated to Li Ch'un-fang [45] (*T* [46] Tzŭ-shih, *H* [47] Shih-lu, *Chung-yüan* 1547, *Ming Shih* 193), also a native of Hsing-hua, who became one

of the Grand Secretaries in the lung-ch'ing period, and was a Taoist devotee in later life. Another work of his, *Fang-hu Wai-shih* [48], which was devoted to the study of Taoist physical cultivation, was highly praised by Li Tai [49] (*T* [50] Jên-fu, *H* [51] Chên-ming Tao-jên, *chin-shih* 1568), the Minister of Civil Office, in a preface written for the 'Principles of Śūraṅgama Sūtra' in 1601. A scholar-official like his former schoolmate Tsung Ch'ên and others would no doubt do their very best to help him in case of necessity, as it had long been in vogue for Chinese scholar-officials to associate themselves with monks and Taoist priests, to compare notes on the understanding of philosophical argument and to share temporarily in their rustic but peaceful life. How much more so this would be at a time when Taoist belief and practice were so highly favoured by the court. And such practice, if it became degenerate, would certainly increase moral laxity and debauchery among such officials.

It was not long after Lu had become a Taoist that Tsung Ch'ên gave a party for his intimate friends who were undoubtedly Lu's former associates in his native district. At the dinner after they had drunk a fair number of cups of wine perhaps, Tsung, a brilliant writer of verse, composed an eight-line poem with seven characters to each line, entitled 'A Night-gathering of Friends – To Ch'ang-kêng' [52] which ends with these words:

I hear that you have become a Taoist, a companion of the clouds, the wonderful flowers on the rocks you can now apppreciate in solitude.

From this we may deduce that Lu must have left his native place to go tramping while Tsung was still there, and this could have happened only in 1550 or not long after that. But in any case Lu did not appreciate his 'wonderful flowers' alone, as in addition to his many other works, he published his *Nan-hua Ching Fu-mo* [53], 'The Criticism of Chuang-tzŭ,' a philosophical dissertation in 8 *chüan*, which attracted the admiration both of his contemporaries and of scholars of posterity. On this particular work, in his well known *Ssŭ-k'u Ch'üan-shu Tsung-mu* [54] (147), the

erudite Chi Yün [55] (*ECCP*, Vol. 1, pp. 120–3) writes, 'Hsi-hsing, alias Lu Ch'ang-kêng or "the Unofficial Historian of the Fairy Mt. Fang-hu," was a Taoist of the Ming dynasty. When Chiao Hung [56] (*T* [57] Jo-hou, *H* [58] Tan-yüan, 1541–1620, *Ming Shih* 288) wrote his *Chuang-tzŭ I* [59], "Wings to Chuang-tzŭ," he quoted many passages from this book, whence we know that Lu was a scholar earlier than Chiao. There is a preface written by his nephew Lu Lü [60] in the 6th year of Wan-li (1578), from which we know also that Lu Hsi-hsing lived just before his later admirer [Chiao]. The theme of this book ... is to combine both Taoism and Buddhism into one great family ...' Although his deduction of Lu's age has been found inaccurate in the light of later discoveries, the last sentence in Chi's comments seems to be of tremendous significance.

The idea of blending the teachings of the two important religions, *êrh-chiao* [61], namely Buddhism and the Taoist doctrines, with those of the traditional, orthodox Confucianism had germinated long before Lu, and the earliest trends in that direction may be traced to the period of the Epoch of North and South. Such a proposal was given a great impetus during the T'ang dynasty when for quite a number of years it was the unofficial practice that on the birthday of the emperor, an assembly was to be held in a hall in which all the courtiers and high officials were to be present, to hear the sometimes vehement, sometimes courteous, but always interesting debates between a well known monk, a Taoist high priest and a traditional scholar-official who had imbibed deeply in Confucian texts, in which debates the essence of these three teachings was discussed, and on such occasions as a general rule, the conclusion would be a fairly reasonable compromise. Such discussions together with the assimilation of a large part of the Zen-Buddhist doctrines into their commentaries and expositions of the classics by those neo-Confucianist philosophers of the Sung dynasty undoubtedly helped to provide an ideological background for scholars of comparatively independent bent like Lu to form his own theory of an amalgamation of these three doctrines into one, with, however, the deeply rooted Confucian beliefs as its framework.

It was in about 1578 when Lu was 58 that the book 'Criticism of Chuang-tzŭ' was engraved. In order to give emphasis to his new theory of amalgamation of philosophies he had first of all to refute some of the biased opinions which came from the orthodox scholars and extremists who maintained that both the Buddhist and the Taoist words were heretic. To the mind of some of these people, perhaps, for a Taoist-priest to comment on Confucianism was already sacrilegious and intolerable. Very few of them remembered the fact that Lu had been, and somewhere in his mind still was, a typical Confucianist whose filial piety towards his parents was never inferior to that of those hypocritical critics who dreamt of having 'cold pork meat' offered before their shrines in a local Confucian temple after their death. Thus when explaining the term *tso-wang* [62] ('getting rid of everything' as found in the chapter *Ta Tsung-shih* [63] of *Chuang-tzŭ*) in his 'Criticism' he says, 'In reading *Chuang-tzŭ* and *Lao-tzŭ* one must make one's judgment with a detached eye, and should not consider them with the prevalent views of us Confucianists.' He never denies that he believed also in Confucian teachings. But to go one step further in comparing Confucian reasoning with the Taoist methods he says, 'We Confucianists can only gain ideas by gathering materials from different sources to assist in finding solutions, whereas the Great Way maintains that things will evolve naturally and take their own course and leaves no place for us to be worried.' Throughout this work he uses a term coined by himself *chü-ju* [64] or 'narrow-minded Confucianists' which may be a sufficient proof for us that Lu, although he had been a Taoist priest for about thirty years by that time, still thought of himself as a good Confucianist, however, a Confucianist with a broader mind. It may have been because of his possession of such a nature and such a liberal view in judging things, that he eventually became interested in Buddhism, wrote even in his old age a commentary on the Tantric *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*, called himself the 'Buddhist Devotee Who Believes that the Five Attributes of A Human Being Are Non-existent,' and most important of all, found that the three schools of teaching were not mutually exclusive but fundamentally one.

In writing this 'Criticism' he made use of a lot of Buddhist terms which he took generally from the 'Lotus Sutra' *(Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra)* an the *Yüan-chüeh Ching* [65], also a Chinese text of a Buddhist *sūtra* translated by Buddhatrata [66] of Kashmir in about 694, the Sanskrit origin of which is not very clear. Again in the commentaries on the chapter *K'ê-i* [67] (self-conceit), he points out, 'There is tranquillity in movement, and movement in tranquillity. Movement and tranquillity mutually produce each other and then there can be harmony with the abstruse. The possession of this knowledge is the same in the three schools.' In another place when comparing the metaphysical terms used in the teachings of three schools, he says that 'the Confucianist would call it conscience, the Buddhists, the susceptibility of enlightenment, and the Taoist, the primordial spirit,' 'but the sages and virtuous men of the three schools have but one and the same principle.' It is beyond doubt that the reason why Lu was so interested in blending the doctrines of the three schools was that he was wise enough to understand it was more important to get hold of the supreme, the ever homogeneous principle behind which was the noumenon, whereas the divergent doctrines were merely the form or phenomenal aspect which could be cast off as soon as one had reached the principle or the *Tao*. Bearing this in mind he once wrote, 'It is said in the *fo-k'ê* [68] (Buddhist ceremonial verses) that "to be active is only to do what is expedient, but if you forsake the deed, you will never be able to achieve [anything]." In the Taoist teaching again we have, "No matter whether you make use of the cinnabar or not, you have to apply to and get through [the process]." If we understand this in a broader context, it will not be difficult for us to realise that the sages of the three schools advocate but one principle.'

The conjecture that the 100-chapter novel *Fêng-shên Yen-i* might also come from the hands of the literarily talented Lu Hsi-hsing originated in the early thirties. This novel that Wilhelm Grube and Herbert Müller have given a partial translation in German entitled *Die Metamorphosen der Götter* is a historical romance based upon the rise of the Chou people and

the downfall of the house of the Yin-shang in 1122 B. C. under the cruel rule of the tyrant King Chou, who was endowed with Herculean strength and fond of sensual indulgence. When the novel begins, King Chou, the last ruler of Shang, is paying respect to the Goddess Nü-kua at the temple dedicated to her. Suddenly a wind blows rolling up the veil covering the shrine and reveals the peerless beauty of the image of the goddess. King Chou is enchanted by her beauty and writes a poem in praise of the goddess which offends her. Nü-kua in her rage sends a fairy fox, a pheasant and a stone lute, transformed as three young ladies, to bewitch him. Then there are about thirty chapters which relate the cruelty of King Chou and which tell a story similar to that which is recorded in Ssŭ-ma Ch'ien's *Shih Chi*, about the early poverty-stricken life of Chiang Tzŭ-ya [69] who is destined to be the military adviser to King Wu in his revolt against King Chou, and about the escape from death and imprisonment of King Wu's father, the exemplary King Wên, who invented the 64 hexagrams for divination, followed by King Wu's revolt against the tyrannical ruler after his father's death, thus unfolding a panoramic description of battles which is continued in the other chapters. In these battles, not only valorous generals and men who perform wonderful feats participate, but even the immortals are divided into two camps, the orthodox group headed by Yüan-shih T'ien-tsun [70], the Celestial Honoured Primordial, and Lao-tzŭ himself, and the heretical one led by the equally powerful T'ung-t'ien Chiao-chu [71], the Patriarch of All Heavens. During the dreadful fightings all kinds of magic weapons are used, everything that the 16th century Chinese mind could conceive, even including plague-carrying seeds. Buddhist deities such as Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, Avalokiteṣvara who belong to the *mahayana* worship, and other Tantric figures including Cundī, who is a vindictive form of Pārvatī, the wife of Shiva, and Vairocana Buddha also appear in this struggle. But they are all given Taoist-sounding titles like *tao-jên* [72]. The climax of the fighting is reached after the battle of Ten-thousand Gods when the leader of the heretical sect who intended to help the tyrant King Chou is

badly defeated, with all his disciples killed or scattered, and himself suffering humiliation. However, at this point the author creates another character who is the common master of all the three Taoist leaders to appear and reunite them. At this juncture the author writes:

> Like the red lotus flower, its white root, and its green leaves,
> The Three Teachings are really one and the same.

The war is concluded when the capital of Shang is taken by the troops of King Wu, King Chou burns himself to death, while his wicked young queen, transformed by a fairy fox sent by the Goddess Nü-kua, is publicly executed. The story ends with the canonization of all the dead, and King Wu enfeoffs the meritorious ministers and warriors, though amongst these, Li Ching [73] and his son No-cha [74] decline worldly honour, bid farewell and go back to their grottoes. Indeed, these latter two characters in the novel are very different from the others for they are none other than Vaiśravana [75] and Prince Natā [76], the Heavenly King of the North [77] and his son, both of whom are reverently worshipped in the Tantric *sūtras*.

The origin of this novel in popular literature can be traced to the story-tellers' prompt-book *Wu-wang Fa-chou P'ing-hua* which was printed in book form not later than 1323, an edition of which is still preserved in the Japanese Cabinet Library. I have, however, discovered that some passages and verses in *Fêng-shên Yen-i* are virtually a revised version of those found in the 1st *chüan* of the *Lieh-kuo Chih-chuan* [78], another historical romance of which there are several Ming editions. Although scholars in the Ch'ing dynasty speculated in their writings about the identity of the author of this novel, they did not succeed in coming to any conclusion except to say that it was a great scholar of the Ming dynasty 'who remains anonymous.' It was found some time in the twenties of this century that a certain Hsü Chung-lin [79] (*H* [80] Chung-shan I-sou or 'An Old Hermit of Chung-shan'), may have been the Ming scholar in question, as his name appears in the 2nd *chüan* of a Soochow edition of this novel published in Ming times, the only extant copy of this being

again preserved in Japan. By carefully studying the publishing trade of the Ming dynasty and also a preface by Li Yün-hsiang [81] (*T* [82] Wei-lin) written specially for this edition, we found that the so-called earliest edition which we have of the novel at present cannot after all be claimed as the 'earliest' edition engraved from the manuscript of its author, and that Hsü was merely an editor employed by one of the publishing proprietors in Soochow (i. e., Shu Tsai-yang [83], *T* [84] Wên-yüan) to do some revision work on an earlier edition brought by the proprietor for reprinting. Later when this particular edition was compared with other editions, it was found that it preserves some textual differences that would throw some light on the problem of its real authorship, but this has nothing very much to do with Hsü Chung-lin himself.

It was not until 1935 that several Chinese scholars independently made an important discovery in the works *Ch'uan-ch'i Hui-k'ao* [85] and *Yüeh-fu K'ao-lüeh* [86], both fragmental drafts for the preparation of a general catalogue of Chinese plays during the censorship and revision of drama which was carried out upon Imperial mandate by a group of scholars for about four years between 1777 and 1781 in Yangchow. It was in these works that one and the same item was found to be of tremendous importance to the question of the authorship of *Fêng-shên*. It is found that the play *Shun T'ien-shih* [87], 'To Obey Heaven's Will,' adopts as its plot one episode from the *Fêng-shên Yen-i* which reads:

It is said that *Fêng-shên Chuan* [88] was written by Lu Ch'ang-kêng, a Taoist of the Yüan dynasty, but I do not know whether this is true. As in the novel, most of the Buddhas, Jang Têng [89] [Dīpaṃkara]' Tz'ŭ-hang [90] [Avalokiteṣvara], Chieh-yin [91] [Amitabha], Chun-t'i [92] [Cundī] become Taoists, while some of them, Wên-shu [93] [Mañjuśrī], P'uhsien [94] [Samantabhadra], Chü-liu [Krakucchanda] are called the disciples of Yüan-shih, it is possible that the author himself was a Taoist, otherwise he would not have put the Taoists before the Buddhists. *Fêng-shên Chuan* is largely fictitious, in which some of the characters of the Shang and

Chou court are described. Therein some are historical figures and some are only imaginary. It takes the story of the expedition of King Wu of Chou against King Chou of Shang as a framework, and interweaves with it half-true and half-fanciful descriptions in which Buddhists are mixed up with Taoists to enrich the plot. It ends with the investiture of the deities ...

Prof. Sun K'ai-ti [95], Mr. Chang Chêng-lang [96] and myself all studied this single item of evidence cautiously, but it was I alone who carried out the painstaking work from 1935 to 1956 of bringing together sufficient proofs to lead me to the conclusion that the author or compiler of the novel was in fact Lu Hsi-hsing.

To say that Lu was a Taoist of the Yüan dynasty is of course a mistake, but the fact that the censorship and revision of drama was held in Yang-chow-fu, a prefecture which had under its jurisdiction Hsing-hua District, Lu's native place, is something of topographical interest. The amalgamation of Buddhist and Taoist deities as seen in this novel has influenced actual religious practice in China. The practice of worshipping Taoist gods side by side with Buddhas and Bodhisattvas seems to have started after the publication of this novel, for in early Taoist literature we find no Buddhist deities mentioned among Taoist gods. For instance, in the *Yün-chi Ch'i-ch'ien* [97], *chüan* 103, we find an account of the Taoist pantheon as it was in the 11th century, which contains no Buddhists deities or gods taken from fiction. But after the 16th and 17th centuries, various Taoist gods mentioned in the novel came to be worshipped together with the Buddhist ones. What is more, most of the temples which apparently first adopted such practice were situated in northern Kiangsu, near Hsing-hua, the native place of Lu. It is therefore not unreasonable to say that the religious belief of the author of this novel influenced the composition of the Chinese pantheon and contributed to the amalgamation of Buddhist and Taoist gods in popular belief.

We already know that Lu quotes the *sūtra Yüan-chüeh Ching* in his 'Criticism of Chuang-tzŭ.' It is surprising to note that the twelve dis-

ciples of Yüan-shih as found in chapter 45 of the novel have the twelve Bodhisattvas in the *Yüan-chüeh Ching* as their prototypes, and among them Mañjuśrī and Samantabhadra are common to both works. It is again of interest to note that many Buddhist terms and allusions are used in *Fêng-shên Yen-i*, particularly the names of those Tantric gods who often reveal their sacred *dharmakāya* such as Chun-t'i (Cundī):

> of eighteen hands and twenty-four heads, his hands holding the sun-shade covered with garlands, the jar, the necklace, the divine cudgel protected by the Buddha, the precious file, the gold bell, the gold arrow, the silver halberd and the streamers.

These details would be beyond the knowledge of persons who did not belong to the Tantric sect of Buddhism. To be sure on this point and on the close correspondence of literary expression, I have compared the terms and vocabulary used in this novel and Lu's other works, and obtained concrete evidence that Lu is the author of this popular work. The most astonishing finding is perhaps the fact that the name of many characters in this novel includes the Chinese character *kêng* [98], the second character of Lu's courtesy name. And moreover in chapter 99 of the earliest edition of this novel preserved in the Japanese Cabinet Library, two more persons have the character *kêng* in their names. Never before has any scholar pointed out this textual difference, and it appears that the character *kêng* used in the names of many characters in the novel is a hint by the author himself that the book is composed by him whose name contains the same character. One of these two fictitious characters in the earliest edition is called Ching Kêng [99]. There is a line in the Book of Odes:

> In the east there is the ch'i-ming (Lucifer),
> In the west there is the ch'eng-kêng (Hesperus).

This is the source of both Lu's formal name and courtesy name, thus they being closely related. But here in the name of this imaginary person, it

happens that not only does the second character *kêng* correspond to Lu's name, but even the first character *chin* or gold denotes the west (*hsi* [100]) in the traditional Taoist belief of the five elements. As mentioned before the Emperor Shih-tsung seldom received his ministers. In the Biography of Ting Ju-kuei [101] the *Ming Shih* (204) records that in the year of 1550:

The troops of the Mongols were approaching the capital. As the Emperor had not presided over the court for many years, his ministers could find no means to report to him the danger which was hanging over his head. Hsü Chieh [102] (*T* [103] Tzŭ-shêng, *H* [104] Ts'un-chai, 1503–1583, *Ming Shih* 213), the Minister of the Board of Rites, supplicated for an audience which was finally granted. The ministers assembled themselves before dawn and waited impatiently until lunch hour when the Emperor presided over the Fêng-t'ien Hall [105]. He did not utter a single word [about the emergency] but instructed Hsü to summon those ministers to the Gate of the Imperial Palace and reprimanded them with a mandate.

In the novel the following passages may be quoted for comparison:

(When Chiao Li [106] wept and admonished King Chou, he said,) 'The people suffer greatly from the cruel punishment you have imposed on them, and now, Your Majesty, you have isolated yourself from your ministers so that they cannot come into contact with you, and the government is clogged with dark and gloomy clouds' (chapter 17).
The King cared little for the state affairs ... the court was completely isolated from him and the distance between the King and his ministers was ten thousand *li* (chapter 26).

In chapters 27, 41 and 85 we find similar descriptions which may be summarized by the conversation between general Huang Fei-hu [107] and Shang Yung [108], a retired premier, 'The King himself dwells in the inner harem and never presides over the court. We receive imperial orders from him only through messengers. The ministers find no means

of seeing His Majesty in person; it is as if there are ten thousand *li* from the government officials to the gate of the royal palace ... The inner harem has no direct communication with outside and the ministers are isolated from the ruler.' In chapter 85 of the novel, when four out of five Passes had fallen into the hands of the enemy, Wei-tzŭ [109] thinks, 'The enemy troops are so close yet the King seems still unaware of the impending danger.' In another passage of the same chapter the author writes, 'For years King Chou had not given audience to his ministers. Now he presided over the hall, and the ministers were greatly encouraged.' Historically speaking, such happenings occurred not under King Chou but rather under the emperors of the Ming dynasty, the only dynasty in which emperors indulged in such wanton and irresponsible behaviour.

In which year Lu Hsi-hsing went back to his native district we cannot be sure. But it is recorded in the 'District Annals' that Lu also compiled the District Annals which was published in his time, and this is undoubtedly the one that was published in 1591, under the name of the District magistrate Ou-yang Tung-fêng [110], a copy of which is in the collection of the National Peiping Library, now preserved in Washington. At that time Lu was already 71. Eleven years later we find him still enjoying reasonably good health, as he was then travelling on the North Canal on his way home (?), and had just finished his exposition of the Tantric *Śūraṅgama Sūtra*. From Li Tai's preface we know that Lu was in the capital the year before where they met, and it was upon Li's recommendation that both this work and his other minor dissertations on the *sūtra* were engraved, under the auspices of the prefects of Hui-an [111] and Yangchow. The fact that he refers to himself as a disciple of Tantrism and relies on the Tantric concept of an omnipotent and omniscient Buddha in the commentaries of this text may serve to prove that he was able to show by words and deeds that 'the teaching of the three schools is but one.'

We do not know the exact year of Lu's death either, but can conjecture that he may have died in Hsing-hua, as both the District and the *fu* 'Annals' recorded that his body was buried at P'ing-wang P'u [112],

ten *li* away from the northern outskirts of the District city. Relatives of his who may have survived him were, in addition to his two sons, his younger brother or cousin Lu Yüan-po [113], Yüan-po's grandson Lu Shih-su [114], (*T* [115] ch'ü-huang) and Shih-su's son, Lu T'ing-lun [116]. These last three names also appear in the 'District Annals' as they were well known scholars. The work *Fang-hu Wai-shih* which uses the same characters as its title as those used in one of Lu's styles, was greatly eulogised by Taoist priests of later generations. It is a work in 8 *chüan* which comprises nearly all of Lu's Taoist works except the 'Criticism of Chuang-tzŭ' which was engraved separately, and which has perhaps nothing to do with the 'cultivation' of golden pills, and the theory of preservation of both the nature and the *ch'i*, to such purposes this collection is devoted. The theory that Lu advocated is technically referred to as *hsing-ming shuang-hsiu* [117], was perhaps an innovation originating from his amalgamating principle. Even today the Taoist priests and lay devotees in China and overseas still respect Lu as one of their former patriarchs, and his name appears in a long list of predecessors, placed after Chang Po-tuan, Ch'ên Nan [118] (*H* [119] Ni-wan), Po Hai-chiung, and Pêng Ssŭ [120] (*H* [121] Ho-lin). But they are not very much concerned with his Buddhist tendencies, nor are they aware of his academic or literary fame. Most of his works, with the exception of his popular novel which was published anonymously, are recorded in the 'District Annals':

Chou-i Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i Ts'ê-shu [122] 'Comments on Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i and the Book of Change', 1 *chüan*; *Lao-tzŭ Yüan [Hsüan]-lan* [123] 'Studies on Lao-tzŭ', 2 *chüan*; *Nan-hua [Ching] Fu-mo* [124] 'A Criticism of Chuang-tzŭ', 8 *chüan*; *Yin-fu Ching Ts'ê-shu* [125] 'Remarks on Yin-fu Canons', 1 *chüan*; *Chang Tzŭ-yang Chin-tan Ssŭ-pai Tzŭ Ts'ê-shu* [126] 'Remarks on the Four-hundred Characters On the Invisible Golden Pills by Chang Tzŭ-yang', 1 *chüan*; *Chin-tan Chiu-chêng P'ien* [127] 'Commentary on the Invisible Golden Pills', 1 *chüan*; *Fang-hu Wai-shih* [128] 'An

Unofficial History of the Fairy Mt. Fang-hu', 8 *chüan; Lêng-yen [Ching] Shu-chih* [129] 'The Principles of the Surangama Sutra', 10 *chüan; I Chih* [130] 'Hsing-hua District Annals' and *Ch'u-yang Shih-i* [131] 'Collection of Poems of Ch'u-yang'.

'The Principles of the Śūraṅgama Sūtra' and one minor work on the same text entitled *Lêng-yen Ching Shuo-yüeh* [132] are included in the 'Second Collection of the Tripitaka in Chinese' which I mendioned at the beginning of this biography. Judging from the clear analysis and erudite citations of these two works it would be difficult for us to say that Lu's knowledge in Tantric Buddhism was either superficial or trifling. In the 'Annals of Yangchow-fu,' however, there are six more works, all related to Taoist 'cultivation,' which are not ostensibly mentioned in the 'District Annals.' These are:

Wu-shang Yü-huang Hsin-yin Miao-ching Ts-ê-shu [133] 'A Commentary on the Marvellous Sūtra for Understanding of the Mind of the Jade Emperor'; *Chou-i Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i K'ou-i* [134] 'Verbal Interpretations of Ts'an-t'ung-ch'i and the Book of Change' in three parts; *Ts'ui-kung Ju-yao-ching Ts'ê-shu* [135] 'Commentary on the Formulae for Preparation of Drugs by Master Ts'ui'; *Lü Chên-jên Pai-tzŭ Pei Ts'ê-shu* [136] 'Commentary on the Inscription of the Hundred Characters of Master Lü the Immortal'; *P'ang Mei-tzŭ Chin-tan Yin-chêng Ts'ê-shu* [137] 'Commentary on the Study of Golden Pills by P'ang Mei-tzŭ' and *Ch'iu Chên-jên Ch'ing-t'ien Kê Ts'ê-shu* [138] 'Commentary on the Song of Blue-heaven by Master Ch'iu the Immortal.'

Except the 'Commentary on the Study of the Golden Pills by P'ang Mei-tzŭ,' all of these above-mentioned works on 'cultivation' are also found in the *Fang-hu Wai-shih*. However, in the latter collection, there are the *Chang Tzŭ-yang Wu-chên P'ien Hsiao-hsü* [139] (in *chüan* 5), the *Hsüan-fu Lun* [140] and the *Chin-tan Ta-chih Pa-t'u Ch'i-p'o Lun* [141] (both in *chüan* 8) which are not recorded separately in the Annals. In the

Oriental collection of the British Museum there is a manuscript of the *Chin-tan Ch'iu-chêng P'ien* and the *Hsüan-fu Lun* (OR 7375) which bears a preface written by Lu Hsi-hsing himself on the 9th day of the 9th moon in the 1st year of Lung-ch'ing which corresponds to 1567, and also another preface by Wang Kao [142] dated the 15th day of the 6th moon in 1576. The first eight works recorded in the 'District Annals' can also be found in the *Ming Shih*.

The collections of Lu's poems is called *Ch'u-yang Shih-i*, the title of which can very easily be confused with that of another anthology, *Ch'u-yang Shih-hsüan* [143], which is the work of Lu Yüan-po. As both of them are no more extant, we have to be content with the seven poems of Lu Hsi-hsing preserved in the 'District Annals' which are unfortunately all elegies in memory of his old friends. From these poems we know that both Tsung Ch'ên and Hsi-hsing's nephew Lu Lü died before him. Lu Lü (*T* [144] Tzŭ-ho) was a senior licentiate in 1564, and later on held a minor post as an education officer (*hsün-tao* [145]) in the District Lung-yu [146] of Chekiang. It was Lu Lü who wrote the preface for Lu Hsi-hsing's 'Criticism of Chuang-tzŭ,' probably the most well known of Lu's works excluding his novel. In his dirge for Tsung Ch'ên, who died at an early age of 35, Lu Hsi-hsiang writes the following lines:

> You used to sit on my seven-feet mat,
> Bearing in your hand your (radiant) multi-coloured brush.
> Your brilliancy was such as to astound the world!
> What was filthy lucre to you!
> For many days I have not been able to forget you,
> and in my melancholy I see your figure before me;
> The moonbeam shining on the rafter, is it you?
> Your faint perfume fills this dark room.
> Where are you going to on your solitary journey into the unknown?
> How I long to invite you to my place again, to discuss the
> abstruse with you in intimacy.

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CHINESE CHARACTERS APPEAR IN TEXT

1 陸西星
2 長庚
3 方壺外史
4 蘊空居士
5 封神演義
6 興化縣
7 楞嚴經述旨
8 日本續藏經
9 華岳
10 潞河
11 通縣
12 西苑
13 宋臣
14 子相
15 中原七子
16 蓮花燈
17 聯登
18 李夢龍
19 陸長庚母夫人敘
20 火星廟
21 司徒里
22 道錄司
23 朝天宮
24 金真
25 正一
26 張陵
27 龍虎山
28 張恩溥
29 瑞齡
30 鶴琴
31 金丹
32 王嘉
33 呂巖
34 呂洞賓
35 寧海州
36 丘處機
37 劉操
38 海蟾
39 張伯端
40 紫陽
41 白海瓊
42 玉蟾
43 張紫陽金丹四百字測疏
44 八康
45 李春芳
46 子實
47 石麓
48 方壺外史
49 李載
50 仁夫
51 貞明道人
52 諸子彙集因寄長庚
53 南華經副墨

54 四庫全書總目
55 紀 昀
56 焦 竑
57 弱 侯
58 談 圃
59 莊子翼
60 陸 倕
61 二 教
62 坐 忘
63 大宗師
64 爲 儒
65 大方廣圓覺脩多羅了義經
66 佛陀多羅
67 劉 惠
68 佛 科
69 姜子牙
70 元始天尊
71 通天教主
72 道 人
73 李 靖
74 哪 吒
75 毘沙門
76 那 吒
77 北方毘沙門天王
78 列國志傳
79 許仲琳
80 鍾山逸史
81 李雲翔
82 爲 霖
83 舒載陽
84 文 淵
85 傳奇彙考
86 樂府考畧
87 順天時
88 封神傳
89 燃 燈
90 慈 航
91 接 引
92 準 提
93 文 殊
94 普 賢
95 孫楷第
96 張政烺
97 雲笈七籤
98 庚
99 金 庚
100 西
101 丁汝夔
102 徐 階
103 子 升
104 存 齋
105 奉天殿
106 將 軍
107 黃飛虎
108 商 容
109 微 子
110 歐陽東鳳
111 湘 安
112 平望鋪

113 陸原博
114 陸士驌
115 渠 黃
116 陸廷綸
117 性命雙修
118 陳 楠
119 泥 丸
120 彭 韶
121 鶴 林
122 周易參同契測疏
123 老子元〔玄〕覽
124 南華〔經〕副墨
125 陰符經測疏
126 張紫陽金丹四百字測疏
127 金丹就正篇
128 方壺外史
129 楞嚴經述旨
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131 楚陽詩遺
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