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Authority over Death: Two Tales Related to the Lord of Mount Tai in *Konjaku Monogatarishū*

Yiwen Shen

Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Columbia University, New York, NY 10027, USA;
yiwen.shen49@163.com

Abstract: *Tales of Times Now Past* (*Konjaku Monogatarishū* 今昔物語集) is a Japanese *setsuwa* (anecdotes) collection dating from the early twelfth century. Originally contained in 31 volumes, it includes more than one thousand systematically arranged tales from India, China, and Japan. Despite the fact that Daoism was rejected by the Japanese imperial court as an organized religion, Daoist philosophies and practical systems found their ways into Japan, having a significant and profound influence over Japanese esoteric cosmology and folk beliefs. This article takes the Lord of Mount Tai (CN: Taishan Fujun; JP: Taizan Fukun 泰山府君) as the focus and examines two pertinent stories in *Tales of Times Now Past*. By placing the texts in a broader historical, religious, and comparative Japan–China perspective, I examine the reshaping of Daoist elements and traditional Chinese philosophical principles in these two stories and thus demonstrate how the Daoist fragments transmitted to Japan were transformed into an integral part of the orthodox structure by the time of the late Heian period in the pursuit of a more organized form of government.

Keywords: Japanese literature; *setsuwa*; Taizan Fukun; hell narratives; miracle/wonder stories; Daoism; Onmyōdō



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1. Introduction

Although the Heian *setsuwa* (anecdotes) collection *Konjaku Monogatarishū* 今昔物語集 (*Tales of Times Now Past*) is among the most frequently discussed texts in the study of pre-modern Japanese literature, there is virtually no Western language scholarship on its Shintanbu (Fascicles 6–10, “Tales of China”) section in particular. A number of Japanese scholars such as Okamoto Yasutaka, Haga Yaichi, and Miyata Hisashi have studied this selection of tales. However, there is still insufficient scholarly attention to this section, and the only published monograph on it is Miyata’s *Konjaku Monogatarishū Shintanbu kō*. Since many stories in the Shintanbu section are adapted from Chinese sources, most Japanese scholarship on this section is textual study.¹

This article focuses on a story related to the Lord of Mount Tai (泰山府君, CN: Taishan Fujun; JP: Taizan Fukun), a Daoist deity of the Chinese sacred Mount Tai, in this section and a pertinent story in the “Tales of Buddhism in Japan” section in *Konjaku* to examine the important role history and religion play in the formation of narrative. Although the fact that Daoism was not transmitted to Japan as an institutional religion is an academic consensus, scholars have taken great pains to argue for the presence or absence of Daoist elements in Japan—an issue closely related to Japanese identity and Japanese kingship. While Fukunaga Mitsuji and other Japanese scholars believe there were both Daoism and Daoist rituals in ancient Japan² and maintain that the cult of *tennō* 天皇 was derived from Daoism, Western scholars tend to take a more cautious attitude to recognizing these elements or products as “Daoist” in general. As Anna Seidel warns:

“what many authors... call Daoist practices at the Japanese court—divination, five-element sciences, time-keeping, calendar-making, astrology, prognostication, omen-lore, etc.—were Chinese traditions cultivated at every Chinese court... These

traditions [called *onmyōdō* in Japan]... exerted a great influence on Daoism; but they are a pan-Chinese branch of learning with its own chain of transmission distinct from Daoism.”³

Questions of distinguishing the generically “Chinese” and the specifically “Daoist” are particularly complicated because by the sixth and seventh centuries Daoism in China had become an important purveyor of political symbols and practices, and the existence of the “original” Daoist significations of some of these symbols may have abraded over time. It is also admittedly problematic to tell what “original Daoist” is, since many of the Daoist elements have their pre-Daoist “Chinese” aspects. The difficulty in dividing “Chinese” and “Daoist” into two diametrical categories sometime makes scholars employ loose terms—such as Herman Ooms’ using “Daoisant” and “Chinese/Daoist” in his monograph on the Daoist dimensions of the political symbolics in ancient Japan (Ooms 2009, pp. 132–34). Nonetheless, although there was not an institutionalized system of Daoism (which consists of the Daoist canon, talismans, and licensed practitioners) in Japan, the existence of non-institutionalized Daoist elements in Japan should not be denied. This article, launched on this premise, uses the term “Daoist” in a loose sense. The so-called “Daoist” or “Daoist-related” presences in this article include the representatives of the organized Daoism in China as well as the non-institutionalized Daoist fragments in both China and Japan.

The inspiration for this article came from the two major motifs of *Konjaku Shintanbu*, filial piety and universal salvation, as well as the large number of sojourn in hell stories, which has drawn my attention to the deities related to the afterworld such as Jizō 地藏, Mokuren 目連, Enma (Yama-raja) 閻魔, and Taizan Fukun.⁴ The first story I analyze is in the *Shintanbu*, or the “Tales of China” section: *Konjaku* 7–19, “About the Chinese Buddhist Lodged in the Temple of Mount Tai Who Saw A Deity While Chanting the *Lotus Sutra* 震旦僧、行宿太山廟誦法華經見神語第十九”, which depicts a Chinese Buddhist monk encountering the Lord of Mount Tai, an indigenous Chinese deity absorbed by Daoism. The second story is in the “Tales of Buddhism in Japan” section: *Konjaku* 19–24, “About the Monk Whose Name Was Entered on a Petition to the Lord of Mount Tai to Take the Place of His Master 代師入太山府君祭都狀僧語第二十四”, which describes a Buddhist disciple saving the life of his master by entering his name on a petition to Taizan Fukun and the performance of the *Onmyōdō* ritual *Taizanfukun-sai* 泰山府君祭 (the Ritual of the Lord of Mount Tai). By examining the reshaping of Daoist elements and traditional Chinese philosophical principles in these two stories, I investigate how Daoist fragments such as the Taishan Fujun belief⁵ transmitted to Japan were transformed into an integral part of the orthodox structure by the time of the late Heian period. First arriving in Japan as an important part of the *ritsuryō* system (a system of centralized government based on the *ritsuryō* code) at the time of state formation, Daoist fragments in Japan widely scattered throughout the Japanese religio-political landscape and went on to appear piecemeal through textual sources over the centuries. The main purpose of this article is to explore how *Konjaku* *setsuwa* texts facilitate and reflect the settling process of the imported foreign civilization on the continent and how Daoist elements were integrated into the shaping of the Japanese state.

2. The First Story: *Konjaku* 7–19

Taishan Fujun, the Lord of Mount Tai, is a well-known deity that derives from ancient Chinese folk belief and was later absorbed into the Daoist pantheon. He is considered one of the most important spirits of Mount Tai, the Eastern Mountain or East Peak (*dongyue* 東嶽) of the Five Marchmounts (*wuyue* 五嶽) and has had a profound influence on the Chinese view on death since ancient times. From the Eastern Han (or Later Han) period (25–220 CE) onward, it was believed that the spirits of Mount Tai sentenced all human destiny and that after death the souls of people returned to Mount Tai for judgment. There was a gold case on the top of the mountain with an account book inside recording the life span of each human in the world.⁶ In the Daoist bureaucracy, he is the highest authority of the sacred East Peak, with numerous gods and goddesses under his leadership. The

pervasiveness of the Taishan Fujun cult in China is also evidenced in early translated Buddhist scriptures: the translators added the word “Mount Tai” in front of “Hell” in order to make the concept of Buddhist hell easy to understand for the Chinese (See Sawada 1968, p. 44). Anecdotes and short tales about Taishan Fujun and “Hell under Mount Tai (*taishan diyu* 太山地獄)” can be found in a number of classical Chinese accounts, such as *Sou shen ji* 搜神記 (In Search of the Supernatural), the oldest extant literary reference to Taishan Fujun compiled around 350 (Gan 1979), and *Taiping guang ji* 太平廣記 (*The Extensive Records of the Taiping Era*) (Li [1961] 2006), the repository of a large number of Taishan Fujun citations completed in 978.⁷

The No. 19 story in *Konjaku Shintanbu*, Fascicle 7, “About the Chinese Buddhist Lodged in the Temple of Mount Tai Who Saw A Deity While Chanting the *Lotus Sutra*,” is a story dealing with this prominent Chinese chthonic deity (Satake 1999, pp. 122–25). A synopsis of the story follows:

During the Daye period of the Sui Dynasty (605–616 CE), a Buddhist monk traveled to practice Buddhism. When he visited the Temple of Mount Tai and asked for one night’s lodging, the keeper came out and told him there was no room other than the hall of the temple, where everyone who previously lodged there lost their lives. The monk indicated that he was not afraid of death, so the temple keeper gave him a wooden bench and let him stay. In the silence of late night, when he was chanting the scripture, he heard the sound of rings and pendants. While he was scared, an exceptionally elegant man came out. The monk paid respect to him and questioned, “I heard that over the years, people who lodged in this temple were all dead. Why do you, the deity, kill people? May I please ask you to protect me?” The deity replied that he had never killed anyone. Those previous lodgers were all frightened to death of his sudden appearance.⁸ The monk then asked the deity to sit close to him and inquired about whether it was true that Taishan Fujun was a deity who accepted the souls of people after death. Responding with a positive answer, the deity asked if the monk wanted to meet anyone who had already died. After the monk provided the names of two monks who had studied together with him, the deity told him that one of them was already reborn while another was in hell. Since the fellow monk in hell had committed grave sins, the only way for the monk to see him was to follow the deity to hell.

Following the deity to hell, a place not far from the temple, the monk saw a badly mutilated human figure screaming in the flames from a distance. Being told that this terrifying figure was his fellow monk, the monk felt deeply sad and expressed his wish to save his fellow monk from suffering. The deity gave him this instruction: the recitation of the *Lotus Sutra* for the sake of the sinner would remit the punishment. The next morning, when the temple keeper saw the monk still alive, he was so surprised and considered it as a rare case even after the monk told him everything. The monk returned to his residence and began to copy the *Lotus Sutra* immediately. Before long, he finished a copy as an offering for his fellow monk. Afterwards, he carried this copy of the sutra to the temple and lodged there as he did previously. On that night, the deity appeared again. Happy to see the monk, the deity paid homage to him and asked his purpose in coming. The monk replied that he copied the *Lotus Sutra* in order to save his fellow monk. The deity told him that his fellow monk had already been saved at the moment when he wrote down the title of the sutra. The monk was very happy to hear that and entreated the deity to put the sutra in this temple. The deity said this place was not a proper one. Following his suggestion, the monk returned to his residence, sent the sutra to a Buddhist temple, and enshrined it.

3. Honorific Expression

Juxtaposing this Japanese text with the original Chinese one, nuanced differences between the two reveal that even if the overall story in *Konjaku* 7–19 is basically the same as the one in Tang Lin’s 唐臨 (601–660 CE) *Ming bao ji* 冥報記 (*Miraculous Karmic Retribution*, hereafter abbreviated as MBJ) (Tang 1992), the narration has been completely changed due to their different use of honorifics. While the Chinese text holds the Buddhist monk in high esteem, the Japanese text uses honorifics to elevate the deity.

First, in the Chinese text, the deity humbly called himself “the disciple (*dizi* 弟子)” when talking to the wandering monk, and called the monk “master (*shi* 師)”, showing his great respect to the nameless Buddhist monk in the speech. Considering the strong Buddhist stance of MBJ and the story as an advocacy for the merits of copying the *Lotus Sutra*, such expressions to exalt the status of the Buddhist monk is quite natural and reasonable. However, in the corresponding Japanese text, the word “disciple” is completely removed. The only place where the term “master” is retained in *Konjaku* 7–19 is when the two first encounter and the deity tells the monk not to be afraid of him: “I did not harm anyone at all. ...I hope you, Master, do not fear me (我れ、更に人を害する事なし。...願くは、師、我れに恐るる事無かれ).” (Satake 1999, pp. 122–25).

Moreover, honorifics (*keigo* 敬語) are used not only in the prose description but also in the speech to convey esteem for the deity instead. The narrator employs the honorific transitive *yodan* verb *tamau* 給ふ as an honorific supplementary verb and *notamau* 宣ふ, another honorific transitive *yodan* verb, as the honorific equivalent of *iu* (言ふ, to say).⁹ Meanwhile, *mausu* 申す, a humble transitive *yodan* verb which functions as the humble form of *iu*, is utilized frequently when the monk speaks to the deity, implying that the latter is superior to the former. The only *keigo* used for Buddhist components in this narrative is the humble *yodan* verb *tatematsuru* 奉る, suggesting the superiority of the *Lotus Sutra*. In fact, honorifics are meticulously used each time the deity appears, both in *ji no bun* (地の文, prose description) and *kaiwa bun* (会話文, speech). That is to say, the deity gains respect with consistency throughout all the narrative levels. In addition to the respectful language, *Konjaku* 7–19 also adds the description of the deity’s “exceptionally elegant temperament” (*kidakaku yango-tonashi hito* 気高ク止事無キ人), whereas the Chinese narrative simply repeats the word “deity” (*shen* 神) throughout the text.

4. Persona of the Deity

Why does the Japanese version in *Konjaku* 7–19 give more respect to the Lord of Mount Tai—an indigenous Chinese deity with Daoist connotations? The persona of the deity in this story is a key to answer this question. Apparently, though inferior to the infinite power of the *Lotus Sutra*, the deity in *Konjaku* 7–19 is still playing his conventional role here as in China: taking charge of hell and ruling the souls of the dead. Without his leading and instructions, the Buddhist monk would not have been able to sojourn to the underworld or learn the way to save his fellow monk from suffering. Even though the deity does not have a name or a title, the description of his unusual nobility makes the portrayal of him more vivid in this narrative than in the Chinese MBJ equivalent. Moreover, the fact that both MBJ and *Konjaku* texts mention the deity “sat close to the monk and talked like a human being”¹⁰ indicates that the deity in this story is quite anthropomorphic. The recognition of human qualities in this deity of Mount Tai distinguishes him from Taizan Fukun, the Onmyōdō 陰陽道 deity in the influential Taizanfukun-sai 泰山府君祭 (Ritual of the Lord of Mount Tai) controlled exclusively by the Abe 安倍 clan. It should be noted that although the deity Taizan Fukun’s authority over death seems to be underlined in the Onmyōdō ritual, his image remains largely obscure in all the extant early accounts.¹¹ In the accounts of Taizanfukun-sai, there is no depiction of the deity’s appearance, personality, behavior, or speech—the deity never faces the audience. Compared with the largely humanized deity in *Konjaku* 7–19, the Onmyōdō deity in the Taizanfukun-sai is more like an abstract concept. The issue is not that the deity in *Konjaku* 7–19 has a different persona from the one in Taizanfukun-sai but whether or not the latter actually possesses a persona. Since in the process of the Taizanfukun-sai ritual, the *onmyōji* 陰陽師 (practitioner) functions both as the prayer on behalf of the patron and as the surrogate of the deity (as the *Konjaku* 19–24 story I discuss later in Section 7 shows), Taizan Fukun looks more like a detached symbol of exotic connotations.

Even though it would be faulty to equate the deity in *Konjaku* 7–19 to Taizan Fukun, it would also be too rash a conclusion to say that they are two completely separate existences. On the contrary, the fact that Taizan Fukun is an abstract concept is the very allusion to the

importance of this concept. In other words, it provides a clue to interpret the implication of the deity's superiority in *Konjaku* 7–19. If the significance of Taizan Fukun is the reason for *Konjaku* 7–19 to show particular reverence, then the question becomes: what makes *Konjaku* 7–19 pay special respect to this metaphysical concept? And what concept or ideology is that?

The opening of this section has introduced that the Lord of Mount Tai has been a deity of mighty power in China ever since ancient times. But the extraordinary esteem expressed towards the deity in *Konjaku* 7–19 suggests that the deity is likely to carry different or extra connotations in Japan. Therefore, the Japanese side, particularly the Onmyōdō ritual, should be scrutinized. Although the deity, Taizan Fukun, in Taizanfukun-sai shares little in common with the deity in *Konjaku* 7–19 except for their metaphysical roots, the Abe clan's exclusive control of the rite provides a clue to understanding the characteristics of the deity. By the tenth century, two competing clans of *onmyōji*—practitioners of Onmyōdō—the Abe and the Kamo 賀茂, almost dominated the practices for imperial services. By the end of the Heian period, while the Kamo were assigned to the discipline of calendrical studies, the Abe had taken divination and astronomy as their rights. The Abe maintained that other *onmyōji* were not entitled to use the name Taizan Fukun but should use the term *tensha* 天社 (Shrine of Heaven) (Elacqua 2010).

This name is curiously strange. One thing to explain first is the radical difference between the imported religious tradition, namely Buddhism, and the ancient Chinese cosmology in terms of the idea of dualism. Unlike the religious depictions of heaven and hell as two destinations for reincarnation just like two sides of a coin, in traditional Chinese philosophy, heaven and earth are complementary but separate opposites corresponding to the cosmology of *yin* and *yang*. In other words, heaven and earth in ancient China, though interconnected, are actually two interdependent concepts that cannot be fused into an entity. Therefore, the unnatural celestial title given to this terrestrial deity is peculiar enough to draw attention.

5. Shrine of Heaven

The reason for the deity of Mount Tai, the lord of the underworld, to be entitled “Shrine of Heaven” in Japan can be traced back to the cult of Mount Tai in ancient China.¹² On grounds of the belief that “mountains are the assistants of heaven 山嶽則配天”,¹³ Mount Tai is supposed to have maintained an intimate connection with heaven ever since ancient times. As one of the most conspicuous peaks in the Central Plain of China, Mount Tai was proclaimed as a sacred mountain, *yue* 嶽, together with another three, and later Mount Song joined this honored group.¹⁴ In addition to the sanctified title *yue*, Mount Tai was not only designated as the Eastern Pillar of Heaven (*tian zhi dongzhu* 天之東柱) but also *tiansun* 天孫 (“Grandson of Heaven”), showing a sign of early anthropomorphism. *Bowu zhi* 博物志 (*Record of Natural History*) by Zhang Hua (232–300) indicates that this anthropomorphic perception of Mount Tai propels the combination of the celestial and terrestrial functions of the deity: “Mount Tai, or Tiansun, which means the Grandson of the Lord of Heaven, is in charge of soul evocation. East is the origin of all things. So he knows the life length of people.”¹⁵ As it suggests, the geographical direction of Mount Tai in the East plays a crucial role. Since the East direction is traditionally regarded as the base of cosmic vitality (*shengqi* 生氣) as well as the place where *yin* and *yang* interact with each other (See Ma 1986, 1992), the dual characteristics of the deity of Mount Tai could probably be derived from such a cosmological worldview.

Another explanation is provided by the Ming and Qing scholarship on the topic. Gu Yanwu (1613–1682) suggests in his *Ri zhi lu* 日知錄 (*Daily Accumulation of Knowledge*) that *chenwei* 讖緯 (divination combined with mystical Confucianist beliefs) ideology is the root of the belief in Mount Tai's ruling the dead.¹⁶ By dividing *xian* 仙, the heavenly function, and *gui* 鬼, the earthly function, Gu implies that Mount Tai's official function of supporting heaven as a celestial institute preceded the folk belief of its governing the netherworld. Yu Yue (1821–1907), a Qing scholar, points out that since there are both shrines for Tianzhu

天主 (the Lord of Heaven) and Dizhu 地主 (the Lord of Earth) for the Feng 封 and Shan 禪 sacrifices in this place, and that sacrifices are made by the emperors both to heaven and to earth,¹⁷ it is natural that the deity of Mount Tai incorporates dual characters (Yu 1996, vol. 16, p. 475).

As the secular representative of earth and the sacred support of heaven, strong political meanings were assigned to Mount Tai by the Chinese emperors in antiquity, best demonstrated by the grand sacrificial Feng and Shan ceremonies. In *Shu 書* (*The Classic of History*), one of the Five Classics of Confucianism, the record of Shun 舜, one of the most legendary leaders of ancient China, making an inspection tour to Mount Tai and offering sacrifices is a particular self-evident reference of the significance of this mountain. According to this record, Shun toured eastwards to Mount Tai, where he presented a burnt-offering to heaven and offered sacrifices to the hills, rivers, and the host of spirits. Afterward, he made similar tours to the other four sacred mountains, respectively, where he performed the same ceremonies. At the end of his trip, when he returned to the capital, he went to the temple of the Cultivated Ancestor and sacrificed a bull.¹⁸ This record can be read as a history of the origin of the later Feng and Shan ceremonies. As a means to demarcate and protect the boundaries of the Chinese imperium, Shun's inspection tour served as a proclamation of unification and legitimacy. The set of five sacred mountains in five directions of the country symbolized the territorial integrity of the state and thus was assigned military and political significance. Among the five, Mount Tai was Shun's first stop, and the record of the offerings made there is the most detailed one. In later generations, spectacular sacrificial ceremonies performed by the emperors became a part of the imperial cult and a grand exposition of the Chinese emperors' ambitions. Only great unifiers such as Qin Shi Huang (259–210 BC) and Emperor Wu of Han (156–87 BC) were considered deserving enough to ascend the mountain, the supreme locus where *yin* and *yang*, heaven and earth, and life and death interchange, to seek the favor of the cosmos through the sacred mountain, an intermediary of Heaven and Earth.

Not only a personified natural god but also one of dual characteristics, the deity of Mount Tai's image as the lord of the netherworld in combination with Mount Tai's political function of endorsing the imperial legitimacy and its power of unification make him a suitably appealing icon for the rulers. Yet there is one more basic question: how could a mountain located in China successfully transmit its political attraction to Japan?

6. Reception of Dual Characters

One reason might be the eastern location of Mount Tai. According to traditional Chinese etymology, the Chinese character *dong* 東, which means "East," is an ideogrammic compound (*huiyizi* 會意字)¹⁹ combining *ri* 日 (sun) and *mu* 木 (wood), representing a sun rising in the trees. According to *Shuo wen jie zi* 說文解字 (*Discussing Writing and Explaining Characters*), an early second century Chinese dictionary from the Han dynasty, the first book to analyze the structure of the characters and to elucidate the rationale behind them, the woods where the sun rises is likely to be *fu* 樺, a sacred wood in ancient Chinese myth (See Duan 1914). The term *fusang* 扶桑/樽桑 is conventionally perceived as the name of a giant sacred tree overseas in Chinese mythology. For example, *Shanhai jing* 山海經 (*The Classic of Mountains and Seas*)²⁰ indicates "There is a *fusang* tree growing in Tanggu, where the ten suns bathe. It is located in the north of the country of Black Teeth. 湯谷上有扶桑，十日所浴，在黑齒北。" The set phrase *richu fusang* 日出扶桑,²¹ generally interpreted as "Sun rises in *fusang*," is derived from this myth.²² In traditional Chinese cosmology, the element of East in the Five Movements (*wuxing* 五行) is wood, and the virtue of East in the Five Constant Virtues (*wuchang* 五常) is benevolence (*ren* 仁), the foundational virtue of Confucianism. In the Chinese constellations, the symbol of East in the Four Symbols (*sixiang* 四象) is the Azure Dragon (*qinglong* 青龍). As for the eight principles (*bagua* 八卦), according to the Manifested *bagua* (or King Wen's "Later Heaven" arrangement, 文王后天八卦),²³ the trigram of East is thunder (*zhen*, 震 ☳), of which the symbolic animal is the dragon as well. Chinese mythologies in antiquity associated thunder and

dragons with the birthplaces and prosperity of emperors.²⁴ The *Yi jing* 易經 (*The Book of Changes*) also implies the East direction's superiority and its close connection to the imperium by the statement that the "Emperor derives from *zhen*".²⁵ Among the beliefs listed above, "Sun rises in *fusang*" might be the most appealing to the Japanese rulers. Considered itself the Land of the Rising Sun, Japan later uses the term *fusang* (Fusō) as a designation for Japan. And as I mentioned earlier, Tian Huang 天皇, the original Daoist divinity whose name probably engendered the title Tennō for Japanese emperors, is an equivalent to the Emperor of Fusang in some early Daoist accounts. The veneration for the East as the holy locus of rising sun, together with its standing as a representative of Confucian virtues and a symbol of divine kingship, might have turned Mount Tai, the pinnacle in the East, into an extraordinarily appealing symbol for the early Japanese rulers.

While the grounding for the Japanese reception of the deity's celestial characteristic is on the land, the reason for the reception of his chthonic attribute might be in the sky. The above cited phrase, the "Emperor (*di* 帝) derives from *zhen*", in the *Yijing* has another interpretation: *di* refers to the Polaris.²⁶ As I mentioned in the analysis of the title Tennō, the Polaris is also called the "Emperor Star" in the Chinese constellations. In Daoist cosmology, the Southern Dipper is in charge of life while the Northern Dipper is in charge of death (*nandou zhu sheng*, *beidou zhu si* 南斗主生, 北斗主死). For instance, *Sou shen ji*, the oldest extant literary reference to the Lord of Mount Tai as I mentioned earlier, includes in Fascicle 3 a story of the deities of the two Dippers administering humans' life span, and describes it as "The Southern Dipper predetermines life; the Northern Dipper predetermines death. Starting from the date of birth, mortals are handed over to the Northern Dipper from the Southern Dipper. All the prayers should go to the Northern Dipper."²⁷ This account indicates the overlapping chthonic duties between the deity of Mount Tai and the deity of the Northern Dipper in ancient Chinese beliefs. *Taishan beidou* 泰山北斗 (Mount Tai and the Northern Dipper) is a common Chinese idiom to describe a person deserving great respect, and there is a shrine for the deity of the Northern Dipper on Mount Tai. Since *Sou shen ji* and other documents of Daoist influence can be found in *Nihonkoku genzaisho mokuroku* 日本国見在書目録 (*Catalogue of Books Seen in Japan*, completed around 891),²⁸ the oldest extant catalogue of Chinese books present in Japan compiled by the court scholar Fujiwara Sukeyo 藤原佐世 (d. 898) (See Fujiwara 1996), it would not be too difficult to infer that the overlapping identities of the two deities had also been transmitted to Japan.²⁹ As I discussed earlier, the cult of Polaris was a central part of Japanese imperial ancestor worship. On account of the death-related nature of the Northern Dipper belief, the deity of Mount Tai who shares a similar function with it might be a convenient medium for the Japanese royalty to smoothly absorb and interweave into their ritual tradition.

Thus, the previous questions are answered: the reason for the deity of Mount Tai being exalted in the *Konjaku* narrative is that it not only catered to the Japanese rulers' needs of affirming royal authority but was also compatible with their existing imperial cult. Taishan Fujun, as a representative of the Daoist-related elements, was selected by the Japanese authorities as a means to integrate authority over heaven, earth, and humanity. The later emergence of the belief of Taizan Fukun, the Japanese equivalent of Taishan Fujun, casted a profound influence over Japanese religious traditions, especially in regard to its ritual. While reflecting some common features of Heian religious paradigms, it also illustrates the Japanese indigenization of imported Daoist elements.

7. The Second Story: *Konjaku* 19–24 and the Onmyōdō Ritual of Taizan Fukun

Konjaku 19–24, "About the Monk Whose Name Was Entered on a Petition to the Lord of Mount Tai to Take the Place of His Master," (Satake 1994, pp. 179–81) is an interesting story because it is centered on the Ritual of Taizan Fukun (JP: Taizanfukun-sai) and belongs to the Honchōbu ("Secular Tales of Japan") section, revealing that the imported Chinese deity had been indigenized. As one of the most powerful onmyōdō rituals, Taizanfukun-sai is an invocation of Taizan Fukun, the Lord of Mount Tai, in order to extend life and prevent calamities, which incorporated *henbai* 反閉 (反閤, 反陪), the ritual treading of the ground

to the accompaniment of incantations in order to ensure personal safety. One thing worth noting is that Fascicle 19 is under the title of “Tales of Buddhism in Japan 本朝付仏法”. While most onmyōji stories appear in Fascicle 24, this story in which Abe no Seimei,³⁰ probably the most legendary onmyōji figure in Japanese folklores, was involved, detaches itself from the majority. To explore the reason for putting this story in Fascicle 19, a close examination of the plot is necessary. The following summary of the story is modified from Marian Ury’s translation of the text (See Ury [1979] 1993, pp. 124–26):

In the story, a monk of eminence contracted a grave illness and suffered painfully. His condition worsened as the days passed. High-ranking disciples used every art they knew to pray for his recovery but without the slightest success. The disciples summoned an onmyōji³¹ named Abe no Seimei. He was the most eminent practitioner of his science, employed on that account both by the emperor and by private individuals. They asked Seimei to perform the ritual to the Lord of Mount Tai and thereby cure their master’s illness and save his life. Seimei came to them and said, “I have divined the course of this illness: it will be mortal. Even though I pray to the Taizan Fukun I cannot save him. There is only one remedy: put forth one of your number who will die in place of the sick man. If you do, I will enter that monk’s name on a petition to the god, proposing him as a substitute. Otherwise, there is nothing I can do.” There was not one disciple who upon hearing this thought, “Let me sacrifice my own life for my master.” Each wanted to save him, but without harm to himself. And, moreover, it occurred to the disciples that if he should die, they would inherit his chambers, his wealth, and his holy books. It was natural that no one felt in the least like substituting for him. They sat there side by side, staring into each other’s faces, and nobody said a word.

For years there had been an under-disciple, a man of no consequence, who lived among them. The master scarcely deigned to notice him, and as he was poor, he inhabited a storage shed. When he heard the news he said, “My allotted years are already more than half gone. Who knows how much longer I may be going to live? And I’m poor—in the future I won’t have the means to plant the roots of good karma. Since I must die in any event, let me do it now, in place of my master. Enter my name on the petition immediately.” When they heard this, the other disciples thought, “What a noble mind!” And though none of them had been willing to sacrifice themselves for the master, they were moved by his words, and many wept.

When Seimei heard this, he entered the monk’s name on the petition of worship and performed the ritual with great care. And when the master heard of this, he said, “In all the years this monk has been here I never imagined that he was a man of such feeling,” and he wept. As soon as the ceremonies were over, the master’s illness subsided markedly—it appeared that the prayers were efficacious. It was thought, therefore, that the substitute would certainly die, and so a place was prepared for him to defile...

The monk was supposed to die, but he was still alive. The master had already recovered. Early that morning, when they were deciding that “no doubt the monk will die today”, Seimei arrived. He said, “The master need fear no more; nor need the monk who offered himself as substitute have any fear. I have been able to save the lives of both.” He departed, and master and disciples alike wept unrestrainedly for joy upon hearing his words (See Ury [1979] 1993, pp. 124–26).

One conspicuous characteristic of this story is the Confucian ethic of filial piety manifested by the low-ranking Buddhist disciple. According to Confucian teachings, respect for teachers is not only a highly valued ethic but also a virtue intimately associated with filial piety and even with loyalty to the emperor:³² “A man who teaches you even only for one day should be treated like your own father (*yiri wei shi, zhongsheng wei fu* 一日為師，終生為父)”; “There are three things you should respect: the emperor, your parents, and your teacher. (*ren you sanzun, jun, qin, shi* 人有三尊，君、親、師).”³³ In general terms, filial piety in Confucian philosophy can be defined as a virtue of respect for one’s parents and ancestors, as well as of the hierarchies within a hierarchical social system: father–son, elder–junior, and male–female. In this sense, Confucian ethics, centered on obedience and loyalty

to the superior, unifies the virtues of respect for teachers, filial piety, and loyalty—into an organic whole, and in the case of *Konjaku*, filial piety functions as representative of this synthesis. The two major motifs in the Shintanbu section and other China-related stories in *Konjaku* are “sojourn in hell” and “filial piety”. As *Shin nihon koten bungaku taisei* (abbreviated as SNKBT) puts it, Fascicle 24 is about cultivated arts (such as Onmyōdō, medical skills, music, and literature), to echo the theme of Fascicle 23, which is physical and sporting activities (such as chivalry and horse racing), while Fascicle 19 is broadly devoted to stories of karmic rewards and retributions, with an emphasis on virtuous deeds. SNKBT editors also point out that stories No. 23–28 in Fascicle 19 are about filial obligations, with a focus on the relationships between masters and apprentices. The filial motif in this fascicle echoes the filial piety motif of Shintanbu Fascicle 9, and the paradigm of these stories later spawned the *Naki Fudō engi* 泣き不動縁起 (The Origin Tale of the Grace of Fudō Myōō) (Satake 1994, pp. 100, 382). The focus of *Konjaku* 19–24 is not the sophisticated skills of Onmyōdō but the selfless action of the low-ranking Buddhist disciple as a manifestation of filial piety. Since it is a story of Buddhism synthesized with Confucian ethics, instead of being categorized as “Secular Tales of Japan (Tales of Arts and Magic Arts) 本朝付世俗 (芸能譚 術譚)” in Fascicle 24, it was put in Fascicle 19, under the “Tales of Buddhism in Japan” section. Such a configuration allows for readers to identify the central idea of the story, while it also facilitates understanding of the narrative levels of this story.

But what happens to Seimei, the other prominent character in this story? His presence in this narrative is so crucial that it is still retained as an integral part of the later *Naki Fudō* tales, which were adaptations of this story for the purpose of promoting Mikkyō (the Vajrayana practices of Shingon Buddhism and the related practices), even though he is not credited for saving lives. And what is the relationship between him and Taizanfukun-sai? What role does the ritual of Taizan Fukun play in this story? There are three key participants in the *Konjaku* 19–24 story, each representing a separate ideology: the low-ranking Buddhist disciple, onmyōji Seimei, and the indigenized Chinese/Daoist deity Taizan Fukun. It seems that by employing the mysterious power of Taizan Fukun, Onmyōdō exceeded and trumped Buddhism in this story. This is peculiar since we know the stance of *Konjaku* is substantially Buddhist—especially taking into account the contemporaneous situation that Onmyōdō and Buddhism were competing with each other for patronages. Why would a story of Buddhism being surpassed by Onmyōdō appear in this Buddhist collection? Does it suggest that the Abe clan, who claimed the authority over Taizanfukun-sai, not only excelled among onmyōji practitioners but also somehow made their way to an esteemed position in a rival tradition? To examine the roles of the three major participants in this story, the storyline needs to be further analyzed.

8. Inner Story and Outer Story

Here I would like to follow the distinction between “inner” and “outer” stories,³⁴ which was first introduced by Karl S. Y. Kao and developed by Glen Dudbridge, and which is widely used to analyze supernatural Tang tales and other medieval Chinese narratives.³⁵ Since early medieval Japanese tales share many attributes and were largely influenced by their Chinese precedents, I hope to make an effort to extend the use of this marvelous theoretical tool to the Japanese field.

From the structural point of view, the story consists of two lines: the “inner story” and the “outer story”. Each speaks for a distinct set of perceptions. As Karl S. Y. Kao puts it in analyzing the two event-lines of a story, “The temporal and spatial settings of these two levels of story seem to be the same, but the outer story is in fact set explicitly in a ‘historical background’ ..., while in the inner story participants act as agents in taking the initiative to bring about the supernatural union.” Glen Dudbridge developed and modified the use of these two terms in his book. According to him, the inner story is “a highly colored adventure” sometimes “enhanced by the author or some intermediate informant to fit standard mythological norms, for those norms both prescribe and reflect the mental imagery of their parent culture”, and the outer story “creates a distance from all this” — “At

first sight its work of observation seems to give us what we ourselves might have seen if we had been there to see it. But of course the detachment is more apparent than real, for those observations are filtered through the minds of informants and shaped by the hand of the compiler.” (Dudbridge 1995, p. 15).

Referring to both of their points of views, I would like to introduce a modification of the terms “inner story” and “outer story” here to put *Konjaku* 19–24 in a new context. According to my modified definition, the outer story is the event-line that cannot be observed by the inner eyes of the participants in the story, while the inner story is a product of the compiler. The outer story is closely related to the plot and can be unfolded by being read from a viewpoint broken away from the narrative’s historical background, which is to say, a modern viewpoint, while the inner story draws attention to the special color (a mythological one or not) coated upon the anecdote by the author or the compiler. While analyzing the outer story helps to demystify a supernatural narrative, recognizing the participants as agents in taking the initiative in the inner story helps to discern the interactive contemporary social and cultural systems and their reverberation in the narration. Such an inner/outer perspective, translating the story into a specific discourse on a particular occasion, can help us to have a glimpse of the authorial intention as well as the forming of the narration.³⁶

From the outer-story perspective, a shaman doctor cures his patient in a mysterious way. In the view of modern minds, it is probable that Seimei secretly uses some medicine to treat the sick monk. This can also explain why the under-disciple as a substitute does not die—the petition is just a cover. Obviously, the high-ranking monk is at death’s door from his illness: in the narrative, all Buddhist prayers made by his disciples are in vain; even Seimei claims that the Ritual of Taizan Fukun cannot cure this fatal disease unless they “take a chance (*mōshi kae kokoromi mu* 申代へ試みむ)” by making someone a substitute—in other words, there is no assurance that the patient will be cured. Since the curative effect of the drugs is uncertain, asking someone to sacrifice his life to save the master is a smart trick for the onmyōji to keep his fame as an extraordinarily capable practitioner: if no one agrees to sacrifice his own life, Seimei can easily walk away without taking risks; and even if there happens to be a volunteer, since this person who offers himself as a substitute will certainly not die, the fact that the substitute is still alive can also provide him a good excuse if his treatment does not work.

From the inner story perspective, it is a fictional story fleshed out by the author(s) or compiler(s) with specific purposes. There are two protagonists in this story: onmyōji Abe no Seimei and the Buddhist under-disciple. Portrayed as an extraordinarily powerful magician, the Seimei character is apparently elevated in the narrative; but on a more hidden level, the under-disciple character is more elevated. As the title of this tale indicates, the main character is “the monk whose name was entered on a petition to the Lord of Mount Tai to take the place of his master”—who is actually a more impressive and touching character than Seimei. Compared with the superior, mystical, and aloof image of Seimei, the low-ranking monk who is poor and neglected but still keeps a noble heart is easier to resonate with readers, and his altruistic act of sacrificing himself to save his teacher is more impressive and moving. The image of Seimei constructed in *Konjaku* (by 19–24 and other four stories of him in Fascicle 24) as a paragon might be the reason for the Seimei character’s being retained in the later *Naki Fudō* stories, but the image of the under-disciple actually carries more weight. By addressing the inner story, the character of the filial Buddhist disciple can be read as an embodiment of *ren* 仁 (benevolence), the foundational virtue of Confucianism, synthesized with Buddhist compassion. Since the attribution of *ren* is attached to the personification of Mount Tai, Taishan Fujun, owing to Mount Tai’s Eastern location as I argued earlier, the implied explanation for the disciple’s surviving after having entered his name on the petition is that he is exempted from death for his benevolence by the other similarly benevolent, but relatively hidden, participant in this story—the deity of Mount Tai.

Another commonality between these two participants is the support for the hierarchical social system: while Mount Tai is a representative of Confucian virtues and a symbol of kingship, the disciple's act of sacrificing himself for his master is a striking manifestation of royalty within the hierarchical social system. Taking into account that Taizanfukun-sai functioned as an imperial ritualistic therapy (Nasu 1982, pp. 281–86), the values represented by Taizanfukun-sai in this story can be interpreted as an advocacy of royal authority, while the under-disciple character adds extra morals to the story as a symbol of the synthesis of Buddhist and Confucian moralities. From this perspective, the story told in *Konjaku* 19–24 is not about Buddhism being exceeded or trumped by Onmyōdō but rather about the syncretic ideology which comprises Buddhism, Confucian loyalty to the hierarchy and indigenized Daoist ritual fragments outweigh all.

As for the other group, Seimei and Taizan Fukun, the relationship between the two to some extent demonstrates a way of localizing the imported Daoist ritual fragments in Japan. Since Onmyōdō was originally a religious tradition greatly influenced by Daoist philosophies and traditional Chinese cosmology, it was not surprising for the Abe clan to exploit and monopolize those transmitted Daoist elements that were politically appealing to the Japanese imperial court. Yet, one thing worth noting is that in the process of indigenization, Onmyōdō and imported Daoist fragments formed a reciprocal relationship. The fact that the *Konjaku* 19–24 text does not have any direct depiction of the deity proves the point I mentioned earlier that compared with the largely humanized Chinese deity in *Konjaku* 7–19, the Onmyōdō deity in the Taizanfukun-sai is only an abstract notion. By reshaping the deity of Mount Tai while keeping his dual persona, Onmyōdō not only created an indigenized ritual for its own use but also helped to register Taizan Fukun, a representative of the imported Daoist fragments, as a local in the realm of Japanese religions. By hiding the deity behind Abe no Seimei, the Abe clan builds the image of Seimei as a powerful sorcerer with supernatural abilities and implies their exclusive control over the Taizanfukun-sai.

Despite the fact that Daoism was rejected by the Japanese imperial court as an organized religion due to the consciousness of Japan's own cultural identity, Daoist philosophies and practical systems had inevitably been introduced into Japan, casting a significant and profound influence over Japanese esoteric cosmology and folk beliefs. Indigenization ensured the Japanese adaptations of Daoist philosophies and practices were under the control of the imperial government. In *Konjaku* 19–24, while the character of the unnamed Buddhist disciple, a synthesis of Buddhist and Confucian virtues, represents the orthodox morality of the state, the figure of the legendary onmyōji Abe no Seimei can be viewed as a descendant and inheritor of the Daoist practices being introduced into Japan. Here, I would like to employ two philosophical terms for the purpose of understanding: *subject* (the party that has *subjective initiative* and points to *object*) and *object* (the party that is cognized and practiced and is pointed to by the *subject*). The narrator uses the character of the filial monk as the *subject*—the party that takes the initiative, or the entity in which the orthodox attributes inhere—to give an orthodox overtone to the narration, with a real intention to build up Seimei's figure, namely the *object*—the passive party, an image that was finished, built up, and enhanced deliberately. The reason that the disciple character is more exalted in the narration is that he is the *subject*, the agent that on behalf of the ethics of the orthodoxy, representing the stand of the narrator, while Seimei, who seems to be the protagonist, is actually the passive party, the *object*. The narrative shows a process: the *subject* (the disciple character representing the orthodoxy of the state) acts on and then transforms the *object* (the image of onmyōji Seimei symbolizing the drifting Daoist elements which are threats to the orthodoxy). The *subject* objectifies its own nature and structure dynamically in the narration, to infiltrate and to integrate with the *object*, so as to make the *object* an integral part of its structure (in *Konjaku* 19–24's case, to adapt those drifting Daoist elements under the control of the imperial government), to make the object an avatar (manifestation, incarnation, embodiment...) and a projection of the subject, a work that confirms and reflects the attribute of the subject. Through this process, the orthodox

color of the disciple character is projected on the image of Seimei, transforming the drifting Daoist fragments behind this image into an integral part of the orthodox structure. To put it another way, as a way to draw the imported Daoist fragments into the state's orthodox system, by boosting the prestige of the figure of Seimei, the representative of Onmyōdō, in the early popular tales, the Japanese imperial court built up and reinforced the legitimacy of Onmyōdō as an imperial tool. And this is why there is such a story of Buddhism seemingly being exceeded and trumped by Onmyōdō in the *Konjaku* collection: it is not that one religious tradition outperforms another, but the supremacy of the state overwhelms all.

9. Conclusions

Although Daoism was rejected by the Japanese imperial court as an organized religion, Daoist fragments such as the Taishan Fujun belief have been transmitted to Japan and integrated with Japanese indigenous ritual practices. While the Lord of Mount Tai's authority over death was still underlined in the Onmyōdō ritual Taizanfukun-sai, the Japanese version of the deity, Taizan Fukun, was transformed into an abstract concept, a detached symbol of Daoist connotations. The reason for this deity being selected can be traced back to ancient Chinese mythology and geomancy, which constructed the deity's dual characteristics: supporting heaven and governing the netherworld. The reason for the deity of Mount Tai being exalted in the *Konjaku* narrative is that it not only catered to the Japanese rulers' needs of affirming royal authority but was also compatible with the existing imperial cult. Taishan Fujun, as a representative of the imported Daoist-related elements, was selected by the Japanese authorities as a means to integrate authority over heaven, earth, and humanity.

The indigenization of the Taishan Fujun belief is manifested in *Konjaku* 19–24. The fact that this story is in Fascicle 19 under the “Tales of Buddhism in Japan” category not only suggests that the transformed deity of Mount Tai had been brought under the control of the Japanese but also gives a clue to identify the central idea of the story: *ren* (benevolence), the orthodox ethics represented by the Buddhist under-disciple character, which was closely associated with filial piety and loyalty to the emperor. The values represented by Taizanfukun-sai in this story can be interpreted as an advocacy of royal authority, while the under-disciple character adds extra morals to the story as a symbol of the synthesis of Buddhist and Confucian moralities. Under the Abe clan's monopoly of this ritual, Onmyōdō and imported Daoist fragments formed a reciprocal relationship. The narrative suggests that, as a way to draw the imported Daoist fragments into the state's orthodox system, by boosting the prestige of the figure of Seimei, the representative of Onmyōdō, the Japanese imperial court built up and reinforced the legitimacy of Onmyōdō as an imperial tool.

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Notes

¹ See (Miyata 1976, 1992; Okamoto 1967; Haga 1970; Kunisaki 1962). Longer studies and collections of translations in Western languages include: Marian Ury's *Tales of Times Now Past: Sixty-Two Stories from a Medieval Japanese Collection* (Ury [1979] 1993), which introduces the four major sections of *Konjaku* including the “Tales of China” section with a page of summary and analysis; Robert H. Brower's (1952) doctoral dissertation, *The Konjaku monogatari: An Historical and Critical Introduction, with Annotated Translations of Seventy-eight Tales*; Bernard Frank's (1968) *Histoires qui sont maintenant du passé*; two collections of selected translations into German by Satoshi Tsukakoshi (1956) and by Horst Hammitzsch et al. (1965); S. W. Jones's (Jones 1959) *Ages Ago: Thirty-Seven Tales from the Konjaku monogatari Collection*; Hiroko Kobayashi's (1979) *The Human Comedy of Heian Japan: A Study of the Secular Stories in the Twelfth-Century Collection of Tales, Konjaku monogatari shū*. There are also a number of English articles, such as (Mori 1982; Wilson 1973; Kelsey 1975).

² See (Fukunaga 1978, 1985; Fukunaga et al. 1987). For more Japanese scholarship on this topic, see (Fukunaga 1982, 1985; Fukunaga et al. 1978, 1987; Kubo 1977, 1983, 1986; Senda 1997).

- (Seidel 2002, p. 115). For more scholarship on the history and development of Onmyōdō in Japan, see (Murayama 1981; R. Saitō 2007; H. Saitō [2007] 2008; Shigeta 2004, 2005; Tanaka 2003; Yoshino 1998; Yamashita 1996; Shimode 1997).
- I am also greatly indebted to Joseph P. Elacqua, whose thesis *Lord of the Eastern Peak* from the religious point of view has provided me with great help and inspiration (Elacqua 2010).
- Whether Taishan Fujun is a “Daoist” deity or just a “Chinese” one is a controversial issue. Japanese scholars, such as Fukunaga Mitsuji, Sakai Tadao (*Taizan shinkō no kenkyū*), and Saitō Hideki (*Onmyōdō no kamigami*), generally regard it as a Daoist deity. But, according to the more rigorous definition Western scholars have, it should only be considered an ancient Chinese deity. According to my understanding, Taishan Fujun is a Chinese folk deity adopted by Daoism. Even though Daoist elites consider themselves as in opposition to folk religions at the institutional level, in actual practice, Chinese folk beliefs and Daoism are often difficult to differentiate into distinct groups due to the folk origin of Daoism and Daoism’s constant absorption of folk-religious elements. Taking into consideration that Taishan Fujun appeared in *Zhengao* 真誥 (or *The Declarations of the Perfected*), a sixth century scripture recording the history of the Shangqing faction of Daoism, and that the worship of Taishan Fujun (which is different from the “King of Mount Tai” titled by the Chinese Buddhist bureaucracy of the Ten Kings) is a Daoist practice in China, it is at least a Daoist-related deity in China that possesses a strong Daoist color. In fact, some Western scholars, such as Anna Seidel, also label it as a Daoist deity. Therefore, I put it into the Daoist category in this paper.
- See Ying Shao (153–196 CE), *Fengsu tongyi*, 2 (Ying 1985).
- The extant references to Taishan Fujun in the Chinese literature before the approximate date for the *Konjaku* completion mainly include: *Sou shen ji* 搜神記 4-4; *Taiyu fujun ji* 泰獄府君記; *Sou shen houji* 搜神後記 3; *Sanguo zhi Pei Songzhi zhu* 三國志裴松之注; *Youming ji* 幽冥記; *Zhoushi mingtong ji* 周氏冥通記; *Fayuan zhulin* 法苑珠林 6, 18, 21, 28, 33, 44, 62, 91; *Taiping guang ji* 太平廣記 86, 102, 109, 157, 283, 293, 297, 298, 314, 320, 323, 324, 327, 337.
- Here, the text is a little different from the Chinese origin *Ming bao ji* 冥報記 (MBJ, 2:1). MBJ has the additional text “*yu sizhe jiangzhi* 遇死者將至,” which attributes the death of these people to “(the Deity) just running into the time of their death”, alongside *Konjaku*’s explanation “frightened to death of (the Deity’s) sudden appearance.”
- Grammar reference: (Shirane 2005).
- MBJ: “僧因延坐。談說如人。”; *Konjaku*: “神、僧と近く坐し給て、語ひ給ふ事、人の如し。”
- See *Shōyūki*, the diary of Fujiwara no Sanesuke (957–1046); *Zoku Shika Waka-shū* by Fujiwara no Kiyosuke (1104–1177); and *Konjaku* 19–24.
- For Chinese scholarly works on the cult of Mount Tai, see (Zhang 2009; Fan 2004).
- Zuo zhuan*, “Duke Zhuang Year 22” (Kong 1936).
- Wuyue* 五嶽 (The Five Great Mountains) refers to: the “North Great Mountain” (*beiyue* 北嶽) Mount Heng (*hengshan* 恆山), “South Great Mountain” (*nanyue* 南嶽) Mount Heng (*hengshan* 衡山), “East Great Mountain” (*dongyue* 東嶽) Mount Tai (*taishan* 泰山), “West Great Mountain” (*xiyue* 西嶽) Mount Hua (*huashan* 華山), and “Central Great Mountain” (*zhongyue* 中嶽) Mount Song (*songshan* 嵩山). They are arranged according to the five cardinal directions of Chinese geomancy, which also includes the center as a direction. For more scholarship on Mount Tai, see (Endō 1985; Fan 2004; Takase 1969).
- Zhang Hua, *Bowu Zhi* 1 (Zhang 1985).
- Gu Yanwu, *Ri Zhi Lu* 30 (Gu 1695).
- The *feng* is a sacrifice to heaven, and the *shan* is a sacrifice to earth.
- Shang shu*: Canon of Shun, Book of Yu.
- Some modern scholars argue that *dong* 東 was a *jiajiezi* (phonetic loan) of the character 東 or a *zhishizi* 指事字 (ideogram) following the pronunciation of 東. See (Yu 1979, pp. 447–48). Yet, according to the explanation in Xu Shen’s *Shuo wen jie zi* that this character is “sun in wood (*cong ri zai mu zhong* 從日在木中)”, which I think is more reasonable with other evidence (cf. Chen 2009), I maintain that 東 should be a *huiyizi* (combined ideogram) in the Chinese character classification (*liushu* 六書, or the six types of Han characters).
- Early versions of the text may have existed since the fourth century BCE, but the present form of the text was not completed until the early Han dynasty.
- Here, I follow Duan Yucai’s (1735–1815) annotation of *Shuo wen jiezi*. Fan (2004) says in the ancient oracle bone inscriptions (*jiaguwen* 甲骨文), *mu* 木 is an equivalent to *sang* 桑. After searching for references, I doubt this statement so I do not use it to support my argument. Yet, it can still be a positive and possible implication for the link between the formula 日出扶桑 and 東.
- Generally speaking, “the wood *fu* 榑木” or “the wood *sang* 桑木” are used as the synonyms of *fusang*.
- The *bagua* are eight diagrams used in Chinese cosmology to represent the fundamental principles of reality, seen as a set of eight interconnected concepts. Each consists of three lines, each line either “broken” or “unbroken”, representing *yin* or *yang*, respectively. Because of the tripartite structure, they are often referred to as “trigrams” in English. There are two arrangements for the representation of the relationships between these trigrams, the Primordial *bagua* (Fuxi’s Earlier Heaven sequence, or *Fuxi xiantian bagua* 伏羲先天八卦) and the Manifested *bagua* (King Wen’s Later Heaven sequence, or *Wenwang houtian bagua* 文王后天八卦). Generally speaking, the Manifested sequence is the traditional sequence of the hexagrams used in most contemporary editions

of the *Book of Changes*. It is believed that the Primordial one reflects the pattern before the creation of the world, while the Manifested one is viewed as the opposite. In terms of time and space, the Primordial one is more temporal, while the Manifested one is more spatial. Taking into account that Mount Tai is in correspondence with the two features of the Manifested one, which is also more widely used, I adopt the Manifested sequence here.

For example, Fu Xi 伏羲 was born at Leizei 雷澤 (literally “thunder swamp”).

“Shuo Gua Zhuan 說卦傳” in *Yi jing*. See (Fu 1985).

According to this interpretation, this phrase means that the handle of the Big Dipper points to the east at the spring equinox.

Sou shen ji Vol. 3: “注南斗注生，北斗注死。凡人受胎，皆從南斗過北斗，所有祈求，皆向北斗。” See (Gan 1979).

Sixty-three works with 499 chapters, including *Dao de jing* 道德經, *Bao pu zi* 抱樸子, *Shenxian zhuan* 神仙傳, *Lie xian zhuan* 列仙傳, *Taishang lingbao jing* 太上靈寶經. See (Kubo 1995, pp. 57–86).

Lucia Dolce mentions that by the late eleventh century Polaris was sometimes identified with Taizan Fukun in Onmyōdō through Myōken Bosatsu 妙見菩薩, who was venerated as Sonshō 尊星王 at court and in the area of the capital. See (Dolce 2006, pp. 16–17).

Abe no Seimei (安倍晴明, 921? or 911?–1005?) was a mid-Heian-period master of Onmyōdō and founder of the Tsuchimikado 土御門 clan. Popular collections of tales like *Konjaku monogatari* and *Uji shūi monogatari* include stories describing Abe’s use of divinatory techniques, generally portraying him as a person of extraordinary paranormal powers. These tales particularly emphasize his ability to channel the familiar spirits called *shikigami*. He is unreliably credited with having written the five-volume *Hokinaden*, which details secret techniques of divination. One theory maintains that Abe passed away at the age of eighty-five on the twenty-sixth day of the ninth month of 1005, but no account has gained universal acceptance. He is attributed with having written many texts, and one that clearly bears his name is a volume of the *Senji Ryakketsu*, which details six thousand forecasts and thirty-six fortune-telling techniques based on divination through the use of *shikigami*. Fortunes relating to everyday issues such as prenatal determination of an infant’s sex, matters of personal conduct, and the location and reclamation of articles lost to theft make up the majority of this work. Other legends of his feats of divination and magic are translated in (Mills 1970, pp. 175–76, 339–41, 411–12).

It is very interesting that Marian Ury translated this name as “Daoist doctor” (Ury [1979] 1993, p. 124).

The earliest account of mentioning the respect for teacher is in *Hou han shu* 後漢書, the official history of the Later (or Eastern) Han Dynasty (25–221 CE), compiled by Fan Ye 范曄 (398–445 CE). There is a sentence saying, “I heard all the emperors of keen intelligence and excellent judgment honor teachers and respect teachings. 臣聞明王聖主，莫不尊師貴道” in the “Biography of Kong Xi 孔僖傳”. See (Fan 2009).

Ban Gu 班固 (32–92 CE), *Bai hu tong yi* 白虎通義. (Ban 1968).

These terms were used by Karl S. Y. Kao to analyze a story in his ‘Introduction’ to *Classical Chinese Tales of The Supernatural and Fantastic* (Kao 1985, p. 32). Glen Dudbridge discussed their further use in (Dudbridge 1995).

For example, Stephen F. Teiser follows this distinction in analyzing the twenty-ninth story in *A Record of the Numinous Verifications of Images of Dizang Bodhisattva* 地藏菩薩像靈驗記 in his book (Teiser 2003, pp. 46–48).

By “narration” here I mean the forming process of the production of text. I follow Kenan’s definition of this term in *Narrative Fiction* (Rimmon-Kenan 2002).

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