

On the *Lao-tzŭ-pa-shi-i-hua-t'u-shuo*

—with Reference to its Source Materials—

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A Chinese Buddhist tradition has it that there were bitter disputes between Buddhists and Taoists in the reign of Hsien-tsung (憲宗) of the Yüan dynasty. According to Shih Hsiang-mai's (釋祥邁) *Chih-yüan-pien-wei-lu* (至元辯僞錄), the main source material for this affair, the adherents of the Chüan-chên-chiao sect (全真教) fabricated a book entitled *Lao-tzŭ-pa-shi-i-hua-t'u-shuo* (老子八十一化圖說) with reference to the tradition that Lao-tzŭ (老子) went to India, turned himself into Gautama Buddha and preached there. Coming to know this fact, Buddhists complained to the Emperor Hsien-tsung, and were held public confrontations between them in the presence of the Emperor. Taoists got the worst of the disputation. And copies of the book were destroyed by fire together with the printing blocks.

Nevertheless, we have at the present three extant texts which bear the same title. After a close comparison of part of the extant texts with the eighty-one pictures presented in the *Chih-yüan-pien-wei-lu* in an attempt to clarify the relationship between the extant texts and the original, Dr. Fukui has come to the conclusion that the former are abridgements of the latter. Dr. Yoshioka, on the other hand, maintains after his own study into the extant texts, the original and the *yu-lung-chuang* (猶龍傳) that the extant texts are almost the same as the original text of the *Lao-tzŭ-pa-shi-i-hua-t'u-shuo*, and that the main source of the former is the *Yu-lung-chuang*.

However, considering the facts that a number of discrepancies in style

and structure between the extant texts and the original in the very list of collation by Dr. Yoshioka, that the printing blocks were burnt by the imperial order, and that in the extant texts are not infrequently quoted passages which are not found in the *Yu-lung-chuang*, I came to doubt Dr. Ynshioka's contention, and started investigating as many related materials as possible and making a close collation of them. As a result, I have come to the following conclusion—the extant texts contain only a part of the original; both the former and the latter have many quotations from various sources including the *Yu-lung-chuang*; the extant texts apparently cite from the lost part of the original and other sources, and arrange them into eighty-one items; and they were probably compiled in the Min dynasty.

(The present article is a continuation of my previous one, "On *Lao-tzū-pa-shi-i-hua-t'u-shuo*—Did Ch'ên-chih-hsu compile it?—", *The Memoirs*, No. 46.)