

中華佛學學報第 4 期 (p379-450) : (民國 80 年), 臺北: 中華佛學研究所, <http://www.chibs.edu.tw>
Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal, No. 04, (1991)
Taipei: The Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies
ISSN: 1071-7132

"Structure" and "Communitas" in PoC hü-yi's Tomb Inscription

Koichi Shinohara

Professor. McMaster University

p. 379

Summary

Chinese Buddhist biographies in the three major collections, Kao-seng chuan, Hsü Kao-seng chuan, and sung Kao-seng chuan, are largely based on stupa inscriptions, ie., tomb inscriptions for monks. The stupainscriptions were generally written by secular scholar-officials, in many cases men of great literary fame occupying high government positions. As a consequence, these documents might reasonably be interpreted as reflecting the religiosity of such educated and privileged lay Buddhist followers or sympathizers. In this paper I investigated the implications of these basic facts by examining in some detail the inscriptions written by Po Chü-yi (772-846), the famous T'ang poet who occupied several very high offices in the course of his long career in government. My strategy was to examine Po

Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions by (1) placing them in the larger context of the entire category of tomb inscriptions that Po Chü-yi wrote, and (2) identifying one important aspect of the rhetorical dynamic of these inscriptions. I used the concepts "structure" and "communitas" proposed by an anthropologist Victor Turner in identifying this rhetorical dynamic. Turner suggested that we understand our social experiences and our places in society in terms of two contrasting models: (1) "society as a structure of jural, political, and economic individuals" ("a differentiated, culturally structured, segmented, and often hierarchical system of institutionalized positions"), and (2) "communitas of concrete idiosyncratic individuals, who, though differing in physical and mental endowment, are nevertheless regarded as equal in terms of shared humanity ("society as an undifferentiated, homogeneous whole, in which individuals confront one another integrally").

p. 380

My central conclusion in the present paper is that these two often contradictory views of society and the individuals' relationship to it are found in Po Chü-yi's tomb inscriptions in general as well as in his stupa inscriptions. I further anticipate that this conclusion might apply more generally to at least a large part of Chinese tomb and stupa inscriptions written by other authors.

The paper is divided into three sections. In the first section, I discuss the two autobiographical inscriptions that Po Chü-yi wrote for himself: the "Internal Tomb Inscription of a Drunken Poet" and the "Biography of A Drunken Poet." In the former Po Chü-yi wrote about himself using the conventions of tomb inscriptions, which were usually composed after the death of the subject. The "structural" elements are generally prominent in tomb inscriptions, which describe the successful official careers of their subjects in glowing terms. Such a biography written by the subject himself implies a basic contradiction, and that contradiction surfaces in a condensed manner in Po Chü-yi's fictitious description of his own death. Po Chü-yi's autobiographical voice intrudes loudly here, and that voice speaks in the language of "communitas". The language of "communitas" is a good deal more prominent in the second work, which Po Chü-yi wished to be carved on stone and placed near his tomb. Here Po Chü-yi draws a self-portrait in a

highly poetic language, in which the subject "forgets" his worldly self and achieves spiritual fulfilment through wine and poetry.

In the second part of the paper I examined the tomb inscriptions written by Po Chü-yi by focusing on two examples: the "Tomb Inscription for Lord Wang, Administrator of the Granary Section of Yang-chou Prefecture of the T'ang Dynasty" and the "External Tomb Inscription for Lord Wu, Regional Chief of Jao-chou Prefecture". As is usual in most tomb inscriptions these two inscriptions describe the lives of their subjects with considerable emphasis on "structural" features (family background, official examinations they passed, and government offices they occupied, etc.). Yet, these inscriptions also introduce the "communitas" viewpoint as well: in the case of the inscription for Lord Wang through commenting on the subject's life by reference to the concept

p. 381

of "fate", and that for Lord Wu by appending to the more "structural" biographical passage which describes the subject's life in terms of his official appointments another private biography describing his Taoist cultivation. The passage on Taoist cultivation is more "communitas" oriented as most description of religious practices tend to be, but here an even higher "communitas" is posited as an ideal that fuses the two aspects of the subject's life.

In the third part of the paper I examine surviving stupa inscriptions written by Po Chü-yi. Here I chose to focus on two examples: the "Inscription for the Transmission of the Law Hall" and the "stupa inscription of the Great Master Ming-yüan of Great T'ang, the Master of the Precepts Platform at the K'ai-yüan temple of Ssu-chou Prefecture, Highest Monastic Official of the Three Prefectures of Hsü-chou, Ssu-chou, and Hao". The first inscription describes the subject's life through a set of questions and answers: the "structural" viewpoint is prominent in the answers that describe the basic facts of the subject's life, the lineage of the teaching he received, and his relationship to other contemporary teachers: the "communitas" viewpoint is prominent in the answer that give the subject's spiritual biography and the essence of his teaching. The emphasis on the "structural" viewpoint in Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions, generally more notable in the first part of the inscriptions, may reflect the advanced degree of institutionalization in T'ang

Buddhism; it might also reflect the basic character of these documents as works of secular scholar-officials. In the inscription for Ming-yüan, the subject's life is described in considerable detail from the "structural" point of view and the "communitas" viewpoint is found in the rhetorical verse that alludes to famous passages in the Buddhist scripture. What is distinctive in this case is the fact that there appears to be no tension between the "structural" and "communitas" viewpoints represented here.

p. 382

1.Introduction

Chinese Buddhist biographies are largely based on stupa inscriptions, i.e., tomb inscriptions for monks. In an earlier study (Shinohara, 1986), I investigated the relationship between the biographies of monks collected in the three major works, Kao-seng chuan ("Biographies of Eminent Monks"), Hsü kao-seng chuan ("Further Biographies of Eminent Monks"), and sung kao-seng chuan ("Sung Biographies of Eminent Monks"), and the stupa inscriptions on which these biographies are based. Many biographies in these collections mention explicitly the inscriptions written and carved on stone at the tomb site. In some cases, all from the latest Sung kao-seng chuan, the text of the inscriptions on which the biographies are based is still preserved. My conclusions based on an analysis of these materials included the following observations. The stupa inscriptions of these monks were generally written by secular scholar-officials, in many cases men of great literary fame occupying high government positions. As a consequence, these documents might reasonably be interpreted as reflecting the religiosity of such educated and privileged lay Buddhist followers or sympathizers. In the discussion that follows I would like to pursue this line of investigation by focusing on the inscriptions written Po chü-yi (772-846), the famous T'ang poet who occupied several very high offices in the course of his long career in government^[1]. I have chosen this author for several reasons. Po Chü-yi's name is mentioned with some frequency as the author of stupa inscriptions in the Sung collection of Buddhist biographies. Several examples of Po Chü-yi's tomb inscriptions, including a

few stupa inscriptions for monks, are preserved in his collected works. And finally, Po Chü-yi's self-portrait and the tomb inscription he composed for himself provide us with some helpful insights into the internal dynamics of tomb inscriptions in general. Thus,

p. 383

focusing on Po Chü-yi's tomb inscriptions I hope to develop a general hypothesis regarding the nature and dynamics of tomb inscriptions as biographies. This analysis then should in turn help me to interpret Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions within a broader framework.

In this study I will first offer some observations concerning the dynamics of Chinese tomb inscriptions based on an analysis of the two "autobiographical" inscriptions written by Po Chü-yi. In this context I will introduce Victor Turner's distinction between "structure" and "communitas" and a related concept "liminality" in order to interpret the broader significance of these dynamics. I will then move on to discuss some other, more typical examples of Po Chü-yi's tomb inscriptions and establish that the same inner dynamics are also at work in these inscriptions. Finally, I will move my focus to Po Chü-yi's stupainscriptions for Buddhist monks and comment on them on the basis of the general observations developed earlier.

2. Po Chü-yi's "autobiographical" inscriptions

Po Chü-yi's tomb inscription is of particular interest to us since this inscription was written by Po Chü-yi himself^[2]. Tomb inscriptions (mu-chih ming) carved on stone and buried inside the grave were normally composed by prestigious writer-officials after the death of their subjects. Po Chü-yi's tomb inscription is thus clearly unusual in that it was composed by the subject himself. In addition, in this inscription Po Chü-yi specifies that only one stone inscription with the text of his short essay, "The Biography of A Drunken Poet" (Tsui-yin hsien-sheng chuan) should be placed outside his tomb. Both these texts are preserved and we will begin our discussion of Po Chü-yi's inscriptions with a detailed analysis of these two texts.

These two texts, as it is often the case with traditional Chinese writings, were written with specific literary antecedents in mind. T'ao Ch'ien, Po Chü-yi's favorite poet, had written "a short and fanciful autobiographical sketch", "The Gentleman of Five Willow Trees" (Wu liu hsien sheng chuan)" (Hightower, 1970:4). As the original Chinese titles of the two works and the similarity in content indicate, Po Chü-yi's "The Biography of a Drunken Poet" is his attempt to write a fanciful autobiographical sketch in the same spirit. T'ao Ch'ien also wrote an "elegy" for himself (Tzu-chi-wen, "sacrifice text composed by the subject [i.e., the deceased] himself"). The elegy was probably written in the last year of his life, and maybe on the eve of his death. (5). Po Chü-yi's "tomb inscription composed by the subject himself" must have been composed with T'ao Ch'ien's work in mind. In this case, however, the shift in the context from that of chi-wen ("sacrifice text" which was read and burned as an offering to the spirit of the deceased) to tomb inscription introduces changes that are of particular interest for our purposes here, as will become clear in the discussion below.

a) Po Chü-yi's own tomb inscription: (Tsui-yin hsien-sheng mu-chih ming, "the internal tomb inscription of a drunken poet")[\[3\]](#)

This inscription (PCYC, 1503-1505) follows faithfully the normal conventions of tomb inscriptions. Thus it begins by giving the surname, given name, and style of the subject, Po Chü-yi. Then follows a rather detailed description of the subject's background: first his family's origin in T'ai-yuan and its connection with an ancient figure, Ch'in general Po Ch'i, Lord of Wu-an,

and then a list of his closer ancestors (going four generations back) with their posthumous names and official ranks. The account of his father's official career is followed by a brief description of his mother, giving her family name and posthumous name; then a brief comment on his wife. in this case, since she was still alive, giving only her family name; after that the names and ranks of his older brother and younger brother. His daughter

is mentioned along with the name and rank of her husband, then the names and titles of his three nephews with the statement that Po Chü-yi did not have a son and a son of his nephew was to look after his family after his death.

The inscription then shifts to Po Chü-yi himself. He loved learning in his youth and became a good writer. He passed three stages of official examinations (chin-shin: "presented scholar", pa-ts'ui: "outstanding excellence", and chin-chu: "special")^[4] His first and last appointments, both very prestigious, are named with the added information that he occupied 20 offices during the forty years that he served in government. He was Confucian in cultivating his conduct externally, Buddhist in controlling his mind internally, and in his spare time he enjoyed "mountains, waters, the moon, winds, songs, poems, zithers, and wine". The collection of his writings in seventy chüan containing 3,720 poems and his encyclopedia in thirty sections containing 1,130 items are mentioned, and we are told that since Po Chü-yi's experiences and sentiments are described concretely in the materials in his collected works, no detailed description of these matters will be given in the inscription itself.

The next section focuses on Po Chü-yi's death and funeral. The dates and the location of the residences in which he was born and died (spaces for the month and day of his death left blank) are given in a parallel fashion. The place of burial is given, along with blanks for his age at death and the dates, with the statement that he was buried next to his grandfather and his father. Then an anecdote follows. On the night of his death, Po Chü-yu told his wife

p. 386

and nephews that he was fortunate to have lived a long life and to have achieved a high official standing, and that he had become famous without having done anything to benefit the people. He then instructed them that his funeral should be very simple and that they should erect only one stone in front of his tomb on which his "Biography of A Drunken Poet" is to be carved. After these words, Po Chü-yi's ended his life.

The inscription then concludes in a conventional manner with a verse, but with the unusual feature again that the verse was composed by Po Chü-yi

himself. The verse sings of the unreality of death and pointlessness of attachment to life, using phrases that are distinctively Buddhist and Taoist: "Le-t'ien (Po Chü-yi's style)! Le-t'ien! He lived between Heaven and Earth for seventy-five years. His life was like a floating cloud; his death was like the casting of an old integument (as by snakes and cicadas). What was the cause of his coming? What was the condition of his going? Our nature does not change. Our body changes frequently. It is over! It is over! Where would I not go? And what justifies hating or loving this life?"

As a tomb inscription composed by the subject himself this inscription has a fundamentally contradictory character. I have noted earlier that Po Chü-yi is here following the example of T'ao Ch'ien, but the contradiction appears to have broader consequences in his case since he chose to compose the tomb inscription (*mu-chih ming*), whereas T'ao Ch'ien was writing an elegy to be read at his funeral. The significance of this difference becomes clearer if we examine Po Chü-yi's use of the conventions of tomb inscriptions more closely[5].

A later manual for composing inscriptions, *Mu-ming chu-li* by Wang Hsing of the Yüan dynasty, lists thirteen items that should be included in tomb

p. 387

inscriptions: 1.posthumous name, 2.style, 3.surname, 4.place of origin of the family, 5.ancestors (going back three or four generations), 6.deeds (especially those prior to appointments), 7.official appointments, 8.date of death, 9.age, 10.wife's surname, 11.children (including the positions occupied by the sons), 12.date of burial, and 13.place of burial (CSSL, 125). Po Chü-yi's inscription summarized above contains information on all these items except item 1, posthumous name, and the exact dates of his death and burial. Since the inscription was composed by Po Chü-yi himself, he could hardly have known these details. However it was a common practice for the writer of tomb inscriptions to use blank space or the character *mu* for details of these dates. When the text was carved on stone, these blanks were filled with correct numbers. Po Chü-yi clearly followed the conventional format for tomb inscriptions when he composed an inscription for himself.

A closer examination, however, reveals irregularities. If he composed this inscription during his lifetime, how could the anecdote about his last

instructions be based on fact? Po Chü-yi here must have been expressing in this way his wish concerning his funeral. It has also been noted that the place of burial mentioned here, "northern field in the Lin-chin li, Hsia-kuei District, Hua Prefecture" does not match the present location of Po Chü-yi's tomb in Lung-men near Lo-yang. Apparently, Po Chü-yi first wished to be buried in the location mentioned in this inscription but later changed his mind and chose Lung-men as the place of burial.^[6] This confirms our reading that in this "tomb inscription composed by the subject himself", Po Chü-yi was expressing his wishes

p. 388

concerning his funeral and burial. He was using the conventions of the tomb inscription to define how he was to be remembered after his death.

Tomb inscriptions were normally prepared by the subject's family and friends to glorify the life of the subject. In traditional China the funeral was an important occasion in which the life of the subject was publicly evaluated and the evaluation was ceremonially demonstrated. The building of the tomb and the preparation of the tomb inscription were an important part of this process, and thus the convention of having a well-known writer-official compose the inscription ought to be interpreted as an important part of these efforts to decorate the life of the subject with maximum prestige. The list of thirteen items conventionally included in the inscription also reflects this basic context. Given the importance of family relationships in traditional China, it makes sense, for example, that the inscription, in trying to glorify the life of the subject, mentioned the origin of the family, often going back to a well-known hero in the remote past, and listed the offices held by the subject's immediate ancestors.

The contradiction in a "tomb inscription composed by the subject" becomes more apparent if we reflect on this inherent nature of tomb inscriptions. In composing a tomb inscription for himself, and following the conventions of tomb inscriptions, Po Chü-yi was forced to engage in a certain amount of self-glorification, not acceptable conduct in the light of the dominant Confucian morality in traditional China. This tension appears to be reflected in the contrast between the conventional items and the two sections toward the end of the inscription where Po Chü-yi's person appears more vividly. Thus, the instruction on his death bed given in the fictitious anecdote

directly contradicts the inherent logic of tomb inscriptions by stating explicitly that he does not wish to have an ostentatious funeral and burial. Secondly, the verse (ming) that concludes this inscription expresses the view that the worldly details of a man's life and death are not important for someone with Po Chü-yi's religious views. In these parts of the inscription, then, Po Chü-yi's is speaking autobiographically, summarizing the significance of his life from his personal

p. 389

and religious point of view and giving some specific instructions concerning his funeral and burial. What interests us here is that Po Chü-yi chose the form of a tomb instruction to express these views. Other-worldly attitudes are instructions in a document that by convention was meant to highlight social status and accomplishments. Even if we keep in mind the precedent of a favorite poet it may still not be entirely out of place to ask how these two contradictory viewpoints are to be related to each other.

One point seems to be clear: it was precisely because the manner in which one was remembered after death in traditional China was so strongly bound by conventions that Po Chu-yi was able to borrow these conventions to express how he himself wished to be remembered, the contrast with conventional expectations and the irony thereby achieved adding emphasis to his point of view. The irony of Po Chü-yi's autobiographical writing is more apparent in the other document we need to examine here.

b) The Biography of A Drunken Poet (Tsui-yin hsien-sheng chuan)

By convention tomb inscriptions were buried in the tomb with the coffin. Other types of inscriptions, for example, one called shen-tao-pei, were erected outside the tomb. Po Chü-yi in expressing his wish for simple burial, instructed explicitly that no such external inscription should be made^[7]. Instead he requested that a stone with his "Biography of A Drunken Poet" (PCYC, 1485-1487) be placed at his tomb. Let us now turn to a brief examination of this document.

This "biography" begins with a statement that the subject has forgotten his surname, courtesy name (tzu), place of origin of his family and official appointments. Thus, he "does not know who he is". The text states that after

p. 390

thirty years of government service the subject has retired. A description of his life in retirement follows: in his estate there is a large pond, a bamboo grove, tall trees, pavilions and bridges. He is poor but not to the point of suffering from cold weather and hunger; he is old but not yet senile. He loves wine, the zither, and poetry, His friends, bound by love of these three pleasures and by their common interests in Buddhism, are then mentioned. The subject has visited all places of cultural interest and natural beauty in the neighborhood of Lo-yang: Taoist and Buddhist temples, hills and fields, and gardens; he has met families which offer good wine or own fine zithers, and those with books, and who present performances of songs and dances. Whoever invites him to a party, he goes. On beautiful days, or in mornings after a snow, or full-moon evenings, he gets together with friends to drink and recite poetry. As he begins to feel the effects of wine, he picks up the zither and play "Autumn thought",^[8] if so inclined, he orders his servants to perform "The immortal's dress of rainbow and feathers";^[9] if he is really having a good time, he orders his female

p. 391

tertainer to sing the "Branches of a willow tree",^[10] Carefree and having a good time, he stops only after he has become completely inebriated.

Often he visits neighbors, and takes a trip into the village, he rides to the city and goes to the field carrying things on his shoulder. He takes a zither, a pillow, and several chüans of the poetry of T'ao Ch'ien and Hsieh Ling-yün. He carries a fishing stick with a wine bottle hanging from one end. Looking for beautiful scenery, he would go as his sentiments drive him and return only after he has had a great time playing the zither and drinking. Living like this for ten years, the subject has written over a thousand poems and consumed a great deal of wine.

The second section of the text centers around an anecdote concerning the subject's love of wine. When members of his family became concerned about his excessive drinking and criticized him repeatedly, the subject responded as follows: human nature is seldom perfectly balanced (chung); his own nature is not perfectly balanced, and if he were unlucky, he might

have ended up with loving profit making excessively, or with loving gambling, or with loving the elixir of immortality; all these unbalanced loves risk catastrophes for oneself and for one's family, luckily, he does not love those things, he is content simply with drinking and reciting poetry. This love of drinking and reciting poetry is harmless compared to the above three examples. Here he cites two examples of Liu Po-lun (or Liu Ling)[[11](#)] and Wang Wu-kung (or Wang Chi)[[12](#)] from the

p. 392

past to strengthen his position. After this remark, he took the younger men in his family and went to a drinking establishment to share a jar of wine with them. He took a long breath and commented on his good fortunes, for having lived longer than Yen Hui, the favourite disciple of Confucious who died young, being able to eat as much as he wishes in comparison to Po-yi who starved, being happier (le) than Jung Ch'i-ch'i,[[13](#)] and being able to enjoy better health than Wei Shu-pao (Wei Chieh);[[14](#)] after nothing that if he had given up his love of wine there would be nothing to fill his old age, he recited a poem: "Embracing a zither, Jung Ch'i-ch'i was happy (le); Indulging himself in wine, Liu Ling achieved the state of spiritual attainment (ta).[[15](#)] I cast my eyes around me and see blue mountains. I carry a head that has grown white hairs. I do not know how many more years I am to live in the realm between Heaven and Earth. From now till the end of my life, all the time I have is leisure time". When he finished reciting, he laughed to himself, and drank several cups of wine. He became drunk and unconscious sitting tall and

p. 393

unmoved with his legs stretched out in front. When he woke up, he recited poems and drank again, and again he became drunk and unconscious. Repeating this cycle over and over, he reached the state in which he could treat things that happened to him in this world as if they were dreams, wealth and high ranks as if they were clouds in the sky, and everything between Heaven and Earth as if part of a theatrical performance. One hundred years would pass, but he would feel as if only one moment has passed. In this state of happiness and half-consciousness, he does not realize that old age is approaching. The ancients would have called him a person

who has attained the wholeness in wine (or: realized himself completely through wine). For this reason, he calls himself "A Drunken Poet". At this time, the third year of K'ai-ch'eng (838), he is 67 years old. His beard is white and his head half-bald. He has lost two teeth. But his energy for drinking and reciting poetry has not shown signs of decline. Turning to his wife and children he says, "I have lived my past contentedly; I do not know what pleasures the future may bring".

As we noted earlier, this self-portrait presented as "a biography" (chuan) is modeled after T'ao Ch'ien's "Biography of the Gentleman of Five Willow Trees" (Wu-liu hsien-sheng chuan) (TYMC, 175). Although called a "biography" (chuan), these self-portraits are fundamentally different in orientation from the official biographies in dynastic histories or tomb inscriptions which shared the same orientation as the official biographies.^[16] This difference is best illustrated by the manner in which Po Chü-yi's self-portrait begins. A text with a title "chuan" begins with a statement that the subject has "forgotten" his surname, courtesy name, origin of his family, and official ranks and hours. The text says that the subject does not know who he is. The items listed here represent the basic facts of the subject's life that are invariably given in official biographies and, as we noted above, in biographies written as tomb inscriptions. Such facts given in formula-like expressions constitute the framework of these biographies. The "biography" under consideration here then is making a

p. 394

point: it is not a conventional biography, but a parody of one. When we take into account that this "biography" is composed by Po Chu-yi himself, the significance of his statement might become clearer. He, of course, has not "forgotten" these basic facts of himself; he says that the subject, that is, he himself, has "forgotten" these facts as a literary device to say emphatically that the following account of his life transcends the worldly concerns of ordinary biographies. The higher state, in which one has "forgotten" these worldly concerns, is the state in which the subject has achieved spiritual fulfillment through wine and poetry portrayed toward the end of the essay.

The text further notes that after thirty years in official service, the subject has retired to his estate. What follows is an account of his life after retirement. Whereas official biographies and tomb inscriptions focus on

their subjects' official careers, here we have a "biography" that focuses on the life in retirement after many years of unspecified official service. Again, the message is clear: there is a higher point of view from which the life of a person may be described not in terms of worldly accomplishments but transcending them and achieving a higher spiritual state. A number of themes are introduced to describe this higher point of view: addition to love of wine, zither music, poetry; friendship centered around these passions; Buddhist cultivation; appreciation of beautiful scenery, and so on. In the second half of the essay, the vice of excessive drinking is transformed first into a relatively harmless pleasure of old age and finally into a path that leads to spiritual attainment.[\[17\]](#)

The contradictions between the conventions of biography and the autobiographical content that we saw in Po Chü-yi's tomb inscription may also be seen in this "biography" composed ten years or so earlier. The convention of biography is seen in the use of the term "chuan" in the title and the literary device of beginning with a statement concerning the surname, courtesy name, etc. Yet, the emphasis is decidedly on the autobiographical content in the form

p. 395

of an account of Po Chü-yi's private life centered around wine and poetry. In order to clarify the nature of this complex relationship between these two dimensions of Po Chü-yi's biographical inscriptions, let me at this point turn to Victor Turner's discussion of "structure" and "anti-structure" or "communitas".

c)Turner on "structure" and "communitas"

Turner states in *The Ritual Process* (Turner, 1969: 177f.):

All human societies implicitly or explicitly refer to two contrasting social models. One, as we have seen, is of society as a structure of jural, political, and economic positions, offices, statuses, and roles, in which the individual is only ambiguously grasped behind the social persona. The other is of society as a communitas of concrete idiosyncratic individuals, who, though differing in physical and mental endowment, are nevertheless regarded as equal in terms of shared humanity. The first model is of a differentiated,

culturally structured, segmented, and often hierarchical system of institutionalized positions. The second presents society as an undifferentiated, homogeneous whole, in which individuals confront one another integrally, and not as "segmentalized" into statuses and roles[18].

p. 396

Turner is saying that the two social models described here are found in all human societies, i.e., members of any human society engage at one time or another in activities that presuppose one or the other of these models of society whether they are self-conscious about it or not. The "models" are in the mind of the subjects of Turner's analysis, or perhaps better still, implicitly presupposed in the cultural forms which they adopt. To make this point clearer, I will frequently use the expression "Viewpoints" in the sense of the viewpoint of the author, i.e., Po Chü-yi and of the intended readers in the discussion below.

My hypothesis is that the relationship between the biographical conventions and the autobiographical content in the two inscription examined above is in fact a concrete manifestation of the general relationship between

p. 397

"structure" and "communitas" analyzed by Turner. I will first explain this identification in greater detail, and then try to see whether, given this identification, Turner's analysis enables us to see more clearly the broader implications of our observations concerning the contradictory relationship between the two elements in Po Chü-yi's inscriptions.

It is not difficult to demonstrate that the biographical convention presupposes the "structure" viewpoint or model of society. As we have noted earlier, tomb inscriptions glorify the lives of the subjects, and therefore, their conventions specify that they provide information regarding the subjects' family background and official careers. Such information is given in terms of a hierarchical view of the social prestige of different families and of offices in government. Thus, biographical conventions

presuppose a model which sees the society "as a structure of jural, political, and economic positions, offices, statuses, and roles."

The autobiographical elements in these documents contradict the hierarchical and conventional view of life. These elements represent a different viewpoint based on a different model of society. In the tomb inscription the author directs that his funeral and burial should not follow the conventions of high government officials: he thus rejects important conventions upholding the "structure". In the "biography" inscription, the subject is described as an "idiosyncratic" personage who spends his life in friendship with other individuals equally "idiosyncratic", i.e., engrossed in the pursuit of similar goals in life. The human relationship described in the "biography", the relationship between friends sharing common interests and that between family members (an old patriarch drinking excessively and his wife and other younger members concerned about it) appears to be, in contrast to the relationships of official position and status, a relationship between individuals "regarded as equal in terms of common shared humanity" "in which individuals confront one another integrally."

Turner notes that "communitas has an aspect of potentiality; it is often in the subjunctive mood" (127). Po Chü-yi's relationship to his tomb inscription

p. 398

is indeed in the "subjunctive mood", if by that term we understand a suspension of normal expectations and an interjection into reality of the hypothetical, the potential. To be more specific, Po Chü-yi employs the form of the tomb inscription which was normally written by a third party on the death of another individual, and suspends this normal procedure, saying in effect that if it were possible for a man to write his own epitaph, this is what his would be. In addition he is using the medium of a tomb inscription that describes the subject's funeral after the fact to give his own funeral instructions, a second violation of normal events. This use of the "subjunctive mode" explains the contradictory character of this document examined in some detail above. The contradiction may be explained as a gap between the conventions of tomb inscriptions in the "indicative mood" and Po Chü-yi's use of this form for his unconventional purpose in a manner that defies normal expectation, much as the subjunctive mood implies a lifting of

the rigid rules of the mundane to include the possibility of new events and modes of visualizing those events.

The use of the expression "A Drunken Poet" in the "biography" may also be an expression of the "subjunctive mood" of that document, where the poet speaking of himself writes as if he were writing of a third party. For by writing of himself as if he were someone else Po Chü-yi is permitted to open up the hard reality of fact into fiction, to imagine himself as he would potentially like to see himself and to present himself to the world as the potential Po Chü-yi and not the actual Po Chü-yi. Thus by inventing this humorous sobriquet for himself Po Chü-yi is able to distance himself from his subject and at the same time to describe himself using the conventions for idealizing a certain type of remarkable personality. Calling the document "a biography of a drunken poet" (Ts-ui-yin hsien-sheng chuan) invites the reader to recall another poet's self-portrait and transforms Po Chü-yi's self-portrait into an image of a highly "idiosyncratic" individual who stands in the company of another well-known and highly idealized figure. The overall effect then may be that of an idealized self-portrait: the conventional biography in the "indicative mood", describing simple fact, has become a self-projection in the "subjunctive mood",

p. 399

in which the author is then able to express his dream about himself and to describe scribe how he wants others to remember him later.

The subject's life described in the "biography" is a life in retirement after many years of government service in the world of the "structure". Ultimately, this life (of leisure time) constitutes a rather prolonged stage of transition from an active role in the society ("structure") to the ultimate stage of death. This transitional character of Po Chü-yi's biographies is even clearer in the case of the tomb inscription: Po Chü-yi as the author is describing the transition from life to death as if he were a conscious witness to his own deathbed scene. Turner's term for characterizing and analyzing such transition is "liminality":

Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial. As such, their ambiguous and indeterminate attributes are expressed by a

rich variety of symbols in the many societies that ritualize social and cultural transitions (95).

What is interesting about liminal phenomena for our present purposes is the blend they offer of lowliness and sacredness, of homogeneity and comradeship. We are presented, in such rites, with a "moment in and out of time", and in and out of secular social structure, which reveals, however fleetingly, some recognition (in symbols if not always in language) of a generalized social bond that has ceased to be and has simultaneously yet to be fragmented into a multiplicity of structural ties (96).

This "generalized social bond" is "communitas". The basic presentation of the subject's excessive drinking may be interpreted as an example of the "blend of lowliness and sacredness": here love of wine, something that is openly admitted to be a weakness or shortcoming, is eventually transformed into a positive value as a path toward spiritual perfection. This state of spiritual perfection, moreover, is described as a "a moment in and out of time" in the

p. 400

description of the half-drunken, half-sober state of reciting poetry in which the subject is happily unaware of the approach of old age.[19] The "biography" therefore describes a "liminal mode of experience" and the dominant model of society represented there is "communitas".

If we can interpret the relationship between the viewpoint represented by biographical conventions and that of these autobiographical statements as an instance of the basic relationship between "structure" and "communitas", Turner's analysis leads us to an important suggestion: this relationship must be understood dialectically;[20] the two viewpoints do not simply contradict each other, they also complement each other. In the paragraph immediately following the long paragraph quoted above, Turner describes the relationship between the two "social models" as follows:

In the process of social life, behaviour in accordance with one model tends to "drift away" from behaviour in terms of the other. The ultimate desideratum, however, is to act in terms of communitas values even while playing structural roles, where what one culturally does is conceived of as

merely instrumental to the aim of attaining and maintaining *communitas* (96).

In preparing a tomb inscription himself and instructing that his self-portrait in the "A Drunken Poet" be placed at his grave, Po Chü-yi was trying to achieve something like this "ultimate desideratum": a "structural" image of Po Chü-yi as a famous writer and an eminent statesman, something one associates naturally with a grave site, would then be complemented by a "liminal" or "*communitas*" image. If this is the case, it is important to interpret these document

p. 401

with the awareness that the two contradictory elements are in fact both necessary and stand ultimately in a complementary relationship. These biographies or autobiographies are not simply saying that the worldly titles and family backgrounds, for instance, are not important, or that Po Chü-yi did not pay attention to them;[\[21\]](#) rather the point is that these facts are naturally important, but must be remembered as only one aspect of Po Chü-yi's life, a life which had an entirely different dimension centered around friendship, drinking, reciting poetry, and Buddhist cultivation[\[22\]](#).

Turner may further help us in understanding the significance of "liminality" and "*communitas*" in these inscriptions if we consider his statements about symbolic figures in folk literature.

All these mythic types are structurally inferior or "marginal", yet represent what Henri Bergson would have called "open" as against "closed morality," the latter begin essentially the normative system of bounded, structured, particularistic groups. Bergson speaks of how an in-group preserves its identity against members of out-groups, protects itself against threats to its way of life, and renews the will to maintain the

p. 402

norms on which the routine behaviour necessary for its social life depends. In closed or structured societies, it is the marginal or "inferior" person or the "outsider" who often comes to symbolize what David Hume has called "the

sentiment for humanity," which in its turn relates to the model we have termed "communitas" (110f.).

Po Chü-yi was an elite scholar-official who at many points in his life occupied positions very close to the centre of power. He was obviously a member of the elite "in-group". At first this fact about Po Chü-yi's career and his autobiographical "communitas" image may seem difficult to reconcile. As a man who held important positions in the central government, why did he not wish to describe his life simply as that of a loyal and selfless minister, for example?

As we have seen above, Turner's analysis of the dialectical relationship between "structure" and "communitas" suggests that "liminality" and "communitas" exist in all lives with structure. A concomitant of this "liminality" is "marginality", and a brief consideration of the lives of Chinese officials reveals the extent to which an official could and did become marginal in traditional China. It would have been Po Chü-yi's experience of this "marginality", then, that might have contributed to his describing his own life as he did.

Officials in traditional China lived a life that was inherently precarious. Their careers depended on often unpredictable appointments; careers were often interrupted by unpredictable punishments.^[23] The experience of "marginality" was then also a part of their lives. One might interpret the career of a scholar-official in traditional China as a process that included many periods of transition and reversals of status. During these periods of "liminal" transition theof

p. 403

officials must have experienced marginality. These periods would have also occasioned a distanced evaluation of life in the "structure".^[24] It would thus be natural to attribute a tendency toward "communitas" to the spiritual life of the elites in traditional China.

Po Chü-yi's own career was broken in 815 (age 44) when he was appointed to a local post in remote Chiang-chou as a punishment for criticizing the government. It may not have been entirely an accident that his famous letter to his friend Yüan Chen was written in the same year a few months after he

arrived in Chiang-chou. In this letter Po Chü-yi describes his view of literature and reflects on his life in a manner that comes closest to what modern readers would consider an autobiography. It is tempting to interpret this autobiographical letter as a "liminal" document, produced at a point when Po Chü-yi's official career in the "structure" was interrupted and he had an opportunity to reflect on his life in the light of a pursuit of a literary goal ("cultural value") and share this reflection with a friend ("confronting" him "integrally"). Perhaps it is significant that this "liminal" autobiography no longer uses any of the conventions associated with a biography: the concern in this document appears to have nothing in common with biography writing in traditional China which was so intimately connected with the world of "structure". Since here our interest is focused primarily on the literary form of biography, a more detailed examination of this important document must be postponed until another occasion.

p. 404

This analysis of the two biographical/autobiographical documents written by Po Chü-yi suggests that an important aspect of the internal dynamics of traditional Chinese biographies may be illuminated by Turner's distinction between "structure" and "communitas". The conventions of official biography emphasize the viewpoint of "structure" in glorifying the life of their subjects. Yet, there is also room in this literary form for expressing the viewpoint of "communitas".

Since religion is rooted in "communitas" and "liminality", this analysis of traditional Chinese biographies in terms of "structure" and "communitas" may prove to be useful in analyzing Chinese religious biographies, where one would naturally expect that the elements representing the viewpoint of "communitas" and "liminality" would be found. At the same time, however, we need to keep in mind the fact that "communitas" once institutionalized as religion also enters the realm of "structure". Turner notes,

In complex large-scale societies, liminality itself, as a result of the advancing division of labor, has often become a religious or quasi-religious state, and, by virtue of this crystallization, has tended to reenter structure and acquire a full complement of structural roles and positions" (167).

The study of Chinese biographies and particularly of religious biographies may then be guided by a conceptual framework that evaluates the material in terms of the relationship between "structure" and "communitas". The internal dynamics of biographies may thus be analyzed in terms of the complex relationship between the glorification of the lives of the subjects from the worldly point of view of "structure" on the one hand and the transcending of this viewpoint from a higher (or paradoxically lower) "liminal" viewpoint of "communitas".

As a first step toward such an analysis, let us now move to a brief discussion of Po Chü-yi's tomb inscriptions for secular figures and then to a consider

p. 405

ation of his stupa inscriptions written for Buddhist monks.

3. Po Chü-yi's tomb inscriptions

Po Chü-yi's collected works preserve a number of tomb inscriptions for secular figures: thirteen mu-chih ming inscriptions (five of which are for women), six shen-tao-pei ming or similar inscriptions, and two chia-chuang (one for his grand-father and one for his father). I will here examine one ma-chih ming, inscription and one shen-tao-pei ming inscription in order to illustrate the relationship between "structural" and "communitas" concerns in secular tomb inscriptions.

a) "The Tomb Inscription for Lord Wang, Administrator of the Granary Section of Yang-chou Prefecture of the T'ang Dynasty" (T'ang yang-chou ts'ang ts'ao ts'an-chün Wang fu-chüh (mu-) chih-ming)

This inscription (PCYC, 927-929) is accompanied by a note saying that it was composed on behalf of Secretary (she-jen) Pei T'ing. In the text Po Chü-yi mentions that he was acquainted with the three sons of the subject, and that this is the reason why he composed the inscription.

The text begins by giving the posthumous name (in fact left in blank) and courtesy name of the subject. Then a long description of the subject's ancestry follows. The family claims its origin from the prince Chin of King Ling of the Chou dynasty; mention is made of Chien, in the twenty-first

generation after the prince, who became a general of the Ch'in dynasty, of Hsün who was born three generations later and lived in T'ai-yüan, thus establishing the family's place of origin in this place; and of Ch'üung who came nineteen generations later and served as Vice Director under the Later Wei and was given the honorary posthumous name (shih) Duke Hsiao-chien. Next is mentioned the subject's great grandfather who followed two generations later, and was given the posthumous name Man; he served as District Magistrate of the Wang-wu District of the He-nan superior Prefecture; then the grandfather with the posthumous name Ta-chin who served as a Commander of Chia-chou region, and his father with the posthumous name P'ien, who served as the Director of

p. 406

Hsien-yang in the Ching-chao superior Prefecture and as the Director of Yi-ch'üeh in the He nan Superior Prefecture. P'ien was educated both in literature and conduct, passed the special examination (chih-cha) called tui ch'en-mou mi-lüeh ts'e k'e, and his poetry was included in the Cheng-sheng chi ("Collection of Poetry with Correct Sounds"). The subject was the third son of this Director of Yin ch'üeh.

The next section describes the life of the subject, emphasizing his official career. He loved learning and was good at composition. During the T'ien-pao period (742-756), he took the ming-ching ("knowledge of scriptures") examination, passed, and was appointed (hsüan-shou) as the Commandant of Yi-wu in Wu-chou Prefecture. He was known for his integrity and ability (ch'ing-kan). Prefect Wei Chih-chin having learned that this was so appointed him as the Administrative Assistant for Defense of his prefecture.

Soon Special Supply Transport Commissioner Yuan Tsai also heard about him and appointed him as the Acting Director of Graneries to take exclusive charge of transport. At the end of the year, impressed by the subject's accomplishments, Yüan Tsai recommended to the court that he should be appointed to the same position on a regular basis. During the Yung-t'ai period (765-766) he was transferred to the Ministry of Revenue of the Yüeh Superior Prefecture. He directly administered any community within the territory that was not in proper order himself. Consequently, order was restored everywhere. During the Ta-li period (766-779) Surveillance

Commissioner Hsieh Chien-hsün recommended him to the court as a man of extraordinary integrity and he was appointed as Probationary District Magistrate of Yü-yao District. The area at that time was suffering from pirates and bandits, but the subject of this inscription governed so well that he was known as the best local government official in the South. Details of his accomplishments are said to be noted in local government records. At the beginning of the Chien-chung period (780-783) he was appointed Administrator of the Granary Section of Yang-chou Prefecture. In the fourth year of this period, on the 26th day of the 7th month, he died of sickness in the private residence in the Chiang-yang District. He was 62 years old.

p. 407

Some information about his wife and children is given after this account of the subject's official career. His wife was from the Ts'ui family of Ch'ing-he area. She was a grand-niece of the Drafter of the Phoenix Pavilion Jung, and a daughter of the Legal Administrator of Cheng-chou Prefecture Ang. The woman followed the instruction of her mother and treated her husband as her teacher on all questions. She died of sickness in the official residence in the San-yüan District at the age 62.

There were three sons, called Po, Yen, and Ch'i. All three passed the prestigious Presented Scholars' examination. Po passed in addition the special examination called the tui chih-yen chi-chien k'e and was given the office of Editor in the Academy of Scholarly Worthies, and then transferred repeatedly to Chief investigating Censor, Palace Censor, and Director of San-yüan. Yen had already passed the examination, but had not served in any office. Ch'i had passed the po-hsüeh hung-ts'u k'e special examination and was appointed as an Editor in the Academy of Scholarly Worthies. Thus, these three brothers passed altogether five of the most difficult examinations within ten years. They were widely praised for this accomplishment. There was one daughter who was married to Lu Chung-t'ung of Fan-yang.

A passage states that the oldest son Po and others moved the grave of the subject to a field in Ch'un-hua village, Fu-p'ing District in the Ching-ch'ao Superior Prefecture in the capital region. This was done for the sake of finding a more auspicious location for the grave.

In the last section Po Chü-yi makes some comments on the life of the subject. He refers to the Confucian concept of ming* ("fate"), stating that moral cultivation of the self is a matter over which man has control, but appointment in high offices and success in benefitting the people is something that depends on ming*. Even sages, who have done everything in man's control, cannot accomplish anything if ming* is against them. The subject of the inscription was a man of integrity and ability, those who were wise knew that he considered serving the ruler and bringing salvation to people his responsibility. But ming* was such that though his name was known by the Son of Heaven, his rank was that of a low ranking official (p'ei-ch'en). The ancients said that if

p. 408

a man of great virtue and wisdom was not recognized in his life time, good fortune would always come to his descendants. This prediction appears realized in the three sons of the subject. Heaven is probably making his descendants prosper in order to demonstrate how virtues are rewarded later. Po Chü-yi then mentions his connection these three sons: he passed examinations at the same time as Yen; served in government office with Po, and served as an examiner when Ch'i passed the state examination. He had a friendly relationship with the sons and through them became familiar with the subject's life. Therefore, he composed this text without any distortions of facts or flattering words.[25]

The verse that constitutes the last section of the inscription summarizes in rhetorical language the family history, the subject's remarkable talents and accomplishments, and the fact that though he did not receive an appropriate position in his life, his descendants prospered.

There is little doubt that the primary concern of this inscription is the social status defined in the context of "structure". It describes the family history in detail mentioning the figures who attained high government positions. Obviously it is saying that the subject comes from a prestigious family. It describes his life primarily in terms of the offices he occupied. And finally the inscription places considerable emphasis on the fact that the three sons of the subject passed very prestigious examinations.

One interesting feature of this inscription is that whereas both the ancestors and descendants are glorified in terms of the positions they occupied, the subject himself is treated differently. Po Chü-yi is obviously not impressed by the official record of the subject and attempts to explain the unimpressive record by referring to the concept of ming* ("mandate", "fate"). The concept implicitly makes a distinction between worldly success from the viewpoint of the "structure" and the moral worth of the man that is determined from a higher point of view.

p. 409

In an ideal society morally worthy men should occupy high positions in the government. But in the real world, for reasons that we do not understand and that are beyond our control ("ming*"), morally worthy men do not always occupy high offices. In this inscription Po Chü-yi calls our attention to this anomaly by calling to mind the ideal world, a Confucian "communitas" where virtue is always recognized and leads to appointments in high offices. He then softens his discontent with the mundane world by quoting an old saying that in cases where morally worthy people do not receive appropriate appointments in their life times, their descendants prosper. The effect of this linking of the subject's moral worth and the worldly success of his descendants is to underline the significance of the worldly success of the latter. Thus while the text remains primarily oriented to the world of "structure", the introduction of the concept of ming* is an intrusion of the "communitas" viewpoint into a primarily "structure" oriented inscription.

As we noted earlier Turner suggests that there is a dialectical relationship between "structure" and "communitas". The relationship between the primary "structural" orientation of the inscription and the "communitas" viewpoint that appears at the point where Po Chü-yi begins his own personal comments on the life of the subject may be explained in terms of this general insight. Again, the two viewpoints are not merely contradictory, but are complementary as well.

Po Chü-yi is using the religious and symbolic concept of ming* as a rhetorical device to make a point: the subject was a man of greater virtue and ability than the positions he occupied in his life time suggest; he would

have served in higher offices if it were not for the adverse ming*.[26] We must also note that in making rhetorical use of this concept in this way, Po Chü-yi is also asserting the necessary dialectic between the order of the world and its repeated

p. 410

breakdown. By returning then to the concept that reward goes to the man's descendants, he in effect finally suggests that structure and order may be trusted, the ideal order of Confucian society ("communitas") is realizable over a longer span of time.[27]

In many cases tomb inscriptions do not seem to recognize any possible tension between a basic "structural" orientation and the "communitas" viewpoint represented in symbolic and rhetorical passages. In some cases, however, the tension between "structure" and "communitas" is made more explicit. The focus on the concept of ming* in the inscription we examined above may be taken as an example of this. In the external tomb inscription (shen-tao-pei ming) written for a personal friend, Po Chü-yi focuses even more clearly on this dual perspective.

b) The external tomb inscription of Lord Wu, regional chief of Jao chouprefecture (Ka jao-chou tz'u-shih Wu fu-chun shen-tao-pei ming)

In this inscription (PCYC, 1446-1448) Po Chü-yi pays special attention to the question of the relationship between official career and Taoist cultivation. The inscription begins with a brief paragraph rejecting the two extremes of losing

p. 411

oneself in the market place, government office or family life on the one hand and of abandoning one's relatives to escape into mountain forests on the other hand. Neither of these is said to constitute the ideal state of attainment. As an individual spends his life in society, he must adapt to circumstances, maintaining the distinction between his own place and that of other people (i.e., not interfering in the affairs of other people), not seeking unnaturally to be pure by himself nor seeking unnaturally to become impure. He ought not to reject offices insisting on unnaturally high moral standards

as did Ch'ao-fu or Hsü-yu during the reign of Yao, nor serve in high and conspicuous offices as did famous ministers Yi-yin and T'ai-wang-kung Lü Shang. Making his mind like water and his body like a cloud, rising and sinking, prospering and declining in every circumstance a man attains fulfillment. Such is the ideal state of attainment, and Po Chü-yi says that his friend Lord Wu achieved it.

At this point a paragraph describing the life of the subject in the conventional manner of tomb inscriptions is introduced. After the posthumous name Tan and courtesy name Chen-ts'un comes a brief account of his family background: he was a great-grandson of Lan, Secretarial Receptionist for the Heir Apparent, a grandson of Shu, Commander of Mu-chou Prefecture, and the eldest son of Ch'üan, Director of Gate Keepers for Heir Apparent, posthumously appointed as Minister of Works. Having passed the examination for Presented Scholars he entered government service. A long list of his offices follows: Proof Reader, Chief Musician, Case Reviewer for the Court of Judicial Review, Palace Investigating Censor, Secretary for the Heir Apparent, Vice-Director of Ministry of Works and Bureau of Provisions, Director of Criminal Administration Bureau and Ministry of War, Grand Master of Remonstrance, Vice-Minister of the Court of Judicial Review, and Regional Chief of Jao-chou Prefecture. A list of his special assignments (chih) is then given. Finally, this record is summarized by saying that in official rank (chieh) he reached that of Grand Master of the Palace and that his merit title (hsün) reached that of Supreme Pillar of State. He read thousands of volumes of books and wrote a great deal. In the first year of the Pao-li period (825), in

p. 412

the sixth month, on a certain day (left blank) he died in the official residence in Jao-chou prefecture. In a certain year (left blank), in the eleventh month, on a certain day (left blank), he was buried in the northern field of the Jen-he village, in the Chin-ling District, Ch'ang-chou Prefecture. This was done following the will of the subject.

A parallel account of the life of the subject emphasizing his Taoist cultivation follows. When the subject was four or five years old, he was playing with mud and sand in a way that was quite similar to the performance of a Taoist ritual; when he was eight or nine years old he wrote

sentences that were like the writings of well-known poets. He did not know why he did these things-probably they were the result of Confucian and Taoist (hsüan) learning in previous lives. After the capping ceremony, he enjoyed Taoist books, observed the Taoist register (lu), controlled his breathing (ch'i) and avoided eating grains for several years at a stretch. Bright breath (hao ch'i) filled him and his Cinnabar Field (tan-t'ien) was moistened. Being unworldly he wanted to renounce living in the world. When he became a fully mature man, he could not abandon his three young brothers and eight nephews and therefore decided to serve in salaried positions. He said, "A hermit in comfort cannot instruct others. I shall become known by working as a Confucian. A man anxious to achieve greater reputation than others cannot pacify his mind. I shall embody the profound mystery (hsüan) to nourish power. A man suffering from cold and hunger cannot be at peace in the Way. I shall diligently seek salaried employment. One should not go to excesses in salary and rank. I shall know where to be satisfied and stop and maintain balance(chung)." Then he went to the capital region and obtained reputation and wealth. Yet except for attaining fame and providing for his family he possessed no unnecessary objects and had no unnecessary worries. Unadorned zither on his left side and the Taoist Yellow Court Scripture (huang t'ing) on his right, he was at peace and self-sufficient; he was in harmony with Heaven all his life. Having served for twenty-seven years, he died at age 88. Having no family of his own, he had no worries about descendants. Following the

p. 413

changes in fortune naturally (wei-shun) he was not fearful about anything even for one day, and returned to the completed state at death (kuei-ch'uan fan-chen). Therefore, I call him a man who attained the ideal (ta). This is undoubtedly the case.

A short passage describing the circumstances which led Po Chü-yi to write the inscription follows: the subject's younger brother (chung-li) who was the Administrator of Hu-chou Prefecture requested Po Chü-yi to compose the text for the inscription, "Since I had a friendly association with his brother and as a fellow student and colleague in government I am well informed about the circumstances of his life."

Saying that he can illumine the meaning of the subject's life through reference to an ancient figure, he composes a concluding verse that compares him to Tung-fang shuo of the Han dynasty, who in legend became a Taoist immortal and praises both as men who attained the ideal (ta).

In this inscription the two aspects of the subject's life, as an official who attained the highest ranks in government service and as a Taoist adept, are given side by side and his achievement is praised as a synthesis of the two ideals. A term ta (translated here as "attaining the ideal") is introduced to fuse the two conflicting ideals into a higher ideal of living in the world naturally and without attachments.

To return to Turner's terminology, the "structure" viewpoint and "communitas" viewpoint are first presented separately in the biography. On this level, the "communitas" viewpoint describes a life of spiritual cultivation following Taoist teaching. But there is yet another level on which the ideal of "communitas" is presented in this inscription. We have seen that the emphasis is on the harmonious relationship between the two viewpoints: the subject was particularly admirable in that he was able to live the life of spiritual cultivation ("communitas") while performing his duties through highly successful government service ("structure").

Throughout the author takes the position that the ideal life (ta) ("communitas") should not be sought either in escape from the world

p. 414

("sturcture") nor in total immersion in it. The "communitas" viewpoint then is represented on two levels in this inscription: in terms of a life of spiritual cultivation following Taoist teaching and in terms of a life of a man who attained the ideal (ta-jen) through combining successful government service and religious practice.

What we see here may be interpreted in part as a consequence of the process in which the ideal of "communitas" becomes crystalized and institutionalized into "structured" forms of religious practice; it becomes incorporated into the "structure" and is seen as a socially sanctioned life style of renouncing worldly duties. When this takes place, a higher more transcendent "communitas" is sought beyond this more "structured"

"communitas". As we noted earlier, Turner calls attention to this as a typical development in religions in highly differentiated and structured societies. Our study of Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions will throw further light on this complex process.

4. Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions

Stupa inscriptions (t'a-ming) are tomb inscriptions for Buddhist monks. As we noted earlier, these stupa inscriptions were typically written by well-known secular scholar-officials. In a survey of authors of stupa inscriptions,[\[28\]](#) we noted that certain figures, generally secular scholar-officials of great literary fame, appear to have been popular and willing authors of these inscriptions; among them Po Chü-yi figured prominently. In the Sung collection of the biographies of eminent monks, compiled by Tsan-ning (919-1001) in 988, Po Chü-yi's name appears four times as the writer of inscriptions (Ch'ung kuei, Taisho, 50, 765c; Shang-heng, Taisho, 50, 806c; Shen-ts'ou, Taisho, 50, 807a; Chi-jan, Taisho, 50, 880a). Two of these[\[29\]](#) are preserved in

p. 415

Po Chü-yi's collected works. Further comparison of the text of the Sung collection with other inscriptions preserved in Po Chü-yi's collected works reveals that at least one other biography was based on Po Chü-yi's inscription though his name was not mentioned explicitly.[\[30\]](#) Po Chü-yi's collected works contain our texts entitled stupa inscriptions and two others that are in fact biographies of monks in the manner identical with regular stupa inscriptions. As I noted above, three of these six existing texts were used as the main source by Tsanning when he compiled the biographies of the respective monks in his collection. Thus, there were at least two more stupa inscriptions that Po Chü-yi composed which were not collected in his works and are probably now lost, and there is the possibility that more biographies in the Sung collection are in fact based on Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions though this dependence is not mentioned in the biographies and the original inscriptions have now been lost. It would be safe to conclude that Po Chü-yi was one of more popular compilers of stupa inscriptions in his time.[\[31\]](#) Here I will examine a few examples of existing stupa inscriptions composed by Po Chü-yi paying special attention

to the relationship between the "structure" and "communitas" viewpoints in the descriptions of the lives of their subjects. We are particularly interested in the fact that stupa inscriptions were composed by secular scholar-officials. In the final analysis these inscriptions, therefore, represent an view of the life of Buddhist monks seen from the outside. Po Chü-yi, though sympathetic to Buddhism, was not a monk himself. How did he see the lives of the monks for whom he composed

p. 416

inscriptions? What were the important facts about their lives in Po Chü-yi's eyes? How do these facts differ from those noted in the tomb inscriptions of secular figures? These are the questions that we shall consider.

a)The inscription for the Transmission of the Law Hall (ch'uan-fa t'ang pei)[[32](#)]

This rather untypical inscription (PCYC, 911-913) is of particular interest in that it is written in the form of questions and answers, and these questions and answers in fact indicate the categories of facts that, in Po Chü-yi's mind, were particularly important in composing an inscriptional biography of a monk.

The inscription begins with a statement that next to the temple called Hsing-shan ("promoting good deeds") is a hall called Ch'uan-fa ("transmitting the Law"). The hall was given this name because the Ch'an master Ta-ch'e, the real subject of the inscription, had earlier preached there.

This brief introduction is followed by the first question concerning the names and basic facts of the master's life (ming-chi). The answer gives the following information. His style was Wei-k'uan and surname Chu. His place of origin was Hsin-an in the Ch'u-chou Prefecture. His grandfather was called An and father Chiao. He renounced the householder's life at age thirteen and received the complete precepts at age twenty-four. He lived thirty-nine years as a monk and died at age sixty-three in the Hsing-shan temple. He was buried in the field west of Pa-ling. The name of his stupa built by an imperial edict is given as "Ta-ch'e ch'an-shin Yüan-he cheng-chih chih t'a (the stupa of Correct Truthfulness built for Meditation Master Ta-ch'e during the Yüan-he period").

p. 417

The second question is about the lineage of the teaching that the subject received (ch'uan-shou). The answer first mentions the transmission of the correct teaching to Mahakasyapa at the time of the Buddha's entry into final nirvana and traces the lineage of transmission from there through Indian and Chinese patriarchs until it reached Tao-i of Hung-chou, posthumous name Ta-chi, who was the subject's teacher.

The third question is about the relationship between the subject and other contemporary teachers (tao-shu, "relatives in the Tao"). The answer first states that the teaching has branched out into different streams ("main and secondary streams"; "major and minor schools") after the fourth patriarch. Then the relationships are given between the subject and other well-known teachers, using the metaphor of family relationships.

The fourth question concerns the subject's career as a monk (hua-yan: "circumstances of spiritual instruction"). The answer begins with an anecdote. When the subject was a young boy he saw someone killing an animal and could not eat its meat. This gave him the desire to renounce the householder's life. He had his head shaven by Seng-t'an, received the precepts from Seng-ch'ung, studied the monastic rules with Seng-ju, mastered the Mahayana teaching through the T'ien-'tai meditation of cessation and contemplation, and realized the Way of the Supreme Vehicle under Ta-chi Tao-yi. In the sixth year of Chen-yuan (791) he began his teaching in the Min and Yüeh region. In a little more than a year between one hundred and two hundred people became monks under his influence. The next year he tamed wild tigers in K'uai-chi and performed an eight day session of intensive cultivation (tao-chang) at the residence of the T'eng family. He conferred the Eight Precepts on a mountain deity in P'o-yang and performed a session of Pure Land practice (hui-hsiang tao-chang).^[33] In the thirteenth year (798) he encountered a supernatural

p. 418

being at the Shao-lin temple. In the twenty-first year (806) he performed the yu-wei kung-te^[34] ceremony at the Wei-kuo temple. In the following

year he performed the wu-wei kung-te ceremony at the T'ien-kung temple. In the fourth year of Yuan-he (810) the Emperor Hsien-tsong granted an audience to him in the An-kuo temple. In the fifth year (811) the Emperor asked him questions about Buddhist teaching in the Lin-te Hall. In the same year the subject restored the spring at the pond of Tripitake Pu-k'ung (Amoghavajra, 705-774). In the twelfth year (818) in the last day of the second month, the subject preached in the hall, and after the sermon was over, he died.

The fifth question is about the essence of the subject's teaching (hsin-yao). The answer first states that it is impossible to summarize the essence of his teaching, for he meditated and lectured on Buddhist teaching for thirty years and brought salvation to a very large number of monks and lay people. His teaching was adjusted to the capacities and circumstances of those whom he taught in the same manner as different medicines that doctors give depend on the nature of the disease. Nevertheless, the answer continues, when Po Chü-yi was serving as the Grand Master Admonisher, he once asked four questions about his teaching ("the Way"). The inscription then gives the four questions and the answers that the subject gave to them in detail. Po Chü-yi first asked why a meditation master, who sits quietly in practice, preaches using words which by definition cannot adequately express the truth realized in meditation.

p. 419

The subject answers that the three branches of Buddhist practice, i.e., precepts, teaching, and meditation, are in fact one, since the underlying truth is the same, though the common truth is differently practiced. This relationship is compared to the relationship between rivers or lakes—though they are called by different names they are one in that they are all bodies of water. In terms of their real nature as water, they are the same. We should avoid making deluded distinctions. Po Chü-yi next asked, how is one to practice if there are no distinctions? The master answers by denying the need for cultivation, saying that the mind is fundamentally free from all flaws. He says that we should not entertain thoughts either of impurity or purity. Accepting the command not to entertain thoughts of impurity, Po Chü-yi then asks if it is permissible not to entertain thoughts of purity. The master answers with an illustration: even though scraps of gold are valuable, if they were placed directly on a person's eye, his eye will be damaged.

Similarly, attachment to purity (or pure practice), through entertaining thoughts of purity, constitutes a state of delusion. Finally, Po Chü-yi asks where does the difference between the true practitioners and ordinary men lie if the former are not to practice cultivation and entertain any special thoughts. The master answers, saying that ordinary men are ignorant, followers of the two inferior vehicles suffer from attachments (to specific "pure" forms of practice and thought), and the true cultivation transcends these shortcomings. The true practitioners should not "move" (ie, make self-conscious efforts of cultivation?) and should not "forget", because "movement" is close to attachment and "forgetting" results in ignorance.

The last section of the inscription comments on the subject's disciples and the circumstances that led Po Chü-yi to compose the inscription. The subject had nearly one thousand disciples of whom thirty-nine attained an advanced state. Yi-ch'ung and Yüan-ching, who had received the highest teaching from the master in the latter's own room, knew that their master had instructed Po Chü-yi. When the subject died Po Chü-yi had been assigned to a post in the South, and he was requested to compose the inscription from a distance. The text of this inscription does not restore the master's teaching nor does it

p. 420

console the disciples. It records that (through the teaching of the Master) his followers received a prediction of future salvation by Dipamkara Buddha and that (they shall all meet together?) at the future sermon at the Vulture Peak.[\[35\]](#) Therefore, Po Chü-yi did not hesitate in producing a lengthy text. The inscription ends with a short verse which states that the teaching of the Buddha has been transmitted through fifty-nine generations of teachers from the Buddha to the subject of the inscription and that for this reason the hall of the subject was called the "transmission of teaching".

The first three questions describe the life of the subject from the viewpoint of "structure". Basic facts of the subject's names and family background are given in a standard form found in all tomb inscriptions. The attention given to the details of the steps that led to the subject's ordination parallels the emphasis on state examinations in secular tomb inscriptions and may also be seen to reflect the "structural" viewpoint that sees the society, in this case the Buddhist monastic order, in terms of different ranks and positions. The

description of the subject's death and burial again is a universal feature of all tomb inscriptions.

The "structural" view of the Buddhist community is most notable in the second and third questions and answers. Here the question of the authenticity of the subject's religious attainment is dealt with as a matter of lineage of transmission and his relationship with other teachers is explained by the model of complex relationships in an extended family. These metaphors place the subject within a large framework of relationships spelled out in detail—clearly a "structurally" oriented viewpoint. The emphases in these two sections in this inscription indicate how far the process that transforms a spiritual "communitas" experience (for example, enlightenment) into organized institutions ("structure") noted by Turner has proceeded in the Chinese Buddhism that produced this inscription.

It is also possible that this emphasis on a "structure" viewpoint appears in stupa inscriptions because they were so often composed by secular scholar-officials

p. 421

using the basic format of tomb inscriptions. The conventional form of tomb inscriptions, as we saw above, tended to emphasize the "structure" viewpoint in describing the life of the subject. It is possible that the life of the monk glorified in the stupa inscription was very often his life as seen by an outsider who could not really empathize with the inner dimensions of the monk's life.

The emphasis in the fourth question and answer on different stages in the subject's progress under different teachers, on his imperial audience and his role as an instructor to the emperor in a particular palace building may also be seen as reflecting the "structural" viewpoint. There are, however, other elements in this question and answer that point in a different direction. The story of taming wild creatures usually in a mountain far away from human communities appears frequently in biographies of monks as an illustration of their extraordinary powers. Here, as elsewhere, this story may be read as a description of the extraordinary ability of the subject to create a "communitas" with dangerous and feared creatures. The story of taming a mountain god and converting him to Buddhism, again not unique to this

biography, may also be interpreted in a similar manner. The two subsequent references to miracles point to "liminal" experiences, since miracles imply that something extraordinary, not a part of the "structure" of this world, occurred. The experience at the Shao-lin temple is described briefly as "he was affected by a non-human being" (). The term "affected" (kan) usually signals a supernatural experience and the specification of the being as "non-human" probably means that it was a god. For the reason mentioned above one may regard this experience too as a "liminal" experience[36]. The incident at the Pu-k'ung pond uses the expression

p. 422

"restore" (fu) and suggests that he was able to reenact the miracle of producing water in a spring, originally performed by a famous translator of esoteric Buddhist scriptures, by connecting with the miracle's supernatural source.

The teaching of the subject described in the fifth question and answer is characterized by the emphasis on transcending distinctions. Thus, in his answers the subject of this inscription equally rejects the distinction between precepts, teaching, and meditation (first question), the distinction between impurity and purity (second and third questions), and attempts to go beyond the dilemma created by the distinction between ignorance of the truth on the part of ordinary beings and attachment to truth on the part of the followers of two inferior vehicles (fourth question). These answers may be interpreted as negating the conventional "structural" view of the Buddhist teaching which, for example, classifies the practitioners into practitioners of precepts, those of doctrines, and of meditation. The teaching in contrast is described as one truth that transcends all these distinctions and classifications, which suggests a vision of "communitas"[37].

The content of this stupa inscription may thus be analyzed as representing both the "structure" and "communitas" viewpoints. Chinese Buddhism in Po Chü-yi's time had become a complex institutional organization representing an important part of the world of "structure", and the inscriptions of the monks, written by secular writers using conventions of tomb inscriptions which always emphasized the facts of the subjects, life from the "structure" point of view, accordingly emphasized the place they occupied within this massive framework

or "structure". This emphasis is clearly identified in the inscription here under examination. At the same time, certain themes, many of them highly rhetorical, appear in the description of the lives of monks that presuppose a different viewpoint of "liminality" and "communitas".

In the tomb inscription for Wu Tan, Po Chü-yi presented the life of his subject first in "structural" terms, following the conventional format of tomb inscriptions, and then introduced passages that represent the "communitas" viewpoint. This shift in viewpoint was most notable in that the biography from the "structure" viewpoint described his public life in government while the biography from the "communitas" viewpoint described his Taoist cultivation. In the stupa inscription here under examination, both the "structure" and "communitas" accounts describe the life of the subject as that of a Buddhist monk. Yet, our analysis above showed that the accounts of the subject's life that appear at the beginning of the inscription presuppose the "structure" viewpoint, while those that appear toward the end stand closer to the "communitas" viewpoint. It is interesting to note that Po Chü-yi himself appears to have been sensitive to this difference and used specific Chinese terms to describe the different ways in which the biography of the monk could be drawn, terms like "ming-chi" and "hsin-yao" which have been given above at the appropriate places in my account of the inscription.

The same pattern of describing the lives of Buddhist monks first from the "structure" viewpoint and then from the "communitas" viewpoint may be seen in other stupa inscriptions in Po Chü-yi's collection. For example, in "The stupa inscription for the Honorable Ts'ou, the vinaya master of the Hsing-kuo temple of Chiang-chou Prefecture during the T'ang period" (T'ang Chiang-chou Hsing-kuo ssu lu ta-te Ts'ou-kung t'a-chieh ming) (PCYC, 916-918) Po Chü-yi first gives the outline of the subject's life primarily from the "structure" viewpoint and then gives a longer description of his religious life that ends with an anecdote about his death. When his sickness became severe and he was about to die, he was free from attachment to life and from the desire to avoid death; when the governor of the commandary and his disciples brought medicine,

he said, "As the result of my past deeds I have received this body, which is now to be dissolved. It is a natural process and has nothing to do with sickness. I have therefore no use for medicine" (a loose translation of the compact original sentence, pao-shen fei ping; yen yung shih-wei). After saying this the subject died peacefully (t'ien-jan). Po Chü-yi comments here that this illustrates the completeness of his enlightened understanding (liao-wu). This account of the subject's death is designed to show that he was completely free from attachment to life in this world ("structure"). It also demonstrates his greatness by describing how he happily and peacefully accepted death, a negative value from the viewpoint of the "structure". The viewpoint behind this account of transition from life to death is that of "liminality" and "communitas"[38].

In the "Text for the flag at the Cremation Site of the master Chih-ju, Hea of the Po-t'a Hall in the Sheng-shan Temple, Leader of the Ten Greatest Vinaya Masters in the Eastern Capital (Tung-tu shih lu ta-te-ch'ang Sheng-shan-ssu Po-t'a-yuan chu Chih-ju he-shang t'u-p'i-ch'uang Chi) (PCYC, 1462-1463) Po Chü-yi begins with an introductory comment saying that he proposes to describe the accomplishments of the subject and the circumstances that led to erecting a flag, based on the cremation rites described in detail in the Nirvana sutra and the merits of fo-ting-chou dharani described in the Ts'un-sheng chingscripture (T. no. 967-971). An account of the subject's life with emphasis on basic facts from the "structural" viewpoint is then followed by a religious portrait of the subject. This description then ends with an account of the subject's death and his instructions not to build a stupa or a tomb but, following the order of the former resident of the hall, to raise a flag with the dharani of fo-ting ts'un-sheng written on it. He then expresses the wish that

after his body is gone he continue to be present, for ever benefiting all sentient beings through the "shadow of the dust of the flag". Here the subject is advising, just as Po Chü-yi himself did in his own tomb inscription, that he does not wish to have a funeral and burial that are considered appropriate from the "structure" point of view. Instead, he expresses the wish to continue bene-fitting sentient beings for ever, using the humble symbol of

"the shadow of the dust on the flag". The viewpoint is obviously closer to that of "communitas" and "liminality" than that of "structure".

This pattern in which an account of the life of the subject using a conventional format is followed by some dramatic anecdotes that reveal the personality or the unparalleled attainments of the subject is found frequently in stupa inscriptions and biographies of monks. Very often while the first part using conventional format tends toward a description from the "structure" viewpoint even in the case of biographies of Buddhist monks, the latter part of the biography contains passages or statements that presuppose the "communitas" viewpoint. Hence tension between the "structure" and "communitas" viewpoints we found in secular tomb inscriptions appears in stupa inscriptions of monks as well.

Of particular interest is the apparent contradiction between what we are told of the subject's life and the summary of his teaching in "The inscription for the Transmission of the Law Hall. The subject, Wei-k'uan, is represented as rejecting all distinctions and attachments to formal teachings. Carried to its logical conclusion, the preceding detailed account of his life and his relationship to other teachers would have to be rejected as irrelevant to the truth of his teaching. It is interesting to note in addition that the "communitas" viewpoint is given as a quotation from the subject himself. Po Chü-yi presents himself as the questioner whose rather naive assumptions are refuted step by step by Wei-k'uan's answers. The tension between the "structural" facts given by Po Chü-yi and the "communitas" view implicit in the teaching of the subject is therefore the tension between the view of a lay follower who is describing the life and the view of the subject of that the description who is an accomplished

p. 426

monk. I may add further that the summary of the subject's teaching, something that is probably of greater interest to monks than to lay admirers, is not a common feature of stupa inscriptions. It is, for example, found only in this one rather untypical example among all the existing stupa inscriptions composed by Po Chü-yi. This fact suggests that the tension between the "structure" and "communitas" viewpoints which could easily surface if the emphasis were placed on the religious teaching of the subjects tended to be

suppressed in stupa inscriptions in which the "structure" viewpoint of the lay composer tended to dominate.

In the stupa inscription for Shen-ts'ou, the second inscription examined here, the contrast between the "structure" viewpoint of the lay follower and disciples and the "communitas" viewpoint of the subject appears in the exchange in which the subject rejects the medicine brought to him and expresses his readiness to depart. This account is followed immediately by the description of the circumstances under which the subject's disciples built the stupa and requested Po Chü-yi to compose the inscription. The implication is clear: the viewpoint that dominates the main part of the inscription in which the accomplishments of the subject are described is the "structural" viewpoint of the disciples and lay followers who wanted the subject to take the medicine and live longer. The subject's viewpoint transcended theirs in some fundamental way while embodying the ultimate truth of the Buddhist teaching.

The instruction of the monk Chih-ju not to build a tomb or stupa for him but to erect a flag in our third inscription might be seen as an expression of the "communitas" oriented view of a monk's life, in a manner similar to that in which we interpreted Po Chü-yi's own instruction about his tomb inscriptions. Again it is interesting to note that this "communitas" viewpoint is given in a quotation of the subject's own words. Elsewhere, the subject's life is glorified by mentioning his attainments in the "structure" of the monastic order.

These examples suggest that one context for the expression of the "communitas" viewpoint in Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions is to be found in his use of the subject's own voice, while the viewpoint of the "structure" remains

p. 427

that of the composer of the inscription (a viewpoint that he probably shares with most of his readers). Other contexts in which the "communitas" viewpoint appears in stupa inscriptions include miracle stories and rhetorical uses of symbols. Miracles are mentioned frequently in stupa inscriptions and biographies of monks in standard collections and constitute an important type of "liminal" events in monks, lives that was perfectly intelligible and

interesting to secular writers. The existing examples of Po Chü-yi's stupainscriptions do not provide sufficient materials to enable us to examine the miracle accounts in any depth. We will conclude our review of Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions with a brief examination of one example that uses rhetorical expressions freely.

b) The stupa inscription of the great master Ming-yüan of Great T'ang, the master of the precepts platform at the K'ai-yüan temple of Ssu-chou prefecture, highest monastic official of the three prefectures of Hsü-chou, Ssu-chou, and Hao (Ta-T'ang Ssu-chou K'ai-yüan-ssu lin-tan lü-te, Hsü Ssu Hao san-chou seng-cheng, Ming-yüan ta-shih t'a-p'ei-ming.)

This inscription (PCYC, 1460-1462) begins with an introductory passage: first the tathagata, Sakyamuni, was the leader in this saha world, but after His death, during the periods of "imitation law", monks who were arhats or bodhisattvas appeared in many places and became leaders. The late great master of the precepts platform at the K'ai-yüan temple of Ssu-chou prefecture was one of these leaders.

An account of the life of the subject using the conventional biographical format follows. His family's place of origin, Tsuan in the Ch'iao-chün commandary, his secular surname of Pao, monastic name Ming-yüan are first given. At age seven the subject renounced the householder's life under meditation master P'ei of the subject's original commandary. At nineteen he received the complete precepts from the vinaya master Ling-mu of the Ssu-chou prefecture. After five summers he mastered the Vinaya in Four Divisions and Chu-she-lun (abhidharmakosa). After that he lectured and performed ceremonies on (teng) the precepts platform. In the first year of Yüan-he

p. 428

(806), he became the head monk of the temple. In the following year he was appointed by the government as the seng-cheng (the highest monastic official) of the prefecture.

A long description of his work as the leading monk of the temple follows. He built seven lecture halls and six residences for the monks in the field north of the K'ai-yüan temple. In the Huai and Ssu river region there were

frequent floods. The subject of the inscription collaborated with the Commandary Governor Su Yü and others to build large emergency monastic buildings and planted ten thousand trees. Then there was a fire in the temple which destroyed everything. The subject happened to be acquainted with Palace Attendant Wang who was the Military Commissioner of Hsu-chou prefecture and with his cooperation rebuilt the temple. Thereupon, the subject was asked to serve as the seng-cheng for the three prefectures of Hsü-chou, Ssu-chou, and Hao-chou and he memorialized requesting that a vinaya platform be established in the temple. Because of these increased responsibilities, the temple was expanded. The Palace Attendant helped him using a very large amount of his private wealth.

A description of the expanded temple follows in which a great number of rhetorical expressions occur. There were over two thousand rooms in a variety of buildings serving a wide range of needs for the temple, and everything was provided for the ceremonial needs of the images in the buildings; utensils for other purposes were also provided in abundance. The construction work began in the second year of Ch'ang-ch'ing (822) and was completed in the first year of Ta-he (827). Numerous beautifully decorated buildings looked as if they had sprung out of the ground or come down from heaven. Ceremonies were performed everyday and temple bells rang constantly. All four divisions of the Buddhist community took refuge there and ten thousand people were converted. Here the arrogant became reverent and those who had planted the seeds of good deeds vowed to seek Buddhist salvation. Rich benefits flowed everywhere. The passage closes by saying that this revival of Buddhist teaching was possible because the subject of the inscription was the first among all

p. 429

monks in merits and wisdom and the Palace Attendant Wang was the first among laymen in reverence and faith. This event proves the truth of the instruction of the Buddha that after his death his teaching will be transmitted (shou) to his disciples and the necessary support will be requested (chu) from great ministers.

An account of the subject's death follows this extended description of the new temple. In the eighth year of Ta-he (835) in the morning of the 19th day

of the twelfth month, he died in his residential building in his temple. On the 29th day of the same month grieved followers, both monks and laymen, held his funeral and placed his remains in the brick stupa to the west of the lake showing respect to the teaching and honouring the wishes of the deceased. He was seventy years old, and had lived as a monk for fifty-one years. A brief summary of his life as a student and teacher (hua yuan) is states that nine of his disciples "faced the precept platform (and conferred precepts?)", fifteen "served on (teng) the seat of vinaya (teacher?),[\[39\]](#) 30,000 people became monks and nuns under him, and that he taught in the Chiang-huai region for forty years. Po Chü-yi says, obviously recalling the opening statement concerning the Buddha, arhats and bodhisattvas, that people suspected that he might be a messenger from the tathagata, or an arhat, or a bodhisattva, but asks how one could know whether there is any truth in these suspicions. The subject wanted to perform the meritorious deed of constructing a temple, and when the deed was completed he passed away.

In the last part of the prose section of the inscription, Po Chü-yi describes briefly the circumstances of the composition of the inscription. Originally, the

p. 430

subject of the inscription asked the Palace Attendant Wang to compose the record of his life but the Palace Attendant died before he could do so. Therefore, Po Chü-yi composed the inscription based on the biography ("hsing-chuang) prepared by monks Seng-liang and Yüan-su, both disciples of the subject, in order to fulfil the subject's wish and bring the Palace Attendant's intention to fruition.

The inscription closes with a verse which begins with references to the emergence of a stupa from the ground, the manifestation of the Prabhuta Ratna Buddha, and the illusory city, all from stories in the Lotus sutra. These extraordinary events are said to be the "skill in means" of the Great Teacher, namely, the Buddha. The great master, ie., the subject of the inscription, had a great vow: to spread the "imitation law" and to build stupas and shrines so that the Buddha and people would commune with each other. The vinaya was taught by the Buddha; monks and nuns of the congregation were ordained by the master. The master worked diligently for more than forty years to spread the scriptural collection of precepts and

perform the rites of the vinaya. His merit and virtue are like empty space in the sky—they are beyond our understanding. He came to this world when all necessary conditions were present at the same time, and went away from it when his work was completed. The essential nature of reality is beyond change and the phenomenal body is impermanent (ju-hsing pu-tung; se-sheng wu-chu). Although there is the manifestation of passing away at death, in fact there is no "death" or "crossing over to the other realm" as we understand these terms. In building the stupa and carving the verse, his disciples and followers express their affection.

What is distinctive about this inscription is the combination of the detailed facts about the subject's life and the density of its rhetoric. The life of the subject is described from the "structure" point of view, focusing on his appointment by the secular government in a high office that controlled the monastic community; at the same time the subject's deeds and life are compared in highly rhetorical passages to those of the Buddha, arhats, or bodhisattvas. The images in the final verse compare his building of the temple buildings to

p. 431

the Buddha's miracles and use of "skill in means" in creating the mirage of a city. In saying that in this temple arrogant people became reverent and good people vowed to pursue the path of Buddhist cultivation, and in describing the subject's preaching and temple building as the communion between the Buddha and people, the rhetoric of this inscription portrays the world of "communitas". Thus, in this inscription we can again note the dual perspectives of "structure" and "communitas" views of the subject's life. In this case, however, there appears to be no tension between the glorification of the life of the subject from the "structural" viewpoint and its glorification in rhetorical passages rich in traditional imagery. Here the "communitas" viewpoint embodied in the rhetorical passages reinforces the "structure" viewpoint without much tension.

Perhaps in these rhetorical biographical inscriptions, we see how the educated lay followers assimilated the "communitas" of Buddhist symbols as a matter or literary device to be used to reinforce the biographies of monks drawn primarily from the "structure" point of view.

The brief analysis of Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions above showed first of all that the "structure" viewpoint is dominant in these inscriptions. Chinese Buddhism at this time was highly institutionalized and inscriptions place a great deal of emphasis on identifying the places that the subjects occupied in this "structure". The form of stupa inscriptions, heavily dependent on that of secular tomb inscriptions, also meant that the "structure" viewpoint was likely to become dominant.

The analysis also revealed that the "liminal" or "communitas" dimension of monks' lives appear in different ways in their biographical inscriptions. Since these inscriptions were composed by lay scholar-officials, one might assume that these different ways must have reflected the manner in which certain important practices and experiences of Chinese monks were understood by lay followers among the literary elites. Thus, it is particularly noteworthy that in Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions the tension between "structure" and "communitas" viewpoints often appears as the contrast between the quoted words of the subjects and the views of his followers including that of Po Chü-yi himself. The

p. 432

words of the subjects are quoted since there was something unexpected and extraordinary in them. This seems to indicate that Po Chü-yi saw the subjects of his inscriptions as religious adepts who in the final analysis lived in a different world: he admired them greatly, but saw them as extraordinary persons and was always aware of the gulf that separated their concerns from his world, which is also the world that produced their inscriptions.

This attitude is reflected in the sometimes tentative manner in which he comments on the lives of monks. We saw earlier that Po Chü-yi reacted to the rumour that Ming-yüan was a messenger from the tathagata or an arhat or a bodhisattva by asking a question: how could one know? This tentativeness contrasts markedly with the confident manner in which he stated in the case of a tomb inscription of a secular figure that his relatively low offices were the result of "fate" (ming*) rather than virtue. He seems to have been much more comfortable in evaluating the life of a secular subject than that of revered monks.

The relationship between the "structure" and "communitas" viewpoints is more harmonious in the case of references to miracles and in the use of Buddhist symbols in rhetorical passages. Lay followers could easily understand the significance of miracles and interpreted them as confirming the worth of the subjects as shown in their high positions in the "structure" of Buddhist institutions. Skillful writers assimilated Buddhist symbols into their rhetoric and complemented the glorification of the subjects' lives based on the positions they occupied in the "structure" with a description that transfigured them into members of idealized "communitas".

This analysis points to one basic conclusion: stupa inscriptions present the lives of monks as seen by outsiders; they do not describe the lives of monks as monks saw them. Whereas Po Chü-yi's tomb inscriptions usually communicate a sympathetic understanding of their subjects, who lived the life of a scholar-official as he himself did, his stupa inscriptions show his distance from those Buddhist monks whose lives were alien to him. This distance seems to be reflected in the rather artificial manner in which the "communitas" viewpoint appears in these inscriptions.

p. 433

5. Concluding Comments

In this paper I attempted to examine the nature of stupa inscriptions by analyzing the biographical tomb inscriptions written by Po Chü-yi. I identified the central dynamic in Po Chü-yi's tomb inscriptions using Victor Turner's concepts of "structure" and "communitas" and determined the manner in which the Po Chü-yi's lay status affected the nature of the stupa inscriptions he composed. Since stupa inscriptions were typically written by eminent lay writers/statesmen, this analysis of Po Chü-yi's stupa inscriptions may throw light on the nature of Chinese stupa inscriptions in general. The purpose of this paper was, however, to devise a method for exploring this question concretely in analyzing examples of stupa inscriptions and to propose some hypothetical answers.

The next task will naturally be that of testing the method and hypotheses proposed here in the context of stupa inscriptions composed by other writers from different periods in the history of Chinese Buddhism. Such a study may reveal how this genre of writing developed in the course of Chinese history.

One other context in which the findings of the analysis in this paper might be pursued further is that of the relationship between stupa inscriptions and Chinese Buddhist historiography. As we noted above, the three standard collections of the "biographies of eminent monks" relied heavily, though not exclusively, on stupa inscriptions. Other sources included miracle stories (found in other types of inscriptions and in collections of such stories) and writings of the monks themselves. In the earlier study mentioned above, we noted a fundamental tension between the orientation of lay composers of stupa inscriptions and the orientation of the later compilers (such as Hui-chiao, Tao-hsüan, and Tsan-ning) who as monks collected biographies of "eminent monks" for primarily monastic purposes. In many cases, these compilers appear to have adapted the material to suit their purposes, often by adding other types of materials. Thus, compilers of collected biographies often quoted passages from the subjects' own writings. As compositions of monks, these writings represent the monastic viewpoint and in many cases presuppose an audience of

p. 434

monks. Later sectarian histories, again written as collections of biographies took this development further. Thus, in Ch'an collections the biographical information of the type that we find typically in stupa inscriptions is combined with summaries of the subjects' teaching that are of interest primarily to practitioners of Ch'an meditation. Here the balance shifted in the direction of emphasizing materials that are of interest to monks.

I believe that these complex developments might profitably be analyzed by the method proposed here of identifying the "structure" and "communitas" viewpoints and characterizing the nature of Chinese religious biographies as a matter of the relationship between these two viewpoints. Thus, in the context of the study of standard collections of the "biographies of eminent monks" we might characterize different types of sources as representing either "structure" or "communitas" viewpoints and decipher the compilers'

intention in the relationship between these viewpoints. In sectarian histories, we might find a very complex pattern of relationship between the "structure" viewpoint, partly determined by the sects' own interest in determining its relationship with other groups, and the "communitas" viewpoint represented in the teachings of the figures included there.

The discussion of these complex issues must be postponed to later occasions. I have mentioned these areas of further investigation here as a way of illustrating the potential significance of the analysis of a small number of Po Chu yi's inscriptions attempted here.

This paper presented some of the findings of a comparative study on "Religious Biographies in Asia" carried out during the two year period, 1984-86, by a team consisting of Dr. Phyllis Granoff (on Indian biographies), Dr. Eva Dargyay (on Tibetan biographies), and myself (on Chinese biographies) supported by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Many colleagues and friends read this paper at different stages of its development and made valuable suggestions. I am particularly indebted to Prof. James R. Hightower of Harvard University who read this paper with great care, identified some important allusions in the sources, and offered innumerable stylistic suggestions.

p. 435

LIST OF CHARACTERS

An 安

An-kuo 安國

Ang 昂

Ch'an 禪

Ch'ang-chou 常州

Ch'ang-ch'ing 長慶

Ch'ao-fu 巢父

Chen-ts'un 真存

Chen-yüan 貞元
Cheng-chou 鄭州
Cheng-sheng chi 正聲集
Chi-jan 寂然
Chi-ti wen 祭弟文
chi-wen 祭文
Ch'i 起
ch'i 氣
Chia-chu 嘉州
chia chuang 家狀
Chiang-chou 江州
Chiang-huai 江淮
Chiao 皎
Ch'iao-chün 譙郡
chieh 階
Chien 翦
Chien-chung 建中
chih 職
chih-chü 制舉
Chih-ju 智如
chih-ts'e 制策

p. 436

Chin 晉
Chin-ling 晉陵
chin-shih 進士
Chin-shih san-li 金石三例
Chin-shu 晉書
Ch'in 秦
ch'in-chü ke-tz'u 琴曲歌辭
Ching-chao 京兆
Ch'ing-he 清河
Ch'ing-hua 清書
ch'ing-kan 清幹
Chiang-yang 江陽
Chiu-ssu 秋思

Chiu T'ang shu 舊唐書
chiu-te sung 酒德頌
Ch'iuung 瓊
Chou 周
chu 囑
Chu 祝
Chü-she-lun 俱舍論
chü-shou lo-ch'uan 居守洛川
Ch'ü-chou 衢州
chuan 傳
Ch'uan-fa 傳法
ch'uan-fa t'ang 傳法堂
Ch'uan-fa t'ang pei 傳法堂碑
ch'uan-shou 傳授
chüan 卷
Ch'üan 詮
Ch'üan T'ang Wen 全唐文
Chuang tzu 莊子

p. 437

Ch'un-hua 淳化
chung 中
chung-ti 仲弟
Ch'ung-kuei 崇珪
Fan-yang 范陽
Fo-hsüeh ta-tz'u-tien 佛學大辭典
fo-ting-chou 佛頂咒
fo-ting ts'un-sheng 佛頂尊勝
fu 復
Fu-p'ing 富平
Gendai shinsho 現代新書
Hakurakuten 白樂天
Han 漢
Han Yü 韓愈
Hao-chou 濠州
hao-ch'i 顥氣

He-hsi 河西
He-nan 河南
Hsiao T'ung 蕭統
Hsia-kuei 下邳
Hsiang-chou pieh-chia chun shih-chuang 襄州別駕君事狀
Hsiang-shan 香山
Hsiao-chien 孝簡
Hsieh Chien-hsün 薛兼訓
Hsieh Ling-yün 謝靈運
Hsien-tsung 憲宗
Hsien-yang 咸陽
hsin-yao 心要
Hsin T'ang shu 新唐書
hsing-chuang 行狀
Hsing-kuo 興果

p. 438

Hsing-shan 興善
Hsin-an 信安
Hsü kao-seng chuan 續高僧傳
hsüan 玄
hsüan-shou 選授
Hsüan-tsung 玄宗
Hsün 珣
hsün 勳
Hsü-chou 徐州
Hsü-yu 許由
Hu-chou 湖州
Hu Shih 胡適
Hu Shih wen-ts'un 胡適文存
Hua 華
Huai 淮
hua-yüan 化緣
Huang Tsung-hsi 黃宗羲
huang-t'ing 黃庭
Hui-chiao 慧皎

hui-hsiang tao-chang 迴嚮道場
Hung-chou 洪州
Jao-chou 饒州
Jen-he 仁和
Jen-wang ching 仁王經
ju-hsing pu-tung; se-sheng wu-chu 如性不動、色身無住
Ju-man 如滿
Jung 融
Jung Ch'i-ch'i 榮啓期
K'ai-ch'eng 開成
K'ai-yüan 開元
Kakyo no hanashi 科擧の話

p. 439

kan 感
kan fei-jen 感非人
Kanbun nyumon 漢文入門
Kao-seng chuan 高僧傳
Kodansha 講談社
Koteki Zen Gakuan 胡適禪學案
Ku Hsüeh-hsieh 顧學頡
Ku Jao-chou tz'u-shih Wu fu-chün shen-tao pei-ming 故饒州刺史吳府君
神碑銘
ku Kung-hsien ling Po fu shih-chuang 故鞏縣令白府事狀
ku-wen 古文
K'uai-chi 會稽
kuan 官
Kuei Yu-kuan 歸有光
kuei-ch'üan fan-chen 歸全反眞
k'uei-tz'u 愧辭
Kuo Mo-ch'ien 郭茂倩
Lai 來
Lao tzu 老子
le 樂
le ch'i-chih 樂其志
Le-t'ien 樂天

Li Fang 李昉
Li Po 李白
Li Shang-yin 李商隱
li-yüeh 禮樂
liao-wu 了悟
lieh-chuan 列傳
Lieh tzu 列子
Lin chieh-t'an 臨戒壇
Lin-chin li 臨津里

p. 440

lin-t'an ta-te 臨壇大德
Lin-te 麟德
Ling 靈
Ling-mu 靈穆
Liu Hsü 劉昫
Liu K'e 劉訶
Liu Ling 劉伶
Lui Po-lun 劉伯倫
Lo-ch'uan 洛川
Lo Kung-yüan 羅公遠
Lo-shui 洛水
Lo-yang 洛陽
lu 籙
Lu Chung-t'ung 盧仲通
Lu Ch'in-li 遼欽立
Lun-yü 論語
Lung-men 龍門
Man 滿
Min 閩
ming 銘
ming* 命
ming-chi 名跡
ming-ching 明經
Ming-yüan 明遠
mou 某

mu-chih ming 墓誌銘
Mu-chou 睦州
Mu-ming chü-li 墓銘舉例
Mu-pei ming 墓碑銘
Murakami Tetsumi 村上哲見
Ni-shang yü-yi 霓裳羽衣

p. 441

Nishida Taichiro 西田太一郎
Ogawa Tamaki 小川環樹
Ou-yang Hsiu 歐陽修
Pa-ling 灞陵
pa-ts'ui 拔萃
Pan Ang-hsiao 潘昂霄
Pao 暴
Pao-li 寶曆
Pao shen fei ping; yen yung shih wei 報身非病、焉用是爲
Pei T'ing 裴頌
P'ei 霏
p'ei-ch'en 陪臣
P'ien 昇
Po 播
Po Ching-shou 白景受
Po Chü-yi 白居易
Po Chü-yi chi 白居易集
Po Chu-yi shih-tai ti ch'an-tsung shih-hsi 白居易時代的禪宗世系
Po h'i 白起
Po-lun 伯倫
po-hsüeh hung-ts'u k'e 博學宏詞科
Po-t'a 鉢塔
Po-yi 伯夷
P'o-yang 鄱陽
Pu-k'ung 不空
pu-yi 布衣
San-yüan 三原
Sang-hu 桑戶

seng-cheng 僧正
Seng-ch'ung 僧崇
Seng-ju 僧如

p. 442

Seng-liang 僧亮
Seng-t'an 僧曇
Shang-heng 上恒
Shao-lin 少林
she-jen 舍人
shen-tao-pei 神道碑
shen-tao-pei ming 神道碑銘
Shen-ts'ou 神湊
Sheng Chiang-tso 升講座
shih 諡
shou 授
Shu 庶
Ssu 泗
Ssu-chou 泗州
Ssu-ma Ch'ien 司馬遷
Su Yü 蘇遇
Sung kao-seng chuan 宋高僧傳
Sung Ch'i 宋祁
ta 達
Ta-ch'e 大徹
Ta-ch'e ch'an-shih Yüan-he cheng-chih chih t'a 大徹禪師元和正直之塔
Ta-chi 大寂
Ta chi Tao-yi 大寂道一
Ta-chin 大璣
Ta-he 大和
ta-jen 達人
Ta-li 大曆
Ta Sung seng-shih lüeh 大宋僧史略
Ta-T'ang Ssu-chou K'ai-yüan-ssu lin-tan lü-te, Hsü Ssu Hao san-chou
seng-cheng, Ming-yüan ta-shih t'a-p'ei-ming
大唐泗州開元寺臨壇大德、徐泗濠三洲僧正明遠大師塔碑銘

t'a-ming 塔銘

Taisho Shinshu Daizokyo 大正新修大藏經

Tai-tsung 代宗

T'ai-wang-kung Lü Shang 太望公呂尙

T'ai-yüan 太原

Takakusu Junjiro 高楠順次郎

Tan 丹

tan-t'ien 丹田

T'ang 唐

T'ang Chiang-chou Hsing-kuo ssu lu ta-te Ts'ou-kung t'a-chieh-ming

唐江州興果寺律大德湊公塔碣銘

T'ang ku Fu-chou Ching-yün-ssu lü ta-te Shang-hung he-shang shih-t'a-Pei
ming

唐故撫州景雲寺律大德上弘和尚石塔碑銘

T'ang ku Li-shui hsien-ling t'ai-yüan Po fu-chün mu-chih ming

唐故溧水縣令太原白府君墓誌銘

T'ang ku t'ung-yi t'ai-fu he-chou tz'u-shih Wu-chün Chang-kung
shen-tao-pei ming

唐故通議大夫和州刺史吳郡張公神道碑銘

T'ang tseng shang-shu kung-pu shih-lang Wu-chün Chang-kung
shen-tao-pei ming

唐贈尚書工部侍郎吳郡張公神道碑銘

T'ang Yang-chou ts'ang-ts'ao ts'an-chün Wang fu-chün (Mu-) chih-ming

唐揚州倉曹參軍王府君【墓】誌銘

T'ang yi-shih 唐逸史

tao-chang 道場

Tao-hsüan 道宣

Tao-hsüan lü-shih kan-t'ung lu 道宣律師感通錄

Tao-yi 道一

tao-shu 道屬

T'ao-Ch'ien 陶潛

T'ao Yüan-ming 陶淵明
T'ao yüan-ming chi 陶淵明集
teng 登
teng chieh-t'an 登戒壇
teng lü-tso 登律座
T'eng 滕
t'ien jan 恬然
T'ien-kung 天宮
T'ien-pao 天寶
T'ien-t'ai 天台
Ting Fu-pao 丁福保
Tsan-ning 贊寧
Ts'e lin 策林
Tsui-yin hsien-sheng 醉吟先生
Tsui-yin hsien-sheng chuan 醉吟先生傳
Tsui-yin hsien-sheng mu-chih-ming 醉吟先生墓誌銘
Ts'ou 湊
Tsuan 鄮
Ts'ui 崔
Ts'un-sheng ching 尊勝經
tui chih-yen chi-chien k'e 對直言極諫科
tui ch'en-mou mi-lueh ts'e k'e 對沈謀秘略策科
Tung Kao 董誥
Tung-fang Shuo 東方朔
Tung-tu shih lü ta-te-ch'ang Sheng-shan-ssu Po-t'a-yüan chu Chih-ju
he-shang t'u-p'i-ch'uang chi
東都十律大德長聖善寺鉢塔院主智如和尚茶毗幢記
Tzu-chi wen 自祭文
tzu 字
Tzu-hsüan mu-chih 自撰墓誌
tzu-ming ch'I mu yüeh 自銘其墓曰

p. 445

Wang 王

Wang Chi 王績

Wang Ch'i-sun 王芑孫
Wang Hsing 王行
Wang wu 王屋
Wang Wu-kung 王無功
Wei 魏
Wei Chieh 衛玠
Wei Chih-chin 韋之晉
Wei-k'uan 惟寬
Wei-kuo 衛國
Wei Shu-pao 衛叔寶
wei-shun 委順
Wen-hsüan 文選
Wen-yüan ying-hua 文苑英華
Wu 吳
Wu-an 武安
Wu-chou 婺州
Wu-liu hsien-sheng chuan 五柳先生傳
Wu Tan 吳丹
Wu-tou sheng-hsien chuan 五斗先生傳
wu-wei kung-te 無爲功德
Yang Ching-shu 楊敬述
Yang-chou 楊州
Yang-liu chih 楊柳枝
Yao 堯
Ye Fa-shan 葉法善
Yen 炎
Yen Hui 顏回
Yi-ch'ung 義崇
Yi wen-chang 議文章

p. 446

Yi-wu 義烏
Yi-yin 伊尹
Yi-ch'üeh 伊闕
Yokoyama Hiroo 橫山宏雄
yu-wei kung-le 有爲功德

Yü 輿
Yüan 元
Yüan Chen 元稹
Yüan-ching 圓鏡
Yüan-he 元和
Yüan-su 元素
Yüan Tsai 元載
Yüeh 越
Yüeh-fu 樂府
Yüeh-fu shih-chi 樂府詩集
Yüeh-yüan 樂苑
Yung-t'ai 永泰
Yü-yao 餘姚

p. 447

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Fang Hsuan-ling, and others. 1974. Chin-shu. 10 volumes. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. This work was originally compiled in the three year period between 646 and 648.

Graham, A.C. (transl.). 1960. The Book of Lieh-tzu: A classic fo Tao. New York: Columbia University Press.

-----, 1981. Chuang tzu: The Seven Inner Chapters and other writings from the book chuang tzu. London: George Allen and Unwin. pp.87-90.

James Robert Hightower. 1970. The Poetry of T'ao Ch'ien, Oxford: Oxford University Press. Oxford Library of East Asian Literatures Series.

Hsiao Tung (ed.), 1977. Wen hsuan. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 3 volumes. Beijing: Zhunghua shuju Ku Hsueh-chich, 1979. po Chu-yi chi.

Kuo Mo-ch'ien. 1979. Yueh-fu shin-chi. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. 4 volumes. The date of this work and details of the Sung scholar Kuo Mo-ch'ien's biography are unknown.

Lao, D.C. 1979. Confucius: The Analects (Lun yü). Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books.

Liu Hsu and others. 1975. Chiu T'ang shu. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. Modern punctuated edition. Abbreviated as CTS.

Lu Ch'inli (ed.). 1979. T'ao Yüan-ming chi, Beijing: Zhunghua shuju. Abbreviated here as TYMC.

Metzgar, Thomas. 1973. The Internal Organization of Ch'ing Bureaucracy. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Murakami Tetsumi. 1980. Kakyo no hanashi. Tokyot Kodansha. Gendai shinsho 592.

Ogawa Tamaki and Nishida Taichiro. 1957. Kanbun nyumon. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten.

Ou-yang Hsiu and Sung Ch'i. 1975. Hsin T'ang shu. Abbreviated as HTS. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju.

Pan Ang-hsiao, Wang Hsing, Huang Tsung-hsi (authors); Wang Ch'i sun (commentary). 1956. Chin-shih san-li. Taiwan: Shangwu yinshuguan. Abbreviated here as CSSL.

p. 448

Shinohara Koichi. 1984. "Miracle stories in Chinese Buddhist biographies: Three Preliminary Investigations: Paper resented at the Easten Region meeting of the American Academy of Religion held at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, in the spring of 1984.

----- 1986. "Inscriptional Sources of Chinese Buddhist Biographies". Paper presented at the International Congress for Asian and North African Studies

in Hamburg, August, 1986. This paper was published as a part of a longer article listed below.

----- 1988. "Two Sources of Chinese Buddhist Biographies: Stupa Inscriptions and Miracle Stories" in Phyllis Granoff and Koichi Shinohara (eds.) *Monks and Magicians: Religious Biographies in Asia*, Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press.

Sung Fang and others. 1966. *Wen-yüan ying-hua*. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. Abbreviated as WYYH. The work was completed in 982.

Takakusu Jun jiro and others. 1960-. *Taisho shinshu Daizokyo* (The Tripitaka in Chinese). Tokyo: The Taisho Shinshu Daizokyo Kanko Kai. Reprint edition. Abbreviated as T. and references given by text no. or volume and page numbers.

Ting Fu-pao. 1984. *Fo-hsüeh ta-tz'u-tien*. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe (photographically reproduced edition). This work was originally published in 1922.

Tung Kao and others. 1983. *Ch'üan T'ang Wen*. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju. Abbreviated as CTW. The work was completed in 1814.

Turner, Victor. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Antistructure*. Chicago: Aldane.

----- 1974. *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human society*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

D.C. Twitchett. 1961. "Chinese Biographical Writing", in *Historians of China and Japan*. London: Oxford University Press.

Waley, Arthur. 1949. *The Life and Times of Po Chü-i, 772-846 AD.* London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd.

Yanagida Seizan, 1975. *Koteki zen Gakuan*, Taipei: Cheng-chung shu-chu.
Yokoyama Hiroo. 1967. *Hakurakuten*, Tokyo: Jimbustsu orai sha. *Chugoku jimbutso sho*, series II, no. 4.

白居易墓誌銘中的「結構」和「群體」

篠原亨一

馬克馬斯特大學教授

提要

《高僧傳》、《續高僧傳》和《宋高僧傳》這三部主要選集中的中國佛教傳記，主要是以僧人的塔銘〈墓誌銘〉為基礎。撰寫塔銘的，一般是在家的學者官員，其中不乏位居高官的大文豪。因此，我們可以推論，這些滿腹經綸和天賦異稟的在家佛弟子或佛教同情者，他們的宗教情操都反映在這些塔銘中。白居易（772-846）這位唐朝名詩人，在他漫長的宦宦生涯中，曾經擔任過若干非常高的職位。本文即是以詳細討論他所寫的塔銘，來探索這些基本事實的涵義。我在討論白居易的塔銘時，採取兩個策略：1.把它們放在白居易所寫的全部墓誌銘的氛圍中；2.指出這些塔銘的動力所在。我引用人類學者維特·托納的「結構」和「群體」觀念，來說明「動力」。托納認為，我們以兩種互相矛盾的模式，來了解我們的社會經驗和社會地位：1.「人類是法律、政治和經濟的動物，社會便是許多個人的結構。」（「分化的、以文化為結構的、區隔的、而常常是階級的制度化地位的系統」）。2.「社會是有具體癖性的個人的群體，這些個人雖然在生理和天賦方面千差萬別，但就人人皆有的人性而言，卻是平等的。」（「社會是一個非分化、同質的整體，個人在社會中，以完整的個體與人交往。」）我的中心結論是，在白居易的墓誌銘和塔銘中，我們可以發現這兩個詮釋社會和個人社會關係的矛盾觀念。我更進一步預測，這個結論可以適用到其他作者所寫的大多數中國墓誌銘和塔銘。

本文分為三部份。在第一部份中，我討論了白居易為自己所寫的兩篇自傳式題綱：〈醉吟先生墓誌銘並序〉和〈醉吟先生傳〉。墓誌銘一般都是在主人翁過世後才寫的。但在前一篇文章中，白居易卻以墓誌銘來描寫自己。「結構的」因素，在墓誌銘中非常顯著，以亮麗的辭藻來描述主人翁的顯宦生涯。由主人翁自寫的這一篇傳記，顯含著基本的矛盾，這種矛盾以濃縮的模樣，浮現在白居易對於自己死亡的虛構描寫上。白居易的自傳聲音在這裡突入得很響亮，而那種聲音是以「群體」的語言

說出的。「群體」的語言，在第二篇文章中非常突顯，白居易希望這篇文章能夠刻在石頭上，

p. 450

置於他的墳墓旁邊。在文章裡面，白居易以非常像詩一般的語言來做自畫像，主人翁「忘了」世俗的自我，卻透過酒和詩來達成精神上的圓滿。

在本文的第二部份中，我以〈唐揚州倉曹參軍王府君墓誌銘并序〉和〈故饒州刺史吳府群神道碑銘并序〉二文為例，討論白居易所寫的墓誌銘。就像大多數的墓誌銘一樣，這兩篇文章在描述主人翁的生平時，都非常強調「結構的」特色（家庭背景、他們所通過的官方考試，他們所擔任過的官職……）。不過，這兩篇墓誌銘也介紹了「群體的」觀點：在〈王府君墓誌銘〉中，引用「命運」的概念來批評主人翁的生平；在〈吳府君碑銘〉中，則以附加於比較「結構性的」傳記段落（指官職），來描述主人翁的生平，另外還有私人的傳記描述修道過程。就像大多數有關宗教修持的描述一般，有關修道過程和段落，比較有「群體的」傾向，但本文卻提出一個比較高的「群體」當作理想，結合了主人翁生平的兩個層面。

在本文的第三部份，我討論了現存的白居易塔銘，以兩篇文章為例：〈西京興善寺傳法堂碑銘并序〉、〈大唐泗州元寺臨壇律德徐泗濠三州僧正明遠大師塔碑銘并序〉。前者透過一套問答來描述主人翁的生平：在描述主人翁生平的基本事實、他所受的教法的傳承、他與當代幾位法師的關係等答案中，「結構的」觀點比較顯著；在描述主人翁的修行經過、他的教法要旨等答案中，則「群體的」觀點比較顯著。白居易的塔銘，往往是在前面部分最為重視「結構的」觀點，這也許可以反映出唐代佛教已經制度化到相當程度，也可以反映出在家學者官員的作品特色。至於在〈明遠大師塔碑銘〉中，從「結構的」觀點來看，主人翁的生平描述得相當仔細；「群體的」觀點則見於引用佛經名句的詩偈中。本文的特色是，在「結構的」和「群體的」觀點之間，似乎並沒有緊張的情形存在。

[1] Po Chü-yi's biographies in official histories are found in the CTS, chuan 166, pp. 4340-4360; HTS, chüan 119, pp. 4300-4307. Arthur Waley wrote an extended biography of Po Chü-yi, titled *The Life and Times of Po Chü-yi*, 772-846 A.D.

[2] This inscription is not included in standard editions of Po Chü-yi's works. For a brief discussion of this document see the Appendix I in Waley's biography (Waley: 216). The text of the inscription is found in CTW, chüan 679 (p. 6942) and in WYYH, chüan 945 (P. 4973f).

[3] The title of this inscription in the version given in the WYYH collection says explicitly "tomb inscription composed by the subject" (Tzu-hsuan mu-chih). The title in the CTW version uses the expression, "A Drunken Reciter" (tsui-yin hsien-sheng), which Po Chü-yi used to describe himself humorously, thus indicating indirectly that the inscription was written by himself. The expression "tzu-ming ch'i mu yüeh (he wrote a verse for his tomb. which went as follows)" that appears in the inscription itself also indicates the autobiographical nature of this document.

[4] For details on different levels of the state examination, see Murakami (67-74). The term chih ts'e is used for the chih-chu examination in Po Chü-yi inscription.

[5] Han Yü (768-824), a contemporary of Po Chü-yi and known above all for his advocacy of the ku-wen style, is generally considered as providing the model for this form of writing. A short and helpful explanation of the literary genre of tomb inscriptions, together with a few annotated examples of tomb inscriptions written by Han Yü, Ou-yang Hsiu and Kuei Yu-kuang is found in an anthology prepared by Ogawa Tamaki and Nishida Taichiro (237-260). My discussion below is based on this explanation.

[6] For details, see the note (6), PCYC. 1505. Earlier, in the second year of Ta-he (828), Po Chü-yi mentions the location Hsia-kuei as the place of his own burial in chi (lang-chung) ti wen (PCYC, 1455). Hsia-kuei was Po's native place, where his ancestors were buried. But the official biography of Po Chü-yi in the CTS notes that he asked not to be returned to Hsia-kuei, but rather to be buried next to the stupa of Master Ju-man of Hsjang-shan (chüan 166, p. 4358), This matches the present location of Po Chü-yi's tomb. If Po Chü-yi changed his mind about his place of burial, as the note in the section on this document in the PCYC suggest, then his Buddhist faith might have had something to do with it. His earlier wish was to be buried with his ancestors and later wish to be buried with a Buddhist teacher.

[7] This instruction does not appear to have been followed strictly. Li Shang-yin's Mu-pei ming, an external tomb inscription, is preserved in CTW, chüan 780, and describes how Po Ching-shou, a relative of Po Chü-yi, and Po Chu-yi's wife went to the capital and requested Li Shang-yin ("the best known poet of the day") to compose the inscription. For details, see Waley's appendix (216).

[8] The Yueh-fu shih-chi, chüan 59, lists a number of poems entitled by chiu-ssu, ("Autumn thought") as "words for songs played by cithern" (ch'in-chu ke-tzu). Two poems by Li Po are included here. The Collected works of Po Chü-yi (Po Chü-yi chi lists two poems titled Chiu-ssu (chüan 14, p. 281, and chüan 26, p. 605).

[9] Ni-shang yu-yi ("The immortal's dress of rainbow and feathers") refers to a famous yueh-fu poem and music of the T'ang court. According to the Li-yuen section of the Hsin T'ang-shu (chüan 22, p.476). this music was presented to the court by Yang Ching-shu, the Military Commissioner of He-hsi (ie., the wide region to the west of the Yellow river). Yüeh-fu shih-chi quotes a work recording events not included in the official dynastic histories ("T'ung yi-shih"), which tells the following story: Emperor Hsüan-tsung was taken by the magician Lo Kung-yüan to the Moon Palace and observed hundreds of immortal women dance to this tune in the court yard. The Emperor remembered the tune, After retuning to his own palace, the Emperor called in his musicians and composed this music. According to another story quoted in the same passage, accompanied by the magician Ye Fa-shan Emperor Hsüan-tsung travelled to the Moon and heard this music, The same passage in the Yüeh-fu shih-chi also quotes from another work called "Yüeh-yüan" according to which Emperor Hsuan-tsung visited the Moon and heard a music of immortals. but he could remember only half of it afterward; around the same time Yang Ching-shu presented a piece of "Brahmanical" music, which happened to be the same as the music that the Emperor had heard (Kuo Mo-ch'ien, p.816).

[10] A number of poems, beginning with several by Po Chü-yi, entitled Yang-liu chih ("Branches of Willow Tree") are listed in the Yüeh-fu shih-chi, chuan 81, pp.1142-1149. These poems were sung to a popular tune imported recently from Central Asia.

[11] Liu Ling (style, Po-lun) composed the "In Praise of the Virtue of Wine" (Chiu-te sung); the text of this work is found chüan 47 of the Wen-hsüan (1977: 3, 662). The biography of Liu Ling, one of the famed "Seven Sages of Bamboo Grove", is found in the Chin-shu, chüan 49, pp.1375-76, According to this biography, Liu Ling's wife advised him to stop drinking, but he did not listen to her, and Po Chü-yi refers to this incident explicitly in the passage under examination in his inscription.

[12] Wang Chi (style, Wu-kung) was known for his love of wine. His biography is found in the Chiu T'ang-shu, chüan 192 (p. 5116) and in the Hsin T'ang-shu, chüan 196 (pp.5594-5596). He is said to have composed the Wu-tou sheng-hsien chüan ("The Biography of the Gentlemen of Five Pocks of Wine").

[13] A passage about Jung Ch'i-ch'i appears in the T'ien-jui ("Heaven's Gifts") chapter of the Lieh tzu. In A.C. Graham's translation the passage reads as follows: "When Confucius was roaming on Mount T'ai, he saw Jung Ch'i-ch'i walking in the moors of Ch'eng, in a rough fur coat with a roap around his waist, singing as he strummed a lute. 'Master, what is the reason for your Joy [le in the original–Shinohara]?' asked Confucius?. 'I have very many joys [le]. Of the myriad things which heaven begot mankind is the most noble, and I have the luck to be human; this is my first joy. Of the two sexes, men are ranked higher than women, therefore it is noble to be a man. I have the luck to be a man; this is my second joy. People are born who do not live a day or a month, who never get out of their swaddling clothes. But I have already lived to ninety; this is my third joy. For all men poverty is the norm and death is the end. Abiding by the norm, awaiting my end, what is there to be concerned about?' 'Good!' said Confucius. 'He is a man who knows how to console himself.' (Graham, 1960, p.24.) Jung Ch'i-ch'i was known as a man who knew about "le", which Graham translates as "Joy", but was translated as "happy" here.

[14] Wei Chieh's biography is found in the Chin-shu, chüan 36, p.1067. He is said to have suffered from frequent illnesses.

[15] The name of Jung Ch'i-ch'i in an abbreviated form as Jung Ch'i in this passage. For the famous story about Jung Ch'i-ch'i in the Lieh tzu, see the note on him above. For Liu Ling (style, Po-lun) see the note above him above.

[16] See Twitchett (1961: 95-114) for a discussion of lieh-chuan biographies.

[17] Liu Ling's earlier poem "In Praise of the Virtue of Wine" mentioned above lies behind the description of the drunken state of transcendence here.

[18] Turner describes his concepts of "structure" and "communitas" in several places. A few examples of these descriptions may be useful. The passage in p. 96 (1970) describes these concepts in a manner quite similar to the one quoted above using the term "model".

Turner defines "structure" as "social structure", that is, "as a more or less distinctive arrangement of specialized mutually dependent institutions and the institutional organization of positions and/or of actors which they imply." (166-7; see, also 125-6.) In describing "communitas", Turner refers to Martin Buber's words: "community is the being no longer side by side (and one might add, above and below) but with one another of a multitude of persons and this multitude, though it moves toward one goal. yet experiences everywhere a turning to, a dynamic facing of, the others, a flowing from I to Thou. Community is where community happens" (127). Turner comments: "Buber lays his finger on the spontaneous, immediate, concrete nature of communitas, as opposed to the norm-governed, institutionalized, abstract nature of social structure. Yet, communitas is a mode evident or accessible, so to speak, only through its juxtaposition to, or hybridization with, aspects of social structure. Just as in Gestalt psychology, figure and ground are mutually determinative, or, as some rare elements are never found in nature in their purity but only as components of chemical compounds, so communitas can be grasped only in some relation to structure. Just because the communitas component is elusive, hard to pin down, it is not unimportant" (127). "(For) communitas has an existential quality; it involves the whole man in his relation to other whole men. Structure, on the other hand, has cognitive quality; as Levi-Strauss has perceived, it is essentially a set of classifications, a model for thinking about culture and nature and ordering one's public life. Communitas has also an aspect of potentiality; it is often in the subjunctive mood. Relations between total beings are generative of symbols and metaphors and comparisons; art and religion are their products rather than legal and political structures" (127-8). "Communitas breaks in through the interstices of structure, in liminality; at the edges of structure, in marginality; and from beneath structure, in inferiority. It is almost everywhere held to be sacred or "holy",

possibly because it transgresses or dissolves the norms that govern structured and institutionalized relationships and is accompanied by experiences of unprecedented potency" (128). "There is a dialectic here, for the immediacy of *communitas* gives way to the mediacy of structure, while, in rites of passage, men are released from structure into *communitas* only to return to structure revitalized by their experience of *communitas*. What is certain is that no society can function adequately without this dialectic... *Communitas* cannot stand alone if the material and organizational needs of human beings are to be adequately met. Maximization of *communitas* provokes maximization of structure, which in its turn produces revolutionary strivings for renewed *communitas*" (129).

[19] Po Chü-yi uses the expression attributed to Confucius, See, Lun yu, Book 7, verse 19; D.C. Lao (1979: 19).

[20] Turner uses the term "dialectic" in some passages describing this relationship. See, for example, Turner, 1969:97, 129.

[21] In fact. Po Chü-yi dwelled on them extensively in his biographies of his grandfather (Ku kung-hsien ling Po fu-chun shih-chuang) (PCYC. 981-983) and of his father (Hsiang-chou pieh-chia fu-chun shih-chuang and T'ang ku Li-shui hsien-ling t'ai-ynan Po fu-chun mu-chih ming) (PCYC, 983-985; 1473-1474). Po Chü-yi in fact came from a relatively modest background, which he was trying to glorify by tracing it through rather dubious links to an ancient prestigious figure. For a brief historical account of Po Chü-yi's family background, see Yokoyama (1967: 29-36).

[22] In the tomb inscription Po Chü-yi describes his moral and spiritual cultivation by mentioning Confucian cultivation of conduct, Buddhist cultivation of mind, and entertaining himself (le ch'i-chih: this expression appears in T'ao Yuan-ming's Wu-liu hsien-sheng chuan, TYMC, 175) with beautiful scenery, music, poetry, and wine. The analysis here indicates that this characterization of Po Chü-yi's life as involving many dimensions ought to be taken seriously; it also suggests the nature of the logic that holds the many dimensions together.

[23] Thomas Metzgar (1973: 250, 255-65, 400-404) examined the unstable and anxious life of high officials in Ch'ing China in some detail.

[24] The following remark by Turner appears to be helpful in this context: "in the liminal phases of ritual, one often finds a simplification, even elimination, of social structure in the British sense and an amplification of structure in Levi-Strauss's sense. We find social relationships simplified, while myth and ritual are elaborated. That this is so is really quite simple to understand: if liminality is regarded as a time and place of withdrawal from normal modes of social action, it can be seen as potentially a period of scrutinization of the central values and axioms of the culture in which it occurs" (1970: 167).

Turner also notes that certain type of liminal rituals reinforce structure (200-201.) This analysis, very much in the spirit of his view on the dialectic relation between structure and *communitas*, may be particularly appropriate in interpreting the "liminal" "*communitas*" themes in the elite culture of traditional China.

[25] K'uei-tz'u: Po Chü-yi uses this term in another place discussing the writing of inscriptional text. See Yi wen-chang ('discussing literary works'), Ts'e lin: 68 (PCYC, 1369).

[26] Note that the concept of *ming** is used in a similar manner in other inscriptions by Po Chü-yi. See T'ang ku t'ung-yi t'ai-fu he-chou tz'u-shih Wu-chun Chang-kung shen-tao-Pei ming, PCYC, 907; and T'ang tseng shang-shu kung-pu shih-lang Wu-chun Chang-kung shen-tao-pei ming, PCYC, 909.

[27] This analysis suggests a broader thesis: the highly rhetorical character of tomb inscriptions may also have something to do with this dialectical relationship between "structure and "*communitas*". Symbolic expressions in certain rhetorical passages in these inscriptions generally throw light on the life of the subject from the "*communitas*" viewpoint, Yet the inscriptions generally have a very strong tendency to glorify the lives of the subjects by focusing on their backgrounds and accomplishments in "structural" terms. As we noted above, this tendency is embedded in the convention of tomb inscriptions. It would be a mistake, however, to explain this pattern of combining the strong concern with concrete this-worldly facts of the subjects with symbolic rhetoric simply as a matter of convention; we need to explore the deeper significance of this combination. Turner's discussion of the dialectical relationship between "structure" and "*communitas*" enables us to focus on the significance of this combination and suggests a direction in

which the discussion of this question may proceed. We will return to this issue at the end of this paper in our discussion of the stupa inscription of the monk Ming-yüan.

[28] Details are given in my paper mentioned at the beginning of this article (1986:127).

[29] The inscriptions are titled, "T'ang ku Fu-chou ching-yun-ssu lu ta-te Shang-hung he-shang shih-t'a-pei ming" for Shang-heng and "T'ans Ching-chou Hsing-kuo-ssu lu ta-te Ts'ou-kung t'a-chieh ming" for Shen-ts'ou. The texts of the inscriptions are found in PCYC, 913-918; the corresponding biographies are found in T, vol. 50, p. 806c and P.807a respectively.

[30] This is the biography of Wei-k'uan found in T., Vol. 50, 768a, which reproduces a large part of the biographical material in Po Chü-yi's inscription, Ch'uan-fa t'ang pei, PCYC. 911-913. The framework of this inscription, to be examined in some detail below, however, is not reproduced in Tsan-ning's biography. Tsan-ning reorganized the text somewhat so that the biography appears in a style similar to that of other biographies in his collection.

[31] A comparison of the frequency with which other authors are mentioned in the Sung collection makes this even more clear. Only two other authors (Liu K'e and Ch'ing-hua) are mentioned as frequently as four times in the collection. For details see my paper mentioned above (1986: 127).

[32] This inscription was discussed by Hu Shih in an article entitled "Po Chü-yi shih-tai ti. ch'an-tsung shih-hsi". Hu Shih's article bears the date of March 24, Min-kuo year 17 (1928). the version of this article in the Hu Shih Wen-ts'un, the third collection, pp. 310-313, is reproduced in Yanagida, 1975: 94-97.

[33] The meaning of this term hui-hsiang tao-chang is unclear. The translation here is tentative.

[34] The meaning of the term yu-wei kung-te here and the term wu-wei kung-te below is unclear. Ting Fu-pao (1984: 510d) mentions the Jen-wang ching and explains the term wu-wei kung-te as the highest truth of nirvana and yu-wei kung-te as all other merits that result in conditioned rebirths. The

Jen-wang ching passage is found in Taisho, vol. 8, 825a and 834c, and there these two terms are used to describe the remarkable attainments of the numerous members who constituted the audience of the Buddha's teaching. Perhaps in the inscription under examination here these terms refer to ritual performances that are meant to lead to these different goals mentioned by Ting Fu-pao. The meaning of the passage would be then that these rituals were performed at the temples mentioned. The interpretation here remains tentative.

[35] The meaning of this sentence is not clear. The translation here is tentative.

[36] A well known example of a Chinese monk's encounter with a supernatural being is the experience of Tao-hsüan (596-667) toward the end of his life. This incident, recorded autobiographically in *Toa-hsüan lu-shih kan-t'ung lu* (T. no. 2107) written by Tao-hsüan himself, describes how supernatural beings gave Tao-hsüan instructions on some details of monastic rules. I discussed this document briefly in an earlier paper (1984).

[37] Turner's discussion of the distinction between *prajna* and *vijnana* as described by D.T. Suzuki is relevant here, Turner says, "I have recently been paying attention to the notion that the familiar distinction made in Zen Buddhism between the concepts *prajna* (which very approximately means 'intuition') and *vijnana* (very roughly, 'reason' or 'discursive understanding') are rooted in the contrasting social experiences I have described respectively, as 'communitas' and 'structure'", Turner (1974: 46). The rejection of distinctions in the subject's answers in this inscription is clearly related to the teaching of *prajna*. As a student of Tao-yi, the subject belongs to the main stream of Ch'an (ie., Zen) Buddhism.

[38] The relationship between the acceptance of death and "communitas" in Chinese tradition may be seen, for example, in many stories in the book *Chuang tzu* where ideal discipleship, friendship and relationship to one's wife are tied to a proper attitude toward death, See, for example, the stories about the funeral of Lao tzu (Graham: 64-65), the illness of Masters Yü and Lia, (87-89), the death of Master Sang-hu (89-90), and the death of Chuang tzu's wife (123-124).

[39] The distinction between *lin chieh-t'an* ("face the precept platform") and *teng lü-tso* ("climb the seat of vinaya") appears to parallel the one between *teng chieh-t'an* ("climb the precept platform") and *sheng Chiang-tso* ("go up the seat of lecturer") that appears earlier in describing the subject's own career. Here I understood these terms tentatively as referring to performing the ritual of conferring precepts and lecturing on vinaya respectively. The former appears to be a higher honour. The title of *lin-t'an ta-de* is explained in Tsan-ning's *Ta-sung seng-shih lüeh* (252a and also 250b). According to Tsan-ning, this title was first introduced under Emperor Tai-tsung (reign: 762-779) of the T'ang dynasty during the Yung-t'ai period (765-766)