

# Pangu's Birth and Death as Recorded in a Tang Dynasty Buddhist Source

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During recent decades there have been numerous ethnological fieldwork projects carried out by Chinese scholars in order to collect Pangu 盤古 myths and clarify its role in Chinese culture.<sup>1</sup> While the number of orally transmitted versions of the myth is constantly increasing, the quotations from historical records used to substantiate the historical roots of this myth remain unchanged.<sup>2</sup> As is well known, the Pangu myth is preserved in records which were written relatively late. When retold by scholars, one of the following three sources is usually cited: *Sanwu lijì* 三五曆紀 (*Record of the Three and Five*) written by Xu Zheng 徐整 (third century CE),<sup>3</sup> the *Wuyun linianji* 五運曆年紀 (*Chronicle of the Five Cycles of Time*),<sup>4</sup> usually also attributed to Xu Zheng, *Shuyiji* 述異記 (*A Record of Accounts of Marvels*) by Ren Fang 任昉 (460–508 CE).<sup>5</sup> However, all three of these sources appear only in collections made in a period significantly later than when they are said to have been written, and the first two are not extant in their entirety today. The account of the *Sanwu lijì* on Pangu's birth is quoted in the relatively early *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (*Classified Collection of Literary Writings*) (624 CE), but the famous account of his death and dismemberment is cited in the rather late 16<sup>th</sup> century *Han-Wei congshu* 漢魏叢書 (*Han and Wei Dynasties Collectanea*), which cites the *Shuyiji*, and in the 17<sup>th</sup> century *Yishi* 釋史 (*Unravelling History*) compiled by Ma Su 馬驥, which contains the relevant passage from the *Wuyun linianji*. Moreover, since these two fundamental episodes are not presented together in any of these sources, they are both temporally and spatially disjointed.

In this paper I present an important and so far completely neglected source of the Pangu myth, which was recorded relatively early – during the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) – and uniquely preserves both episodes together. The analysis of this source might contribute to our understanding of the textual transmission of the Pangu myth and might offer some new insights for scholars engaged in intensive research of Pangu's role in Chinese culture.

## 1. Pangu in the Chinese Buddhist Canon

For some reason, until now, the Chinese Buddhist canon in its presently most widely used version, the *Taishō Tripitaka* (*Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經), has not been subjected to a search for the Pangu motif. In this section, I first

present some Buddhist scriptures which make general mention of Pangu, then I present an excerpt from a work by Chengguan 澄觀 (738–839), which relates a complete Pangu myth that is unique in several aspects. The survey will be restricted to the Taishō Tripitaka (in the following text referred to as T), with references in the supplemental collection, the *Xu Zangjing* 續藏經 (hereafter as X) being mentioned in the footnotes.

Pangu appears without explicit mythological content in the following scriptures: *Yuanwu foguo chanshi yulu* 圓悟佛果禪師語錄 (T47: 1997, p0728a); *Hongzhi chanshi guanglu* 宏智禪師廣錄 (T48: 2001, p0023a); *Shishi jigu lue* 釋氏稽古略 (T49: 2037, p0738a); *Shimen bianhuo lun* 十門辯惑論 (T52: 2111, p0555a).<sup>6</sup> In the *Sanguo yishi* 三國遺事 (T49: 2039, p0989b), there is a hint at his role in the process of creation (*kāipi* 開闢).<sup>7</sup> There are two further texts that briefly touch upon the cosmogonical aspect of Pangu: the *Zhaolun xinshu* 肇論新疏 (T45: 1860, p0235a) mentions his birth and death in a philosophical analysis, while the *Wansong laoren pingchang Tiantong Jue heshang songgu Zongrong'an lu* 萬松老人評唱天童覺和尚頌古從容庵錄 (T48: 2004, p0259c) refers to him in the context of *The Classic of Changes* (*Yijing* 易經), a classical work which, by that time, had already been integrated into the Daoist tradition. None of these examples offer any new information on the Pangu myth.

Chengguan, the fourth patriarch of the *Huayan* 華嚴 tradition, was well-known for both his immense erudition in the various branches of contemporary Buddhist schools and his knowledge of a vast array of various other texts: Confucian as well as Daoist.<sup>8</sup> Born in present day Shaoxing 紹興 (Zhejiang 浙江), Chengguan stayed in the region, studying for almost thirty years. Later, he became a widely acknowledged authority on *The Flower Garland or Avataṃsaka Sūtra* (Chin. *Huayanjing* 華嚴經). He wrote a commentary *Dafangguang fo Huayanjing shu* 大方廣佛華嚴經疏 (*Commentary on The Flower Garland Sūtra*, T36, n1735) and a sub-commentary *Dafangguang fo Huayanjing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔 (*Sub-commentary on The Flower Garland Sūtra*, T36, n1736) on Śikṣānanda's translation of this important Buddhist scripture. In his sub-commentary (T36, No. 1736: p0320c) he cites a source which records the currently most complete description of the Pangu myth (hereafter referred to as DHSY). Very similar versions of this text also appear in two later works: in the Yuan dynasty *Huayan xuantan huixuan ji* 華嚴懸談會玄記 (*Account of Combining the Profound Meanings of Huayan Xuantan*) (X08: 0236, p0362c; HXTX) and the Ming dynasty *Cheng weishi lun jijie* 成唯識論集解 (*Collected Explanations on the Treatise on the Establishment of the Doctrine of Consciousness-Only*) (X50: 0821, p0670b; CLJJ). Compared to Chengguan's work, these two later texts contain some minor differences, which I will indicate in the footnotes included on Chengguan's Chinese text in the quotation presented below. In all translations, I have strictly followed the Chinese text, even at the expense of the style in English. In order to make later references easier, I have divided the DHSY excerpt into nine thematic parts (DHSY/1–9).

[1] 案《三王曆》云：[2] 「天地渾<sup>10</sup>沌，盤古生其中。[3] 一日九變，神於天，聖於地，主於天地<sup>11</sup>。[4] 天日高一丈，地日厚一丈，盤古亦長一丈，如此萬八千年<sup>12</sup>，然後天地開闢<sup>13</sup>。[5] 盤古龍身人首。[6] 首極東西，足極東西<sup>14</sup>，左手極南，右手極北。[7] 開目成晝<sup>15</sup>，合目成夜。呼爲暑，吸爲寒。吹氣成風雲，叱<sup>16</sup>聲爲雷霆<sup>17</sup>。[8] 盤古死，頭爲甲，喉爲乙，肩爲丙，心爲丁，膽爲戊，脾爲己，脅爲庚，肺爲辛，腎爲壬，足爲癸，[9] 目爲日月，髭爲星辰，眉爲斗樞，九竅爲九州，乳爲崑崙，膝爲南嶽<sup>18</sup>，股爲太<sup>19</sup>山，尻<sup>20</sup>爲魚鰲，手爲飛鳥，爪爲龜龍，骨爲金銀，髮爲草木，毫毛爲鳬鴨，齒爲玉石，汗爲雨水<sup>21</sup>，大腸爲江海，小腸爲淮泗，膀胱爲百川，面輪爲洞庭。」<sup>22</sup>

“[1] The *History of the Three Kings* says: [2] “The sky and the earth were chaotic, Pangu was born in it. [3] Nine times did he transform daily, he became more spiritual than the sky, more saintly than the earth, more powerful than the sky and the earth. [4] The sky grew one *zhang* higher every day, the earth grew one *zhang* thicker every day, Pangu also grew one *zhang* bigger every day. 18,000 years passed like this, and afterwards the sky and the earth got separated. [5] Pangu had a dragon body and a human head. [6] His head reached the edge of the east-west direction, his legs reached the edge of the east-west direction, his left hand reached up to the southernmost end, his right hand reached up to the northernmost end. [7] When he opened his eyes, it was daylight, when he closed his eyes, it became night. When he breathed out, it was summer, when he breathed in, it was winter. The air he blew became wind and clouds, his shouting voice became thunder. [8] When Pangu died, his head became the *jia*, his throat became the *yi*, his shoulders became the *bing*, his heart became the *ding*, his bladder became the *wu*, his spleen became the *ji*, his ribs became the *geng*, his lungs became the *xin*, his kidney became the *ren*, his feet became the *gui*. [9] His eyes became the sun and the moon, his beard became the stars and constellations, his brow became the pole of the Big Dipper, the nine holes became the nine continents, his chest became the Kunlun (mountain), his knee became the southern mountain, his thigh became the Taishan, his buttocks became fish and tortoises, his hands became flying birds, his claws became turtles and dragons, his bones became gold and silver, his hair became grasses and trees, his hair on his body became mallards and ducks, his teeth became gems and rocks, his sweat became rain and water, his large intestines became rivers and seas, his small intestines became the Huai and the Si rivers, his blisters became the hundred rivers, his face became caves.”

## 2. The Comparison of the New Text with the Other Sources

In the following section, I will analyze this new text sentence by sentence and compare it with the other better known sources. As in the case of the DHSY, I have divided all the other sources used here into thematic units, and have presented a textual comparison among the different versions in Appendix 2.

[1] DHSY/1: “The “History of the Three Kings” says”:

In contrast to the DHSY, the *Yiwen leiju* introduces the source for its quotation in the following way: “Xu Zheng’s *Sanwu liji* [*Record of the Three and Five*] says [徐整《三五曆紀》曰].” As will be clear later on, the first part of the myth mentioned by Chengguan and that of the *Sanwu liji* quoted in the *Yiwen leiju* (hereafter referred to as SWLJ) is evidently the same. However, Chengguan mentions a work called *Sanwangli* 三王曆 [*History of the Three Kings*]. The much later *Huayan xuantan huixuan ji*, on the other hand, mentions *Wudili* 五帝歷 [*History of the Five Emperors*], while the even later *Cheng weishi lun jijie* preserved, almost precisely, Chengguan’s form, i. e. *Sanwangli* 三王歷. All these texts cite, almost exactly, the same wording of the myth, apparently attributing it to different sources. While the alternation between the two characters, “li” (曆, 歷), is not relevant, the difference between *sanwu* 三五 (i. e. “three and five”), *sanwang* 三王 (“three kings”) and *wudi* 五帝 (“five emperors”) requires explanation. As for the difference between *sanwu* 三五 and *sanwang* 三王, theoretically it is possible that *wang* 王 is simply the corrupted form of *wu* 五; however, this still does not account for the *wudi* 五帝 form. Here, I will advance a hypothesis which accounts for this discrepancy.

In the historical sources, Xu Zheng, a minister in the southern state of Wu 吳, was credited with the composition of *Sanwu liji* 三五曆紀,<sup>23</sup> sometimes abbreviated as *Sanwu li* 三五曆. This title evidently refers to the concept of *sanhuang wudi* 三皇五帝, that is the Three Sovereigns and the Five Emperors, the mythical rulers of China. This work most likely dealt with the beginnings of Chinese history, a topic that would dovetail well with the presence of the Pangu myth within it. The last sentence of the SWLJ supports this assumption: “The sky reached its utmost height, the earth reached its utmost depth, Pangu [reached] his utmost size, and then the Three Sovereigns were born.” Thus, the Pangu myth might have served as a precursor to the story of the Three Sovereigns, who in this case most probably were the Heavenly, the Earthly and the Human Sovereigns (*tianhuang* 天皇, *dihuang* 地皇, *renhuang* 人皇). According to the *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (*Old History of the Tang Dynasty*) and the *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (*New History of the Tang Dynasty*), this work, currently lost and extant only in citations, comprised two fascicles (*juan* 卷).<sup>24</sup> It is not too far-fetched to assume that the first fascicle treated the Three Sovereigns (*sanhuang*), who could have been also called the Three Kings (*sanwang*), while the second one discussed the deeds of the Five Emperors (*wudi*). Consequently, Xu Zheng’s work contained two fascicles, and thus could have had two thematic parts: the *Sanhuang li* 三皇曆 (or *Sanwang li* 三王曆) and the *Wudi li* 五帝曆. Thus, the work might have proceeded from the ancient mythical times to the beginnings of historical time. The Pangu account, which related the birth of the universe, was most probably in the first fascicle, together with the Three Sovereigns. Thus, it could have been referred to as being recorded either in the first fascicle, called *Sanwang li* 三王曆, or in the *Sanwu li(ji)* 三五曆(紀), which is the title of the whole work. The rather late (Yuan dynasty) *Huayan xuantan huixuan ji* – or possibly

another source on which it was based – might have confused the two parts and so, therefore, it mentions the *Wudi li* 五帝歷, i.e. the second fascicle of this work, as the source of the Pangu myth.

[2] DHSY/2: “The sky and the earth were chaotic, Pangu was born in it.”

The SWLJ/2 has an almost exact equivalent: “The sky and the earth were chaotic like an egg, and Pangu was born in it.” The only difference between the citations is the reference to the egg. It should be noted, however, that the SWLJ uses the symbol of the egg already as a simile, which probably attests that by that time it was on the way of losing its genuine mythical content, a process which was completed centuries later in Chengguan’s work, where the motif of the egg is completely omitted. This motif, used as a representation of chaos, also appears in a relatively early Daoist work *Yuanshi shangzhen zhongxian ji* 元始上真眾仙記 (*Records of the Supreme Perfected and all the Immortals of Original Commencement*), attributed to Ge Hong (283–343 CE): “In the ancient times the two forces have not been separated yet, dark and dim, immense and infinite, nothing had a form yet, the sky and the earth, the sun and the moon did not exist yet, it was like an egg, chaotic and dark-yellow. Then Pangu, the Perfect appeared, the essence of sky and earth, who called himself the Primordial Heavenly King, floating in it [the egg-like chaos].”<sup>25</sup> Thus, while the DHSY omits the egg motif, that is it cites a version which did not contain this motif any more, both the SWLJ and the Daoist work use it as a simile.

[3] DHSY/3: “Nine times did he transform daily, he became more spiritual than the sky, more saintly than the earth, more powerful than the sky and the earth.”

Here again, the SWLJ/4 has nearly the same wording: “Pangu was in-between, nine times did he transform daily, he became more spiritual than the sky, more saintly than the earth.” In between this and the previous sentence, the SWLJ/3 also has another description which is not present in the DHSY: “It took 18,000 years for the separation of the sky and the earth. The *yang* and the pure became the sky, the *yin* and the impure became the earth.”

[4] DHSY/4: “The sky grew one *zhang* higher every day (...) and afterwards the sky and the earth got separated.”

Again, the SWLJ/5 has exactly the same wording, though the last part on the separation is missing here, probably because it was mentioned in SWLJ/2. SWLJ/5 reads: “The sky grew one *zhang* higher every day, the earth grew one *zhang* thicker every day, Pangu also grew one *zhang* bigger every day. 18,000 years passed like this.” Here the SWLJ/6 has more to say about the extremities reached by the three entities, which has no parallel in the DHSY: “The sky reached its utmost height, the earth reached its utmost depth, Pangu (reached) his utmost size, and then the Three

Sovereigns were born.” With this section the similarities between the DHSY and the SWLJ terminate, but it is evident that both testimonies go back to a common source, the original *Sanwu liji*. However, the differences between the two versions make the hypothesis probable that the two texts rely on different recensions.

[5] DHSY/5: “Pangu had a dragon body and a human head.”

The *Wuyun linianji*, quoted by the *Guang bowu zhi* 廣博物志 (*The Enlarged Treatise on Research into Nature*), compiled by Dong Sizhang 董斯張 (1586–1628) (hereafter WLGB) also contains a reference (9.2b) to Pangu’s composite nature, though this differs from the DHSY version: “Lord Pangu had a dragon head and a serpent body”. The only common element is that Pangu has a dragon-like appearance. The hybrid feature of mythical creatures is well attested in various sources, the *par excellence* collection of such descriptions being the *Shanhaijing* 山海經.<sup>26</sup> Interestingly, the description of the activities of the Zhulong 燭龍 or the “Illuminating Dragon” in *Xuanzhongji* 玄中記, authored by Guo Pu 郭璞, shares some of the motifs with Pangu in DHSY/7: “The Zhulong [“Illuminating Dragon”] has a pair of vertical eyes from its birth: its left eye is the sun, its right eye is the moon. If it opens its left eye, it is daytime, if it closes its left eye and opens its right one, it becomes night. If it opens its mouth, it is spring and summer, if it closes its mouth, it is autumn and winter.”<sup>27</sup> It is to be noted that although the similarities with some of Pangu’s functions are conspicuous, Zhulong does not appear as the creator of the world, but as a maintainer of the natural processes.

[6] DHSY/6: “His head reached the edge of the east-west direction, his legs reached the edge of the east-west direction, his left hand reached up to the southernmost end, his right hand reached up to the northernmost end.”

This part has no equivalent in any of the received texts. Although the meaning of the sentence is evident, the first part is somewhat awkward in this version, while the *Huayan xuantan huixuan ji* (X08: 0236, p0362c) makes it explicit: “His head reached the edge of the east, his legs reached the edge of the west [首極東，足極西].

[7] DHSY/7: “When he opened his eyes, it was daylight (...) his shouting voice became thunder.”

The *Wuyun linianji* preserved in the *Yishi* (hereafter WLYS) has a description similar to the last part. However, while the DHSY relates the changes in nature to the changes in Pangu’s life, it links these phenomena unambiguously to Pangu’s approaching death: “When the first-born Pangu’s death was approaching, he transformed his body, his breath became the wind and the clouds, his voice became the thunder...”<sup>28</sup> On the other hand, another source, the *Guang bowu zhi* (9.2b), also



quotes the *Wuyun linianji* [introduced above and abbreviated hereafter as WLGB], where the associations of wind and rain, and those of daytime and night are clearly related to a living Pangu: “Lord Pangu had a dragon head and a serpent body, his breathing in became wind and rain, his breathing out became thunder. When he opened his eyes, it was daylight, when he closed his eyes, it became night. After his death his bones and joints became mountains and forests, his limbs became the rivers and seas, his blood became the Huai river, his hair became grasses and trees”.<sup>29</sup> Thus the Tang dynasty DHSY and the WLGB basically agree that the changes in nature are correlated with the actions of a living Pangu, though these correlations do not always match (DHSY/7: voice = thunder, WLGB/2: exhaling = thunder).

Nevertheless, the sources also share several correlations, such as the opening of the eyes as daytime, the closing of the eyes as night (開目成晝，合目成夜 = 開目爲晝，閉目爲夜). On the other hand, there are also strong correlations between the DHSY/7 and the WLYS/1b [and the same WLYL/2a]: exhaling is wind and clouds, voice is thunder (吹氣成風雲，叱聲爲雷霆 = 氣成風雲，聲爲雷霆). It can also be hypothesized that the differences between the two versions of the *Wuyun linianji* in this case can, surprisingly, be best explained with the help of DHSY/7, since the latter contains the most complete version, while the other two seem to preserve the meaning of the first and the second character of the initial compound, respectively. In the case of WLGB/2, the replacement of *chuī* 吹 by *xū* 噓 during the transmission might be explained as a corruption of the relatively rare *chì* 叱 to the frequently used *chuī* 吹, thus it was necessary to choose another character for the first one, otherwise *chuī* 吹 would have appeared twice. The corruption theory can be substantiated by the fact that breathing (*chuī* 吹) hardly makes any sense in the case of thunders, while “a shouting voice” (*chìshēng* 叱聲) is much more probable. This is further corroborated by Ren Fang’s *Shuyiji*<sup>30</sup> (see part 3 of the translation in Appendix 1) which comprises two reports on Pangu’s death and then proceeds to another tradition in which the state of Pangu is not specified: “Former literati said: ‘Pangu’s weeping became the rivers, his breath became the wind, his voice became the thunder, the pupils in his eyes became the lightning.’”<sup>31</sup> In this apparently different source, thunder is again correlated with Pangu’s voice. The following chart shows the different versions of this specific sentence.

DHSY/7:	吹氣成風雲	叱聲爲雷霆
WLYS/1b:	氣成風雲	聲爲雷霆
WLYL/2a:	氣成風雲	聲爲雷霆
WLGB/2:	噓 爲風雨	吹 爲雷電
SHYJ/3:	氣爲風	聲爲雷，目瞳爲電

It is evident that there were different recensions of this version of the Pangu myth, which is reinforced by the differences here (*fēngyún* 風雲 – *fēngyǔ* 風雨; *léitíng* 雷霆 – *léidiàn* 雷電) and in other parts of the myth. Nevertheless, the DHSY

claims to quote from the *Sanwu liji*, while the two other versions come from the *Wuyun linianji*, yet their resemblance is still striking.

[8] DHSY/8: “When Pangu died, his head became the *jia* (...) his feet became the *gui*.”

This set of correlations between Pangu’s body parts and the ten heavenly stems are completely absent from any other source. Not only is the correlation itself unknown, but the majority of these body parts, as related to Pangu, are also completely unattested. This fact eminently points to the unique nature of Chengguan’s text and also to its current status as being the most complete version of the whole myth. “Most complete” does not necessarily mean most genuine, as a later scholarly reworking of the original material in this and the other cases cannot be ruled out.

[9] DHSY/9: “His eyes became the sun and the moon (...) his face became the caves.«”

This most famous episode is related in many sources, among others in the WLYS: “(After Pangu’s death) his left eye became the sun, his right eye became the moon, his four limbs and the five parts of his body became the four extremities and the five (sacred) mountains, his blood became the rivers, his arteries became the arteries of the earth, his flesh became the soil, his hair became stars and constellations, his skin became grasses and trees, his teeth and bones became minerals and stones, his marrow became precious stones and jades, his sweat and his fluids became rain and marshes, and the insects on his body, when they were touched by the wind, were transformed into the common people”. This excerpt differs in two aspects from the DHSY/9. First, it has different alloforms<sup>32</sup> correlated to the various parts of the body [for a general comparative chart, see Appendix 3]. Secondly, it contains an additional important remark which correlates the birth of mankind with the bodily insects touched by the wind. The same text is also quoted in the *Yuanqi lun* 元氣論 (*Discourse on the Primordial Qi*) (*Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 (*Seven Tomes from the Cloudy Satchel*) 56., *Daozang* 道藏 1032: 56.1b–1c, hereafter WLYL). The *Shuyiji* (in sections 1–2 shown in Appendix 1) also includes this episode, greatly differing from both previous descriptions, in terms of both its brevity and the analogies. This source also presents a later oral transmission of the myth, which is again dissimilar in the enumeration of specific alloforms: “1. In former times when Pangu died, his head became the four (sacred) mountains, his eyes became the sun and the moon, his fat became the rivers and the seas, the hair on his body and on his head became the grasses and the trees. 2. In Qin and Han people said: ‘Pangu’s head became the eastern mountain, his stomach became the central mountain, his left arm became the southern mountain, his right arm became the northern mountain, his legs became the western mountain.’”



As a kind of postscript, I would like to make a small remark about the contribution that this new source might make to our understanding of the provenance and the spread of the Pangu myth. There are fundamentally three opinions on the origin of the Pangu myth: 1. foreign, usually Indian influence (e.g. Lǚ Simian 呂思勉, He Xin 何新, Liu Cunren 柳存仁); 2. traditions of a certain minority or minorities, usually placed somewhere in southern, southeastern China (e.g. Wen Yiduo 闻一多, Mao Dun 茅盾, Qin Naichang 覃乃昌, Wang Xiaolian 王孝廉); 3. Han Chinese tradition (e.g. Ma Huixin 馬卉欣, Zhu Gelin 朱閣林, Zhang Wen'an 张文安, Xie Huichang 谢会昌).<sup>33</sup> In his study published in 2008, Hou Hongliang lists 12 scholars who advocate the foreign influence theory, 25 authors who support the southern origin theory, and 17 scholars in favor of the Central Plain theory.<sup>34</sup> By now the foreign (Indian) influence theory seems to have been discredited almost completely,<sup>35</sup> while the second and third theories are sometimes reconciled through developing ideas about a certain Central Plain tribe (e.g. the Miao) that migrated to the South.<sup>36</sup> Recently, one of the most popular theories seems to focus on a specific Central Plain origin, from the Dongbai 桐柏 mountain, from where the myth is thought to have spread to various parts of southern China. This is in turn often connected with a versified Pangu myth which is contained in the *Hei'an zhuan* 黑暗傳, a relatively recently discovered collection of Han Chinese myths.<sup>37</sup> Naturally, some proponents of the southern origin theory link it in various ways to Chinese minorities. The most influential theories usually derive their basis from recently collected oral transmissions of the myth. The various theories and the possible motivations behind them would deserve a separate paper, and even the main outlines would go beyond the scope of this study; here I will confine myself to mentioning one possible novelty of Chengguan's version.

Most versions of the myth itself contain general expressions (e.g. rivers, mountains, stars) and, except for the five sacred mountains, no specific place name is mentioned in the myth proper. However, there is one exception. As mentioned before, the WLGB states: "After his death his bones and joints became mountains and forests, his limbs became the rivers and seas, his blood became the Huai river, his hair became grasses and trees."<sup>38</sup> Until now, this was the only place name in the sources, which would point to the region of the Huai river as a possible place of formation, or at least a region where this myth was widespread at a relatively early period. Interestingly, the new source presented here also contains Huai as a place name, even making the territory in question more precise: "his large intestines became rivers and seas, his small intestines became the Huai and the Si rivers [大腸爲江海, 小腸爲淮泗]". Since the alloforms mentioned in these two sources are completely different, it seems that two basically independent sources mention the Huai river, and no other early source mentions any other place name in the myth proper, except for the *Shuyiji*, which refers to place names (Guilin, southern sea) that are related to the cult, and not the myth, of Pangu.

It can be assumed that the etiological explanation of these two rivers could be eminently important for the inhabitants of present day Jiangsu region, where these

rivers are found. This is, of course, a simplification of the question, but it is still worth considering that throughout his early years of education (AD 745–776), Chengguan himself stayed in this region, in Jiangsu and Zhejiang.<sup>39</sup> Thus, it would not be too far-fetched to surmise that he came into contact with this version of the myth during this period. Although no far-reaching conclusions can be drawn from these occurrences, it might be worth considering that the Jiangsu region had either contributed to the formation of the myth or at least it might have possessed a relatively early and peculiar version of the Pangu myth.

## Conclusions

After comparing DHSY/1–4 with SWLJ/1–6, it is clear that they are fundamentally based on the same source, although the wording is not always exactly the same and there are also sentences that appear in the SWLJ but not in the DHSY. I have offered an explanation for the discrepancy between the titles of the sources cited in the various texts. On the other hand, there are several reasons to surmise that the DHSY drew not from the version of the *Sanwu liji* that is quoted in the *Yiwen leiju* (1.4a–b), but from a separate textual transmission. Firstly, there is variance in the title of the source cited (*Sanwu li(ji)*, *Sanwangli*). If Chengguan had drawn from the *Yiwen leiju* directly, he probably would not have changed the title of his source. Secondly, the wordings of the two sources do not match exactly. Thirdly, the DHSY has a continuous description, containing much more material than the SWLJ, but at the same time it can be said to have omissions in its first part in comparison to the SWLJ. Thus, it is probable that Chengguan cited from a separate transmission of the *Sanwu liji*, which had more material, but which was even in its first part not precisely equivalent to the *Yiwen leiju* version.

In Chengguan's quotation of the *Sanwu liji*, this text appears to have contained the whole myth, even the episodes (though not the exact words) which are otherwise attributed to the *Wuyun linianji*. It would be improbable to assume that Chengguan quoted the first part of his description from some version of the *Sanwu liji*, and then, without indicating it, also added materials from other sources not belonging to it. Chengguan simply could not have had any motivation to do so: neither the *Sanwu liji*, nor the Pangu myth play any important role in his exposition. Moreover, misquoting from a presumably well-known source would disqualify his other, much more important citations. Thus, there is no reason not to assume that Chengguan in fact quoted from a unique transmission of Xu Zheng's *Sanwu liji*, which has several consequences:

1. Although no other *Sanwu liji* fragment attests to it, it is quite probable that this work contained a more elaborate version of the Pangu myth, which was, however, not available to the compilers of the *Yiwen leiju*, probably because they cited from a separate version.
2. An original version of the *Sanwu liji* probably contained the myths of both Pangu's birth and death, thus the separation of these motifs appears to be a later development.

3. Despite the fact that most modern scholars credit Xu Zheng with the authorship of the *Wuyun linianji*, as far as I know, there is no direct evidence of this connection.<sup>40</sup> As mentioned before, it is evident that Chengguan basically attributes his entire testimony to Xu Zheng's *Sanwu liji*, but it is clear that the homologous alloforms mentioned by Chengguan, and thus attributed to Xu Zheng, are so different from those preserved in the *Wuyun linianji* (see Appendix 3) that it is hard to imagine that they were recorded by the same person. Even if this did occur, Xu Zheng, the supposed author of the two texts, would most likely have mentioned in one work that he also knows of a completely different set of alloforms, which he presents in the other. Therefore, if Chengguan indeed cited from Xu Zheng's *Sanwu liji*, it is highly unlikely that Xu Zheng is the author of the *Wuyun linianji*.

As a consequence, it is clear that the Pangu myth was recorded at least in three (and not two) independent written sources: 1. Xu Zheng's *Sanwu liji* preserved a certain version of the entire myth (Pangu's birth and death), presently extant only in Chengguan's work; 2. The *Wuyun linianji* by another author, which preserved another version of Pangu's death; 3. Ren Fang's *Shuyiji* again contains multiple alternative versions. As the latter work also attests, different regions had diverse oral traditions of the Pangu myth. Based on the testimony in Chengguan's work, it can be suspected that both Xu Zheng and the unknown author of the *Wuyun linianji* each recorded one of the orally transmitted versions of the Pangu myth in their own time and region. This in turn might mean that the Pangu myth was part of an oral, rather than a written tradition, which might be the reason why it does not appear in earlier written sources. However, the fact that during the Six Dynasties and Tang period there were at least three complete, but differing, versions points to the conclusion that the myth itself had to have been born at a much earlier time than the written versions.

In this paper I have presented a hitherto neglected source of the Pangu myth, preserved in Chengguan's work. In addition to the new elements preserved only in this source, this version of the myth also attests to a unique transmission of the Pangu myth in Tang China. Hopefully, the present paper will contribute to the clarification of the Pangu myth and its role in Chinese culture.

## APPENDIX 1. SOURCES

**SWLJ** = *Sānwǔ lìjì* 三五曆紀 as preserved in the *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (*Classified Collection of Literary Writings*) 1.4a–b. (comp. by Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 et al. in 624 CE.).<sup>41</sup>

“[1] Xu Zheng's *Sanwu liji* says: [2] »The sky and the earth were chaotic like an egg, and Pangu was born in it. [3] It took 18,000<sup>42</sup> years for the separation of the sky and the earth: the *yang* and the pure became the sky, the *yin* and the impure became the earth. [4] Pangu was in-between, nine times did he transform daily, he became more spiritual than the sky, more saintly than the earth. [5] The sky grew one *zhang*

higher every day, the earth grew one *zhang* thicker every day, Pangu also grew one *zhang* bigger every day. 18,000 years passed like this. [6] The sky reached its utmost height, the earth reached its utmost depth, Pangu (reached) his utmost size, and then the Three Sovereigns were born.«”

[1] 徐整《三五曆紀》曰：[2]「天地渾沌如雞子，盤古生其中。[3] 萬八千歲，天地開闢，陽清爲天，陰濁爲地。[4] 盤古在其中，一日九變，神於天，聖於地。[5] 天日高一丈，地日厚一丈，盤古日長一丈。如此萬八千歲。[6] 天數極高，地數極深，盤古極長，後乃有三皇。」

**WLYS = Wǔyùn lǐniánjì 五運曆年紀** (*Chronicle of the Five Cycles of Time*) in Ma Su's 馬驢 (1621–1673) *Yishi 繹史 (Unravelling History)* 1.2a. [In: Liu et al. 2000, 2]. Also in *Yuanqi lun 元氣論* quoted in the *Yunji qiqian 雲笈七籤* 56.1b–1c. [Daozang 道藏 DZ1032 (22/382)]. Also cited in Dong Sizhang 董斯張: *Guang bowu zhi 廣博物志 (The Enlarged Treatise on Research into Nature)* 9.2b.<sup>43</sup>

“[1a] When the first-born Pangu's death was approaching, he transformed his body, [1b] his breath became the wind and the clouds, his voice became the thunder, [1c] his left eye became the sun, his right eye became the moon, his four limbs and the five parts of his body became the four extremities and the five (sacred) mountains, his blood became the rivers, his arteries became the arteries of the earth, his flesh became the soil, his hair became stars and constellations, his skin became grasses and trees, his teeth and bones became minerals and stones, his marrow became precious stones and jades, his sweat and his fluids became rain and marshes, and the insects on his body, when they were touched by the wind, were transformed into the common people.”

[1a] 首生盤古垂死化身，[1b] 氣成風雲，聲爲雷霆，[1c] 左眼爲日，右眼爲月，四肢五體爲四極五嶽，血液爲江河，筋脈爲地里，肌肉爲田土，發爲星辰，皮膚爲草木，齒骨爲金石，精髓爲珠玉，汗流爲雨澤，身之諸蟲，因風所感，化爲黎甿。

**WLGB = Wǔyùn lǐniánjì 五運曆年紀** in Dong Sizhang 董斯張: *Guang bowu zhi 廣博物志 (The Enlarged Treatise on Research into Nature)* 9.2b. Also quoted as *Diwang Wuyun linian ji 帝王五運歷年紀* in the earlier *Shiwu jiyuan 事物紀原 (The Origins of Affairs and Things)* (1.4a–7a) by Gao Cheng 高承.

“[1] Lord Pangu had a dragon head and a serpent body, [2] his breathing became wind and rain, his breathing out became thunder. When he opened his eyes, it was daylight, when he closed his eyes, it became night. [3a] After his death [3b] his bones and joints became mountains and forests, his limbs became the rivers and seas, his blood became the Huai river, his hair became grasses and trees.”

[1] 盤古之君龍首蛇身，[2] 噓爲風雨，吹爲雷電，開目爲晝，閉目爲夜。[3a] 死後 [3b] 骨節爲山林，體爲江海，血爲淮瀆，毛髮爲草木。

**SHYJ = Shùyìjì 述異記** (*A Record of Accounts of Marvels*) by Ren Fang 任昉 (460–508 CE) in *Han-Wei congshu 漢魏叢書 (Han and Wei Dynasties Collectanea)*, comp. by Cheng Rong 程榮 (fl. 1573–1620), preface from 1592.

“[1] In former times when Pangu died, his head became the four (sacred) mountains, his eyes became the sun and the moon, his fat became the rivers and the seas, the hair on his body and on his head became the grasses and the trees. [2] In Qin and Han, people said: ‘Pangu’s head became the eastern mountain, his stomach became the central mountain, his left arm became the southern mountain,<sup>44</sup> his right arm became the northern mountain, his legs became the western mountain.’ [3] Former literati said: ‘Pangu’s weeping became the rivers, his breath became wind, his voice became the thunder, the pupils in his eyes became the lightning.’ The ancients said: ‘Pangu’s joy became good weather, his anger became cloudy weather.’ [4] In Wu and Chu they say: ‘Pangu and his wife are the beginning of *yin* and *yang*.’ [5] Nowadays at the southern sea there is Pangu’s tomb, which is 300 *li* [approx. 150 km, G.K.] long. The folk say that his descendants buried his soul here. In Guilin [Guangxi, G.K.] there is a temple dedicated to Pangu, where people pray and offer sacrifice to him. At the southern sea there is a land called Pangu, nowadays everybody there has Pangu as a surname. (Ren) Fang’s commentary: ‘Pangu is the ancestor of the sky, the earth and the myriad things, living creatures originate from Pangu.’”

[1] 昔盤古氏之死也，頭爲四岳，目爲日月，脂膏爲江海，毛髮爲草木。[2] 秦漢間俗說：盤古氏頭爲東岳，腹爲中岳，左臂爲南岳，右臂爲北岳，足爲西岳。[3] 先儒說：盤古氏泣爲江河，氣爲風，聲爲雷，目瞳爲電。古說：盤古氏喜爲晴，怒爲陰。[4] 吳楚間說：盤古氏夫妻，陰陽之始也。[5] 今南海有盤古氏墓，亘三百里，俗云後人追葬盤古之魂也。桂林有盤古祠，今人祝祀。南海有盤古國，今人皆以盤古爲姓。昉按：»盤古氏，天地萬物之祖也而生物始於盤古。«

## APPENDIX 2.

### COMPARISON OF CHINESE TEXTS IN THEMATIC UNITS

#### Abbreviations:

DHSY = *Dafang guangfo huayanjing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔 T36: 1736, p0320c;

SWLJ = *Sanwu liji* 三五曆紀 in *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 1.4a–b;

WLYS = *Wuyun linianji* 五運曆年紀 in *Yishi* 釋史 1.2a. (also cited in Dong Sizhang 董斯張: *Guang bowu zhi* 廣博物志 9.2b.);

WLGB = *Wuyun linianji* 五運曆年紀 in *Guang bowu zhi* 廣博物志 9.2b.;

WLYL = *Wuyun linianji* 五運曆年紀 in *Yuanqi lun* 元氣論 in *Yunji qiqian* 雲笈七籤 56. [*Daozang* 道藏 1032: 56.1b–1c];

SHYJ = *Shuyiji* 述異記 in *SKQS shang*: 1a–b;

YSZJ = *Yuanshi shangzhen zhongxian ji* 元始上真眾仙記 in *Daozang* 道藏 166: 3.269b.

## I. THE SOURCE

DHSY/1: 案《三王曆》云:

SWLJ/1: 徐整《三五曆紀》曰:

## II. CHAOS AND PANGU'S BIRTH

DHSY/2: 天地渾沌，盤古生其中。

SWLJ/2: 天地渾沌如雞子，盤古生其中。

YSZJ: 昔二氣未分，溟滓鴻蒙，未有成形。天地日月未具，狀如雞子，混沌玄黃。已有盤古真人，天地之精，自號元始天王，游乎其中。

## III. YIN AND YANG

SWLJ/3: 萬八千歲，天地開闢，陽清爲天，陰濁爲地。

## IV. NINE TRANSFORMATIONS AND SUPERSEDING SKY AND EARTH

DHSY/3: 一日九變，神於天，聖於地，主於天地。

SWLJ/4: 盤古在其中，一日九變，神於天，聖於地。

## V. ONE ZHANG FOR 18,000 YEARS

DHSY/4: 天日高一丈，地日厚一丈，盤古亦長一丈，如此萬八千年，然後天地開闢。

SWLJ/5: 天日高一丈，地日厚一丈，盤古日長一丈。如此萬八千歲，

## VI. UTMOST LIMITS

SWLJ/6: 天數極高，地數極深，盤古極長，後乃有三皇。

## VII. PANGU'S APPEARANCE

DHSY/5: 盤古龍身人首。

WLGB/1: 盤古之君龍首蛇身，

## VIII. HEAD, FEET AND HANDS

DHSY/6: 首極東西，足極東西，左手極南，右手極北。

## IX. EYES, BREATH AND VOICE

DHSY/7: 開目成晝，合目成夜。呼爲暑，吸爲寒。吹氣成風雲，叱聲爲雷霆。

WLYS/1b: 氣成風雲，聲爲雷霆

WLGB/2: 噓爲風雨，吹爲雷電，開目爲晝，閉目爲夜。

WLYL/2a: 氣成風雲，聲爲雷霆

SHYJ/3: 先儒說：盤古氏泣爲江河，氣爲風，聲爲雷，目瞳爲電。古說：盤古氏喜爲睛，怒爲陰。

## X. PANGU'S DEATH AND THE TEN HEAVENLY STEMS

DHSY/8: 盤古死，頭爲甲，喉爲乙，肩爲丙，心爲丁，膽爲戊，脾爲己，脅爲庚，肺爲辛，腎爲壬，足爲癸



WLYS/1a: 首生盤古垂死化身

WLYL/1: 首生盤古垂死化身

WLGB/3a: 死後

## XI. THE TRANSFORMATION OF PANGU'S BODY INTO THE COSMOS

DHSY/9: 目爲日月，髭爲星辰，眉爲斗樞，九竅爲九州，乳爲崑崙，膝爲南嶽，股爲太山，尻爲魚鱉，手爲飛鳥，爪爲龜龍，骨爲金銀，髮爲草木，毫毛爲鳧鴨，齒爲玉石，汗爲雨水，大腸爲江海，小腸爲淮泗，膀胱爲百川，面輪爲洞庭。

WLYS/1c: 左眼爲日，右眼爲月，四肢五體爲四極五嶽，血液爲江河，筋脈爲地里，肌肉爲田土，發爲星辰，皮膚爲草木，齒骨爲金石，精髓爲珠玉，汗流爲雨澤，身之諸蟲，因風所感，化爲黎甿。

WLGB/3b: 骨節爲山林，體爲江海，血爲淮瀆，毛髮爲草木。

WLYL/2b: 左眼爲日，右眼爲月，四肢五體爲四極五嶽，血液爲江河，筋脈爲地裏，肌肉爲田土，發髭爲星辰，皮毛爲草木，齒骨爲金石，精髓爲珠玉，汗流爲雨澤。身之諸蟲，因風所感，化爲黎甿。

SHYJ/1: 昔盤古氏之死也，頭爲四岳，目爲日月，脂膏爲江海，毛髮爲草木。

SHYJ/2: 秦漢間俗說：盤古氏頭爲東岳，腹爲中岳，左臂爲南岳，右臂爲北岳，足爲西岳。

## XII. PANGU AND HIS WIFE

SHYJ/4: 吳楚間說：盤古氏夫妻，陰陽之始也。

## XIII. PANGU'S TOMB AND CULT

SHYJ/5: 今南海有盤古氏墓，亘三百里，俗云後人追葬盤古之魂也。桂林有盤古祠，今人祝祀。南海有盤古國，今人皆以盤古爲姓。昉按：»盤古氏，天地萬物之祖也而生物始於盤古。

### APPENDIX 3. HOMOLOGIC ALLOFORMS<sup>45</sup>

	DHSY (7)	WLYS (1b)	WLGB (2)	WLYL (2a)	SHYJ (3)
開目 opening the eyes	晝 daylight	—	晝 daylight	—	—
合(閉)目 closing the eyes	夜 night	—	夜 night	—	—
呼 breathing out	暑 summer	—	—	—	—
吸 breathing in	寒 winter	—	—	—	—

(吹)氣 blowing air, breath	風雲 wind and clouds	風雲 wind and clouds	雷電 thunder	風雲 wind and clouds	風 wind
(叱)聲 shouting voice	雷霆 thunder	雷霆 thunder	—	雷霆 thunder	雷 thunder
噓 breathing	—	—	風雨 wind and rain	—	—
泣 weeping	—	—	—	—	江河 rivers
目瞳 pupils	—	—	—	—	電 lightning
喜 joy	—	—	—	—	晴 good weather
怒 anger	—	—	—	—	陰 cloudy weather

	<b>DHSY (8, 9)</b>	<b>WLYS (1c)</b>	<b>WLGB (3b)</b>	<b>WLYL (2b)</b>	<b>SHYJ (1, 2)</b>
目[2, 4.左,右眼] eyes	日月 sun and moon	日月 sun and moon	—	日月 sun and moon	日月 sun and moon
髭[發髭] beard	星辰 stars, constellations	—	—	星辰 stars, constellations	—
眉 brow	斗樞 pole of the Big Dipper	—	—	—	—
九竅 nine holes	九州 nine continents	—	—	—	—
乳 chest	崑崙 Kunlun	—	—	—	—
膝 knee	南嶽 southern mountain	—	—	—	—
股 thigh	太山 Taishan (mountain)	—	—	—	—
尻 buttocks	魚鱉 fish and tortoises	—	—	—	—
手 hands	飛鳥 flying birds	—	—	—	—
爪 claws	龜龍 turtles and dragons	—	—	—	—
骨 [2,4 齒骨] bones	金銀 gold and silver	金石 minerals and stones	—	金石 minerals and stones	—

骨節	—	—	山林	—	—
bones and joints			mountains and forests		
髮 [3,5 毛髮]	草木	星辰	草木	—	草木
hair	grasses and trees	stars, constellations	grasses and trees		grasses and trees
毫毛 [皮毛]	鳧鴨	—	—	草木	—
hair on the body	mallards and ducks			grasses and trees	
齒	玉石	—	—	—	—
teeth	gems and rocks				
汗	雨水	—	—	—	—
sweat	rain and water				
大腸	江海	—	—	—	—
large intestines	rivers and seas				
小腸	淮泗	—	—	—	—
small intestines	Huai and Si (rivers)				
膀胱	百川	—	—	—	—
blisters	hundred rivers				
面輪	洞庭	—	—	—	—
face	caves				
四肢	—	四極	—	四極	—
four limbs		four extremities		four extremities	
五體	—	五嶽	—	五嶽	—
five parts of his body		five mountains		five mountains	
體	—	—	江海	—	—
limbs			rivers and seas		
血液 [3. 血]	—	江河	淮瀆	江河	—
blood		rivers	Huai river	rivers	
筋脈	—	地里	—	地裏	—
arteries		arteries of the earth		arteries of the earth	
肌肉	—	田土	—	田土	—
flesh		soil		soil	
皮膚	—	草木	—	—	—
skin		grasses and trees			
精髓	—	珠玉	—	珠玉	—
marrow		precious stones and jades		precious stones and jades	
汗流	—	雨澤	—	雨澤	—
sweat and fluids		rain and marshes		rain and marshes	
身之諸蟲	—	黎甿	—	黎甿	—
insects on the body		common people		common people	
頭	甲	—	—	—	四岳, 東岳
head	jia				four (eastern) mountain(s)

脂膏 fat	--	--	--	--	江海 rivers and seas
腹 stomach	--	--	--	--	中岳 central mountain
左臂 left arm	--	--	--	--	南岳 southern mountain
右臂 right arm	--	--	--	--	北岳 northern mountain
足 legs	癸 <i>gui</i>	--	--	--	西岳 western mountain
喉 throat	乙 <i>yi</i>	--	--	--	—
肩 shoulder	丙 <i>ding</i>	--	--	--	—
心 heart	丁 <i>ding</i>	--	--	--	—
膽 bladder	戊 <i>wu</i>	--	--	--	—
脾 spleen	己 <i>ji</i>	--	--	--	—
脅 ribs	庚 <i>geng</i>	--	--	--	—
肺 lungs	辛 <i>xin</i>	--	--	--	—
腎 kidney	壬 <i>ren</i>	--	--	--	—

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> I am grateful to Michael Conway for reading and commenting on my paper. Translation of all Chinese texts are mine.
- <sup>2</sup> Similarly to Chinese scholars, Western researchers also preeminently focused on the origin of the Pangu myth. Earlier studies were usually seeking for more distant analogies and often did not make a proper distinction between the different phases of the evolution of the myth from the earliest versions to the Ming dynasty novels. Here, I simply mention some examples without a critical assessment. Edward T.C. Werner freely related the Pangu myths, confounding earlier and later ones, and offered a comparison with the Ymir myth (*Myths and Legends of China*, 76–79). Donald A. MacKenzie also ascribed later attributes (chisel, hammer) to the early figure of Pangu (*Myths of China and Japan*, 260), and connected him with the Egyptian Ptah and other hammer-gods (261–262). MacKenzie also referred to the Ymir myth and calls Pangu “evidently an importation” (263–264). Eduard Erkes linked the Pangu myth with *The Book of Changes* (*Yijing*) tradition (“Eine P’an-ku-Mythe Der Hsia-Zeit?”). Wolfgang Eberhard emphasized the egg motif in the myth and thus related the Pangu myth to early Chinese concepts (*Lokalkulturen*, 467–468). Hellmut Wilhelm claimed that it was a late myth, which was not of Chinese origin (*Heaven, Earth, and Man*, 30). Derk Bodde called the Pangu myth “China’s only clearly recognizable creation myth” (*Myths of Ancient China*, 383), and discovered analogies in Vedic and Sumerian myths. He also stressed the importance of the *hundun* 混沌 or 渾沌 (“primordial chaos”) motif, (384–385), which was later analyzed by N. Girardot (*Myth and Meaning in Early Taoism*). In her book on the divine aspect of Laozi, Anna Seidel investigated the Pangu myth appearing in Laozi’s later “biography” (*La divinisation de Lao tseu*, 92–96). Kristofer Schipper emphasized that in this myth the birth of the cosmos was explained by Pangu’s death, and compared the myth with the famous Zhuangzi story on the death of *huntu* (*The Taoist Body*, 114–115). Reflecting on Chinese scholarship, both Derk Bodde (*Myths of Ancient China*, 383) and Anne Birrell (*Chinese Mythology*, 118–119) stressed that the Panhu founding myth and the Pangu cosmogonical myths are not related, though both might derive from south-eastern China and in both cases the names of the protagonists display a phonetic similarity. According to Birrell, the homologous alloforms of the Pangu myth are so similar to those of the Indo-European cosmogonical myths, collected by Bruce Lincoln (“Cosmogony, Anthropogony, Homology”), that the Pangu myth must have been borrowed from a Central Asian source.
- <sup>3</sup> This passage from the *Sanwu liji* 三五曆紀 was preserved in the *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 1.4a–b. (comp. by Ouyang Xun 歐陽詢 et al. in 624 CE.).
- <sup>4</sup> *Wuyun linianji* 五運曆年紀 was preserved in Ma Su’s 馬騶 (1621–1673) *Yishi* 譯史 1.2a. and some excerpts in Dong Sizhang’s 董斯張 *Guang bowu zhi* 廣博物志 9.2b.
- <sup>5</sup> The *Shuyiji* 述異記 was preserved in the *Han-Wei congshu* 漢魏叢書 (SKQS vol. 1047, shang: 1a–b).
- <sup>6</sup> Further similar examples from the *Xu Zangjing* 續藏經 include the following ones: *Qiongjue laoren tianqi zhuzhu Tiantong Jue heshang songgu* 堯絕老人天奇直註天童覺和尚頌古 X67: 1306, p0454b; *Banruo xin jing zhujie* 般若心經註解 X26: 0575, p0978b; *Gaofeng longquanyuan yinshi jixian yulu* 高峰龍泉院因師集賢語錄 X65: 1277, p0016b; *Zongjian falin* 宗鑑法林 X66: 1297, p0606a; *Suiyuan ji* 隨緣集 X57: 0975, p0532b; *Chanzong Songgu lianzhu tongji* 禪宗頌古聯珠通集 X65: 1295, p0715a; *Fozu gangmu* 佛祖綱目 X85: 1594, p0694a; *Wudeng quanshu* 五燈全書 X82: 1571, p0582b; *Qixin zashuo* 啓信雜說 X62: 1201, p0644a; *Chanlin leiju* 禪林類聚 X67: 1299, p0094c; *Chanzong Songgu lianzhu tongji* 禪宗頌古聯珠通集 X65: 1295, p0704c; *Zibo zunzhe quanji* 紫柏尊者全集 X73: 1452, p0385b; *Fajie*

- shengfan shuilu dazhai falun baochan* 法界聖凡水陸大齋法輪寶懺 X74: 1499, p1062b; *Yuxuan yulu* 御選語錄 X68: 1319, p0569a.
- <sup>7</sup> Other later but similar examples include: *Wuliang shou jing qixin lun* 無量壽經起信論 X22: 400, p0116a; *Yuansou xingduan chanshi yulu* 元叟行端禪師語錄 X71: 1419, p0518a; *Xigui zhizhi* 西歸直指 X62: 1173, p0115b; *Yunwai yunxiu chanshi yulu* 雲外雲岫禪師語錄 X72: 1431, p0174b; *Cheng weishi lun zhengyi* 成唯識論證義 X50: 0822, p0844c. The *Huayan yuanren lunjie* 華嚴原人論解 (X58: 1032, p0756c) rather briefly summarizes the entire myth.
- <sup>8</sup> Imre Hamar, *A Religious Leader*, 31–43; Imre Hamar, “Buddhism and The Dao,” 283–292.
- <sup>9</sup> HXTX: 五帝歷; CLJJ: 三王歷.
- <sup>10</sup> HXTX: 混.
- <sup>11</sup> HXTX, CLJJ: 主於天地 is missing.
- <sup>12</sup> HXTX, CLJJ: 歲.
- <sup>13</sup> CLJJ: 天開地闢.
- <sup>14</sup> HXTX: 首極東，足極西.
- <sup>15</sup> HXTX, CLJJ: 曙.
- <sup>16</sup> CLJJ: 吒.
- <sup>17</sup> HXTX: 電.
- <sup>18</sup> CLJJ: 岳.
- <sup>19</sup> HXTX, CLJJ: 泰.
- <sup>20</sup> CLJJ: 屍.
- <sup>21</sup> CLJJ: 水 is missing.
- <sup>22</sup> *Dafang guangfo huayanjing suishu yanyi chao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔 T36: 1736, p0320c. A certain part of this text is also included in the *Beishan lu* 北山錄 (T52: 2113, p0573b–c), which had been written by the 9<sup>th</sup> century Shenqing 神清 and includes Huibao’s 慧寶 commentaries and his preface which is dated 1068: The *Fozu lidai tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載 (T49: 2036, p0490b) by Nianchang 念常 of the Yuan dynasty cites the *Beishan lu*.
- <sup>23</sup> *Jiu Tangshu* 46/1996, *Xin Tangshu* 58/1465.
- <sup>24</sup> *Jiu Tangshu* 46/1996, *Xin Tangshu* 58/1465.
- <sup>25</sup> *Yuanshi shangzhen zhongxian ji* 元始上真眾仙記 (*Daozang* 166: 3.269b): 昔二氣未分，溟滓鴻蒙，未有成形。天地日月未具，狀如雞子，混沌玄黃。已有盤古真人，天地之精，自號元始天王，游乎其中。
- <sup>26</sup> See e.g. R.E. Strassberg, *A Chinese Bestiary*, 43–46, more generally Michael Loewe, “Man and beast.”
- <sup>27</sup> *Xuanzhongji* 玄中記 (Yuan Ke, *Zhongguo shenhua tonglun*, 71): 燭龍生著一雙豎目，左目爲日，右目爲月，張開左目爲晨，閉左目爲張右目爲夜，張口爲春夏，閉口是秋冬。The earliest record of Zhulong appears in the *Shanhaijing* (SPPY 17.7a–b): “Beyond the northwestern sea, north of Scarlet River, is Pied-Tail Mountain. It has a god with a human face and a snake’s body, and it is scarlet. His vertical eyes are straight slits. When he closes his eyes it grows dark. When he looks out it grows bright. He neither eats nor sleeps or rests. Wind and rain visit him. This god shines on the nine darknesses. He is called Torch Dragon [Zhulong]” (trans. by A. Birrell, *Chinese Mythology*, 69).
- <sup>28</sup> 首生盤古垂死化身，氣成風雲，聲爲雷霆。
- <sup>29</sup> 盤古之君龍首蛇身，噓爲風雨，吹爲雷電，開目爲晝，閉目爲夜。死後骨節爲山林，體爲江海，血爲淮瀆，毛髮爲草木。An earlier source, the Song dynasty *Shiwu jiyuan* 事物紀原 by Gao Cheng 高承, though in a slightly scattered way, also quotes both the first (1.4a) and the second (1.6a–7a) part of this description.
- <sup>30</sup> In the official historical works the *Shuyiji* 述異記 is first recorded as Ren Fang’s work in the



*Songshi* 宋史 206/5219. The famous mathematician, Zu Chongzhi 祖沖之 (429–500 CE) also had a work called *Shuyiji* but that consisted of 10 fascicles (*Suishu* 隋書 33/980; *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 46/2005, *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 59/1540). On Ren Fang's 任昉 *Shuyiji*, see Robert F. Campany, *Strange Writing*, 84–85, 362–363.

<sup>31</sup> 先儒說：盤古氏泣爲江河，氣爲風，聲爲雷，目瞳爲電。

<sup>32</sup> On homologic alloforms, see Bruce Lincoln, “Cosmogony, Anthropogony, Homology.”

<sup>33</sup> On references, see Hou Hongliang, “Shi shi, fei fei hua Pangu,” 125–126.

<sup>34</sup> Hou Hongliang, “Shi shi, fei fei hua Pangu,” 119. For a similar summary of the main theories, see Qin Naichang, “Pangu guo wenhua, 119–121 or the more detailed Zhu Xinyi, “Pangu shenhua tanyuan,” 6–18.

<sup>35</sup> See, for example, Han Huchu, “Pangu zhi gen zai Zhonghua,” Qin Naichang, “Zhuiwen Pangu”; Wu, “The Rhinoceros Totem,” 365–368; Zhu, “Pangu shenhua tanyuan,” 8–11; Hou Hongliang, “Shi shi, fei fei hua Pangu,” 119–121. The general refusal of the foreign influence theory might have several reasons, but it should be stressed that during recent decades none of the Chinese Pangu specialists were willing to consider it as a possible historical explanation.

<sup>36</sup> E.g. Wu Xiaodong, “The Rhinoceros Totem,” 368–369.

<sup>37</sup> See e.g. Liu Shouhua, “*Hei'anzhuan zhuzong*.”

<sup>38</sup> 死後骨節爲山林，體爲江海，血爲淮瀆，毛髮爲草木。

<sup>39</sup> Imre Hamar, *A Religious Leader*, 42.

<sup>40</sup> E.g. Wu Xiaodong, “The Rhinoceros Totem,” 364; Wu Xiaodong, “Pangu yuanxing,” 39; Qin Naichang, “Zhuiwen Pangu,” 118, 120; Qin Cailuan, “Pangu guo wenhua,” 135–136; Yang Jianjun, “*Sanwu liji zhong de Pangu*,” 162; Guo Wei, “Pangu yanjiu fazhan,” 110, 118; Tan Daxian, “‘Pangu kai tiandi’,” 91, 93. I presume that the attribution is based on the list in the *Tongzhi* 通志 (*Comprehensive Treatise on Institutions*, 65: 12b–13a): “*Sanwu liji*: two fascicles, compiled by Xu Zheng; *Huntian Diwang Wuyun linianji*: one fascicle; *Tongli*: two fascicles, compiled by Xu Zheng [三五歷紀: 二卷，徐整撰。渾天帝王五運歷年紀: 一卷。通歷: 二卷，徐整撰。].” Thus two works by Xu Zheng flank a third work, whose author is not specified. The identity of the *Huntian Diwang Wuyun linianji* 渾天帝王五運歷年紀 with the *Wuyun linianji* 五運歷年紀 can be inferred from the *Shiwu jiyuan* 事物紀原 (1.4a–7a) which cites many episodes of the Pangu myth from the *Diwang Wuyun linianji*. Thus the *Wuyun linianji* is the abbreviated form of *Diwang Wuyun linianji*, which in turn derives from the most complete *Huntian Diwang Wuyun linianji*.

<sup>41</sup> For another English translation, see e.g. Anne Birrell, *Chinese Mythology*, 32–33 or David C. Yu, “The creation myth,” 479.

<sup>42</sup> Yue Shi's 樂史 (930–1007 CE) *Taiping huanyu ji* 太平寰宇記 (*juan* 72) mentions 84,000 years.

<sup>43</sup> For another English translation, see Livia Kohn, *The Taoist Experience*, 169 or Anne Birrell, *Chinese Mythology*, 33.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *Nanyue zongsheng ji* 南嶽總勝集 (T51: 2097, p1056c): “The *Shuyiji* says: ‘The Southern Mountain is Pangu's left arm’ (述異誌云: 南岳者盤古左臂).”

<sup>45</sup> Numbers in brackets in the first column indicate that another version in the line has some minor differences in the wording.

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