

DAVID A. GRAFF

Fang Guan's Chariots: Scholarship, War, and Character Assassination in the Middle Tang

In the autumn of 756 the fortunes of the Tang house were at their lowest ebb since the founding of the dynasty in 618. The rebellious frontier general An Lushan 安祿山 had captured the eastern capital of Luoyang 洛陽 early in 756, and on July 7 (756/vi/6) his generals smashed the large government army guarding the road to Chang'an 長安 at the Tong Pass 潼關. The capital fell just a few days later. The emperor fled to safety in Sichuan 四川 with a small escort, while his heir-apparent made for the frontier garrison of Lingwu 靈武 to rally support and direct resistance in the north. On August 12 (756/vii/12) the heir-apparent (known posthumously as Suzong 肅宗) ascended the throne at Lingwu, usurping his father's authority. Elsewhere in the empire other rebel forces loyal to An Lushan were trying to push southward through Henan 河南 toward the Yangzi River 長江, while the government armies that had been effectively challenging rebel power in Hebei 河北 were hastily recalled to the west. The Tang state appeared to be on the verge of a complete collapse.

It was against this background that Suzong launched his first counterattack against the rebels. He appointed one of his chief ministers, Fang Guan 房琯 (697–763), a civil official with no prior military experience, to lead an army of 50,000 men to evict An Lushan's forces from Chang'an. Fang selected other civil officials and scholars to serve as his principal deputies, and then ordered an advance on the capital by three separate columns. The "northern army" marched south from Fengtian 奉天, the "center army" moved southeastward from Wugong 武功, and the "southern army" pushed east from Yishou 宜壽 (near today's Zhouzhi 周至 on the south side of the Wei River 渭水). The northern and center armies joined forces at the Bian Bridge 便橋 over

IN THIS article, traditional Chinese dates are expressed as numbers separated by slashes, as follows: equivalent Western year / Chinese lunar month / day of said month; e.g., "756/x/23", where roman numeral "x" is the tenth lunar month. Sometimes the year is not given.

the Wei River on November 16 (756/x/20). The next day, they encountered a rebel army under An Shouzhong 安守忠 at a place called Chentao Slope 陳濤斜, just to the east of the county town of Xianyang 咸陽.¹ Sima Guang's *Zizhi Tongjian* 資治通鑑 offers the following brief account of the action that ensued:

Fang Guan imitated the ancient methods, using two thousand ox-carts with cavalry and foot soldiers on both sides of them. The rebels took advantage of their upwind position to raise an uproar, frightening all of the oxen. The rebels set fires to burn them, and both men and beasts were thrown into great confusion. Those in the government army who were killed or wounded numbered more than 40,000 men; those who were left were no more than several thousand. On November 19 (756/x/23) Fang Guan himself fought with the southern army and was again defeated.²

This episode has become a famous case for Western students of the Tang period, especially those dealing with intellectual history. It is typically deployed as a colorful and extreme example of the impractical devotion of Fang Guan and like-minded scholars to ancient models, in strong contrast to other scholars who believed in the mutability of institutions and argued for adjustments to meet the changing needs of the times. The classic treatment is found in Edwin G. Pulleyblank's highly influential article on "Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism in T'ang Intellectual Life, 755-805." Here Pulleyblank presents Fang's battle plan as an exact parallel of his earlier policy suggestion (to the exiled Xuanzong 玄宗 in Sichuan) that the emperor's sons be given control over major regions of the empire in emulation of the "feudal" (*fengjian* 封建) system of the Zhou 周 dynasty: "Once again he adopted a plan based on literal imitation of 'the way of the former kings'; he went into battle with chariots drawn by oxen. The result was a disastrous defeat in which the imperial army suffered 40,000 casualties."³

¹ For more detail on the location of the battle, see note 64 below. The translation of *xie* given here is highly tentative. The word's most basic meaning is "diagonal." According to Hu Sanxing's 胡三省 13th-c. commentary to *Zizhi tongjian*, the origin of the place name is uncertain. It could refer to a place where the road from Xianyang to Chang'an changed direction to avoid the Chentao marsh, or it may have been a burial place of palace women (which, according to Hu, was also called a *xie*). See Sima Guang 司馬光, *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑 (Beijing: Guji chubanshe, 1956; rpt. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1987; hereafter cited as *ZZTJ*) 219, p. 7004. Henceforth I shall refer to the location simply as Chentao.

² *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7004.

³ Edwin G. Pulleyblank, "Neo-Confucianism and Neo-Legalism in T'ang Intellectual Life, 755-805," in Arthur F. Wright, ed., *The Confucian Persuasion* (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1960), p. 99.

Following the Japanese Sinologist Kanai Yukitada 金井之忠, Pulleyblank identifies Fang's scholarly associate Liu Zhi 劉秩, son of the great historian Liu Zhiji 劉知幾, as the likely author of these schemes.⁴ More recently, Peter K. Bol has presented this "use of Spring and Autumn-era techniques to battle the rebels" as emblematic of "a kind of literalism about ancient practices" during Xuanzong's reign, and suggests that Fang's defeat helped to bring on "a crisis of culture in scholarship" as scholars became convinced that "the cultural models of the past had not worked as intended."⁵

Such assertions about the larger significance of the battle of Chentao are, however, built upon a remarkably weak evidentiary base. As will soon become clear, Tang sources tell us very little about what actually happened on that late autumn day in 757. There is reason to suspect that the historical record is not only incomplete in its treatment of this episode, but also inaccurate and sharply biased against this particular scholar-general.⁶ When considered in the context of medieval military practice, Fang Guan's tactics were neither so unusual nor so foolishly impractical as these accounts might lead us to believe. A close examination of the sources suggests that his approach to battle was marked by trepidation rather than overconfidence. Fang had access to advice from experienced military officers, and there was ample precedent for the use of wheeled vehicles to screen or buttress unsteady infantry threatened by cavalry. Nor is it likely that such a fine classical scholar would have confused his own ox-drawn conveyances with the horse-drawn chariots of antiquity. That he suffered a severe defeat is undeniable, but there is no need to invoke his imitation of the military methods of the Spring and Autumn period (722–481 BC) to explain it; his hastily

⁴ Kanai Yukitada 金井之忠, *Tōdai no shigaku shisō* 唐代の史學思想 (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 1940), pp. 90–91.

⁵ Peter K. Bol, "This Culture of Ours": *Intellectual Transitions in Tang and Sung China* (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1992), p. 109 and p. 366, n. 109.

⁶ To the best of my knowledge, the received account of the battle of Chentao (as found, for example, in the *Zizhi tongjian* passage quoted above) has never been directly challenged. Two modern surveys of Chinese military history – *Zhongguo junshi shi* 中國軍事史, vol. 2: *Binglüe, xia* 兵略下 (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1988), p. 97; and Li Zhen 李震, *Zhongguo lidai zhanzheng shihua* 中國歷代戰爭史話 (Taipei: Liming wenhua shiye gongsi, 1985), p. 426 – basically repeat the account from the *Zizhi tongjian*. A recent multi-volume survey strips the battle to its bare bones and makes no mention of Fang Guan's tactics: *Zhongguo junshi tongshi* 中國軍事通史, vol. 10: *Tangdai junshi shi* 唐代軍事史, pt. 2, by Du Wenyu 杜文玉 and Yu Rubo 于如波 (Beijing: Junshi kexue chubanshe, 1998), p. 521. Western scholars have been no less credulous in their treatment of this episode; for examples, see Ralph D. Sawyer, *Fire and Water: The Art of Incendiary and Aquatic Warfare in China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 2004), p. 75, and David A. Graff, "The Sword and the Brush: Military Specialisation and Career Patterns in Tang China, 618–907," *War & Society* 18.2 (October 2000), p. 18 (in addition to the works by Pulleyblank and Bol that have already been cited).

raised force was facing an army of battle-hardened veterans, accustomed to victory and almost certainly superior in cavalry. Not all accounts of the battle assert an explicit link between Fang's tactics and those of ancient times, suggesting that this connection may not have been universally accepted, and those that do appear to derive from a single hostile source – possibly the Veritable Record (*shilu* 實錄) of Suzong's reign – whose author may well have been seeking to exploit the fiasco at Chentao to discredit Fang Guan's ideas regarding the applicability of ancient models to current political and institutional problems.

There can be no doubt that Fang Guan was an improbable choice for military command. As the son of a chief minister of empress Wu's reign who had died in exile in the far south, Fang was able to enter the Institute for the Advancement of Literature (Hongwenguan 弘文館), the elite school in the capital that prepared the sons of high officials for careers in government service. His disquisition on the ancient *feng* 封 and *shan* 禪 sacrifices brought him to the attention of the illustrious chief minister Zhang Yue 張說 in 724, and he was made an editor in the Imperial Library (*pishusheng jiaoshulang* 秘書省校書郎, rank 9A1). Hucker notes that these were “appointments for men of great literary promise, considered the starting points for excellent careers...”⁷ His next appointment, as defender (*wei* 尉, in effect police chief) of a county near the capital, also indicated that he was on the elite track. He served as magistrate of another county near Chang'an, and then was made an investigating censor (*jiancha yushi* 監察御史, rank 8A2) in 734. Demoted for an offense, he served on the staff of a prefecture (Muzhou 睦州, in the interior of Zhejiang 浙江) and then became a county magistrate again (in Zhejiang, Henan, and finally the environs of Luoyang) before he was brought back to court in 742 as vice-director of the Bureau of Receptions under the Ministry of Rites (*zhuke yuanwailang* 主客員外郎, rank 6B). In 744 he was promoted to probationary director of the same bureau (主客郎中, rank 5B), and two years later he was made a probationary supervising secretary in the Chancellery (*jishizhong* 給事中, rank 5A1). Very soon after this, however, he was demoted and sent out to serve as governor of Yichun 宜春 in Sichuan because of his friendship with the ministers Wei Jian 韋堅 and Li Shizhi 李適之, who had been implicated in an alleged plot concerning the heir-apparent (the future Suzong).⁸

⁷ Charles O. Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1985), p. 142. The resumé of Fang's career given here follows his *Jiu Tangshu* biography unless otherwise noted. Liu Xu 劉昫 et al., *Jiu Tangshu* 舊唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975; hereafter, *JTS*) 111, p. 3320.

⁸ Wei and Li had threatened the power of the dominant chief minister Li Linfu 李林甫, who responded by accusing them of plotting a coup; the heir-apparent was not directly involved

Fang governed three other commanderies (Langye 琅邪 in Shandong 山東, Ye 鄴 in Hebei, and Fufeng 扶風 in Guanzhong 關中) before he was brought back to the capital as mentor heading the Left Secretariat of the Heir-Apparent (*zuo shuzi* 左庶子, rank 4A). At the time the capital fell to An Lushan's forces in 756, Fang was serving as vice-minister of Punishments (*xianbu shilang* 憲部侍郎, rank 4A).

In contrast to many officials who stayed in Chang'an or its environs and were forced into the service of the rebels, Fang set out on the road to Sichuan and eventually caught up with the emperor's party. A delighted Xuanzong made him minister of Personnel (*wenbu shangshu* 文部尚書, rank 3A) and a chief minister that very same day, and Fang accompanied the emperor to Chengdu 成都.⁹ When word of Suzong's usurpation reached Chengdu, Xuanzong chose to acquiesce. On September 17 (756/VIII/19) he dispatched Fang Guan and three other chief ministers to Lingwu bearing his formal abdication message.¹⁰ The emissaries from Sichuan had their first meeting with Suzong at Shunhua 順化 commandery, south of Lingwu, on October 23 (756/IX/25).¹¹ All were made chief ministers at his court, which is not surprising given the paucity of talent at his disposal: when Suzong established himself at Lingwu, his entourage included only about thirty civil and military officials, some of whom were extremely disrespectful.¹² Fang, however, was treated differently from the others and given effective control over the government. "From this time on, most of the affairs of the state and army were planned by Fang Guan."¹³

We are told that Suzong was deeply impressed by Fang and deferred to him because of his reputation. This reputation was not simply due to his current rank and the offices he had held in the past, but to the fact that he was "an influential and charismatic intellectual."¹⁴ Fang apparently had a keen eye for talent and promoted the careers of younger scholars and literary figures; he attracted many loyal disciples and was widely admired.¹⁵ One member of his network was the

and was not punished himself. For more on this episode, which came to a head in 746, see *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 3, *Sui and Tang China, 589–906, Part 1*, ed. Denis Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1979), pp. 421–24.

⁹ *JTS* 9, p. 33; 111, p. 3320.

¹⁰ Denis Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History Under the Tang* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1992), pp. 180–81; Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 and Song Qi 宋祁, *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975; hereafter, *XTS*) 5, p. 153.

¹¹ *JTS* 10, p. 244.

¹² *ZZTJ* 218, p. 6983.

¹³ *ZZTJ* 218, p. 6998; also see *JTS* 11, p. 3321.

¹⁴ *JTS* 111, p. 3321; David McMullen, *State and Scholars in Tang China* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1988), p. 49.

¹⁵ McMullen, *State and Scholars*, p. 49; Ji Yougong 計有功, *Tang shi ji shi* 唐詩紀事 (Bei-

scholar Liu Zhi, whose ability he had praised in the highest terms; another admirer was the poet Du Fu 杜甫, who submitted a memorial in Fang's defense when he was removed from office in the spring of 757.¹⁶ Fang's reputation was built not only on his patronage of younger scholars, but must also have owed something to his integrity and courage. As prefect of Fufeng not long before the outbreak of the rebellion, for example, he incurred the displeasure of the dominant chief minister Yang Guozhong 楊國忠 by reporting that local crops had been damaged by heavy rainfall – information that Yang had been trying to conceal from the emperor.¹⁷ By putting the government in Fang Guan's hands, the insecure and inexperienced Suzong may have hoped to attract the loyalty and support of many other scholar-officials at a time when he faced competition from the rebel regime in Luoyang and at least potentially from his father in Sichuan as well.

Fang, for his part, appears to have had great confidence in his own talents, “considering the entire empire to be his own responsibility.”¹⁸ Just a few days after his first meeting with Suzong (about the end of October according to the Gregorian calendar), he requested permission to personally lead troops against the rebels and recover Chang'an. The emperor promptly granted his request and appointed him “bandit suppression commissioner for the western capital, concurrently troop commander and military governor for the defense of the two passes of Pu and Tong, commissioned with special powers” (*chi jie, zhao tao xi jing jian fangyu Pu Tong liang guan bingma jiedu deng shi* 持節，招討西京兼防禦蒲潼兩關兵馬節度等使).¹⁹ The appointment of a civil official with no military experience to hold an important military command was not without precedent in the history of the Tang dynasty, but it marked a major departure from the policy that had been in effect in recent years. Both Fang Guan's desire to lead the army in person and Suzong's willingness to consent to it very likely reflected a loss of confidence in the “professional” military leadership after the destruction of the government army at the Tong Pass (where the senior commander, Geshu Han 哥舒翰, had allowed himself to be taken captive by the rebels). Suzong had wanted to execute three generals who had escaped from the blood-bath, but spared two of them after Fang Guan's intercession.²⁰ Need-

jing: *Zhonghua shuju*, 1965) 19, p. 276. One scholar whose career was promoted by Fang Guan was Li Han 李翰; see *XTS* 203, p. 5777.

¹⁶ *JTS* 147, 8982; 190B, p. 5054; *XTS* 166, pp. 5089–90; 201, p. 5737.

¹⁷ *XTS* 206, pp. 5849–50.

¹⁸ *JTS* 111, p. 3321.

¹⁹ *JTS* 10, p. 244; 111, p. 3321.

²⁰ *JTS* 111, p. 3321.

less to say, An Lushan's revolt must also have influenced perceptions of the reliability of the existing military leadership.

Fang Guan was allowed to choose his own staff. The men he turned to were literary scholars like himself, and at least some of them were already his protégés.²¹ He made the vice censor-in-chief (*yushi zhongcheng* 御史中丞) Deng Jingshan 鄧景山 his deputy and brought along Liu Zhi, now a supervising secretary of the Chancellery, as his advisor (*canmou* 參謀). Li Yi 李揖, the vice-minister of Revenue (*hubu shilang* 戶部侍郎), became the chief administrator of the army (*xingjun sima* 行軍司馬). There were also three administrative assistants (*panguan* 判官): Song Ruosi 宋若思, Jia Zhi 賈至, and Wei Shaoyou 魏少遊. Song had been the vice censor-in-chief at Xuanzong's court in Sichuan, where Jia had been a court diarist and participant in the drafting of proclamations (*qiju sheren, zhi zhi gao* 起居舍人, 知制誥); both men presumably accompanied Fang Guan on his mission from Chengdu to Lingwu.²² Wei was a bureau director of the Right Office (*yousi shilang* 右司侍郎).²³ The military positions to which these men were now assigned were ones that were normally filled by literate clerical personnel rather than fighting men, but there is no evidence that any of the appointees except Wei had ever served even as a military administrator with a field army or on the frontier. Wei, who had served as deputy commissioner for land and water transport (*shui lu zhuanyun fushi* 水陸轉運副使) in the Shuofang 朔方 frontier command and was one of the officers who had welcomed Suzong to Lingwu, was clearly the odd man out.²⁴ All the others easily fit the characterization in Fang's *Jiu Tangshu* biography that they were "sons of scholarly families who had never been trained in matters pertaining to military units."²⁵ Liu Zhi had written (or would soon write) two books on military strategy, but this was not equivalent to practical experience or training.²⁶

²¹ The list that follows is drawn from *JTS* 111, p. 3321.

²² For Song Ruosi, see *JTS* 9, p. 233. Jia Zhi has biographies in *JTS* 190B, p. 5029, and *XTS* 119, p. 4298.

²³ This was a second-echelon position when the ministries of War, Punishments, and Works were combined as a single agency under one of the vice-directors of the Department of State Affairs. See Hucker, *Dictionary of Official Titles*, pp. 586–87 (No. 8079).

²⁴ For Wei's biographies, see *JTS* 115, pp. 3376–77, and *XTS* 141, pp. 4656–57. It seems unlikely that Wei was a protégé of Fang Guan. His presence on the staff suggests that either (a) Fang did not have complete control over his appointments, or (b) he was not oblivious to the need for an experienced military administrator in his army.

²⁵ *JTS* 111, p. 3322.

²⁶ *JTS* 102, p. 3174; Kanai, *Tōdai no shigaku shisō*, p. 91. Kanai believes that Liu was probably already familiar with the classical military writings when he was advising Fang Guan.

Fang Guan's command structure did not, however, consist entirely of scholars. After Fang set out on his campaign, an experienced general named Wang Sili 王思禮 was dispatched to serve as his deputy – presumably at the behest of the emperor. Wang was a man of Korean descent whose father had served as an officer in the Shuofang Army, giving him the opportunity to become acquainted with military affairs at an early age. Wang had risen as a subordinate of Geshu Han in Longyou 隴右 and commanded the Tang vanguard in the disastrous battle at the Tong Pass.²⁷ It also appears that the commanders of the three armies into which Fang's force was divided were military men rather than scholars. This was certainly true of Li Guangjin 李光進, the leader of the northern army, who was the son of one Shuofang general and the younger brother of another. It is a safe assumption that, like his more famous brother Li Guangbi 李光弼, Guangjin was skilled at mounted archery and had followed the army from an early age.²⁸ Much less is known about the other two commanders, Yang Xiwen 楊希文 of the southern army and Liu Guizhe 劉貴哲 of the center army. We have some evidence that Yang was also a military man, while Liu is a cipher.²⁹ There is no reason to believe that Fang Guan appointed scholars as subordinate troop commanders within each of the three armies. However, Fang's *Jiu Tangshu* biography states that “military matters (*rongwu* 戎務) were all entrusted to Li Yi and Liu Zhi.”³⁰ This implies that Fang's scholarly staff officers were allowed to overstep their proper role as military administrators and meddle in the sorts of technical details that would normally have been left to experienced military men at the lower command levels. And at this point in time, soldiers who might have been expected to resist such meddling may have been too cowed to protest; several defeated generals had been put to death since the outbreak of the rebellion, and Wang Sili himself was one of the officers whose life had been spared due to Fang Guan's intercession after the disaster at the Tong Pass.³¹

The author of the *Jiu Tangshu* biography attributes Fang's defeat at Chentao to his failure to make careful calculations in advance 無廟

²⁷ *JTS* 110, pp. 3312–13; *XTS* 147, pp. 4749–50.

²⁸ *JTS* 110, p. 3303; *XTS* 136, p. 4591. The family was of Khitan origin.

²⁹ The *Zizhi tongjian* identifies Yang as a *pi jiang* 裨將 or subordinate officer (219, p. 7003). He surrendered to the rebels after Fang Guan's defeat and later fell into the hands of government forces when Li Guangbi captured Huaizhou 懷州.

³⁰ *JTS* 111, p. 3321.

³¹ *JTS* 111, p. 3321; *XTS* 147, p. 4749. Interestingly, Wang's *Jiu Tangshu* biography attributes the pardon to “someone” without mentioning Fang Guan by name. Wang died of illness in 761. The summary judgment of his biographers was that his real talent was as an organizer and disciplinarian, not as a battlefield commander. See *JTS* 110, pp. 3312–13.

勝 and to his choice of men with no substance behind their reputations 虛名 to be his lieutenants. The text does not offer a specific example of his lack of strategic forethought, but it does suggest that a specific tactical blunder, Fang's use of "the chariot-fighting methods of the Spring and Autumn period," was largely responsible for his defeat.³² Even if we accept this claim at face value and grant that Fang was *trying* to do something along those lines, it should be clear that he and his colleagues fell far short of recreating the military techniques of antiquity. Given the very short preparatory period (no more than three weeks separated Fang's assumption of command from the encounter at Chentao) and the limited resources at the immediate disposal of Suzong's court, it is highly unlikely that 2,000 chariots could have been custom-built to antique specifications in time to take part in the battle. Instead, the references to oxen in all of the substantial extant accounts of the engagement make it clear that Fang's army at Chentao did not employ the war chariots of the Spring and Autumn period – light, maneuverable, and fast-moving with their teams of four horses – but ordinary ox-drawn carts from his army's baggage train.³³ Tang-period pictorial representations from Dunhuang 敦煌 show a box-like vehicle with two wheels and a semi-cylindrical or barrel-shaped roof cover. The cart is drawn by a single ox, yoked between shafts.³⁴ The usual speed of draft oxen was (and is) about two miles per hour, which would have made it very easy for both cavalry *and* infantry to run circles around Fang Guan's "chariots."³⁵ As scholars well versed in the literature of China's classical antiquity, both Fang Guan and Liu Zhi would have been well aware that the war chariots of the Spring and Autumn period were drawn by horses, not oxen. The *Zuo zhuan* 左傳 account of the battle of Chengpu 城濮 (632 BC), to pick only one example, mentions that one of the Jin 晉 officers "cloaked his horses in tiger skins," and that after the battle the duke of Jin presented "one hundred four-horse teams of armored war horses 駟介百乘 to the Zhou king.³⁶ Is it really possible that Fang

³² *JTS* 111, p. 3321.

³³ With regard to Spring and Autumn chariots, see the comments of Yang Hong 楊泓 in his *Zhongguo gu bingqi luncong* 中國古兵器論叢, 2d edn. (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1985), p. 93.

³⁴ Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, vol. 4: *Physics and Physical Technology, Part 2: Mechanical Engineering* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1965), pp. 250, 319–20. The painting, in cave number 156, is thought to date from 851. It shows the triumphal procession of a Tang general and includes four carts, three of which are baggage vehicles. Needham reproduces one of these in plate 213, fig. 558.

³⁵ Donald W. Engels, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: U. California P., 1978), p. 15.

³⁶ *Zuo zhuan*, 28th year of Duke Xi 僖公. *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan jin zhu jin yi* 春秋左傳今註今譯, ed. Li Zongtong 李宗侗 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1971; 7th printing, 1987).

and Liu, with their attachment to the ways of the ancients, would have considered their plodding ox-carts the functional and moral equivalent of the noble horse-drawn chariots of antiquity?

The accounts of the Chentao battle that appear in *Jiu Tangshu*, *Xin Tangshu*, *Zizhi tongjian*, *Tang huiyao*, and *Cefu yuangui* are extremely sketchy, but what little they have to say about Fang's dispositions suggests that he was under no illusions regarding the capabilities of his ox-carts.³⁷ There is no indication that Fang attempted to use the vehicles offensively. He simply placed the carts in the center of his formation with infantry and cavalry on either side of them. They seem to have been used in a purely stationary and defensive role, perhaps as a stable, secure base around which other units might maneuver. There is no indication that Fang took the initiative or made any move whatever against the enemy's position. The tactical initiative, it seems, rested entirely with the rebels, who exploited their upwind position to make noise and start grass-fires that panicked Fang's oxen and thereby threw a large part of the government army into confusion. To have reached the casualty level reported in the sources (some 40,000), the vulnerable government army must then have been subjected to a decisive general attack by the rebel forces – although the sources are entirely silent on this point.

Fang's apparent reluctance to take the initiative on the Chentao battlefield is understandable considering the material he had to work with. When the future Suzong parted from Xuanzong on the road west of Chang'an, he was accompanied by about two thousand men, but many of these were soon lost in an accidental clash with government soldiers fleeing from the defeat at the Tong Pass and others deserted him on the road to Lingwu. At one point, Suzong's force was reduced to only a few hundred men.³⁸ On his arrival at Lingwu he was met by several thousand horse and foot from the garrison, and his army soon grew to number in the tens of thousands.³⁹ Some of them were peasant levies (*bingmu* 兵募) hastily raised in the areas under Suzong's control after the fall of Chang'an; others were survivors from Geshu Han's de-

vol. 1, p. 372. Translations follow Burton Watson, *The Iso Chuan: Selections from China's Oldest Narrative History* (New York: Columbia U.P., 1989), pp. 60–61.

³⁷ The most substantial accounts of the battle are found in Fang Guan's biographies (*JTS* 111, p. 3321; *XTS* 139, p. 4627), in *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7004, in Wang Pu 王溥, comp., *Tang huiyao* 唐會要 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1955; hereafter, *THY*) 78, p. 1423, and in Wang Qinruo 王欽若, comp., *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 (Taipei: Taiwan zhonghua shuju, 1967; hereafter, *CFYG*) 443, p. 11b–12a, and 445, pp. 6b–7a. These accounts differ only slightly, but the differences are significant.

³⁸ *ZZTJ* 218, pp. 6976–77; *JTS* 10, pp. 240–41.

³⁹ *JTS* 10, p. 241; 11, p. 267.

feated army.⁴⁰ It is unlikely that either of these groups would have enjoyed very high morale, and the levies had little time for training before they were thrown into battle. A third element consisted of units of the Shuofang Army that had been left to hold the frontier garrisons (such as Lingwu) when their commander Guo Ziyi 郭子儀 marched against the rebel forces in Hebei in the spring of 756. Those left behind, however, tended to be the old, the weak, and the infirm.⁴¹ Some 5,000 men sent from the Hexi 河西 frontier command and another 7,000 from Anxi 安西 in the far west were of much higher quality, but did not reach the war zone until well after Fang Guan's defeat at Chentao.⁴² The veteran Shuofang troops who had been campaigning in Hebei under Guo Ziyi and Li Guangbi were likewise unavailable for assignment to Fang's command. Hastily recalled after the battle of Tong Pass they had arrived at Lingwu with 50,000 men before the end of the seventh lunar month (August 756), but were soon dispatched to other fronts.⁴³ Li was sent to Taiyuan 太原 with 5,000 soldiers, while Guo was ordered to the Yellow River frontier in the ninth lunar month (October 756) to confront a menacing concentration of Türk, Töngra 同羅, and Tiele tribesmen.⁴⁴ The main body of the Shuofang Army, which survived to become the mainstay of Suzong's military power, was not involved in Fang Guan's debacle.⁴⁵

Not only did Fang's army lack top-quality fighting men, but it is also likely that it was short of cavalry – the essential offensive striking force in the warfare of this period.⁴⁶ Although Suzong had been able to gather several tens of thousands of horses from the imperial pastures located along the northern frontier, these were not necessarily avail-

⁴⁰ This is my reading of *JTS* 11, p. 267.

⁴¹ *ZZTJ* 218, pp. 6981, 6983.

⁴² *ZZTJ* 218, p. 6987. They did not arrive until after Suzong had shifted his provisional capital to Fengxiang 鳳翔 in the spring of 757. See *JTS* 10, p. 245; 109, p. 3299.

⁴³ *ZZTJ* 218, p. 6990.

⁴⁴ *ZZTJ* 218, p. 6997. The Türks and Töngra (led by Ashina Congli 阿史那從禮) had originally been part of An Lushan's army, but apparently as a result of tensions within the rebel camp they cut their way out Chang'an in August and made for the frontier where they began to suborn Tiele groups that had been under Tang suzerainty. Guo did not bring the campaign to a successful conclusion, with substantial assistance from the Uighurs, until December 7 (756/xi/11); see *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7007. For analysis of this episode, see Terrence Douglas O'Byrne, "Civil-Military Relations during the Middle Tang: The Career of Kuo Tzu-i," Ph.D. diss. (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, 1982), pp. 90–92.

⁴⁵ *JTS* 120, pp. 3450–51.

⁴⁶ For the role of cavalry in Tang warfare, see Li Shutong 李樹桐, "Tangdai junshi yu ma" 唐代軍事與馬, in idem, *Tang shi yanjiu* 唐史研究 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1979), pp. 231–76, and Wang Jian 汪錢, "Tang chu zhi qibing" 唐初之騎兵, in Tang Zhangru 唐長孺, ed., *Wang Jian Sui Tang shi lun gao* 汪錢隋唐史論稿 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1983), pp. 226–60.

able for the drive to recapture Chang'an.⁴⁷ The assignment of Guo Ziyi and his veteran Shuofang troopers to deal with the tens of thousands of renegade tribesman massed along the Yellow River north of the Ordos region suggests that the elimination of this looming threat to their rear was a higher priority for Suzong and his advisors than the quick recovery of the western capital from a rebel garrison whose offensive momentum appeared to have been spent, and it raises the possibility that scarce resources such as cavalry mounts (and remounts) were allocated accordingly. The fact that he was operating in a vast and relatively open landscape on the edge of the steppe against an opposing force composed entirely of horsemen supports the proposition that Guo Ziyi had first call on the government's available horses and may have drawn off a large number of them just before Fang Guan began to assemble his own army. Equine shortages appear to have been endemic; even after Guo had returned from the frontier, an official was impeached and demoted in March 757 for reporting that the imperial armies did not yet have enough horses to support the recovery of the capital.⁴⁸

The rebel army that Fang Guan faced at Chentao was a very different sort of force. Most of the soldiers must have been veterans of An Lushan's Fanyang 范陽 frontier army. They were accustomed to victory, having easily defeated Feng Changqing 封常清 on the road to Luoyang and Geshu Han at the Tong Pass. They surely included a large and powerful cavalry component; when the same rebel commander who defeated Fang Guan fought another government army near Chang'an in May 757, he had some 9,000 horsemen in his force.⁴⁹ That commander, An Shouzhong, was a wily, experienced frontier general who later inflicted reverses on much better Tang leaders than Fang Guan, including even the great Guo Ziyi himself.⁵⁰

Under these circumstances, the use of ox-carts as part of a defensive formation would have made a great deal of sense. In other times and places, generals found that they could stiffen their foot soldiers to stand against cavalry by creating barriers or strongpoints with the

⁴⁷ For the number of horses, see *ZZTJ* 218, p. 6978.

⁴⁸ *JIS* 10, p. 245. Even if Fang Guan had been abundantly provided with horses, it would not necessarily have translated into a strong cavalry force. As Pat Southern and Karen Ramsey Dixon have observed, "A rider, even a good one, is not a cavalryman until he and his mount have undergone some training.... This process is not impossible to execute, but it takes time..." Southern and Dixon, *The Late Roman Army* (New Haven and London: Yale U.P., 1996), p. 12. Most of Fang's men were probably raw recruits with a few weeks of training at most.

⁴⁹ *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7023.

⁵⁰ An defeated Wang Sili at Wugong on March 13, 757 (11/19), and Guo Ziyi at Qingqu 清渠 on May 28 (757/v/6). See *ZZTJ* 219, pp. 7018-19, 7023.

army's wagons. The Hussite sectarians of fifteenth-century Bohemia, for example, were weak in cavalry but inflicted repeated defeats on the mounted German knights after they made the wagon-fortress (*wagen-burg*) the basis of their tactical system. The usual practice of the Hussites was to form a defensive stronghold by chaining their wagons together, disrupt their assailants with archery and gunfire, and then launch a devastating counterattack with their own (relatively weak) cavalry that had been held in reserve within the wagon-fortress.⁵¹ The Hussites excelled at these tactics, but "the idea of using the wagons that were taken along in any case as a light protection for the camp and a barricade in case of necessity was common enough" in medieval Europe.⁵² There are also Chinese examples of the tactical use of carts that Fang Guan himself may well have been aware of. During his successful campaign against the state of Southern Yan 南燕 in 409–10, the Eastern Jin general Liu Yu 劉裕 "used four thousand carts as his left and right wings, and advanced slowly in a square pattern."⁵³ When campaigning against steppe nomads, most Sui generals had also deployed their forces in square-shaped defensive formations. Infantry, cavalry, and carts were positioned for mutual support, with the cavalry being held in reserve in the center of the formation.⁵⁴ During the Song dynasty, after Fang's time, Chinese strategists often discussed the utility of wheeled vehicles as a means of countering the superior cavalry forces of opponents such as the Khitan Liao and Jurchen Jin; the thirteenth-century encyclopedia *Yu hai* 玉海 includes instances from 996, 1055, 1058, 1073, 1127, and 1132.⁵⁵

Closer to Fang Guan's own time, the tactics of the early and middle Tang do not seem to have made much use of carts. Early Tang expeditionary armies tended to be fast-moving, aggressive forces that placed their main reliance on a cavalry corps that was not as heavily armored

⁵¹ The Hussite tactics are described in some detail in Hans Delbrück, *History of the Art of War*, vol. 3: *Medieval Warfare*, trans. Walter J. Renfro, Jr. (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1982; rpt. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), pp. 483–98.

⁵² Delbrück, *History of the Art of War*, vol. 3, p. 488. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in many parts of Eurasia, wheeled vehicles were used to protect infantry armed with firearms against attack by cavalry; see Kenneth Chase, *Firearms: A Global History to 1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2003), pp. 78 (Russia), 86 (Ottoman Turkey), 92 (Eastern Europe), 117 and 123 (Safavid Persia), 132–33 (Mughal India), 162–65 (Ming China). It might be objected that all of the instances adduced by Chase combine wagons and firearms, which were not used in 8th-c. China. But crossbows were, and shared some of the characteristics of early gunpowder small arms, packing a powerful punch but being slow to reload and therefore requiring protection against fast-moving cavalry.

⁵³ *ZZTJ* 115, pp. 3616–17.

⁵⁴ Wei Zheng 魏徵 et al., *Sui shu* 隋書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973) 48, pp. 1285–86.

⁵⁵ Wang Yinglin 王應麟, *Yu hai* 玉海 (Taipei: Huawen shuju, 1964) 146, pp. 19a–23b.

as its Sui predecessor.⁵⁶ The sections of the tactical manual written by the early-Tang general Li Jing 李靖 that have been preserved in the *Tong dian* 通典 make no mention of the use of carts to protect foot soldiers, although they include a detailed prescription for the positioning of troops to screen the baggage carts while the army is on the march.⁵⁷ Accounts of the campaigns of later frontier generals such as An Lushan, Geshu Han, and Gao Xianzhi 高仙芝 also give no hint of the tactical employment of wheeled vehicles. Although it is improbable that Fang Guan and Liu Zhi really believed they were recreating the chariot tactics of antiquity, it is entirely possible that the two scholars found the inspiration for their unusual deployment at Chentao in old books rather than current military practice. The *Zuo zhuan*, for example, describes how part of the army of the state of Zheng 鄭 adopted a formation with infantry occupying the intervals between chariots at the battle of Xuge 繻葛 in 707 BC.⁵⁸ Another possible source of inspiration was the military treatise *Liu tao* 六韜, probably of Warring States vintage, which describes the use of chariots to cover the front, rear, and flanks of an army while the weaker troops and cavalry occupy the center of the formation.⁵⁹ The accounts of the battle are not very helpful in detailing exactly what Fang did with his carts. Several tell us they were concentrated in the center of the formation, with cavalry and infantry off to the sides. In addition, the *Tang Huiyao* wording seems to indicate that some of Fang's men fought from atop the carts 為乘車之戰, while Fang's *Xin Tangshu* biography states that the carts encircled his camp (*liao ying* 繚營).⁶⁰ If Fang ordered his men to deploy in any sort of unfamiliar formation, whatever its origin, this might have elicited complaints from the more experienced military men under his command that the amateurish meddling of an armchair general was responsible for the defeat at Chentao.

⁵⁶ For the shift from heavy to light cavalry at the beginning of the Tang, see David A. Graff, *Medieval Chinese Warfare, 300–900* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 176.

⁵⁷ Du Yu 杜佑, *Tong dian* 通典 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1988) 157, pp. 4028–29. The closest Li Jing comes to recommending the use of carts in battle is the following: “Hence the infantry forms the core of the army, the chariots form the wings, and the cavalry are the eyes and ears” (*Tong dian* 148, p. 3789). Although “chariot” (*che* 車) may also be translated as “cart,” this sounds suspiciously like a quotation from a Warring States or Han-period text.

⁵⁸ Duke Huan 桓公, 5th year. *Chunqiu Zuo zhuan jin zhu jin yi*, vol. 1, p. 75. For a detailed examination of this formation, see Lan Yongwei 藍永蔚, *Chunqiu shiqi de bubing* 春秋時期的步兵 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), pp. 175–79.

⁵⁹ This is Section 34 (“Bi chu” 必出); see *Taigong Liu tao jin zhu jin yi* 太公六韜今註今譯, annot. Xu Peigen 徐培根, 2d rev. edn. (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan, 1986), p. 149. For an English translation, see Ralph D. Sawyer, *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), p. 81.

⁶⁰ *THY* 78, p. 1423; *XTS* 139, p. 4627. The latter strongly implies that the carts were used as a defensive barrier (or wagon laager) rather than an offensive force.

Given the qualitative inferiority of Fang's army and the inexperience of much of its leadership cadre, however, it is hardly necessary to invoke bizarre or unorthodox tactical arrangements in order to make sense of his defeat. Fang and his men were simply outclassed by the enemy, and it would have been difficult for them to pull off a victory under any circumstances. Although the presence of numerous oxen in or near the fighting line contributed to the collapse of the government army as they were frightened first by noise and then by fire, creating chaos in the ranks, it is doubtful that their absence would have enabled Fang to avoid defeat; the grass fires spreading downwind toward them surely also had a direct effect on skittish men and horses, including the infantry and cavalry positioned to either side of the vehicular concentration in the Tang center. The impression given by the historical narratives that no one in the government army held their ground or put up much of a fight is confirmed by an unusual additional source, a poem written by Du Fu, then in rebel-held Chang'an, shortly after the battle. Du's "Chentao Lament" ("Bei Chentao" 悲陳濤) depicts an encounter occurring "under clear skies" with "not a sound of battle."⁶¹

Despite his boast that his brilliant associate Liu Zhi was more than a match for the elite warriors of the enemy, Fang Guan showed signs of recognizing the difficulty of his situation as he moved toward contact with the rebel army under An Shouzhong. Both of his biographies in the Tang dynastic histories state that Fang wished to hold back, maintaining his forces intact in order to watch and wait for a good opportunity to attack the enemy, but was pressured into giving battle at Chentao against his better judgment by a eunuch overseer who had been attached to his army by Suzong.⁶² It is not clear at what

⁶¹ *Quan Tang shi* 全唐詩 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1960; rpt. 1979) 216, pp. 2267–68; Eva Shan Chou, *Reconsidering Tu Fu: Literary Greatness and Cultural Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1995), p. 95.

⁶² *JTS* 111, p. 3322; *XTS* 139, p. 4627. Fang may have been trying to follow a strategy well grounded in both the classical military texts and the victorious campaigns of the most successful generals of the early Tang. The *Sunzi bingfa* 孫子兵法, in particular, emphasizes that delay and the avoidance of decision by battle could often be the best means of staving off immediate defeat – thereby preserving the possibility of eventual victory. Li Shimin 李世民, the greatest of all Tang military commanders, followed just such a strategy in his campaigns between 618 and 621. He would avoid a general engagement by occupying a strong defensive position or fortified camp, while sending out smaller detachments to harass the enemy forces or raid their supply lines. It was only after the enemy had begun to weaken or had made themselves vulnerable by initiating a withdrawal that Li Shimin would unleash a decisive attack by his main force. These methods are discussed in Wan Jun 萬鈞, *Tang Taizong* 唐太宗 (Shanghai: Xuexi shenghuo chubanshe, 1955), pp. 17–18; Shi Suyuan 史蘇苑, "Cong san da zhanyi kan jiechu junjia Li Shimin" 從三大戰役看杰出軍家李世民, *Renwen zazhi* 人文雜誌 1981.3, p. 97; and Xu Daoxun 許道勳, *Tang Taizong zhuan* 唐太宗傳 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984), pp. 55–56.

point in the campaign this intervention took place, but one obvious possibility would be when Fang's center army joined forces with the northern army under Li Guangjin at the Bian Bridge on November 16. This put the Tang forces at a key crossing point on the Wei River, an obvious place to dig in and wait for the arrival of the southern army that was pushing eastward along the south bank of the river and could not have been more than three days' march away; the united force of some 50,000 could then have advanced to threaten Chang'an, only 20 *li* (some seven miles) to the southeast.⁶³ Instead, perhaps compelled by the eunuch Xing Yan'en 邢延恩, he moved his force ten *li* north-east to Xianyang on November 17 without waiting for the southern column – and encountered An Shouzhong's rebel army in the vicinity of the Chentao marsh, not far east of the town, on or near the post road leading to the Middle Wei bridge 中渭橋.⁶⁴ It is interesting that even at this juncture Fang did not advance directly on Chang'an, but

⁶³ The Suzong Annals in the *Jiu Tangshu*, probably the earliest extant account of the battle apart from Du Fu's "Chentao Lament," makes it clear that the figure of 50,000 is the total for all three columns (*JTS* 10, p. 244). If they were of equal size, the government army that fought at Chentao Slope would have been in the neighborhood of 30-35,000 men. Most accounts state that more than 40,000 were killed or wounded in the battle of Chentao, but this may be a misstatement derived from an estimate of total losses in the battles of 17 and 19 November. Both army sizes and casualty figures may be somewhat inflated and should be used with caution; for a discussion of the problem of numbers in Tang battle accounts, see David A. Graff, "Early Tang Generalship and the Textual Tradition," Ph.D. diss. (Princeton: Princeton University, 1995), pp. 35-64. For the distance from the Bian bridge to Chang'an, see Li Jifu 李吉甫, *Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* 元和郡縣圖志 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1983) 1, p. 15.

⁶⁴ The distance given here is again based on Li Jifu's *Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* (1, p. 15) the most detailed Tang source. The Tang county town of Xianyang was three *li* north of the Wei River, and the Middle Wei Bridge was 22 *li* southeast of the town (1, p. 13). According to Yan Gengwang [Yen Keng-wang 嚴耕望], *Tangdai jiaotong tukao* 唐代交通圖考 (Taipei: Institute of History and Philology of Academia Sinica, 1985), vol. 1, p. 5, the bridge was about ten *li* from the northernmost gate in the western wall of Chang'an. Somewhere between Xianyang and the Middle Wei Bridge was the Chentao marsh, mentioned in both Du Fu's "Chentao Lament" (*Quan Tang shi* 216, p. 2268) and the commentary to *ZZTJ* (219, p. 7004). The exact location of the battle is unknown. The 17th-c. geographer Gu Zuyu 顧祖禹 tentatively located the battlefield on the south side of the Wei River; see his *Du shi fangyu jiyao* 讀史方輿紀要 (Taipei: Xinxing shuju, 1967) 53, p. 33b. This is surely incorrect. Fang Guan had no reason to wedge his army into a tight spot between Chang'an and the river – where, given that the prevailing cyclonic winds are from a northerly direction in northern China in late November, the rebels would probably not have been able to attack from an upwind position as described in the sources. I am confident that the battle took place north of the Wei River, but less certain whether the venue was the narrow strip of low-lying ground along the north bank of the river or the large plateau of Bi 華原 rising sharply a little farther to the north. The plateau, the location of various Han imperial tombs and nowadays also the Xi'an municipal airport, is described in *Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* 1, p. 13. The map of Xianyang municipality on pages 85-86 of *Shaanxi sheng dituce* 陝西省地圖冊 (Xi'an: Xi'an ditu chubanshe, 1991) gives a good sense of the topography. Du Fu's poem says that many of the Tang soldiers died in the Chentao marsh, which must have been on the lower ground along the river, but a rout into the marsh is not incompatible with a battle atop the plateau (especially if the rebels were attacking from the north).

was apparently moving in an arc that kept the Wei River between his army and the rebel-held capital.⁶⁵ The impression is not of a general who was spoiling for a fight.

That Feng advanced as far as he did, exposing his army to defeat at Chentao, may well have had less to do with his own folly than with political pressures to gain a quick victory, the same sort of pressure that had led to the destruction of Geshu Han's army at the Tong Pass a few months earlier. Fang Guan's sensitivity to the presence and attitude of the eunuch supervisor Xing Yan'en is interesting in this connection. Such overseers were often (though not always) assigned to Tang armies in the field. They did not normally exercise command authority, but were there to report back to the emperor on the behavior of the army's commander. Fang would have been well aware that denunciation by the eunuch supervisor Bian Lingcheng 邊令誠 had resulted in the execution of two prominent generals, Gao Xianzhi and Feng Changqing, after the disasters in Henan at the beginning of 756.⁶⁶ Xing Yan'en's pressure was probably effective because Fang understood that he was giving voice to Suzong's own demands and expectations for the early recovery of the western capital.⁶⁷

As it turned out, Fang Guan was able to avoid the fate of Gao and Feng after the battle of Chentao. When the emperor first heard of Fang's defeat he was extremely angry but nevertheless ended up pardoning him, retaining him in office, and treating him as before. According to the *Zizhi tongjian*, Suzong was persuaded not to take action against Fang by Li Mi 李泌, a scholar who did not hold high office at this time but enjoyed the emperor's confidence.⁶⁸ We are not told what arguments Li used, but we may speculate that Fang's loyalty and the fact that he was an influential scholar who commanded the respect of many others figured prominently in the emperor's decision. At this point, when Suzong was still striving to attract and retain the loyalty of the scholar-official class, a move against Fang Guan might have antagonized the man's many friends and admirers. Perhaps another factor was that Fang's errors were not as egregious as surviving accounts of the battle would

⁶⁵ Gu Zuyu notes that the road over the Bian Bridge is the most direct approach to Chang'an from the northwest; see *Dushi fangyu jiyao* 53, pp. 29a-b.

⁶⁶ See *JTS* 104, pp. 3206, 3209-11; *ZZTJ* 217, p. 6942. The institution of army supervisors is examined in Zhang Guogang 張國剛, "Tangdai jianjun zhidu kaolun" 唐代監軍制度考論, *Zhongguo shi yanjiu*, 1981.2, pp. 122-33.

⁶⁷ I am indebted to Professor Huang Ch'ing-lien 黃清連 of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica, for this insight, and for the observation that this may have been a reason for Suzong's failure to punish Fang (see below).

⁶⁸ *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7004. Li's biography (*JTS* 130, p. 3621) does not mention the episode.

lead us to believe, especially if the emperor himself had had a part in pressuring him to give battle. And it should not be forgotten that Fang and his scholarly subordinates returned to Suzong's court prepared to accept punishment, whereas two of his three army commanders (Yang Xiwen and Liu Guizhe) defected to the rebels.⁶⁹ In those dark days, loyalty was a more important virtue than competence.

The emperor did not deprive Fang Guan of his chief ministership until June 1, 757 (v/10). By that time, the court had moved to Fengxiang near the Wei River and Suzong's rule was on a more secure footing. The reasons given for ousting Fang at this point were various. The immediate pretext was the influence peddling of one of the hangers-on in his household, a zither-player named Dong Tinglan 董庭蘭, but the loss at Chentao also seems to have been held against him. And Fang's situation was not helped by the fact that after the battle he stopped paying attention to his official duties and stayed home to discuss Buddhist and Daoist topics with cronies such as Liu Zhi and Li Yi.⁷⁰ His removal was also part of a larger pattern, however. Fang was not the only chief minister to fall during the first half of 757. Two of the others who had been sent with him from Xuanzong's court in Sichuan, Cui Huan 崔渙 and Wei Jiansu 韋見素, were also removed from office, leaving only one of their number (Cui Yuan 崔圓) in power at Suzong's court.⁷¹ This was apparently part of a general effort by Suzong to purge his father's appointees and replace them with his own men.⁷²

After his removal as chief minister Fang Guan was initially given the sinecure position of junior preceptor to the heir-apparent (*taizi shaoshi* 太子少師), then demoted to prefect of Binzhou 邠州 in Guanzhong. In 759 he was brought back to court, first as advisor to the heir-apparent (*taizi binke* 太子賓客) and then minister of Rites (*libu shangshu* 禮部尚書). In the latter part of 760 he was made prefect of Hanzhou 漢州 in Sichuan. He died on September 25, 763 (viii/4), while on his way back to Chang'an to take up the post of minister of Punishments (*xingbu shangshu* 刑部尚書).⁷³

Fang remained a controversial figure long after he had passed away. In addition to his devoted circle of disciples and admirers, he

⁶⁹ *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7004.

⁷⁰ *JTS* 111, p. 3323; *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7024. The *Xin Tangshu* biography of Du Fu includes a substantial extract from the poet's memorial in defense of Fang Guan, indicating that the defeat at Chentao Slope was one of the considerations in his eventual ouster. See *XTS* 201, p. 5737.

⁷¹ *JTS* 108, pp. 3378–80; *XTS* 6, p. 58; 62, p. 1693. Cui Yuan also lost his chief ministership before the end of 757; see *JTS* 108, p. 3279.

⁷² Twitchett, *Writing of Official History*, pp. 180–81.

⁷³ *JTS* 111, p. 3324.

also had many enemies and detractors. His efforts to promote the careers of younger scholars he respected were accompanied by the cavalier dismissal of those he considered vulgar or ordinary, causing many to dislike him.⁷⁴ There were clashes of personality and ambition and well as disagreements over matters of policy. One of Fang's critics was Helan Jinming 賀蘭進明. When Fang was at the height of his power in the autumn of 756, he followed Suzong's instructions to appoint Helan military governor of Lingnan 嶺南 but failed to give him the promotion in rank that he had been expecting. This episode prompted Helan to denounce Fang to Suzong as an empty talker without the capacity to be chief minister, and to plant doubts about his loyalty.⁷⁵ Another of Fang's critics was Zhang Hao 張鎬, who supplanted him as chief minister in 757.⁷⁶ And Fang clashed more than once with the financial officials who sought to develop new sources of revenue for the government during this period of crisis. As chief minister in 756, he attempted to block a novel but expedient scheme proposed by Diwu Qi 第五琦, future architect of the salt monopoly that would become the financial mainstay of the Tang court.⁷⁷ Even earlier, when he was with Xuanzong in Sichuan, his own scheme for devolving regional power to imperial princes following the ancient model of the Zhou dynasty was criticized by Liu Yan 劉晏, then a prefectural level official. Liu played an active role in the suppression of the princely rebellion made possible by the adoption of Fang's policy, and went on to succeed Diwu Qi as the chief administrator of the salt monopoly.⁷⁸

One indication of the controversy that surrounded Fang Guan is that the compiler of the Veritable Record of Daizong's reign, namely, *Daizong shilu* 代宗實錄, writing long after Fang's death, did not include his biography in that work – when inclusion should have automatic given his rank and prominence and the fact that he had died during Daizong's reign (762–779).⁷⁹ Another is the uneven, pastiche-like

⁷⁴ *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7002.

⁷⁵ *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7002; *JTS* 111, p. 3322. Helan's partisans later blamed Fang for the divided command structure and resulting failures when Helan was serving as military governor of Henan (where he was reassigned instead of being sent to Lingnan in the far south). The charge was that Fang, disliking Helan, had given a subordinate commander the same substantive censorial office as the military governor himself, thus providing the basis for insubordination. See *JTS* 187B, pp. 4902–3.

⁷⁶ *JTS* 111, p. 3323.

⁷⁷ Liu Su 劉肅, *Da Tang xin yu* 大唐新語 (Shanghai: Gudian wenxue chubanshe, 1957) 10, p. 159.

⁷⁸ *XTS* 149, p. 4793. For the importance of the salt monopoly and the role of Diwu Qi and Liu Yan in establishing it, see D. C. Twitchett, *Financial Administration Under the Tang Dynasty*, 2d edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1970), pp. 51–53.

⁷⁹ McMullen, *State and Scholars*, p. 193.

character of Fang's biography in *Jiu Tangshu*. The portion dealing with Fang's career up to his arrival at Suzong's court has the laudatory tone characteristic of many such texts in an era when official biographies were often based on the "accounts of conduct" (*xingzhuang* 行狀) submitted to the government by friends, former subordinates, and even family members of the deceased.⁸⁰ Thereafter, the biography suddenly becomes sharply critical of Fang's attitudes and behavior in general and his political and military decision-making in particular – without, however, suppressing the occasional bit of exculpatory evidence such as the pressure placed on Fang by the eunuch supervisor Xing Yan'en. Its author appears to have stitched together material from a variety of sources, including the Veritable Record of Suzong's reign and the *Tang li* 唐曆, a private, unofficial history of the dynasty up to 778 written by the prominent official historian Liu Fang 柳芳.⁸¹ In contrast to many other biographies and other parts of the *Jiu Tangshu* that were recopied more or less intact from earlier texts such as the Veritable Records, Fang Guan's biography may not have been composed until the early 940s, during the final compilation of the Tang dynastic history by official historians of the Later Jin dynasty.⁸²

A close reading and comparison of the several extant accounts of the battle of Chentao reveals disagreement over Fang Guan's culpability and his imitation of the ancients. I have found a total of eight accounts of the battle in Tang and Song historical works and encyclopedic compilations: two each in *Jiu Tangshu* (completed in 945) and *Xin Tangshu* (completed in 1060), one in Wang Pu's *Tang Huiyao* (completed in 961), two in Wang Qinruo's *Cefu yuangui* (completed in 1013), and

⁸⁰ For the sources of Tang biographies, see Twitchett, *Writing of Official History*, pp. 66–70.

⁸¹ The passage in Fang's *Jiu Tangshu* biography dealing with Helan Jinming is very close in content and wording to the *Zizhi tongjian* at a point where Sima Guang's *Zizhi tongjian kao-yi* 資治通鑑考異 states that the source is the *Suzong shilu*; compare *ZZTJ* 219, pp. 7002–3, and *JTS* 111, p. 3322. Another passage in the *Jiu Tangshu* biography (p. 3321) has much the same wording as a passage from Liu Fang's *Tang li* that is quoted in the *Zizhi tongjian kao-yi* (*ZZTJ* 219, p. 7003).

⁸² In Fang's *Jiu Tangshu* biography, the name of his subordinate general Liu Guizhe 劉貴哲 is rendered as Liu Zhe 劉愨. This is probably due to taboo avoidance of the given name of Shi Chonggui 石重貴 or Jin Chudi 晉出帝, the second emperor of the Later Jin 後晉 dynasty during whose reign (942–947) the *Jiu Tangshu* was completed, and suggests the biography was drafted at that time. (*Gui* appears only once in the biography, in a very long extract from an edict of Suzong.) It should be noted that this character is not avoided throughout the *Jiu Tangshu*; in the Suzong Annals, for example, Liu Guizhe's name is not abbreviated, suggesting the incorporation of an older text into the *Jiu Tangshu* without any rewriting. For the circumstances under which the *Jiu Tangshu* was compiled in Later Jin, see Twitchett, *Writing of Official History*, pp. 191–97; for Shi Chonggui, see Wang Gungwu, *The Structure of Power in North China During the Five Dynasties* (Kuala Lumpur: University of Malaya Press, 1963), p. 167; for his name taboo, see Wang Yankun 王彥坤, *Lidai bihui zihui dian* 歷代避諱字彙典 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1997), p. 134.

one in Sima Guang's *Zizhi tongjian* (completed in 1084). The eight accounts include two brief notices, four longer Tang accounts that have been preserved in Five Dynasties or Song texts, and two accounts written in the Song period on the basis of older materials. To all of these must be added another source from an entirely different genre, Du Fu's "Chentao Lament."

Let us begin with Du's poem, which is almost certainly our earliest surviving source and seems to have been written in rebel-held Chang'an no more than a few days after the battle was fought. The poem provides interesting details about the engagement, including its one-sidedness and the presence of a marsh in the vicinity; it also appears to confirm the figure of 40,000 government casualties given in some of the historians' accounts of the battle.⁸³ The poet, who was an admirer of Fang Guan and later spoke up in his defense, does not mention Fang by name, nor does he have anything to say about the use of wheeled vehicles or the imitation of ancient tactics. The poem conveys a sense of tragedy without apportioning blame.

The earliest extant account of the battle by an official historian is probably the brief notice that appears in the Suzong Annals in *Jiu Tangshu*.⁸⁴ A mere thirty-two characters, it says little more than who fought whom, when and where, and who won. Fang is mentioned, of course, but his unusual tactics are not. Since the National History (*Guo shi* 國史) written by Liu Fang during the An Lushan rebellion was incorporated almost intact into the *Jiu Tangshu*, and the National History included a two-chapter supplement on the events of Suzong's reign written by the official historian Yu Xiulie 于休烈 (692–772), it seems most likely that Yu was the author of this account.⁸⁵ It has been suggested that scholars such as Yu, who had gone directly to serve Suzong at Lingwu, were given the task of revising Liu Fang's National History to make it less friendly to Xuanzong, and that there was a rift between these men and those such as Fang Guan who had initially rallied around Xuan-

⁸³ I say "appears" because it is not impossible that the historians borrowed the figure from Du Fu, whose work was known in elite circles well before the end of the eighth century. See Chou, *Reconsidering Tu Fu*, p. 39. This poem is taken by Chou as an example of Du's "realism": "The event recounted...must be real, and it has to convince the reader that it is real." (p. 92) This suggests it is not purely a work of the imagination, but reflects the facts as he understood them. The poem can be found in *Quan Tang shi* 216, pp. 2267–68, and has been translated by Chou (p. 95).

⁸⁴ *JTS* 10, p. 244.

⁸⁵ For Yu's biography, see *JTS* 149, pp. 4007–9, and *XTS* 104, pp. 4006–8. For his role in the writing the supplement to Liu Fang's National History after Suzong's death in 762, see Twitchett, *Writing of Official History*, p. 182 and p. 187, note 113. Twitchett (pp. 186–87) also discusses the incorporation of the National History into the *Jiu Tangshu*.

zong in Sichuan.⁸⁶ Yet Yu's own respect for ancient models was not at all incompatible with Fang's attitude, making him an unlikely critic of this particular aspect of Fang's character.⁸⁷

The Suzong Annals in *Xin Tangshu* include an equally brief notice of the events at Chentao, though it is hardly a carbon copy of its *Jiu Tangshu* counterpart, as it includes some information drawn from a more detailed Tang source.⁸⁸ The more complete Song accounts found in *Zizhi tongjian* and Fang Guan's *Xin Tangshu* biography are also of limited interest as they seem to be based mainly on a single Tang source, albeit rewritten, reorganized, and incorporating a few snippets of new information.⁸⁹ This source has not survived to the present day in its original form, but something very close to it can be discerned in *Tang Huiyao*, the *Jiu Tangshu* biography of Fang Guan, and two separate passages in *Cefu yuangui*. The four accounts differ only slightly and are clearly no more than variants of a common original, most likely deriving from the Veritable Record of Suzong's reign, which was compiled under Daizong some time between 762 and 777.⁹⁰

The basic narrative of events is nearly identical, character for character, in all four passages, especially with regard to Fang Guan's deployment of 2,000 wheeled conveyances flanked by infantry and cavalry and the methods used by the rebels to throw the government army into confusion. There are, however, two significant divergences. The version found in Fang Guan's *Jiu Tangshu* biography states that Fang "used the chariot-fighting 車戰 methods of the Spring and Autumn period," but these seven characters are missing from the *Tang Huiyao* version. Instead, after the description of Fang's deployment, the latter adds five characters not found in *Jiu Tangshu*, telling us that Fang's

⁸⁶ McMullen, *State and Scholars*, pp. 345-47, note 141. Also see Twitchett, *Writing of Official History*, pp. 178-87.

⁸⁷ Yu once invoked the *Zhou li* 周禮 to call for the repeal of an innovation in ritual (*JTS* 149, pp. 4008-9), and argued against making a gift of Confucian classics to the Tibetans on the grounds that those ancient works contained valuable military knowledge (*XTS* 104, p. 4007).

⁸⁸ *XTS* 6, p. 157. The information about Fang's three "armies" in particular seems to derive from the more detailed Tang accounts, such as that found in Fang's *Jiu Tangshu* biography.

⁸⁹ *ZZTJ* 219, p. 7004; *XTS* 139, p. 4627. For example, the *Xin Tangshu* says that Fang Guan deployed his carts in a circle around his camp.

⁹⁰ This conclusion is reached in part by a process of elimination. No biography of Fang Guan was included in the Daizong Veritable Record (as should have been the case), and the account of the battle in the Suzong Annals of the *Jiu Tangshu* probably speaks for the National History of Liu Fang as supplemented by Yu Xiulie. Moreover, the inclusion of this passage in the *Tang Huiyao*, a compendium of government documents, would appear to rule out a private history as the source. Since the dominant chief minister Yuan Zai 元載 is listed as having supervised the compilation of the Suzong Veritable Record (*XTS* 58, p. 1472), it is likely that the work was completed before his downfall in 777.

men “gave battle riding on carts 車.”⁹¹ The second difference is that the *Jiu Tangshu* account mentions that the government army lost “more than 40,000 men killed and wounded; those who remained were only a few thousand.” This information is not found in *Tang Huiyao*. By omitting the casualties and choosing not to forge an explicit link between the fact of the defeat and the impractical imitation of *ancient* tactics, the *Tang Huiyao* passage is markedly less hostile to Fang Guan than its counterpart in *Jiu Tangshu*.

Which of these versions is closer to the putative original in the Veritable Record of Suzong's reign? Given that the material in *Tang Huiyao* dealing with the seventh and eighth centuries was incorporated in its entirety from the earlier *Huiyao* 會要 of Su Mian 蘇冕 (completed circa 804), and that Su is known to have expressed respect for Fang Guan, a case can be made that the version included in *Tang Huiyao* had been reworked so as to moderate an earlier and sharper critique of the scholar-generalissimo. The presence in the *Jiu Tangshu* version of cyclical dates appropriate to the annalistic framework of the veritable records, and their absence in *Tang Huiyao*, would seem to lend support to the view that the former is closer to the original. One of the two parallel passages in *Cefu yuangui* is of no assistance in resolving this question, as it has clearly been lifted directly from Fang's *Jiu Tangshu* biography.⁹² The other passage is of much greater interest. It is essentially the same as the *Tang Huiyao* version but includes cyclical dates, making it, too, a plausible candidate for the original version.⁹³ If this *Cefu yuangui* passage does indeed represent the Suzong Veritable Record, then the *Jiu Tangshu* version is a subtle reworking of that text by an unknown author with an unfriendly attitude toward Fang Guan. Whether such a reworking was done in an alternate draft of the Veritable Record, as part of an unofficial history (such as Liu Fang's *Tang li*) or collection of biographies, or even in the process of the final compilation of *Jiu Tangshu* in the 940s, seems impossible to determine at this distance and on the basis the surviving sources.⁹⁴ The impor-

⁹¹ *JTS* 111, p. 3321, has *yong chun qiu che zhan zhi fa* 用春秋車戰之法. *THY* 78, p. 1423, has *wei cheng che zhi zhan* 爲乘車之戰. I have chosen to translate the same character (*che* 車, with the basic meaning of “wheeled vehicle”) as “chariot” in the *Jiu Tangshu* passage and “carts” in the *Tang Huiyao* passage on the grounds that the reference to the Spring and Autumn period in the former makes it clear that the ancient vehicles are meant, while the latter contains no indication that this is other than a reference to the baggage carts that accompanied Fang Guan's army.

⁹² *CFYG* 445, pp. 6b–7a. The passage consists entirely of excerpts from the much more complete account in Fang's *Jiu Tangshu* biography, arranged in the same order in which they appear there.

⁹³ *CFYG* 443, 11a–1b.

⁹⁴ McMullen notes that unofficial compilations of biographies were popular in the post-

tant point, however, is that the explicit link between Fang's tactics at Chentao and the chariot warfare of the Spring and Autumn period can be traced to a single Tang source, one clearly ill-disposed toward Fang Guan and possibly of relatively late date. The failure of any of the other Tang sources to make the same link suggests that it was controversial and far from universally accepted, although it would gain much greater currency from Song times onward.

As we have already seen, Fang Guan had a great many enemies and detractors. Any of them would presumably have been quite happy to use the defeat at Chentao to besmirch his reputation in the historical record, and some of them would surely have had the opportunity to do so. The precise nature of the criticism leveled at Fang in his *Jiu Tangshu* biography may allow us to narrow the field, however. Fang is not taken to task simply for having been defeated, which was common knowledge and not disputed by anyone, but for having brought on the defeat by foolishly and inappropriately copying the chariot tactics of the Spring and Autumn period. It is not really Fang's generalship that is impugned, but rather his obsession with the contemporary applicability of ancient models – which in this case is seen to have the most disastrous consequences. Thus, the critique of Fang in his *Jiu Tangshu* biography appears to reflect the views of men who considered his ideas not just impractical but downright harmful, instead favoring pragmatic policies devoid of classical pedigrees.

One such man was Liu Yan, who had spoken out in opposition to Fang Guan's Zhou-inspired "feudal" scheme in 756. Later, as Commissioner for Revenue, Salt and Iron, Transport and Taxation during Daizong's reign, Liu embodied the sort of expedient policy that Fang had once condemned. As a powerful chief minister, he was in a position to influence the historical record. His patron, the dominant chief minister Yuan Zai 元載, was responsible for supervising the compilation of the Suzong Veritable Record, and at least two of his protégés, Linghu Huan 令狐峘 and Kong Shurui 孔述睿, were among the eight men known to have worked as compilers (*shiguan xiuzhuan* 史館修撰) in the History Office during Daizong's reign.⁹⁵ The authorship of the

rebellion period; even official historians engaged in this, and "the Tang scholar community had access to a large literature of this kind, a proportion of which had official or semi-official standing"; *State and Scholars*, pp. 192–93. Liu Fang's *Tang li* is not the most likely source for the attack on Fang Guan; the quotations from Liu's work that appear in the *Zizhi tongjian* tend to be favorable to Fang (McMullen, *State and Scholars*, p. 346, note 141).

⁹⁵ Zhang Rongfang 張榮芳, *Tangdai de shiguan yu shiguan* 唐代的史館與史官 (Taipei: Dong Wu daxue, 1984), pp. 259–60. For Yuan Zai's role in the Suzong Veritable Record, see *XYS*

thirty-chapter Suzong Veritable Record is unknown, but Linghu Huan, the author of both the earlier Xuanzong Veritable Record and the later Daizong Veritable Record, could easily have had a hand in it.⁹⁶ Linghu is an especially interesting character. In 773 he was made vice-director of a bureau in the Ministry of Punishments (*xingbu yuanwailang* 刑部員外郎, rank 61b) and then vice director in charge of the bureau of Appointments (*nan cao* 南曹) in the Ministry of Personnel on Liu Yan's recommendation.⁹⁷ Linghu repaid the favor by taking Liu's side in his factional struggle with Yang Yan 楊炎 and was sent into provincial exile just five days after his patron's downfall in the spring of 780.⁹⁸ He appears to have been an unscrupulous character and something of a troublemaker, quarreling with colleagues in the History Office and, when in a prefectural position, submitting a false denunciation of his superior Zhao Jing 趙憬, the civil governor (*guanchashi* 觀察使) of Hunan 湖南.⁹⁹ Summoned back to the capital in 805 by the reformist faction led by Wang Shuwen 王叔文, he died before he could take up his new appointment.¹⁰⁰ Linghu Huan's relationship with Liu Yan, and the latter's disagreement with Fang Guan, suggests one possible route by which the now commonly accepted understanding of the disaster at Chentao could have entered the historical record.

Whether or not it was Liu Yan and Linghu Huan who were responsible for the suggestion that Fang Guan's battle plan was of classical inspiration, the evidence that has been presented here cautions us against accepting the claim at face value. Fang may well have used his army's baggage carts as a barrier against the enemy's superior cavalry, and would not have been the first or the last medieval Chinese general to do so, but he could not have mistaken his ox-drawn conveyances for the horse-drawn war chariots of the Spring and Autumn

58, p. 1472. For Kong Shurui's connection with Liu Yan, see *XTS* 196, p. 5610, which also says that Linghu Huan and Kong Shurui were not on good terms with one another. This need not be cause for surprise, as factional ties tended to be vertical rather than horizontal.

⁹⁶ For the authorship of the Veritable Records, see *XTS* 58, p. 1472, and Twitchett, *Writing of Official History*, pp. 140-42. The Xuanzong Veritable Record was presented to the throne in 768. The Daizong Veritable Record was completed by Linghu Huan while in provincial exile during the later part of Dezong's 德宗 reign, and not presented to the throne until 807, two years after Linghu's death (*JTS* 14, p. 421).

⁹⁷ The most complete biography of Linghu Huan was written by Han Yu 韓愈 for the Veritable Record of Shunzong's 順宗 reign; see *The Veritable Record of the Tang Emperor Shunzong* (February 28, 805-August 31, 805), trans. by Bernard S. Solomon (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1955), pp. 29-31. This provided the basis for his biographies in the dynastic histories (*JTS* 149, pp. 4011-14; *XTS* 102, pp. 3986-88). For *nan cao*, see Hucker, *Dictionary of Official Titles*, p. 341.

⁹⁸ *JTS* 12, p. 325.

⁹⁹ *JTS* 138, pp. 3778-79; 192, p. 5131; *XTS* 150, p. 4812.

¹⁰⁰ *JTS* 149, p. 4014.

period. He was in fact reluctant to confront the enemy in battle, and would have been defeated just as decisively even if he had not tried to incorporate any ox carts into his battle line. The earliest Tang accounts of the battle at Chentao make no mention of any unusual tactics, and only a single source – one at variance with other accounts – asserts an explicit link between Fang’s deployment and the chariot tactics of the Spring and Autumn period. In the face of this evidence, we can no longer continue to deploy Fang Guan’s defeat at Chentao as our stock example of the ludicrous extreme to which some Tang scholars were willing to go in their imitation of the ancients. However, what was said about Fang’s defeat, untrue and unfair as it may be, is not without significance. If my interpretation is correct, with Fang’s critics choosing to misrepresent his military failure in order to ridicule his infatuation with ancient models, it actually serves to underline the intellectual and political fault lines identified by Pulleyblank, revealing defenders of Confucian orthodoxy pitted against the advocates of more eclectic and expedient solutions to the problems of the time. In the final analysis, what was said about Chentao may be far more significant than what actually happened there.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

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|-------------|---|
| <i>CFYG</i> | Wang Qinruo 王欽若 (comp.), <i>Cefu yuangui</i> 冊府元龜 |
| <i>JTS</i> | Liu Xu 劉昫 et al., <i>Jiu Tangshu</i> 舊唐書 |
| <i>THY</i> | Wang Pu 王溥 (comp.), <i>Tang huiyao</i> 唐會要 |
| <i>XTS</i> | Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 and Song Qi 宋祁, <i>Xin Tangshu</i> 新唐書 |
| <i>ZZTJ</i> | Sima Guang 司馬光, <i>Zizhi tongjian</i> 資治通鑒 |