



Non-fiction

Group 1

New Talse of Judge Pao

Kownloon Tong School (Primary Section), Ding, Ka Chun Marcus – 8

Who is Judge Pao? What is he? Is he a real person or an imaginary one? According to the history of China, Pao was a real person who lived in the Song Dynasty (960–1279). In fact, in Hong Kong, Sir Pao Yue Kong a well known person, is believed to have descended from him.

Pao, also known as the Chinese Sherlock Holmes, came from a poor family but rose to become a famous magistrate. He was also trusted and held many other important positions as well. He was greatly admired by all, especially the poor and vulnerable, victims of corrupt, selfish, greedy and power-hungry people such as Kings, rulers and high ranking officials of his time. These victims were often falsely accused of crimes and misbehaviour that they had never committed. With his sharp mind, righteousness and integrity and the rule of law, he became the saviour of these victims and was honoured with the title of Pao Qing Tian, for being a kind judge, a man of honesty and fairness. Also, he initiated many legal reforms to better address the grievances of people in China. What inspired him to take up such a task was Confucius' desire for a benevolent government where kindness and fairness prevail. His passion for justice was so great that when he found his nephew guilty of a crime, he did not spare him but sentenced him to death.

Is Pao known only to and loved by the Chinese? Of course not, he has been and is still greatly admired by people of different countries too. Even after his death, people still love to read his cases and stories written by subsequent writers.

And, was Pao the only upright judge able to solve mysteries of crimes and bring about justice? No, as throughout history, injustices were also rampant but fortunately with shrewd judges and mediators, like Pao, their victims were also rescued.

Take for example, in the Bible, Daniel was able to save Susanna, a victim of being falsely accused of wrong doing, from being stoned to death and then there was Jesus who also rescued a woman from a similar fate by making the accusers realize they were no better than she was.

Even now, with corrupt officials in governments and tyrants ruling countries, such sad cases still exist and that is why many crimes stories, such as those of Sherlock Holmes of England and those of Pierrot of France are welcome by readers. Like Pao both of them are ingenious detectives, famous for solving difficult intriguing crimes

To have a taste of what an excellent judge Pao was, we should read some of his more famous cases such as: EXECUTING BAO MAN, CIVET CAT EXCHANGED FOR CROWN PRINCE and THE CASE OF THE TWO NAILS.

To conclude, I just wish we have Judge Pao or judges like him with us today in this world which is still rampant with corruption and justice.

New Talse of Judge Pao

Kownloon Tong School (Primary Section), Quan, Julian James – 8

On a thunderous evening on the 5th of March, 999, the residents of the Bao family were busy making preparations to welcome a new member to their family. Suddenly a roaring baby's cry brought joy to the entire household. The cry of the baby was full of energy drowning out the deafening sound of the thunder. The Bao family's joy was however short-lived when they saw the baby's skin was as dark as the night and his forehead had the markings of a crescent moon. Many felt that the baby was cursed, but little did they know that night marked the beginning of a magnificent justice of the Song Dynasty, Bao Zheng commonly known as "Bao Gong".

Despite early hardship with people quick to judge him as cursed, Bao Zheng was diligent and at the age of 29, he passed the highest-level imperial examination and became qualified as a Jinshi. However, Bao Zheng did not start his official career for a decade, opting to stay at home and look after his ailing parents. After the passing of his parents, at 39 Bao was appointed magistrate of Tianchang County not far from his hometown. During his tenure, Bao was decisive in his judgment and was renowned for his love and respect for the people.

In 1040, Bao Zheng was promoted to the prefect of Duanzhou in the south for his exceptional performance. It was during these 3 years that Bao Zheng established his righteous and incorruptible reputation. Bao Zheng would not take bribes and abolished corrupt rules set by his predecessors. Bao Zheng was recalled back to the capital and named investigating censor in 1044. During the next two years Bao Zheng

In 1057, Bao was appointed the magistrate of the capital city of Kaifeng. Bao Zheng initiated several administrative reforms. The most famous reform was allowing citizens to directly lodge complaints, bypassing corrupt city clerks who only served those that could afford to pay them large sums of money. Bao Zheng gained much fame and popularity from his reforms and was loved by the people.

Bao Zheng died on the 3rd July 1062. During his 25 years in civil service, the people often referred to him as "Bao qingtian" or "Iron-faced judge", due to his righteousness, defending peasants and lower-class people against corruption and injustice. There were also assertions that he was the incarnation of the Astral Gods of Civil Arts. There were even rumors that the crescent moon on his forehead was a sign that he was a demigod which gave him the ability to communicate with the super-naturals, helping him to solve inexplicable cases.

To this day, the people still commemorate his exploits, with numerous TV series showcasing his deeds. In modern Chinese, Justice Bao is synonymous with the "Lady Justice" of western culture symbolizing justice for all.



Non-fiction

Group 2

New Tales Of Judge Pao C.C.

Canadian International School of Hong Kong, Cai, Chloe – 10

IN ANCIENT CHINA,

One boy was different from all the rest. His skin was so dark it had a blue sheen if you looked at it in the sunlight, and on his forehead was a mysterious scar, shaped like a crescent moon.

That boy was me.

My name is Bao Zheng, and this is my life.

As I was born dark-skinned, I was considered cursed by my birth family and I was thrown away by my father, after meeting him for the first time. So naturally from a very small age, before I was barely even one, I was nursed by my older brother and sister-in-law.

There were many stories about me, all different. This is the truth. Or the twisted version of it.

...

MY FIRST CASE was called The Chalk Circle.

Once upon a time, a beautiful sixteen-year-old girl called Hai-Tang was sold into a house of *prostitution* by her impoverished family, after her father's death. Beauty may seem like a dream to many, but it does have its costs...

...

HAI-TANG STARED AT THE CEILING,

She had no more will to live. 'Why can't I just die?' She thought, her mind turning to all the pros and cons of dying. 'She was helpless, depressed and stained, so what was the point of living anymore?' Hai-Tang thought, her thoughts turning depressing and sad.

“來了!” A loud voice rang in her ears, as it resounded with the sound of a bronze gong being hit.

Hai-Tang dragged her tired and limp body to her bed, that is, if you could call a mass of cardboard and stones a bed. There was no fight left in the maiden anymore. None of the fire that crackled inside her when she was just starting in the prostitution house. Indeed when her family dumped her on the doorstep, she fought.

She had a fire in her that most thought was impossible to smother. However as time went on, and she became a shell of herself, her fire slowly weakened daily. As countless nights and days passed, her will to live grew smaller and smaller, until one day when her time of need and helplessness was at its peak, she was befriended by Ma Chun-Shing, a wealthy and childless tax collector, who visited her every Saturday.

Today was the last day Hai-Tang was going to meet him. For she was going to kill herself this very night.

'Ah, there he is.' Hai-Tang thought as her door swung open.

In the hall, a handsome man with stylish clothes and acrostic features sashayed down the hall and glanced at the walls. "Tsk," the man clicked his tongue, upon seeing the crumbling walls that had spots of green mould growing on the cracks that spread throughout the place.

As he walked towards the door at the end of the hall he visibly cringed when he heard some...very unpleasant sounds, emitting from a room to his right. As the man pushed the door open he walked briskly inside the door before coming to a sudden halt.

"Hai-Tang..." the man whispered, shocked at the sight of his usually lively friend. Sure, Hai-Tang's movements were always rather sluggish, her cheeks were hollowed out, and her skin ashy grey but she always had a lively and happy expression on her face. Unlike now.

After sweeping his judging gaze over at his friend the man couldn't take it anymore and his cold mask broke. "Hai-Tang, I cannot let you live here anymore!" The man shouts at her, his loud voice echoing in her room. "Then what do you propose?" Hai-Tang asks, her voice void of all emotion.

Already giving up.

"Become my second wife." A lengthy and awkward silence was followed by that sentence, until Hai-Tang finally broke the long and awkward silence her voice cracking as she said, "y-you'd do that f-for m-m-me?" "Of course," the man says smiling.

After that proclamation, Hai-Tang couldn't believe it, she was finally getting out of there. Her Prince Charming was finally coming for her.

How little did she know what fate had in store for her.

...

FATE SMILED, as she guided her pawn towards the blank space next to the king. "Well? Give up so easily, Life?" She said tauntingly to her opponent. "Never."

As she waited patiently for the other person to make a move. Suddenly the king moved slightly and a slightly loud thump was followed by the same voice from before.

"Checkmate."

...

HAI-TANG WOKE UP WITH A START, she groaned, the previous night's memories rushing through her head. Ma Chun-Shing bringing her to his home. Ma Chun-Shing introducing her to his first wife. And many, *many* more painful memories crashed into her head.

...

SIX MONTHS PASSED, and as our oblivious yet loving main character Hai-Tang smiles with adoration at her son, she unknowingly ignites the wrath of Ma Chun-Shing's first wife, Ah-Siu.

Ah-Siu, jealous person by nature and blinded by the black poison of jealousy, planned to destroy Hai-Tang's life.

...

Ah-Siu smiled, 'ah, it's finally the day,' she thought, glee visible in her eyes, 'the day when I can finally destroy that awful excuse for a woman!'

Ah-Siu, fed up with her husband's antics, accuses Hai-tang of adultery, and poisons Ma, blaming Hai-tang for the crime she committed.

After that, Ah-Siu claims to a court that Shoulang is her child so that she can gain rights to Ma's fortune.

The court believes Ah-Siu's words instead of Hai-Tang's, and Hai-Tang is arrested and beaten by guards until she confesses her crime, which she didn't do, but they don't know that do they?

As Hai-tang is about to be hanged, she is rescued by Bao Zheng in a scene similar to the Judgment of Solomon: Shoulang is placed in a circle of chalk between the two women, and each is ordered to pull the child toward her by hurtful means. Hai-Tang being Shoulang's mother couldn't bear to hurt her child, so she gave in and is judged his true mother.

Justice Bao

ESF Glenealy School, Mithaiwala, Burhanuddin – 10

(China's Sherlock Holmes)

On a day when bright sunshine drenched the world, I was sitting in the middle of a timbered park, thinking long and hard about my write-up for the young writer's award. That's when I dozed off...

When I widened my eyes, I found myself in the 7000-year-old Ningbo city, in China. I flickered my eyes but only the vintage walls were to be seen. As I took a few steps forward, still trying to make sense of where I was, I saw a person: pale brown skin tone, with a distinct white crescent-shaped birthmark. To my great surprise this gentleman was none other than the one and only Judge Pao, Justice Bao, Bao Zheng or whatever you want to call him. This happened to be my ultimate luck! It suddenly dawned on me that perhaps I should interview him... I got my sharp pencil and precious leather-bound notebook ready to scribble down notes.

I politely enquired – “Can I interview you?”

“必须的! (Of Course!)” replied Judge Bao.

“Holy macaroni!” “I don't know how to speak mandarin!” I gasped.

“That's alright, I can speak English, but will you learn Mandarin?” asked Judge Bao.

I took a moment to ponder and then replied “yes.”

My first question was:

“Can you tell me about your family and early life?”

He replied:

“I was born on March 5th in the year 999 in Shenxian, Hefei, Northern Song Dynasty. My father was a scholar and an official, while my grandfather was a commoner. My parents couldn't afford to educate me, however, I managed to clear the imperial examination at the age of 29 and qualified as a Jinshi. I did not take this position to look after my elderly parents. I had two wives: Lady Zhang, with whom I had a son named Bao Yi, and Lady Dong with whom I had two daughters. Bao Yi died at a very young age.”

“Sorry to hear that!” I said gloomily.

“Tell me more about your experience as a judge,” I probed.

Judge Bao responded “I would share with you some of the astonishing life experiences.

The first one is when my opinion differed completely from the emperor. He went and freed all the prisoners and promoted many government officials, just after Ningbo fell due to the torrential waves that flooded the city. I scolded the emperor because His Majesty was planning to release people who had performed unacceptable things and promote individuals who had not worked for the position, just because he was overjoyed!”

“Hmmm! Did you actually scold the emperor? I asked

“Yes, I did.” answered Judge Bao. “I was granted a golden rod and an imperial sword by the previous emperor, which gave me the authority to reprimand the incumbent emperor. I was also given three knives to execute criminals: one decorated with a dog's head for commoners, one with a tiger's head for government officials and one with a dragon's head for nobles.”

By now, we had strolled together a long way. There was an eating house in the vicinity.

“Are you hungry?” asked Judge Bao.

I replied “Well!” “I don't mind having lunch”. I could eat a horse, I muttered to myself.

We bought some mouth-watering food. I ordered an appetizing dim sum which had crunchy chicken meat while he ordered noodles that smelled heavenly, with fresh delicious vegetables. Now, like my blotter was stuffed with letters, I was filled with delicious food. Alright, back to the interview.

Judge Bao continued...”the second one is, civet cat exchange for crown prince (the baby). I had met Emperor Renzong's mother, who had fallen out of favor for supposedly giving birth to a civet skinned cat, but the baby had been kidnapped by a rival named Guo, at the command of the jealous Consort Lui and had been replaced with the cat. A maid called Kou was ordered to kill the baby by Guo, however she could not muster the courage and instead gave the baby to the chief who in return secretly took it to the younger brother of the emperor. Eventually, the child was raised by him. Kuo was tortured to death by Guo when Liu began to suspect that the infant had survived. Subsequently, with the help of a woman dressed up like Kou's ghost, I dressed up as Yama the God of Hell, to play on both Guo's fear of the supernatural and guilt hereby extracting his confession. When the verdict was out, the emperor was reluctant to accept Consort Li. I then admonished the emperor and ruled that he should be beaten up for lack of piety instead they beat up the emperor's dragon robe. He eventually accepted his mother and elevated her as the new Empress Dowager.”

“The third one is cracking the cattle tongue case... One day a peasant told me that someone had cut off one of his cattle’s tongue. I advised him to kill the bovine and sell it in the market. The peasant hesitated as it was illegal. I reassured him that if he listens to me, I will find the culprit. The peasant butchered the cattle and took it to the market. Shortly, a man came and accused the peasant of killing the cattle in the local court. I immediately arrested the man as it was clear that the wrongdoer wanted to cause grief and was annoyed on seeing the peasant make profit which is why he reported and sued him.”

“Now I know why you are the Sherlock Holmes of China!” I exclaimed.

“You were a very famous judge who had helped solve crime and was considered to be an extremely honest, clever and fair politician. It is also believed you became the immortal Yama of a Department of Hell known as ‘the Infernal Bureaucracy’ at night and worked as a supernatural judge sorting out the affairs of the Afterlife.”

By now the heavens had become murky and black, and it was about time to retreat home. I had one final question.

“Do you have any Hong Kong connections?” “Well, yes, I do,” he replied. “My 29th generation descendant lived there, and his name is Sir Y.K. Pao. He built one of the world’s largest shipping companies called ‘King of The Sea’. His son-in-law Peter currently runs it.” Judge Bao asked me to meet Peter and give him his regards. “Of course,” I said. “It will be my pleasure!”

By now, I had woken up and was elated. This dream made me grateful for being in Hong Kong and appreciate the people who shaped its society. Judge Bao’s narration was very intriguing, it took me a long time to untangle the deep-rooted information, however it was worth being aware of.

I finally had a chronicle from the man himself for my young writers’ award!

Bibliography: Wikipedia, Friday every day, The world of Chinese Beijing tourism, Vibrant Dot, WayBack Machine and Shanghai daily. com.

Brilliant Bao: Well and Lesser-known Stories

Kowloon Tong School (Primary Section), Wang, Chi Yuen – 10

The 5th of March, year 999, 1023 years ago in the far past, was arguably one of the most important days in Chinese legal history of Chinese law. It was the day when Bao Zheng was born.

Historians can not agree on Bao's family origins. According to one version, Bao, the son of a scholar and an official, was born in a middle class family in Hefei, Anhui province. His parents had inspired him with wisdom of ancient sages such as Confucius since he was young. Bao was an exceptional student. In 1027, at the age of 29, he passed the highest-level imperial exam and became a 'Jinshi' or 'presented scholar'. Bao subsequently worked for various government posts, including the Magistrate of Tianchang, the Prefect of Kaifeng and an investigating censor.

Bao Zheng was very brave and outspoken. A report from CGTN described him as an 'upright official who dared to contradict the emperor.' Legend has it that Bao Zheng was once giving a lecture to Emperor Renzong, pointing out how wrong he was to offer a high-profile government position to the uncle of his favorite concubine. The emperor got furious and just wanted to leave the room. But Bao grabbed his clothes and would not let him go until he got his message across.

There are many legendary cases handled by Bao, some of which even appear in our textbook. A case in point is a story known as "Bao Trials a Stone".

One day, Bao was walking down a bustling street. Suddenly, he heard crying and decided to investigate. He then found the source of the noise: a boy next to a random and innocent-looking stone. He asked the boy kindly, 'Why are you crying?' The boy pulled himself together and replied, 'I sell youtiao (Chinese doughnut sticks with lots of oil). Today, I came out here earlier than usual. I saw how low the sun was and decided to take a nap. I put a pile of 100 coins next to me. When I woke up, they disappeared!' The boy broke into tears again.

'Very well, I will find the coin stealer.' Bao said calmly. He was thinking about how to bring the stealer on site and catch him red-handed. Then, as if a lightbulb lit over his head, he got a plan. He yelled, 'It must have been the stone!' Everyone who heard Bao yelling came over to see what was going on. Bao secretly thought, 'My plan is working!' Bao said to the stone, 'Did you steal his money?' Obviously, the stone didn't answer. Bao said again, 'Stone, did you steal the child's money?' The stone still didn't answer. Bao pretended to lose his temper and bellowed, 'If you don't tell the truth, I will crack your head open!' All the people around him laughed. Some even yelled loudly, 'Stones don't know how to talk!' 'Everybody says Bao Zheng is smart. But in reality, he is a stupid official!' Bao roared in anger, 'You are interrupting me interrogating a stone! Everyone must drop one coin into this pit of water!', pointing to the bucket at his feet. With the gaze of Bao Zheng, no one could escape doing the extraordinarily simple task of putting a coin into the bucket.

One person put a coin into the bucket and was just about to leave. But Bao said, 'Aha! The coin stealer! Don't you dare to leave!'

Bao Zheng's rationale works like this. Because youtiao is pretty oily, the boy always has oil on his hands. The coins he handles thus has oil on them. The oil ended up on the hands of the stealer when he exchanged coins with the boy. The stealer was then sent to jail for burglary.

Bao not only knew some science, as portrayed by the above example, but also understood criminal psychology very well. This can be illustrated in the following story. One day, an old farmer rushed to the yamen (government office), reporting that something had been stolen from his house. Bao initiated an investigation and soon found that what was stolen was his cow's tongue!

It is common sense that cows eat by pulling food with their tongue. Without the tongue, a cow can not eat and chew. Moreover, cutting off the tongue will cause oral infection, hastening the cow's death.

Having pondered for a while, Bao asked the old man to kill the cow and sell it in the market. The old man was bewildered by Bao's words, but did so, thinking he would make some money selling beef. He indeed made handsome money.

A few days later, a man appeared in the yamen, accusing the old man for killing and selling the cow. Back in the Song Dynasty, cows were scarce commodities. Therefore, killing or injuring a cow was considered a crime, and anyone who reports the killing would get a reward. However, it was Bao Zheng who privately instructed the old man to kill the cow. In other words, the old man slaughtered the cow with the government approval. Bao approved this because he thought that the real "tongue cutter" would be very jealous of the old man who made a hefty profit out of the dying cow, and reported the case as a revenge. It transpired that the "tongue cutter" did exactly what Bao expected. Bao set a psychological trap, and the criminal took the bait.

In many ways, Bao was a ground-breaking and unprecedented judge. He was intelligent, decisive, and upright. More importantly, he brought justice to underprivileged people. He embodies what Confucius said "Justice to all of the world." This is incredible, given that he lived in a feudal society without a sound and modern legal system. He is a well-deserved "Lord Bao".

It seems like Sherlock Holmes has a lot to learn.

New Tales of Judge Pao

St. Joseph's Primary School, Chong, Chi Yeung – 11

According to Chinese history, there was once a famous judge called Judge Pao, his full name was Pao Qing Tian, who got thrown out of the house immediately after birth because of his ugly appearance. His sister, a woman who was notoriously known to be spoiled and ruined the child accidentally by doing things that she thought was going to help the child out of kindness who she was currently assigned to take care of without realizing what she had done. This happened to an orphan when Pao Qing Tian's sister found him on the streets and took care of him and ended up being a beggar. Now, people still believe that he is on the streets still begging for money believing that someone would be his savior and get him a home to live in for free. On the other hand, Pao Qing Tian's sister would be perfectly fine as a guardian if she didn't spoil children by accident.

Despite being took care of a woman that would spoil him, Pao Qing Tian still resisted his sister's offers that would make him spoiled because he had a talent of knowing what was right and what was wrong.

As Pao Qing Tian grew up, he went to school like normal children, though some of the students were a bit racist and laughed at Pao Qing Tian's black skin and bullied him, he still learned and made friends perfectly well. Halfway through primary school Pao developed a dislike at people who enjoyed bullying others and people who cheated or did things against the school rules because he knew that students should follow the school's rules if they chose to learn at that school. He also despised teachers who ignored things such as students who fought or cheated when they saw it because he knew that teachers should also be aware of student's actions and punish them if it was against the school rules other than teaching

When Pao Qing Tian was eleven, he suddenly thought to himself "Maybe I should study law and become a judge, so that I can clean China of corruption and crime and right all the wrongs that people have made." Though Pao Qing Tian wanted to be a judge as soon as possible, he still knew that he needed enough knowledge before he could go to law school so he decided to finish school before going to law school. After seven years when Pao Qing Tian was eighteen and finished secondary school, he immediately asked people in his town where was the nearest law school, and found out that the nearest law school, was 200 miles away and Pao Qing Tian had to ride on horseback and in ships to get there and it took him two months to get there.

After Pao Qing Tian arrived at the law school, he trotted lightly up the stairs to the principal's office, and greeted him. When the principal saw him, he said "Who are you, young man, I do not remember you being in my school, why are you here?" Pao Qing Tian replied "Sir, I come from a humble home and I am here to ask of the way of how to apply for this law school." The principal said "Very well, you are in luck, there is currently one space for one more student to join. Also, the waiting list is empty, so I suppose you could just take the examination test right now and get interviewed by me (all the teachers were teaching), to see if you are worthy to be in the school. That is, if you really want to join." Pao Qing Tian was elated and instantly said "I really want to join this law school, so I am willing to take the admissions test immediately. Fortunately enough for Pao Qing Tian, the admissions test only questioned basic laws like no killing other citizens, no stealing (pick-pocketing, shoplifting, burglary...), no blackmailing, all those random stuff that everybody knew about. Pao Qing Tian, knowing the basics, got into the law school easily.

In Pao Qing Tian's law education, he excelled at everything and was excellent at reasoning, citing sentences in laws and also public speaking, in order to prove that it was right to do something in court when he became judge. During Pao Qing Tian's law education, he revised for a long time for exams and through hard work, so he got perfect grades and got praised by his teachers from time to time at school.

A few years later, Pao Qing Tian graduated and got the title Judge Pao. He was widely known for his former success in law school. His first trial was a guy called Mike Whoppee who robbed another woman of her valuables in the middle of the night. In the middle of the trial, Mike silently took a knife out of a pocket and tried to fling it at someone, but before he knew it, he was held tightly and brought back to jail until he could see more sense than just trying to kill police, so the whole thing was declared as a mistrial. A few days later, Mike was accused for attacking police and thievery and he was imprisoned for 5 years for attempting to assault the police and stealing.

Some legends say that at night, Judge Pao works for the underworld in Chinese religions as judge, but I am definitely not buying that, since Judge Pao is definitely a human who is normal, just like us.

In Judge Pao's life, he had thousands more famous trials that he did, and all of China wept when Judge Pao died because he did so much for China during his day.

New Tales of Judge Pao

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Cheung, Nga Ting Annette – 10

Vincent van Gogh once wrote in 1889 that he never got tired of the blue sky. When we look up at the clear and blue sky, its peace and calmness entitle it to be a byword for justice and moral integrity. There is a judge, Bao Zheng (包拯) (999–1062 A.D.), who wins the acclaim from the general public since Northern Sung Dynasty (960–1127 A.D.) and is popularly symbolised as Clear–Sky Bao (Bao Qingtian 包青天). What kind of good qualities would endear Judge Bao to Chinese for over thousands of years? Let's explore why and how the legendary Judge Bao is remembered for his integrity over the centuries.

Judge Bao's name was Bao Zheng (包拯), also Bao Gong (包公), Bao Longtu (包龍圖) after his appointment by the Emperor as Longtuge Daxueshi, etc. He was born in an official and well-educated family from Luzhou, China. Besides being an astute judge at Kaifeng in Henan Province, China, Judge Bao served in the civil service for around a quarter of a century and was promoted to high-ranking posts, including but not limited to Kaifeng Prefecture, the Treasury and the Military Affairs. He repeatedly pleaded to Emperor Renzong (reign: 1022–1063 A.D.) to be compassionate for the public's sufferings and stop making endless exorbitant demands on the common people. He is impartial and fearless of any privileged and powerful political figures or officials and the closest relatives of the Emperor and fought against all illegal actions by punishing wrongdoers from all walks of life. One famous example of Judge Bao's exemplification of judicial independence is his impeachment of Zhang Yaozuo, an uncle of the Emperor's concubine. Judge Bao is also famous for his incorruptibility and does not allow any of his descendants who commits bribery to return home or be buried in the family burial site. Upon his death, the Emperor gave him the honorary rank of Minister of Rites and the posthumous title of Filial and Reverent Dukes. The full confidence and the backing of the Emperor and other highest officials are prerequisite for his successful implementation of rule of law in the complex bureaucracy of the imperial China.

As Judge Bao becomes famous, tales spread of his miraculous powers of detection and become fictional. In the stories, Judge Bao is portrayed in a special image – he has a dark iron-colored complexion, which in Chinese drama, Xiqu, symbolises justice, incorruptibility and impartiality. The crescent moon mark on his forehead “added” by dramas since Ming and Qing Dynasties points to the hope and brightness brought by him. Some stories even state that Judge Bao investigates both the worldly cases for human beings in the daytime and the spiritual cases in the underworld for the dead people in the nighttime. Why is the history connected with the legend which turns him into a “half-man–half-mythological” hero?

First, one needs to understand various traditional Chinese values in Judge Bao's legend. The supernatural intervention in his cases reflects the root of the Chinese emphasis on criminal justice, namely, morality's ties to their cosmology. Since the Spring and Autumn period (771–476 B.C.), Confucianism, one of the dominant academic and political beliefs, indicates that every element of universe is interconnected with each other and human society and human life are parts of the entire universe with a moral principle operating to balance and maintain harmony. Justice can therefore be naturally restored by good morality and supernatural intervention, etc. Next, Confucianism emphasizes its key idea of “filial piety”, taking form of obedience to parental authority, ancestor worship and the devotion to family which help to strengthen the surrounding society and unite the empire. Later in Sung Dynasty, the state supports Neo-Confucianism to revive the ancient Confucian doctrines and emphasizes morality for the whole empire.

Further, the interplays among the above Chinese values, literatures like chantefables, novels, theatre plays, illustrations and other art pieces since Sung Dynasty featuring Judge Bao and the faith from common Chinese general public make the unique contributions to the growing imagery and historical legend. One of the early written literatures, a set of widely performed ballad–stories for narrating and singing (namely, shuochang cihua which the performers tell the Judge Bao stories through an alteration of spoken prose and chanted verse), was printed in Ming Dynasty (1465–1487). Another edition “Bao Longtu adjudicates on Hundred Court Cases” (1594) inspired other storytellers and dramatists. In around 1879, Shi Yukun's novel, “The Three Hero and Five Gallants”, compiled and dispersed his stories into a more coherent narrative. The traditional opera is unarguably a good medium for the wider illiterate public to learn about the court cases.

One of the famous tales in Mr. Shi's novel which embraced the above enrichments was the exchange of civet cat for baby prince. In this tale, a jealous emperor's concubine secretly swapped the infant Emperor Renzong with a civet cat and alleged Emperor Renzong's mother to give birth to such animal. At the request of the exiled mothers after decades, Judge Bao found the truth with the help of a dead royal servant's spirit and got confessions from all wrongdoers. Yet, Emperor Renzong was reluctant to accept her as his mother. Judge Bao ordered to beat his dragon gown, instead of Emperor Renzong, for lack of filial piety. This famous new scene of beating dragon gown is added by subsequent Beijing opera plays about Judge Bao which resemble Mr Shi's novel.

Nowadays, many Asian and foreign people recognise Judge Bao as a justice icon and Baogong Park and temples are established in Asian countries for worship and tourism. Besides dramas, vernacular fictions, modern and foreign movies and television series, [the Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies founded by the](#) Harvard-Yenching Institute has Judge Bao's cases reconstructed. Judge Bao preserves the priceless Chinese values and the public faith on impartiality, fairness and incorruptibility should be well preserved throughout the world.



Creative Writing
Non-Fiction

Group 2

New Tales of Judge Pao

Ching Chung Hau Po Woon Primary School, Lo, Yuet Ching – 9

A long time ago, there was a man who lived in China called Pao. He was born in the Song Dynasty on March 5, 999 years ago. He is a judge. His face is black. There was a moon shape on his head. Do you know why his head had a moon and he had a black face? Let's see his story...

When Pao was born, everyone knew he was born perfectly. They were over the moon. In addition, his mother's health was unaffected. He cried, and he cried very loud. He didn't have a moon shape on his head, and his face was not black. After Pao was born, they had a party for him.

When Pao went to school, he was a brilliant student. Every time he took an exam, he got good marks. His parents and cousin were all proud of him. He was pleased, but not arrogant. He did better than before in his exam. Also, his conduct was good. His teacher always praises him. He was a monitor when he was in school.

When he was 29 years old, he could be a judge, but he needed to go home, which was far away, so his parents were worried about him. His dad said, "It's too far. We'll be concerned about you. He didn't do the judge when he heard that because he wanted to stay at home and care for his elderly parents. Everyone said he was very filial.

When his parents died, he went to the place for his work. At that time, everyone admired him because he was fair, just, and unselfish; everyone called him Judge Pao. He was extremely famous. He worked very hard and was fair. Every bad guy feared him because they assumed Judge Pao would need them in prison.

He had one wife before, but after they got married and his wife died, they didn't have any daughters or sons. He then married another woman. He and the woman had two daughters and a son. They lived happily.

One time, there was a blaze on the street. Everyone went to get water to help put out the fire. There were two ways to get the water. One of the waters was sweet, called "sweet water street," and the other was bitter, called "bitter water street. Then a man said, "Which one can we choose, the bitter or the sweet?" The other man said, "Let's choose the bitter one." Then all the people went to the bitter water to get it, but there were too many people, so they couldn't get it. Judge Pao caught the man who had chatted before because he knew they wanted the fire to get bigger, so they chatted for a few times. At the same time they were chatting, the fire would get bigger and bigger. Then Judge Pao called for half the people to go to "sweet water street" to get the sweet water, and the other half to go to "bitter water street" to get the bitter water. At the end, the blaze was not there. All the people were thankful for Judge Pao.

When Judge Pao saw an old woman crying loudly one day, he asked her what had happened. She answered, "There are people who grabbed my cow." Judge Pao caught the man who grabbed the woman's cow. He recognized the man as his uncle, but he also adjudicated. After a long time, his uncle also said, "The cow wasn't mine to grab," so Judge Pao found the people who saw his uncle grab the cow. At the end, his uncle needed to go to prison, and then his uncle said, "I am your uncle. I don't want to go there, please. "I won't do that anymore, please." But Judge Pao didn't let him go, and then his uncle went to prison. After the judgment, everyone said he was fair.

One Sunday, Judge Pao saw a boy who sold the fritters crying. He asked, "Why are you crying?" The boy said, "I can't find my money." Then Judge Pao needed the people to throw one dollar in the water. After a long time, he knew who stole the boy's money because, when the money was thrown into the water, there were some oil bubbles in the water. Then the thief shouted, "Sorry, I stole the money." The thief gave the money back to the boy, and the boy forgave the thief, but the thief also needed to go into prison.

In 1062, on the third of July, Judge Pao was sixty-three years old; at that time, he died in the Legend of Kaifeng. When the people knew that Judge Pao had died, they were very sad; somebody cried loudly all day because he kept the place peaceful. There was disharmony in the ancient world, but he kept the Song Dynasty harmonious. Everyone thanks him for maintaining the Song Dynasty's peace.

Now, people say the black face and the moon shape on Judge Pao's head mean he is fair, just, and unselfish. Many writers will talk about him. Let's know more of Judge Pao's story. You can watch the movie on TV or read about it in a book. Also, some people made a Pao Qingtian Temple of him because they think that Judge Pao is a god. You can find the Pao Qingtian Temple in Macao and Wan Chai. There were some people who made statues of Judge Pao, too. In the three examples, you can see that Judge Pao is a fair, smart, just, and unselfish judge. He has an alias called Pao Zheng. In China, there is a park to commemorate Judge Pao. He is many people's super star. He is now well known as well. If you don't know who he is, you should know that he is a famous judge. Judge Pao is an iconic figure in Chinese culture and is renowned for his strict and impartial judgments, which have won him both respect and admiration from the Chinese public.

A Symbol of Justice

Yaumati Catholic Primary School (Hoi Wang Road), Bok, Tsz To Lukas – 11

Judge Pao was a celebrated figure of uprightness and justice in ancient China. Although he passed away long time ago, he is still very well-known for his highly developed moral sense and pursuit for legal equity for commoners nowadays.

Judge Pao's real name is Pao Zheng. As a result of his respectable personality and contributions to society, people called him Pao Gong (equivalent to Lord Pao in English) and Pao Qing Tian ("Qing Tian" meaning a clear sky, a metaphor for describing his uncorrupt quality).

Pao Zheng was born in Shenxian, Hefei, Luzhou, China (currently known as Feidong County near Hefei, Anhui, China). His parents had high expectations for him. Therefore, he began to learn to read when he was five. He did well at school. Consequently, at the comparatively young age of 29, he was qualified as a Jinshi, the highest rank of imperial scholars.

You may ask, was he ready to start his work in the government? This is what we might expect, but it did not happen. His parents were old and were struggling to look after themselves, so he postponed his ambitions to take care of them, which he did until he reached his late thirties.

Fortunately, his career did not seem to suffer since people in China respected young ones who sacrificed years of work to look after their parents. After mourning for his parents after their deaths, he was accepted into the government and became a high-ranking official during the reign of Emperor Ren Zong in the Song Dynasty and began his career as a judge.

One day, the country was hit with huge floods. When the water finally receded, the grateful emperor decided to express his gratitude to the gods by granting a general amnesty for all criminals and promoting all civil and military officials.

Judge Pao objected to the plan. Justice was too important to be set aside in this way, he told the emperor. Acts of criminality should lead to punishment. Bringing justice to society should be the only way to rise in a government.

The emperor followed his advice. Despite the fact that he lived in a culture where thoughts expressed too candidly to people in power could lead to disaster, he spoke his mind.

Judge Pao also demonstrated his fairness in a number of cases that he solved. Once, his uncle broke the law and was sued by the victim. He summoned his uncle to court and punished him by beating him 100 times with a stick. He even impeached Prime Minister Song Xiang, an uncle of the emperor's favourite concubine and other powerful people. Unfortunately, he died at the age 63.

There is also an interesting question about Judge Pao. Why does he have a crescent on his forehead? It is said that the crescent symbolizes his unique talent for investigating crime in the underworld at night. Without the crescent, this talent would be gone. This mark was formed in his mother's womb.

Judge Pao is a symbol of justice in China nowadays. Many people take him as the prototype for many wonderful stories in various genres of ballads, novels, cartoons, operas, movies and TV dramas. Some of the most popular portrayals of him can be found in the novel "Seven Heroes and Five Gallants". The novel first appeared in the 1880s. In it, he was assisted by a team of heroes who used their great fighting skills to arrest criminals and corrupt officials, seeking justice without hesitation or fear.



Non-fiction

Group 3

New Tales of Judge Pao: An Icon of Justice

Heep Yunn School, Lam, Yat Yu – 13

A commanding figure, cloaked in black. On his forehead is a crescent moon, a fitting symbol of serenity and wisdom; an unsullied light in the midst of darkness, as he is. Known for his fairness and adamant incorruptibility, he has long been a legendary figure, an icon of justice in Chinese history. Solving countless crimes with impeccable judgement and reasoning, fighting against corruption among the nobility while caring for the concerns of the peasants, he has not only gained much fame and respect, but also left considerable impact in our modern society. From the past to present, many works about him have been created, although mostly fictionalized, the spirit of these tales—his unwavering righteousness—remains. History remembers him as Judge Pao.

His alias of Judge Pao is nowadays worldwide famous, earning him several honorific titles such as 'Justice Pao', 'Bao Gong' et cetera. However, this historical figure's identity is often not as well known. The character of Judge Pao portrayed in stories is based on a real Chinese government official named Bao Zheng. He lived during the Song dynasty, under the rule of Emperor Renzong. Born into a scholar family, Bao could afford to receive education, but still lived a simple subsistent life in the low working class. As he grew up among commoners, he understood the hardships and injustice many of them faced. This led to Bao developing strong morals and a firm sense of uprightness, which were qualities he carried throughout the 25 years of his service in the government, regardless of the position he held. It was also during his early years when his talent for reasoning and judgement was discovered, under the influence of his father. With his gifted intellect and much effort put into his studies, Bao passed the imperial exam at the age of 29, obtaining the title of 'Jinshi', which was the highest level of distinction in the exam and earned him the qualifications needed to become a government official.

Over the time he served in the government, Bao held multiple positions, from the magistrate of Tianchang to prefect of Kaifeng to the minister of finance. In all of these posts, Bao continuously demonstrated his imperturbable incorruptibility and insightful sense of judgement. For instance, when he was the prefect of Duanzhou, a place renowned for its high quality inkstones, Bao discovered the misconduct and bribery the previous prefects committed by collecting more inkstones than the required amount for court tribute then bribing influential officials with them. Bao not only put a stop to this unlawful practice, but also left without an inkstone himself when his term of office ended. Moreover, Bao was not afraid of pointing out mistakes in governmental policies or impeaching high-ranking officials, even if it meant offending powerful nobles, royalty or even the emperor, which could result in severe consequences. This was a taboo for many officials, hence Bao's boldness in pursuing justice was what that gained him much respect.

As aforementioned, although many of the stories about Judge Pao are only legends or imaginary, it was indeed Judge Pao's character, which was based on the personality traits of the real Bao Zheng, that made them popular. Aside from the captivating plots and scenes of these tales, the reason why the stories were beloved, especially among the Chinese, was that Judge Pao's persona consisted of a variety of virtues and positive traits considered significant in the traditional Chinese culture. In short, Judge Pao had many of the characteristics that Chinese people regarded as ideal in a person. Three of his most significant qualities include his relentless pursuit for justice, his righteousness and wisdom in his judgement. The first two of the above traits are mentioned in the Confucian fundamental principles of morality, whilst intelligence has always been considered as a positive trait. Therefore, Judge Pao's personality is often vividly illustrated in his tales.

One of classic traits most associated with Judge Pao is his uncompromising belief in justice. Solving criminal cases, uncovering the truth and sentencing the culprit with a fair degree of punishment is the essence of justice, and it is what Judge Pao has been striving for in nearly all of his crime stories. To achieve justice, Judge Pao's righteousness comes into play. His concern for the lower class in society; his hatred for corruption and wrongdoing added up with his determination to eradicate crime inspires him to fight for the weak and against the powerful. Take the tale of Judge Pao Cleverly Executes Court Official Lu for example. This story begins with how a favored official of the emperor, Official Lu commits heinous crimes, including kidnapping both the wives of silversmith Lee and Governor Zhang. When Judge Pao, who has been wanting to sentence Official Lu for his past offenses, hears about this, he has

an ingenious idea of miswriting Official Lu's name on the memorial for his sentence in order not to be discovered by the emperor, then writing his name correctly on the memorial after approval so that Official Lu would be executed. Judge Pao's plan succeeds, Official Lu is executed, bringing both families of Lee and Zhang back together. This is a perfect example reflecting how Judge Pao seeks justice for the weak who are harmed and takes action to punish the powerful who deserve it with his unswerving sense of uprightness.

Another of Judge Pao's celebrated characteristics is his wisdom, with which he unravels numerous mysterious crimes and makes fair judgement in cases. This is emphasized in many of the cases, for instance the story of Judge Bao Cleverly Investigates the Circle of Chalk. Hai-tang, the main character of the tale, is taken into the house of a wealthy tax collector Ma as his second wife after being sold into prostitution. However, Ma's first wife grows jealous of Hai-tang after she bears Ma his first son named Shoulang, leading to her poisoning Ma and framing Hai-tang for it. She also claims Shoulang as her own son as to successfully inherit Ma's property, while Hai-tang confesses to a crime she did not commit after being tortured, and awaits the death sentence. Fortunately, Judge Pao notices something suspicious in the case and comes to Hai-tang's rescue by holding a test to determine the real mother of Shoulang. With Shoulang placed in the middle of a chalk circle between Hai-tang and the first wife, the two women are ordered to pull him towards themselves. Having no qualms, the first wife grabs Shoulang, but Hai-tang, his real mother, could not bear to hurt her child. Hai-tang's display of genuine concern and worry for Shoulang is the very evidence needed to prove that she is indeed his real mother, hence Judge Pao deems her innocent and arrests the first wife for the murder of Ma. The story is one of the many examples of how Judge Pao unravels hidden truths through his insightful perceptions and creative strategies to obtain proof. Thus, it is reflected how Judge Pao utilizes his intelligence in achieving justice.

From the ancient ages to the present time, numerous works about Judge Pao have been produced, and they have remained favorites of the public, no matter in the form of traditional plays and novels, or as modern day crime fiction stories and television shows. The character Judge Pao is now a household name, and I believe he will be just as well known in the future, for he still represents some of the most valued traits in humanity. An icon of legal justice in ancient China; a symbol of righteousness and integrity, history will remember his name, for now and forever.

My Great Model and the Committed Judge – Pao Cheng

Immaculate Heart of Mary College, Ying, Cheuk Kiu Cheryl – 13

Black clouds surrounded the world, bright future had been blurred.

Since a legend was born in Song, commoners' lives would be saved.

The man with justice brought the light, corruption of the imperial soon eliminated.

For any locals or anyone who knows about the righteous judge in Chinese history, they would definitely recall the stories of Pao Cheng after reading the poem above.

My encounter with Judge Pao all began when I was still a student of primary school (four years ago). At that time, reading was my only hobby, and I took it as some sort of treasure hunting. Every time I read a book, I could discover some new and concealed gems which conveyed the knowledge about the world. Thus, I always borrowed books from the library. One of my favourite books at that time was the comic 'Seven Heroes and Five Gallants'. I read it again and again as its plot was exceptionally alluring and breathtaking. 'Judge Pao' was also one of my favourite characters. I greatly admire his righteousness and wisdom, since I dreamt to be a detective when I grow up. He is not only an idol of my childhood but also a model of my life.

Although I have learnt about Judge Pao from comic books, the stories might not be adequately comprehensive to describe the facts of him. Therefore, I searched for books in libraries to understand him more. In the following, let me introduce the great judge and his achievements.

In 999, Pao Cheng was born into a scholar's family in present day's Hefei, Anhui Province in eastern China. He was nimble and eager to learn in his childhood. As his father was a close friend of the local county magistrate, he started to become interested in studying various cases, and he waited for a great chance to show his flair in reasoning and judgement.

Pao's dream of serving his people came to true in 1027 when Pao Cheng passed the highest-level imperial examination by his hard-work and received the title of Jinshi or "sit presented scholar", which qualified him to become a government official. However, concerning his ageing parents, he didn't begin his career right away till 10 years later, after the death of his parents while Pao observed all the required mourning rituals. He earned a good reputation for his love for his parents, and that was indeed a good foundation for starting his career.

After taking care of his parents for 10 years, he served as the magistrate of Kaifeng which was the capital of the Song Dynasty. He fought against the corruption of both provincial and central administrative offices. Moreover, he treated all levels in the society equally. Even though the wrongdoer was the closest relative of the emperor himself, Pao had no fear at all, instead, he would give him the same punishment as a commoner.

Moreover, Pao Cheng was granted a golden rod and an imperial sword by the previous emperor, which allowed him to punish the incumbent emperor and execute convicted criminals without the prior permission from the emperor. In addition, he had been given the three knives from the emperor for executing criminals: one decorated with a dog's head for the commoners, one with a tiger's head for the government officials and one with a dragon's head for the nobles.

And at last, Pao Cheng ended his legendary life at the age of 69 in 1068.

In legends, the character Judge Pao solved a lot of well-known cases. A famous one is 'The Case of Executing Chen Shimei'. It is about a man named Chen Shimei who placed first in the imperial examination and had a marriage with the princess who allow him to be the brother-in-law of the emperor. However, he had his own family, a wife and two children, which he concealed to the emperor. Years later, Qin Xianglian, the wife of Chen Shimei, and her children were forced to move away by a famine. They moved to the capital and found out what happened to Chen. Qin asked for his help to take care of their children but he refused to take up any responsibilities. After that, to avoid his secret being revealed, Chen sent his servant to kill his own family. However, his servant helped the whole family escape. Then, Qin brought the case to Judge Pao. Pao tried the case and Chen finally received a heavy sentence, which was an execution in spite of pressures and threats from the imperial family. It showed that Judge Pao had no fear of the powerful authorities at that time.

Another case is 'The Case of Executing Pao Mian'. It is about Pao Cheng's nephew, Pao Mian, who became a county magistrate, was found taking guilty of misconduct acts. He used to be unprejudiced in every case, but since Pao Mian's mother, Wu, treated Pao Cheng as her own son when he was little, he started to struggle between the Confucian concepts of loyalty and filial piety. At last, he executed his nephew and went to his sister-in-law to apologise tearfully and ask for forgiveness. It shows that Judge Pao judged people impartially in any situation.

As Pao Cheng had lots of achievements, his story had been adapted in popular fiction and drama, such as 'Bao Gong An' in the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644) and 'Seven Heroes and Five Gallants' in the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911). Therefore, most people regard Pao Cheng not as the minister and political critic of documented history but as the courtroom judge of the classic work.

With the advantage of different adaptations of Pao Cheng's legends, his stories have been spread around the world. Not only known by Chinese people, he is also renowned in some foreign countries.

In France, a Chinese editor, Xu Ge Fei, founded FEI, a press which chiefly publishes Chinese classic tales. She found Patrick Marty, a french TV screenwriter to create a comic which could facilitate westerners' understanding of Chinese culture. Marty accepted the invitation and then did research to select a suitable theme for the comic. Coincidentally, he found out the legends of the popular Chinese Judge. He was impressed by Pao Cheng's image of wisdom and courage. Xu Ge Fei, Patrick Marty and the Chinese cartoonist, Nie Chong Rui later collaborated to depict the brand-new Judge Pao.

After appearing on the market in France, it became well-liked in just an instant. It soon released the Italian and Dutch versions in the same year. Two years later, the English and Chinese versions were launched. It was confirmed that the tales of Judge Pao undoubtedly achieved an appreciable work on out-spreading Chinese culture.

Since lots of works use Judge Pao's stories and legends as the prototype of their plots, people know not only about the character, Judge Pao, but also the real person Pao Cheng progressively, and they start to understand more about his righteousness, wisdom and bravery. For me, it is also a new perspective to learn further about the meritorious traits of Pao Cheng, apart from enjoying the judicial stories of him. There is always something we can learn from this greatest judge of all, and personally, I believe that his stories will be passed on and continued be the comfort of the underprivileged and the oppressed.

The Legend, the Hero, the Judge

Immaculate Heart of Mary College, Chu, Kwee Emely – 12

Judge Pao, China's Sherlock Holmes.
Who existed in a time without phones.
The Chinese icon of justice.
And also known for his heroiness.

Judge Pao, the symbol of justice, a representative of all honest and upright officials.

He, a crusading figure with a passion to fight crime and clean up the corrupted land, bearing the name that may ring many bells worldwide as there are a number of books and movies inspired by his life, including books and TV shows, such as 'Justice Pao', 'Legend of Kaifeng' etc.

Recently, I have watched a few episodes of 'Justice Pao' myself with a few friends, as we were curious about the righteous figure after our Chinese History teacher briefly introduced this righteous figure in class. After watching one of his famous cases, The Case of Two Nails, I was so much impressed by Pao Zheng who investigated a man's suspicious death while the cause of death was unknown. After an autopsy, his coroner confirmed that there was no wound on the body. Later, the coroner had discussed the case with his wife, who mentioned that someone could force long steel nails into the brain without injuring the body. After a brief investigation, the dead man's widow was arrested, as the coroner found a nail in the body's brain. Afterwards, Pao Zheng questioned the coroner's wife and learned that her first husband had died. He immediately ordered his guards to go to the cemetery and to dig up her first husband's coffin. Sure enough, her first husband had died the same way as the widow's husband did. This interesting story immediately drew my attention and I started to dig up more information about Judge Pao then.

From a pool of information, many might know that Judge Pao, also known as Pao Zheng or Pao Gong who was a Chinese politician during the reign of Emperor Renzong in China's Song Dynasty (960–1279). During his years in civil service, Pao has demonstrated extraordinary uprightness and fairness with actions such as sentencing his own relative, impeaching the relative of the emperor's concubine and punishing some wicked members of powerful families. His appointment as the prefect of Song's capital Kaifeng, where he initiated a number of changes to better the life of the poor, to hear the grievances of the people, allowed him to be a legendary figure.

During his years in office, he attained the title of Justice Pao due to his extraordinary ability to defend peasants and commoners against corruption or injustice, and had never accepted any bribes from powerful people.

Though Pao was not born to a very well-off family, he was born into a scholar family in today's Hefei in eastern China. In TV dramas, he's portrayed to have dark skin and a crescent moon birthmark on his forehead, symbolizing brightness and purity, it characterized his righteousness and upright character. His father was a scholar and an official, while his grandfather was a commoner. As Pao grew up among the low working class, he grew sympathetic towards the hardships ordinary people had to go through, he also hated corruption and strongly desired for justice, thus inspiring him to become a Chinese officer who was honest and never accepted bribery from anyone, while other officials at that time were indulged with material enjoyment, and thus being corrupted and received bribery from the rich in return for their blind judgement in the court.

Unlike the other children in most ordinary families, Pao was a gifted child and he studied very hard. In 1027, at the age of 29, he passed the highest-level imperial examination and obtained the title of Jinshi, which qualified him to become a government official. Pao was appointed as a magistrate of Jianchang County, but he only started his official career for a decade later in order to take care of his aging parents and observe all the mourning rituals. For this, Pao Zheng had earned a good reputation for his filial piety.

After a decade of being a filial son, Pao Zheng, served as the magistrate of Kaifeng, capital of the Song Dynasty. He fought against corruption in both provincial and central administrative offices. He punished wrongdoers from all levels of society, from commoners to the relatives of the emperor himself.

In 1040, Judge Pao was promoted to the prefect of modern Zhaoqing, a prefecture famous for its high-quality inkstones (a traditional Chinese stationery. It's a stone mortar for the grinding and containment of ink), a number of which were presented to the imperial court. However, Judge Pao had discovered that the previous prefects had collected far more inkstones from manufacturers than the required tribute — several dozens times more — in order to bribe them with the extras. Pao Zheng abolished the practice by telling manufacturers to fill only the required quota.

As a hardworking and loyal officer, in 1044, at the age of 45, Pao Zheng had returned to the capital. For the next two years as an investigating censor, Pao submitted at least 13 memoranda to Emperor Renzong of Song on military, taxation, the examination system, and governmental fraudulence and incompetence.

In 1057, at the age of 58, Pao Zheng was appointed to the magistrate of present day Kaifeng. He held the position for a mere period of one year, but he had initiated a number of administrative reforms such as allowing citizens to directly lodge complaints with the city administrators, thereby bypassing the city clerks who were believed to be nefarious and in the pay of local powerful families. Although Judge Pao gained a lot of fame and popularity from his reforms, his service after the tenure as magistrate of Bian was controversial. For instance, when Pao was appointed to these offices as Zhang's successor. Someone then filed a rebuke against him.

Our heroic figure left us in 1062, Pao Zheng died in the Capital City of Kaifeng at the age of 69. It was recorded that he left the following warning for his family: "Any of my descendants who commits bribery as an official shall not be allowed back home nor buried in the family burial site. He who shares not my values is not my descendant." Pao Zheng was buried in Daxingji in 1063. His tomb was rebuilt by officials in 1066. Lady Dong, one of his two wives (the other being Lady Zhang), died in 1068 and was buried next to him.

According to some stories, in 1973, the remains of Pao Zheng and his family were carried out in 11 wooden coffins and transported back to the hometown of Pao Zheng, DaPaocun. However, the local commune secretary there would not allow their ancestors' remains to be buried on the grounds, otherwise they would be destroyed immediately. Pao Zheng's descendants, worrying that the remains would be eradicated, secretly hid them elsewhere without knowing what to do. The remains, consisting of Pao Zheng's bone fragments, was later be sent to Beijing for forensics research before they were returned to the newly reconstructed cemetery. In 1985, the Pao Gong Cemetery was reconstructed next to the Pao Gong Temple in Hefei in the forested area of Henan and was completed in 1987 to preserve the remains of Judge Pao and artifacts from the former tombs.

According to legends, Pao Zheng was granted a golden rod and an imperial sword by the previous emperor, which gave him the authority to reprimand the incumbent emperor and execute convicted criminals without prior approval from the emperor. Once, Judge Pao used the dragon-headed knife to execute a son-in-law of the emperor. The famous case was about an originally poor scholar, who, after winning the first place in the imperial examination, married one princess while hiding the fact that he had a wife and a family in his hometown. In order to prevent his secret from being exposed, he ordered someone to kill his own wife and children. Judge Pao, again, with remarkable intelligence could solve this case with no difficulty at all.

After reading all the information we have found and collected, we've learnt a lot about Judge Pao's admirable personality and background. We would love to visit the reconstructed cemetery one day. We think that everyone should be honest and be fair to everyone, no matter their social status, appearance, race and culture. Let us learn from Judge Pao today, so we will be an honest person who is willing to stand up for the voiceless, the marginalised and the poor.



Creative Writing
Non-Fiction

Group 3

Judge Pao

HKMA David Li Kwok Po College, Poon, Elise – 12

Have you ever heard of Judge Pao? Have you ever seen him on television shows, or read about him in books? If you haven't, this passage about Judge Pao will definitely help you know more about this legendary figure!

Judge Pao was born in Shexian on the 5th March, 999. In fact, his father was a scholar and an official working for the government. Although their family members could afford Pao to go to school, his mother had to climb up mountains to collect firewood just right before she gave birth to Pao! How impressive! As Pao grew up among the grassroot working class, he understood the hardships in people's lives, and understood the importance of justice among their country. So he was determined to be an unbiased judge when he grew up.

Pao passed the highest level of imperial examination when he was 29 years old and successfully qualified as a Jinshi. Through his life of justice, Pao solved some of the most mind-wrecking mysteries. Many citizens were impressed by Pao's intelligence. One of his most famous cases was "The Case of Two Nails". Pao investigated a husband's death whose cause had been ruled natural. However, Pao's coroner confirmed that there were no injuries on his body. At home, the coroner discussed the case with his wife, who mentioned that people could put long nails into others' brains, leaving no injuries or traces on the body. The next day, the coroner found a long nail indeed, and soon the wife of the victim was arrested for murdering her own husband. After all that fiasco, Pao went to question the coroner's wife, and found out the coroner was her second husband, while her first husband died. Pao ordered the guards to go to the cemetery and opened his coffin. Unsurprisingly, there was a long nail in his brain, too. Judge Pao successfully solved two cases.

Judge Pao was a very intelligent official, he died in 1062 in the capital city of Kaifeng. I am very impressed by his wit and his courage to solve mysteries and come face-to-face with those evil criminals lurking around on the streets. I do hope I can be as brave as him, maybe I can be the next Judge Pao in the future, who knows?

The Story of Judge Pao

Man Kwan Pak Kau College, Lui, Ming Fung – 13

If we talk about Chinese history, we must have to mention a guy. In the thousands of years of history, he is one of the most dazzling stars. He is the character of our article. Judge Pao

Movies and TV portray him with a black face, with a crescent moon on his forehead. He is selfless, admirable. Even in front of the emperor, he was outspoken, dared to supervise, and disregarded his own life and death.

At that time, there was an officer in a country who was greedy and corrupt, and he did all kinds of evil, he also relied on himself as a relative of the emperor, corrupted the law and committed all kinds of evil. When Judge Bao found out, he sent someone to monitor his every move mercilessly. At first, that officer didn't care much, but when he knew it was Judge Bao, his arrogance suddenly disappeared, he knelt down and begged for mercy, and asked Judge Bao to come to his mansion, saying that he surrendered himself, but in fact, he wanted to bribe Judge Bao. When he arrived at the mansion of the officer, the officer went out to greet him in person, and behaved amiably. The officer and Judge Bao sat on the stone bench in the garden and chatted. Judge Bao felt very puzzled, and after a while, the officer carried out several boxes and added: "This is a little gift, please accept it." Judge Bao opened the box and saw there is a lot of money. He was secretly surprised: The officer didn't surrender himself but wanted to bribe me! Then the officer said in a deep voice: "I don't understand what you mean." Seeing that Judge Bao pretended to be confused, he said bluntly: "Bao, as long as you let me go, the money will belong to you. There is a reward, you can choose gold and silver, Bao, I will let you eat well and live well, and enjoy the glory and wealth forever. What do you think?" The officer thought that Judge Bao would agree, but Judge Bao's answer surprised him: "officer, being an official is only for the people, not for money. You said you would surrender, but now it seems that is not the case." After speaking, he strode out of the officer's mansion, and dealt with it fairly when he returned.

It was Judge Bao's honesty and integrity and he won everyone's respect and love. He is famous in history all over China and even the world.

Deliverer of Justice

Shanghai American School, Huang, Kaylee – 13

Judge Pao (commonly known as Bao Zheng and Bao Gong), was one of the most famous politicians during the Chinese Song Dynasty. He was known throughout the nation for his strong sense of justice and integrity, continuously proving his worth during the years spent getting justice for those who were wronged. Bao completed 25 years of civil service and consistently served as a model of rectitude for the citizens of Ancient China. This resulted in him gaining the title of Justice Bao, which represented how strong his moralities were when he applied them in court. He was revered even after his death by several Chinese provinces who compared him to the war god Guan Yu for their similar sense of righteousness.

Despite the titles he held and his popularity, Bao wasn't always divinized by the public. He was born to a middle class family in the year of 999, with his father being a scholar and his grandfather a peasant. He still received proper education and was greatly influenced by Confucius's ideologies on moral authority and his take on the significance of being a principled leader. However, Bao still grew up in the lower working class, meaning he had to see the mistreatment of people who didn't possess high status within the Chinese community. This ultimately resulted in his strong hatred for injustice and his need to right the wrongs caused by the corruption and deceit in high society. He embarked on his journey to become an imperial official at the age of 28, progressing through the examination of the highest level to become a Jinshi (the most distinguished degree an examinee can achieve). Despite his chances for a career as an Imperial Scholar, however, he chose to delay his employment in order to return home and care for his elderly parents. He put off chasing his scholarly aspirations for nearly a decade, looking after his parents instead and attending mourning ceremonies after their passing, which represents their strong filial bond.

Even after his absence, the people still welcomed him formally. The public admired his filial piety and respected his traditional values, leading to his return to the position as magistrate of Tianchang County. It was then when Bao first became known for his fairness as an official. He was promoted several times afterwards until he ended up as the investigating censor in 1044. It was in this position that he became involved in the famous impeachment case concerning a concubine's uncle.

Emperor Renzong had taken multiple concubines during his reign, one of whom was Concubine Zhang, his personal favorite. He had wanted to make her empress and have her rule alongside him, but refrained from doing so due to his mother's protests. Instead, he displayed his favoritism for her in other subtle ways, like raising the status of her uncle, Zhang Yaozuo, from his low-level local position. Bao objected to this, stating that Zhang did not have the talent and merit needed for his standing, and strongly advised the emperor to remove him from his rank. At first, Emperor Renzong paid no heed to his words and kept Zhang in his position. However, Bao did not abandon his protesting, which proved how headstrong he was when it came to fairness. His advice for the emperor eventually convinced him to remove Zhang from his position and strip him of his titles.

Even in the face of those with more authority than him, Bao still spoke up in the name of justice and what he deems right, making him one of the most upright officials in Chinese history. Even when near death, he thought of wanting his offspring possess the same values as him, stating that "he who shares not my values is not my descendant." He never allowed himself to be swayed by the corruption and manipulation around him, choosing to take the righteous path to help the less fortunate.



Non-fiction

Group 4

The Legacy of Bao Zheng

Pui Kiu College, Lam, Yee Ting Keira – 16

Justice Pao remains to be one of the most significant and memorable pieces of literature and performing arts in traditional Chinese crime fiction, transcending generations and the passage of time. The main character Judge Pao, a prominent icon of justice, has graced mainstream television for decades on end and captivated the hearts of all those that came to watch him. However, most people seem to see Judge Pao as only a fictional character and not as who he really is—Bao Zheng, a person that at one point truly existed.

Bao Zheng was born during the reign of Emperor Renzong in China's Song Dynasty, in Hefei, Anhui, China and lived as a politician, fulfilling 25 years of civil service. In his numerous years of service, he rose to fame and was given the honorable title 'Justice Bao' owing to his aptitude for defending commoners against situations of injustice and corruption.

Bao was raised among the low to middle working class by parents who were commoners and though his family was affluent enough to be able to send him to school, he never took this opportunity to learn for granted and well understood people's hardships, detested corruption and had a strong desire for justice due to his humble upbringing. Bao excelled in school and was particularly inspired by Confucian ideas of benevolent governance and stories of virtuous officials in history. At only 29 years young, he passed the highest-level imperial examination which took place only once every three years, and became qualified as a Jinshi, equivalent to a Doctor of Literature degree in modern terms. But as his parents had struggles maintaining their livelihood and were becoming frail with age at the time, he set his personal ambitions aside and put his career on halt to tend to them. He cared for his parents in that way for a decade until they passed, by the time he resumed his official career once more, he was already in his late thirties. Fortunately, the pause in his career did not cause any issues for his future as a traditional moral value well respected by people in China is filial piety. So, Bao was accepted into the government and appointed as magistrate of Tianchang County not far from his hometown. It was from this point on that Bao began to establish his reputation as a just judge, impeaching corrupt officials and reprimanding powerful imperial families severely without fear.

In 1040, Bao Zheng received a promotion and became the prefect of Duanzhou which is modern Zhaoqing in the Southern part of China. Duanzhou was a prefecture well-known for its high-quality inkstones of which the imperial court was presented a few every year. During Bao's time as prefect, he found out that previous governors had collected several dozens of times more inkstones from manufacturers than the required tribute. Many of these officials made a fortune by receiving more inkstones from the craftsmen and giving only a portion to the court as tribute, keeping the remains for personal gains. As the governor, Bao requested manufacturers to fill only the required quota to be given as tribute and abolished the common practice of previous prefects in its entirety. By the time his incumbency ended in 1043, Bao left without having a single inkstone in his possession and even left behind a poem as a direct reminder to future governors to do the same.

Bao returned to the capital not long after and was named an investigating censor the year later. During his two years with this position, Bao submitted a minimum of 13 memoranda to Emperor Renzong on taxation, military, incompetence, governmental dishonesty, and the examination system. In the following years, he held many other high-level government posts, from Vice Minister of Finance, Vice Minister of Defence to Governor of the capital city of Kaifeng. Once Bao became Prefect of Kaifeng, he played a major role in initiating reforms in which the grievances of ordinary people were able to be listened to by government officials. Since these reforms were put in place, the people gave Bao the title of Bao Qingtian, which signifies a person who brings justice to the populace. Concubine Zhang, who was even set to become empress if it was not for the opposition of the Emperor's mother, had always been Emperor Renzong's favorite consort. The concubine's family soared in social status and went from minor local posts to high office, being promoted to major posts including the state finance commissioner. Bao protested against these unfair actions of blatant bias and presented a memorandum with other censors and accused the concubine's family of mediocrity and shamelessness. The voice of Bao's strong objection was heard and Emperor Renzong had no choice but to relieve the consort's kin of the high positions. During his years working in the government, Bao impeached 30 high officials for bribery, corruption or negligence of duty. Bao steadily grew in popularity as word of his actions to bring about a just society free from corruption began to spread nationwide.

In particular, Bao became a household figure of justice due to his courage in exposing anyone who did immoral things, and this rule was applied to all people without exception regardless of their social status, including Emperor Renzong. At one point in time, the land was frequented by floods, and when the waters subsided eventually, the

emperor felt indebted to the Gods and felt that it was only appropriate to express his gratitude by putting forth a blanket amnesty to all criminals and giving promotions to all civil and military officials. Bao spoke his mind and raised his disapproval of the plan. He informed Emperor Renzong of the importance of justice and meritocracy and that they were too vital to be pushed aside in this retrospect. Crimes committed must be met with punishment while the only way to move upwards in terms of government status should be rewarded to those who show actions of excellence. In the end, the Emperor concluded that Bao was right and withdrew his original plans. Even though it was uncommon then for one's thoughts and opinions to be expressed in such a blatant way, Bao was still able to succeed in spite of his contradictory behavior to cultural standards.

Throughout his time as a judge, Bao adjudicated court cases with integrity, sternness in law enforcement and impartiality. Even those with little education were permitted to voice out their complaints without filling in paperwork. By doing so, all citizens were given the opportunity to prevent injustices brought upon them by officials who would offer to represent them at an unreasonably high cost. In the latter years of Bao's life and also after his passing, his legend was fortified by countless folk tales and detective stories, which was further dramatized by novels, movies and TV dramas as he was perceived to be a person of demigod status. Till this day, Judge Bao is admired and remembered as a person for steadfastly upholding the virtues he subscribed to.

Judge Pao: Why is There No Modern–Day Equivalent, and What Does It Mean to Us?

St. Paul's Co-educational College, Lai, Wai Lok – 16

Judge Pao, alternatively romanized as Justice Bao, is a legendary figure in Chinese history. Known for his detective work in cracking difficult cases, such as the Case of Two Nails, his intellect is revered in Chinese history as one of the most renowned detective minds in history. He is further set apart from his fictional counterparts, such as Sherlock Holmes, by his fearlessness in the face of power. While we often know him as a detective, it is his righteousness and fearlessness, cracking down on corruption and injustice by the nobles, that makes him all the more notable. During his 25–year tenure as a public servant, he was in a situation where making the emperor unhappy could result in a loss of their job or even execution, and some of the nobles he sentenced were indeed very close to the emperor. Many of his contemporaries indeed lost their jobs by virtue of making minor offending statements. Fast forward to current times, and Judge Pao's actions are still unparalleled and far beyond what anyone has done.

One might wonder, among the generations of legal practitioners, there would surely be someone who has been able to accomplish the achievements of Judge Pao, saving the public from injustice by the stronger powers. However, the world has still not seen such a person, and indeed such a powerful figure is unlikely to come in the near future. What does this mean, then, for our society famed for an independent and reliable judicial system?

A naive explanation might be that there are few people who are as righteous as Judge Pao was, seeing justice as lying above the concerns of death. However, there have been figures righteous enough to sacrifice themselves in different fields, including in the royal court, as such the explanation is difficult to justify. A more involved analysis would involve considering two different kinds of societies: the developed democracies and the less–developed world.

In developed countries, the major reason is that there is simply no person powerful and influential enough to be able to both judge and sentence. To put into perspective Judge Pao's power, consider an “evil” version of Judge Pao who, instead of upholding justice, only works for his own benefit. Such a person would be able to “investigate” his opponents based on fabricated evidence, and judge and sentence said opponent, installing a political ally in his place. Evidently, this would be detrimental to the functioning of the government. As such, in order to prevent such an incident, there is no position as powerful as this. Most developed countries adopt the *trias politica* model, where the executive, legislative and judicial powers are separated and have the power to check each other. The power to prosecute lies within the executive branch carrying out laws, while the power to judge lies in the judiciary. There can be righteous judges and intelligent detectives, but in a modern system, they are not the same person.

This separation also implies that modern judges do not face the same level of scrutiny from any form of “emperor”. In an imperial system, all three powers originate from the emperor, and the judges such as Judge Pao report to the head of state as well. However, in a modern–day system, the judiciary does not report to anyone. While typically the executive branch, acting as the head of state, appoints judges, once appointed, a judge cannot be easily removed from office at the will of the head of state. A modern–day judge can sentence high–level officials without any fear of repercussions. Consider the case of Park Geun–hye, who was the center of a political scandal that saw her investigated, impeached, convicted, and jailed. Imagine this happening in imperial China: the moment a prosecutor files a motion for investigation of the emperor, he would be undoubtedly and promptly punished. This difference between modern and medieval times is a core reason why modern–day judges differ from Judge Pao.

On the other hand, modern judges face issues that Judge Pao would never have had to face. The most prominent is the rise of the “fourth power” – the public, and the voice of the media, are surely foreign to medieval China. In medieval China, the public is strictly vassals of the state and thus have little say over their government or even their landlords. While judges are no longer under the scrutiny of the executive, they are instead concerned with the public's voice and potential outcries. At different times, there are different “louder parties” whose rights, if violated, would lead to a major response in the media or among its people. For example, in America in the past, it would be about race, as judges are pressured by their race to rule against African–Americans. Judges are humans as well, and they might succumb to pressure from the ever–more–vocal public.

Another noteworthy reason is that the nature of corruption has changed drastically over time. With the change in government structure, the appeal of gaining power has diminished compared to the appeal of riches. For ancient officials, gaining power meant that they could further extort from more subordinates, often accumulating riches

exponentially. Furthermore, being closer to the emperor meant that they would also have more influence over policy-making as well as remove enemies from office, solidifying their power and riches. This encourages corrupt officials to bribe their way up the social ladder. On the other hand, in modern times power does not necessarily correlate with riches, and removing political enemies is less of a priority; furthermore, going up a rung in the political hierarchy does not come with a great increase in power, as the power of the executive is still checked by the legislative and judicial branches. As such, the most common types of collusion nowadays involve officials receiving monetary benefits from corporations, which in turn are granted a more dominant position compared to competitors, for example being granted the rights to a certain major project or even a monopoly. Consider the Rafael Hui corruption case, where the former Chief Secretary for Administration accepted bribes from Sun Hung Kai Properties. Another kind of collusion is between two companies, where one offers money in exchange for dominating the market. Thus, what is at stake here is money and not personal power. The target for investigation would be companies and not officials, and as such, a modern-day Judge Pao would not face the fear of being removed from office; in other words, there is less to fear, and Judge Pao's fearlessness would not be highlighted in the modern world.

To reiterate, Judge Pao's defining qualities are his righteousness, fearlessness, and intelligence in the face of power in investigating, as well as judging, cases that often involve the nobility and social elites. He had to be intelligent to be able to solve difficult cases, righteous in impeaching the corrupt elites, and fearless in dealing with the power of the royalty. In the modern, developed world, there is no emperor wielding power over all his subordinates, and what corrupt officials want is not pure power but money. The political landscape is so different compared to medieval China, and the current landscape does not favor the appearance of a new Judge Pao. Indeed, if there were a new position with powers as extensive as what Judge Pao had, being able to investigate, adjudicate and carry out punishments, then it would be prone to abuse and a net negative for society.

Speaking of the current political landscape, while the current, developed world is the radical opposite of the dictatorship system in ancient China, the "third world" – the underdeveloped parts of the world, where dictators rule vast swathes of land, is a closer match compared to the landscape of medieval China. There, collusion and corruption are rampant, and elections can be rigged to generate a voter "turnout" of 1660%. Yet, with these, there has been no Judge Pao who has stepped up to the occasion. Why is this so?

Time is a possible factor, as many of the independent countries in these parts of the world are very new. However, a more direct reason would be that neither does the political landscape of these countries allow such a Judge Pao to exist.

The key difference between medieval China and these less-developed countries (LDCs) is that medieval China is far richer materially, on a relative scale, than these countries. In medieval China, trade is minimal and there is no "outside world" to speak of. The concept that "the grass is greener on the other side" does not exist, and the emperor can gain everything that they knew of. Whenever delicacies are discovered anywhere, it is the duty of the local officials to send them to the emperor and the capital. Simply speaking, the dictator does not need, or want, more money – On the other hand, the amount of wealth that LDC dictators can amass is still insufficient to satisfy their wants, ranging from rare delicacies to luxury vehicles to hotels. When the dictator is not satisfied, the only natural choice is to join the corruption. As such, the difference can be summarized this way: in medieval China, the emperor turned a blind eye to, or even supported, the corruption among lower officials; in LDCs, the dictators are themselves part of this corruption. This fundamental difference is what makes the job of any judge far more difficult, as will be explained in the following.

The key to Judge Pao's success is the support from the Emperor. As mentioned, Judge Pao escaped punishment that many of his contemporaries suffered from by virtue of making minor statements. Considering how righteous Judge Pao was, it would be expected that he would have received complaints from the nobility, and the emperor would act in favor of his family and remove Judge Pao from office, the fate that many righteous officials in ancient China faced. While Judge Pao's sentences were against the interests of the emperor, they didn't directly contravene the emperor, since the emperor was often not himself the target of investigation. However, in LDCs, the dictators, who are themselves corrupt, would try their best to maintain the situation of corruption in place so that they can rake in profit and luxuries. As such, any such investigation is bound to be met with halt orders from the government, and any such Judge Pao would be hindered from completing their investigation. Justice can only be served if they are granted the right to do so – in the case of LDC dictatorships, this right can be revoked at any time at wish by the dictator, and there is a higher power – the dictator – obstructing the arteries of society – justice – leading to corruption throughout the government.

The militaristic nature of the governments further intensifies this issue. In many LDCs, the reigning dictator is a former general, or the son of one, and the power stems from the military control that the leader has over his subordinates. The same can be said of many of its subordinates. In this system, it is exceedingly difficult for a judge, which has non-military origins, to join the ranks of such a government. In these countries, the military is often the basis for power. Take Mali, a northern African country that has experienced 2 coup d'états in the past 3 years, as an example. According to Transparency International, Mali is ranked in the lower quartile in the Corruption Perceptions Index, and it is described as having corruption in "all levels of institution" partly due to an ineffective judicial system. Considering its coup history, if even the governing leader of the country cannot protect himself from a military strong enough to overpower himself, then no judge is safe from the power of the military. The nature of corruption is that it involves officials in power, and these officials often possess military means to overpower any verdict that the judge might be able to deliver. If a senior official engages in corruption, no prosecutor will be able to file any complaint, partly because such a complaint will be nipped in the bud before it is made public, and partly because the police force is controlled by the government as well. As such, it is impossible for anyone to be able to check corruption in a country like Mali.

The militia system also renders it easier for dictators to suppress any dissenting voice, removing the influence of the "fourth power". The dictator is given absolute power, which allows them to exercise varying degrees of control over the people; how much freedom is afforded to the people, and how tight is the grip of the dictator on the people, are determining factors of how effectively a prosecutor, or judge, can check the government. The emperor that Judge Pao served under, Emperor Renzong, was acclaimed as a "good emperor" who had empathy for his people, which is reflected in the word "Ren" of "Renzong". Under this empathetic emperor, Judge Pao was able to clear up the corruption without being silenced, even pointing out the wrongdoings of the emperor himself at one point. Other officials serving under different emperors who dared to point out the wrongs of their emperor were less lucky, facing punishment ranging from dismissal to exile to execution depending on the emperor. LDC dictators tend to fall into the latter category, as they came to power through military means and as such had to reign with an iron fist in order to keep their citizens in line. As such, rather than being protected like Judge Pao was, any potential prosecutor would likely face dire consequences. The stars have not aligned for these countries to have a figure like Judge Pao.

In order for a figure like Judge Pao to exist, several factors have to favor this at the same time: a political system where a position of such power exists, a government that allows for opposing voices to be heard, and a group of nobles that are open to, or at least under public scrutiny, to fulfill behavioral norms. In modern society, it is difficult and unlikely for all these factors to come together. However, this by itself is not a bad thing. It is simply a reflection that with the rise of the "fourth power" – the public and the media, the structure of society has been altered enough so that we do not need a Judge Pao, for that Judge Pao is embodied in the spirit of the fourth power. Around a millennium ago, Judge Pao monitored the government and checked if there was corruption, impeached corrupt and incapable officials and investigated suspicious cases. As a member of the public, by monitoring the government's work, submitting our opinions and making ourselves heard in the ballot box, and raising concerns over suspicious behavior in the media, we are serving as the modern-day Judge Pao.