Chapter 19

Dhāraṇī Pillars in China: Functions and Symbols

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FOR MORE THAN twenty years, scholars have been interested in pillars called *jingchuang* 經幢 (sūtra banners) or *tuoluoni chuang* 陀羅尼幢 (dhāraṇī banners);[1] both terms are usually translated "dhāraṇī pillar" in English.

A "dhāraṇī pillar" is a free-standing stone column, most often octagonal in shape (Figures 121 and 122). Its socle and upper section may show a décor of lotus petals, Buddhist figures, and so on, most often small buddha-images. The main (middle) section, usually octagonal (Figure 123), is engraved with Buddhist sūtras in Chinese translation, or with syllabic characters supposed to be phonetically exact transcriptions of Indian formulas usually called in Chinese *tuoluoni* 陀羅尼 or *zhenyan* 真言 (true word), corresponding to the Sanskrit terms "dhāraṇī" and "mantra."[2] They are often followed or preceded by a dedicatory text or eulogies, and by a long list of both lay and clerical participants and donors, together with their civil or religious titles as well as their contribution towards erecting the pillar. These inscriptions are a very valuable source for understanding Chinese Buddhism, its organization, the local Buddhist lay associations, and the development of Buddhist sūtras and formulas (dhāraṇīs or mantras), and thus offer insights into the political, religious, social, and economic life in mediaeval China.

Perusal of the *Epigraphical Corpus* (*Shike shiliao* 石刻史料), archaeological reports, and of my own fieldwork has enabled me to gather a huge amount of data on approximately three hundred pillars, or rubbings of these pillars' inscriptions, with dates and



Figure 121. Dhāraṇī pillar.
Source: Photograph by Liying Kuo, September 2002.
Note: In situ on the outskirts of Lucheng 潞城 city, Shanxi Province. Dated 744.



Figure 122. Dhāraṇī pillar.
Source: Photograph by Liying Kuo, September 2002.
Note: In situ at Wutaishan Zunshengsi 五台山尊勝寺. Erected in 1009 and repaired in 1026 (*front*).

geographical information. Ranging in date from 697 to 1285, they are mostly found in the central, eastern, and southern parts of China (Figure 124).[3] Dhāraṇī pillars inscribed with the same texts are also known in Vietnam (Figure 125), Korea, and Japan, where they are not necessarily octagonal. These pillars continued to be erected after 1285. That custom has now been rediscovered in Taiwan and Hong Kong, where Buddhist communities are beginning to erect dhāraṇī pillars.

Characteristics of the Epigraphic Data

The *Epigraphical Corpus* contains much data on Chinese pillars dating back to the eighteenth and



Figure 123. Detail of the dhāraṇī pillar in Figure 122.
Source: Photograph by Liying Kuo, September 2002.
Note: The title of the inscription reads "*Foding zunsheng/tuoluoni zhi chuang*" 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼之幢.

nineteenth centuries and earlier,[4] while reports of archaeological finds from the twentieth century to the present day provide additional information. But there are gaps of knowledge in our understanding of these pillars. Many are broken, and it is not always easy to decipher in their entirety the inscriptions they bear. Furthermore, the *Epigraphical Corpus* is not always reliable.[5] Its compilers, in most instances, never saw the pillars themselves and were content to copy what their predecessors had written. Even when they had seen the pillars, or rubbings from them, they did not transcribe the entire inscriptions, instead limiting themselves to giving the title of each engraved text (when they were conscientious). A long dedicatory inscription, especially if loaded with many civil and religious titles of lay and religious donors, may have attracted some editors to reproduce it in its entirety. This kind of record, which may also indicate the amounts of money or donations given for erecting the pillar, is very useful for historical, political, social, and even economic studies. A few compositions, sometimes written by renowned men of letters, were reproduced in literary collections such as the *Quan Tangwen* 全唐文 (Complete Tang literary works);[6] regretfully, such selected reproductions did not preserve the exact content of the inscriptions, nor did

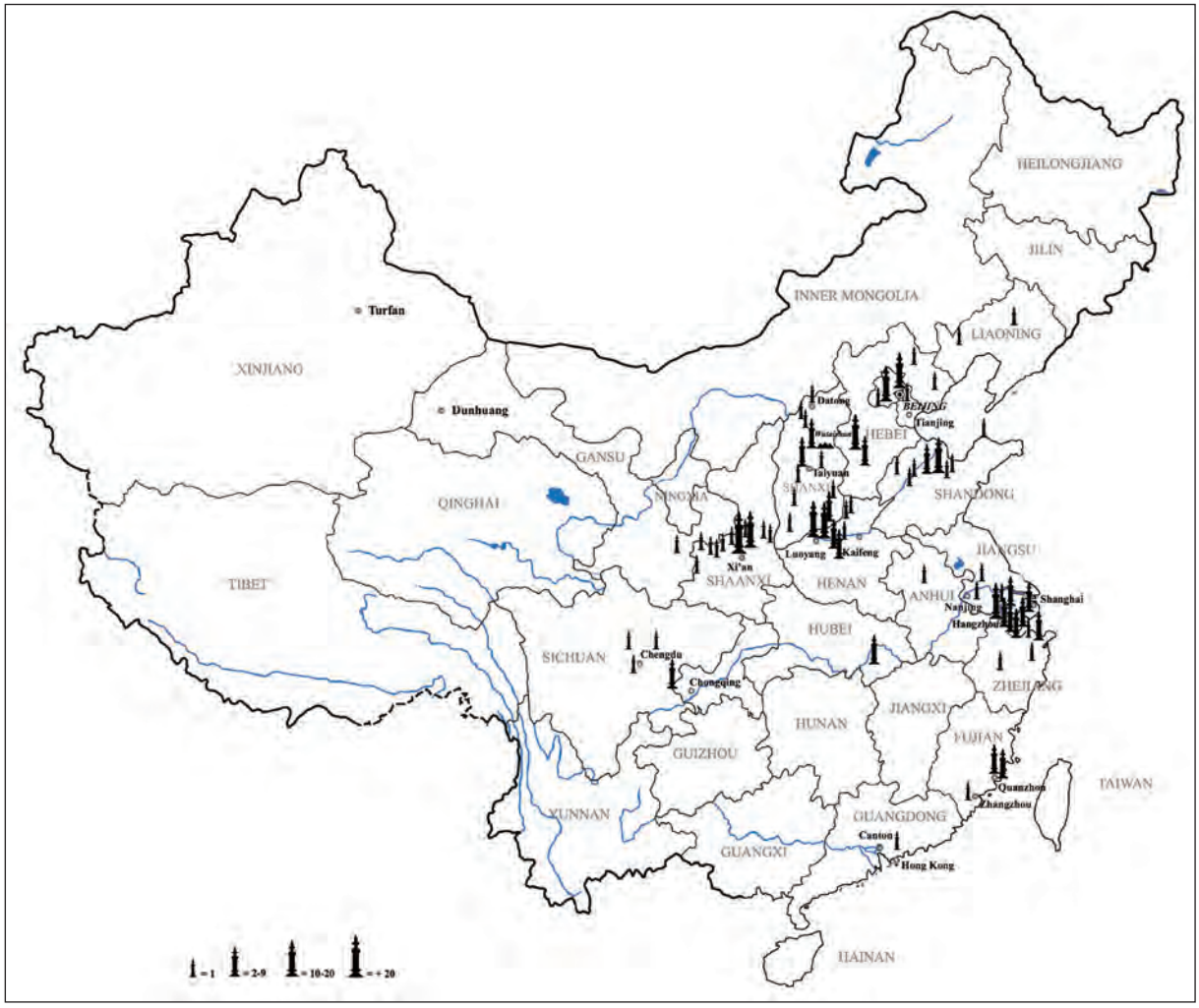


Figure 124. Locations of dhāraṇī pillars in China.
Source: Drawn by Liying Kuo with the assistance of Costantino Moretti.

they give any indication of the location and shape of the pillars. Archaeological reports do not always give the information we need, and sometimes even contain errors, especially in understanding and transcriptions of Buddhist texts.[7] What follows is my attempt to examine as many extant pillars as possible that are either still standing in situ or preserved in museums. Only a few bear dates that I was able to check.

Location and Dates of the Pillars

The pillars were originally erected in courtyards of Buddhist monasteries. Later they were often erected in private cemeteries, or close to the house of the family. Others were found buried under pagodas. A few others stood in public places, such as at crossroads or markets. The original locations of 280 of the 300 dated pillars recorded in my databank are more or less known. In China proper, they were found in the fourteen provinces listed in Table 3 (see also Figure 124).

In Shaanxi Province they are found mostly around the Tang 唐 (618–907) capital Chang'an 長安 (modern-day Xi'an). Sixty-four dhāraṇī pillars were erected between 725 and 891, with one, dated 974, under the Song 宋 dynasty (960–1279). The con-



Figure 125. Dhāraṇī pillar.
Source: Photograph by Liying Kuo, September 2009.
Note: Nhát Trụ Temple, Hoa Lư, Ninh Bình Province, Vietnam. Late tenth century.

Table 3. Provinces and Dates of 280 Dhāraṇī Pillars Found in China Proper

Province	Dates of erection	Number of dated pillars
Shaanxi	From 725 to 974	65
Hebei	From 702 to 1285	46
Henan	From 731 to 1127	46
Zhejiang	From 826 to 969	42
Shandong	From 719 to 1150	28
Shanxi	From 697 to 940	16
Jiangsu	From 728 to 958	15
Fujian	From 854 to 1031	7
Sichuan	From 745* to 1183	5
Hubei	894, 963 and 993	3
Liaoning	1044, 1056 and 1120	3
Anwei	884 and 985	2
Guangdong	945	1
Gansu	939**	1

*The pillar of year 745 was made from iron; it is called *Tieta zunsheng chuang* 鐵塔尊勝幢 (Iron pagoda, a *Zunsheng* banner). See Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng, juan* 47: 1–2; Hao Chenglin, "Langzhong tieta *Foding zunsheng tuoluonijing xu* tapian jieshao."
**This pillar was found west of Tianshui 天水 city—the farthest west on the Chinese continent ever recorded.

centration of these pillars around the Tang capital is to be expected, since the main sūtra inscribed on these pillars was translated or written there. Earlier pillars are known in Shanxi and Hebei provinces. The earliest one, dated 697, is in the Chongfusi 崇福寺 in Shouyang 壽陽 Prefecture in Shanxi Province.[8] Above its inscription, the following characters are engraved: *Shangwei huangdi bixia jingzao Foding zunsheng tuoluoni [chuang]* 上為皇帝陛下敬造佛頂尊勝陀羅尼[幢] (*Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* [banner] made respectfully for Her Majesty the Empress). *Huangdi* 皇帝 (emperor) refers to the title assumed by Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 in 690 for her newly established Zhou 周 dynasty (690–705). A pillar dated 702 is still standing in a temple called Benyuansi 本願寺 at Huolu 獲鹿, to the northwest of Shijiazhuang 石家莊 in Hebei. Here Empress Wu is referred to as Shengshen huangdi 聖神皇帝 (Saintly and Divine Emperor/Empress), a title she bore from the twelfth day of the ninth month in the first year of the Tianshou era (October 19, 690).[9] These two pillars are the only ones known to have been erected during the reign of China's only female emperor. We shall come back to her later.

Five of the forty-six pillars today known in the same Hebei Province—dated 707–709,[10] 719, 721, 1174, and 1285—come from the Benyuan temple at Huolu mentioned above. Eighteen were found near Shijiazhuang and Zhengding 正定 Prefecture.

The pillars from Henan Province are found in two different localities: eighteen in Luoyang 洛陽 or its vicinity, including the Longmen 龍門 cave-temples site, and seventeen in or near the celebrated Gongxian 鞏縣 cave-temples. In Shandong Province, nineteen of the twenty-eight pillars I recorded bear dates ranging from the second half of the ninth to the tenth century. They were found near Qingzhou 青州, where a great depot of Buddhist statues of the Northern Qi 北齊 dynasty (550–77) was recently unearthed.[11]

The Japanese monk Ennin 円仁 (794–846) reported that on the fifteenth day of the seventh month in the year 844, during Emperor Wuzong's 武宗 (r. 840–46) persecution of the Buddhists, an imperial edict ordered the destruction of every

Buddhist building, including the "stone banners engraved with the *Zunsheng [dhāraṇī sūtra]* (*Zunsheng shichuang* 尊勝石幢), monks' tombs, stūpas, and other memorial buildings (*sengmuta* 僧墓塔)."[12] Ninety-nine pillars erected before this date escaped that destruction. As Table 4 shows, they were: the two erected during Wu Zetian's reign, referred to above; the one installed between 707 and 709, also mentioned above; thirty-eight erected between 717 and 755, during Xuanzong's 玄宗 long rule (Kaiyuan and Tianbao eras, 712–56); one in 761, during Suzong's 肅宗 reign (756–61); one each in 763 and 771, and two in 778, during Daizong's 代宗 reign (762–79); nine erected between 784 and 805, during Dezong's 德宗 reign (779–805); twelve erected between 808 and 818, during Xianzong's 憲宗 reign (805–20); three during Muzong's 穆宗 short reign (820–24); another three during Jingzong's 敬宗 short reign (824–26); and sixteen erected between 829 and 840, during Wenzong's 文宗 reign (826–40). It is surprising to see ten pillars built during Wuzong's short reign (840–46), dated 841 to 844 (see Table 4), during which time the Buddhist persecution occurred. Of these, five are located in Zhejiang 浙江 Province (Wuxing 吳興 and Haining 海寧), three in Chang'an, one in Luoyang, and one in Jiangsu 江蘇 Province (Wuxian 吳縣).

Soon after the restoration of Buddhism in 846, the erection of dhāraṇī pillars started again: twenty-nine pillars were erected in Xuanzong's 宣宗 time (846–59), and thirty-seven during Yizong's 懿宗 reign (859–73).

Table 4. Dating of 99 Dhāraṇī Pillars that Survived the 844 Persecution of Buddhism

Ruler when erected	Number of pillars
Wu Zetian (Zhou dynasty, 690–705)	2
Zhongzong 中宗 (r. Jinglong 707–09)	1
Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 712–56)	38
Suzong 肅宗 (r. 756–62)	1
Daizong 代宗 (r. 762–79)	4
Dezong 德宗 (r. 779–805)	9
Xianzong 憲宗 (r. 805–20)	12
Muzong 穆宗 (r. 820–24)	3
Jingzong 敬宗 (r. 824–26)	3
Wenzong 文宗 (r. 826–40)	16
Wuzong 武宗 (r. 840–46), between 841–44	10

Contents of the Inscriptions

FODING ZUNSHENG TUOLUONI JING (BUDDHOṢṆĪṢA VIJAYĀ DHĀRAṆĪ [SŪTRA])

Buddhist steles of the Northern and Southern Dynasties period 南北朝 (386–589) bear mostly representations of buddhas and other Buddhist deities, sometimes accompanied by names and portraits (or supposed portraits) of the donors.[13] The dhāraṇī pillars were not made on the same pattern. They are mainly inscribed with Buddhist sūtras and dedicatory inscriptions or eulogies. Over nine-tenths of these pillars are engraved with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經 (Sūtra on the dhāraṇī of victory from the Buddha's head-summit), translated and transcribed from the Sanskrit *Budhoṣṇīṣa vijayā dhāraṇī [sūtra]*.[14] This Sanskrit text was brought to the Tang court about 679.[15] Within thirty-two years, five translations were done. According to the Tang monk Yancong 彥悰 (fl. 650–88), who was part of the translation teams, the first translation was done in 679 by an imperial court official named Du Xingyi 杜行顗 and a general called Dupo 度婆.[16] In 682, Emperor Gaozong 高宗 (r. 649–83) ordered that a new translation of the "Holy Words" (*shengyan* 聖言, i.e., Buddha's teaching) be made that was free of tabooed characters;[17] this was done by the imperial court translator Divākara (Ch. Dipoheluo 地婆訶羅; 613–88), who was a monk from central India, assisted by the same Du Xingyi and by Chinese monks.[18] About one year later, a third translation in 1 *juan* 卷 (roll, or fascicle), entitled *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*, was made. This translation is attributed to a Kashmirian monk named Buddhapālita (Ch. Fotuopoli 佛陀波利) with the assistance of a Chinese monk called Shunzhen 順貞.[19] In 685, one year after Gaozong's death, when Empress Wu became the de facto ruler, a fourth translation, attributed to the above-mentioned Indian

monk Divākara, was made on the eve of his journey back to India.[20] The fifth and last translation was made by Yijing 義淨 (635–713) in 710, eight years after his return from India and Sri Lanka.[21]

Of these five Chinese translations, only the third one—namely, the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* attributed to Buddhapālita and his Chinese assistant Shunzhen—was engraved on the dhāraṇī pillars. The diffusion of this third translation is probably due to the popularity of Buddhapālita's legend. Buddhapālita is said to have encountered the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, who appeared to him in the garb of an old man, on Mount Wutai (Wutaishan 五台山) in northern Shanxi Province. Following the old man's advice, Buddhapālita went back to India and brought the Sanskrit sūtra to China. He first presented it to the Emperor (Gaozong), then co-translated it into Chinese with the monk Shunzhen some time after 683.[22] This translation was engraved as early as 692 on a cave-wall at Longmen in Henan.[23] The legendary circumstances leading to this translation are depicted alongside an illustration of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* in two Dunhuang murals (in Caves 217 and 103; see below).

OTHER BUDDHIST INSCRIPTIONS ENGRAVED ON THESE SAME PILLARS

The earliest known pillar engraved with both the preface to Buddhapālita's translation and the translated text is dated 731.[24] Before that date, the entire text of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* was engraved on seven of the eight faces of such pillars. The eighth face used to bear another sūtra, such as the *Prājñāpāramitāhṛdaya* (Heart sūtra) or the *Liumen tuoluoni jing* 六門陀羅尼經 (Skt. *Ṣaṇmukhī dhāraṇī*; Dhāraṇī of six entries), as seen on a pillar dated 728, now in the Longxian Museum (Longxian Bowuguan 隴縣博物館) in Shaanxi (Figure 126).[25]

From 742 to 756 (Tang Tianbao era), the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* (the dhāraṇī extracted from the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*) was often engraved alone, with neither the sūtra preface nor the narrative part of the sūtra. Later, this *tuoluoni* (dhāraṇī) was engraved on only one or two faces of a pillar, the remaining faces often being engraved with a dedication. Such dedications, much longer than earlier ones, give the date of erection of the pillar, the names of the donors, their ranks, and their material or financial contributions to the engraving and the setting up of the pillar when it was the collective undertaking of a local religious association.

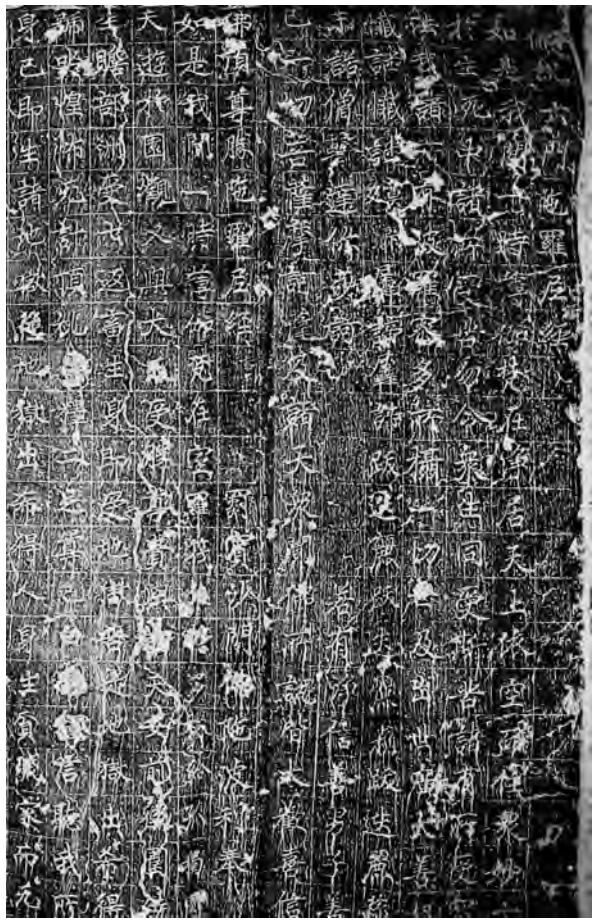


Figure 126. Part of the rubbing of a dhāraṇī pillar.
Source: Longxian Museum, Shaanxi. Photograph by Liying Kuo, after the rubbing done by the Longxian Museum, 2005.
Note: Detail shows inscribed texts from the *Foshuo liumen tuoluoni jing* (first seven lines) and *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* (after line seven). Pillar dated 728.

About the same time or a bit later, other dhāraṇīs were engraved next to the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*, including the *Wugou jingguang tuoluoni* 無垢淨光陀羅尼 (Skt. *Raśmivimala viśuddhaprabhā dhāraṇī*;

Dhāraṇī of pure light without any stain, hereafter *Dhāraṇī of Pure Light*) and especially the *Qianshou qianyan dabei zhou* 千手千眼大悲咒 (Spell of the Great Compassionate Thousand-Armed and Thousand-Eyed [Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva]), often referred to by its shortened title *Dabeizhou* 大悲咒 (Spell of the Great Compassionate One). The *Dhāraṇī of Pure Light* is engraved on a pillar erected in 744 (Tianbao 3), now kept in the Forest of Steles Museum in Xi'an (Xi'an Beilin Bowuguan 西安碑林博物館).[26] It is not recorded in the *Epigraphical Corpus*, nor do we have any rubbing of it. Two translations of this dhāraṇī sūtra are printed in the *Taishō Canon*. The first one was translated at Chang'an by an Indian monk, Mituoxian 彌陀仙 (Skt. Mitraśānta?), at the end of Wu Zetian's reign in the early years of the eighth century, only a short time after the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*.[27] The second one, translated by Shihu 施護 (Skt. Dānapāla?) between 982 and 1017, contains a much longer title and version of the dhāraṇī.[28] The inscribed dhāraṇī is most probably the one transliterated by Mituoxian about 704, the same one that the Japanese Empress Shōtoku 稱德 (r. 765–70, who ruled earlier as Kōken 孝謙, r. 749–58) had printed on paper from xylographs and inserted in her "million" little wooden stūpas (*hyakumantō darani* 百万塔陀羅尼) in 770 (Hōki 1, 4.26).[29] The Sanskrit *Vimaloṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* has been found inscribed on stone in India.[30] The *Qianshou qianyan dabei zhou* of course refers to the dhāraṇī of Avalokiteśvara (Ch. Guanyin 觀音; hereafter *Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī*); it is the dhāraṇī most often inscribed on pillars after the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*, and is often found together with the latter and other mantras. The *Thousand-Armed and Thousand-Eyed Avalokiteśvara Dhāraṇī Sūtra* (*Nīlankaṇṭha Sūtra*) has been "translated" into Chinese at least three times under slightly different titles: (1) the *Qianyan qianbei Guanshiyin pusa tuoluoni shenzhou jing* 千眼千臂觀世音菩薩陀羅尼神咒經 (Thousand-Eyed and Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva's dhāraṇī, divine spell sūtra; *T.* 1057), by the Chinese monk Zhitong 智通 during the Zhen'guan era (627–49); (2) the *Qianshou qianyan Guanshiyin pusa guangda yuanman wuai dabeixin tuoluoni jing* 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼經 (Thousand-Handed and Thousand-Eyed Avalokiteśvara's large, perfect without obstacle, great compassionate heart dhāraṇī sūtra; *T.* 1060), by Qiefantamo 伽梵達摩 (Bhagavaddharma?) from Western India, between 650 and 660; and (3) the *Qianshou qianyan Guanshiyin pusamu tuoluoni shen jing* 千手千眼觀世音菩薩姥陀羅尼身經 (Thousand-Handed and Thousand-Eyed Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva–mother's dhāraṇī-body sūtra; *T.* 1058), by another Indian monk, Bodhiruci (Ch. Putiliuzhi 菩提流志; d. 722), between 693 and 706. The first and third translations, *T.* 1057 and *T.* 1058, are quite similar to each other.

Some copies of the *Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī* in Chinese transliteration are printed in the *Taishō Canon*. They are ascribed to Amoghavajra (Ch. Bukong 不空, 705–74), *T.* 1064, or to his teacher, Vajrabodhi (Ch. Jin'gangzhi 金剛智; d. 732), *T.* 1061, 1062A.[31] The expression *dashen zhou* 大身咒 (spell of the great body), present in the title of *T.* 1062A, is also used in the text of Zhitong's translation (*T.* 1057, 20:90b21: *genben dashen zhou* 根本大身咒 [basic spell of the great body]) and in Bodhiruci's translation (*T.* 1058, 20:96c25: *dashen zhou* 大身咒 [spell of the great body]). The poet Bo Juyi 白居易 (772–846) had the *Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇi* engraved on a pillar erected in 835 (Tang Dahe 9) near his house in Luoyang.[32] Two versions of this dhāraṇi with slightly different titles can be found inscribed on one and the same pillar, such as the one erected in 848 in the Tianning nunnery 天寧寺, located at Gui'an 歸安 (Huzhou 湖州 or Wuxing xian), Zhejiang Province. The *Epigraphical Corpus* records that it was inscribed with eleven dhāraṇis and mantras, the second one being the *Qianshou qianyan Guanshiyin pusa guangda yuanman wu'ai dabeixin tuoluoni* 千手千眼觀世音菩薩廣大圓滿無礙大悲心陀羅尼 (Spell of the great compassionate heart, perfect and without obstacle, of Thousand-Handed and Thousand-Eyed Avalokiteśvara), and the third being the *Qianshou qianyan Guanshiyin tuoluoni genben dashen zhou* 千手千眼觀世音陀羅尼根本大身咒 (Basic spell of the great body of Thousand-Armed and Thousand-Eyed Avalokiteśvara).[33]

From about 850 on, either the entire sūtra of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* or only its dhāraṇī can be found engraved together with other short dhāraṇīs or mantras of other deities, such as the mantras of Mañjuśrī in Five, Six, or Eight syllables (*Wenshu Wuzi, Liuzi, Bazi zhenyan* 文殊五字，六字，八字真言); the mantra of Mahācakra Vajrasattva (*Dalun jin'gang zhenyan* 大輪金剛真言; mantra of the Big Wheel Thunderbolt);[34] the dhāraṇī of Cundīdevī (*Qifo juzhi fomuxin tuoluoni* 七佛俱胝佛母心陀羅尼);[35] the dhāraṇī of Amitāyus (*Wuliangshou genben rulai tuoluoni* 無量壽根本如來陀羅尼); and the mantra of the heart of Amitābha (*Amituo xin zhenyan* 阿彌陀心真言).[36] Other mantras or spells may also be engraved, for freeing a dead person of his former sins, for example: *miezui zhenyan* 滅罪真言 (mantra to eliminate sins); *jingshen zhenyan* 淨身真言 (mantra to purify the body); *jingkou zhou* 淨口咒 (spell to purify speech); *po diyu zhenyan* 破地獄真言 (mantra to break hell); *kaihou zhenyan* 開喉真言 (mantra to open the throat [of a hungry ghost]); *jieyuanjie zhenyan* 解冤結真言 (mantra to dissolve hatred); and *wangsheng zhou* 往生咒 (spell for rebirth [in the Pure Land]). These mantras or spells usually are not found in the Buddhist canon. They are often associated with funerary rites and may be buried in the tomb of the person they are supposed to protect. Thus, a stone found in a Five Dynasties 五代 (907–60) tomb is inscribed with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* and three other *zhenyan* (mantras): the *jieyuanjie zhenyan*, *wangshen zhenyan* 往生真言 (mantra for good rebirth), and *antudi zhenyan* 安土地真言 (mantra to pacify the ground [of the tomb]).[37]

THE "EXTENDED AND MIRACULOUS *FODING ZUNSHENG TUOLUONI*" AND THE "INVITATION STANZAS"

Zhijing 志靜, the author of the preface to Buddhapālita's translation of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*, doubted the exactitude of the Chinese transcription of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* made by Buddhapālita with the help of Shunzhen. Chinese Buddhists knew well that the efficacy of the dhāraṇī depended on its exact pronunciation, as in India. The five early Chinese transcriptions of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* (*Buddhoṣṇīṣa vijayā dhāraṇī*) in the first five Chinese translations of the sūtra are not identical: they do not use the same Chinese characters, and the length and number of syllabic units or phrases are different. There are also later versions linked with the promotion of ritual practices at the Tang court by Indian Tantric masters, and especially with the existence of two ritual manuals, one composed by Śubhakarasiṃha (Ch. Shanwuwei 善無畏; d. 735) and the other by Amoghavajra, in which the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* plays a central role.[38] These later versions become longer by repeating the same words two or three times, adding other invocations, and inserting other deities' names, such as Avalokiteśvara and the Seven Buddhas of the Past.

The pillar erected in 869 at the Ayuwang temple 阿育王寺 (Aśoka monastery) of Yinxian 鄞縣, in Zhejiang Province,[39] is the earliest known pillar inscribed with a new *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*, called the *Jiaju lingyan foding zunsheng tuoluoni* 加句靈驗佛頂尊勝陀羅尼 (Extended and miraculous *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*). It also bears a text relating two miracles, dated 738 and 823, resulting from recitation of this new dhāraṇī.[40] Other accounts of miracles linked with this longer dhāraṇī were in circulation during that period. Some of them are printed in the *Jiaju lingyan foding zunsheng tuoluoni ji* 加句靈驗佛頂尊勝陀羅尼記 (Record of the miraculous events [resulting from the recitation of] the extended *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*).[41]

From the tenth century on, the pillars were also engraved with strophes called "invitation" (*qiqing* 啟請) stanzas, a heptasyllabic eulogy written in gāthā (verse) style addressed to a deity, or to the dhāraṇī treated as a deity. The deified dhāraṇī, the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* or *Jiaju lingyan zunsheng tuoluoni*, is sometime called "Honourable Victorious King of the Buddha's Head-Summit" (Foding zunsheng wang 佛頂尊勝王) within the stanzas. The invitation stanzas that precede the "Extended and Miraculous *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*" are entitled *Jiaju lingyan foding zunsheng tuoluoni qiqing* 加句靈驗佛頂尊勝陀羅尼



Figure 127. Dhāraṇī pillar.
Source: Photograph by Liying Kuo, December 1997.
Note: Taoyuangong, in the outskirts of Quanzhou, Fujian. Dated 1025.

啟請 (Invitation [stanzas] to the extended and miraculous *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*).[42] The non-canonical invitation stanzas are to be found only on dhāraṇī pillars and in a few Dunhuang manuscripts.[43] Pillars incribed with invitation stanzas are chiefly found in the vicinity of Qingzhou, Shandong Province,[44] and in Quanzhou 泉州 and Jinjiang 晉江, Fujian Province (Figures 127 and 128).[45] From the year of 973 on, the Vietnamese king, Dinh Liễn 丁璉 erected in Hoa Lư 華閭, in the Ninh Bình 寧平 province of Vietnam, "one hundred dhāraṇī pillars" (寶幢一百座) for the benefit of his subjects. Those bearing the date 979 state that he transferred the merits resulting from erecting the pillars to his younger brother, whom he had himself killed the same year. A few of them are engraved with the same invitation stanzas and the "Extended and Miraculous *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*" (Figure 129).[46]



Figure 128. Invitation stanza inscribed on the dhāraṇī pillar in Figure 127.
Source: Photograph by Liying Kuo, December 1997.
Note: The stanza is written in gāthā (verse) style.



Figure 129. Dhāraṇī pillars.
Source: Ninh Bình Museum, Vietnam Ninh Bình Museum, Vietnam. Photograph by Liying Kuo, September 2009.
Note: The pillars in storage. End of the tenth century.

OTHER SŪTRAS, DHĀRAṆĪS, AND "INVITATION STANZAS"

My database contains information on twenty-six pillars engraved during the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries with sūtras or dhāraṇīs other than the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*: two short *Prajñāpāramitā* sūtras; the *Diamond Sutra* (*Jin'gang jing* 金剛經) and the *Heart Sutra* (*Xin jing* 心經);[47] the *Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī* (*Qianshou Qianyan dabeixin tuoluoni* 千手千眼大悲心陀羅尼); and the *Sarvatathāgata uṣṇīṣa sitātapatrā dhāraṇī* (*Yiqie rulai baisangai dafoding tuoluoni zhou* 一切如來白傘蓋大佛頂陀羅尼咒), often called the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* (*Dafoding tuoluoni* 大佛頂陀羅尼) or the *Sitātapatra dhāraṇī* (*Baisangai tuoluoni* 白傘蓋陀羅尼, "White parasol dhāraṇī"). This *Sitātapatra dhāraṇī*, called *Dafoding fangguang xidaduobodaluo daxin zhenyan* 大佛頂放光悉怛多鉢怛羅大心真言 (Mantra of the great heart of the *Sitātapatra* in the beam of the Tathāgata's light of the Greater *Buddhoṣṇīṣa*), is also found engraved together with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*, the two *Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara* dhāraṇīs, and other dhāraṇīs and mantras on the above-mentioned pillar erected in 848 in the Tianning nunnery.[48] The earliest version of the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* is found in Chapter Seven of the *Dafoding rulai miyin xiuzheng liaoyi zhupusa wanxing shoulengyanjing* 大佛頂如來密因修證了義諸菩薩萬行首楞嚴經 (Sūtra of the Greater *Buddhoṣṇīṣa* of the supreme heroic march and the myriad practices of the bodhisattvas for cultivating and realizing the complete meaning of the Tathāgata's secret cause), also called *Dafoding shoulengyanjing* 大佛頂首楞嚴經 (Sūtra of the Greater *Buddhoṣṇīṣa* of the supreme heroic march) or *Shoulengyanjing* 首楞嚴經 (Sūtra of the supreme heroic march),[49] a sūtra considered to be partly or entirely apocryphal.[50] The efficacy of that *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa Sitātapatra dhāraṇī* is of course as great as that of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*, if not greater. It is used mainly to protect the country from all kinds of calamities. The sūtra prescribes putting the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa Sitātapatra dhāraṇī* on the four city gates (*ancheng simen* 安城四門), on all caityas (*zhiti* 支提) and banners (*tuoshe* 脫闍).[51] A pillar erected in 857, also in the Tianning nunnery, is inscribed with Chapter Seven of the *Dafoding shoulengyanjing*, including its full sūtra title: "*Dafoding rulai miyin xiuzheng liaoyi zhupusa wanxing shoulengyanjing* juan qi" 大佛頂如來密因修證了義諸菩薩萬行首楞嚴經卷七.[52] A version of that *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* entitled *Dafoding rulai fangguang xidaduobodaluo tuoluoni* 大佛頂如來放光悉怛多鉢怛羅陀羅尼 (*Sarvatathāgata uṣṇīṣa sitātapatrā dhāraṇī*) is ascribed to Amoghavajra.[53] The colophon of this text in the *Taishō Canon* states that this version of the dhāraṇī is the one inscribed on the stele of Qinglongsi 青龍寺 monastery, on the outskirts of Chang'an, where Amoghavajra spent the greatest part of his life.[54] We know that in 762, Amoghavajra presented a copy of the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* in Indian script (*fanshu* 梵書) to Emperor Daizong on his birthday.[55] On some pillars erected in the tenth century, as is the case with the "Extended and Miraculous *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*" discussed above, the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* and the *Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī* are both also preceded by their own "invitation stanzas" with praise to the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* and to the *Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara*, respectively. The invitation stanzas to the *Dafoding tuoluoni* or *Dafoding tuoluoni qiqing* 大佛頂陀羅尼啟請 (Invitation to the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī*) can be found engraved on a pillar erected in 990 at the Zhaoqing chanyuan 招慶禪院 (Zhaoqing Chan monastery) of Quanzhou in Fujian.[56]

Ceremonials Linked with the Dhāraṇi

MEMORIZATION AND RECITATION

As State Master (*guoshi* 國師) under three Tang emperors, Amoghavajra was influential in promoting the recitation of dhāraṇīs, notably that of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*. In 770, he asked Emperor Daizong to institute a group of fourteen monks who would permanently recite, for the sake of the Tang dynasty

(*weiguo changsong* 為國長誦), the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*. That ceremony took place in the Abhiṣeka Hall (Guanding daochang 灌頂道場) of the imperial monastery Datang Xingguo Taichongfusi 大唐興國太崇福寺 at Taiyuan, where the first Tang emperor had started the course that eventually led him to the throne. In 775, a year after Amoghavajra's death, his disciples asked the imperial court to order monks and nuns in the entire empire to memorize and recite twenty-one times a day this *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*. On every New Year's day, each monastery was to report to the court the number of recitations thus made.[57]

Pillars engraved with this dhāraṇī would have helped monks and nuns to memorize it and recite it. According to a colophon on a dhāraṇī stele at Xi'an dated 813, the stele was engraved with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni zhou* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼咒 (*Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* spell) by a female disciple (*nudizi* 女弟子), Naluoyan 那羅延 (named after a Buddhist divine protector), to enable people to make rubbings of the dhāraṇī and circulate them (*daben sanshi* 打本散施).[58] Chen Qiren 陳榮仁, referring to a dhāraṇī pillar erected in 991 at Chengtiansi 承天寺 monastery of Jinjiang in Fujian, says that the dhāraṇī engraved by Naluoyan was the one translated by Amoghavajra.[59] There is no indication of the monastery at which Naluoyan's stele was located. We may surmise that it was installed in the Qinglongsi monastery, like the stele inscribed with the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* mentioned above. We know that two steles dated 811 were standing there, one inscribed with the *Foding zunsheng zhenyan* 佛頂尊勝真言 (*Foding zunsheng* mantra, i.e., *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*) and the other with the *Dabei tuoluoni zhou* 大悲陀羅尼咒 (Great Compassionate dhāraṇī spell, i.e., *Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī*).[60]

Cult of the Foding Zunsheng Tuoluoni / *Buddhoṣṇīṣa Vijayā Dhāraṇī*

In the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing,* it is said that devotees should copy the dhāraṇī written in the sūtra, the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*, and put it on a "high banner" (*gaochuang* 高幢), a "high mountain" (*gaoshan* 高山), a multi-storey building (*gaolou* 高樓), or a stūpa. In that way, when seeing it—or being touched by its shadow, or even by its dust—people will be purified from all sins and freed from all unfortunate states of rebirth. These persons will receive the prediction made by all the Tathāgatas that they will obtain complete and perfect awakening.[61] Devotees are also advised to offer flowers, incense, banners, and parasols, and to build stūpas at crossroads, install copies of this dhāraṇī on them, and then circumambulate them in worship. Whoever does all this will become a mahāsattva (true son of the Buddha), the stūpa of the Tathāgata's entire body relic. Moreover, sprinkling a corpse with a handful of dust that has been consecrated twenty-one times with this dhāraṇī will ensure that the deceased person is reborn in heaven.[62]

Shichuang (Stone Banners) and Stūpas

Dhāraṇī pillars are usually called *shichuang* 石幢 (stone banners). This appellation may have come from the above-mentioned prescription, evidently followed, to put the dhāraṇī on the top of a banner (*gaochuang shang* 高幢上). We have no written or archaeological evidence of the installation of the *Foding zunsheng* dhāraṇī on the top of multi-storey buildings, but we cannot doubt that it was occasionally done because it is shown in some Dunhuang murals (in Caves 23, 31, 55, 103, 156, 217, and 454; see the section "'Banner Poles' in Dunghuang Paintings" below). The evidence for placing dhāraṇīs on stūpas is complex. Fourteen small stūpas engraved with images and texts, dated between 426 and 436, during the Northern Liang 北凉 dynasty (397–439), are known in the Hexi corridor and Turfan. One of these was found in 1969 near Jiuquan 酒泉 (Figure 130). The images engraved on the upper section of these stūpas are those of the Seven Buddhas of the Past together with the Future Buddha, Maitreya. On the lowest section, often octagonal, eight deities are



Figure 130. Votive stūpa.
Source: Gansu Province Museum, Lanzhou. Photograph by Yin Guangming, Dunhuang Academy.
Note: Found in 1969 near Jiuquan 酒泉. Dated 428.

represented. The middle section bears a short sūtra entitled *Shier yinyuan jing* 十二因緣經 (Skt. *Pratītyasamutpāda*), taken from the *Ekottarāgama*, followed by a vow text.[63] These are the earliest instances of Chinese Buddhist scriptures engraved on stone stūpas. A stone stūpa found in the ruins of the Tianzhu temple 天竺寺 in Longmen, Luoyang, is called a *chuangta* 幢塔 (banner-stūpa) in the inscription itself (Figure 131). It was made in 850 by the monk Huaize 懷則 to be buried in his tomb. The "banner-stūpa" has four buddhas in four niches and is inscribed with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* and five other dhāraṇīs or mantras.[64]

Some dedicatory notices on the dhāraṇī pillars attest that flowers, incense, and colours for decoration were offered to dhāraṇī pillars,[65] such as to the pillar erected at Huolu district, Hebei, during the Jinglong period (707–09).[66] Donors who paid for the images



Figure 131. Chuangta 幢塔 (banner-stūpa).
Source: After Longmen Bowuguan and Longmen Shiku Yanjiuyuan, eds., *Longmen bowuguan cangpin*, pl. 36.
Note: Found at Longmen, Luoyang, Henan Province. Dated 850.

were called *xiangzhu* 像主; those who paid for the masts (*yaṣṭi*) supporting the garlands and parasols (*chattravallī*) were called *xianglun zhu* 相輪主; and those in charge of inspection were called *xianglunzhu duweina* 相輪主都維那 and *xianglunzhu dujian* 相輪主都監. Also found in the Huolu district, a pillar erected in 721 has an inscription that begins, "This *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* banner was made for the sake of the [Tang] State" (為國敬造佛頂尊勝陀羅尼幢), thus referring to the pillar as a "banner" (*chuang*).[67] Four pillars were erected in 1038 at Zhaozhou 趙州 in Hebei. One of them bears a dedicatory inscription, entitled *Jian chuangzi xianglun ji* 建幢子相輪記, that describes the making of masts supporting parasols and garlands for these four pillars (*chuangzi* 幢子, banners). Two of them were engraved with the entire *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* as well as with its preface (*jingxu* 經序), the dhāraṇī, the "divine spell" of Mahāpratisarā Bodhisattva (*Suiqiu jide dazizai tuoluoni shenzhou* 隨求即得大自在陀羅尼神咒), and a great number of donors' names—so many that, in order to include them all, two pillars were made just for inscribing these names.[68]

A dhāraṇī pillar may stand in the basement (*digong* 地宮, "underground palace") of a pagoda, as in the Northern Pagoda (Beita 北塔) at Chaoyang 朝陽 in Liaoning 遼寧, of the ancient Qidan State 契丹國. This pillar was divided into four adjustable sections, and the upper one was placed not vertically but on its side because the *digong* was no high enough. This pillar is engraved with five texts;[69] the colophon is dated 1044, and says that the pillar was buried a second time six years before entering the period of the final age of Dharma (*mofa* 末法). In that way the Dharma—that is, the sūtras and dhāraṇīs engraved on the pillar—was being safeguarded for the next aeon.

DHĀRAṆĪ PILLARS ERECTED FOR COMMUNITIES

Apparently the dhāraṇī pillars were first erected by monks in their own monasteries for the well-being of the emperor and all sentient beings. That is the case for the two pillars, mentioned earlier, erected during the reign of Empress Wu Zetian. Later, lay devotees were encouraged to participate in erecting them to benefit from the efficacy of the dhāraṇīs. For example, in 719, to stop a famine, three hundred laypeople from different villages on the outskirts of Qingzhou in Shandong erected a *Foding zunsheng jing* pillar and repaired the Shitasi 石塔寺 (Stone pagoda temple);[70] in 735, twelve elders from three villages (*sancun fulao* 三村父老) at Juye 鉅野 in Hebei erected a pillar for the sake of the emperor, their masters, monks, parents, and (all) living beings (*shangwei guowang dizhu, xiawei sheseng fumu puji cangsheng*上為國王帝主、下為師僧父母普及倉[= 蒼]生);[71] and in 824, people in Haoshi 好畤 district in Chang'an erected a pillar for the Tang State (*Datang Jingzhaofu Haoshi xianzhen wei guo jingzao Zunsheng tuoluoni jingchuang yisuo* 大唐京兆府好畤縣鎮為 [a space was left empty here] 國敬造尊勝陀羅尼經幢一所).[72] Some pillars' head-titles add other items: thus, on a pillar erected in 841 in Tianningsi nunnery at Gui'an in Zhejiang, the aim is to have "the lifespan extended and good fortune increased" (*zengshou yifu* 增壽益福),[73] and the inscription on a pillar damaged in 845 during the Huichang persecution but restored in 851 proclaims that the pillar is able to "rescue from danger and assist in difficulty" (*jiuwei jinan* 救危濟難).[74]

DHĀRAṆĪ PILLARS USED AS FUNERAL MONUMENTS

A great number of dhāraṇī pillars contained relics, as the funeral stūpas did. Some were found with corporeal relics (*śarīra*; Ch. *sheli* 舍利) inserted in them of the deceased monk or nun to whom the pillar was dedicated.[75] The word *sheli* was occasionally used to indicate the pillar itself, as in *Sheli tuoluoni jingchuang* 舍利陀羅尼經幢 (Dhāraṇī sūtra banner containing the relics).[76]

Indeed, beginning about 825, monks, nuns, and lay followers started to erect dhāraṇī pillars for deceased masters. Some of these lay disciples were local

dignitaries holding civil or military titles; they contributed largely to the costs of erecting the pillar and sometimes wrote the eulogy or necrology engraved next to the sūtras or dhāraṇīs. Many pillars are dedicated to deceased nuns. A pillar dated 818, dedicated to the nun Qiyi 契義, *dade* 大德 (*bhadanta*; religious leader) of Longhuasi 龍花寺 monastery in Chang'an, is engraved with an obituary notice composed by her cousin, a high-ranking official. Qiyi had asked for a little tomb with a dhāraṇī pillar next to it, for she thought she did not deserve a stūpa.[77]

Lay devotees also erected dhāraṇī pillars for deceased members of their families: a son or daughter for his/her parents; a husband for his wife, or vice versa; less often, a father or mother for his/her son or daughter. These pillars were usually erected next to the tomb of the deceased person, often on the southeastern corner of the grave so that it would be shaded by the pillar. Thus in 853 an Investigation Censor (Jiancha yushi 監察御史) and his three sons erected a dhāraṇī pillar for their deceased wife and mother, from the Chen family. It is engraved with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*, and so forth; on its upper section, four buddha-images are carved in four niches with a bodhisattva-image between each of them.[78]

In 866, a mother erected a dhāraṇī pillar for her deceased daughter in a Longmen cemetery in Henan. The pillar was intended to procure her daughter's rebirth in the Pure Land (*wangsheng* Jingtu 往生淨土) thanks to its miraculous shadow (*fuyuan cheng ciying zhan gongde* 扶願承此影霑功德), and was also used as a landmark for the tomb ground, which occupied a square of 240 paces.[79] It was engraved with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* only, copied, so says the inscription, from the text engraved on the "jade banner" (*yushi chuangben* 玉石幢本) at Xilu cloister (Xilu yuan 西律院) of Fuxian monastery (Fuxian si 福先寺) of the eastern capital (Dongdu 東都), meaning Luoyang. That "jade banner" is lost.

The inscription on that jade banner apparently was well known. The inscriptions on two pillars kept in the Pinglu Prefectural Museum in Shanxi 山西平陸縣博物館 also refer to it. These two pillars were erected in 812 by a high official named Zhang Qing 張清 for his departed parents. They were damaged during the Huichang persecution in 844. In 877 and 929, the offspring of the same Zhang family were still maintaining them, even adding a new inscription of the *Duoxinjing* 多心經 (Heart sūtra).[80]

In 1025, a spouse of the Ge 葛 family, née Chen, erected a dhāraṇī pillar in memory of her deceased husband and parents. It is about 7 metres high and can still be seen on the outskirts of Quanzhou, Fujian, in a little shrine called Taoyuangong 桃源宮 in which Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗 was consecrated as a cult figure (see Figures 127 and 128).[81]

I have already referred to the monk Huaize, who made his own funeral "banner-stūpa" in Longmen (see Figure 131). In the same way, the lay devotee Li Shu 李恕, in a dedication dated 987, states that since he was unable to return to his hometown, he had built a tomb for himself, together with a *Zunsheng* pillar (*zijian fenying, li Zunsheng chuang yisuo* 自建墳塋、立尊勝幢一所) engraved with the dhāraṇīs of Amitābha and of the Great Compassionate One (i.e., Guanyin; Skt. Avalokiteśvara), and with the *Heart Sutra*.[82]

A dhāraṇī pillar could also be part of larger offerings. In 752, Cao Wenyu 曹文玉 and his wife erected a pillar inscribed with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni shenzhou*, and at the same time installed a lamp with pedestal (*dengtai* 燈臺) as well as a statue of Amitābha in their family chapel (*dangjia fotang* 當家佛堂); the celebratory ritual included the chanting of sūtras and burning of incense, together with a feast (*fenxiang shezhai, qingzan weirao* 焚香設齋、慶讚圍遶).[83]

Literati often volunteered or were asked to write necrologies, favourable texts or literary compositions for these dhāraṇī pillars. About sixty texts of this kind are edited in the *Quan Tangwen*.[84] The very rhetorical "Hymn and Preface" to the dhāraṇī pillar erected at Chongming monastery 崇明寺 (in Yanzhou 兗州, Shandong), written by the famous Tang poet Li Bo 李白 (701–62), is a good example.[85] Some literati erected dhāraṇī pillars for their own use. A recently discovered pillar, engraved with both

the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* and the *Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara dhāraṇī*, was erected in 835 by another famous Tang poet, Bo Juyi, near his house in Luoyang, as mentioned earlier.[86]

DONORS AND PARTICIPANTS

Steles engraved with Buddhist or Daoist figures (*zaoxiang bei* 造像碑) during the Six Dynasties 六朝 (220–589) were often the offering of a local community or an association (*yi* 邑). The inscription gives the names of every participant. In the same way, the sūtra pillars erected by a community list the names of donors to and participants in the realization of the monument, with their civil or ecclesiastic titles, the amount of money they gave or the work they did. These male lay devotees are called *zhuyuanren* 助緣人, and female ones, *zhuyuan nu dizi* 助緣女弟子. The main donors are called *zhu* 主 (chief), *chuangzhu* 幢主 (chief donor of the pillar), *jianchuangzhu* 建幢主 (chief donor for building the pillar), *jianchuang gongde zhu* 建幢功德主 (chief merit donor for building the pillar), or simply *lichuang ren* 立幢人 (man who erected the pillar). Other names are *xiangzhu* 像主, for a sponsor of carving the images, and *xianglun zhu duweina* 相輪主都維那 or *xianglun zhu dujian* 相輪主都監 for those in charge of the garlands and parasols and also in charge of inspection. The donor who paid for engraving the sūtra is called *jingzhu* 經主 or *juanjing shizhu* 鐫經施主; the one in charge of selecting materials for the erection of the dhāraṇī pillar is called *dugoudang gonde zhu* 都勾當功德主 (main donor, chief of negotiation), *dugoudang guan* 都勾當官 (official, chief negotiator), *du goudang* 都勾當 (chief negotiator), *daduliao* 大都料 (chief in charge of selecting the materials?) or *duliaojiang* 都料將 (person in charge of selecting the materials?), and so forth. The distinction between laypeople and monks/nuns is also indicated—thus *goudang tanyue* 勾當檀越 (lay donor in charge of negotiation), *goudang seng* 勾當僧 (monk in charge of negotiation), *goudang xiuchuang ni* 勾當修幢尼 (nun in charge of negotiation for repairing the pillar), *zhuan goudang junshi yaya* 專勾當軍事押衙 (military officer in charge of negotiation); *jian chuangzhu sizhu ni* 建幢主寺主尼 (chief donor, abbess), *chuangzhu dangsi shangzuoseng* 幢主當寺上座僧 (chief donor, monk, dean of the monastery), or *jianzao seng* 建造僧 (monk participant), and so forth. The craftsmen are also named in the inscription, thus the titles *shujing ren* 書經人 (calligrapher of the sūtra), *shijiang* 石匠 (stone worker), *duliao jiang* 都料匠 (crafstman in charge of selecting the materials?), *huaren* 畫人 (painter), *zhijiang* 直匠 (craftsman), and *dajiang* 大匠 (chief craftsman).

Stone Pillars Are Also Called *Chuang* 幢 ("Banner Poles")

The word *chuang* (banner) has designated the pillar itself since the earliest inscriptions (see Figure 123). Pillars are thus called *zunsheng chuang* 尊勝幢 or *shengchuang* 勝幢—short forms referring to the pillars engraved with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*. Others expressions are descriptive: *yingchuang* 影幢 (shadow banner), *baochuang* 寶幢 (precious banner), *gaochuang* 高幢 (high banner, as written in the sūtra), *fachuang* 法幢 (Dharma banner), *shanchuang* 善幢 (virtuous banner), *fabao zhichuang* 法寶之幢 (Dharma treasure banner), *gongde chuang* 功德幢 (meritorious banner), and *shixiangchuang* 石香幢 (perfumed stone banner). A pillar engraved with an obituary notice is called *jiechuang* 節幢 (chaste banner).

Indeed, the term *chuang* 幢 translates the Sanskrit word *dhvaja*, indicating both the cloth banner and its usually wooden pole, exactly like the French *drapeau* or English *flag*. The octagonal pillar is thus equated to a banner pole, *chuang*. We know from dedications that it was an object of cultic worship and thus could be decorated with one or more banners (made out of cloth) to obtain the appearance of a banner pole.

But we cannot determine that the term *chuang* was used exclusively to designate dhāraṇī pillars. Indeed, the word is already used in two earlier inscriptions that refer to something else. A Buddhist stele dated 529 in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, previously studied by Dorothy C. Wong, gives three donors who



Figure 132. Equestrian donor on a Buddhist stele.
Source: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Caroline Balch Allen Fund and Cranmere Nesmith Wallace Fund, 23.120. Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.
Note: Donor holds the title *caixiang chuangzhu* (sponsor for colouring [or choosing?] the images). Shanxi Province. Dated 529.

were members of a *yi* association—each shown riding a horse under a parasol—the title *caixiang chuangzhu* 採像幢主 (sponsor for colouring [or choosing?] the images; Figure 132).[87] Another Buddhist stele, dated 528, said to come from Henan and now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, has similar donor-images that are given the title *caixiang junzhu* 採像軍主 (Figure 133). Here *chuang* 幢 (banner) is replaced by *jun* 軍 (army). Does this mean that the donor was a military person? And how can we explain the word *chuang* 幢 (banner) in the previous example?

A stele from Yaowang shan 藥王山 in Shaanxi, engraved with both Buddhist and Daoist figures (*Fodao zaoxiang bei* 佛道造像碑), dated to the



Figure 133. Equestrian donor on a Buddhist stele.
Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Sackler Collections, Purchase, The Sackler Fund (65.29.1). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. www.metmuseum.org.
Note: Donor holds the title *caixiang junzhu*. Henan Province. Dated 528.

fifteenth day of the twelfth month of the second year of Baoding (January 23, 563), bears on its front face the words *X X xiong chuangzhu X X* 口口兄 幢主口口 ("chief donor of the banner, the elder brother X X"?).[88] Here does the term *chuang* 幢 refer to the stele showing Buddhist and Daoist images? Was that name chosen because there is some similitude between a stele and a hanging cloth banner (which depicts Buddhist images)? *Chuang* would be thus used in a metaphoric and metonymic sense: a cloth banner for the stele, a banner pole for the pillars. In any case, the epigraphical use of *chuang* is earlier than the first attested dhāraṇī pillars (at the beginning of the eighth century). It goes back to the steles carved with images (*zaoxiang bei* 造像碑) of the sixth century.

"Banner Poles" in Dunhuang Paintings

Dunhuang is the only place known to date where there are paintings illustrating the *Foding zunsheng*

tuoluoni jing and the story of Buddhapālita. Seven such paintings are known for the moment. The paintings on the southern walls of Caves 217 (Figures 134) and 103 illustrate the contents of the sūtra and the story of its transmission.[89] The painting on the ceiling of Cave 23 (Figures 135 and 136) illustrates the sūtra only. Some themes of the sūtra can be recognized on the ceiling of Cave 31. Two images showing the placing of dhāraṇī copies can be seen on the southern side of the ceiling in the antechamber of Cave 156 (Figures 137 and 138). The images on the northern walls of Cave 454 (Figure 139) and Cave 55 relate only to the sūtra, but both murals are entitled *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jingbian* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經變 (Transformation tableau of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*).[90]

According to the late professor He Shize of the Dunhuang Academy, the mural in Cave 217 was ordered by the Yin 陰 family in the early eighth century.[91] Caves 103, 23, and 31 were probably excavated during the second half of the eighth century.[92] Cave 156 was commissioned by Zhang Yichao 張議朝 (799–872; the first military commissioner [Jiedu shi 節度使] of the Guiyijun 歸義軍 [Returning Righteous Army] from 851 to 867) or by his successor, Zhang Huaishen 張淮深 (831–90; commissioner from 867 to 890). Only a very small fragment of the painting on the ceiling of Cave 156 is preserved, but it exhibits a dhāraṇī copy placed on the top of a three-tiered parasol (see Figure 137) and another one placed on a two-storey building (see Figure 138).[93] Caves 55 and 454 were dug out much later, during the second half of the tenth



Figure 134. *Illustration of the Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing and the Story of Buddhapālita.*
Source: Courtesy of Dunhuang Academy. Photograph by Shi Pingting, Dunhuang Academy.
Note: Dunhuang Cave 217. South wall. Early eighth century. Mural painting.



Figure 135. *Illustration of the Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*.
Source: Courtesy of Dunhuang Academy. Photograph by Wang Huimin, Dunhuang Academy.
Note: Dunhuang Cave 23. Eastern ceiling. Second half of the eighth century. Mural painting.



Figure 136. Dhāraṇī written on a placard-like support placed on top of a three-tiered parasol.
Source: Courtesy of Dunhuang Academy. Photograph by Wang Huimin, Dunhuang Academy.
Note: Detail of lower left corner of mural in Figure 135.



Figure 137. Dhāraṇī copy placed on the top of a three-tiered parasol.
Source: Courtesy of Dunhuang Academy. Photograph by Yin Guangming, Dunhuang Academy.
Note: Detail of *Illuatration of the Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*. Dunhuang Cave 156. Ceiling of antechamber. Second half of the ninth century. Mural painting.



Figure 138. Dhāraṇī copy placed on the top of a two-storey building.
Source: Courtesy of Dunhuang Academy. Photograph by Yin Guangming, Dunhuang Academy.
Note: Detail of *Illustration of the Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*. Second half of the ninth century. Dunhuang Cave 156. Mural painting.

century, by three military chief commissioners of the Cao 曹 family.

There is no depiction of dhāraṇī stone pillars in these murals. All show how to place the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* for cultic purposes. The dhāraṇī is written on a placard-like support[94] placed either on top of a three-tiered parasol (see Figures 136, 137 and 140), on top of a high mountain (see Figure 136), on top of a multi-storey building (see Figures 136, 138), or on a stūpa, as prescribed in the sūtra.

The chronological order of Mogao paintings connected with the cult of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* began with Caves 217, 103, then 23 and 31. They were painted before the Tibetan occupation of Dunhuang (781–848), a period during which no similar painting is known to date. However, we know that the Tibetans knew of the sūtra relating to the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*, and the Dunhuang manuscript S. 2146, composed during the Tibetan period, mentions the installation of the *Shengchuang* 勝幢, which is certainly an abbreviation for *Zunsheng chuang* 尊勝幢 or *Zunsheng tuoluoni chuang* 尊勝陀羅尼幢 ("banner inscribed with the *Zunsheng tuoluoni*"), as used also in the dhāraṇī pillars' inscriptions mentioned above.[95] Soon after Zhang Yichao defeated the Tibetan army, he or his successor



Figure 139. Cartouche with inscription.
Source: Courtesy of Dunhuang Academy. Photograph by Wang Huimin, Dunhuang Academy.
Note: The inscription gives the name of the painting (first line read from the left): *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jingbian* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經變 (Transformation tableau of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*). Detail of Illustration of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jingbian in* Dunhuang Cave 454. North wall. Second half of the tenth century. Mural painting.

had, if not the entire scene, at least a few sequences of the sūtra painted on the ceiling in the antechamber of Cave 156. This is the cave where Zhang Yichao had painted his military procession and the cortège of his spouse, Madam Song 宋氏, as a memorial of his victory against the Tibetan political and military ruler of the Dunhuang region (*Chu Tubo shoufu Hexi yidao xingtu* 除吐蕃收復河西一道行圖), as indicated in one of two cartouches.[96] The *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* painting in Cave 156, if the identification is accepted, probably looked like those depicted on the ceiling of Cave 23 or that of Cave 31.

In 962, Chief Military Commissioner Cao Yuanzhong 曹元忠 (commissioner from 944 to 974) had the sūtra painted in Cave 55, newly excavated for his family's sake. A bit later, his two heirs, Cao Yankong 曹延恭 (commissioner from 974 to 976) and Cao Yanlu 曹延祿 (commissioner from 976 to 1002), had a similar illustration painted in a newly excavated family cave, Cave 454, much bigger than Cave 55.[97] These two new murals of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* depict the whole sūtra, without any allusion to Buddhapālita and the story of his translation as depicted in Caves 217 and 103. The spatial composition is also different, but the iconographic presentation of each theme is similar to those in Caves 217 and 103. There are free citations of the sūtra in the cartouches of both Cao-family sūtra paintings, and it is clearly written that they are illustrations of the *Foding zunsheng tuolouni jing* (see Figure 139). Some cartouches can still be deciphered. In Cave 454, close to the three-tiered parasol, a cartouche (Figure 140) contains a free quotation from the sūtra exalting the effectiveness of the shadow or the dust of the "high banner" or the "high mountain" for helping deceased people be reborn in heaven (*Foding Zunsheng tuoluoni huo an gaochuang huo an gaoshan/qi ying yingzhuo wangzhe shengshang huo chui chentu jiede shengtian* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼 或安高幢或安高山/其影影著亡者身上或吹塵土皆得生天).

The above-mentioned military commissioners—Zhang Yichao, Zhang Huaisheng, Cao Yuanzhong, Cao Yankong, and Cao Yanlu—could also have erected dhāraṇī pillars, as other Han Chinese did in central China, had they wished to do so. It is true that good quarrying and material for stone carving were not easily available at Dunhuang. But they probably did not erect pillars because they felt that ordering the excavation of a new cave—and the painting (*jingbain* 經變) in it of representations of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*; scenes from the Maitreya sūtra, Amitāyus sūtra, Guanyin sūtra, Bhaiṣajyaguru sūtra, and so forth; and portraits of themselves and family members—was more in the Dunhuang tradition. Indeed, ordering the excavation and decoration of a cave-temple had always been a meritorious action in Dunhuang. In Cave 454, dug out by Cao Yankong and Cao Yanlu successively, the king and a princess of Khotan are shown among the donors (*gongyanren* 供養人). The main donor, or *kuzhu* 窟主 (cave-chief), named in the dedicatory inscription probably believed he would gain as much

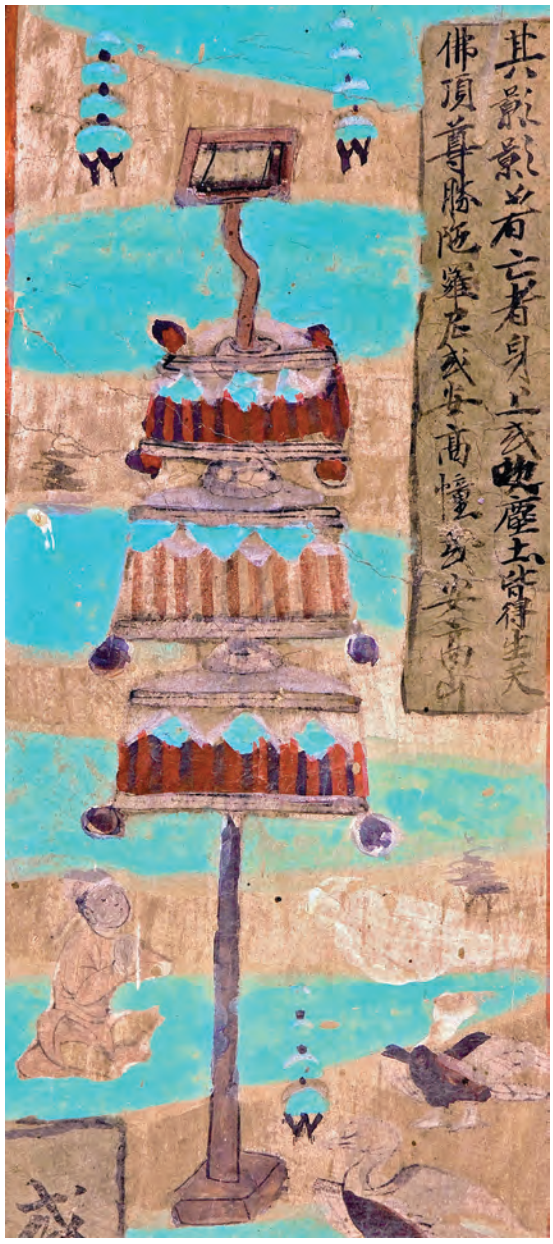


Figure 140. Cartouche with inscription.
Source: Courtesy of Dunhuang Academy. Photograph by Yin Guangming, Dunhuang Academy.
Note: Free quoting of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* in a cartouche next to a three-tiered parasol with dhāraṇī placard on top. Detail of *Illustration of the Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jingbian*. Dunhuang Cave 454. North wall. Second half of the tenth century. Mural painting.

religious merit—and much greater political benefit—by paying for that painting than by erecting a dhāraṇī pillar.

We know that, besides ordering representations of the dhāraṇī-sūtra, these military chiefs also commissioned dhāraṇī-banners for various ceremonies, as had the Tibetan rulers at Dunhuang: many Dunhuang manuscripts of the Tibetan and Guiyijun periods contain series of texts composed for seasonal rites—the *Zhisan wen* 置傘文 ("Parasol installation," e.g., S. 2146), *Xingcheng wen* 行城文 ("City's circumambulation," e.g., P. 3224), *Simen zhuanjing wen* 四門轉經文 ("Sūtras' psalmody on the four city-gates," e.g., P. 2580), *Qingfan wen* 慶幡文 ("Banner celebration," e.g., P. 2588V°d), and so forth. These texts frequently refer to the setting up of banners and parasols. The text inscribed on the banner may not necessarily have been the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*. More often it was the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa Sitātapatra dhāraṇī* or a different sūtra, such as those we read on stelae and dhāraṇī banner-pillars. The dhāraṇī banners established in the Dunhuang region were certainly similar to those depicted in the paintings. They were made out of cloth and wood. That may explain why the pillar found nearest to Dunhuang is in Tianshui 天水 in Gansu (dated 939),[98] approximately 1,125 kilometres southeast of Dunhuang as the crow flies.

Conclusion

According to an inscription dated 548, a lay Buddhist named Liu Shuangzhou 劉雙周, from the Qingzhou district in Shandong, established stūpas adorned with figures of the Five Buddhas and Six Bodhisattvas at crossroads, in order to bring good fortune to his family and all sentient beings.[99] Qingzhou recently became famous for an archaeological discovery of Buddhist statues and stelae contemporary with this inscription. During the Six Dynasties and Sui 隋 (ca. 581–618) periods, the carving and establishing of stelae engraved with Buddhist figures and symbolic objects seems to have been one of the preferred meritorious deeds of lay devotees. Later, in early Tang

times, members of the Buddhist clergy began to have sūtras engraved on stone, such as on rock surfaces or in cave walls. Thus did the monk Jingwan 靜琬 in Fangshan 房山, from 628 on, preserve the entire Buddhist canon from destruction. In 692, only ten years after its translation, the *Foding zunsheng tuoluni jing* was engraved in a Longmen cave by a lay devotee for the sake of Empress Wu Zetian, and also to enable his deceased mother to be reborn as a male in the Pure Land. The same sūtra was engraved on two octagonal pillars later, in 697 and 702, also during the reign of Empress Wu.

Dhāraṇī pillars seem to have replaced stelae carved with images to a great extent. The texts of sūtras, mantras, and dhāraṇīs took the place of images. The names and titles of the donors and other participants—*chuangzhu* 幢主 ("banner donor"), *xiangzhu* 像主 ("image donor"), *yizhu* 邑主 ("chief of association"), *yizi* 邑子 ("member of association"), and so on—were entered into a more readable dedicatory inscription engraved on the dhāraṇī pillar, in lieu of being engraved in spaces left empty in between the image carvings.

Being the support of the sūtras engraved on it, the pillar became the Dharma body (Ch. *fashen* 法身; Skt. *dharmakāya*). It is said in the sūtra that a person who worships and circumambulates a stūpa inscribed with or containing the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* should be known as "the real Buddha's disciple, a principal pillar maintaining the Dharma" (*Fozi chifa dongliang* 佛子持法棟樑), and also as "the stūpa of the entire corporeal relic of the Tathāgata" (*Rulai quanshen sheli sudubota* 如來全身舍利窣堵波塔).[100] Dhāraṇī pillars, henceforth called *jingchuang* or *tuoluonichuang* (sūtra or dhāraṇī banner-poles), were very popular for many centuries afterwards throughout East Asia. The story of the meeting of Buddhapālita and Mañjuśrī greatly contributed to the popularization of the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* in China. Very soon it was known at Dunhuang and represented there in wall-paintings.

The earliest pillars, often erected by the Buddhist clergy and the laity together, are accompanied by wishes for the well-being of the emperor. Those bearing a head-title insist on this purpose. But the pillars soon became funerary offerings for deceased masters, as respect for the state and its monarch became less and less conspicuous. They were monuments for the monastic community, a testimony of the disciples' devotion to their departed master.

Later, laypeople began to erect dhāraṇī pillars as family funeral monuments. In this context, the strong institutional feeling towards the state itself and towards the Buddhist clergy (Skt. *saṃgha*, Pali *saṅgha*) disappears from dedicatory inscriptions. In the funerary context the dhāraṇī pillar is only a tool to prevent bad rebirths, and functions as a sort of gravestone designed to indicate and protect the deceased person's tomb.

The inscription of sūtras, dhāraṇīs, and mantras on pillars parallels the evolution of the use of Buddhist texts in ritual. The inscribed texts are those copied and read out in rites sharing the same purpose as the dhāraṇī pillars. The invitation stanzas engraved on pillars clearly have a ritual connotation. "Invitation" is one of the first ceremonial steps that an officiant has to accomplish in most religious rituals because these rituals require a divine presence. The first task of the officiant, after cleaning and establishing the altar, or *bodhimaṇḍa*, and ritually purifying himself, is to invite the deity to descend to the altar by delivering an eulogy and offering him flowers, incense, and purified water in the manner of a host receiving a noble guest. Carving the invitation stanzas to the dhāraṇī on a pillar thus transformed the dhāraṇī, the divine formula, into an invisible deity who would remain present for eternity on the pillar and on the spot where it was erected. In other words, the stone pillar became the dhāraṇī deity himself. Thus the dhāraṇī's supernatural powers would stay forever and produce miracles for both the living and the dead. As such, the dhāraṇī pillar serves as a distinct example of the adaptations and innovations Buddhism underwent in China.

Notes

1. See, for example, Liu Shu-fen, "*Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* yu Tangdai zunsheng jingchuang de jianli"; idem, "Jingchuang de xingzhi he laiyuan"; idem, "Muchuang";

and Lin Yun-jo, "Tangdai *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* de yichuan yu xinyang." See also Kuo Liying, "*Bucchōsonshōdarani* no dempa to gishiki"; idem, "Inscriptions on 'Stone Banners' (*shichuang*)"; idem, "Philologie du bouddhisme chinois: Aspects politico-religieux et traductions de l'*Uṣṇīṣavijayadhāraṇī-sūtra*"; and idem, "Philologie du bouddhisme chinois: Rites et utilisation des formules de protection (*dhāraṇī* et *mantra*) aux VI^e^–XII^e^ siècles."

2. A dhāraṇī is a Mahāyānic formula, a string of more or less Sanskritic words, often of obscure meaning, used as an aide-memoire for mental exercises by bodhisattvas. By reciting it, a bodhisattva is supposed to recollect the buddhas' and bodhisattvas' teachings and the knowledge he had acquired in his previous existences. A strophe pronounced by a buddha, a sūtra, and even the whole Buddhist canon could thus be termed a dhāraṇī. The word *dhāraṇī* derives from the Sanskrit root DHṚ ("to hold"), translated *zongchi* 總持 ("to hold totally") by early Chinese translators. See Kuo Liying, *Confession et contrition*, p. 48. The most usual sense of *dhāraṇī* is that of a spell, made of Sanskrit words and syllables without any meaning, which a devout Buddhist should recite or write down to ward off any danger or to obtain the realization of a vow. The dhāraṇī is therefore a formula which may be termed magical, since to be efficacious it must be uttered with the greatest exactitude. For this reason, dhāraṇīs were transcribed using Chinese characters whose pronunciation was as close as possible to the original Indian pronounciation. Because the meaning of these Chinese characters has no import at all, the text so transcribed has no meaning in Chinese. To give an indication of its nature, the word *zhou* 咒 ("spell") or *shenzhou* 神咒 ("divine spell") was sometimes added at the end of the dhāraṇī title. The Sanskrit word *mantra* ("sacred formula") is much older. It appears already in the oldest Indian text, the *Ṛgveda*. A mantra is a verse, or part of a verse, pronounced during Vedic sacrifices and, later, in Hindu rites. Its efficacy also depends on its exact utterance. A dhāraṇī spell is usually much longer than a mantra. But these words became soon interchangeable. They are sometimes even used together, thus the *Buddhoṣṇīṣa vijayā dhāraṇī* occasionally received the appellation *tuoluoni zhenyan* 陀羅尼真言 (dhāraṇī mantra). See, among others, Lamotte, *Le traité de la grande vertu de sagesse de Nāgārjuna* IV: 1854–64; Braarvig, "*Dhāraṇī* and *Pratibhāna*"; Padoux, *L'énergie de la parole*; Strickmann, *Mantras et mandarins*, pp. 66–78; McBride, "Dhāraṇī and Spells in Medieval Sinitic Buddhism"; and Kuo, "Philologie du bouddhisme chinois: Aspects politico-religieux," pp. 467–69.
3. Kuo, *Databank of Dhāraṇī Pillars (697–1285)*, forthcoming.
4. Reproductions of these texts have been published in many places. The most recent and complete ones were reproduced by Xinwenfeng Publishers in Taipei in the *Shike shiliao xinbian*. Cf. Kuhn and Stahl, *Annotated Bibliography to Shike shiliao xinbian*.
5. Exceptions are Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, and Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*. The latter made additions and corrections to the *Jinshi cuibian*.
6. See Zhou Shaoliang, ed., *Quan Tangwen xinbian*.
7. For example, the date of 689 indicated in the sūtra's preface was misundertood as that of the pillar's erection. See Shaanxi Sheng Wenwu Guanli Weiyuanhui, "Shaanxi suojian de Tangdai jingchuang," p. 29. For a correction, see Su Bai, "Dunhuang Mogaoku Mijiao yiji zhaji," p. 53 n. 16.
8. The Shanxi pillar, dated 697, is the earliest inscribed pillar in my databank. Hu Pinzhi, in his *Shanyou shike congbian* (*juan* 5: 13a), published in 1901, which is my only source for that date, rightly remarks that the date given in the inscription (the twenty-eighth day of the third month in the first year of the Shen'gong era, i.e., April 24, 697, under Empress Wu Zetian) cannot be correct since, according to (Liu Xu et al.'s) *Jiu Tangshu* (*juan* 6, *Benji* 本紀 6: 5a), the Shen'gong era had a duration of four months only, from the ninth to the twelfth months (i.e., September 21, 697–February 7, 698). The date may have been engraved during or after the time when the designation "Shen'gong era" was in use. As far as I know, the pillar does not exist anymore and the inscription cannot be checked.
9. Shen Tao, *Changshan zhenshizhi*, *juan* 7: 1–2; Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 46: 1–4; Kuo, *Databank of Dhāraṇī Pillars*, no. 2. For the title "Saintly and Divine" for Empress Wu, see Forte, *Political Propaganda and Ideology in China*, pp. 4, 9, and p. 217 n. 108.
10. The date is deduced from the imperial titles of the emperor and empress; cf. Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 46: 22–24.
11. See, for example, Xia Mingcai, *Zhongguo zhongda kaogu fajue ji*, and Qingzhoushi Bowuguan, ed., *Qingzhou Longxingsi fojiao zaoxiang yishu*.
12. Ono Katsutoshi, *Nittō guhō junrei kōki no kenkyū*, vol.

4, pp. 71, 74; Reischauer, *Ennin's Diary*, pp. 347–48. However, Reischauer translates the *Zunsheng shichuang* as "the revered stone pillar."

13. See Wong, *Chinese Steles*, and Abe, *Ordinary Images*.
14. A Sanskrit manuscript of the sūtra, discovered some twenty years ago, most probably in Gilgit, is now preserved in the Miho Museum in Japan. The manuscript has been damaged, but its title is preserved in the end of the text. It is the *Sarvagatipariśodhanoṣṇīṣa-vijayā dhāraṇī*. The word "sūtra" does not appear in the Sanskrit title. See Schopen, "A 6th/7th Century Sanskrit Manuscript."
15. According to Fei Zhangfang in his *Lidai sanbao ji*, compiled in 597, a now-lost *Foding zhoujing bing gongneng* 佛頂咒經並功能 (*Foding* spell and its abilities) was translated in 564 by Zhe'nayeshe 闍那耶舍 (Jñānayaśas), *T.* 2034, 49:100b18.
16. *T.* 968, *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*, 1 *juan*. See also the list of these five translations in the References.
17. See Yancong's preface to the second translation, *T.* 969, 19: 355a26–b3. A few tabooed characters, *shi* 世, *zhi* 治, and *shi* 勢, can be seen in *T.* 968. These three characters evoke the names of the emperors Taizong (Li Shimin 李世民) and Gaozong (Li Zhi 李治). Writing the names of the emperors was forbidden to all, except for a handful of officials. For this reason, in this translation only, *shizun* 世尊 (Worldly Venerable One = the Buddha) is written *shengzun* 聖尊 (Holy Venerable One; *T.* 968, 19: 353a19); Dashi 大勢 (the Chinese translation of the name of the Bodhisattva Mahāsthāmaprāpta) is written Daqu 大趣 (*T.* 968, 19: 353a11); *shijie* 世界 (world) becomes *shengjie* 生界 (living world, *T.* 968, 19: 353b13); and *jiuzhi* 救治 (save and cure) becomes *jiuchu* 救除 (save and remove; *T.* 968, 19: 354b18). *Shi* 勢 was probably tabooed because it is pronounced like the character *shi* 世 of Li Shimin.
18. *T.* 969, *Foding zuisheng tuoluoni jing*, with a preface written by Yancong, dated the twenty-third day of the fifth month of the first year of Yongchun (= July 3, 682), *T.* 969, 19:355b4–11.
19. *T.* 967, *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*. The attribution of the translation to Buddhapālita is done in the preface attached to this translation collected in the *Taishō Canon*, *T.* 967, 19:349b1–c19. The text itself was probably written by a monk called Zhijing 志靜, unknown elsewhere, sometime after 689, the last date mentioned in the preface.
20. *T.* 970, *Zuisheng foding tuoluoni jingchu yezhang zhou jing*. In his catalogue compiled in 730, the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, Zhisheng states that Divākara translated the sūtra at Luoyang with a monk called Huizhi 慧智 (*T.* 2154, 55:564a3–4); for Huizhi, see Forte, "Hui-chih (fl. 676–703), a Brahmin Born in China." For Divākara, see Forte, "Divākara (613–688), un monaco indiano nella Cina des T'ang." For the dates of these translations, see also Huilin's 慧琳 (737–820) *Yiqiejing yinyi* 一切經音義 (compiled in 802), *T.* 2128, 54:544a.
21. *T.* 971. *Foshuo Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*.
22. This legend is told in the preface, *T.* 967, 19:349b1–c19.
23. Liu Jinglong and Li Yukun, *Longmen shiku beike tiji huilu*, vol. 2, p. 274.
24. This pillar stands in front of the Gongxian cave-temples in Henan; see Henansheng Wenwu Yanjiusuo, ed., *Zhongguo shiku*, pp. 291–93.
25. The *Liumen tuoluoni jing* was translated by Xuanzang in 645 (*T.* 1360) and even copied out by Emperor Taizong 太宗 (r. 626–49) himself; cf. *Si samen Xuanzang shangbiao ji*, *T.* 2119, 52:820c11–26. But curiously, the 728 stone pillar inscription does not contain the name of Xuanzang. The former director of the Archaeology Institute of Shaanxi Province, the late Han Wei 韓偉, kindly sent me a rubbing of the inscription.
26. Li Hui, *Shaanxi shike wenxian mulu jicun*, p. 96. This pillar is said to come from Jinyang xian 涇陽縣 near Xi'an. See Mao Fengzhi, *Guanzhong jinshi wenzi cunyikao*, *juan* 7: 3.
27. *T.* 1024. This translation is entitled *Wugou jingguang tuoluoni jing* 無垢淨光陀羅尼經 (Dhāraṇī sūtra of pure light without any stain).
28. *T.* 1025. This version is entitled *Foding fang wugou guangming ru pumen guancha yiqie rulaixin tuoluoni jing* 佛頂放無詬光明入普門觀察一切如來心陀羅尼經 (*Samantamukha praveśaraśmi vimaloṣṇīṣa prabhā sarvatathāgata hṛdaya samāvalokita dhāraṇī*).
29. *Shoku Nihongi*, IV (*kan* 30, article 21), in *Shin Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, vol. 15: 291. Pelliot suggested that the printing of the dhāraṇīs started in 764 and stopped in 770, just after Empress Shōtoku's death in 769; see his *Les débuts de l'imprimerie en Chine*, pp. 28–30. Some of these little wooden pagodas can be seen in both the Tokyo and the Nara national museums. See also Ishigami-Iagolnitzer, "Les Hyakumantō-dhāraṇī et les débuts de la xylographie

au Japon." A xylographic print of this dhāraṇī sūtra was discovered inside a pagoda erected in 751 in the Bulguksa temple 佛國寺 in Kyongju 慶州, S. Korea. The Chinese characters made during Empress Wu's reign can be read in this dhāraṇī print. Cf. Ogg Li, "Imprimerie coréenne du VI^{e} au XIV^{e} siècle," pp. 137–38.

30. Schopen, "The *Bodhigarbhālaṅkāralakṣa* and *Vimaloṣṇīṣa Dhāraṇīs* in Indian Inscriptions"; idem, "The Text of the'Dhāraṇī Stones from Abhayagiriya.'"
31. *T.* 1064, edited from a Japanese edition of 1801, is actually a section from Qiefantamo's translation (*T.* 1060): *T.* 1064, 20:115c2–117a9 = *T.* 1060, 20:106c17–107c26; *T*. 1064, 20:116b13–117a9 = *T.* 1060, 20:107b25–c26. *T.* 1064 adds sixteen gāthās before the invocations to Guanyin (*T.* 1064, 20:b23–c1). Avalokiteśvara's "thousand hands" are actually thirty-eight in the descriptions of *T.* 1060 (111a5–b11) and forty-one, in a slightly different order, in *T.* 1064, with the addition of sketches of hands and spells (*zhenyan* 真言) for each (117a10–119b23).
32. Wen Yucheng, "Bo Juyi guju chutu de jingchuang."
33. Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 82: 34–35.
34. A *Dalun jin'gang tuoluoni* 大輪金剛陀羅尼 (Dhāraṇī of Big Wheel Vajra[sattva]) is to be found in the *Tuoluoni jijing*, *T.* 901(2), 18:803b10–18, and also in the *Dalun jingang zongchi tuoluoni jing*, but it is called *Dalun jin'gang tuoluonixin zhenyan* 大輪金剛陀羅尼心真言 (Mantra of the heart of the dhāraṇī of Big Wheel Vajra[sattva]), *T.* 1230, 21:162a11–16. In the *Taishō Canon*, a short text entitled *Dalun jin'gang tuoluoni* is added at the end of Divākara's second translation of the *Foding zuisheng tuoluoni jing*, *T.* 969, 19:357b, and is attributed to Divākara. The Big Wheel dhāraṇī is also copied with other mantras and dhāraṇīs in the Dunhuang manuscripts, such as S. 2498 in London and P. 2197 in Paris. For a reconstruction of this dhāraṇī in Sanskrit, see Duquenne, "Dairin 大輪," pp. 975–76.
35. There are three translations of the *Sūtra of the Cundīdevī Dhāraṇī* in the *Taishō Canon*: (1) the *Qijuzhi fomuxin Dazhunti tuoluoni jing* 七俱胝佛母心大准提陀羅尼經 (Sūtra of the heart of seven koṭis of Buddha-Mothers, Great Cundīdevī dhāraṇī), translated by Divākara in 685 (data according the colophon of the Dunhuang manuscript S. 83), *T.* 1077; (2) the *Qijuzhi fomu Zhunti daming tuoluoni jing* 七俱胝佛母准提大明陀羅尼經 (Sūtra of seven koṭis of Buddha-Mothers, Cundīdevī great vidyā dhāraṇī), translated by Vajrabodhi (d. 732), *T.* 1075; and (3) the *Qijuzhi fomu suoshuo Zhunti tuoluoni jing* 七俱胝佛母所說准提陀羅尼經 (Sūtra of Cundīdevī dhāraṇī, spoken by seven koṭis of Buddha-Mothers), translated by Amoghavajra, *T*. 1076. But the title given in the inscription corresponds to one of the ritual texts, the *Qifo juzhi fomuxin Dazhunti tuoluoni fa* 七佛俱胝佛母心大准提陀羅尼法 (Heart of seven Buddhas koṭis of Buddha-Mothers, Great Cundīdevī dhāraṇī ritual), attributed to Śubhakarasiṃha, *T.* 1078, taken from a Japanese edition of 1801.
36. This dhāraṇī of Amitāyus is printed in the ritual handbook for contemplating the Tathāgata Amitāyus, *Wuliangshou rulai guanxing gongyang yigui* 無量壽如來觀行供養儀軌 (Contemplation ritual on Amitāyus Tathāgata), composed by Amoghavajra, *T.* 930, 19:71b5–18. We do not know much about the "mantra of the heart of Amitābha," but in the same text there is a "mantra of the heart of the Tathāgata Amitāyus" (*Wuliangshou rulai xin zhenyan* 無量壽如來心真言), which could be the one said to have been inscribed on a pillar erected in 871 at the Wolong monastery 臥龍寺 of Xianning 咸寧 Prefecture in Shaanxi. See Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, *juan* 67: 14a–b, and Hong Yixuan, *Pingjin dubeiji*, *juan* 8: 17a–b.
37. Cf. Chengdushi Wenwu Kaogu Gongzuodui, "Chengdushi Wudaimu chutu Zunsheng tuoluoni shike."
38. The two manuals are *Zunsheng foding xiu yuqiefa guiyi*, by Śubhakarasiṃha (*T*. 973), and *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni niansong yiguifa*, by Amoghavajra (*T*. 972); see the References list. The *Taishō Canon* includes another ritual manual, ascribed to a ninth-century monk from Kucha called Ruona 若那, entitled *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni biefa* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼別法, *T.* 974F. But it is an extract from *T*. 973. According to the *Répertoire du Canon bouddhique sino-japonais* (*Hōbōgirin* catalogue, p. 270b), Ruona was active around 838. However, the *Répertoire* refers to the *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten*, where the date is given as 805; see Ono Gemmyō, ed., *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten*, vol. 9: 326c. In the biography of Śubhakarasiṃha, a man named Ruona 若那 was sent by the emperor Ruizong (r. 710–12) to receive this Indian master (*T.* 2061, 50: 715a26–27). Chou Yi-liang associated that Ruona with a monk named 提雲若那 (Devendrajñāna,

Sanskrit name reconstituted according to Chou Yi-liang) who came to China from Khotan in 689 AD (*T.* 2061, 50: 719b5–13); see his "Tantrism in China," p. 262 n. 62. About Tiyunruona 提雲若那, see Forte, "Le moine khotanais Devendrajña." See also Chen Jinhua, *Crossfire*, p. 190.

39. Hong Yixuan, *Pingjin dubeiji*, appended 3, *juan* 3: 18.
40. These two stories name two Tang officers, Zhang Yi 張繹 and Ma Yang 馬揚. They are printed in the last part of the *Jiaju lingyan foding zunsheng tuoluoni ji*, *T.* 974C, 19:386c29–387b8. The *Répertoire du Canon bouddhique sino-japonais* (p. 269) indicates that the *Jiaju lingyan foding zunsheng tuoluoni ji* was compiled by Wu Che in 823, the last date given in the text. But according to the text itself, Wu's personal story took place during the Yongtai era (765–66). Wu Che compiled only the first portion of this text, and even that is not entirely certain. The incorrect date is repeated by Liu Shu-fen ("*Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* yu Tangdai zunsheng jingchuang de jianli," p. 161), according to whom Wu Che was active during the ninth century. About Wu Che, see also Chen Jinhua, "*Śarīra* and Scepter," p. 110 n. 199.
41. *T.* 974C, 19:386a1–387b10.
42. The earliest instance, dated 934, is included in Lu Zengxiang (*Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 79: 28b–29b), from a rubbing kept at Cunguge 存古閣 in Luoyang. Ruan Yuan (*Liangzhe jingshizhi*, *juan* 4: 9) and Hong Yixuan (*Pingjin dubeiji*, appended 3, *juan* 3: 22b–23a) both refer to another pillar erected in 937 at Gaomingsi 高明寺 in Tiantai 天台 Prefecture, Zhejiang. The dhāraṇī is entitled *Jiaju lingyan foding zunsheng tuoluoni zhenyan* 加句靈驗佛頂尊勝陀羅尼真言 (Extended and miraculous *Foding zhunsheng tuoluoni* mantra) on both pillars.
43. For example, mss. P. 2197, 3919 in Paris, and S. 2566, 4378 in London.
44. Three pillars were erected in 971, 987, and 1003; see Duan Songling, *Yidu jinshiji*, *juan* 2: 29–31, 31–32, and 34–36, respectively.
45. Two pillars were erected in 1025, one at the Chengtiansi 承天寺 temple in Jinjiang; the other is now located in a shrine called Taoyuangong 桃源宮 on the outskirts of Quanzhou (Chen Qiren, *Minzhong jinshilue*, *juan* 3: 24–25 and 25–26, respectively). The inscription on the second one is published in Fu Jinxing, *Lianhuafeng zhi*, pp. 81–88.
46. See *Épigraphie en chinois du Viêt Nam*, pp. 51–72. One of these dhāraṇī pillars and an incomplete rubbing of the inscription are exhibited in the Hanoi Historical Museum. Others are still kept in the Ninh Bình Province Museum.
47. The *Heart Sutra*, often called *Miduoxinjing* 蜜多心經, or *Duoxinjing* 多心經 (the short title of the *Panruo boluomiduo xinjing* 般若波羅蜜多心經, Skt. *Prajñāpāramitā hṛdaya sūtra*), is engraved on a pillar erected in 702, during Wu Zetian's reign. This is the second-earliest dated pillar. See Shen Tao, *Changshan zhenshizhi*, *juan* 7: 1–2; Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 46: 1–4.
48. The other dhāraṇīs and mantras are: *Wuliangshou rulai shiganlu zhenyan* 無量壽如來十甘露真言 (Ten *amṛtas* [ambrosias] mantra of Amitāyus); *Ruyilun genben zhenyan* 如意輪根本真言 (Fundamental mantra of [Avalokiteśvara] Cintāmaṇicakra); *Qingjing fashen Piluzhenafo huashen wubu daochangzhu Dalun jin'gang sanmeiye zhenyan* 清淨法身毗盧遮那佛化身五部道場主大輪金剛三昧耶真言 (*Samaya* mantra of the Master of Five Clans *Bodhimaṇḍa*, Big Wheel Vajra[sattva], the metamorphotic body [or *nirmāṇakāya*] of Vairocana's pure Dharma body); *Baolouge tuoluoni* 寶樓閣陀羅尼 (Dhāraṇī for the Treasure Pavilion); *Dabei xinzhongxin zhenyan* 大悲心中心真言 (Mantra of the heart of the Great Compassionate One); *Wenshu zhou* 文殊咒 (Mañjuśrī spell); and *Wangsheng zhou* 往生咒 (Spell for being reborn [in the Pure Land]).
49. *T.* 945, 19:134a1–136c14 and 139a15–141b13 (second version).
50. Zhisheng gives two different origins for this sūtra. In *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, he writes that the sūtra was translated by a Chinese monk called Huaidi 懷迪 from a Sanskrit manuscript brought to Guangzhou 廣州 by an unnamed Indian monk; *T.* 2154, 55:571c14–26. But according to his other work, the *Xu gujin yijing tuji*, the sūtra was translated in Guangzhou in 705 by an Indian monk called Panlamidi 般剌蜜諦 (Pāramiti?) working together with another Indian monk, from Uḍḍiyāna, named Mijiashijia 彌迦釋迦 (Meghaśikhara?) and a Chinese high official, Fang Rong 房融, who wrote down the (Chinese) translation (*bishou* 筆受), and Huaidi "confirmed the translation" (*zhengyi* 證譯); *T.* 2152, 55:371c24–372a6. See also Demiéville, *Le Concile de Lhasa*, pp. 43–46.

51. *T.* 945 (7), 19:137c4–10. *Tuoshe* 脫閣 is a rare Chinese transcription of the pronunciation for the Sanskrit word *dhvaja*, which means "banner"; it is usually translated into *chuang* 幢, as in *shichuang* (stone banner). The installation of the dhāraṇī on the four gates of the city is mentioned in liturgical prayers from Dunhuang, such as the *Zhisan wen* 置傘文 (Parasol installation) and *Xingcheng wen* 行城文 (City's circumambulation). See, for example, S. 2146, edited in *T.* 2853, 85:1301b7–1303b13, which is a copy of those texts used by the Tibetans at Dunhuang (781–848).
52. The same family erected another pillar at the same time, inscribed with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* and its preface, for the benefit of the deceased mother. The two pillars were installed on the east and west sides of the Grand Hall dedicated to the Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗, called Kaiyuan zunxiang dian 開元尊像殿 (Hall of the Venerable Statue of the Kaiyuan Emperor) of the Tianning nunnery. See Ruan Yuan, *Liangzhe jingshizhi*, *juan* 3: 20–23; Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 48: 6–8; and Lu Xinyuan, *Wuxing jinshiji*, *juan* 4: 44.
53. *T.* 944A, 19:100a1–102c17.
54. *T.* 944A, 19:102c18–20, colophon dated 1703 (the sixth day of the second month of Genroku era 16), printed after the Ōbaku edition 黃檗版 (1669–78) with Jōgon's 淨嚴 (1639–1702) notes.
55. *Daizongchao zheng Sikong dabianzheng guangzhi sanzang heshang Biaozhiji*, *juan* 1, *T.* 2120, 52:829c17–830a11. The *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* (*Dafoding tuoluoni* 大佛頂陀羅尼) is also referred to as *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa mantra* (*Dafoding zhenyan* 大佛頂真言) in this chapter heading.
56. The *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa dhāraṇī* may have been inscribed in an Indian alphabet (Chen Qiren, *Minzhong jinshilue*, *juan* 3: 14–15). The same invitation text in 44 stanzas is also engraved on a pillar in Korea; see Chōsen Sōtokufu, ed., *Chōsen kinseki sōran*, I: 542–43. The Amoghavajra version of this dhāraṇī and the same invitation text are also inscribed on a tenth-century stone tablet at Fangshan Yunjusi 房山雲居寺, but here the invitation text bears the full title *Yiqie rulai biasangai dafoding tuoluoni qiqing* 一切如來白傘蓋大佛頂陀羅尼啟請 (Invitation to the *Greater Buddhoṣṇīṣa Sitātapatra dhāraṇī* of all the Tathāgatas). See Zhongguo Fojiao Xiehui, ed., *Fangshan shijing*, vol. 19 (1990): 390. For the invitation gāthās to the dhāraṇī of Thousand-Armed Avalokiteśvara and others written on a few Dunhuang manuscripts, see Kuo Liying, "Cong shichuang tan Dunhuang de tuoluoni zuofa."
57. *Daizongchao zheng Sikong Dabianzheng Guangzhi sanzang heshang biaozhiji*, *juan* 2 and 5, *T.* 2120, 52:837c–838a, 852c.
58. Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, *juan* 66: 33b; Wu Shushan and Song Bolu, *Shaanxi jinshi zhi*, *juan* 16: 19–20; Li Hui, *Shaanxi shike wenxian mulu jicun*, p. 139.
59. Chen Qiren, *Minzhong jinshilue*, *juan* 3: 15–17.
60. Chen Si, *Baoke congbian*, *juan* 7: 10a; Li Hui, *Shaanxi shike wenxian mulu jicun*, p. 138.
61. *T.* 967, 19: 351b9–18. The Chinese reads as follows: 若人能書寫此陀羅尼，安高幢上、或安高山、或安樓上、乃至安置窣堵波中.... 於幢等上、或見、或與相近、其影映身、或風吹陀羅尼上、幢等上塵落在身上，天帝，彼諸眾生所有罪業應墮惡道、地獄、畜生、閻羅王界、餓鬼界、阿修羅身、惡道之苦，皆悉不受，亦不為罪垢所染污。天帝，此等眾生為一切諸佛授記. This passage does not exist in the Sanskrit text. See Schopen, "A 6th/7th Century Sanskrit Manuscript."
62. *T.* 967, 19:351b19–24 and c. These passages exist in the Sanskrit text; see Schopen, "A 6th/7th Century Sanskrit Manuscript."
63. See, for example, Yin Guangming, *Beiliang shita yanjiu*; Zhang Baoxi, *Gansu fojiao shike zaoxiang*; Abe, *Ordinary Images*, pp. 123–50. One fragment of a stūpa is inscribed with Sanskrit in Brāhmī script and a Chinese translation of the *Pratītyasamutpāda* (Abe, *Ordinary Images*, pp. 145–48, and Yin Guanming, *Beiliang shita*, pp. 51–53).
64. Wen Yucheng, "Longmen Tianzhusi yizhi faxian Tangdai Zunsheng chuangta"; van Alphen, ed., *The Buddha in the Dragon Gate*, pp. 138–41; Longmen Bowuguan and Longmen Shiku Yanjiuyuan, eds., *Longmen bowuguan cangpin*, pp. 66–67.
65. An example is the pillar erected in 860 at the Anwensi 安穩寺 monastery of Renhe 仁和 Prefecture in Zhejiang. In addition to burying relics under the pillar, four high-ranking monks had donated 500 *wen* each in order to buy colours to decorate it (各施伍伯文入緣、買彩色嚴飾寶幢). See Hong Yixuan, *Pingjin dubeiji*, appended 3, *juan* 3: 17a–b and Ruan Yuan, *Liangzhe jingshizhi*, *juan* 3: 28–30.
66. Twenty-one lay persons had to offer flowers every year,

on the fifteenth day of the seventh month (七月十五日、幢側長造花槃供養人). See Shen Tao, *Changshan zhenshizhi*, *juan* 7: 12–16; Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 46: 4–19.

67. Shen Tao, *Changshan zhenshizhi*, *juan* 8: 9b, and Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 46: 19–25.
68. Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 82: 31–33.
69. These five texts are: (1) the *Dafoding rulai fangguang xidaduobodaluo tuoluoni* 大佛頂如來放光悉怛多鉢怛羅陀羅尼 (*Sitātaprata dhāraṇī*); (2) the *Dasuiqiu tuoluoni* 大隨求陀羅尼 (*Mahāpratisarā dhāraṇī*); (3) the *Panruo boluomiduo xinjing* 般若波羅密多心經 (Heart sūtra); (4) the *Foshuo Jin'gang dacuisui yanshou tuoluoni* 佛說金剛大摧碎延壽陀羅尼 (Dhāraṇī of the Vajra[sattva] who smashes [evil] and extends the lifespan); and (5) the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni* written in both Chinese characters and Siddham scripts (*Tang Fan* 唐梵). See Chaoyang Beita Kaogu Kanchadui, "Liaoning Chaoyang beita tiangong digong qingli jianbao," pp. 17–20.
70. Fa Weitang, *Yidu jinshizhi*, *juan* 27: 6–14.
71. Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 46: 26–27; Yan Juanying, "Sheng Tang Xuanzongchao fojiao yishu de zhuanbian," p. 629.
72. Wu Shushan and Song Bolu, *Shaanxi jinshi zhi*, 17: 3; Li Hui, *Shaanxi shike wenxian mulu jicun*, pp. 148–49.
73. The entire head-title is "*Foding zunsheng tuoluoni miaofa zengshou yifu zhi baochaung*" 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼妙 / 法增壽益福之寶幢 (The precious banner engraved with the *Buddhoṣṇīṣa vijayā dhāraṇī*, the wonderful Dharma for extending lifespan and increasing good fortune). See Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 47: 21–23; Ruan Yuan, *Liangzhe jingshizhi*, *juan* 3: 1–3.
74. The date of the first erection is unknown. The entire head-title reads "*Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jiuwei jinan miao fabao zhi chuang*" 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼救 / 危濟難妙法寶之幢 (The Dharma precious banner engraved with the *Buddhoṣṇīṣa vijayā dhāraṇī* to rescue from danger and assist in difficulty). See Ruan Yuan, *Liangzhe jingshizhi*, *juan* 3: 17–18; Lu Xinyuan, *Wuxing jinshiji*, *juan* 5: 12–14.
75. For example, the pillar erected in 842 at Tongting Baoshan 洞庭包山, Wuxian, Jiangsu, contained fourteen *sheli* (內有舍利二七粒). It was engraved with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* and *Rulai fashen jie* 如來法身偈 (*Ye dharmā*). See Wang Chang, *Jinshi cuibian*, *juan* 67: 6–7; Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 79: 23–24.
76. This pillar was found at the Huolu district in Hebei. While the inscription lacks a date, Shen Tao considers it to have been made during the Jin dynasty (1115–1234), between 1124 and 1137 (*Changshan zhenshizhi*, *juan* 13: 5–8).
77. Her obituary notice is entitled *Tang gu Longhuasi neiwai lintan dade biqiuni zunsheng tuoluoni deng chuangji* 唐故龍花寺內外臨壇大德比邱尼尊勝陀羅尼等幢記 (Text on the pillar inscribed with *Zusheng tuoluoni* and others, dedicated to the deceased *bhikṣuṇī*, the *bhadanta* who was in charge of both religious and secular ordinations at Longhuasi). There are nine dhāraṇīs and mantras inscribed together with the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*. See Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 47: 11–12.
78. This pillar stood on the outskirts of Chang'an, in the village of Wangchai in Changle county of Wannian Prefecture (萬年縣長樂鄉王柴村). It is now kept in the Art Museum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. See Yeung, "A Sūtra Pillar in the Art Museum of the Chinese University of Hong Kong."
79. Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 48: 13–14.
80. The pillars were probably standing near Pinglu Prefecture. See Shanxisheng Kaogu Yanjiusuo, ed., *Shanxi beijie*, pp. 146–49.
81. The inscription includes five distinct texts: (1) an invitation stanza to the "Extended and Miraculous *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*" (*Jiaju lingyan foding zunsheng tuoluoni qiqing* 加句靈驗佛頂尊勝陀羅尼啟請); (2) the "Extended and Miraculous *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni*" (*Jiaju lingyan foding zunsheng tuoluoni* 加句靈驗佛頂尊勝陀羅尼); (3) the *Antudi zhenyan* 安土地真言 (Mantra to appease the soil); (4) the *Bao fumu enzhong zhenyan* 報父母恩重真言 (Mantra for repaying the kindness of parents); and (5) a colophon. See Chen Qiren, ed., *Minzhong jinshilue*, *juan* 3: 25–26, and Fu Jinxing, *Lianhuafeng zhi*, pp. 81–88.
82. The pillar was located in the Qingliangsi 清涼寺 monastery in Yidu (Qingzhou), Shandong. The dhāraṇī of Amitābha is not mentioned by Duan Songling (*Yidu jinshiji*, *juan* 2: 31–32) or by Fa Weitang (*Yidu jinshizhi*, *juan* 27: 56–57), perhaps because the pillar was partly damaged. They record six other texts: (1) an invitation stanza to *Foding zunsheng zhenyan* (*Foding*

zunsheng zhenyan qiqing 佛頂尊勝真言啟請); (2) the *Foding zunsheng dhāraṇī*; (3) the invitation stanza to the Great Compassionate dhāraṇī (*Dabei tuoluoni X miao XX qiqing* 大悲陀羅尼□妙□□啟請); (4) the Great Compassionate spell (*Dabei zhou* 大悲咒); (5) the *Heart Sutra*; and (6) Li Shu's necrology. See also Liu Shu-fen, "Jingchuang de xingzhi xinzhi he laiyuan," p. 664.

83. Lu Zengxiang, *Baqiongshi jinshi buzheng*, *juan* 47: 4.
84. See Zhou Shaoliang, ed., *Quan Tangwen xinbian*, vol. Index, pp. 888–89: "*Jingchuang* 經幢" (Sūtra pillars).
85. For a study and translation of this inscription, see Kroll, *Dharma Bell and Dhāraṇī Pillar*, pp. 39–75.
86. Wen Yucheng has suggested that, in order to benefit from the shadow of the pillar, it was located at the southeastern corner of the house ("Bo Juyi guju chutu de jingchuang").
87. Wong, *Chinese Steles*, pp. 83–86 (notably 84–85 for photos and outline of the stele). Professor Stanley Abe of Duke University kindly photographed the inscription for me in 2006.
88. This stele was discovered in 1934 near Yaoxian, north of Xi'an in Shaanxi. See Zhang Yan, *Beichao fodao zaoxiang bei jingxuan*, p. 119 (photo of rubbing) and p. 140 (inscription).
89. The two illustrations used to be interpreted as depictions of the *Lotus Sutra*. See, for example, Shi Pingting and He Shizhe, "Dunhuang bihua zhong de *Fahuajing bian chutan*." Shimono Akiko has shown that the painting in Cave 217 illustrates the *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing* ("Tonkō Bakkōkutsu dai niyaku jūnana kutsu minamiheki kyōhen no shin kaishaku"), hence the re-identification of the paintings in Caves 103, 23, and 31. Shi Pingting of the Dunhuang Academy does not agree entirely with this new interpretation, but has not yet brought forth any new evidence to back up the "Lotus Sūtra theory" shared by her and He Shizhe. See Shi Pingting and Fan Quan, "Guanyu Mogaoku 217 ku nanbi bihua de sikao."
90. Wang Huimin, "Dunhuang *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jingbian* kaoshi."
91. He Shizhe, "Cong kongyangren tiji kan Mogaoku bufen tongku de yingjian niandai," pp. 203–04; idem, *Dunhuang shiku lungao*, pp. 516–18.
92. For the date of Caves 23, 31 and 103, see He Shizhe, *Dunhuang shiku lungao*, pp. 160–64.
93. I identified the dhāraṇī copy placed on top of the three-tiered parasol and on a two-storey building in this mural (see Figs. 137 and 138, respectively) when I visited Dunhuang Cave 156 in August 2010, under the guidance of Dr. Yin Guangming.
94. This support is called a "lectern" by Neil Schmid, in his paper presented to the "Cultural Crossings: China and Beyond in the Early Medieval Period" conference ("Whosoever writes this dhāraṇī …": The Ritual Use of *Dhāraṇī* Lecterns in Medieval East Asia). According to Schmid, a mural on the eastern wall of Cave 449 identified by our Dunhuang colleagues as an illustration of the *Sūtra on Repaying Kindness to the Parents* (*Bao fumu enzhong jing bain* 報父母恩重經變) would be an illustration of the *Foding zunsheng dhāraṇī sūtra* because such a lectern was placed on the flat roof of a two-storey building. Dr. Yin Guangming 殷光明 does not accept Schmid's proposition; see his "Mogaoku di 449 ku dongbi beice fei *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jingbian* bianxi."
95. For the Tibetan translation of the sūtra, see Schopen, "A 6th/7th Century Sanskrit Manuscript."
96. Dunhuang Wenwu Yanjiusuo, ed., *Dunhuang Mogaoku kongyangren tiji*, p. 74.
97. He Shizhe, *Dunhuang shiku lungao*, pp. 563–64 and 568–69. For the history of Guiyijun, see Rong Xinjiang, *Guiyijun shi yanjiu*.
98. Zhang Wei, *Longyou jinshi lu*, Section on Tang, pp. 70–71.
99. Zhao Wenqin, *Changle jinshi xuzhi*, *juan* 17: 3–4.
100. *Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing*, *T.* 967, 19:351b23–24.

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ABBREVIATIONS

P. Pelliot Collection of Tun-huang Manuscripts. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

S. Dunhuang manuscripts in the Stein Collection, British Library, London.

T. *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏経 [Taishō-era new edition of the Buddhist canon], ed. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 (1866–1945), Watanabe Kaikyoku 渡辺海旭 (1872–1932), et al. 100 vols. Tokyo: Taishō issaikyō kankōkai, 1924–35.

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Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經. 1 *juan*. Translated by Du Xingyi 杜行顗 in 679. Edited in *Taishō Canon*, *T.* 968, 19:353a1–355a5.

Foding zuisheng tuoluoni jing 佛頂最勝陀羅尼經. 1 *juan*, and preface by Yancong 彥悰, dated 682. Translated by Divākara (Ch. Dipoheluo 地婆訶羅) in 682. *T.* 969, 19:355a9–357a29.

Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經. 1 *juan*, and preface [by Zhijing 志靜] written after 689. Said to have been translated by Buddhapālita (Ch. Fotuopoli 佛陀波利) after 683, with the assistance of a Chinese monk called Shunzhen 順貞. *T.* 967, 19:349a1–352c29.

Zuisheng foding tuoluoni jingchu yezhang zhou jing 最勝佛頂陀羅尼淨除業障咒經. 1 *juan*. Said to have been translated by Divākara in 685. *T.* 970, 19:357b25–361c17.

Foshuo Foding zunsheng tuoluoni jing 佛說佛頂尊勝陀羅尼經. 1 *juan*. Translated by Yijing 義淨 (635–713) in 710. *T.* 971, 19:361c21–364b3.

Zunsheng foding xiu yuqiefa guiyi 尊勝佛頂修瑜伽法軌儀 [*Zunsheng foding* ritual manual for yoga practice]. 2 *juan*. Redaction attributed to Śubhakarasiṃha (Ch. Shanwuwei 善無畏; d. 735) or his disciple Xiwuwei 喜無畏 in 722 (data according to Huilin 慧琳 [737–820], *Yiqiejing yinyi* 一切經音義, *T.* 2128, 54:544a). *T*. 973, 19:368b1–383b29.

Foding zunsheng tuoluoni niansong yiguifa 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼念誦儀軌法 [Ritual manual for reciting the *Buddhoṣṇīṣa vijayā dhāraṇī*]. 1 *juan*. Redaction attributed to Amoghavajra (Ch. Bukong 不空; 705–74) in 764 (data according to Huilin). *T.* 972, 19:364b6–368a22.

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CHINA AND BEYOND IN THE MEDIAEVAL PERIOD

Cultural Crossings and Inter-Regional Connections

Edited by

DOROTHY C. WONG AND GUSTAV HELDT







MANOHAR
2014

A collaborative project with the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre
at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore.

First published, 2014

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ISBN 978-81-7304-056-9

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Published by
Ajay Kumar Jain *for*
Manohar Publishers & Distributors
4753/23 Ansari Road, Daryaganj
New Delhi 110 002

in association with
Cambria Press
University Corporate Centre
100 Corporate Parkway, Suite 128
Amherst, New York 14226, U.S.A.

Typeset at
Digigrafics
New Delhi 110 049

Printed at
Salasar Imaging Systems
Delhi 110 035