

**Paul Copp.** *The Body Incantatory: Spells and the Ritual Imagination in Medieval Chinese Buddhism.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2014. xxix + 363 pp. \$64.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-231-16270-8.



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**Commissioned by** Gregory A. Scott (University of Edinburgh)

An ambitious volume, *The Body Incantatory* uses its subject matter to initiate a paradigm shift in the way scholars write and think about medieval Chinese Buddhism. Paul Copp argues that incantation practices, specifically *dhāraṇī* amulets and *dhāraṇī* pillars—his primary topic—should be given greater consideration in how “we imagine the nature of Buddhist practice in late medieval China” and most especially in fleshing out its “complete language” (p. 228).[1] This latter concept drawn from Ludwig Wittgenstein underpins much of the thinking in this volume, which seeks to shift our attention away from a narrow consideration of the textual concerns of the social elite and “doctrinally super-literate monks of the great monasteries of the Tang and early Song” (p. 232) and the High Esoteric tradition. It advocates instead that we move toward a greater understanding of where the weight of the tradition falls with respect to actual practice among a greater range of participants in diverse geographic locations. The author of this volume has clearly given considerable thought to how best to present this ma-

terial and situate it vis-à-vis the larger landscape of medieval Chinese Buddhism. The preface and introduction alone exhibit a depth of reflection not usually found in other volumes of this kind.

It strikes me that there are two styles of writing operative in *Body Incantatory*. First, Copp’s theoretical analysis of ritual logics and myth fits well within the tradition of essay-style writing that Jonathan Z. Smith has used to good effect in his many reflections on major issues confronting the field of religious studies.[2] A number of sections in *Body Incantatory* can be appreciated for their tableau-style reflections: on the frameworks instituted by different genres, the conceptual nexus surrounding central terms, the inadequacy of dichotomous tropes, and so on. The literary style adopted by Copp favors metaphor and poetic flourish over straightforward description and line-by-line explanation—a style that both breathes life into its subject matter and draws the reader into broader, and I think very useful, discussions. Methodologically, creating this work required skill in the arts of interpretation and mea-

sured speculation, a skill this author most assuredly demonstrates when analyzing the tropes of adornment and anointment. Much of this volume is devoted to a literary interpretation of ritual and myth framed in terms of numerous metaphorical tropes and couched in the theoretical language of structuring, conditioning, figuring, picturing, and imagining.

In the view of this reviewer, however, this literary style has not been successfully balanced with the demands of good historical writing, which requires meticulous attention to the clear identification of the text under discussion and documentation of ideas, as well as the ability to anticipate where and when the reader will need more orientation to the material, that is, clear markers indicating what the subject is and where we are in the argument. In focusing on the theoretical and literary, Copp appears not to have anticipated the need for greater attention to historical matters. In brief, *Body Incantatory* sacrifices historical clarity in its pursuit of a new theoretical language and method of “picturing” medieval Chinese Buddhism. A more astute balance between these two writing styles would have made this volume a clearer and, ultimately, more convincing read.

This volume has already received four reviews, two of them quite substantial.[3] I am going to make the somewhat unorthodox suggestion that the reader of *Body Incantatory* give thorough consideration to two reviews in particular: those written by T. H. Barrett and Michael Radich, for the simple reason that reading them makes it easier to appreciate the arguments presented in the volume. T. H. Barrett situates *Body Incantatory* in relation to a recent wave of scholarship on *dhāraṇīs*, reaffirming its timely arrival.[4] The twenty-page review article by Michael Radich summarizes potential key findings. The bulk of the review, however, is “focused on the mechanics of scholarship,” and presents a systematic discussion of problems with dating primary sources,

the lack of documentation at key junctures, and misrepresentation of certain primary sources (particularly Zhiyi 智顗 [538-598 CE], p. 52).[5] It further criticizes the insufficient use of Indic and Central Asian materials needed to substantiate key claims about the relationship between Indic and Central Asian practices and those adopted in China.[6] In *Body Incantatory* Indic and Central Asian comparisons rely solely on two sources: Chinese texts that are, in effect, translations of relevant Indic materials and Indic-language materials that have already received attention in secondary scholarship. This asymmetry is liable to irritate scholars who can read both Chinese and Sanskrit, for Indic Buddhist cultures are imagined here far more obliquely than the claims that have been made warrant.[7] Despite the many strengths of *Body Incantatory*, I too share some of Radich’s frustrations with an apparent lack of attention to “the historian’s craft,” most particularly in the absence of proper footnote citations, an inadequate index and glossary, and occasional sloppy editing.[8] Rigorous attention to these matters is crucial because it forms the very scaffolding upon which our analyses are built.

I will now turn to a discussion of this volume’s content. The preface offers a recapitulation of what is to come, functioning in most respects as a first introduction. The introduction itself offers a sustained philological discussion of the definition of *dhāraṇī* and then offers further orienting subsections on its forms, spell writing, relationship to the bodhisattva path, and so on. This chapter is a must-read for any scholar who intends to introduce the topic of *dhāraṇī* in lecture. In a departure from previous scholarship whose analyses of *dhāraṇī* tended to focus on its orality within the context of ritual performance, Copp broadens the definition and scope by including discussion of his current topic, written incantations. Chapter 1 offers yet more orienting material, sketching out the broader scholarly and historical contexts for the study of Buddhist practice in medieval China. It is not until chapters 2 and 3 that the reader is

introduced to the two case studies that stand at the heart of this book. Chapter 4 turns outward in what feels like the beginning of a new and different project: the relationship between the advent of eighth-century High Esoteric Buddhism and the continued existence of the two types of *dhāraṇī* practice laid out in chapters 2 and 3, what Copp now refers to as heritage traditions. This chapter introduces myth analysis and reflections on the use of fantasy to describe the conceptual world of medieval religious actors. In lieu of a conclusion there is a very short epilogue. Rather than simply describe the contents of each chapter, the remainder of this review will focus on a few ideas for further consideration.

In chapter 1, there is a noteworthy discussion of agency embedded in a long reflection on scholarly conceptions of the religious life in medieval China. The discussion covers (1) religious traditions writ large, (2) the distinction between elite and popular, and (3) the lack of scholarly reflection on the agency of practitioners: “‘Buddhism’ and ‘Daoism’ remain the principle agents, not the long-dead author of a tale or improviser” and “though the pictures of Tang religious life that emerge from text-centered styles of historical scholarship are often compelling, there is the tendency to relegate anything that does not fit the established patterns of the ‘great traditions’ to the catchall category of the ‘popular,’ a realm too often considered beneath the interest of the serious scholar of Buddhism” (p. 42). The critique of past research which attributed agency to meta-terms or texts, rather than writers and practitioners, was laid out in detail over a decade ago by Robert Campany and could have been brought in here to good effect.<sup>[9]</sup> On the other hand, if we set aside Copp’s gratuitously dim view of the “serious scholar,” his reiteration offers an extremely clear cameo on the subject that every scholar should know. Copp rightly points to the inadequacy of the catchall term “popular” (p. 42) to designate anything that is not elite or “worse to call some aspects of the canon ‘popular’ and others ‘norma-

tive” (p. 44). And yet, I found his solution, which relies too heavily on binary concepts, unconvincing.

Throughout the volume a clear distinction is drawn between what are variously described as “the closely monitored precincts of monastic halls” (p. 49) or “doctrinally super-literate monks” (p. 232),<sup>[10]</sup> and their opposite, “the wilds where traditions freely commingled” (p. 49). The replacement of popular with “the wilds” and such stark binary divisions between elite monks and everyone else creates a skewed vision of both elite monks, whose *dhāraṇī-sūtra* translations reached “the wilds,” and practitioners associated with mid-level monasteries and monks who along with every other non-elite village practitioner presumably inhabited those wilds. The relations between these various middling groups at the village, county, and prefectural level and how they acquired the very “elite” products or the ideas articulated in them are not fully theorized here. For this reason, it would have been helpful in the discussion of agency to engage directly with Sarah Fraser’s arguments concerning a high/low, elite/popular distinction in the use of amulets, and of diagrams from some of the Stein paintings. She makes the claim that the selling of mass-produced amulet sheets constituted the economic lifeblood of monasteries (see p. 267n103). I wondered why this information was merely relegated to a footnote, most especially since this very idea is referenced on p. 108 without mention of her work. Likewise, the *dhāraṇī* pillars discussed in chapter 3 presumably proliferated across the landscape, popping up in many a monastic courtyard and at various crossroads, yet we are not told which monasteries were wealthy, middling, poor, accessible, remote, and so on. Given the pervasiveness of *dhāraṇī* pillars, the more likely scenario is of movement and interaction, what Thomas Tweed has theorized using such terms as crossing and dwelling.<sup>[11]</sup> In general, the network of transmission has not been clearly laid out in this volume. The reader is, more often than not, left with the

dichotomous juxtaposition between high cosmopolitanism and scattered locally autonomous groups, rather than the interconnected flow of translated objects, ideas, and personnel, or a convincing counterargument against such flows.

Much of *Body Incantatory* is given over to fine-grained philological analysis, most especially of the term *dhāraṇī* and its various cognates, but also in the excellent long footnote (p. 291n14) on the meaning of *mizang* 密藏, not to mention many other terms with shorter discussions. All of this is extremely helpful to the overall argument. In discussions of philological matters, however, there is the occasional conflation of elite philologist-monks, like Huilin 慧琳 (d. 820) (p. 4), and monastic commentators with the Western scholars who read and write about their work. Both groups are viewed as narrow purveyors of the landscape: the former as a misleading guide and the latter as the misguided, naïve scholar headed down a narrow, exclusive road hardly representative of the village pathways of medieval Buddhist practice. We see this most clearly where Copp takes to task every (I might add unnamed) scholar who discusses “a unitary *dhāraṇī* tradition, spanning cultures and languages, that take original—or putatively original—Sanskrit sounds as that tradition’s unwavering core” (p. 6, and also p. 245n18). This criticism extends, naturally, to monks like Huilin who spent their time writing about sound. This harsh caricature is followed by Pierre Bourdieu’s critique of philologism, which is not clearly explained, but can be distilled to something like: “Is the philologist sure that his understanding coincides with the usages of the people who created the texts he is reading?” A clear exposition on how Copp’s own philological work models an alternative approach would be most helpful here. Instead of the skewed caricature of elite Western scholars as mere scribes, a more compelling argument would focus on the strengths and limitations of studying various genres.

Chapters 2 and 3 present case studies that are truly exceptional in the attention brought to bear on the use of two different *dhāraṇīs* in the creation of amulets and pillars, objects which have traditionally been left to the expertise of art historians. The twenty-three amulets discussed in chapter 2 all reproduce in part or in full the *Mahāpratisarā dhāraṇī sūtra* mostly in Chinese translation, but sometimes in Sanskrit.[12] Paul Copp’s analysis is based on a reading of two Chinese translations of this text, one dated 693 by Mañicintana (Baosiwei 寶思維, d. 721) and the other a mid-eighth-century one by Amoghavajra (Bukong 不空, 705-774).[13] Despite recognizing that there are clear differences between them, the decision was made to discuss these two texts in the singular, not as two separate entities. Thus, both titles are abbreviated in English first as *The Scripture of the Incantation of Wish Fulfillment* and then more simply as the *Scripture*. So, for instance, the top of p. 111 mentions the Amoghavajra translation, the last section of the same page refers to “the *Scripture*” thus amalgamating the two, and on the following page we are presented with a short translation which the footnote indicates is from the Baosiwei text.[14] Unfortunately, the further decision not to present the structure of the text or to reproduce the *dhāraṇī* made this chapter less accessible. I would have found chapter 2 far more illuminating if there had been a clear discussion of both the structure of this particular *dhāraṇī* sutra and of the *dhāraṇī* itself.[15] How long is the *dhāraṇī*? Where does it appear in the sutra? What are the main sections of the sutra? What is the difference between the two sutras discussed here? Answers to these questions would not have detracted from this study’s very rich description of amulets nor would it have upended Copp’s desire to decenter the text by making it merely one, albeit important, party to the amulet practices in which it became embedded (p. 63). At the very least, this information could have been included in an appendix.

There are a few minor changes that would have made chapter 2 an easier read. For Figure 2.15 (p. 116), the caption should state that south is at the top, not north. On p. 116, it would help when discussing Stein 4690 to indicate that this is replicated in Appendix 2. Oddly enough, Appendix 2 is comprised entirely of a Chinese *dhāraṇī* with no English explanation whatsoever or instructions directing readers to its discussion. An explanation of “root” spell (p. 104) or “Root Spell” (p. 105) would be helpful. I do not know what is meant by “Ming Edition” (p. 103). *Zhoufa* 咒法 is translated as “enchantments” (p. 69).[16] One section discusses enchanting (*zhou*) bodies. There are also many translated excerpts with “enchant.” Is this always *zhou* 咒 or another term?[17] Until the term showed up in translated excerpts, I thought “enchant” was part of the theoretical language Copp has so successfully developed for this work. But as it turns out, the term is quite important to both the translated texts and the analytic language of this volume; thus it would be useful to discuss early on how the following family of terms, enchantment, wizardry,[18] and magic, fit into the analysis and translations presented here.

In chapter 3, Copp writes that the transformational results from practicing either the *Incantation of Glory* or the *Incantation of Wish Fulfillment* “were never, as far as I have discovered, described in terms of cognitive or affective change. ‘Awakening’ to the true nature of reality, for example, often seen as the true goal of Buddhist practice, had little if any place in these accounts” (p. 145). This is an interesting statement and I do not disagree with its premise. After all, many Buddhist practices offered therapeutic and other benefits; not all practices were aimed at awakening, let alone some form of cognitive or affective change. However, this statement is undermined by the short translated section from Buddhapaṇi-ta’s *Incantation of Glory* (T 967), which appears on the following page and ends thusly: “Heavenly Emperor, these beings will receive the prophecies of future buddhahood from every single buddha.

They will attain the stage of non-regress within *annutāra-samyak-sambodhi*” (p. 146). So the goal here seems to be supreme perfect awakening. It would be better in this instance to address how this idea fits in with the argument just presented and offer the reader a translation of *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi*. [19]

Lastly, chapter 4 is especially noteworthy for its use of literary methods of myth analysis in its handling of monk biographies and definitions of religion, myth, and ritual, strongly suggesting that Paul Copp and J. Z. Smith are kindred spirits in their theoretical ambitions and writing style.[20] In that vein this chapter’s protracted analysis of Zanning’s (919-1001) “Transmission of the Mystic Store” (*Chuan mizang* 傳密藏), a short section on the history of *dhāraṇīs* excerpted from his much longer *Historical Digest of the Buddhist Order* (*Da Song sengshi lue* 大宋僧史略) is a real tour de force and some of Copp’s best writing. Continuing a theme first laid out in the preface, this chapter makes a distinction between the trans-Asian history of High Esoteric Buddhism and the more modest and ancient incantatory heritage traditions laid out in chapters 2 and 3, which are occasionally discussed in trans-Asian context, but mainly analyzed as part of the growth of local Chinese Buddhist practice. This particular distinction and the arguments presented for it are one of the great scholarly contributions of this volume and will surely stand the test of time.

The first paragraph of chapter 4 mentions Arthur Waley’s survey of the Stein manuscripts from Dunhuang and his declaration that “*Dhāraṇī* Buddhism” was one of its principle forms. In fact, it was Arthur Waley who in 1931 made the observation that European scholars had got it wrong when they linked *dhāraṇī* sutras only to the later eighth-century esoteric traditions of the Vairocana sect, having failed to realize the richness of these much earlier traditions (p. viii). This, in a nutshell, is the thesis that Paul Copp refines and elaborates throughout *Body Incantatory*. Waley further di-

vided the Buddhism of Dunhuang into that of “(1) the cult of Paradises, (2) the *dhāraṇī* cults” (p. xiv). The very scriptures discussed in *Body Incantatory* were also the subject of an earlier article where Copp claims that practices of adornment and anointment had “themselves, just as much as particular incantations, come to be emblematic of certain *dhāraṇī* cults.”[21] Why this has now been dropped and *Dhāraṇī* Buddhism retained is unclear, as is any distinction between the Waley and Copp definitions of *Dhāraṇī* Buddhism.

The literary interpretations of myth are certainly resonant with what has come to be known as the Chicago school. My only quibble is in the repeated references to “deep:” the “deep well” of (1) the Buddhist imagination (p. 146) and (2) incantation practice (p. 200); deep veins in medieval Chinese Buddhism (p. 177); and other similar uses of “deep.” Is this a depth unreached by language or buried in the psyche? However, deep, rich, or multilayered one might find various Buddhist ideas, I kept coming back to the *dhāraṇī* pillar and wondering how “deep” the practice or commitment might be, when myriad sins can be wiped out instantaneously simply by passing through its shadow. What is the fuller Buddhist language of those who showed up on monastery grounds and walked through the shadow of a *dhāraṇī* pillar on their way to a dharma lecture?

Indeed, one of the main theses of this book is the need for scholars to flesh out the complete language of medieval Buddhism. In this, I was left to ponder two questions. In reading Copp’s use of terms like *Dhāraṇī* Buddhism, High Esoteric Buddhism, along with what I see here as attempts to section off lineage Buddhism and heritage traditions, I began to reflect on how or even whether these could be brought together to form a complete language of medieval Chinese Buddhism. The term here that might be doing some damage is Buddhism itself. I suspect that the use of this world history term was retained as a way to bring “popular” traditions to the high table and force a

realignment in the way we constitute our subject matter. Fair enough. And yet in reaching the end of this volume I was left with that indelible image of a skeleton with armlet, drawn in an almost empty tomb (p. 60, figure 2.1). Did he have Buddhist commitments? Practices? What were they? Like so many of the male and female practitioners referenced in this volume, this figure is never discussed in terms of the full religious scope of his own “complete language.” In many cases, all we are given is a figure’s *dhāraṇī* practices. Perhaps this is a function of the sources, which simply do not allow for that fuller picture. By shutting out other frames, this work brings heightened attention to the use of written incantations, forcing the reader to contend with that subject matter. And yet, this volume’s overall argument would have been strengthened if the communities discussed had been brought into conversation with the known index of practices already uncovered by others in the field. Of course, it goes without saying that the distinction between the complete language of a given practitioner or practitioner community is categorically distinct from the complete language of Chinese medieval Buddhism writ large.

There are a few final things to consider in terms of the index, glossary, and footnotes. It would have been helpful to add Japanese terms to the glossary, particularly, *zōmitsu*, *komikkyō*, *junmitsu*, and even *Ishinpō*. *Shishuoxinyu* (not *shinyu*) should be in the glossary. Somewhere, perhaps in the glossary, there should be the Chinese characters for the following hybrid terms: *fu*-talismans, *hu*-style, *gu*-sorcery, *dhāraṇī-fu* and also more consistent punctuation in the use of *ye dharmā*, which is a shorthand reference for a title, no less. In the context of this volume it looks like a Chinese pinyin-Sanskrit hybrid.[22] The index has seven entries that merely say “Stein Painting.” Since these paintings are all numbered, it would help to provide the numbers.[23] Footnotes were extremely problematic. Many footnote references to a specific term, passage, or idea simply

offer some version of “see chapter 2,” when what is called for is a page number.[24] Trying to find proper references was one the most time-consuming and disruptive aspects of reading this volume. Many times as I read, I had one finger in the footnotes, another holding a place in the glossary, and another for the primary source section of the bibliography, which I used as a supplemental glossary/index.

At times this volume presented an uneasy balance between theoretical reflections and the demand for “nuts and bolts” historical underpinnings. A few fateful decisions, namely the conflation of texts, constant abbreviation of titles without setting up a key, and poor footnote documentation, made this book more difficult to read than it should have been and in the process undermined its assertions. It strikes me that much of this volume theorizes about issues that extend well beyond the two cases studies presented in chapters 2 and 3. In fact, their subject matter is too limited to allow for Copp’s broader vision of how scholars should approach any Buddhist subject in the Chinese medieval context. The book has an unfinished feel to it—perhaps we have been left in mid-conversation because this author has plenty more to say, and we can look forward to a continued series of reflections that will, as J. Z. Smith put it, further broaden the horizon of our inquiries on issues of practice, history, body, and text.[25] The question remains, however, in how to say it. At times, the writing veers toward poesis, offering up tableaux for the reader’s reflection. However, historical clarity is another kind of poetic expression. And on that note, let me simply say that I look forward to reading Paul Copp’s next volume.

#### Notes

[1]. For the full Wittgenstein passage, see the epitaph on the unnumbered page preceding the table of contents.

[2]. See for instance Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map Is Not Territory* (Leiden: Brill, 1978); *Relating Reli-*

*gion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[3]. The review by the art historian Youn-ni Kim offers the kind of enthusiastic praise one might expect from scholars of visual culture, again demonstrating the importance of this work to that field. In his review, Joshua Capitanio provides a succinct description of each chapter and its methodology. Kim, Youn-mi, “Review of Copp (2014),” *Studies in Chinese Religions* 1 (2015): 99-101; Joshua Capitanio, “Review of Copp (2014),” *Journal of Chinese Religions* 43, no. 2 (2015): 201-203.

[4]. T. H. Barrett, “Review of Copp (2014),” *Journal of Chinese Studies* 中國文化研究所學報 61 (2015): 315-324.

[5]. Just as I appreciated Radich’s translation and explanation of the Zhiyi citation, I would have appreciated the addition of a longer translation of Zongmi’s 宗密 (780-841) text on p. 221. It would simply help make this section clearer, and may not have had the same problems as the Zhiyi citation.

[6]. Some scholars will be surprised by the extent to which the mild-mannered Michael Radich has gone not only in tracking down select primary sources, but in further offering translations of some of them, not to mention his willingness to walk the reader through that material. I am going to suggest, however, that this is, in fact, a labor of extreme generosity. Most scholars are far too busy to devote much energy to such efforts. The Radich review does not present a new set of claims, leaving that task to the next scholar willing to visit this topic. Michael Radich, “Review Article,” *Tang Studies* no. 33 (2015): 91-110.

[7]. If, as Copp argues, “scholars” have yet to offer a thorough examination of the kinds of materials he analyzes, then this suggests that secondary literature on Indic instantiations will not offer a fair comparison. Be that as it may, a more judicious inclusion of secondary sources coupled with greater circumspection on the claims one

can derive from those sources would have been helpful. As it stands, Indic culture is represented largely through the inclusion of the Sanskrit names of translator-monks and Sanskrit titles and terms, which look authoritative and specific in comparison to their Chinese pinyin counterparts, but tell us little about Indic cultures.

[8]. Some readers might attribute such problems to the copyeditor, the indexer, and the glossary creator. Unfortunately, the final responsibility remains with the author.

[9]. Robert Campany, "On the Very Idea of Religions (in the Modern West and in Early Medieval China)," *History of Religions* 42, no. 4 (2003): 287-319. Erik Zürcher's flawed paradigm of these relations and other writings on Buddhist-Daoist texts could have been noted, at least in a footnote. Zürcher does not even appear in the bibliography. See Erik Zürcher, *Buddhism in China: Collected Papers of Erik Zürcher*, ed. Jonathan Silk (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

[10]. See also, "highly literate class of monks" (p. 46).

[11]. Thomas A. Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006).

[12]. I would advise reading carefully pp. 61-64 to grasp the scholarly procedures that will apply throughout the rest of this chapter when discussing both the incantation and the scripture, abbreviated respectively *Incantation of Wish Fulfillment* and the *Scripture of Wish Fulfillment*. Because Columbia University Press does not admit the insertion of Chinese characters in either the body of the text or in footnotes, the reader would be better served by English title first, then the long string of pinyin and not the other way around.

[13]. On p. 64 a sentence reads in part, "credited to ... monk Amoghavajra or Bukong." Apparently, the indexer took "or" to mean these were two different persons, thus indexing them under

separate unlinked entries. In chapter 4, the name Bukong 不空 appears more frequently than Amoghavajra, but these important references are not linked to the Sanskrit name. Most egregiously, the Amoghavajra translation T no. 1153, vol. 20 (see footnote 17) is thereafter abbreviated as T 20: page #. Thus if one just happens to look at footnote 44 first, there is no title, no author, only T 20: 640c. The long string of T 20's beginning with note 17 and continuing for a number of pages is interspersed with many other references, yet there is no restatement of the title or author. Note 27 does not even have a page number. The decision to reference Taisho texts without author or title and only by volume after first mention made tracking references needlessly difficult and time-consuming. The bibliography is naturally of no help in this matter since it lists texts by their Taisho number, not volume.

[14]. The six translations of the second *dhāraṇī* sutra are also abbreviated in chapter 3 as simply the *Scripture*. Again, if one loses track of what this term means, the index is of no help for it has no references to "the *Scripture*." A note should clearly state that hereafter the text(s) will be abbreviated as "the *Scripture*." On p. 114, yet another text, the *Scripture of the Adamantine Seat of Awakening*, is also abbreviated or so I think, in the phrase, "become, with its associated *Scripture*, two in a larger." But then on p. 215 there is reference to "twelve scrolls that span over one hundred pages in the modern critical edition of Buddhist Scriptures, proclaims." Is "Buddhist Scriptures" an abbreviation for a collection of texts? The Taisho?

[15]. Because chapter 2 includes many references to texts, it would have been helpful if the relationship between the following terms had been made crystal clear: *dhāraṇī*-incantation manuals, incantation scriptures, and *dhāraṇī*-incantation texts (p. 65). Presumably they are all one and the same? This is also the case for the many different translations of the title for the *Incantation of*



*Wish Fulfillment*, which I believe includes the following: *Seeking and Immediately Attaining* (p. 68); *Dhāraṇī Spirit-Incantation of Great Sovereignty Whereby One Immediately Attains What Is Sought* (p. 71). There needed to be a simple note of clarification. Likewise, the abbreviated title, *The Scripture of Wish Fulfillment* is referenced in the index with “see, *Incantation of Wish Fulfillment*,” but that entry does not have the most crucial page numbers for the scripture, namely p. 64 (and others). Ditto for the pinyin entry *Foshuo da suiqiu* and full English-title entry in the index—they are not properly linked.

[16]. On p. 292n20, it is translated as “incantation methods” and p. 202, “spell methods.”

[17]. See also “enchanted with *dhāraṇīs*,” p. 39; “enchanting someone else,” pp. 70, 81. “Enchant” frequently appears in translated excerpts in chapter 4: “enchant acacia wood” (p. 82), “enchant twine” (p. 82), “enchanted soil” (p. 143). Is this simply to recite a *dhāraṇī* over an object, somehow infusing it with spiritual power?

[18]. There is a very interesting footnote on why Copp chose to use “wizard,” not “thaumaturge.” However, the footnote appears in the wrong place (p. 206), where I fear it will be missed, and should have been moved forward to p. 205.

[19]. The author chose not to translate the term *anuttara-samyak-sambodhi* here because the Chinese text uses a transliteration—as is also the case in an earlier passage. In both instances the translation appears only in a footnote, but with different translations; see p. 252n15; p. 274n12. Moreover, in one instance we have *anut-tarā* (p. 33) and in the other *annutāra* and *sambodhi* without diacritic (p. 146).

[20]. In terms of defining religion, see for example the discussion of “the fantasy life of late Tang Buddhism” along with George Tanabe’s claim that “Buddhist history is as much a history of fantasy” (p. 157), and of course the Wittgenstein epitaph. This is all quite reminiscent of J. Z.

Smith’s 1978 claim that when we study religion we study “one mode of constructing worlds of meaning.” J. Z. Smith, “Map Is Not Territory,” in *Map is Not Territory*, 290-291.

[21]. Arthur Waley and his term “*Dhāraṇī* Buddhism” first appear abruptly on p. 124 without proper citation, and again on p. 134 with citation but missing a page reference. Neither place explains Waley’s use of the term. The first citation of Waley’s *Catalogue of Paintings* is buried in footnote 12 of the preface, with the correct page reference, viii. Waley’s name is not in the preface and the footnote is easy to miss—it belongs with p. 124. Arthur Waley, *A Catalogue of Paintings Recovered from Tun-huang by Sir Aurel Stein, K.C.I.E., preserved in the Sub-department of Oriental Prints and Drawings in the British Museum, and in the Museum of Central Asian Antiquities, Delhi* (London, Printed by order of the Trustees of the British Museum and of the government of India, 1931). Paul Copp, “*Dhāraṇī* Scriptures,” in *Esoteric Buddhism and the Tantras in East Asia*, ed. Charles D. Orzech, Henrik H. Sørensen, and Richard K. Payne (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 178.

[22]. For the English title, “Verse on Dependent Origination,” see p. 35; p. 265n75 has yet another vague note “on the *ye dharmā* ... see previous chapter.” Readers need page numbers.

[23]. The caption for figure 2.8 should say Stein 172.

[24]. For example, p. 259n5: “*Shouchi*. On this term see the introduction.” Why not add “p. 26”? No one has the time to rife through an entire chapter looking for a specific reference.

[25]. J. Z. Smith, “Religion, Religions, Religious,” in *Critical Terms for Religious Studies*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 281-282.

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