

PACIFIC WORLD

Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies

Third Series Number 15
Fall 2013

SPECIAL SECTION:
Graduate Student Symposium



The Legendary Siege of Anxi: Myth, History, and Truth in Chinese Buddhism

Geoffrey Goble

Postdoctoral Fellow in East Asian Religions
Washington University in St. Louis

INTRODUCTION

The figure of Vaiśravaṇa, the World-Protecting King of the North, is relatively familiar to scholars working in the field of East Asian Buddhism. He appears fairly early in the history of East Asian Buddhism and has played an outsized role throughout East Asia as a protector deity, often specializing in military conflict.¹ The East Asian mythology of Vaiśravaṇa is often considered in relation to a rather well-known and widespread myth concerning the intervention of this deity on behalf of the Tang emperor Xuanzong (玄宗, r. 712–765) and at the command of the Esoteric Buddhist monk Amoghavajra (不空金剛, 704–774)—a tale that I refer to as the “Legendary Siege of Anxi.” In previous studies, the Legendary Siege of Anxi has been considered as an etiological myth explaining practices contemporary with the source in which it appears, but bearing little if any relationship to actual historical events. The historical accuracy of the account is broadly rejected on the basis of discrepancies between the events it describes and those attested in independent sources. Thus, rather than an accounting of events from the mid-eighth century, the tale has been read instead as evidence of practices current in China during the Song dynasty (960–1279).² Here I would like to return to the Legendary Siege of Anxi and consider it anew by approaching the story as myth and as reflective of historical events, and by setting aside expectations and considerations rooted strictly in contemporary historiography, text-critical logical positivism, and conceptions of genre literature.

The developed Legendary Siege of Anxi familiar from Song dynasty sources is a hybrid tale emerging from a collection of earlier mythic

elements. The stories and history that lead to the accepted association of a Buddhist monk (Amoghavajra), a martial figuration of an Indic deity (Vaiśravaṇa), and a Tang emperor (Xuanzong) is a pastiche of several narrative elements and developments. In the first of these narrative movements we see the recapitulation, merger, and metamorphosis of a mythic tradition deriving ultimately from the Hellenic world of the Mediterranean that was transplanted to Central Asia. This element is reimagined and reframed according to particular historical events surrounding the An Lushan Rebellion in the second half of the eighth century. Reading the story in this manner is based on the assumed primacy of a shared objective world to which the story has only a secondary and imagined relation. However, rather than simply explaining and justifying practices contemporary with its retelling, the Legendary Siege of Anxi acted as the impetus for the creation of indigenous Sinitic scriptures and practices. In reversing the assumptions concerning the relationship between fact and fiction, history and myth, and cause and effect we are pushed to reevaluate our expectations and approaches to Chinese documentary sources and their relationship with historical events and practices.

MYTH: THE LEGENDARY SIEGE OF ANXI

The version of the Legendary Siege of Anxi most often cited in scholarship comes from the thirteenth century *Comprehensive Record of the Buddhas and Patriarchs* (Fozu tongji, 佛祖通記) by Zhipan (志磐):

In the first year of Tianbao (天寶, 742/3 CE) the Western Regions, Samarqand,³ the Arabs,⁴ and the Five Kingdoms invaded Anxi (安西) (the Tang court had established four prefectures: Andong, Anxi, Annan, and Anbei). The emperor summoned Trepitaka Amoghavajra to enter the inner palace and perform the recitation of the secret language of the *Kingdom-Protecting Humane Kings* [Scripture]. His Highness personally held the incense brazier and after fourteen recitations His Highness saw some five hundred divine men standing in the palace courtyard. The master said, “This is the second son of King Vaiśravaṇa of the Northern Heaven, Dujian (獨健), blessing Your Majesty’s prayerful request to save Anxi.” And he asked [the emperor] to lay out food and to then send him off.

In the fourth month (May 13–June 11, 742) Anxi memorialized, saying: “On the eleventh day of the second month (March 26, 742), golden-armored men more than a *zhang* tall were seen in a black cloud to the northeast of the city. In the sky, drum and horns sounded,

shaking Heaven and Earth. Among the invaders' banners there were golden rats that gnawed and severed their bowstrings. The Five Kingdoms immediately ran off. At that moment, the Heavenly King was visible above the city towers." His Highness commanded that it be investigated and it was the day the spell was recited. (Now city towers and army encampments set up the Heavenly King because of this.)

天寶元年。西域康居大石五國。入寇安西(唐朝置安東安西安南安北四府)帝召不空三藏入內。持誦仁王護國密語。上親秉香鑪。方二七遍。上見神人可五百餘立於殿廷。師曰。此北天毘沙門王第二子獨健。副陛下禱往救安西。請設食發遣。四月安西奏云。二月十一日。城東北黑雲中見金甲人身丈餘。空中鼓角聲振天地。寇人帳幙間有金鼠齧斷弓弦。五國即時奔潰。須臾見城樓上天王見形。上令驗之。即誦呪曰也(今城樓軍營立天王者因此)⁵

The historicity of the events described in this and cognate accounts is broadly dismissed. In his monumental *Buddhism under the T'ang*, Stanley Weinstein characterizes the account as "suspect" given that the events of the narrative do not appear in eighth century accounts of Amoghavajra's life.⁶ MATSUMOTO Bunzaburō rules out the possibility of these events occurring based on a number of factors, chiefly that there is no record of Anxi being besieged in 742 and that Amoghavajra was in the southern Indic regions from 741–746.⁷ Taking the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* to be historically inaccurate, those who have considered it have instead approached it as an etiological myth, a tale invented in order to explain then-current practices in medieval China. Valerie Hansen, for example, reads the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* as an explanation for "the appearance of Vaiśravaṇa's image in cities, barracks, and monasteries all over China" from the Song dynasty.⁸ While the explanatory function of the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* is clearly given in extant sources, we may note that the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* is itself a human product, one that emerged as the result of complex systems of interaction, transcription, revision, publication, and dissemination. As such, the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* may be subject to an exploration of its origins. There is an etiological account to be given of the tale itself.

The *Legendary Siege of Anxi*, with relatively little variation from the thirteenth century version above, appears in several earlier sources. We find it in Zanning's (贊寧, 920–1001) *Song Dynasty Biographies of Eminent Monks* and in his *Brief History of the Sangha*.⁹ In the *Anthology of the Patriarchal Hall*, Mu'an Shangqing (睦庵善卿, fl. 1088–1108) reproduces Zanning's account.¹⁰ The *Ritual Procedures of Vaiśravaṇa*, a ritual manual attributed to Amoghavajra with a *terminus a quo* circa 862–865,

also contains a version of this story.¹¹ The persistence of specific details of the story in each these sources suggests that the standard version of the Legendary Siege of Anxi had developed no later than the mid-ninth century and was unquestionably in circulation from the eleventh century onward. Tracing the development of this story in the textual record reveals that the Legendary Siege of Anxi is a composite tale that took shape in large part through the merger of two earlier, independent stories, which, like both Vaiśravaṇa and Amoghavajra, were of non-Chinese origin. The first of these stories comes from the Hellenic world, the second from Central Asia.

The Legendary Siege of Anxi developed out of earlier tales. The first, recorded in the fifth century BCE by Herodotus, concerns the intervention of rats in defense against an otherwise insurmountable foreign enemy.

Next on the throne after Anysis was Sethos, the high priest of Hephaestus. He is said to have neglected the warrior class of the Egyptians and to have treated them with contempt, as if he had been unlikely to need their services. He offended them in various ways, not least by depriving them of the twelve acres of land which of them had held by special privilege under previous kings. As a result, when Egypt was invaded by Sennacherib, the king of Arabia and Assyria, with a great army, not one of them was willing to fight. The situation was grave; not knowing what else to do, the priest-king entered the shrine and, before the image of the god, complained bitterly of the peril which threatened him. In the midst of his lamentation he fell asleep, and dreamt that the god stood by him and urged him not to lose heart; for if he marched boldly out to meet the Arabian army, he would come to no harm, as the god himself would send him helpers.

By this dream the king's confidence was restored; and with such men as were willing to follow him—not a single one of the warrior class, but a mixed company of shopkeepers, artisans, and market-people—he marched to Pelusium, which guards the approaches to Egypt, and there took up his position. As he lay here facing the enemy, thousands of field-mice swarmed over the Assyrians during the night, and ate their quivers, their bowstrings, and the leather handles of their shields, so that on the following day, having no arms to fight with, they abandoned their position and suffered severe losses during their retreat. There is still a stone statue of Sethos in the temple of Hephaestus; the figure is represented with a mouse in its hand, and the inscription: 'Look upon me and learn reverence.'¹²

This story from the Hellenic world reached China via Xuanzang's (玄奘, ca. 600–664) *Great Tang Record of the Western Regions*. In Xuanzang's report, however, the story has been transformed from one concerning an Egyptian priest-king and the god Hephaestus into a tale about the Central Asian city-state of Khotan, referred to as Kustana (瞿薩旦那), Yutian (于闐), or Tian (闐) in medieval Chinese sources. I will refer to this story as “**Xuanzang A.**”

One hundred fifty or sixty *li* to the west of the royal city [Khotan], along the main road through the great desert there are small mounds that are heaps of earth dug out by rats. I heard that local tradition says that the rats in the desert are as large as hedgehogs, that if their fur is gold or silver colored they serve as chiefs, and that every time they came out of their holes, the other rats follow them as attendants. In the past, the Xiongnu (匈奴) led several hundreds of thousands of troops to attack and plunder the frontier city [of Khotan] and they garrisoned beside the rat mounds. At that time the king of Khotan¹³ led [only] some tens of thousands of soldiers and feared that their strength did not match [that of the enemy and] was not strong enough to resist the enemy. He knew that in the desert there were strange rats, but no deities. By the time the invaders arrived, there was none he could ask to come to his aid. The lord and subjects trembled in terror and could think of no stratagem. In desperation they set up an offering of burning incense and asked the rats [for help], hoping that there might be some supernormal (靈) strengthening of their army. In a dream that night the king of Khotan saw a large rat that said, “I respectfully wish to assist you, and hope you will dispatch your troops early in the morning. At daybreak I will join the battle and you will win certain victory.” The king of Khotan knew that he had supernormal help and then assembled his cavalry and commanded his officers to go before it was yet light and make a surprise attack. The Xiongnu heard of this and there was none who was not frightened. Just as they were about to harness their chariots and don their armor, they found that the belts and ties of their saddles and dress and the strings of their bows and the ties for the armor had all been gnawed through by the rats. The enemy soldiers were upon them, their hands were [as if] tied, and they were subject to slaughter. As a result, [the Khotan forces] killed their generals and captured their soldiers. The Xiongnu were awestruck, thinking that [the Khotan forces] had help from gods. In response to the generous kindness of the rats, the king of Khotan built a temple and established offerings [to them].

王城西百五六十里。大沙磧正路中有堆阜。並鼠壤墳也。聞之土俗曰。此沙磧中鼠大如蝸。其毛則金銀異色。為其群之酋長。每出穴遊止則群鼠為從。昔者匈奴率數十萬眾寇掠邊城。至鼠墳側屯軍。時瞿薩旦那王率數萬兵。恐力不敵素知磧中鼠奇而未神也。洎乎寇至無所求救。君臣震恐莫知圖計。苟復設祭焚香請鼠。冀其有靈少加軍力。其夜瞿薩旦那王夢見大鼠。曰敬欲相助願早治兵。旦日合戰必當克勝。瞿薩旦那王知有靈祐。遂整戎馬。申令將士。未明而行。長驅掩襲。匈奴之聞也。莫不懼焉。方欲駕乘被鎧。而諸馬鞍人服弓弦甲纏。凡厥帶系鼠皆齧斷。兵寇既臨面縛受戮。於是殺其將虜其兵。匈奴震攝以為神靈所祐也。瞿薩旦那王。感鼠厚恩建祠設祭。¹⁴

Here we plainly see the basic elements of Herodotus' story now transplanted to the world of Central Asia. Speculation regarding the socio-historical events and forces that led to this transplantation and transformation are clearly beyond the scope of the present essay, but this modified Mediterranean tale, in which an otherwise invincible force of foreign troops is defeated through the miraculous intercession of rodents destroying enemy materiel, is the first of the two narrative elements making up the Legendary Siege of Anxi.

A second antecedent tale to the Legendary Siege of Anxi is also recorded by Xuanzang. This story concerns the miraculous intercession of the deity Vaiśravaṇa and his role in defeating an army of foreigners. This story will be “**Xuanzang B.**”

Outside of the city [of Balk]¹⁵ to the southwest there is a Navāp (納縛) monastery. A previous king of this kingdom built it. North of the great snow mountains, of all the masters commenting [on the scriptures], only in this monastery has the good work not declined. Its Buddha image is lustrous with precious [substances] and the eaves of its halls are adorned with rare treasures. Consequently, the lords of various kingdoms considered it to their benefit to plunder [the monastery]. In the past this monastery had an image of the Heavenly [King] Vaiśravaṇa, who was supernormally reliable to provide mysterious protection. Recently, the son of the Turkish Yabgu Quaghan, Si Yabgu Quaghan, mobilized his tribesmen and led them on a military expedition making a surprise attack on the monastery in hopes of lucre. He stationed his troops in the field not far from this [monastery]. That night in a dream he saw the Heavenly [King] Vaiśravaṇa, who said, “What strength do you have that you dare to despoil the monastery?!” Following this, he ran [the Quaghan] through the chest and back with a two-pointed spear. The Quaghan awoke in shock and experiencing an intense pain in his heart. Then he declared what he

had dreamed to his crowd of followers and sent [envoys] to ask the monks that he may express his repentance, but they had not yet returned when his allotment ended and he died at the monastery.

城外西南有納縛僧伽藍。此國先王之所建也。大雪山北作論諸師。唯此伽藍美業不替。其佛像則瑩以名珍。堂宇乃飾之奇寶。故諸國君長利之以攻劫。此伽藍素有毘沙門天像。靈鑿可恃冥加守衛。近突厥葉護可汗子肆葉護可汗。傾其部落率其戎旅。奄襲伽藍欲圖珍寶。去此不遠屯軍野。次其夜夢見毘沙門天曰。汝有何力敢壞伽藍。因以長戟貫徹胸背。可汗驚悟便苦心痛。遂告群屬所夢咎徵。馳請眾僧方申懺謝。未及返命已從殞歿。¹⁶

Navāp is variously identified as modern Shanshan (鄯善, i.e., Charqliq) in Xinjiang, as Yixun (伊循), or as a reference to the Stone City Garrison (石城鎮) in Tang. However, the location of these events related by Xuanzang is in the vicinity of the Central Asian city-state of Bactria. Xuanzang's reference to Navāp here appears to be an allusion to a particular style of monastery that he identifies with Navāp rather than a specific location. As a location, though, Navāp is not in Central Asia in the Pamirs, it is on the eastern edge of the Tarim Basin. In other words, reading Navāp as a *location* places the events firmly in the center of the Tang protectorate Anxi. This ambiguity is likely a contributory factor in the eventual shifting of location of these events from Central Asia in antecedent versions to the Tang protectorate in the fully-developed *Legendary Siege of Anxi*.

The two preceding narratives, which would eventually become the *Legendary Siege of Anxi*, are blended into a single tale recorded by Li Quan (李筌) in the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon*.¹⁷ Arguably dating to the second half of the eighth century, the received version dates to the seventeenth century.¹⁸ In the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon*, the two stories recorded by Xuanzang—Xuanzang A, which is Herodotus' account of the Egyptian king Sethos refigured as a tale concerning the Central Asian city-state of Khotan, and Xuanzang B, concerning Vaiśravaṇa's defense of a Buddhist monastery near Balkh—are merged to form a proto-version of the *Legendary Siege of Anxi*, which I will refer to as “**Li Quan A.**”

In Khotan (Tian, 闐) there was a temple with a statue (身) [of Vaiśravaṇa] clad in gold armor. His right hand held a two-pointed lance and his left hand supported a pagoda. He was venerated by the masses as a deity for his remarkable form and his unusual shape. This is a matter for foreigners.

In previous years, the Tibetans (吐蕃) surrounded Khotan. At night they saw a golden man holding a two-pointed lance arise above the city. All in the throng of some one hundred thousand Tibetans broke out in blisters. None was able to [fight] victoriously. Their weapons were also affected (化) by black rats that gnawed through the bowstrings. There was none that was not severed. The Tibetans, having been relieved of their illness, escaped. The people of the kingdom knew it was that deity [who caused this] and there was a command to erect temples [to him] on the frontier. Marshals also painted his image on their banners. These are called Deity Banners (神旗). They are the leading banners of a deploying army. Therefore, an army would deploy and they would sacrifice to him. To this day there are many garrisons, prefectures, and counties that set up Heavenly King temples.

於闐城有廟身被金甲，右手持戟，左手擎塔，祇從群神殊形異狀，胡人事之。往年吐蕃圍於闐，夜見金人被發持戟行於城上，吐蕃眾數十萬悉患瘡疾，莫能勝，兵又化黑鼠，咬弓弦，無不斷絕；吐蕃扶病而遁，國家知其神，乃詔於邊方立廟，元帥亦圖其形於旗上，號曰：神旗。出居旗節之前。故軍出而祭之，至今府州縣多立天王廟焉。¹⁹

In this version of the developing legend we have the defeat of enemy invaders through the intercession of Vaiśravaṇa, who visits disease on the soldiers and wrecks their materiel with rats. This story is a hybrid created through the merger of Xuanzang A and Xuanzang B. The location of the events (Kustana or Khotan, referred to as Tian by Li Quan) and the wrecking of enemy materiel by rats derive from Xuanzang A. The appearance and intervention of Vaiśravaṇa are drawn from Xuanzang B. We may speculate that the basis of this merger may have been the well-established close connection between Khotan (the location of Xuanzang A) and Vaiśravaṇa (the agent in Xuanzang B).

In any case, I suggest that Li Quan A represents an early stage in the development of what would become the standard Song dynasty version of the Legendary Siege of Anxi as recorded in later sources. Missing from Li Quan A, though, is the narrative frame concerning Emperor Xuanzong and Amoghavajra, which serves to refigure the story as a tale concerning the Tang imperium rather than a Central Asian city-state. These elements are included in an alternative account that appears in the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon*. This second story will be “**Li Quan B.**”

In the past the Tibetans (吐蕃) surrounded Anxi (安西) and Beiting (北庭). They [Anxi and Beiting] memorialized requesting assistance. Tang's Primordial Ancestor (元宗) [Emperor Xuanzong] said, "Anxi is located twelve thousand *li* from the metropolitan area. It would take eight months to arrive there. Even if troops arrive, there will be nothing left." The Left and Right Ministers requested that he summon Trepitaka Amoghavajra and command him to engage the Heavenly King Vaiśravaṇa. The master arrived and requested that the emperor hold the incense burner [while] the master recited the mantra (真言). The emperor suddenly saw an armored officer (士) standing before him. The emperor asked Amoghavajra and Amoghavajra said, "The Heavenly King has sent his second son Dujian to lead troops to relieve Anxi. He has come to report to Your Majesty."

Later, Anxi memorialized: "In misty clouds thirty *li* northwest of the city we saw soldiers each one *zhang* tall and arrayed [in battle formation] of five or six *li*. At the *you* (酉) hour (5pm–7pm) there was a sound of drums and horns. The ground shook for three hundred *li*. It stopped after two days. Samarqand and the Five Kingdoms withdrew their troops. Within their encampment were golden rats that gnawed through the strings of their bows and crossbows; their apparatus was equally damaged. At that instant the Heavenly King manifested his form [at the] Northern Pavilion."

昔吐蕃圍安西，北庭表奏求救，唐元宗曰：「安西去京師一萬二千裏，須八月方到，到則無及矣。」左右請召不空三藏，令請毘沙門天王，師至，請帝執香爐，師誦真言，帝忽見甲士立前，帝問不空，不空曰：「天王遣二子獨撻將兵救安西，來辭陛下。」後安西奏雲：「城東北三十裏雲霧中，見兵人各長一丈約五六裏，至酉時鳴鼓，角震三百裏，停二日。康居等五國抽兵彼營中，有金鼠咬弓弩弦，器械並損，須臾，北樓天王現身。」²⁰

With this account we have what appears to be the earliest recorded version of the Legendary Siege of Anxi, though we may note some slight variations between this version of the legend and that recorded in Song dynasty sources. Reference to the *Scripture of Humane Kings* does not appear in Li Quan B, for example. Now, it is clearly possible that this version of the Legendary Siege of Anxi in the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon* is an interpolation. This would certainly go toward explaining why the text contains two versions of the story (Li Quan A and Li Quan B). But if Li Quan B is an interpolation, it does not appear to be a very late one. The absence of any reference to the *Humane Kings* suggests to my mind a pre-Song insertion. The *Humane Kings* was produced by Amoghavajra in 765 and although it was not an insignificant text and

ritual, it was only one among many sponsored by the Tang imperial court. The perception of the importance of this text and its attendant ritual stems from Song dynasty sources that tend to refer to it as a synecdoche for Amoghavajra's textual and ritual corpus during the Tang. It is also perhaps noteworthy that Emperor Xuanzong is not referred to by his posthumous temple name (Xuanzong), but by his reign name: Tang Primordial Ancestor (唐元宗). Though by no means a certainty, this suggests that Li Quan B was composed no later than 762.

On my reading of the evidence, the Legendary Siege of Anxi assumed its basic form as Li Quan B in the second half of the eighth century. This tale, repeated with minimal variation in elite Buddhist sources over the following centuries, is a hybrid produced by the blending of two previously separate stories. The first of these concerns the king of Khotan being assisted by rats as reported by Xuanzang (Xuanzang A, which is a transplanted version of Herodotus' story). The second is the Khotanese tale of Vaiśravaṇa killing Si Yabghu Qaghan (Xuanzang B). These two mythic accounts are merged by Li Quan in the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon*—foreign armies are defeated by a combination of rats and Vaiśravaṇa at Khotan (Li Quan A). This merging may have been based on or facilitated by the known relationship between Vaiśravaṇa and Khotan, though it might simply reflect only vague knowledge of or indifference to the political geography of Central Asia. In any case, the hybrid account of Li Quan A is further transformed into a legend concerning the Tang imperium rather than Khotan through the grafting of a narrative frame concerning Amoghavajra and Emperor Xuanzong in Li Quan B. The essential elements of Li Quan A—the improbable defeat of a foreign siege through the intercession of Vaiśravaṇa and the wrecking of enemy materiel by rats—are retained within an account centered on Amoghavajra and Emperor Xuanzong as the protagonists. In other words, at some point as early as the second half of the eighth century—following my interpretation of the sources—the legend came to be not about (just) Vaiśravaṇa, but also about Amoghavajra and the Tang emperor.

HISTORY: AMOGHAVAJRA AND THE TANG EMPERORS

If we shift our gaze away from the etiology of the Legendary Siege of Anxi itself and adopt instead a pseudo-euhemerist view, we may seek the true historical basis of the story and its evident circulation. But if the Legendary Siege of Anxi is based on true historical events, they

clearly were not those specific to the story, for the historical record provides no indication that the Tang protectorate of Anxi was besieged in the 740s and Amoghavajra was in the southern Indic regions at the time the events of the Legendary Siege of Anxi are purported to have occurred. The Legendary Siege of Anxi may be read as reflecting Emperor Xuanzong's interest in the propagation of a Vaiśravaṇa cultus—an implied reading of the tale that may be supported in other sources.²¹ But whether Xuanzong may justly be credited with initiating Vaiśravaṇa centered practice, the existence of such a cult in the Tang military is evident from the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon*.²² There are two accounts for the origin of the Tang military practice of supplicating Vaiśravaṇa while on campaign in the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon*. The first is Li Quan A, the combination of Xuanzang A and B in which an army of invaders is defeated by Vaiśravaṇa and the intercession of rats that wreck the enemy materiel. The second account is the earliest account of the Legendary Siege of Anxi, Li Quan B, which is possibly an interpolation intended to establish the legitimacy of this military cultus by moving its origins from the barbarous western regions to the court of Tang Xuanzong. However, in my view, this does not adequately account for the inclusion of Amoghavajra in the Legendary Siege of Anxi. It may be that the narrative frame concerning Amoghavajra and Xuanzong derives, *mutatis mutandis*, from real historical events, and Amoghavajra may prove to be the key in discovering them.

Considered in terms of its fundamental structure, the Legendary Siege of Anxi is about a Chinese emperor facing an intractable situation presented by a massive army of confederated foreigners. Otherwise hopeless, the predicament is resolved with the help of Amoghavajra, who ritually invokes and deploys a martial deity in defense of the imperium. In these general terms, the Legendary Siege of Anxi reflects actual historical events of the second half of the eighth century. While particular details of the Legendary Siege of Anxi are drawn from mythic elements introduced to China by Xuanzang in the seventh century—a besieging army of foreigners is defeated by rats and by Vaiśravaṇa—the narrative concerning Amoghavajra and Emperor Xuanzong appears based on the fact of Amoghavajra's military assistance to the Tang throne during and following the uprising of An Lushan (安路山) and his epigones in rebellion.

The effects of An Lushan's rebellion for the Tang imperial state can hardly be overemphasized. The salient events of the rebellion

period are widely known and need be treated only briefly here. On December 20, 755 An Lushan led an army of veteran Luo (羅), Xi (奚), Khitan (契丹), and Shiwei (室韋) troops out of Fanyang (范陽, modern Beijing) in rebellion against the Tang ruling house.²³ Advancing rapidly, An Lushan's forces had already captured Gao City (藁城), some 170 miles south of Fanyang, only eight days later.²⁴ Having met only token resistance by Tang troops and governors—if not their complete capitulation—An Lushan stood in possession of the secondary capital of Luoyang (洛陽), effectively controlled the Central Plains, and was in striking distance of Chang'an (長安), about two hundred miles to his west, within a month of beginning of his campaign for the throne.²⁵ However, his rapid progress was halted at Tong Pass (潼關), which was defended by fortified troops drawn from the northwestern Military Command Regions (*jiedushi*, 節度使) and under the command of Geshu Han (哥舒翰).²⁶ Although holding a strong tactical position, the Tong Pass defense was undermined by weaknesses in command. Geshu Han was ill at home when he was summoned to defend Tang and he delegated many of his responsibilities to fractious officers.²⁷ Represented in the sources as a result of operational micromanagement by palace officials seeking personal advantage, the Tang forces at Tong Pass were led in an assault on the rebel position.²⁸ The loyalist troops were routed. Geshu Han was captured (he would be executed ten months later by An Qingxu).²⁹ The way to Chang'an was open.³⁰ In the face of this development, the imperial family and the chief officials fled the capital heading west. Emperor Xuanzong went southwest to Shu (蜀), where he could hole up in the tactically superior location of the Sichuan Basin. The crown prince, who would subsequently be known by his temple name Suzong (肅宗), went northwest to Lingwu (靈武),³¹ the seat of Shuofang Military Command Region (*Shuofang jiedushi*, 朔方節度使) formerly administered by Geshu Han, and assumed the throne on August 12, 756.³² After nineteen months of chaos and shifting fortunes, on the fifteenth of November, 757, Emperor Suzong received official report of victory from the Guangping Prince.³³ On December 18, 757 Emperor Suzong entered the imperial capital for the first time in his sixteen-month reign.

Although the capitals had been recovered and Tang rule formally restored, military operations were far from over. Rebel generals continued to emerge hydra-like. An Qingxu, who had assumed command of the rebellion after assassinating his father, An Lushan, remained at

large and in command of troops, but was assassinated and succeeded by Shi Siming (史思明), who claimed the title of Emperor of the Yan Dynasty for himself. Shi Siming initially capitulated to the Tang in February of 758, but subsequently rose again in rebellion and recaptured Luoyang on June 7, 760.³⁴ Siming was murdered and rebel leadership devolved to his son, Shi Chaoyi (史朝義). Chaoyi eluded capture by loyalist forces but in the end was abandoned by his own troops and killed in 763.³⁵ In November of that same year, though, an irresistible force of Tibetans invaded the Wei Valley, drove the emperor from the capital, and installed the luckless Chenghong, Prince of Guangwu (廣武王承宏) as a puppet emperor.³⁶ The Tibetans were driven out of Chang'an by gangs of thugs organized for the purpose by the retired general Wang Fu (王甫), but Tibetan forces continued to encroach on Tang, seizing territory on the western border of the imperium in February 764.³⁷ In September of 765 the Tibetans returned to the Wei Valley, this time joined by the foot and horse of the Uighurs, Qiang (羌), Hun (渾), and Nula (奴剌).³⁸ They were also joined by Pugu Huai'en (僕固懷恩), a general of Tiele Turk descent who had earlier served the throne during the rebellion.³⁹ In short, from 756 to 765 Tang was beset by a Stygian chaos wrought by waves of confederated foreign troops and rebellious generals. It was during this period of political disruption and military conflict that Amoghavajra rose to prominence in the Tang court.

There were several factors involved in Amoghavajra's rise to prestige. Perhaps most important among these were his close connections with the elite of the Shuofang military command and his performance of rituals aimed at destroying rebellious troops and commanders on behalf of the Tang rulers. Amoghavajra was situated in Lingwu, where he had been headquartered since 754 at the request of Geshu Han and his subordinates, when he was recalled to Chang'an by Emperor Xuanzong in response to An Lushan's uprising.⁴⁰ Amoghavajra's presence and ritual services were clearly conceived as an important element in the Tang military resistance to the rebellion initiated by An Lushan.

Evidence suggests that the Tang emperors of the rebellion period—Xuanzong, Suzong (肅宗), and Daizong (代宗)—held Amoghavajra's performance of Esoteric Buddhist rites to be militarily effective. The editors of the *Older Tang History* attributed Emperor Daizong's support of Amoghavajra to his perception that military disasters were

leavened by the monk's ritual services.⁴¹ Though the court literati who composed the Standard Histories viewed this with disdain, it is quite probable that the Tang rulers perceived a supernormal agency behind certain events during the rebellion period. For example, though An Lushan met with immediate success, moving rapidly and almost without resistance to within striking distance of the imperial capitals, he was murdered by his son, An Qingxu, with the support of his own commanders.⁴² An Qingxu was himself murdered by a trusted associate, Shi Siming (史思明), who was likewise assassinated by his own son, Shi Chaoyi (史朝義), who in turn was abandoned by his own troops and killed in 763.⁴³ The invasion and occupation of Chang'an that same year by Tibetan forces was defeated by a gang of rabble. When a force of confederate foreigners organized by Pugu Huai'en invaded the Wei Valley west of Chang'an in 765, their advance was halted by rivers swollen by heavy rain and they were defeated by infighting.⁴⁴ The turncoat general Pugu Huai'en slunk off to the northwest where he fell ill and died.⁴⁵ All of these events were exceedingly fortuitous for the Tang ruling house and although there is no direct evidence that these events were attributed to the supernormal intercession of beings commanded by Amoghavajra, it is quite probable that they were. This was certainly the case regarding the assassination of Zhou Zhiguang (周智光) in 767. Zhou was military commissioner exercising command northeast of the imperial capital in Tongzhou (同州) and Huazhou (華州) but was suspected of being an insurrectionist. Emperor Daizong dispatched an envoy to meet with Zhou and ascertain his intentions. Upon reaching Zhou's headquarters, though, the envoy found him unguarded and he simply chopped off Zhou's head and delivered it to the emperor.⁴⁶ Hearing this news, Amoghavajra sent Daizong a letter of congratulations.⁴⁷ In his reply, Daizong suggests that Amoghavajra played a role in killing Zhou Zhiguang:

Zhiguang, violent and murderous, dared to harass frontier supply posts (關鋪). The Princely Master⁴⁸ [Amoghavajra], entirely unexpected, from him there was an execution.⁴⁹ The numinous power of the ancestral and tutelary divinities—the great sage deployed their blessings. The master's protective recollection—inauspicious signs forever purified.

智光兇狂敢擾關鋪。王師暫舉自有誅夷。宗社威靈大聖敷祐。師之護念氛稜永清。⁵⁰

The conventional means by which Zhiguang met his end was that he had his head chopped off by an intrepid imperial envoy, but evidently to Daizong's mind this was a manifestation of or was ultimately predicated on the performance of Buddhist rites by Amoghavajra. It is evident that the martial and violent application of these rites was recognized by the Tang emperors, who employed them for such purposes.

We cannot ascertain with complete certainty the specific rites Amoghavajra performed during the early years of the An Lushan Rebellion. Representations from the Song dynasty onward and in modern scholarship tend to emphasize Amoghavajra's performances of ritual centered on the *Humane Kings Scripture*. But although ritual performances deriving from this scriptural source have had a long and significant history in East Asia, this tradition, which is essentially virtue-based and prophylactic in nature, was not established until the reign of Daizong in 765, a decade after An Lushan rose in revolt. It is exceedingly unlikely that the rites performed by Amoghavajra in support of Emperor Suzong's war against An Lushan, An Qingxu, et al. were based on the *Humane Kings Scripture*. Feixi (飛錫), who composed Amoghavajra's memorial stele in 774, reports that while residing in the imperial capital during its occupation by rebels, Amoghavajra performed the rites of the *Banner of Acala and the Divinities of the Eight Directions Scripture* on the emperor's behalf.⁵¹ There is no extant text of this name, but Acala is a well-known deity in the Esoteric Buddhist pantheon and he appears in several texts that Amoghavajra himself produced or to which he had access.

Of the three extant Acala texts attributed to Amoghavajra, two are more certainly his. These two are also the most obvious in their applicability during the rebellion period of 755–765 when Amoghavajra was working on behalf of Tang in the imperial capital against enemy troops. The titles given these two texts are almost identical: the *Trisamaya Secret Recollection and Recitation Methods of the Worthy Immovable, the Wrathful King Envoy* and the *Trisamaya Recollection and Recitation Methods of the Worthy Immovable, the Wrathful King Envoy*.⁵² I will refer to these respectively as *Trisamaya I* and *Trisamaya II*.⁵³ Both of the extant *Trisamaya* texts attributed to Amoghavajra contain rituals by which an army can defeat an opposing force, and the description of these rites in the two *Trisamayas* are functionally equivalent. There are some variations between the two—*Trisamaya I* contains a rite for corpse reanimation not

mentioned in *Trisamaya II*, for example—but the main difference between the militarily-applicable rites described in them is stylistic.

The instructions in the *Trisamaya* texts are given to Vajrapani by Śākyamuni and follow a standard structure for Esoteric rites involving purification of the mind via mantra, purification of the body and of the ritual space, meditative (re)construction of the ritual arena, offerings, and so forth. After completing all of the necessary preliminaries, the practitioner may perform particular rites for specific effects, including methods by which one may target an enemy army. Among these is a procedure by which an opposing army may be rendered immobile and, one would imagine, easy prey:

There is also a method for those who wish to restrain another's army, causing them to be unable to move: on your own army's pennants paint the Immovable Worthy [with] four faces, four arms, and a yellow body. [His] teeth protrude above and below and he makes a wrathful gaze—a fearsome appearance. About his body is a radiant fire made of the power of heavenly troops. The practitioner, by displaying these pennants to the other army and imagining the Sage [Acala] binding the other troops with a rope, [causes] the other army to be completely unable to move.

Trisamaya I: 又法欲禁他軍令不得動者。於旗幡上畫無動尊。身作黃肉色四面上下出牙。四臂作怖畏瞋怒狀。遍身火焰。作吞他兵勢。持法人以旗示彼人。又想聖者以羈索縛彼兵眾。彼即無能動也。又法欲禁他軍令不得動者。於旗幡上畫無動尊。身作黃肉色四面上下出牙。四臂作怖畏瞋怒狀。遍身火焰。作吞他兵勢。持法人以旗示彼人。又想聖者以羈索縛彼兵眾。彼即無能動也。

Trisamaya II: 又法欲禁他軍陣眾令不動者。於自旌上畫不動尊。四面四臂身作黃色。上下出牙作大忿怒瞋怖畏狀。遍身火光作天兵勢。行者以旌示彼軍眾。復想聖者以羈索縛彼兵眾。即彼軍眾盡不能動。⁵⁴

One may empower an army's banners with mantra and thereby win certain victory:

There is also a method for those who wish to cause another's army to be routed: empower your own army's pennants ten times each. Grasp them and go out in front of the army. The other's army will be routed and will retreat.

Trisamaya I: 又法取旗幡誦明一千遍。執於軍陣前能破他陣。

Trisamaya II: 又法欲令他軍陣破散者。加持自軍旌一十遍。執出在軍前。彼軍陣破散退走。⁵⁵

One can target an enemy commander with rites resulting in certain death:

There is also a method for those who wish to cause another's army and commander to perish and flee: obtain salt, soil, wax, silk, and leaves. Mix them up into a paste and make the form of those others and place it on the ground. Recite the empowering spell and hack it up. Those others will then perish.

Trisamaya II: 又法欲令他軍主終亡者。取鹽土蠟苦練葉。和搗為泥。作彼形狀置於地上。誦明加持斫斷。彼即終。⁵⁶

Should more indirect means of victory be desired, one may starve an enemy army out of the field:

There is also a method for those who wish to cause another's army to be impoverished and cut off from provisions: obtain some rice paddies and empower them [with the spell] and those others will then be impoverished.

Trisamaya II: 又法欲令他軍貧窮絕糧者。取稻穀加持彼即貧矣。⁵⁷

A more lethal method is also provided:

There is also a method for those who wish to cause enemies to perish: obtain rice chaff, recite the spell empowerment, and cast [the chaff] into a fire to burn. Also imagine those enemies bound with ropes by the envoy [Acala], lead to the southern direction of stifling suffering, vomiting blood, and perishing. Those [enemies] and their ilk will all be unable to recover. Not a single one will survive.

Trisamaya I: 若欲令燒設都嚕卒者。取稻糠燒當燒之時。想聖者以索縛彼捨都嚕。將向南方困苦吐血。彼等族類皆不得存也。

Trisamaya II: 又法欲令捨靚嚕終亡者。取稻糠誦明加持擲火中燒。又想彼捨靚嚕。被使者以索縛。將向南方困苦吐血而終。彼等族類。皆不得痊一無存在。⁵⁸

Through the ritual procedures of performing a *homa* offering of rice chaff empowered with mantra while visualizing Acala binding one's human enemies with his noose and, in that visualization, dragging them off to the malarial southern regions, those people serving in the enemy army will die.

Many of these rites clearly require battle conditions for their performance, but whether the enemy die of one of the many diseases endemic to army camps, besieged cities, and battlefields in medieval China or whether their lives are violently snuffed out—cut, cleaved, crushed, pierced, poisoned, or burnt by a human agent—these would

be understood only as proximate causes of death. It is Acala, fierce and mighty, and his gang of demonic subordinates who rub out one's enemy and they are specifically deployed to do this by the ritual specialist. With these rites Amoghavajra could putatively bring about the deaths of tens of thousands of human beings and evidence suggests that the Tang emperors believed that he did.

I suggest that the collective memory of Amoghavajra's service—violent and martial in imagery and in effect—to the Tang court during the An Lushan Rebellion period provides the narrative frame for the Legendary Siege of Anxi. Therein, we have Amoghavajra performing rites in response to and in the context of an imperial military operation. An irresistible force of confederated foreign troops besieges a Tang outpost. The tactical situation appears hopeless, but Amoghavajra is summoned to court where he performs a ritual. As a result, the barbarian enemy is miraculously defeated. This narrative frame of the Legendary Siege of Anxi is, *mutatis mutandis*, a representation of true historical events from the rebellion period.

TRUTH: VAIŚRAVAṆA IN CHINESE BUDDHISM

May we say that the Legendary Siege of Anxi is true? If we approach the Legendary Siege of Anxi as myth, we may adopt Bruce Lincoln's view and aver that "myths are neither false stories, nor true, but simply stories that claim to speak with authority about issues of deep importance."⁵⁹ What is at issue, then, is not simply a matter of truth or falsity, but one of authority. The matter of truth reduces to a matter of trust or belief. This insight applies not only to myth. It is also true of history.

Our etiological account of the Legendary Siege of Anxi begins with Herodotus, who may be said to provide us with our own intellectual beginnings. Does Herodotus not articulate a certain history of religions approach when he writes, "My business is to record what people say, but I am by no means bound to believe it"?⁶⁰ The contemporary historiographical project seeks to establish its own authority through verification and validation, through logic, evidence, and a scrupulous documentation of sources. But we are still subject to our own beliefs. Primary among these is our notion of causality, though we will likely agree with Paul Veyne that historical causal relations are "the effect of a *post eventum* analysis or even a retrospective illusion."⁶¹ But at the root of our historical analyses are fundamental assumptions

concerning what is primary, what is real, and, therefore, what may be counted as cause rather than as effect. This is all well and good as far as it goes, but the disparity between our beliefs and those of our informants may prevent us from understanding their actions and the events of the past. This is particularly true when our assumptions of truth and falsity—often masked by genre designations such as “history,” “myth,” or “scripture”—are not those of our informants. This disconnect may lead us to miss important, alternative understandings and implications of our material. In short, the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* may not have (only) been created, preserved, and propagated as an *effect* of medieval Chinese events and practices, it may have been their *cause*.

It is broadly recognized that indigenous Chinese history is fundamentally didactic in nature. It is a narrative that, not unlike the histories that we create, purports to reveal the real, that postures itself as being true. But the truth that it contains is not the ostensibly disinterested historical truth of the modern, critical historian. It is a prescriptive truth. History, in the well-known Sinitic metaphor, is a mirror. It holds a truth that is to be discerned from reported events of the past and actualized in the present. This recognition should encourage us to reconsider the causal relationships involved in our reading of Chinese historical sources. As it is recorded in multiple elite texts narrating Chinese history, we may flip our approach to the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* from one of skepticism to one of credulity—or suspended doubt, at least—and thereby see it as functioning not as a passive, mythic *description* of established activities and practices in medieval East Asia but as an active *prescription* for the present and the future. We may consider subsequent elements and developments in Sinitic Buddhism as reflections of the *Legendary Siege of Anxi*. This leads us to a consideration of Vaiśravaṇa in China.

Vaiśravaṇa is, of course, a venerable deity in the pan-Asian Buddhist tradition. He is mentioned in a few Pāli *suttas*—the *Janavasabha-sutta*, in which King Bimbisara appears reborn as a *yakkha* (Skt. *yakṣa*) in the retinue of Vaiśravaṇa (Pāli, Vessavaṇa) and the *Sakkapaṇha-sutta*, in which Vaiśravaṇa’s wife, Bhunajati, attends the Buddha in a brief episode.⁶² Vaiśravaṇa also often appears as a god of wealth in a variety of Pāli sources. But the *Aṭṅānāṭṭiya-sutta* (Skt. *Aṭṅānāṭṭiya-sūtra*) is the early *locus classicus* for Vaiśravaṇa.⁶³ Punyodaya is said to have produced a translation of the *Aṭṅānāṭṭiya* in 663, but the text was lost by 730.⁶⁴ The earliest extant Chinese translation of the *Aṭṅānāṭṭiya-sutta* dates to the

tenth century.⁶⁵ This text is fairly close to the version found in the Pāli canon. The major difference is the inclusion of a transliterated Sanskrit mantra that is not present in the Pāli version.

The early image of Vaiśravaṇa in China essentially derives from the *Scripture of Golden Light*.⁶⁶ First translated in China by Dharmakṣema (Tanwuchen, 曇無讖) in the early fifth century,⁶⁷ the sixth chapter of the *Scripture of Golden Light* is dedicated to the Four Heavenly Kings. The scripture is praised by those deities for its ability to produce the happiness of sentient beings, empty the earth-prisons, eliminate terrors, protect against grain failure, extinguish “evil stars” and other astral anomalies, and heal illnesses. In addition to these, the scripture is also claimed to hold the power to repulse the hated enemies of other lands.⁶⁸ This is accomplished by means of a ruler paying homage to the *Scripture of Golden Light* and to those Buddhist monks who possess it. As a consequence of which, the Four Heavenly Kings and the innumerable deities, spirits, and ghosts that serve them will protect the kingdom.⁶⁹ The same holds good in Yijing’s (義淨) translation produced in 703 CE, the *Scripture of Golden Light, Most Victorious King of Scriptures*.⁷⁰

The textual and archeological record testifies to the fairly early and persistent presence of Vaiśravaṇa in the Chinese Buddhist world. But, if my proposed approach to the Legendary Siege of Anxi as a pre-scriptive indigenous history has merit, we should expect to see particular changes in the figuration of Vaiśravaṇa from at least the eighth century onward, and these changes should be broadly consistent with the narrative of the Legendary Siege of Anxi. In other words, we should most basically expect to see Vaiśravaṇa represented in a more martial, potentially lethal manner, his power should be seen as actively effective against human enemies, and we should see him appearing in association with Amoghavajra and the techniques of Esoteric Buddhism (e.g., ritual performances involving mantras, *mudrās*, etc.).

Five texts attributed to Amoghavajra and concerning Vaiśravaṇa are extant in the modern Taishō canon, but only one is attested among those scriptures that he formally submitted to the Tang court. This is the *Heavenly King Vaiśravaṇa Scripture*.⁷¹ It was personally submitted among Amoghavajra’s other translations in 771 and it is listed in Yuanzhao’s *Continuation of the Kaiyuan Catalogue*, completed in 795–796.⁷² This text describes a series of rites involving Vaiśravaṇa to various ends. The description of the rites is somewhat disjointed and the text has a cobble-together feel—the scripture begins *in media res* with the phrase

“at that time,” which typically occurs in sūtra texts announcing a transition in the narrative. Vaiśravaṇa is then described declaring his mantra before the Buddha for the plenitude of future sentient beings and the protection of kingdoms. Vaiśravaṇa speaks his mantra and describes the attendant elements of its ritual performance—offerings of incense and the formation of *mudrās*. Upon completion of this brief rite Vaiśravaṇa’s son Janeśa (赦爾娑) will appear and ask the practitioner what is desired, at which point one announces one’s wish to obtain wealth in order to make offerings to the Three Jewels.⁷³ This wish will be met by the subsequent miraculous appearance of gold coins, strangely fragrant, by the practitioner’s head as he sleeps. With this miraculous fund of wealth, the practitioner is then directed to make offerings to the Three Jewels. Here another technique is introduced. These procedures are said to command the blessings of Vaiśravaṇa and his retinue of “male and female followers, inner and outer relations by blood and marriage, his envoys and battalions (營從).”⁷⁴ These benefits are a mixed bag of mundane and soteriological effects including freedom from rebirth, unlimited longevity, understanding animal language, and attaining further material plenitude. For these, one is directed to have a painting made of Śākyamuni attended by the deity Lucky Heavenly Lady. This is the (originally) Hindu goddess Mahāśrī, often identified with Lakṣmī, the goddess of wealth and fortune.⁷⁵ This painting accomplished, one makes the usual offerings of incense, flower garlands, lamps, etc. to the Buddha Śākyamuni. Vaiśravaṇa will then, if he “sees” the rites and takes pity on the performer, appear in the form of a lad or a lay Buddhist, pay homage himself to the image of the Buddha, and grant the practitioner’s wishes. The text concludes with a description of the root *mudrā* and the *mudrā* of Mahāśrī, followed by another brief mantra in both Chinese transliteration and in Siddham script. Although the ritual narrative conforms to that of the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* in the appearance of Vaiśravaṇa’s son as an intermediary between the Heavenly King, the Vaiśravaṇa in this text appears in his early guise as a deity of wealth. This text produced by Amoghavajra is only minimally consistent with the narrative of the *Legendary Siege of Anxi*. However, from the ninth century we find evidence of indigenous Chinese scriptures attributed to Amoghavajra and apparently modeled on the *Legendary Siege of Anxi*.

Again, reading the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* as indigenous Sinitic history and therefore as fundamentally prescriptive in nature, I suggest

that the creation and circulation of the Legendary Siege of Anxi led to the production of a scripture based on the legend. This is the *Mantra Method for the Protection of Armies that Follow Vaiśravaṇa, the Heavenly King of the North* attributed to Amoghavajra.⁷⁶ Appearing neither in the list of titles Amoghavajra submitted to the Tang court in 771 nor in official Tang catalogues, this text was reportedly obtained in Tang China by Engyō (圓行) in 840 CE.⁷⁷ Although it is attributed to Amoghavajra and the specifics of the ritual procedures that it describes are consonant with those appearing in his verifiable textual corpus, the *Mantra Method for the Protection of Armies* is an indigenous Chinese scripture. Its creation seems to have been motivated by and predicated on the Legendary Siege of Anxi in China.

The *Mantra Method for the Protection of Armies* begins immediately with the titular mantra. No narrative context is provided. According to the instructions, if one wishes to perform the mantra, one should paint a polychromatic image of Vaiśravaṇa adorned in bejeweled robe and armor, standing atop two *yaḥṣas*, bearing a two-pointed lance in one hand, and presenting his pagoda to Śākyamuni with the other. His mien is furious and awesome. One paints this image on cloth and, for the purposes of commanding Vaiśravaṇa and his heavenly troops in defense of the kingdom, performs offerings to Vaiśravaṇa's image. The practitioner is advised to mark off a ritually clean space using cow dung and incense paste, to bathe, and to don clean clothes. On the night of the full moon one makes a *homa* offering of food and drink, flowers and incense, while reciting the mantra ten thousand times. Thereupon, Vaiśravaṇa will appear in the sky and grant one's requests, or the wind will kick up clouds around the ritual space, thereby assuring the ritual's success. This rite is claimed to produce a number of effects. These include obtaining the affection of others and of protection against highwaymen, wild beasts, illness, and poison. Also included are rites specific to an army in the field:

There is also a method if one wishes to vanquish masses of enemy troops from various kingdoms. You should paint an image of [Vaiśravaṇa's] form and the *gua* with armor of the highest quality pure gold. In a clean room burn an assortment of excellent incense such as⁷⁸ first-rate *kunduruka*⁷⁹ and make an offering of flowers of various colors and food and drink. Recite the Heavenly King's mantra one hundred thousand times with vehement rage and hatred.⁸⁰ The Heavenly King will lead Heavenly Troops to come and attack. The enemy troops of that kingdom will of themselves retreat and scatter.

If you are able to recite day and night without interruption, then the Heavenly King will dispatch his crown prince, Dujian, to lead thousands of troops to protect you and not leave your side. That for which you wish will be as you intend and will accord with your intention—all will be accomplished.

There is also a method if you wish to vanquish masses of the front line. In a clean room hold a *zhai* and paint an image of the Heavenly King and the *gua* with armor of the highest quality pure gold. Hang [the image] from a two *zhang* pole fifty paces in front of the army and pointing toward the enemy. The seal [that renders] enemies unable to cause trouble: each of the little fingers are hooked. The ring fingers are both outside, erect and perpendicular. The two middle fingers and two index fingers inversely interlocked. The two thumbs are both outside, erect and perpendicular. The palms are joined together and this is the seal.

又法若欲降伏諸國兵賊眾者。當畫一像身卦紫磨真金甲。於淨室中燒眾名香乳頭薰陸香。諸色香花飲食供養。瞋心誦念天王真言十萬遍。天王領天兵來助。他國兵敵自退散。若能晝夜誦念不絕。天王使太子獨健。領天兵千人衛護不離其側。所求如意應念隨心。皆得成就。又法若欲降前敵眾者。於淨室持齋畫一天王形像卦紫磨真金甲。於二丈竿懸。軍前五十步指其敵。其敵不能相患。印相二小指相鉤。二無名指向外直豎。二中指二頭指反相又。二大母指向外直豎。手掌背合即是其印。⁸¹

The rites described here in this text with a *terminus a quo* of 840 CE correspond to specific details of the Legendary Siege of Anxi and to the practice of marching behind a banner depicting Vaiśravaṇa described by Li Quan in the second half of the eighth century. The ritual procedures—the performance of *mudrā*, recitation of mantra, offerings presented to a painted image of the deity—also correspond to those found throughout the scriptures Amoghavajra produced in China during the second half of the eighth century. However, given its absence from the list of titles Amoghavajra submitted to the Tang throne, from subsequent imperial bibliographies, and from the Korean canon, we are most likely dealing here with an indigenous scripture attributed to Amoghavajra and in part modeled on the ritual procedures that he popularized. The specific reference to the *gua* is also a strong indication of the Chinese rather than Central Asian or Indic provenance of this text.

YORITOMI Motohiro's 1979 *Chūgoku Mikkyō no Kenkyū* (中国密教の研究) remains the most significant study of the imperial cult of Vaiśravaṇa and its connection with the Esoteric Buddhist traditions emerging from

the eighth century.⁸² In that study, Yoritomi dates the development of the imperial Vaiśravaṇa cult to the late Tang and Five Dynasties periods, and, consequently to sources other than Amoghavajra's career in the mid-eighth century. He appears led to this conclusion on the basis of his sources, the most significant of which is Zanning's (贊寧, 920–1001) *Great Song Dynasty History of the Saṃgha*.⁸³ However, evidence from the eighth century challenges this view, arguing for an earlier emergence of a Vaiśravaṇa cultus. And it is clear that there was a decided shift toward violence in the eighth century that accompanied this development. Evidence indicates that a military cult centered on Vaiśravaṇa had been established in China by the mid-eighth century, very probably resulting from a more general establishment of Central Asian peoples and cultural artifacts in Tang China. However, in a case of life imitating art, the Legendary Siege of Anxi seems to have spurred the creation of indigenous Chinese Esoteric Buddhist rituals devoted to the martial and violent Vaiśravaṇa.

The Legendary Siege of Anxi not only spurred the development of new, indigenous Chinese texts and ritual practices. It is also possible that the circulation of the story precipitated an alternation in Vaiśravaṇa's iconography. Vaiśravaṇa is typically depicted as grasping a weapon—typically a two-pointed spear—in his right hand and holding a pagoda in his left, though there are variations. A color image of Vaiśravaṇa on silk recovered at Dunhuang depicts him holding the two-pointed spear in his right hand with a pagoda sitting atop a cloud emanating from his left hand.⁸⁴ At the Longmen Grotto (龍門石窟), Vaiśravaṇa holds a pagoda in his right hand and his left hand rests on his hip. One still finds Vaiśravaṇa figured with this iconography in Chinese temples today. However, it is not uncommon to see Vaiśravaṇa holding not a pagoda in his right hand, but a rat. This is the manner in which he is depicted in the recently carved image at Lingyun Temple (凌雲寺) at the Great Buddha of Leshan site in Sichuan, for example. This iconography may reflect the shared association of Vaiśravaṇa and rats with wealth within a Chinese symbolic nexus, but it is just as likely a graphic reflection of the pairing of Vaiśravaṇa with rats in the Legendary Siege of Anxi.

CONCLUSION

The distinctions between myth and history, between truth and falsity, even between cause and effect are largely cultural determinations.

As scholars invested in the study of persons culturally different from ourselves—whether this springs from temporal or geographic distanciation—we must be alive to the fact that this determination in our culture, that of the modern academy, is not always consonant with that in which our sources were produced, circulated, encountered, and received. Scholarly analyses and considerations rooted in text-critical logical positivism and contemporary conceptions of genre literature, I would suggest, often spring from a failure to recognize this distinction. Such assumptions have limited our analyses of medieval Chinese literature and its relationship with real-world practices and events. They can preclude consideration of text as a constructive and dynamic motivator of historical events and developments.

Previous analyses of the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* have been based on assumptions concerning the causal relationship between myth and history, between fiction and fact, between the fictive narrative of the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* and actual Song dynasty practices. Following these readings, it is the established Song practices that spur the telling of the legend—Zanning relates the tale as a means of explaining the installation of Vaiśravaṇa images on city walls in the Song, for example. In the analyses provided above, I have sought to show that the dynamics behind the production of the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* and the causal relation between the telling of the tale and the real-world practices that it is related to are more complex than have heretofore been recognized. As deriving from Hellenic and Central Asian tales, the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* may be analyzed as the result of mythic diffusion and productive ambiguities in the Sinitic travel narrative genre, for example. But the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* also reflects the historical fact of Amoghavajra's assistance to the Tang emperors during the rebellion period. Through deconstructing the archeology of the narrative, the particular Sinitic contributions to the finished tale—the narrative frame concerning Amoghavajra and Emperor Xuanzong—are revealed. By considering this element from a structural perspective and in relation to documented historical events, we can see that the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* possesses a certain facticity. Finally, by recognizing the dynamics of Sinitic history, which possesses a facticity of a rather different nature than that of the modern historiographical enterprise, we may see the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* as a productive force in the development of Sinitic Buddhism. Represented by those who reproduced and disseminated the *Legendary Siege of Anxi* over

the centuries as an account of true historical events and presumably perceived as such by those who read it, the world of medieval Chinese Buddhism was made to conform to the reality of the text. The practice of installing Vaiśravaṇa on city walls may have been as much the effect of the Legendary Siege of Anxi as it was the cause of its retelling. Life imitates art. In this light we may consider the Legendary Siege of Anxi, and other such tales, as bearing a certain existential weight that contemporary historiographical approaches tend to ignore. We may reconsider our textual sources as dynamic, creative elements of the historical past rather than merely static descriptors.

NOTES

1. See, for example, Paul Demieville's references in the recently published English translation of his 1957 article "Bouddhisme et la guerre": Paul Demieville, "Buddhism and War," in *Buddhist Warfare*, ed. Michael K. Jerryson and Mark Juergensmeyer (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 17–57.

2. Valerie Hansen, for example, has approached the tale as a window into the influence of Central Asian cultic traditions on the development of city god traditions in China. Phyllis Granoff considered it in reference to the development of a widespread Vaiśravaṇa cult in China and Japan. Valerie Hansen, "Gods on Walls: A Case of Indian Influence on Chinese Lay Religion?" in *Religion and Society in T'ang and Sung China*, ed. Patricia Buckley Ebrey and Peter N. Gregory (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 75–113; Phyllis Granoff, "Tobatsu Bishamon: Three Statues in American Museums and the Rise of This Cult in East Asia," *East and West* 20, nos. 1–2 (1970): 144–168.

3. *Kangju* (康居), an independent kingdom located at what is still called Samarqand in Uzbekistan.

4. The text reads *dashi* (大石), which I take to be a variation of *dashi* (大食). *Dashi* (大食) is a transliteration of the Persian word *Tāzīk*. Deriving from the name of the earliest Arab tribe to encounter the Persians, *Tāzīk* came to connote "Arab/Arabic" (C.E. Bosworth and B.G. Fragner, "Tādīk," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs, 2nd ed. [Leiden: Brill, 2010]; retrieved April 24, 2010, http://www.brillonline.nl/subscriber/entry?entry=islam_COM-1142). *Dashi* likely refers here to the Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258) and its subjects. See Marc S. Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 221n5.

5. *Complete Record of the Buddhas and Patriarchs* (Fozu tongji, 佛祖統紀, T. 49.2035.375b4–13) by Zhi Pan (志磐), completed in 1269 CE.

6. Stanley Weinstein, *Buddhism under the T'ang* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 170n41.
7. MATSUMOTO Bunzaburō 松本文三郎, *Bukkyōshi zakkō* 仏教史雜考 (Ōsaka: Sōgensha, 1944), 287–290.
8. Valerie Hansen, “Gods on Walls,” 87.
9. T. 50.2061 and T. 54.2126, respectively.
10. *Xuzang jing* 續藏經 (Hongkong: Longmen shudian, 1968), T. 64.1261.390b13–c01.
11. T. 21.1248.
12. Herodotus, *Histories*, 2.141 (Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Aubrey De Sélincourt [London: Penguin, 2003], 153).
13. Xuanzang refers to the city-state as Kustana (Qusadanna, 瞿薩旦那). I have taken the liberty of changing this to Khotan for the sake of consistency.
14. T. 51.2087.944a21–b11.
15. In modern northern Afghanistan.
16. T. 51.2087.872c07–872c16.
17. *Taibai yin jing* (太白陰經). This translation of the title is based on Li Quan’s memorial of submission, the relevant line of which reads, “Your servant has heard that *Taibai* is the lord of arms and serves as general-in-chief, *yin* is the lord of killing. Therefore, in employing arms theirs is the method” (*Taibai yin jing* 1. submission memorial.1b). The precise meaning and proper translation of the title is, however, a source of some disagreement. Ralph Sawyer takes *yin* to refer to the moon (“Military Writings,” in *A Military History of China*, ed. David Andrew Graff and Robin Higham Graff [Boulder, CO, and Oxford: Westview, 2002], 108). David Graff tends to leave the title untranslated (see Graff and Graff, *A Military History of China*, 8; see also David A. Graff, “Narrative Maneuvers: The Representation of Battle in Tang Historical Writing,” in *Military Culture in Imperial China*, ed. Nicola Di Cosmo [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009], 143–164). The issue hinges on whether *tai* applies only to *bai* (*taibai*, Grand White; i.e., the planet Venus) or whether it has a distributive property and applies also to *yin* (*taiyin*, Grand Yin; i.e., the moon). If *tai* does not also apply to *yin*, then *yin* might have an adjectival function and the title would be translated as the *Secret* (or *Hidden*) *Scripture of Venus*. This is how Christopher Rand chooses to read the title (Christopher C. Rand, “Li Ch’uan and Chinese Military Thought,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 39, no. 1 [June 1979]: 112). But based on the memorial of submission, I do not believe this to be accurate.
18. The precise dating of the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon* has been a source of disagreement. The memorial of submission, addressed to Emperor Suzong (肅

宗, r. 756–762), that accompanies the received version of the text is dated June 2, 759, when, according to that memorial, Li Quan was serving as a military official stationed in Youzhou (幽州), a prefecture-level administrative region in northern Hebei Circuit. Guo Shaolin (郭紹林), however, takes the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon* to have been written in 751 CE. Though it is not explicitly clear in Guo's essay, this is probably based on the standard biography of Li Quan contained in Du Guangting's (850–933 CE) *Biographies of People Who Encountered Divinities and Transcendents* (*Shenxian ganyu zhuan*, 神仙感遇傳, *Daozang* [Zhonghua daoang, 中華道藏] 592, fasc. 1 [Beijing: Huaxia chubanshe, 2004]). According to that account, which is repeated in the *Comprehensive Record of the Taiping Era* (*Taiping guangji*, 太平廣記) completed in 978 CE, the *Scripture of Venus and Yin* (called the *Secret Tallies of Venus*, 太白陰符經, by Du) was composed when Li Quan was serving as a general and prior to his dismissal by Li Linfu (李林甫). Li Linfu died Dec. 26, 752 (*Jiu Tangshu*, 舊唐書, 9.226; Liu Xu [887–946], ed. [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju chuban faxing, 1975; repr., 2002]). The preface to the received version of the text is dated the fourth year of Daizong's (代宗) *Yongtai* (永泰) reign period, an impossible date as there was no fourth year of this reign period. The reign title was changed in the second year of *Yongtai* to *Dali* (大歷) on Dec. 22, 766. It is quite possible that the erroneous date found in the preface to the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon* stems from an ignorance of such events due to disrupted communications between the central government and the provinces. If this is the case, then the preface would be from 768/9. For his part, Guo takes this date to be a copyist's error, but he accepts that the text was submitted during the reign of Emperor Daizong (r. 762–779). This supposition and the 759 date on the memorial of submission lead Guo to theorize that the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon* was written in 751 and originally submitted to Emperor Suzong during the An Lushan Rebellion period (755–ca. 765). Guo conjectures that the text was not initially well-received and was therefore resubmitted during Daizong's reign. I find this theory somewhat doubtful, but I see no compelling reasons to doubt that the *Scripture of Venus and the Moon* dates to the mid-eighth century. See Guo Shaolin 郭紹林, "Tangdai wenren Li Quan de bingshu Taibai yin jing" 唐代文人李筌的兵書《太白陰經》 ("The Tang Dynasty Literatus Li Quan's Military Text, *Taibai yin jing*"), *Xi'an waiguoyu xueyuan xuebao* 西安外國語學院學報 10, no. 2 (2002): 114. Also see FANG Li, *Taiping Guang Ji*, 10 vols. (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju: Xin hua shu dian Beijing fa xing suo fa xing, 2003), 1:101–102.

19. *Taibai yin jing*, fasc. 7, sect. 75, pp. 1b–2a.

20. *Ibid.*

21. Lu Hongzheng's (盧宏正) *Record of the Establishment of Tang Temples to the Heavenly King Vaiśravaṇa* (*Xing Tangsi Pishamen tuanwang ji*, 興唐寺毗沙門天王記) from 838 relates the establishment of a Vaiśravaṇa cultus to the practice initiated by Emperor Xuanzong of painting the deity on banners

(*Quan Tangwen*, 全唐文, fasc. 730). In the Song dynasty *Annals of Images and Information* (*Tuhua jianwen zhi*, 圖畫見聞誌), Guo Rouxu (郭若虛), citing the stele at Xianguo Temple in Henan, reports that Xuanzong sent the artist Che Daozheng (車道政) to Khotan in order to obtain a model image of Vaiśravaṇa, which was subsequently used as the basis for painting his image at Xianguo Temple.

22. *Taibai yin jing*, 7.78.5b–6a.

23. The Luo, Xi, Khitan, and Shiwei were all non-Han peoples whose territories were on the northeastern frontier of the Sinitic imperium in what is now Heilongjiang (黑龍江) and eastern Inner Mongolia (內蒙古). See Elina-Qian Xu, *Historical Development of the Pre-Dynastic Khitan*, Publications of the Institute for Asian and African Studies, 7 (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, 2005), 155–236.

24. Modern Shijiazhuang (石家莊) in Hebei (河北).

25. *Zizhi tongjian* 資治通鑑, ed. SIMA Guang 司馬光 (Beijing: Guji chubanshe, 1956), fasc. 217, 天寶 14, sec. 19.

26. Near modern Sanmenxia (三門峽) on the Shanxi (山西) border of Henan (河南). Feb. 5, 756, the day that An Lushan announced the establishment of the Yan dynasty, was the first, and therefore auspicious, day of the year. *Zizhi tongjian*, fasc. 217, 德元年, sec. 1.

27. According to the *Comprehensive Mirror*, Geshu Han had been convalescing since Jan. 756 (*Zizhi tongjian*, fasc. 217, 天寶 14, sec. 17). For an account of the events at the Tong Pass see Edwin G. Pulleyblank, “The An Lu-Shan Rebellion and the Origins of Chronic Militarism in Late T’ang China,” in *Essays on Tang and Pre-Tang History*, ed. Edwin G. Pulleyblank (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 42–43.

28. Pulleyblank, “The An Lu-Shan Rebellion.”

29. *Zizhi tongjian*, fasc. 220, 至德 2, sec. 8.

30. *Jiu Tangshu* 104.3211.

31. *Jiu Tangshu* 10.241. Lingwu is on the Yellow River in Ningxia (寧夏) on the Inner Mongolian border.

32. *Jiu Tangshu* 10.242.

33. This is Li Yu (李豫), the eldest son of Emperor Suzong. Born Jan. 13, 727, he was enfeoffed as the Guangping Prince at the age of fifteen in 742–743 (*Jiu Tangshu* 11.267; *Xin Tangshu* 新唐書 6.166 [ed. OUYANG Xiu 歐陽修 (Beijing: Zhong hua shu ju chuban fa xing, 1975; repr., 2002)]). In May to June 758 he became the heir apparent and was enthroned as emperor on May 16, 762 with the temple name Daizong (*Jiu Tangshu* 11.267–268).

34. *Zizhi tongjian*, fasc. 221, 上元 1, sec. 14.

35. Pulleyblank, “The An Lu-Shan Rebellion.”
36. *Jiu Tangshu* 11.273–274.
37. *Jiu Tangshu* 11.274.
38. *Jiu Tangshu* 11.279; *Xin Tangshu*, 6.171, 224.6371. These are indigenous, non-Han peoples who inhabited what is now western Sichuan. (See Denis Crispin Twitchett and John King Fairbank, *The Cambridge History of China*, vol. 1 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978], 428–430.)
39. *Jiu Tangshu* 11.279; *Xin Tangshu*, 224.6371. For the career of Pugu Huai’en and the events leading to his eventual rebellion and death, see Charles A. Peterson, “P’u-Ku Huai-En and the T’ang Court: The Limits of Loyalty,” *Monumenta Serica* 29 (1970–1971): 423–455.
40. For the specific vicissitudes of fortune that played out in battles between loyalist and rebel forces during the rebel occupation of Chang’an, see Pulleyblank, “The An Lu-Shan Rebellion.”
41. *Jiu Tangshu* 68.3417. They specifically cite the *Humane Kings Scripture* in this regard.
42. *Jiu Tangshu* 10.245.
43. Pulleyblank, “The An Lu-Shan Rebellion.”
44. *Jiu Tangshu* 49.6371.
45. *Jiu Tangshu* 11.279; *Xin Tangshu*, 49.6371.
46. *Jiu Tangshu* 114.3368–3370; *Xin Tangshu*, 224.6373–6374.
47. *Memorials and Edicts*, T. 52.2120.0834c02–0834c03.
48. *Wangshi* (王師); here parallel to Zhiguang, *wangshi* is a bureaucratic title for one of the crown prince’s tutors. Here, though, it seems to refer to Amoghavajra as a “princely master” based on the reference in the concluding line concerning the “master’s (*shi*, 師) protective recollection (*hu’nian*, 護念).”
49. *Zhuyi* (誅夷): literally “to punish Yi barbarians,” invoking legal terminology and in reference to cultural or ethnic inferiority, the phrase most basically means to kill someone.
50. *Memorials and Edicts*, T. 55.2120.834c14–0834c15.
51. Even accurately predicting the date of Chang’an’s recovery, if we are to believe Feixi’s *Stele Inscription* (T. 52.2120.848c29–849a03).
52. *Dilisanmeiye budong zunshengzhe niansong mimi fa* (底哩三昧耶不動尊聖者念誦祕密法, *Trisamaya I*, T. 21.1201) and *Dilisanmeiye budong zun weinuwangshizheniansong fa* (底哩三昧耶不動尊威怒王使者念誦法, *Trisamaya II*, T. 21.1200).
53. Yuanzhao’s *Record* includes a text referred to only as the *Trisamaya* (*dili*

sanmeiye, 底哩三昧耶). *The Great Tang “Honorable Prime” (785–805) Continuation of the “Opened Prime” [Period]* (Dec. 22, 713 to Feb. 9, 742) *Catalogue of Buddhist Teachings* (大唐貞元續開元釋教錄卷上, T. 55.2156.749a8).

54. *Trisamaya I* (T. 21.1201.21c27–22a2), *Trisamaya II* (T. 21.1200.11b25–29).

55. *Trisamaya I* (T. 21.1201.21c25–26), *Trisamaya II* (T. 21.1200.11b23–24).

56. *Trisamaya II* (T. 21.1200.11c8–10), *Trisamaya I* (T. 21.1201.22a20–22a22): 又法欲令設都嚕卒取土鹽蠟。苦練葉相和擣為泥。捻作彼形狀。置地上研斷。即卒若明稻穀燒。令彼捨都嚕即貧窮。

57. *Trisamaya II* (T. 21.1200.11c11–12), this roughly corresponds to *Trisamaya I* (T. 21.1201.22a22).

58. *Trisamaya II* (T. 21.1200.11c4–7), *Trisamaya I* (T. 21.1201.22a17–19).

59. Bruce Lincoln, “An Early Moment in the Discourse of ‘Terrorism’: Reflections on a Tale from Marco Polo,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 48, no. 2 (Apr. 2006): 242.

60. Herodotus, *Histories* 7.152 (from Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. De Sélincourt, 468).

61. Paul Veyne, *Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths?: An Essay on the Constitutive Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 36.

62. *Dīgha Nikāya* 18 and *Dīgha Nikāya* 21, respectively. See Maurice Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995), 291–300, 321–334.

63. *Dīgha Nikāya* 32; Walshe, *The Long Discourses*, 471–478.

64. See Li-kouang Lin, “Punyodaya: Un propagateur du tantrism en Chine et un Cambodge a l’epoque de Hiuen-Tsang,” *Journal Asiatique* 227 (1935): 85–86, 89, 100.

65. The *Scripture of the Heavenly King Vaiśravaṇa* (毘沙門天王經, T. 21.1249) translated by Dharmadeva (Fatian, 法天) in the tenth century is sometimes cited as an independent version of the *Aṭānāṭīya* (Peter Skilling, *Mahāsūtras: Great Discourses of the Buddha*, Vol. 2, Parts I & II [Oxford: Pāḷi Text Society, 1997], 66).

66. There are three extant versions of the *Scripture of Golden Light* (*Jingguangming jing*, 金光明經): Dharmakṣema’s translation from 414–421 CE (金光明經, T. 16.663), the translation of Baogui (寶貴) from 597 CE (合部金光明經, T. 16.664), and Yijing’s (義淨) version from 703 CE (T. 16.665).

67. Dharmakṣema’s version is T. 16.663, *Jingguangming jing* (金光明經).

68. T. 16.663.340c25.

69. T. 16.663.343c5–6.

70. T. 16.665, *Jing guangming zuishen wangjing* (金光明昉勝王經).
71. *Pishamen tianwang jing* (毘沙門天王經, T. 21.1244).
72. *Collected Memorials and Edicts* (T. 21.2120.839c04); *Continuation of the Kaiyuan Catalogue* (T. 55.2156.749b05, 749c20–751a02).
73. *Foguang dacidian* (佛光大辭典), ed. Xingyundashi 星雲大師 et al. (Peking: Peking tu shu guan chu ban she, 1989), 6529.
74. T. 1244.0215b29–c01.
75. For Lakṣmī as a Buddhist goddess see Miranda Eberle Shaw, *Buddhist Goddesses of India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 94–109.
76. T. 21.1248, *Beifang Pishaen tianwang suijun hufa zhenyan* (北方毘沙門天王隨軍護法真言).
77. *Catalogue of the Numinous Peak Monastery* (Ryōgan-ji, 靈巖寺) Monk (靈巖寺和尚請來法門道具等目錄, T. 55.2164). The *Mantra Method* is cited at p. 1072b18.
78. Reading *ru* (如) for *ru* (乳).
79. *Xunluxiang* (薰陸香): *kunduruka* is a variety of frankincense.
80. There is a textual variant here. The Taishō editors chose to read this as *zhenxin* (真心), “sincerity, sincerely,” but a variant texts provides this as *chenxin* (瞋心), indicating a thought or intention characterized by intense rage and enmity. I have elected to follow the latter based on the character of this rite in particular and of the entire text itself and also based on an assumption that *zhenxin* (真心) is likely a bowdlerizing interpolation.
81. T. 51.1248.227a28–b11.
82. YORITOMI Motohiro 頼富本宏, *Chūgoku Mikkyō no Kenkyū: Hannya to Sannei no Mikkyō Rikai o Chushin to Shite* 中国密教の研究: 般若と贊寧の密教理解を中心として (Tokyo: Daito Shuppansha 大東出版社, 1979), 147–159.
83. *Da song seng shilu* (大宋僧史略, T. 4.2126).
84. Stein Painting 45.