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ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS

Durable Ephemera and Networks of Stone in Quanzhou's Zhenguo Pagoda

ABSTRACT

Building a pagoda mobilizes durable materials into architectonic form. But a pagoda may also incorporate likenesses of images and objects wrought in ephemeral materials, thus becoming a nexus of textual, pictorial, and formal transfer and intermedial preservation. This essay examines how, in the Zhenguo pagoda 鎮國塔 (lit. “Defender of the State Pagoda”) at the Kaiyuan temple in Quanzhou, Fujian, rock—covered with the imagery of paper (and other fugitive media) by means of scissors (or, more precisely, the carver’s knife)—preserved traces of evanescent forms. Specifically, it: articulates the relationship of paper-based editions of the Buddhist canon to the pagoda’s stone-carved narrative program; asserts the influence of logographic schema of printed-paper primers and locally known, silk-based court painting styles to the pagoda’s imagery; and contends that carved images of small, free-standing bronze (and stone) pagodas link the Zhenguo pagoda to overlapping local (Quanzhou), regional (Min-Yue/Fujian), imperial (Song-dynasty), and maritime (Indian Ocean) object networks. To test the hypothesis that the Zhenguo pagoda serves as a repository of, and lexicon for, now lost forms, this essay concludes by using the imagery of the Zhenguo pagoda to recover the iconography of a type of Quanzhou-specific Buddhist monument, the Stone Shoot (*Shisun* 石筍).

To build a pagoda is to mobilize durable materials into architectonic form, timber and stone, allowing it to stand and indeed rise stories above ground level, perhaps for several centuries. But pagodas can also be crafted using images and objects wrought in ephemeral materials: fragile printed texts and paintings on silk, indestructible objects fashioned from valuable metals ultimately recycled, and evanescent forms no longer produced. Once these ephemera disappear, they exist only as embodied in the fabric of the pagoda. The pagoda thus becomes a nexus of textual, pictorial, and formal transfer, a site at which artistic and intermedial processes enable imperishable media to preserve others more easily destroyed, thereby creating abiding texts and images able to outlive their models.

This article examines how, in the Zhenguo pagoda 鎮國塔 (lit. “Defender of the State Pagoda”; fig. 1) at the Kaiyuan temple 開元寺 in Quanzhou 泉州 (fig. 2), Fujian 福建, rock—covered with the imagery of paper (and silk, and other fugitive media) by means of scissors (or, more precisely, the carver’s knife)—preserved traces of evanescent forms, sustained their lost

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FIGURE 1. Zhenguo Pagoda, Kaiyuan si (Kaiyuan temple), Quanzhou, Fujian, Song dynasty, ca. 1238. As viewed from the southeast. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019



FIGURE 2. Map of Quanzhou.
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networks, and served, in some cases, as a lexicon for decoding the forgotten iconographies of other monuments.¹ This article articulates the relationship of paper-based editions of the Buddhist canon, especially printed ones, to the stone-carved narrative program and demonstrates how single reliefs combine content from multiple sutras; it also asserts that artisans employed the logographic schema of printed-paper primers as well as pictorial styles drawn from court painting on silk, known locally, to maximize the intelligibility of the reliefs. Furthermore, this article contends that, by representing small, free-standing bronze (and stone) pagodas—their corpus, like those of their paper- and silk-based counterparts, now largely lost—the reliefs establish links to overlapping local (Quanzhou), regional (Min-Yue/Fujian), imperial, and maritime (Indian Ocean) object networks. Finally, by using the durable images of the Zhenguo pagoda as indices of long-lost monuments, this article recovers the identity of an unusual local type of monument, thereby validating the hypothesis that this pagoda serves as a repository of, and lexicon for, now-lost ephemera.

Rock, Paper, Scissors: Writing and Picturing Foundational Buddhist Beliefs in Stone

Paper, especially printed paper, often served as the tool for writing and picturing foundational Buddhist beliefs in stone (and other media). In such cases, portable but potentially destructible imprints—examples of what the media theorist Harold Innis (1894–1952), a founder of the Toronto School of communication theory, in his media ecology termed “space-binding media,” media easily transmitted across space—become fixed and enduring; thus such media are translated into Innis’s “time-binding media,” media able to withstand the ravages of time but less able to move.² Peculiar to instances of intermediality in the Buddhist tradition are the large number and doctrinal diversity of texts contained within the Buddhist Canon or Tripitaka: each text or image translated from the space-binding medium of a paper-based Tripitaka to the time-binding medium of a monument indicates a selection of content from one (or

several) titles of more than a thousand, as well as the corresponding rejection of content from the balance of available titles.³ This process of selective inclusion therefore sheds light on the degree of textual access and doctrinal diversity in the context in which a monument is made.

The structural history of the Zhenguo pagoda is one of iterative intermediality, multiple rebuildings in different materials. This occurred in a changing temple environment, and against the development of the city of Quanzhou from nothing to one of the most important ports in the medieval world system.⁴ The temple in which the Zhenguo pagoda would subsequently be built, originally named Lotus Flower temple 蓮花寺, was founded ca. 685 when the closest walled city was Wurongzhou 武榮州 (located in present-day Fengzhou township 豐州鎮, Nan'an county 南安縣), founded ca. 622 CE.⁵ Circa 711 Wurongzhou relocated from present-day Fengzhou to the current site of Quanzhou, with city walls built ca. 700–718; at this time, the Lotus Flower temple was located just outside the Xiaoqing (West) gate 肅清門 of the walled city.⁶ An imperial proclamation of 738 changed the name of the Lotus Flower temple to the Kaiyuan temple, or Kaiyuan si 開元寺.⁷ It is not until 865—two centuries after the founding of Lotus Flower temple, and a century after its renaming—that artisans working under the direction of the monk Wencheng 文僊 (798–877) completed work on a five-story wooden pagoda on which the Tang dynasty (618–907) emperor Yizong 懿宗 (833–873, r. 859–873) bestowed the name Zhenguo. The following year, 866, an official dispatched from the capital of Chang'an (modern Xi'an) brought relics of the Buddha to be enshrined within this new pagoda.⁸

Even as the morphology of Quanzhou's city walls changed across the course of the Tang and Song dynasties (standard dates: 960–1279; Quanzhou-specific dates: 978–1276), including in response to growing and ethnically diversifying populations, the form of the Zhenguo pagoda also changed, adding height that increased its visibility on the urban skyline, replacing iterations lost to fire, rebuilding in brick and stone for durability. First the Zhenguo pagoda was rebuilt during the Tianxi era (1017–1021) of the Song dynasty, its height extended to thirteen stories. Having burned in 1155, it was restored by the monk Liaoxing 了性 (fl. twelfth century) in 1186. Burning again in 1227, the pagoda was rebuilt by the monk Shouchun 守淳 (fl. thirteenth century) in brick, its height limited to seven stories. The monk Benhong 本洪 (fl. early-mid-thirteenth century, also known as Bengong 本拱) began to replace the brick with stone in 1238, completing only a single story; the monk Faquan 法權 (fl. thirteenth century) completed the next three stories; and finally, the monk Tianxi 天錫 (1209–1263), who hailed from a local family, completed the fifth story and spire ca. 1248.⁹ Built well before the rise of Quanzhou as an important port in an extended maritime network, yet following the enclosure of the Kaiyuan si by the expansion of the city walls after 804, the walls and the Zhenguo pagoda—together with its pendant, the Renshou pagoda 仁壽塔 (lit. “Benevolence and Longevity Pagoda”)—functioned as the most visible, defining civic markers of Song-dynasty Quanzhou.¹⁰

The visibility of the pagoda and its twin, and the fame of its relief-carved imagery, are not matched by clarity on the sources of its architectonic and pictorial forms, problems that prompted this dual investigation of iconography and intermediality. In the local context of Quanzhou, various features of the pagoda resemble the constituent forms of other monuments, their chronological relationship sometimes clear and other times not, indeed, unable to be determined.¹¹ More difficult are the questions of iconographic program and pictorial sources. The forty reliefs on the base of the Zhenguo pagoda neither follow a program established elsewhere nor do they resemble in composition or pictorial form Buddhist pictorial prints contemporaneous with the making of the reliefs, which have been brought into

scholarly focus by colleagues working on Buddhist printing.¹² Not studied systematically since the 1930s, the iconographic program and its sources have been clarified by digital access to the Tripiṭaka, expanding on the groundbreaking work of Paul Demiéville and Gustav Ecke published in their seminal book, *The Twin Pagodas of Zayton* (1935).¹³ In other words, the impetus to this article is the intersection of the problem of form in one of the most cosmopolitan cities of the medieval world (also inhabited by a large group of imperial family members) with the problem of iconography in what was concurrently one of the most vibrant centers of Buddhist learning (supported by proximate access to printed text) in this and other monuments from Quanzhou.¹⁴

To picture foundational Buddhist beliefs in durable form, the base of the Zhenguo pagoda presents thirty-nine carved-stone narrative reliefs drawn from no fewer than 65 titles (and perhaps as many as 146 titles) of various genres anthologized in the Buddhist canon, as well as 4 titles outside it, to viewers at ground level (fig. 3).¹⁵ Each has a four-character inscription; eleven are taken verbatim from standard printed editions of the Tripiṭaka (one from a single text; ten using text found in more than eighty titles).¹⁶ The fortieth relief either represents the void of nirvana or is a blank placeholder for a lost image. The narrative program encircles the pagoda base beginning on its southeast face. The program is read right-to-left like Classical Chinese texts and handscroll paintings: the directionality of this reading moves the viewer across each image and on to the next, the programmatic sequence guiding the viewer to the clockwise circumambulation of the pagoda, a standard practice in Buddhist worship.¹⁷

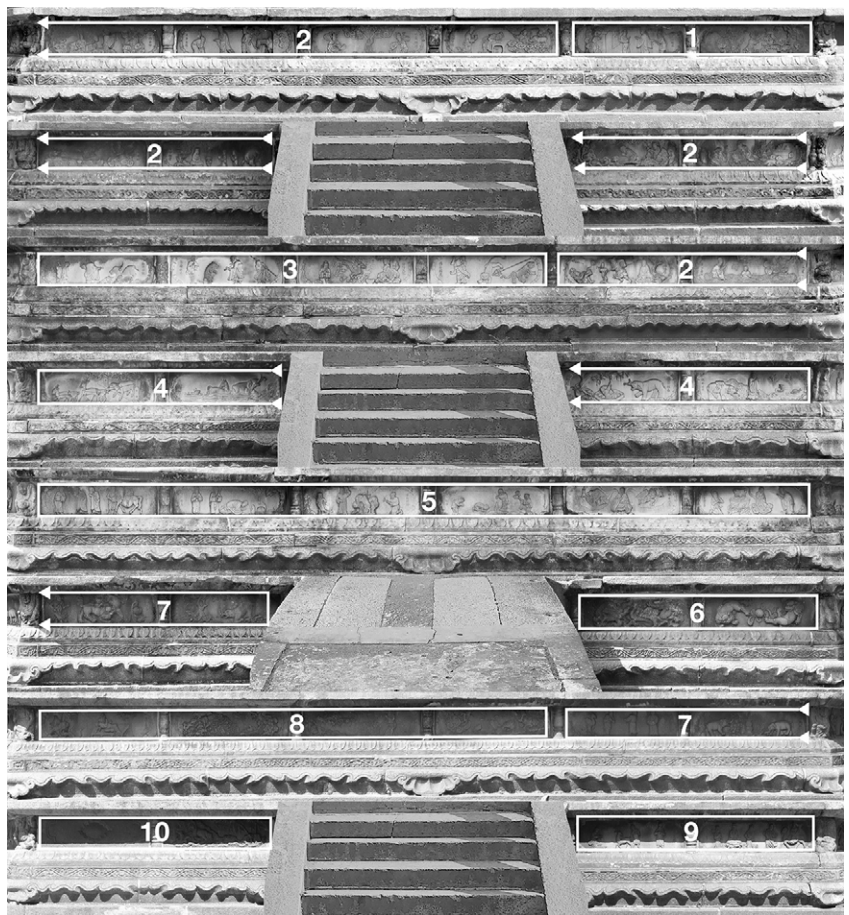


FIGURE 3. Thematic plan of the narrative cycle of the Zhenguo Pagoda base reliefs, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, Fujian, ca. 1238. Photos © Jennifer Purtle, 2014 (stairs and bridge), Ryan Whyte (reliefs), 2019. Composite © Lora Miki, 2020



FIGURE 4. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “The boy asking for the verse (*gāthā*)” (*Tongzi qiu ji*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019



FIGURE 5. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “The Prince’s outing” (*Taizi chu you*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019

At present, staircases and stone bridges prevent continuous circumambulation of the pagoda (see fig. 1).¹⁸ But how these current structural features relate to the original stone structure of ca. 1238, when the monk Benhong rebuilt the pagoda for the fifth time since its founding ca. 865, is unclear.

The selective translation of content from printed paper to carved stone and its resultant programmatic communication is evident when the Zhenguo pagoda base reliefs are parsed into ten thematic groups, a parsing that supercedes prior approaches to the iconographic program.¹⁹ The first four of these cover four of the eight façades of the pagoda (see fig. 3) and address Buddhist history and practice. The first group narrates Buddhist prehistory (reliefs 1, 2), that is, the Jātaka Tales (stories of the past lives of the future Buddha), exemplified by the first relief, “The boy asking for the verse (*gāthā*)” (*Tongzi qiu ji* 童子求偈), a tale from the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* (*Great Parinirvana Sutra*) (fig. 4).²⁰ The second group (reliefs 3–12) illustrates scenes from the Life of the Historical Buddha, exemplified by the fifth relief, “The Prince’s outing” (*Taizi chu you* 太子出遊; fig. 5). This relief depicts the moment when Prince Siddhārtha (ca. 480–ca. 400 BCE), who would become the Historical Buddha Śākyamuni, left the confines of the palace in which he had been raised to encounter age (depicted in this relief by the figure with a staff at the left of the composition), illness, death, and asceticism (a palliative for human suffering).²¹

The transfer of printed text to images carved in stone followed tales of the past lives of the future Buddha and the Life of the Buddha with reliefs that reveal the possibilities and practices

of Buddhism for their viewers. The third group (reliefs 13–16) illustrates Buddhist miracles in the natural world, exemplified by the fifteenth relief, “Bohe (Mint) revealing himself” (*Bohe shi ji* 薄荷示跡, lit. “Mint shows traces [of himself]”), which pictures a bodhisattva incarnated as a pig named Mint seeking to save his fellow human beings who had been reborn as animals.²² The fourth group (reliefs 17–20) addresses Buddhist practices and parables, exemplified by the seventeenth, “Jalavāhana keeping the fish alive” (*Liushui huoyu* 流水活魚, lit. “[He who makes] the water flow [keeping] alive the fish”; fig. 6).²³ This relief pictures the refilling of a dammed lake to maintain its fish populations, a tale linked to festivals for the release of living beings (*fangsheng hui* 放生會); this tale also underpinned the practice of making “Ponds for the Release of Living Beings” (*fangsheng chi* 放生池), one of which existed within the walled city of Quanzhou during the Song dynasty.²⁴

Whereas the first four façades of the pagoda set in stone the historical and practical foundations of Buddhism, the last four façades contain six groups of thematic, text-based images that localize and personalize Buddhism for adherents in Quanzhou. The six reliefs (21–26) of the fifth group cover the northwestern façade of the pagoda in an unbroken sequence addressing *cakravartin*, or divine Buddhist kingship in India and its Chinese context.²⁵ The twenty-first relief, “King Aśoka impelled to good” (*Yu wang qian shan* 育王遷善), depicts the conversion of the early Indian King Aśoka (ca. 268–ca. 232 BCE) to Buddhism at the moment when a Buddhist monk he had imprisoned transcended the torture of being boiled alive to cool the water and sit on a lotus on its surface (fig. 7).²⁶ The sixth group (reliefs 27, 28) alludes to Chan masters in southern China.²⁷



FIGURE 6. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “Jalavāhana keeping the fish alive” (*Liushui huoyu*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019



FIGURE 7. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “King Aśoka impelled to good” (*Yu wang qian shan*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019



FIGURE 8. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “Jade elephant weeding the stupa” (*Yu xiang ti ta*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019



FIGURE 9. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “Giving the body to feed the tigress” (*She shen si hu*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019

Further, to picture in stone the localization of Buddhism in southern China, the seventh and eighth groups of reliefs represent parables illustrated with native beasts and birds and local material culture, thereby localizing Indian Jātakas (tales of the past lives of the future Buddha) and Avadānas (Buddhist tales, often apologues, that correlate past lives’ virtuous acts to subsequent events) in southern China. The seventh group (reliefs 29–32) pictures quadrupeds as protagonists, including the thirty-first, “Jade elephant weeding the stupa” (*Yu xiang ti ta* 玉象薙塔), in which two elephants clear the ground around—and thus worship—a small stupa of a type widespread in Song-dynasty Quanzhou and its hinterland (fig. 8).²⁸ The eighth group (reliefs 33–36) depicts birds and other winged creatures, exemplified by the thirty-fourth, “The master of the fields releasing orioles” (*Tian zhu fang ying* 田主放鸞), another tale of the release of living beings.²⁹

To conclude the narrative cycle, the final two groups of reliefs picture asceticism and portray self-sacrifice, practices that may ultimately lead to extinction (*nirvāṇa*), that is, freedom from the cycle of rebirths, for all Buddhists. The ninth group (reliefs 37, 38) portrays famous ascetics (and the women sent to distract them from their religious practices), exemplified by the thirty-seventh relief, “Patience, the transcendent” (*Renru xianren* 忍辱仙人), which represents the hermit Patience 忍辱 (Skt: Kṣānti) practicing his eponymous virtue despite the temptations of a king’s consorts.³⁰ Then, the first of the final two reliefs (39, 40) depicts the *Mahāsattva jātika*, inscribed “Giving the body to feed the tigress” (*She shen si hu* 捨身飼虎), a famous Indian tale transferred to and localized in southern China by its adornment with bamboo leaves and its depiction of an indigenous tiger (fig. 9).³¹

The concluding reliefs segue to the first image, establishing the cyclicity of the narrative program. The final relief of the program, anomalously aniconic, represents a void. Perhaps a placeholder for a lost narrative panel of unknown subject matter, alternatively this relief may represent nirvana or extinction, that is, freedom from the cycle of rebirths evoked by the circumambulatory circuit of the pagoda base. Indeed, the first relief (see fig. 4) visualizes a past life of the future Buddha drawn from a translation of the *Da banniepan jing* (*The Great Parinirvāṇa Sūtra*; Skt: *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*), a text that expounds the notion that all sentient beings might attain Enlightenment.³² Read programmatically, the narrative cycle perhaps ends by figuring self-sacrifice and extinction, only to begin anew by manifesting further past incarnations of the future Buddha.

The durable image content of the stone narrative program of the thirty-nine Zhenguo pagoda base reliefs draws from no fewer than 65 (and perhaps as many as 150) discrete titles. Nearly every genre of Buddhist text anthologized in the Tripiṭaka informs the images and their prompts, including Āgamas (early Buddhist sutras); Jātakas and Avadānas; works related to famous sutras, the Vinaya (monastic rules), and sutra commentaries; works that address schisms, histories, biographies, and encyclopedias; as well as noncanonical Buddhist works and secular texts.³³ A measure of the tight connection of the monument to Buddhist texts is that reliefs 5, 7, 8, 12, 19, 23, 28, 37, 38, and 39 all bear inscriptions drawn verbatim from their possible textual sources, which number more than eighty titles.³⁴ Together, the reliefs display doctrinal diversity and textual access. Presumably, access to standard, paper-based editions of the Chinese-language Tripiṭaka at the Kaiyuan si, whether manuscript or printed, including by monks institutionalized in the more than one hundred cloisters (*guan* 院) surrounding it—whose sectarian affiliations fostered specialization in different texts within the canon— informed the complexity of this project.³⁵

Rock + Paper: Composite Images of Canonical Texts

Composite images amalgamate content from multiple sources, simultaneously amplifying details of specific content by condensing varied information into a single image. When this happens in the intermedial transposition of paper-based text to stone, stone becomes a content-binding medium aggregating information of disparate origin. In the Chinese Tripiṭaka, multiple translations of Sanskrit originals produce discrepant information associated with a given tale. The interpolation of varying content drawn from different recensions of a single tale is another form of selective inclusion of printed text on stone relief, for it signals access to and knowledge of the multiple titles that include the same tale, and the privileging of selected content over others correspondingly decentered or disregarded.

In presenting thirty-nine Buddhist tales on a corresponding number of reliefs, Benhong or, absent surviving information about possible creators and patrons, unnamed others responsible for designing the program, demonstrated their knowledge of the Tripiṭaka by using more than one textual source to amplify the iconographic details present in a single image. Of thirty-nine extant reliefs, only eight appear to have a single text as their source.³⁶ The remaining reliefs either recount a tale found in multiple titles or combine the imagery of multiple titles containing complementary contents, a phenomenon described (albeit incompletely) but not analyzed by Gustav Ecke and Paul Demiéville, the first scholars to study the reliefs' iconography. The limitations of Ecke and Demiéville's study include analyzing the reliefs only individually or in pairs (not programmatically), and noting only canonical sources (despite reliefs based on popular, noncanonical Buddhist texts and secular texts that contain Buddhist content). While

their groundbreaking methodology documented the use of multiple textual sources in the completion of most reliefs of the program, they did not explore the larger implications of this phenomenon.³⁷

Keyword searches of the digitized Tripiṭaka and other texts to augment the work of Ecke and Demiéville indicate that abundant source material shaped not only the complexity of the narrative program, described above, but also the iconographic intricacy of individual reliefs. Their study of “The auspicious birth in the Lumbini Garden” (*Pi lan dan rui* 毗藍誕瑞; fig. 10a) reveals how this, the fourth relief, aggregated iconographic details from multiple sutras (fig. 10b), with their analysis detailed in the sentences that follow.³⁸ The flanking of the newly born Buddha by Indra and Brahma comes from the *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing*, which indicates that they stood on either side of him, as in the relief.³⁹ Whereas some texts do not specify which hand the newborn Buddha raised before declaring his status (e.g., *Xiuxing benqi jing*), others note that he “raised his right hand” (*ju you shou* 舉右手) to state, per the *Taizi rui ying benqi jing*, “[In] Heaven above, [and in the world] under Heaven, only I am venerable” 天上天下，唯我為尊。⁴⁰ That two *nāgarājas* (lit. “serpent kings”; *longwang* 龍王, “dragon kings”) attended the Buddha derives from the *Xiuxing benqi jing*.⁴¹ Both the *Fangguang da zhuangyan jing* and *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing* note that two streams of water came from a dragon or dragons, but neither specifies their number;⁴² the *Pu yao jing* makes their number nine.⁴³ As Ecke and Demiéville indicate, no sutra notes the basin, but the *Xiuxing benqi jing* mentions the swaddling of the Buddha in a celestial garment by Indra and Brahma after his bathing.⁴⁴



FIGURE 10a. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “The auspicious birth in the Lumbini Garden” (*Pi lan dan rui*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019

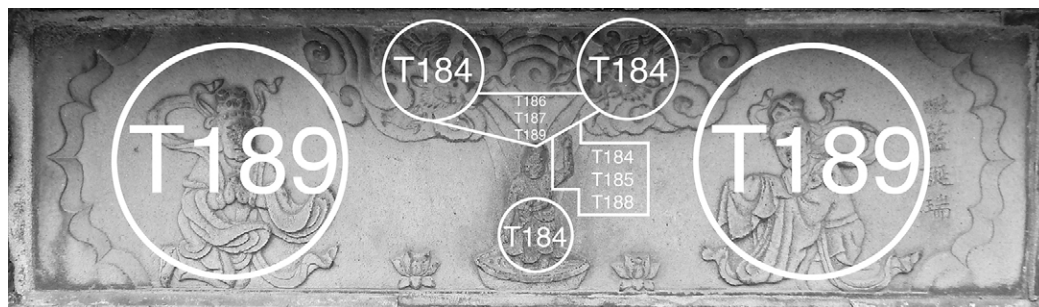


FIGURE 10b. Representation of the textual sources for “The auspicious birth in the Lumbini Garden.” Image © Ryan Whyte, 2024

The Birth of the Buddha and other tales from the life of the Historical Buddha are obvious choices for showcasing the iconographic aggregation of discrete textual sources. Other reliefs within the program, for example, the thirty-eighth, “Unicorn the great transcendent” (*Du jiao da xian* 獨角大僊), differently illustrate a tale with multiple sources: recounted and/or recapped in at least eight texts, including ones not noted by Ecke and Demiéville, the image contains only details common to all textual versions of the narrative, rather than include details specific to one text or another.⁴⁵ This relief thus pursues an alternative, universalizing strategy of representing all possible source texts in the simplest terms common to all versions of the story contained within the Tripiṭaka.

The number of texts used to compose individual reliefs and the program as a whole, the obscurity of some narratives, and the range of Buddhist textual genres from which they derive, suggest that one or more monks with significant access to sutras and likely a complete edition of the Tripiṭaka, whether printed or in manuscript, conceptualized the narrative program.⁴⁶ Indeed, the Kaiyuan si had long been a repository of the Buddhist canon: after the warlord Wang Chao 王潮 (846–898) assumed control of Quanzhou in 884, he supported the Kaiyuan si, including by sponsoring the copying of three thousand *juan* of the Tripiṭaka for its sutra library. However, this edition of the Tripiṭaka was destroyed by fire in 895.⁴⁷ Then, during the Song dynasty, the flourishing of dozens of independent cloisters of various sects surrounding the temple—the official count is more than one hundred before the Kaiyuan si became an exclusively Chan temple during the Yuan dynasty—meant that thousands of monks of different affiliations, specializing in a wide array of texts, coexisted alongside each other.⁴⁸

This vibrant environment of Buddhist scholarship at the Kaiyuan si during the Song dynasty presumably supported the production of such a program. Access to manuscript copies and printed editions of the canon likely underpinned local knowledge of the canon. In the case of manuscript sutras, from the time of Wang Shenzhi 王審知 (862–925, r. 909–925), the founding ruler of the Min Kingdom (909–945), Fuzhou-based temples already collected sutras, and Wang himself was connected to the Kaiyuan si through his patronage of the Amitāyus pagoda.⁴⁹ In the case of printed sutras, multiple editions were produced in Fuzhou, including the Chongning Wanshou Tripiṭaka (*Chongning wanshou dazang* 崇寧萬壽大藏), the first privately sponsored Tripitika printing project, undertaken by the Dongchan dengjue yuan temple (*Dongchansi dengjue yuan* 東禪寺 等覺院) ca. 1080–12; the Pilu Tripiṭaka (*Pi lu zang* 毗盧藏), another privately sponsored project managed by the Fuzhou Kaiyuan si ca. 1112–51; and a second edition of the Pilu Tripiṭaka produced 1164–76, which supplemented the original with Chan and Tiantai sect texts.⁵⁰ Presumably, the local Quanzhou ecclesiastical population, with its extraordinary access to and knowledge of the Buddhist canon—whether local, and/or linked to Fuzhou, and/or to larger imperial networks of textual circulation—not only supplied the expertise to craft a complicated iconographic program but also served as an audience fully capable of parsing it. Alternatively, it is possible that the reliefs were completed by subscription, with secular patrons or the larger monastic community of Quanzhou contributing a panel (or multiple panels) to the narrative cycle that reflected their sectarian interests.⁵¹

Paper (and Silk) + Scissors: Fugitive Models for Carved Images

Perhaps curiously, under some conditions carved stone, like printed or manually marked paper, may survive only as long as its imagery retains its intelligibility and value. Consequently, the translation of textual content from paper to carved stone presupposes its rendering in a comprehensible visual language that will insure its longevity.⁵² In the case of complex and/or



FIGURE 11. Frontispiece from the *Yiqie rulai xin mimi quanshen sheli baoqieyin tuoluoni jing* [Sutra of the Dhāraṇī of the Precious Casket Seal of the Concealed Complete-Body Relics of the Essence of All Tathāgatas], WuYue Kingdom (China), 956. Monochrome woodblock print; ink on paper, H. 7.1 cm. Royal Collections of Sweden

compound Buddhist iconographies, the appropriation and combination of the pictorial format and representational sensibility transmitted in early Buddhist prints appears to inform some of the narrative reliefs. Additionally, the logographic schema current in paper-printed primers and encyclopedias, and the stylistic language of imperial court painting, likely available locally, also appear to have enhanced the legibility of carved stone. Such visual adaptation simplifies recognition and understanding of selectively included, doctrinally diverse content.

Ephemeral Buddhist printed-paper frontispieces perhaps influenced the horizontal format and compositional logic of the reliefs, their proportions and imagery—transmitted in space-binding media and defying the odds of survival—similar to those of the Zhenguo reliefs.⁵³ Specifically, in pictorial format and representational sensibility, the reliefs resemble a unique extant example of the frontispiece of a miniature Buddhist text scroll printed in 956 under the patronage of Qian Hongchu 錢弘俶 (929–988), ruler of WuYue (907–978), which comprised Zhejiang, parts of Jiangxi, and, from 945 to 978, northeastern Fujian (including Fuzhou) (fig. 11). Presumably, this imprint was housed in one of the multitude of metal pagoda-shaped boxes manufactured for this purpose, which were intended to resemble the 84,000 reliquaries of the Historical Buddha that King Aśoka dispatched to various locations (including China) for the building of 84,000 stupas.⁵⁴ The formal resonance of these printed frontispieces and the relief sculptures is apt, given the presence of Buddha relics in the Zhenguo pagoda after 866.⁵⁵

As a frontispiece, this image illustrates a scene from the text it precedes, the *Yiqie rulai xin mimi quanshen sheli baoqieyin tuoluoni jing* 一切如來心秘密全身舍利寶篋印陀羅尼 (Sutra of the Dhāraṇī of the Precious Casket Seal of the Concealed Complete-Body Relics of the Essence of All Tathāgatas; Skt: *Sarvatathāgata-adhiṣṭhāna-hṛdaya-guhyadhātu karaṇḍa-mudrā-dhāraṇī*), translated into Chinese by the Indian monk Amoghavajra (705–774, Bukong 不空), who arrived in China ca. 720.⁵⁶ It pictures an extended moment during which the Buddha encounters a stupa reduced to the form of a rubbish heap (the mound at bottom center of the picture plane); on his approach, the stupa emits rays of light (the lines emanating upward from this central mound) and the sound of praise; and the Buddha's veneration of this stupa reveals an array of Buddhas. This moment concludes with the Buddha advocating for gaining merit by

copying the text contained by the rubbish-heap stupa and for placing the text in stupas and sculptures, noting miraculous and apotropaic outcomes of doing so.⁵⁷

While the rectangular shape of the Zhenguo pagoda reliefs resembles that of the printed-paper sutra frontispiece, despite differences in proportion and dimensions, the reliefs also resemble the print in their dead-center (or near dead-center) placement of objects in the picture plane.⁵⁸ This compositional strategy is found in at least eighteen reliefs (e.g., figs. 4, 6, 8, 10a, 12, 16a–c, 19, 26).⁵⁹ In frontispiece and reliefs alike, the distribution of figures at the left and right edges of the picture planes is distinctive, differing from the composition of pictorial handscrolls. Additionally, in their spareness of detail, the frontispiece and many, but not all, of the reliefs lack the kind of compositional density that characterizes many Buddhist prints of the Southern Song, in which much of the surface of the picture plane is covered with graphic marks.⁶⁰

Ephemeral printed primers perhaps also shaped the stone-carved form of the reliefs, their logographs—transmitted in space-binding media—broadly intelligible to audiences, including local ones. Notably, the visual vocabulary of printed primers spelled out complex iconographies derived from a large and sophisticated corpus of canonical and noncanonical texts in clearly legible terms. For example, “Cowherding girls offer milk” (*Mu nü xian [ru] mi* 牧女獻糜), the ninth relief (fig. 12), illustrates the moment at which Prince Siddhārtha ended his six years of austerity, picturing from right to left: a cow, the two cowherd girls, a lotus flower, the Prince, the tree under which he sits, numinous clouds (mingling with the tree branches), and foliage.⁶¹



FIGURE 12. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “Cowherding girls offer milk” (*Mu nü xian [ru] mi*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019



FIGURE 13. *Xinbian duixiang siyan* [New edition of the facing illustrations, Four-Words(-in-a-Group Primer)] (China, 1436?), 1a,b. Monochrome woodblock print; ink on paper, H. 26.7cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei

Illustrated, printed primers of the Song dynasty are now lost, but their probable schema are known through Song-dynasty encyclopedias, their Ming-dynasty successors, and Ming-dynasty editions of earlier examples. One of these, the *Xinbian duixiang siyan* (新編對相四言, New edition of the facing illustrations, Four-Words[-in-a-Group Primer]; fig. 13), contains many of the schema used in the Zhenguo pagoda reliefs. “Cowherding girls offer milk,” for example, adapts putative primer logographs to represent clouds, lotus, and cow. The Zhenguo pagoda reliefs thus reproduce established pictorial conventions, the one-to-one correspondence of primer conventions to sculpted element rendering each object intelligible in almost logographic terms.⁶²

The iconographic complexity and schematic clarity of the reliefs, shaped by print, exist within compositions that also appear conversant with the conventions of Southern Song court painting. As I have argued elsewhere, the thirty-fifth relief, “The pheasant putting out the wildfire” (*Zhi pu ye shao* 雉撲野燒; fig. 14), exhibits strong typological and compositional similarities to the court painter Ma Lin’s 馬麟 (fl. ca. 1225) undated work *Listening to the Wind in the Pines* (*Jing ting songfeng tu* 靜聽松風圖), painted not later than 1246 (fig. 15).⁶³ Specifically, the landscape found in the right-hand part of the composition of this relief resembles the lower portion of *Listening to the Wind*.⁶⁴ In this relief, the compositional formulae of court painting are adapted to local relief carving, suggesting their transmission from the court at Hangzhou to Quanzhou, home to the largest enclave of Southern Song imperial family members resident outside the capital.⁶⁵

Beyond their apparent use of compositional formulae found in court paintings, the Zhenguo pagoda reliefs also preserve in stone elements of court painting style. Specifically, depictions of water found in the tenth, eleventh, and nineteenth reliefs—“The Divine King contends for the almsbowl” (*Tian wang zheng bo* 天王爭鉢), “Bathing in the Nairāñjanā” ([Ni 尼] *Lian he zao yu* 連河澡浴), and “Three beasts fording the river” (*San shou du he* 三獸渡河; figs. 16a–c)—use different schema for representing its kinetic surface.⁶⁶ These schema resemble those famously associated with the court artist Ma Yuan 馬遠 (ca. 1160–1225) in the undated album *Water* (*Shui* 水)—notably, *Stacked Waves and Layered Ripples* (*Ceng bo die lang* 層波疊浪), *Light Breeze at [Lake] Dongting* (*Dongting fengxi* 洞庭風細), and *Clear, Shallow Water [in a] Cold Pond* (*Han*



FIGURE 14. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “The pheasant putting out the wild fire” (*Zhi pu ye shao*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238; shown with detail marked. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019; image © Lora Miki, 2022



FIGURE 15. Ma Lin (ca. 1180–after 1256), *Listening to the Wind in Pines* (*Jing ting song feng tu*), undated; detail. Ink and color on silk, overall: 226.6 x 110.3 cm. National Palace Museum, Taipei. Image annotation © Lora Miki, 2022



FIGURE 16. Composite image, left column, top to bottom: (a) Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “The divine king contends for the almsbowl” (*Tian wang zheng bo*); (b) “Bathing in the Nairājanā” (*[Ni]lian he zao yu*); (c) “Three beasts fording the river” (*San shou du he*); all from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019. Right column, top to bottom: (d) Ma Yuan (1160–1225). *Stacked Waves and Layered Ripples* (*Ceng bo die lang*), China, Southern Song dynasty, n.d.; (e) Ma Yuan. *Light Breeze at [Lake] Dongting* (*Dongting fengxi*), n.d.; (f) Ma Yuan. *Clear, Shallow Water [in a] Cold Pond* (*Han tang qing qian*); all from the album *Water* (*Shui*), n.d. Ink and light color on silk, H x W: 26.8 x 41.6 cm. Palace Museum, Beijing. Composite diagram © Ryan Whyte, 2024

tang qing qian 寒塘清淺; figs. 16d–f).⁶⁷ The resemblance of the schema for depicting water in the Zhenguo pagoda reliefs to those used by Ma Yuan underscores the visual relation between these reliefs and the visual culture of the Southern Song court.

The style and subject matter of the Zhenguo pagoda reliefs also link them to the networks of Fujian painters known to and/or summoned to serve at the Southern Song court. The inscription replicates verbatim text found in three Tripiṭaka titles of the period, one of specific significance to Quanzhou.⁶⁸ Moreover, the pictorial image of the twenty-eighth relief, “Two dragons vie for the pearl” (*Er long zheng zhu* 二龍爭珠; fig. 17), indicates its imperial connections twice over. First, it loosely echoes a design template for an ornamental panel in Li Jie’s (1065–1110) [*Treatise on*] *State Building Methods* (*Yingzao fashi* 營造法式), first published in 1103.⁶⁹ More significantly, it resonates with the fifth and sixth dragons depicted in Chen Rong’s 陳容 (ca. 1210–after 1262, *jinshi* 1235) *Nine Dragons* (*Jiulong tu* 九龍圖; fig. 18), dated 1244.⁷⁰ Chen, a native of Changle county, Fujian, passed through the National University (*Taixue* 太學), served in office in Jiangxi, near Mount Longhu, and gained recognition from the Song emperor Lizong 理宗 (1205–1264, r. 1224–1264).⁷¹ Chen moved fluidly between localities in Fujian and Jiangxi, as well as the capital, his pictorial formulae, schema, styles, and subjects circulating in the network of imperial institutions and administrative outposts in southern China.



FIGURE 17. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid thirteenth century), “Two Dragons Vie for the Pearl” (*Er long zheng zhu*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019

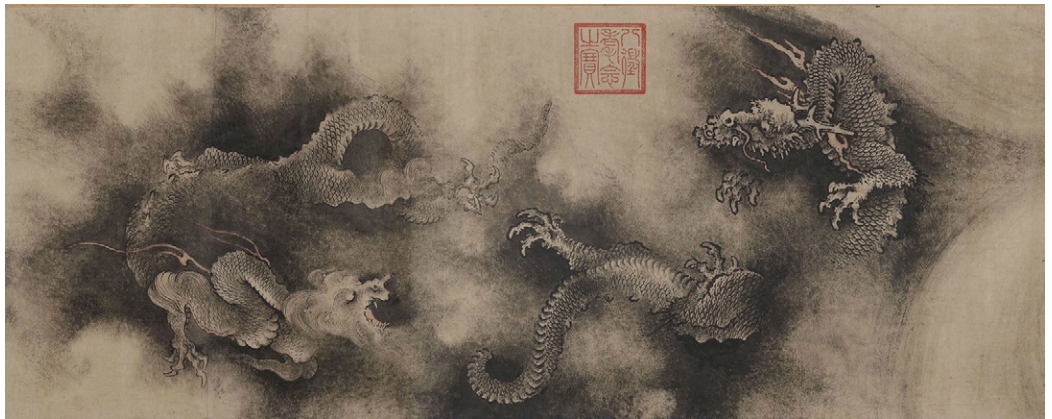


FIGURE 18. Chen Rong (ca. 1210–after 1262, *jinshi* 1235). *Nine Dragons* (*Jiu long tu*), detail, Southern Song dynasty, dated 1244. Ink and color on paper. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 17.1697

Between the documented transfer of imperial icons to imperial scions resident in Fuzhou and the large population of imperial family members resident in Quanzhou after the Move South (*Nan du* 南渡), this is not surprising, despite the lack of clear evidence for the transfer of ritual or decorative paintings from the court to Quanzhou.⁷² John Chaffee has shown that the largest enclave of imperial clan members resident anywhere in the empire lived in Quanzhou, and thus this property transfer presumably supported the ritual and decorative needs of the 338 imperial scions resident in Quanzhou in 1131.⁷³ Roughly a century later, ca. 1228–33, 1,427 clan members resided within the Quanzhou Harmonious Lineage Hall (*Muzong yuan* 睦宗院) that lay catty-corner from the Kaiyuan si; an additional 887 imperial clan members resided outside it; and by the fall of the Song, perhaps as many as 3,000 imperial scions lived in the city.⁷⁴ It is therefore possible that, through the proximity to or the agency of locally resident members of the imperial clan, Quanzhou-based artists and artisans acquired access to court paintings—or, alternatively, their drawing aids or copies of them—that served as models for carving pictorial images in stone.

Scissors + Rock (i.e., Stone plus Bronze): Replicating Cast Bronze in Carved Stone

Like carved stone, cast bronze—whether gilded or not—served as a durable medium for the making of Buddhist monuments. Yet, despite their durability, the longevity of carved stone and cast

bronze is contingent on the continuing importance of their visual form, function, or content; in this respect, they are curiously like printed paper. These seemingly imperishable, time-binding media of Buddhist objects thus share the struggle to survive with ephemeral, space-binding ones. Notably, the properties of time- and space-binding media converge when portable objects are made of hard-wearing materials, that is, when mobility and durability align. Such Buddhist monuments may thus migrate as space-binding media in networks of transmission and communication; but as time-binding media, they do so in lasting ways. However, the possible destruction (or loss in transmission) of such ostensibly indestructible things meant that portable, durable, three-dimensional Buddhist objects also benefited from their reproduction as low-relief images—the sculptural analogue of two-dimensional images—in hard-wearing media.⁷⁵

So-called Aśoka pagodas, styled to resemble the bronze dharani sutra-style pagoda-boxes patronized by Qian Hongchu and their three-dimensional stone copies, were also carved on the Zhenguo pagoda base, rendered in its reliefs and reproduced three-dimensionally in its architectural details.⁷⁶ In fact, two examples of WuYue dharani sutra-style pagoda-boxes excavated from counties adjacent to Fuzhou, ruled by WuYue at that time, indicate their circulation within this state.⁷⁷ One, found in Lianjiang 连江 county in 1953, to the southeast of Fuzhou, is dated to 955; it was found inside a larger stone pagoda crushed beneath the city wall (fig. 20).⁷⁸ A nearly identical example was excavated in Minhou 闽侯 county, to the northwest of Fuzhou, in 1971; it did not contain a printed sutra.⁷⁹

In the narrative program, two reliefs picture such Aśoka pagodas. The twenty-second, “Yaśas manifesting supernatural powers” (*Yeshe xian tong* 耶舍現通; fig. 19), illustrates the moment at which King Aśoka’s spiritual advisor Yaśas used light rays emanating from his finger to distribute the 84,000 reliquaries containing relics for the building of 84,000 stupas, previously noted, as pictured.⁸⁰ The twenty-fourth, “Sahe pays homage to the stupa” (*Sahe chao ta* 薩訶朝塔), illustrates the moment in the fourth century when Liu Sahe 劉薩訶 (345–ca. 436; also known as Huida 慧達) discovered one of King Aśoka’s 84,000 reliquaries of the Historical Buddha, 19 of which Yaśas is said to have dispatched to China, including to Luoyang 洛陽, Jianye 建鄴, Maoyin 鄆陰, Linzi 臨淄, and Chengdu 成都.⁸¹

Across the three centuries, from the first appearances of bronze dharani sutra-style pagoda-boxes under WuYue rule in eastern Fujian to their rendering as Aśoka pagodas in tales related to Aśoka on the base of the Zhenguo pagoda, this archetypal form morphed from an object made of gilt bronze to low-relief representations of its precursors that function more like two-dimensional images, to elements of architectural detail and to various freestanding stone



FIGURE 19. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “Yaśas manifesting supernatural powers” (*Yeshe xian tong*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 cm x 104 cm. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019



FIGURE 20. Aśoka pagoda, WuYue Kingdom, dated 955. Bronze. H: 20.0 cm (approximate). Excavated from Lianjiang county, Fujian, 1952. Fujian Museum. Photograph courtesy of WorldPhoto Gallery © World Photo Gallery, <https://www.globalphotos.org>



FIGURE 21. Photograph of gilt-bronze style stone Aśoka pagoda, ca. 1955, from Wu Wenliang and Wu Youxiang, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike, zengding ben*, E44.3, 580. Courtesy China Science Publishing & Media Ltd.

monuments. While WuYue gilt-bronze examples circulated in greater Fuzhou in the mid-tenth century, as noted above, by the mid-eleventh century their forms—which became inextricably linked to representations of Aśoka pagodas in the Zhenguo pagoda—were replicated three-dimensionally in stone at sites of high visibility in the Quanzhou hinterland. The Stone Shoot Bridge (*Shisun qiao* 石筭橋), putatively built ca. 1049 at the beginning of the Huangyou era (1049–54), hosted an undated stone example (fig. 21); the Wan’an Bridge 萬安橋 hosted another putatively dated to 1059, the year the bridge was completed (now represented by a Sanskrit-inscribed, reconstructed placeholder).⁸² Then, nearly a century later, in 1145, two such stone pagodas were installed in the main courtyard of the Kaiyuan si, one of which bears a dedicatory inscription on its base (fig. 22).⁸³

By 1238, when the putatively Indian forms of the dharani sutra-style pagoda-boxes were reproduced in the stonework framing of the Zhenguo pagoda base and used as models for Aśoka pagodas in its pictorial reliefs, their possible sources were multiplex. The formal relationships of the various objects noted above are self-evident, but absent clear dates for all related examples, their sequence cannot be determined definitively. Consequently, it is impossible to know whether the cloud-footed apron (*yunjiao zhuan* 雲腳磚) and the lotus-leaf framing (*yanglian zhuan*, *helian*



FIGURE 22. Aśoka pagoda, Southern Song dynasty, dated 1145. Stone. H x W x D: 548.0 x 192.0 x 192.0 cm. Main courtyard of the Kaiyuan si. Photo © Ryan Whyte, 2019

zhuān 仰蓮磚, 合蓮磚) of the Aśoka pagoda depicted in “Yaśas manifesting supernatural powers” (see fig. 19) and that reproduced three-dimensionally in the cladding of the Zhenguo pagoda Sumeru-style base (*Xumi zuo* 須彌座) derive from bronze examples perhaps available locally, such as the WuYue dharani sutra-style pagoda-boxes (see fig. 20); small, stone-built pagodas such as those of the Stone Shoot (see fig. 21) and Wan’an Bridges; or both.⁸⁴ The local presence of the Song imperial family from 1131, its Harmonious Lineage Hall presumably built using the conventions of imperial architectural style and located mere meters from the Kaiyuan si, establishes the context in which the makers of the Zhenguo pagoda may have appropriated for their design archetypal imperial architectural models, such as a stepped-and-stacked-base square column (*Jieji diese zuo jiaozhu* 階基疊澀坐角柱) from the *Yingzao fashi* (fig. 23), or local buildings related to it.⁸⁵ The builders of the Zhenguo pagoda may also have reprised Indian forms imported to China more recently than those of Aśoka pagodas, forms such as those exemplified by a *kaṅṭha* (fig. 24), a recessed panel with plank moldings, an example of which from Ramasvamy Temple, Cheranmadevi, Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu, of ca. 995–1010, indicates an architectural form perhaps transferred to Quanzhou by its substantial expatriate Tamil population or vice versa.⁸⁶

The unexpected alignment of durable and mobile media fashioned the Zhenguo pagoda base as a nexus for local, imperial, and Indian Ocean networks. Absent clear textual documentation, it is impossible to know if its makers intended the Zhenguo pagoda to evoke some, all, or none of the monuments noted above. Nonetheless, the formal properties of the pagoda resonated with those transmitted in each of these circuits. Thus, the Zhenguo pagoda enabled

FIGURE 23. Li Jie (1065–1110) et al., *Jieji diese zuo jiaozhu* (Stepped-and-stacked-base square column), from *Li Zhongming Yingzao fashi* ([Treatise on] state building methods) (Zijiang, 1925), Suppl. Images, 29:7b, a lost 1103 edition reconstructed from a Song dynasty Shaoxing era (1131–1362) manuscript edition and printed in the format of the Song dynasty Chongning era (1102–1106). Monochrome woodblock print; ink on paper, H: 33.3 cm. Cheng Yu Tung East Asia Library, University of Toronto

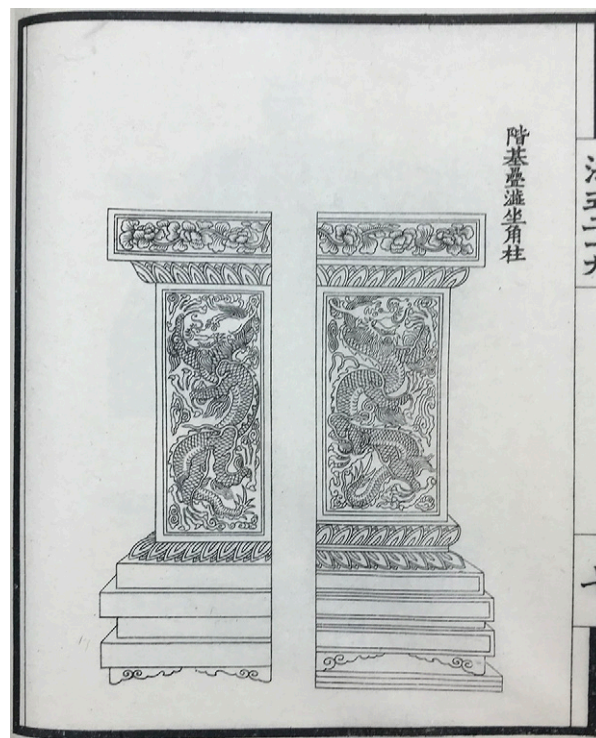


FIGURE 24. Detail of *kanṭha*, Ramasvamy temple, Cheranmadevi, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, ca. 995–1010. Photo © Risha Lee, 2012



these object networks and their intersections to remain visible well past the historical moment when the portable bronze dharani sutra-style pagoda-boxes made in WuYue, and their stone replications, were largely lost.

Rock, Paper, Scissors Redux: Durable Ephemera in Networks of Stone as Decoders for Fugitive Forms

The Zhenguo pagoda base served as a nexus of diverse iconographic and stylistic networks, ideas and places connected to Quanzhou by print, painting, bronze, and stone. These networks were as narrow as those linking the Zhenguo pagoda from its site just to the east of the main courtyard of the Kaiyuan si to the main courtyard and to the local Song imperial family members housed just outside the west walls of the temple precinct; as extensive within China as their connections to Hangzhou, site of the former WuYue and contemporaneous Southern

Song courts; and as expansive as those of the Indian Ocean world of Chinese merchants, resident non-Chinese aliens, imperial scions, and Buddhist clergy. But if, as this article proposes, the reliefs of the Zhenguo pagoda base preserve ephemera, then it should also be possible to invert this relationship: the content that fleetingly circulated in the various networks linked to Quanzhou, pictured—and thus preserved—in the Zhenguo pagoda base reliefs, should be able to serve as a lexicon with which to decode monuments imbricated in these networks, their iconography obscured by the loss of their short-lived sources.

To test this proposition, this article concludes with an example of a monument fabricated in these Quanzhou networks, the source and iconography of which have long been lost. Perhaps the most peculiar objects “native” to Quanzhou are its “stone shoots” (*shisun* 石笋; fig. 25). These conical pillars, at least one surviving example of which was ostensibly built in the eleventh century when Quanzhou had an Indian Buddhist temple and perhaps a significant Tamil population, are identified by some scholars as possible Śiva “linga” (*linjia* 林加) or “male genitalia” (*nanxing shengzhiqi* 男性生殖器).⁸⁷ Two examples (of at least three that survived to the twentieth century), one at the Stone Shoot Bridge (see fig. 25) and another at the Wan’an Bridge of 1059 (likely a recent placeholder for a lost work), suggest a consistency of form, scale, and context. Neither possesses a documented relationship to local Brahmanic institutions, but both were located in proximity to Aśoka-style pagodas located on these bridges, noted above.⁸⁸



FIGURE 25. Photograph of the Stone Shoot, stone pillar from the Stone Shoot Bridge, originally erected at the site of the Stone Shoot Bridge, ca. 1049. Photograph courtesy of the Quanzhou haijiaoshi bowuguan, from their public display



FIGURE 26. Unknown artisan(s), under the direction of Benhong (fl. early–mid-thirteenth century), “Boys heaping sand” (*Tongzi ju sha*), from the base of the East Pagoda, Kaiyuan si, Quanzhou, ca. 1238. Carved stone, H x W: approx. 27 x 104 cm. © Ryan Whyte, 2019

The unknown, now-lost forms represented by the “stone shoots” resemble clearly labeled—and putatively lexical—imagery found on a Zhenguo pagoda base relief. Specifically, the “stone shoots” appear to be three-dimensional doppelgängers of the form pictured in two dimensions at the center of the twenty-third relief, “Boys heaping sand” (*Tongzi ju sha* 童子聚沙; fig. 26). Differing by one character from lines in the *Lotus Sutra*, the inscription makes clear that the unusual conical form pictured is a sand heap:

Then [when it] comes to boys playing, heaping sand to make Buddha-stupas,
So, all of them [and] more, every one [has] already completed the Path to Buddhahood [i.e.,
attained Enlightenment].⁸⁹

乃至童子戲，聚沙為佛塔，如是諸人等，皆已成佛道。

Further Buddhist texts that describe similar practices support the identification of the conical form pictured in the twenty-third relief—and by extension, its architectonic, stone-built analogues—as sand heaps.⁹⁰

Here, the twenty-third relief functions like an illustrated primer: it uses inscribed text to correlate logographic schema (conical form) and its object (sand heap), thereby making other images and/or objects of this type intelligible absent corroborative text.⁹¹ Used thus, the relief subsequently serves as a decoder key for recognizing and/or naming the objects later described as stone shoots, suggesting that they represent, in durable form, sand heaps, objects both ephemeral and immobile, their medium binding neither time nor space. Buddhist texts indicate that sand heaps were proxies for Buddha-stupas, often associated with boys and riverbanks.⁹² The location of the “stone shoots”—built near water and atop bridges—replicates those of sand heaps at river’s edge described in sutras; their proximity to Aśoka-style pagodas adorning Quanzhou bridges perhaps underscores the sand heaps’ function as pagoda surrogates.

Poised at the intersection of interregional Buddhist textual culture and local artisanal fabrication, the stone sand heaps embodied impermanence more permanently than they indexed the textual source of their iconography. Presumably for locals in Song-dynasty Quanzhou, the imagery of relief 23 unsurprisingly confirmed the identity and iconography of the stone shoots that proliferated in and around the city.⁹³ Indeed, other reliefs also simply captured the things of everyday life in Quanzhou ca. 1238: its banyan trees, with their distinctive leaf-clusters

(see fig. 4); its local tigers and bamboo (see fig. 9); its gates of princely residences (see fig. 5), exemplified by the Harmonious Lineage Hall; its well-stocked urban ponds (see fig. 6), like its Pond for the Release of Living Beings; and even its wellheads, as found in the eighteenth relief, “The empty well and the crazed elephant” (*Qiu jing kuang xiang* 丘井狂象), which resembles surviving local examples from the Ming dynasty.⁹⁴

Conclusion: Iterative Intermediality in the Quanzhou Zhenguo Pagoda

Built from rock, and through the agency of the carver’s knife, the Zhenguo pagoda reliefs transmit in time and fix in space content once represented in paper (manuscript texts and images, printed sutras and primers) and other transitory media (silk, bronze, and even sand), as this article has argued. Their form, their imagery, and their process thus evoke—and invert—the iterative intermediality of WuYue dharani sutra-style pagoda-boxes: whereas Qian Hongchu translated an ideal pagoda into an immense corpus of interdependent bronze and paper artifacts (i.e., time- and space-binding media), the more durable medium (bronze) housing the more perishable (paper), at the Kaiyuan si, representations of various forms in space-binding media, such as paper and small bronze objects, provided the imagery and forms rendered in the time-binding medium of carved stone.

The gazeteer of the Kaiyuan temple indicates that its late-Ming compiler (or perhaps popular audiences) found the reliefs to be extraordinary, explaining their exceptional nature in colloquial, not art historical, terms:

Below, [on the] base [of the pagoda, are] repeated [examples of] carved green stone [i.e., green granite], together [and] variously, [they are] completely out of this world. [At once] durable [yet] finely detailed, magnificent [and] handsome, all [are fashioned with] devilish skill, [namely, the work of] divine chisels. [They are] not [something] that human labor is able [to realize].⁹⁵

下座復鑄青石。具諸化境。堅緻偉麗。皆鬼工神斧。非人力所能也。

This passage emphasizes the materiality of the reliefs, namely, their execution in “green stone” (*qing shi* 青石). Perhaps a reference to the green granite used in Quanzhou buildings, it may not be a coincidence that “green stone” is exactly the term used in the *Fozu tongji* (Comprehensive history of Buddhist patriarchs) to describe the color of the Aśoka pagoda discovered by Liu Sahe in Kuaiji (near Hangzhou, Zhejiang), this term linking the Zhenguo pagoda to the tradition of these reliquaries.⁹⁶ The passage also emphasizes the strength of this stone as a medium in which to fix images, its robustness and its precision (堅緻 *jianzhi*) for doing so noteworthy. Furthermore, by using the term *jianzhi*, also applicable to metalwork, the passage indicates concerns shared across media; this is not intermediality per se, but might be understood as a hint toward it.⁹⁷ Despite their differences, the interests of the premodern commentator and the twenty-first-century art historian thus share some common ground.

For the contemporary viewer, the Zhenguo pagoda reliefs, on account of their seemingly imperishable medium, preserve evidence of the overlapping networks of paper, silk, bronze, and stone in which Quanzhou was imbricated, as this article has shown. Moreover, as this article has also demonstrated, the texts inscribed on these reliefs enable this substantial networked repository of ephemera to serve as a lexicon of the local artistic and pictorial forms found in thirteenth-century Quanzhou, establishing it as a nexus of iconographic meaning. Overall, this article has argued that an iterative intermediality, the repeated reproduction of

forms between media, enabled durable traces of ephemera—of which surviving examples exist by accident, and against all odds—to materialize, and thereby substantiate, the iconographic circuits and artifact networks of the Zhenguo pagoda, revealing forgotten histories, fugitive forms, and traces of objects all but forgotten.

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Notes

- 1 For a different application of the rock-paper-scissors paradigm to Chinese material culture, see Dorothy Ko, "Stone, Scissors, Paper: Thinking Through Things in Chinese History," *Journal of Chinese History / Zhongguo lishi xuekan* 3.2 (2019): 191–201.
- 2 On time- and space-binding media, see Harold Innis, *Empire and Communications*, rev. Mary Q. Innis, foreword by Marshall McLuhan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), esp. 7.
- 3 On Song-dynasty printed sutras published in Fujian, see *Lidai Hanwen dazangjing mulu xin kao* 历代汉文大藏经目录新考 (New investigation of the bibliography of historical [editions] of the Chinese Tripitaka), ed. He Mei 何梅 (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2014), 1:63–73, 2:774–1551 passim; Li Fuhua and He Mei, "Appendix I: A Brief Survey of the Editions of the Chinese Buddhist Canon," in *Spreading Buddha's Word in East Asia: The Formation and Transformation of the Chinese Buddhist Canon*, ed. Jiang Wu and Lucille Chia (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015): 311–20, esp. 312–13.
- 4 On Quanzhou (referred to as Zaytun) in the early articulations of the medieval world system, see Janet Abu Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System, 1250–1350* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 34 (fig. 1, "The eight circuits of the thirteenth-century world-system"), 34, 168–69, 201, 212, 298, 335–36, 342, 346, 350n14. See also Angela Schottenhammer, *The Emporium of the World: Maritime Quanzhou, 1000–1400* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2000).
- 5 On the Lotus Flower temple, see Jue'an 覺岸 (b. 1286), *Shi shi ji gu lue* 釋氏稽古略 (An outline [of] historical research [into] the Śākya family lineage), in *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經 (Taishō[-era] newly revised Tripitaka), ed. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠 順次郎 et al. (Tokyo: Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō kankō kai,

1924), accessed via the SAT Daizōkyō Text Database (https://21dzk.l.u-tokyo.ac.jp/SAT/index_en.html) (hereafter noted by the letter “T” and the text number), T2037, 3:819c; [Wanli] *Quanzhou fuzhi* 泉州府志 (Gazetteer of Quanzhou Prefecture), comp. Yang Siqian 陽思謙 (*jinshi* 1595) et al. (1612), repr. in *Zhongguo jiben guji ku* 中國基本古籍庫 (Foundational library of ancient Chinese texts [hereafter ZGJBGJK] (Beijing: Beijing Erudition Digital Research Center, 2001–19), 24:17a; *Quanzhou Kaiyuan si zhi* 泉州開元寺志 (Gazetteer of the Kaiyuan temple of Quanzhou), comp. Yuanxian 元賢 (1578–1657) (1927 repr. of Ming-dynasty ed. with preface dated 1643; Taipei: Mingwen shuju, 1980), 1:1a–b; Gustav Ecke, “Structural Features of the Stone-built T’ing-Pagoda: A Preliminary Study,” *Monumenta Serica* 1.2 (1935): 253–76, 274–76; Jennifer Purtle, “The Production of Painting, Place, and Identity in Song-Yuan (960–1368) Fujian” (PhD diss., Yale University, 2001), vol. 1, 194–98.

On Wurongzhou, see, for example: *Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書 (Old history of the Tang dynasty), comp. Liu Xu 劉昫 (888–947) et al. (repr., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1975), 40:1598–99; *Xianxi zhi* 仙溪志 (Gazetteer of Xianxi county), comp. Zhao Yumi 趙與泌 (fl. 13th cent.) (1257), repr. in ZGJBGJK, 1:1a–b; [Wanli] *Quanzhou fuzhi*, 1:2a; Quanzhou haiwai jiaotong bowuguan 泉州海外通交博物館史 (Quanzhou Museum of Overseas Communication History), “Fujian Jinjiang liuyu Fengzhou diqu kaogu diaocha” 福建晉江流域豐州地區考古調查 (Archaeological survey of Fengzhou area, Jinjiang River Basin, Fujian, *Kaogu* 考古 (Archaeology), 1961.4: 193, 221; *Quanzhou gu jianzhu* 泉州古建築 (Ancient architecture in Quanzhou), ed. Quanzhou lishi wenhua zhongxin 泉州歷史文化中心 (Quanzhou Cultural History Center) (Tianjin: Tianjin kexue jishu chubanshe, 1991), 8–9; Billy K. L. So, *Prosperity, Region, and Institutions in Maritime China: The South Fukien Pattern, 946–1368* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2000): 13; *Quanzhou Tangcheng takan kaocha yanjiu baogao* 泉州唐城踏勘考察研究報告 (Quanzhou Tang-dynasty city-walls survey and examination report; hereafter QTTYB), comp. Jiusanxueshe lichengqu Quanzhou guchengzhi takan yu yanjiu keti zu 九三學社鯉城區泉州古城址踏勘與研究課題組 (The ‘93 Study Society, Licheng District Branch, of the Quanzhou Ancient Walls Survey and Research Group) (Quanzhou: Quanzhou shi chengxia gui-huaxinxi zhongxin, 2002), 15–16.

6 On the move of Wurongzhou, see *Jiu Tang shu*, 40:1598–9; *Yuanhe jun xian tu zhi*, 30:23b; *Xianxi*

zhi, 1:1a–b; *Yudi jisheng*, 130:2a; [Wanli] *Quanzhou fuzhi*, 1:2a, 3:4a; QTTYB, 41.

- 7 [Wanli] *Quanzhou fuzhi*, 24:17a; *Quanzhou Kaiyuan si zhi*, 1:1b.
- 8 *Quanzhou Kaiyuan si zhi* 1:7a. Biographical data on Buddhist monks named in this article follow the Buddhist Studies Person Authority Databases 人名規範檢索 (Beta Version), <https://authority.dila.edu.tw/person/>, accessed November 12, 2023.
- 9 On these rebuildings of the pagoda, see *Quanzhou Kaiyuan si zhi*, 1:6b–8a; [Qianlong] *Quanzhou fuzhi*, comp. Huai Yinbu 懷蔭布 et al. (1763), repr. in ZGJBGJK, 16:19b, 16:20b. See also Ecke, “Structural Features,” 275–76; Chen-shan Wang, “Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery: Architecture, Iconography, and Social Contexts” (PhD. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2008), esp. 55–59 passim.
- 10 Also known as the West Pagoda, the Renshou Pagoda was first built in 916 under the patronage of the king of Min, Wang Shenchi 王審知 (862–925, r. 909–925) as the seven-story “[Buddha of] Infinite Life [i.e., Amitāyus Pagoda]” (*Wuliangshou ta* 無量壽塔). Due to a miraculous event of 1114, the Song-dynasty emperor Huizong 徽宗 (1082–1135, r. 1100–1126) bestowed its current name. Like the Zhenguo Pagoda, the Renshou Pagoda was rebuilt repeatedly: burning in 1155, it was reconstructed by Liaoxing, as noted above, during the Chunxi period (1174–1189), but it soon after perished again. The monk Shouchun, noted above, also rebuilt it in brick. Then, in 1228, the monk Zizheng 自證 (fl. 13th cent.) replaced the brick with stone. *Quanzhou Kaiyuan si zhi* 1:8a–9. On the building of the temple and its pagodas, see *Quanzhou Kaiyuan si zhi*, 1:1a–20a; see also Brian J. Nichols, “History, Material Culture, and Auspicious Events at the Purple Cloud: Buddhist Monasticism at Quanzhou Kaiyuan” (PhD diss., Rice University, 2011), 486–522. Unlike his *Lotus Blossoms and Purple Clouds: Monastic Buddhism in Post-Mao China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2022), which emphasizes contemporary practice, Nichols’s dissertation contains abundant materials on the premodern history of the Kaiyuan temple.

For a revisionist dating of the expansion of the west wall of Quanzhou during the Tang dynasty ca. 809, see QTTYB, 41; see also see [Wanli] *Quanzhou fuzhi* 10:2b. By 897 the scholar Huang Tao 黃滔 (*jinshi* 895, d. 911), whose reports are not always accurate, reported that the Kaiyuan temple was located between the original Tang-dynasty city walls (*cheng* 城) to the east and the expanded city walls (*guo* 郭) to the west. Huang Tao, “Quanzhou Kaiyuan

- si Fodian beiji” 泉州開元寺佛殿碑記 (Record of the Quanzhou Kaiyuan temple Buddha-Hall stele), in *Quan tang wen* 全唐文 (Comprehensive [anthology of] Tang prose), comp. Dong Gao 董誥 (1740–1818), Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849), et al., Qing-dynasty Jiaqing neifu, ed., repr. in *ZGJBGJK*, 825:3a–b. On the unreliability of Huang Tao as an informant, see Nichols, “History, Material Culture,” 41n5.
- 11 Jennifer Purtle, “Salvaging Meaning: The Art of Recycling in Sino-Mongol Quanzhou, 1276–1408,” *Medieval Globe* 6.1 (2020): 70–78. On Āśoka pagodas and WuYue dharani sutra-style pagoda-boxes, see notes 75–84 below.
 - 12 For a visual overview of these prints, see *Zhonghua wuqiannian wenwu jikan: Banhua bian* 中華五千年文物集刊, 版畫篇 (A collection of five thousand years of artifacts: Prints), comp. Wang Zhefu 吳哲夫 and Yang Meili 楊美莉 (Taipei: Zhonghua wuqiannian wenwu jikan bianji weiyuanhui, 1991), 1: cats. 64, 66, 159. For scholarship on these prints in relation to paintings, see, for example, Shih-shan Huang, “Media Transfer and Modular Construction: The Printing of Lotus Sutra Frontispieces in Song China,” *Ars Orientalis* 41 (2011): 135–63. For further scholarship on contemporaneous Buddhist printing, see notes 53, 56–58 below.
 - 13 The classic study is Paul Demiéville, “Iconography and History,” in *The Twin Pagodas of Zayton: A Study of Later Buddhist Sculpture in China*, by Gustav Ecke and Demiéville (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1935), 42–79. My study of the iconographic program, with augmentations and revisions to the work of Ecke and Demiéville, is presented in Jennifer Purtle, “Pictured in Relief: Iconography and Iconology in the ‘Global Middle Ages,’ ca. 1186–ca. 1238,” in *Iconography Beyond the Crossroads: Image, Meaning, and Method in Medieval Art*, ed. Pamela A. Patton and Catherine A. Fernandez (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2022), 147–93; and in its companion website for iconographic appendices, esp. “Appendix II: East Pagoda Base Reliefs of the Kaiyuan si Quanzhou: A Preliminary Account of the Iconographic Program, Source Texts, Related Texts, Texts Reproduced Verbatim in Inscriptions,” Index of Medieval Art, Princeton University, <https://ima.princeton.edu/appendices-pictured-in-relief>
 - 14 For an introduction to Quanzhou as a cosmopolitan city, see, for example, Schottenhammer, *Emporium of the World*; John Guy, “Quanzhou: Cosmopolitan City of Faiths,” in *The World of Khubilai Khan*, ed. James C. Y. Watt (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2010), 158–78; Richard Pearson et al., “Quanzhou Archaeology: A Brief Review,” *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 6.1 (March 2002): 23–59; Purtle, “Production,” 609–62, 883–943.
 - 15 Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” Appendix II passim.
 - 16 Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” 178; Appendix II passim.
 - 17 On clockwise circumambulation, see Yijing 義淨 (635–713 CE), *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳 (An account of Buddhist practices sent home from the southern seas), T2125, 3:225b–c; I-Tsing [Yijing], *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago, AD 671–695*, trans. J. Takakusu (London: Clarendon, 1896), 140–46, esp. 140–42.
 - 18 The earlier architectural framing of the pagoda base appears less obtrusive. See Ecke, “Structural Features,” pl. 7 (right). See also Quanzhou Zhenguo Pagoda Base, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7ffDIH1yrA&t=7s>
 - 19 This presentation follows Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” 168–73. Wang Hanfeng and Paul Demiéville have published alternative analyses of the narrative program. Wang finds five subject matter groups: 1) Past Lives of the Buddha Tales, eight reliefs; 2) Life of the Buddha Tales, thirteen reliefs; 3) Tales of King Āśoka Following the Buddha, four reliefs; 4) Tales of the Eastern Transmission of Buddhism, five reliefs; 5) Tales that Allude to Buddhist Sūtras, seven reliefs. See *Quanzhou Dongxi ta* 泉州东西塔 (The East and West Pagodas of Quanzhou), ed. Wang Hanfeng 王寒楓 (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1992), 188–211 passim. Demiéville previously parsed the narrative cycle into two groups of reliefs, one of “the legend of Śākya Bodhisattva (nos. 1–12)” and one of “various scenes from the history or legend of Indian and Chinese Buddhism (nos. 13–39), the arrangement of which does not follow any chronological or traditional order, but is based on the principle of parallelism.” Demiéville, “Iconography and History,” 80. On previous attempts to parse the iconographic program of the Zhenguo pagoda base, see Wang, “Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery,” esp. 160–61, 274–75.
 - 20 In this tale, a bodhisattva incarnate as a Brahmin boy heard the deity Śakro devānāindraḥ (*Shitihuan-yin* 釋提桓因), chief of the gods, who had taken the form of a flesh-eating demon (Skt: *rākṣasa*; Chinese: *luocha* 羅刹) say half of an old Buddhist verse; in order to hear its other half, the bodhisattva agreed to sacrifice his body for food by jumping from a tree, but Śakro devānāindraḥ saved him. *Da banniepan jing* 大般涅槃經 (The Great Parinirvāṇa Sūtra; Skt: *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*), trans. Dharmakṣema 曇無讖 (385–433/439), T374, 14:449b–451b; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 42. See also *Da banniepan jing* (The Great Parinir-

- vana Sutra; Skt: *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*), trans. Hui Yan 慧嚴 (363–ca. 443) et al., T375, 13:691b–693b. The inscribed text is original to the relief.
- 21 Demiéville (in Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 46) cites these image sources: *Xiuxing benqi jing* 修行本起經 (Sutra [on] the Cultivation [of Right] Practice and Original Arising [of the Buddha], Skt: *Cāryanidāna*), trans. Zhu Dali 竺大力 (fl. late 2nd cent. CE) and Kang Mengxiang 康孟詳 (fl. ca. 194–199 CE), T184, 3:466c–467a; *Foshuo taizi ruiying benqi jing* 佛說太子瑞應本起經 (The Buddha's teachings [on] the sutra on the auspicious omens [and] past incarnations [of] the prince [i.e., Siddhartha; Skt: *Arthavargiya-sūtra*]), trans. Zhiqian 支謙 (fl. ca. 3rd cent. CE), T185, 1:474c–476c; *Pu yao jing* 普曜經 (Sutra on Universal Light, Skt: *Lalitavistara*), trans. Dharmarakṣa 法護 (239–316), T186, 3:502c–504c; *Fanguang da zhuangyan jing* 方廣大莊嚴經 (The Extensive Performance [of the Life of the Buddha] Sūtra, Skt: *Lalitavistara*), trans. Divākara 地婆訶羅 (613–687), T187, 5:569c–571c; *Yichu pusa benqi jing* 異出菩薩本起經 (Sutra of the Great Renunciation; Skt: *Abhiniṣkramaṇa sūtra*) trans. Nie Daozhen 聶道真 (ca. 247/306–ca. 317–337), T188, 618c–619a; *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing* 過去現在因果經 (Sutra [on] Past and Present Causes and Effects), trans. Guṇabhadra 求那跋陀羅 (394–468), T189, 2:629c–631c; *Fo benxing jijing* 佛本行集經 (Sutra of Buddha's Lives, Collected; Skt: *Abhiniṣkramaṇasūtra*), trans. Jñānagupta 闍那崛多 (523–ca. 600), T190, 14:719c–15:725b passim; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 46. Sources not cited by Demiéville include Xuanzang 玄奘 (602–664), *DaTang Xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 (Record of the Western Regions [written during] the Great Tang dynasty), T2087, 6:901b–903c passim. The inscribed text follows the Tripiṭaka verbatim, notably the *Xiuxing benqi jing*, which repeats it for each encounter (age, illness, death). T184, 3:466c, 3:467a.
- 22 Qian Yi 錢易 (968–1026), *Dongwei zhi* 洞微志 (The record of obscurity), in *Shuo fu* (Speaking [of what lies at] the outer city walls), comp. Tao Zongyi 陶宗儀 (1329–1410), rev. Tao Ting 陶珽 (fl. ca. 1610), 1646 ed. in the collection of the Harvard-Yenching Library, vol. 41, 5:2a–b, accessed via <https://id.lib.harvard.edu/curiosity/chinese-rare-books/49-990067069520203941>. The text gives the pig's name as Bohe 勃荷 (lit. “exuberant congratulations”), noting that he was given this name because he liked to eat *pohe* 婆荷, presumably an orthographic mistake for *bohe* 薄荷, i.e., mint. Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 51. The inscribed text is original to the relief.
- 23 *Jin guangming jing* 金光明經 (Golden light sūtra; Skt: *Suvarṇaprabhāsattamarājasūtra*), trans. Dharmakṣema 曇無讖 (385–433/439), T663, 1:335a, 4:352b–353c; *Hebu Jin guangming jing* 合部金光明經 (Reconstructed golden light sutra; Skt: *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamarāja-sūtra*), comp. Baogui 寶貴 (fl. ca. 581–618), T664, 7:395b–396c; *Jin guangming zuishengwangjing* 金光明最勝王經 (Sutra of Supreme Golden Light; Skt: *Suvarṇaprabhāsottamarāja-sūtra*), trans. Yijing (635–713), T665, 9:448c–450c; *Jinglü yixiang* 經律異相 (Peculiarities of the sutras and vinayas [Monastic regulations]), comp. Baochang 寶唱 (ca. 495–ca. 528) in 516, T2121, 192a–193a; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 52. The inscribed text is original to the relief.
- 24 On the Quanzhou *fangsheng chi*, see [Wanli] *Quanzhou fuzhi*, 24:1b.
- 25 These reliefs, the content of which relates to multiple texts, sutras, and popular tales, appear to prefigure the content of the *Fozu tongji*, which narrated the history of Buddhism in China. See Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” Appendix II, reliefs 22, 24–26. While Benhong's 1238 building of the first story of the pagoda postdates the latest fact in the *Fozu tongji* by two years, the *Fozu tongji* was compiled between 1258 and 1269. On its compilation date, see *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統紀 (Comprehensive history of Buddhist patriarchs), composed by Zhipan 志磐 (dates unknown, fl. Southern Song, 1127–1276/79), T2035, 3:235b; Jan Yün-hua, “The Fo-tsu-t'ung-chi, a Biographical and Bibliographical Study, *Oriens Extremus* 10.1 (1963): 61–82, 64–65.
- 26 *Za ahan jing* 雜阿含經 (Miscellaneous Āgama sutras; Skt: *Samyuktāgama*), trans. Guṇabhadra (394–468/469) 求那跋陀羅 and Baoyun 寶雲 (376–449/450), T99, 23:164c–165a; *Shijia pu* 釋迦譜 (Treatise on Śākyamuni), composed by Sengyou 僧祐 (445–518), T2040, 5:77c; *Shijia shi pu* 釋迦氏譜 (Treatise on the lineage of Śākyamuni), composed by Daoxuan 道宣 (596–667), T2042, 1:101c; *Ayu wang jing* 阿育王經 ([Biographical] sutra of King Aśoka; Skt: *Aśokāvadāna*), trans. Saṅghabhara 僧伽婆羅, T2043, 1:134b–135a; *Fu Fazang Yinyuan zhuan* 付法藏因緣傳 (An account of the causes and conditions of the transmission of the dharma-storehouse; Skt: unknown), trans. Kiṅkara/Kivkara 吉迦夜 (ca. 422/471–ca. 473/522) and Tan Yao 曇曜 (ca. 407/450–ca. 463–506), T2058, 3:307c. The inscribed text is original to the relief.
- 27 On the iconography of relief 27, see Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 58; on relief 28, for which Ecke and Demiéville provide no sources, see Song

- gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (Biographies [of] eminent monks [of] the Song [dynasty]), comp. Zanning 贊寧 (919/920–1001/1002) et al., T2061, 23:856c; *Jingde chuandeng lu* 景德傳燈錄 (Jingde [era, 1004–1007 CE] record [of] the transmission [of] the lamp), comp. Daoyuan 道原 (fl. ca. 1004), T2076, 13:304a, 16:326c, 16: 332b, 17:339b, 20:361c, 23:391c, 26:420a.
- 28 *DaTang Xiyu ji*, T2087, 6:902c; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 59. Seventeen titles in the Tripiṭaka use the term “Jade Elephant” (*yu xiang*), but none describes elephants weeding stupas. Thus, the inscribed text appears to be original to the relief. On small-scale Quanzhou stone stupas, see Wu Wenliang 吳文良 and Wu Youxiong 吳幼雄, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike, zengding ben* 泉州宗教石刻增訂本 (Religious stone carvings from Quanzhou), rev. ed. (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 2005), 457–549. Dhāraṇī pillars also featured in the stone-built Buddhist landscape of Quanzhou and its hinterland. Wu and Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*, 529–31, 533–34, 555–57, 582–84.
- 29 *Za baozang jing* 雜寶藏經 (Sutra of the miscellaneous treasures; Skt: *Samyukta-ratna-piṭaka-sūtra*), trans. Kiṅkara/Kivkara (ca. 422/471–ca. 473/522) and Tan Yao (ca. 407/450–ca. 463/506), T203, 1:449a; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 60–61. In the sutra, the birds are parrots or parakeets (*yingwu* 鸚鵡), as pictured in the relief; perhaps to account for the single character, the inscription substitutes the homophonic Chinese word for oriole (*ying* 鸚). Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 61. The inscribed text is original to the relief.
- 30 *Liu du ji jing* 六度集經 (Collection of writings about the Six Pāramitās), trans. Kang Senghui 康僧會 (d. 280), T152, 5:25b–c; *Sengjialuocho suoji jing* 僧伽羅刹所集經 (The sutra compiled by the monk Saṃgharakṣa? [dates unknown]), trans. Saṅghabhūti 僧伽跋澄 (fl. ca. 381), T194, 1:119a–b; *Xianyu jing* 賢愚經 (Sutra on the wise [and] the foolish; Skt: *Damamūka*), trans. Huijue 慧覺 (fl. ca. 445), T202, 2:360a–b; *Da banniepan jing* 大般涅槃經 (The Great Parinirvāṇa Sutra; Skt: *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*), trans. Faxian 法顯 (338–434/4), T376, 3:855c; *Dafangdeng daji jing* 大方等大集經 (The great compilation sutra; Skt: *Mahāsaṃnipātasūtra*), trans. Dharmakṣema 曇無讖 (385–433/439), T397, 50:330b–331a. In other accounts of the tale, the name Patience is transliterated from the Sanskrit Kṣānti as Chanti 羶提. See, for example, *Da zhi du lun* 大智度論 (Treatise on the *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* [The sutra of transcendental wisdom in twenty-five thousand lines]; Skt: *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*), composed by Nāgārjuna 龍樹菩薩 (fl. ca. 150–250), trans. Kumārajīva 鳩摩羅什 (344–413), T1509, 14:164a; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 63.
- The relief reproduces verbatim the *Sengjialuocho suoji jing* albeit using the orthographic variant *renshou* 忍守 (lit. “holding on”), a homophone for *renshou* 忍受 (lit. “endurance”), instead of *renru* 忍辱 (lit. “endurance”); the original character *ru* 辱 has likely been altered over time. *Sengjialuocho suoji jing*, T194, 1:119a. Repeated uses of this phrase in Tripiṭaka titles include: *Xianyu jing*, T202, 2:360a; *Dafangdeng daji jing*, T397, 50:330b.
- 31 On the South China Tiger (*Panthera tigris amoyensis*) and its historical Fujian habitat, see Christopher Coggins, *The Tiger and the Pangolin: Nature, Culture, and Conservation in China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2002), 53–65.
- 32 On this relief, see note 20.
- 33 Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” 177–78.
- 34 Purtle, Appendix II, reliefs 1–40.
- 35 Nichols, “History, Material Culture,” 45–81 passim, esp. 45, 58, 67, 81.
- 36 Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” 178.
- 37 Popular Buddhist texts not included in the canon and/or secular texts provide the content for reliefs 4, 15, 25, and 26, either in whole or part. These include, for example: Faxian 法顯 (337–422 CE), *Gaoseng Faxian zhuan* 高僧法顯傳 (Biography [of] the eminent monk Faxian), T2085, 1:861b (relief 4); Qian, *Dongwei zhi*, 5:2a–b (relief 15); *Sui shu* 隋書 (History [of] the Sui [dynasty]), comp. Wei Zheng 魏徵 (580–643) et al. (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973), 35:1097 (relief 25); *Wei shu* 魏書 (History [of] the Wei [dynasty]), comp. Wei Shou 魏收 (507–572) (repr., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1974), 114:3025–26 (relief 26).
- 38 The text inscribed on the relief was the original phrasing of those who worked on the monument; it is not found verbatim in the Tripiṭaka. On possible sources not cited by Ecke and Demiéville, see Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” Appendix II, relief 4.
- 39 *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing*, T189, 1:625b; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 45. The *Fanguang da zhuangyan jing* (T187, 1:554c) also notes the presence of Indra and Brahma, but less precisely.
- 40 *Xiuxing benqi jing*, T184, 1:463c; *Taizi rui ying benqi jing*, T185, 473b–474a; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 45. The *Yichu pusa benqi jing* (T188, 618a) also specifies which hand the Buddha raised; other texts do not specify. See *Xiuxing benqi jing*, T184, 1:463c; *Fanguang da zhuangyan jing*, T187, 12:613c; *Xianyu jing*, T202, 10:418c.

- 41 *Xiuxing benqi jing*, T184, 1:463c; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 45.
- 42 *Fangguang da zhuangyan jing*, T187, 3:554c; *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing*, T189, 1:625b; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 45.
- 43 *Pu yao jing*, T186, 1:494b; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 45.
- 44 *Xiuxing benqi jing*, T184, 1:463c; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 45.
- 45 The inscribed text reproduces that found in the Tripitaka verbatim (the orthographic variant of *xian* 仙 is substituted for *xian* 僊, both meaning “transcendent” or “immortal”). See *Fomu Da Kongque ming wang jing* 佛母大孔雀明王經 (Sutra of the Buddha’s [God]mother, the Great Peacock Wisdom Queen; Skt: *Mahāmāyūrīvidyārājñīsūtra*), trans. Amoghavajra 不空 (705–774), T982, 3:437b; *Fo shuo Da Kongque Zhou Wang Jing* 佛說大孔雀呢王經 (The Buddha’s sermons on the Sutra of the Great Peacock Incantation King; Skt: *Mahāmāyūrīvidyārājñī*), trans. Yijing 義淨 (635–713), T985, 3:474b; *DaTang Xiyu ji*, T2087, 2:881b; *Shijia fangzhi* 釋迦方志 (A gazetteer of Buddhist [regions]), composed by Daoxuan 道宣, T2088, 1:955a; *Fa yuan zhu lin* 法苑珠林 (A forest of pearls from the Dharma garden), composed by Daoshi 道世 (607/655–683/684), T2122, 29:498b. For new material not presented by Ecke and Demiéville, see Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” Appendix II, relief 38.
- 46 Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” 178.
- 47 Huang Tao 黃滔 (*jinshi* 895, d. 911), *Huang yushi ji* 黃御史集 (Collected works [of the Tang-*[dynasty]* censor Huang [Tao]), repr. of Ming-dynasty *Sibu congkan* ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 5:1b; *Quanzhou Kaiyuan si zhi*, 1:10a; Hugh R. Clark, “Consolidation on the South China Frontier: The Development of Ch’üan-chou, 699–1126” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1981), 142; Hugh R. Clark, *Community, Trade, and Networks: Southern Fujian Province from the Third to the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 60; Nichols, “History, Material Culture,” 48.
- 48 *Quanzhou Kaiyuan si zhi*, *juan* 2, passim; Nichols, “History, Material Culture,” 42–132 passim, esp. 59, 85, 125; Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” 178–79.
- 49 *Fujian tongzhi* 福建通志 (Gazetteer of Fujian), comp. Xie Daocheng 謝道承 (*jinshi* 1721), repr. of *Siku quanshu* ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 62:17a, 36a.
- 50 On the printing of the Buddhist Canon in China during the Song dynasty, including the Fuzhou editions, see Li and He, “Appendix I,” 311–20, esp. 312–13. See also *Sanshan zhi* 三山志 (Gazetteer of “The Three Mountains” [i.e., Fuzhou]), comp. Liang Kejia 梁克家 (1128–1187), repr. of Ming-dynasty printed ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 33:11b; Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” 179–80.
- 51 Parsing the iconographic program of the Zhenguo Pagoda with respect to its possible sources and patrons is the core of a chapter on stonework in Song-dynasty Quanzhou in my forthcoming book, *Forms of Cosmopolitanism in the Sino-Mongol City*.
- 52 The survival of stone is not a given. For example, the Aśoka Pagoda currently placed on the Luoyang Bridge does not resemble earlier iterations of Aśoka pagodas on local bridges. For an image of the current Luoyang Bridge Aśoka Pagoda, see Purtle, “Salvaging Meaning,” 76, fig. 41.3; on prior iterations of bridge-top Aśoka pagodas, see n82, fig. 21.
- 53 On the fragility and non-survival of these images, see Sören Edgren, “The Printed Dharani-Sutra of A.D. 956,” *Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities* 44 (1972): 141–42; Shih-shan Susan Huang, “Early Buddhist Illustrated Prints in Hangzhou,” in *Early Buddhist Illustrated Prints in Hangzhou: Knowledge and Text Production in an Age of Print; China, 900–1400*, ed. Lucille Chia and Hilde de Weerd (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2011), 138.
- 54 On this project, see Dōki 道喜 (fl. ca. 965), “Hōkyōin-kyō-ki” 寶篋印經記 (Record of the Sutra on the Precious Chest Mudrā), manuscript held in the Kongō ji temple 金剛寺, Japan, as cited in Shi Zhiru, “From Bodily Relic to Dharma Relic Stūpa: Chinese Materialization of the Aśoka Legend in the Wuyue Period,” in *India in the Chinese Imagination*, ed. John Kieschnick and Meir Shahar (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 85–86; see also Seunghye Lee, “What Was in the ‘Precious Casket Seal’?: Material Culture of the Karaṇḍamudrā Dhāraṇī throughout Medieval Maritime Asia,” *Religions* 12.1 (2020): 1–19 passim.
- On WuYue rule over Fujian territory, see Zhu Weigan 朱維幹, *Fujian shigao* 福建史稿 (An outline history of Fujian) (Fuzhou: Fujian jiaoyu chubanshe 1986), 1:177–79.
- 55 On these relics, see note 8.
- 56 *Yiqie rulai xin mimi quanshen sheli baoqieyin tuoluoni jing*, T1022a, 710a–712b; Edgren, “Printed Dharani-Sutra,” 141.
- 57 *Yiqie rulai xin mimi quanshen sheli baoqieyin tuoluoni jing*, T1022a passim. For a synopsis of the sutra content, see Eugene Wang, “Tope and Topos: The Leifeng Pagoda and a Discourse of the Demonic,” in *Writing and Materiality in China: Essays in Honor of Patrick Hanan*, ed. Judith T. Zeitlin and Lydia H. Liu (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 491.

- 58 Other WuYue imprints of this sutra bear frontispieces executed in pictorial styles that are more detailed and in which the rubbish-heap stupa is not located at the bottom center of the picture plane. This includes examples dated 965 (Zhejiang Museum), published in Zhang Xiumin 張秀民, *Zhongguo yinshua shi: Chatu zhencang zengding ban* 中國印刷史·插圖·珍藏增訂版 (History of print in China: Expanded and illustrated collector's edition (Hangzhou: Zhejiang guji chubanshe, 2006), 35; and dated 975 (National Palace Museum, Taipei; Harvard Art Museums). On these imprints, see Huang, "Early Buddhist Illustrated Prints," 137–42; Wang, "Tope and Topos," 491–92; Lee, "What Was in the 'Precious Casket Seal?'," 10–13.
- 59 The most pronounced examples of this compositional type are found in reliefs 1–4, 10, 12–14, 16, 17, 19, 22–24, 27, 31, 33, 38.
- 60 On such images, see note 12.
- 61 The image most closely resembles the accounts of the *Xiuxing benqi jing* and the *DaTang Xiyu ji*. The former notes that "the bodhisatva [i.e., Siddhārtha] was seated under a tree" 菩薩坐樹下 (T184, 2:496c) and that the "two girls offered him milk" 二女奉乳糜 (T184, 2:470a). The latter, an account of the environs of the Bodhi Tree under which Siddhārtha attained Enlightenment, indicates that the stupa outside the southwest wall surrounding the Bodhi Tree was built on the site of the "former residence of the two cowherd-girls who offered milk [to Siddhārtha]" 奉乳糜二牧女故宅, T2087, 8:917b. For the textual sources of this image, see *Xiuxing benqi jing*, T184, 2:469c–470a; *Taizi ruiying benqi jing*, T185, 2:479a; *Pu yao jing*, T186, 5:511c–512b; *Fanguang da zhuangyan jing*, T187, 7:583b–584a; *Guoqu xianzai yinguo jing*, T189, 3:639b; *Fo benxing jijing*, T190, 25:771b–c; *DaTang Xiyu ji*, T2087, 8:917a–b; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 47–48. The inscribed text rearranges characters found in the *DaTang Xiyu ji* to incorporate details from various versions of the tale.
- 62 Purtle, "Salvaging Meaning," 62–64.
- 63 Purtle, "Pictured in Relief," 159. Several tales found in texts contained in the Tripiṭaka share the same narrative of a bird putting out a forest or field fire, as Ecke and Demiéville note. Of these only two make the protagonist a pheasant: the *Da zhi du lun* (T1509), and the *DaTang Xiyu ji* (T2087). The text inscribed on the relief is not found verbatim in the Tripiṭaka, but it necessarily draws from the two texts in which the protagonist is a pheasant. The remaining stories feature a parakeet or parrot (*yingwu*) as their protagonist. For the textual sources of this image, see *Sengjialuocho suoji jing*, T194: 1:120a–b; *Za baozang jing*, T203, 2:455a–b; *Jiu za piyu jing* 舊雜譬喻經 (Old sutra of assorted apologues; Skt: unknown), trans. Kang Senghui (d. 280), T206, 1:515a; *Da zhi du lun*, T1509, 14:178c–179a; *DaTang Xiyu ji*, T2087, 903c; *Jinglü yixiang*, T2121, 11:60b; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 60–61.
- 64 Purtle, "Pictured in Relief," 159; Purtle, "Production of Painting," 201–4.
- 65 John Chaffee, *Branches of Heaven* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 1999), 229, table 9.1.
- 66 Like "The auspicious birth in the Lumbini Garden" (see fig. 10a), the relief labeled "The Divine King Contends for the Almsbowl" is a composite of details from multiple texts that amplify and extend each other, rather than an image that illustrates a single textual source of the story, as Ecke and Demiéville note in *Twin Pagodas*, 48–49. Given the composite nature of the image, the text inscribed on the relief is not found verbatim in the Tripiṭaka. For the textual sources of "The Divine King Contends for the Almsbowl," see *Xiuxing benqi jing*, T184, 2:470a; *Taizi ruiying benqi jing*, T185, 2:479a–b; *Pu yao jing*, T186, 5:512a; *Fanguang da zhuangyan jing*, T187, 8:583c–584a; *Fo benxing jijing*, T190, 26:772b. For the textual sources of "Bathing in the Nairāṇā," see *Pu yao jing*, T186, 5:512a–513a; *Fanguang da zhuangyan jing*, T187, 7:583c; *Fo benxing jijing*, T190, 26:772a; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 49. The inscribed text is original to the relief. Principal textual sources of "Three Beasts Forging the River" include *Youposai jie jing* 優婆塞戒經 (Sutra on the discipline of the upāsaka [i.e., laymen]; Skt: *Upāsakāśīla-sūtra*), trans. Dharmakṣema 曇無讖 (385–433), T1488, 1:1038b; *Apidamo da piposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 (Treatise on the Great Commentary of the Abhidharma; Skt: *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣa-śāstra*), trans. Xuanzang, T1545, 143:735b; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 54.
- 67 Purtle, "Production of Painting," 205–6.
- 68 Ecke and Demiéville provide no possible sources for this relief. However, the inscribed text is found verbatim in *Mingjue Chanshi yulu* 明覺禪師語錄 (Quotations [from] Chan master Mingjue [980–1052]), comp. Weigaizhu 惟蓋竺 (fl. Song dynasty, 960–1227, dates unknown), T1996, 2:680b, 2:682a; *Foguo Yuanwu Chanshi Biyan lu* 佛果園悟禪師碧巖錄 (The Blue Cliff Record [of] the Chan master Foguo Yuanwu [1063–1135]), verses by Chongxian 重顯 (980–1052); later commentary by Keqin 克勤 (fl. Ming dynasty, 1368–1644), T2003, 7:196a (a text presumably available in a Song ed.); *Jingde*

- chuandeng lu* (T2076, 16:326a–c). In the *Jingde chuandeng lu*, this phrase occurs in the biography of a Chan master Quanhao 全豁 (828–887), a native of Quanzhou, who asked the question of the monk Yicun 義存 (822/23–908), a native of Nan’an in the Quanzhou hinterland. This relief may thus refer to Quanzhou obliquely.
- 69 “Interlace [pattern] decorated panel” (*goulan hua ban* 鈎欄 [sic: 欄華版]), in *Li Zhongming Yingzao fashi* 李明仲營造法式 (Li Zhongming’s [i.e., Lie Jie’s treatise on] state building methods), reconstruction of lost 1103 ed. from Song-dynasty, Shaoxing-era [1131–62] manuscript ed., printed in the format of Song-dynasty, Chongning-era [1102–1106] printed books, Li Jie 李誡 (1065–1110), reconstructed and ed. Tao Xiang 陶湘 (1871–1940), Zhu Qiqian 朱啓鈞 (1872–1964) (Zijiang, Guizhou: Buxu lou, 1925), Suppl. Images, 32:24b.
- 70 On *Nine Dragons*, see Jennifer Purtle, “The Pictorial Form of a Zoomorphic Imagination,” in *The Zoomorphic Imagination in Chinese Art and Culture*, ed. Jerome Silbergeld and Eugene Wang (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2016), 253–88; Tom Wu, *Tales from the Land of Dragons: 1,000 Years of Chinese Painting* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1997), 197–201; Tseng Hsien-chi, “A Study of the Nine Dragons Scroll,” *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 11 (1957): 17–39.
- 71 On Chen Rong, see Wu Taisu 吳太素 (act. Yuan dynasty, 1279–1368), *Songzhai meipu* 松齋梅譜 (Pine Studio [i.e., Wu Taisu’s] plum album), ed. Shimada Shūjirō 島田修二郎 (Hiroshima: Hiroshima Shiritsu Chūō Toshokan, 1988), 4:302a; Zhuang Su 莊肅 (act. ca. 1298), *Huaji buyi* 畫繼補遺 (Supplement to painting, continued), 1298 (Beijing: Renmin meishu chubanshe, 1964), 1:6; Xia Wenyan 夏文彥 (act. 14th cent.), *Tuhui baojian* 圖繪寶鑑 (Precious mirror of painting; preface dated 1365), repr. of Yuan-dynasty, Zhizheng-era (1341–1368) printed ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 4:5a–b; Wang Yun 王惲 (1227–1304), *Qiujuan ji* 秋澗集 (Collected works of Wang Yun), repr. of *Sibu congkan* Ming-dynasty, Hongzhi-era (1487–1505) printed ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 66:8a–b; He Qiaoyuan 何喬遠 (1558–1632), *Min shu* 閩書 (History of Min, 1619), repr. of Ming-dynasty, Chongzhen-era (1627–1644) printed ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 77:13b–14b.
- 72 *Sanshan zhi* 8:1a–b; Luo Dajing 羅大經 (1196–after 1252), *Helin yulu* 鶴林玉露 (Crane forest, jade frost), repr. of Ming-dynasty printed ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 11:1a–b; *Song huiyao jigao* 宋會要輯稿 (Draft edition of a compilation of Song government documents; hereafter *SHYJG*), comp. Xu Song 徐松 (1781–1848), repr. of manuscript ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, *Li*, 13:1a–25a, 13:9a, 13:12b–13a.
- 73 *SHYJG*, *Zhiguan*, 20:37b–38a, as cited in Chaffee, *Branches of Heaven*, 229, table 9.1. For variant figures, see *Jianyan yilai chaoye zaji* 建炎以來朝野雜記 (Miscellaneous notes [on] court [and] external [politics] from the Jianyan [reign-period, 1127–1130] onward), comp. Li Xinchuan 李心傳 (1167–1244), repr. of Qing-dynasty (1644–1911) *Wuying dian juzhenban congshu* ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 1:1:33b–34b.
- 74 Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 (1178–1235), *Xishan Zhen Wenzhong gong wenji* 西山真文忠公文集 (Literary anthology [of] “West Mountain,” [aka] Zhen Wenzhong [i.e., Zhen Dexiu]), *Sibu congkan* repr. of Ming-dynasty, Zhengde-era (1491–1521) ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 15:11a; Chaffee, *Branches of Heaven*, 229, table 9.1. On the Muzongyuan and its location, see *Yudi jisheng* 輿地紀勝 (Narrative geography [of] important sites), comp. Wang Xiangzhi 王象之 (*jinshi* 1196, d. after 1221), ca. 1221, repr. of Qing-dynasty copy of Song-dynasty manuscript ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 130:5b; Zhang Yining 張以寧 (1301–1370), *Cuiping ji* 翠屏集 (Literary anthology [of] “Kingfisher-colored Screen,” [aka] Zhang Cuiping [i.e., Zhang Yining]), repr. of Ming-dynasty, Chenghua-era (1464–1487) imprint of Ming-dynasty manuscript ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 3:36a; *Fujian tongzhi* 福建通志 (Gazetteer of Fujian), comp. Hao Yulin 郝玉麟 (d. 1745) and carved by Xie Daocheng 謝道承 (1691–1741), repr. of *Siku quanshu* 1737 ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 62:55a–b; [*Qianlong*] *Quanzhou fuzhi*, 12:19a–b.
- 75 It must be noted that of the thousands of bronze WuYue dharani sutra-style pagoda-boxes and their accompanying prints made under the patronage of Qian Hongchu, the vast majority are lost—including the bronzes. See Lee, “What Was in the ‘Precious Casket Seal?’” 13. Indeed, the problems of fungibility (the reuse of the bronze) and forgery (the making of spurious objects of this type) led later commentators to note the weight of the originals and to describe their iconography. See *Liang Zhe jinshi zhi* 兩浙金石志 (Epigraphic record of LiangZhe), comp. Ruan Yuan 阮元 (1764–1849), repr. of 1823 Li Yun ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 4:34a; see also Shi Zhiru, “From Bodily Relic,” 87.
- 76 On examples of Aśoka pagodas, WuYue dharani sutra-style pagodas, and their related prints, see Li Yuxin 黎毓馨, “Ayuwang ta shiwude faxian yu chubu zhengli” 阿育王塔实物的发现与初步整理 (Physical examples of Aśoka pagodas: Discovery and preliminary organization [of data and findings]), in

- Tian fu di zai: Leifeng ta tiangong Ayuwang ta tezhuan* 天覆地載—雷峰塔天宮阿育王塔特展 (Covered by the sky, contained by the earth: Special exhibition of [objects from the] crypt of the Leifeng pagoda) (Hong Kong: Zhongguo wenhua yishu chubanshe, 2009), 8–31; Wang Zhongcheng 王鍾承, “Wuyue guowang Qian Hongchu zao Ayuwang ta” 吳越國王錢弘俶造阿育王塔 (Aśoka pagodas made by Qian Hongchu, king of WuYue), *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊 (Palace Museum Academic Quarterly) 29.4 (2021): 109–78.
- 77 On the distribution of these objects to Fujian under WuYue rule, see *Leifeng yi zhen* 雷鋒遺珍 (The heritage of Leifeng [Pagoda]), ed. Zhejiang sheng kaogu yanjiusuo 浙江省考古研究所 (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2002), 100–102; Li, “Ayuwang,” 37, 40–41, 44; Wang, “Wuyue guowang,” 137–42.
- 78 This example, with a height of 30.0 cm, bears an inscription that states: “The king of WuYue, Qian Hongchu, respectfully commissioned [this pagoda] during the second year of the Xiande era (955), [that corresponds to the] *yimao* year [i.e., the fifty-second year in the sexagenary cycle].” 吳越王錢弘俶敬造時周顯德二年乙卯歲。On this example, see Lin Zhao 林釗, “Fujiansheng si nian lai faxiande wenwu jianjie” 福建省四年來發現的文物簡介 (A brief introduction to artifacts discovered in Fujian in the past four years), *Wenwu cankao ziliao* 文物參考資料 (Cultural-relics reference materials) 1955.11: 83–90, 89. See also Li, “Ayuwang,” 37, 41; Wang, “Wuyue guowang,” 138.
- 79 This example, with a height of 21.5 cm, bears an inscription that contains the text “*yimao* year” 乙卯歲 (955). On this example, see Zhang Xiumin 張秀民, “Wudai WuYueguode yinshua” 五代吳越國的印刷 (Printing in the Five Dynasties’ Kingdom of WuYue), in *Wenwu* 文物 (Cultural relics) 1978.12: 74–76, 76n3; *Fujian bowuguan wenwu zhenpin* 福建博物院文物珍品 (Treasured cultural relics from the Fujian Museum), ed. Fujian Museum 福建博物院 (Fuzhou: Fujian jiaoyu chubanshe, 2002), 107, pl. 106. For an overview of both Lianjiang and Minhou examples, see “Fu shan fu shui Fuzhou cheng: Fujian bowuyuan (Gudai wenming si tong ta)” 福山, 福水, 福州城: 福建博物院 (古代文明四銅塔) (Mountains of good fortune, rivers of good fortune, and Fuzhou: the Fujian Museum (four bronze pagodas [from local] ancient civilizations), accessed September 18, 2022, http://blog.sina.com.cn/s/blog_59e5d1350102wbio.html
- 80 Multiple sources address Yaśas involvement with Aśoka’s 84,000 pagodas. These include *Za ahan jing*, T99, 23:165a–b; *Shijia pu*, T2040, 5:78b–c; *Ayu wang jing*, T2043, 2:135a–b; *Fu Fazang Yinyuan zhuan*, T2058, 3:3–7c; *Jinglü yixiang*, T2121, 6:25a; *Zhujing yaoji* 諸經要集 (An essential anthology [of] all sutras), comp. Daoshi 道世 (607/655–683/684), T2123, 3:20a; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 55. However, the illustration most closely approximates the text of the *Fozu tong ji*, compiled two to three decades after the pagoda base was completed: “Aśoka, possessing the relics of the [Historical] Buddha, [one] night conscripted demons [and] spirits to smash the Seven Treasures later used to make the 84,000 pagodas. Venerable Yaśas pointed [his] finger, emitting light, [and] eighty-four-thousand [rays of light] appeared. [Yaśas] commanded winged, flying demons—each [instructed] to follow one ray of light to its end—[and at each] place [a light ray ended], to erect a pagoda.” 阿育王取佛舍利。夜，役鬼神碎七寶，未造八萬四千塔。尊者耶舍舒指放光。八萬四千道。令羽飛鬼，各隨一光盡，處安立一塔。 *Fozu tong ji*, T2035, 33:318b. The inscribed text is original to the relief.
- 81 The *Gaoseng zhuan* lists his name as Sahe 薩河。 *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳 (Biographies [of] eminent monks), comp. Huijiao 慧皎 (497–554), T2059, 13:409b. The inscribed text is original to the relief. Like relief 22, the pictorial narrative of relief 24 strongly resembles the later text of the *Fozu tong ji*. This text notes that Sahe, instructed to visit the five known sites of the nineteen Aśoka pagodas sent by Yaśas to China (*Zhendan* 震旦, “arrived in Kuaiji [near modern Hangzhou, Zhejiang], searching everywhere, [from] mountains to marshes, [for the local Aśoka pagoda], including at Wushi shan 烏石山 [lit. “Mount Crowstone,” i.e., Blackstone]. [One] night, [he] heard the sound [of] a bell [coming from] underground. [For] more [than] three days seven Indian monks trod a path, [and in] the middle of the space [defined by their path] a square altar welled up; by cutting [into] the earth to search [for] it, [Liu Sahe] recovered a reliquary in the shape of a Buddha-reliquary-pagoda (*sheli bao ta* 舍利寶塔). . . . The color [of] the pagoda [was] like [that] of green stone, [its] height one *chi* [Chinese feet] four *cun* [Chinese inches], its width seven *cun*.” *Fozu tong ji*, T2035, 36:338c; translation modified from Thomas Jülch, *Shipan’s Account of the History of Buddhism in China*, vol. 1, *Fozu tong ji*, juan 34–38, *From the Times of the Buddha to the Nanbeichao Era* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 122–23. Shipan, the compiler of the *Fozu tong ji*, appears to have taken this tale from the *Mingxiang ji* 冥祥記 (Record of mysteri-

ous manifestations), compiled by the scholar Wang Yan 王琰 (b. ca. 454), which was presumably also accessible to the designers of the Zhengguo Pagoda base reliefs. *Mingxiang ji*, comp. Wang Yan, C-TEXT digital ed., *juan 2*, story 11; see Jülch, *Zhipan's Account*, 123n21; Robert Ford Campany, *Signs from the Unseen Realm: Buddhist Miracle Tales from Early Medieval China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012), 148–52.

The *Gao seng zhuan* biography of Liu Sahe tells of Liu Sahe's discovery of a nested reliquary box; T2059, 13:409b. However, the *Shishi jigu lue*, which also postdates the East Pagoda reliefs, provides an account that perfectly matches the relief, despite its anachronistic date: "Suddenly, a pagoda-reliquary welled up from the ground" (*hu cong di yong baota 忽從地涌寶塔*). *Shishi jigu lue* 釋氏稽古略 (An outline of historical research into the Śākya family lineage), comp. Jue'an 覺岸 (b. 1286), T2037, 1:755a. The resemblance of this image to two later texts may indicate that popular, oral versions of the tale—perhaps derived from the *Mingxiang ji*—served as the source for this illustration, and were only subsequently published. It is also possible that the Quanzhou reliefs established new narrative paradigms for the presentations of these tales.

For further texts related to this image, see *You fang ji chao* 遊方記抄 (Manuscript record of travels [to the Four] Quarters), composed by Huichao of Silla 新羅慧超 (fl. ca. 719–780) and Yuanzhao of Tang 唐圓照 (718–799/805), T2089, 989c; *Ji Shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* 集神州三寶感通錄 (Record of miraculous responses to the three jewels in China), comp. Daoxuan 道宣 (597–667), T2106, 2:417c; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 56–57. On Liu Sahe, see Wu Hung, "Rethinking Liu Sahe: The Creation of a Buddhist Saint and the Invention of a 'Miraculous Image,'" *Orientalism* 27.10 (1996): 32–43.

- 82 On the Stone Shoot Bridge pagodas, see "E44: *Shisun qiao Songdai shita* (E44: 石筭桥宋代石塔)" (Stone-shoot bridge Song-dynasty stone pagoda) in Wu and Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*, 579–81. For a photograph of an earlier incarnation of the Aśoka Pagoda on the Wan'an Bridge, see Yan Aibin 闫爱宾, "Reintegration, Shifts in Meaning, and Transformation: Three Junctures in the Morphological Changes of a Casket Seal Stupa-Tower" (整合·转义·变型—中国宝篋印塔形制流变的三个节点), unpublished paper presented at the conference "Site and Sight: The Chinese Pagoda," Harvard University, November 16, 2019.

- 83 On these pagoda dedications, see *Kaiyuan si Liu Sanniang zaota ji* 開元寺柳三娘造塔記 (Record of Liu Sanniang commissioning stupas for the Kaiyuan si) and *Kaiyuan si shenzhang tike* 開元寺神帳題刻 (Inscription carved on the numinous ledgers of the Kaiyuan si), repr. in Kenneth Dean and Zheng Zhenman, *Fujian zongjiao beiming huibian: Quanzhou fu fence* 福建宗教碑銘匯編: 泉州府分冊 (Epigraphical materials on the history of religion in Fujian: Quanzhou Prefecture) (Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 2003), 1:23–24; "E12: *Kaiyuan si Songdai jintushi shita*" E12: 開元寺宋代金涂式石塔 (Song-dynasty gold-leaf-style stone pagodas at the Kaiyuan si), in Wu and Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*, 545–46.

- 84 On the Sumeru-style base and its components, see *Li Zhongming Yingzao fashi* 15:4a–b; Quanzhou Zhengguo Pagoda Base video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7ffDIH1yrA>. On Aśoka pagodas and stone building in Quanzhou, see Yan Aibin, "Mijiao chuanbo yu SongYuan Quanzhou shizao duobaota" 密教传播与宋元泉州石造多宝塔 (Research on the communication of Esoteric Buddhism and Quanzhou stone Duobao pagodas of the Song and Yuan dynasties), *Zhongguo wenwu kexue yanjiu* 中国文物科学研究 (China Cultural Heritage Scientific Research) 2012.03: 68–67; "SongYuan Quanzhou shi jianzhu jishu fazhan mailuo" 宋元泉州石建筑技术发展脉络 (Development of Quanzhou stone-building technology of the Song and Yuan dynasties), *Haijiaoshi yanjiu* 海交史研究 (Maritime history studies) 2009.01: 73–112; "Leifeng ta chutu digong jintuta kaozheng" 雷峰塔地宫出土金涂塔考证 (Study on the gilt-pagoda in the underground-tomb of Leifeng-Pagoda), *Tongji daxue xueban: shehui kexue ban* 同济大学学报 (社会科学版) (Journal of Tongji University: Social sciences) 2002.2: 18–22, 117.

- 85 *Li Zhongming Yingzao fashi* 33:9a–14b.

- 86 Risha Lee, "Constructing Community: Tamil Merchant Temples in India and China, 850–1281" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2012), 115.

- 87 "D75: *Gu Yindujiao dadu shizhu*" D75: 古印度教大独石柱 (Ancient Brahmanic monolithic stone pillar), in Wu and Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*, 502–3.

- 88 On the Stone Shoot Bridge, see *BaMin tongzhi* 八閩通志 (Gazetteer of the Eight Min [i.e., Fujian]), comp. Huang Zhongzhao 黄仲昭 (1435–1508), repr. of Hongzhi-era (1488–1505) ed., in *ZGJB-GJK*, 18:8b–9a; [*Wanli*] *Quanzhou fuzhi* 5:33a; *Jinjiang xian zhi* 晉江縣志 ([Daoguang era, 1813–20] gazetteer of Jinjiang county), comp. Hu Zhihua

- 胡之鏞 (fl. ca. 1808–1832), carved by Zhou Xue-ceng 周學曾 (fl. Qing dynasty, 1644–1911), repr. of Qing-dynasty manuscript ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 71:11b; “E44: *Shisun qiao Songdai shita*,” in Wu and Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*, 502–3. On the Luoyang Bridge, see *BaMin tongzhi*, 83:1a; *Min shu*, 8:1b; “E43: *Wan’anqiao fojiao shike*” (E43: Buddhist stone carving from the Wan’an Bridge), in Wu and Wu, *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*, 577–78.
- 89 *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 (*The Lotus Sūtra*; Skt: *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*), trans. Kumārajīva, T262, 1:8c; *Tianpin Miaofa lianhua jing* 添品妙法蓮華經 (Further chapters [of] the *Lotus Sutra*), trans. Jñānagupta 闍那崛多 (523–600/601) and Dharmagupta 達摩笈多 (529–619/620), T264, 1:141c; translation modified significantly from Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 55.
- 90 The *Flower Garland Sutra* contains an anecdote in which the boy Sudhana (善財童子, i.e., Sudhana-śreṭhi-dāraka) visited another boy known as “the sovereign Lord” (*Zizai zhu* 自在主), whom Ecke and Demiéville (*Twin Pagodas*, 56) identify as Indreśvara; Sudhana found the putative Indreśvara together with ten thousand further boys, all playing by circumambulating heaped sand. *Da fanguang fo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經 (*Flower Garland Sutra*; Skt: *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*), trans. Śikṣānanda 實叉難陀 (652–710), T279, 45:350b,c.
- For further texts on sand heaps as stupa proxies, see, for example, *Fo shuo zao ta yan ming gongde jing* 佛說造塔延命功德經 (*The Buddha’s teaching [on] the building [of] stupas for the Extending [of] Life and Making [of] Merit Sutra*; Skt: unknown), trans. Prajña 般若 (705/744–806/835), T1026:726b; *Fahua xuanyi shi qian* 法華玄義釋籤 (*The explanation [of] the profound meaning [of] the Lotus Sutra*), narrated by Zhanran 湛然 (1048–1116), T1717, 8:871a.
- 91 The inscribed text repeats verbatim that of the *Da fanguang fo huayan jing*, T293, 10:704a; *Fahua yi shu*, T1721, 4:505b; *Neng xian zhong bian hui ri lun* 能顯中邊慧日論 (Commentary [on] the wisdom sun that can illuminate [what is] central [and] peripheral), composed by Huizhao 慧沼 (652–715), T1863, 3:431b; *Beishan lu* 北山錄 (*The record of Beishan* [lit. “North Mountain”]), recorded by Shenqing 神清 (721–820), aka Beishan, with commentary by Huibao 慧寶 (fl. Song dynasty, 960–1127), T2113, 3:591a.
- 92 See, for example, *Sheng jing* 生經 (*Sutra [on the past] lives [of the future Buddha, i.e., Jātaka tales]*; Skt: *Jātaka-sūtra*), trans. Dharmarakṣa 法護 (239–316), T154, 4:95a–b; Ecke and Demiéville, *Twin Pagodas*, 56.
- 93 On Song-dynasty knowledge of “stone shoots” in Quanzhou, using the variant characters *shi sun* 石筍, see, for example, Wang Shipeng 王十朋 (1112–1171), “*Shi sun qiao*” 石筍橋 ([On Quanzhou’s Stone Shoot Bridge], in *Meixi xiansheng wenji* 梅溪先生後集 ([Wang Shipeng’s] Prunus-Creek Master literary anthology), repr. of Ming-dynasty, Zhengtong-era *Sibu congkan* ed., in *ZGJBGJK*, 19:15a.
- 94 For a reproduction of this image, see Purtle, “Pictured in Relief,” 171; for an excellent overview of wells in Quanzhou, see “Quanzhou Xijie gujing: fanshengde jianzheng, yeshi sanluode xiang” 泉州西街古井: 繁盛的见证, 也是散落的乡 (Ancient wells of Quanzhou’s West Street: Witnesses to prosperity, [which] are also scattered [throughout] town), n.p., esp. photo 4, accessed May 11, 2024, <http://fj.people.com.cn/n2/2021/0127/c181466-34551102.html>
- 95 *Quanzhou Kaiyuan si zhi* 1:8a; translation modified significantly from Nichols, “History, Material Culture,” 499.
- 96 *Fozu tong ji*, T2035, 36:338c; for the text, see note 82.
- 97 On the use of this term with respect to smelting metal, see *Songshi* 宋史 (*History of the Song dynasty*), comp. Tuotuo 脫脫 (fl. ca. 1345) et al. (repr., Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1977), 255:11960.