

# Medieval Chinese Buddhist Exegesis and Chinese Grammatical Studies

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## Abstract

The purpose of this article a preliminary study aiming to demonstrate how the medieval indigenous Chinese Buddhist literature, especially the Buddhist exegeses, could contribute to our understanding of the grammatical knowledge of the medieval Chinese Buddhist scholarly monks in particular, and to the overall picture of the premodern Chinese grammatical studies in general. Much ink has been spilled on the important influences of the Chinese translation of Buddhist texts (漢譯佛典) on the development and innovation of Chinese language, so much so that the “Chinese language” of these translated texts has been regarded as a distinct type of Chinese language known as the “Buddhist hybrid Chinese” (佛教混合漢語)<sup>1</sup>. Rather than embarking this trend of study, this paper takes a different source and undertakes a different kind

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<sup>1</sup> This term was probably coined by Zhu Qingzhi 朱慶之 borrowing from an idea found in Edgerton’s “Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit”. Wan Jinchuan 萬金川 argued that this term is inappropriate, because unlike Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit 佛教混合梵語 which was a product of interactive usage between Prakrit and Sanskrit, the so called Buddhist hybrid Chinese did not go through such interaction between Chinese and Sanskrit. (Wang, 60 -68).

of research: instead of the Chinese translation of Buddhist texts, it studies the indigenous writings by the Chinese Buddhist exegetes and studies their grammatical accounts and understanding. Admittedly, the subject matter of their discussion is Sanskrit grammar, but the fact that the target language of their grammatical analysis and application is Chinese gives us an unusual opportunity otherwise unavailable for studying an alternative Chinese grammatical knowledge outside of the traditional sinology. Although a few scholars such as Zhou Yiliang 周一良, Lu Cheng 呂澂, R. van Gulik, C. Harbsmeier, have begun to address this subject, but their findings that ancient Chinese scholarly monks were either uninterested or ignorant in Sanskrit grammar are, in my view, oversimplified and inaccurate. This article will also serve as a corrective to such findings.

**Keywords:** Chinese Buddhist exegesis, Sanskrit studies in China, Chinese grammatical studies, Kuiji

## Current Scholarship on the Ancient Chinese Conception of Sanskrit “Grammar”

The enormous corpse of Chinese Buddhist literature constitutes a rich source of material for studying Chinese culture, society, thought, language, and so on. Following this trend of study, this article focuses on the language aspect of the Buddhist contributions to the historical study of Chinese language. As will be shown shortly, modern scholars have paid more attention to the Chinese translation of Buddhist texts, the *hanyi fodian* 漢譯佛典, and yielded rich research results in the historical development of Chinese language. However, less attention was paid to the indigenous writing of the Chinese monks whose accounts of Sanskrit grammar, as this article tried to demonstrate, are potentially important for our understanding of the history of Chinese grammatical studies. It is thus the latter that this article attempts to address.

In recent years, a group of scholars have devoted themselves on the linguistic aspect of the Chinese translation of Buddhist texts. As a result, there emerged an interesting field of study known as “Linguistics of Chinese Buddhist Texts” (*fojing yuyan xue* 佛經語言學). The pinioning scholars in the field, just to name a few, include Victor Mair, Karashima Seishi 辛島靜志, Jan Nattier, Zhu Jianing 竺家寧, Zhu Qingzhi 朱慶之, Liang Xiaohong 梁曉紅, Wan Jinchuan 萬金川, and Sun Liangming 孫良明.<sup>2</sup> These

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<sup>2</sup> We should also mention that this field was inspired by earlier scholarship of European philology, beginning with Max Muller. In China the field, was launched by Ji Xianlin 季羨林教授. There are increasingly more young Chinese scholars

scholars have enriched our understanding of the influences of the Sanskrit language through the process of the Chinese translation of the Buddhist texts on the phonetics, semantics, and prosody of the Chinese language. With philologically informed comparison between the Chinese translation of Buddhist texts and their Sanskrit origins, the findings of these scholars have furnished our knowledge about the historical development of the Chinese language. While this trend of study is invaluable for the historical study of Chinese language, I found the indigenous accounts of “grammar” written from the early seventh century onwards were largely overlooked in this trend of *fojing yuyan xue* 佛經語言學.

There have been a small number of scholars who paid attention to the grammatical aspect of the Chinese translation of the Buddhist texts. Scholars pioneered by the Dutch Indo-Sinologist, Robert van Gulik, have tried to find out if the prolonged practice of Chinese translation of the Sanskrit text had advanced the grammatical study on the part of the Chinese intellectuals. For example, in his *Siddham: An Essay on the History of Sanskrit studies in China and Japan*, van Gulik brought our attention to Sanskrit grammatical notes of Xuanzang and Yijing.<sup>3</sup> However, the concluding points

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well-trained in classical Chinese and Sanskrit and Tibetan join this field of study.

<sup>3</sup> Xuanzang did not write down these notes, however, they were recorded by his disciple in his biography (T50, no. 2053, p. 239, a4-b29). I will discuss these notes in this article. Yijing's notes are found in his *Nanhai jigei neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳 (*A Record of the Inner Law Sent Home from the South Seas*) (T54, no. 2125, p. 228, b1-p. 229, b4). For English translation see (Li and Dalia, 2002). Brough has written an article that aims at improving previous translation of Yijing and Xuanzang's grammatical notes (Brough, 1973).

made by him and in fact followed by later scholars were problematic and need to be reexamined. I summarize his points here:

1. Chinese Buddhists in general showed scant interest in India and the sacred language of its scriptures, i.e., Sanskrit, because of cultural egoism on the part of the Chinese<sup>4</sup> and linguistic remoteness between the two languages;<sup>5</sup>
  2. It was more likely a hyperbolism out of religious piety that learned Chinese monks were described as having mastered the Sanskrit language. More likely the real picture is that they had merely mastered the *script*, not the language.<sup>6</sup>
- This estimation could be inferred from the fact that, except for those Chinese monks who had studied in India, no

<sup>4</sup> “The Chinese considered their own language as the only one worthy of the name, all other languages they considered as the uncouth utterings of ‘outer barbarians’” (Gulik, 1959:11). The problem of cultural arrogance, which resulted in the early adoption of Chinese language as the Buddhist ecclesiastical language in China and in the hesitation to learn a “barbarian” language, had already concerned some medieval Chinese Buddhist exegetes. For instance, in order to remove the reluctance to study Sanskrit language caused by Chinese cultural egoism, Yancong had tried to distance Sanskrit (*fan* 梵) from the other foreign languages of “barbarians (*hu* 胡).” “語梵雖訛比胡猶別。改為梵學知非胡者” (T50, no. 2060, p. 438, b19-20).

<sup>5</sup> “As is well known, the Chinese language consists of monosyllables that are not subject to any morphological changes. Grammatical distinctions are expressed by a number of auxiliary words and by the position of the word in the sentences. Thus the word *shu* [書] means ‘book’, ‘books’, ‘of the book’, ‘to the book’; also ‘to write’, ‘writing’, ‘what is written’, ‘I write’, ‘he wrote’, etc. (Gulik, 1956: 12).

<sup>6</sup> “[T]he average Chinese scholar considered the knowledge of the Indian script alone tantamount to a knowledge of the Sanskrit language. Chinese terms like *fan-hüeh-seng* [梵學僧] ‘a monk who has studied Sanskrit’ as a rule means nothing more than ‘a monk who has mastered the Indian script.’” (Gulik, 1956:13). See also Zhou Yiliang’s 周一良 *Sanskrit Studies in China* (*Zhongguo de Fanwen yanjiu* 中國的梵文研究 (Zhou, 1963).

Chinese Buddhists, even those as learned as Kuiji, had produced any translation of an Indian Buddhist text.<sup>7</sup>

After van Gulik, Christoph Harbsmeier devoted a few pages on the same topic in his *Language and Logic of the Science and Civilization in China* series. He credited the Chinese Buddhists with the production of four bilingual glossaries, which were all post-Xuanzang.<sup>8</sup> But Harbsmeier basically agreed with van Gulik, that the hardcore of the language, that is, the grammar, still remained an unknown territory to Chinese Buddhists.<sup>9</sup>

This article attempts to serve as a corrective to the above remarks by looking more closely at the grammatical accounts and

<sup>7</sup> “Even Hui-li (Huili 慧立) and Yen-ts’ung (Yancong 彦琮), the two monks who recorded these [Sanskrit grammatical] notes apparently had not penetrated very far into the secrets of Sanskrit grammar. Neither of the two is listed as the translator of any Sanskrit text. The same applied to Hsuan-tsang’s (Kuiji, Vasumitra, and Xuanzang) famous disciple K’uei-chi (Kuiji) ... among the 18 works that bear his name in the Canon, one does not find a single translation from the Sanskrit.” (Gulik, 1956: 21)

<sup>8</sup> The three Sanskrit-Chinese glossaries are: 1. *1000 Sanskrit Words (Fanyu qianziwen 梵語千字文 T54, no. 2133)*, 2. *Scripts and Words of Chinese and Sanskrit (Tang-Fan wenzi 唐梵文字 T54, no. 2134)*, 3. *Miscellaneous Names in Sanskrit Language (Fanyu zaming 梵語雜名 T54, no. 2135)*, and the Chinese-Sanskrit glossary is the *Collection of Bilingual Pairs of Chinese and Sanskrit Languages (Tang-Fan liangyu shuangdui ji 唐梵兩語雙對集 T54, no. 2136)*. A detailed discussion of these four glossaries can be found in Chandra Bagchi’s *Deux Lexiques Sanskrit-Chinois* (Bagchi, 1929).

<sup>9</sup> “One might expect that the Chinese might have developed a sophisticated intellectual interest in Sanskrit, since we have such an enormous body of translations from Sanskrit. The classic work on Sanskrit-Chinese glossaries is Prabodh Chandra Bagchi’s *Deux lexiques Sanskrit-Chinois*, which discusses in detail four glossaries, none of which shows any detailed philological interest in Sanskrit philology or grammar.” (Harbsmeier Christoph, 1998: 83-84) See Teng, 2011 for more detailed survey of the problematics of this issue at stake.

applications found in the indigenous Buddhist writings, especially the Buddhist exegeses, instead of studying only the Chinese translation of the Buddhist texts. I will introduce and evaluate the grammatical operations that were narrated, discussed, and even applied as exegetical devices by the indigenous Chinese Buddhist scholars of the medieval time. The broader purpose of this article is to show the potential importance of indigenous Buddhist writings for the historical study of the Chinese grammatical tradition.

### The Term “Grammar” (Skt. *vyākāraṇa*)

According to Sun Liangming 孫良明 the Chinese terminology comparable to “grammar” is “syntax” or *jufa* (句法), which first appeared in the Song dynasty and came to be widely adopted with an alternative but less used term *wenfa* (文法) by the linguistics of the Qing dynasty.<sup>10</sup> Although, Sun has noticed that in Chinese indigenous writing, e.g., the *Biography of Xuanzang* 《大慈恩寺三藏法師傳》 the Sanskrit term of “grammar”, i.e., *vyākāraṇa*, was already mentioned, he did not examine how the term *vyākāraṇa* had been understood by the Chinese Buddhist exegetes. In the following, I will describe the history of how this term was understood by the medieval Chinese Buddhist scholars.

Before Xuanzang’s time, the Chinese Buddhist scholars seem to have a vague idea of a grammatical text, which was transcribed into Chinese as *pi-jia-luo* 毘伽羅, i.e., “*vyākāraṇa*”, which was

<sup>10</sup> See Sun Liangming 孫良明, *Zhongguo gudai yufaxue tanjiu* 中國古代語法學探究 chapter 4. 1 “The Ascertaining of the Concept of Grammar 文法觀的明確樹立”, pp. 383-392.

later corrected by Xuanzang as *pi-ye-jia-la-nan* 毘耶羯刺謫 . The term *pijialuo* 毘伽羅 was probably known by them through Dharmakṣema's translation of the Mahāparinirvāṇa sūtra 大般涅槃經 .

For example, some elder with only one child would thought about him and pamper him tremendously. After sent his son to a teacher for education, the elder worried about the effectiveness of his learn and brought him back out of fatherly love to him. The elder taught his son day and time diligently the “half-word” [type of scripture] but not the *Pijaluo* texts. Why is that? Because the son is still young and incapable [of understanding the latter].

譬如長者唯有一子，心常憶念，憐愛無已，將詣師所，欲令受學，懼不速成，尋便將還。以愛念故，晝夜慇懃，教其半字，而不教誨毘伽羅論。何以故？以其幼稚，力未堪故。(T12, no. 374, p. 390, c15-19)

Based on this description, several prominent exegetes used the term “*pijaluo*” as a metaphor to the Mahāyāna scripture while understood that the “*Pijaluo*” scripture was a kind of Mahāyāna text. We see in the Chinese Huayan and Tiantai's exegetical traditions, the term “*pijaluo*” was used to compare to some kind of *Vaipulya* texts of the Mahāyāna Buddhism,

It is because the ‘Hearer-disciples’ of the Buddha were lack of the power of wisdom that the Tathāgata preached only the Scriptures of the Nine-divisions, which is a ‘Half-teaching,’



but not the *Pijialuo* text, which is a *Vaipulya Mahāyāna* text.<sup>11</sup>

Some local commentators, however, seemed to be aware that *vyākaraṇa* is a work that deals with words. For example in Jizang's (549-623) commentary to the *Ren wang bore boluomi jing* 仁王般若經疏, the term “*vyākaraṇa*” is a name for “a work that teaches the relations between the names and essences of things and how to interpret the names.”<sup>12</sup> In Guandin's 灌頂 (561-532) commentary to the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra*, we found a fair yet very brief introduction of the work. He told us, Pijialuolun is a text fundamental to the understanding of worldly words and sounds of texts. The work condemns the mundane dharmas and praises those of the supra-mundane. Therefore, although it is a heterodox work, it is not an evil one.”<sup>13</sup>

From the vague descriptions of the term Pijialuolun mentioned above, we will not be able to figure out to what extent the term was understood as as “*Vyākaraṇa*”. It is only from Xuanzang that the Chinese Buddhist exegetes had a concrete idea of the grammatical text called “*Vyākaraṇa*”.

<sup>11</sup> See Chengguan's 澄觀 commentary to the *Huayan sutra*, the *Dafangguang fo huanyanjing suishu yanyichao* 大方廣佛華嚴經隨疏演義鈔：「毘伽羅論者，所謂方等大乘經典，以諸聲聞無有慧力，是故如來為說半字九部經典，而不為說毘伽羅論方等大乘。」(T36, no. 1736, p. 38, a29-b2), and also Zhanran's 湛然 (711-782) commentary to the *Lotus sutra*, *Fahua xuanyi shiqian* 法華玄義釋籤：「毘伽羅論者謂方等典」(T33, no. 1717, p. 897, c22).

<sup>12</sup> *Ren wang bore boluomi jing* 仁王般若經疏：「四辯者一法辯識萬法名體為諸法立名……經云無量劫集毘伽羅論故得法辨」(T33, no. 1707, p. 319, a1-2)

<sup>13</sup> 「毘伽羅論者，此云字本論。河西云世間文字之根本，典籍音聲之論……雖是外論而無邪法。」(T38, no. 1767, p. 91, b26-c1).

Xuanzang gave some history of the *Vyākaraṇa*, that is, Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. He pointed out that the *Vyākaraṇa* is a name of a “*fanshu* 梵書 (Brahma-writing)” composed by one *fanwang* 梵王 (Brahmā). The text consists of a million verses. It was previously incorrectly transcribed as *pi-jia-luo* 毘伽羅; a correct transcription should be *pi-ye-jia-la-nan* 毘耶羯刺謨. It is actually a work that gives exposition of the knowledge of words 聲明記論 (*śabdavidya-vyākaraṇa*).<sup>14</sup>

### On the Verbs and their Conjugations

Xuanzang also instructed the declension of nouns and verbs in a quite sketchy manner at least as it was presented in his Biography. For verbs, he mentioned the term *tiṅanta*, *di-yan-duo* 底彥多, in transcription, which refers to a word that ends with verbal conjugational suffixes, that is, a verb.<sup>15</sup> However, the verb as a grammatical idea did not exist in Chinese traditional linguistics. Xuanzang probably had difficulty in explaining this to his disciples. We saw that *tiṅanta* was understood as a type of words that is more frequently used in elegant and ornate

<sup>14</sup> *Daci'ensi Sanzang fashi zhuan* 大慈恩寺三藏法師傳：「復有《記論略經》，有一千頌，又有字體三百頌，又有字緣兩種，一名《問擇迦》三千頌，二名《溫那地》二千五百頌，此別辯字緣、字體。又有《八界論》八百頌，此中略合字之緣、體。」(T50, no. 2053, p. 239, a17-21).

For English translation of Xuanzang's Sanskrit grammatical account recorded in his Biography see (Staal, 1972) and (Li, 1995). See also Brough's comparing notes between Yijing and Xuanzang on the Sanskrit grammatical account (Brough, 1973).

<sup>15</sup> Lit. word that ends with “*tiṅ*,” which is a special abbreviated form (*pratyāhāra*) used by Pāṇini to stand for a list of 18 verbal conjugational affixes that begin with “*tip*” and ends with “*mahiṅ*..”

compositions<sup>16</sup> and occasionally in prose literature (Ch. *fanwen* 汎文).<sup>17</sup> Several conjugational features were also introduced: the Biography relates that a *tinanta* words have 18 inflectional sounds (Ch. *zhuan* 轉 / 轉 or *zhuansheng* 轉聲), which can be sub-divided into *parasmaipada* 般羅颯迷 and *ātmanepada* 阿答末泥. The Biography continues to explain that the only difference between *parasmaipada* and *ātmanepada* is that the latter is used for literary beauty.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, each sub-division of *parasmaipada* and *ātmanepada* can be further divided into three groups: 1. used for stating things in general, 2 for stating others, 3. for stating oneself.<sup>19</sup> Each of the three groups further has three numbers: singular, dual, and plural. A paradigm of the conjugation of the verb *bhū* (to be) is given correctly in Chinese transcriptions.<sup>20</sup> Given the nature of the Chinese language, the grammar of verbal conjugation was almost entirely irrelevant to the Chinese exegesis. In contrast with

<sup>16</sup> This probably refers to the *kāvya* epic. In contrast to Indian philosophical treatise, the *sāstra*, the *kāvya* often uses verbs of conjugated form.

<sup>17</sup> *Fanwen* probably refers to prose literature, which frequently uses nominal compounds in lieu of verbs. *Daci'ensi Sanzang fashi zhuan* 大慈恩寺三藏法師傳：「底彥多聲於文章壯麗處用，於諸汎文亦少用」(T50, no. 2053, p. 239, a23-24).

<sup>18</sup> *Daci'ensi Sanzang fashi zhuan* 大慈恩寺三藏法師傳：「令文巧妙無別義，亦表極美義也」(T50, no. 2053, p. 239, b8-9). In older Sanskrit such as Vedic Sanskrit, the *parasmaipada* refers to the verbs the fruit of whose activity goes to other people than the agent of the activity, where as in the case of *ātmanepada*, the fruit goes to the agent. However, in later classical Sanskrit such distinction is not strictly observed.

<sup>19</sup> Li Rongxi in his translation mistook the three groups as “subject of a statement, transitive, and intransitive.” The paradigm appeared in the same paragraph that Li translated shows that the three groups clearly refer to the third, second, and first person. (Li, 1995)

<sup>20</sup> For the paradigm see (Gulik, 1956: 16).

the verbal conjugations, the knowledge of the nominal declensions, more precisely their syntactical meanings, ie., *kāraḥas*, plays some exegetical role in Chinese commentaries.

### On the Nominals and their Declensions

The nominal, *subanta*, in classical Sanskrit grammatical terminology, was transcribed into Chinese as *sumanduo* 蘇漫多. The *Biography of Xuanzang* recorded that a nominal has eight cases, three numbers, and three genders. But like verbal conjugation, these declensional features were irrelevant to Chinese language, either. What are important for the exegetical purposes are the syntactical roles of the nominal cases, which is known as “event makers” (Skt. *Kāraḥa*) in the Sanskrit grammatical tradition. However, it is difficult to judge how much was understood even by the biographers themselves, because the biographers did not seem to have their observation to this account. On the contrary, Kuiji has provided some additional information on this grammatical feature.

Examining from the details of this additional information, though minute, it is reasonable to believe that Kuiji’s grasp with respect to this particular grammatical feature is more than superficial. The most noticeable addition to the instruction in the *Biography of Xuanzang* is the transcription of the names of the *kāraḥas*. As far as I could find, Kuiji was the first one to give these transcriptions, which I list in the following table:<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> The Sanskrit restorations were taken from Lü Cheng 呂澂 (Lü, 1977: 17-18). Some of the names of *kāraḥas* provided by Kuiji, as far as I could find, were nowhere to be found in Sanskrit grammatical texts.

Kuiji's Chinese transcription of *kāra*kas

Chinese transcription of <i>kāra</i> kas <sup>22</sup>	Sanskrit <i>kāra</i> kas
1. 利提勢 <i>nirdeśe</i> <sup>23</sup> (probably means description here)	( <i>prātipadika-artha</i> )
2. 鄔波提舍泥 <i>upadeśane</i> (instruction?)	<i>karman</i>
3. 羯唎泥 迦囉泥 <i>karṭṭ karaṇe</i>	<i>karṭṭ karnaṇa</i>
4. 三鉢囉陀儂雞 <i>sāmpradānike</i>	<i>sampradāna</i>
5. 褒波陀泥 <i>apādāne</i>	<i>apādāna</i>
6. 莎弭婆者儂 <i>svāmivacane</i> (the word indicates ownership)	<i>svasvāmibhāvād idambandha</i> <sup>24</sup>
7. 珊儂陀那囉梯 <i>saṃnidhānārthe</i> (a sense of vicinity or presence)	<i>adhikaraṇa</i>
8. 阿曼怛囉泥 <i>āmantraṇe</i> (addressing)	

Kuiji noted that although we uses eight cases, but there is only seven vibhaktis, the eighth case uses the stem form of the word and express only the sense of summoning and no other [*kāra*ka meanings].<sup>25</sup> Kuiji also added that the second case expresses *suoshuo* 所說 and the third case expresses *nengshuo* 能說. We know that 所 and 能 were used particularly by Xuanzang to indicate passive and active voice respectively. It is possible that Kuiji referred to the expressions *karmaṇi* and *kartari*, which are the locative case of *karman* and *karṭṭ* respectively, and which grammatically refer

<sup>22</sup> *Cheng weishi lun zhangzhong shuyao* 成唯識論掌中樞要 (T43, no. 1831, p. 613, c3-9).

<sup>23</sup> The locative case termination “e” indicates that this list was originally taken from some Sanskrit grammar sūtras where the locative termination is used to stipulate the occasions when the rules apply.

<sup>24</sup> The *Siddhānta Kaumudī* explains that the sixth case express the relationship of owner and the owned, etc. (Vasu, 1904: no. 606).

<sup>25</sup> *Cheng weishi lun zhangzhong shuyao* 成唯識論掌中樞要：「但唯七轉。第八乃是汎爾呼聲。更無別詮」(T43, no. 1831, p. 614, a4-5).

to passive and active voices respectively. Why did Kuiji relate the passive and active voices to the *kāraka* and cases? I suspect that Kuiji learned from Xuanzang's explanatory notes about the Pāṇini rules on the second case and third case in which these two expressions, *karmaṇi* and *kartari* appear respectively.<sup>26</sup>

Crudely put, Sanskrit *kāraḥ* are the syntactical relations to the activity expressed by the main verb of a given sentence. There are six *kāraḥ*, namely *kartr* (agent), *karman* (patient), *karaṇa* (instrument), *sampradāna* (beneficiary), *apadāna* (source), *adhikaraṇa* (location).<sup>27</sup> We do not find any translation or transcription of the term *kāraka* itself in any of the Chinese sources of the medieval time; nonetheless, the six *kāraḥ* were mentioned individually in the *Biography of Xuanzang* as well as in some of the Chinese Buddhist commentaries. They were introduced within the framework of the eight nominal cases: There are eight *zhuan* 轉 (case-endings)<sup>28</sup>: the first *zhuan* expresses (Ch. *quan* 詮)<sup>29</sup> the thing

<sup>26</sup> The rule on the second case is: *karmaṇi dvitīyā*, the second case is used to express *karman* (Pāṇini 2.3.2); and on the third case is: *kartrkaraṇayos tritīyā* the third case is used to express agent or instrument (Pāṇini 2.3.18).

<sup>27</sup> See Parimal Patil (Patil, 2009: 8-15) for a succinct explanation of the *kāraka* theory.

<sup>28</sup> In his commentary to the *Yogācārabhūmi śāstra*, Kuiji noted that the eight *zhuan* 八轉聲, with the exception of the eighth, refers to the seven case-endings 七例句. Here, the Sanskrit text for the 七例句 is *saptavibhaktayah*. Therefore, the Chinese term *zhuan* 轉聲 refers to the *vibhaktis*.

<sup>29</sup> The word *quan* 詮 is used technically, which corresponds to *abhi √ dā*: to express. In the Pāṇini *sūtra* all the stipulations about the uses of case-endings are under the condition-*sūtra* (*adhikāra*) of “*anabhihite* (2.3.1): when not expressed” Ex. the *sūtra*, 2.3.2, says: *karmaṇi dvitīyā* – the second case (accusative) is employed in the case of the *karman* when the latter is not expressed (*anabhihite*) [by other means of grammatical operation such as verbal conjugations,

itself 法體<sup>30</sup>; the second expresses the thing done 所作業; third expresses instrument and agent 作具及能作者; fourth expresses purpose of the event 所為事; fifth expresses reason of the event 所因事; sixth expresses the thing to which something else belongs 所屬事; seventh expresses the thing on which something else depends 事所依; eighth expresses thing summoned 呼召事. Such an account had made some sense to the Chinese exegetes. They could realize that Sanskrit nominal has different *zhuansheng* 轉聲 (inflections)<sup>31</sup>. And different *zhuansheng* expresses different roles relating to the activity of the sentence.

The following example will show how this grammatical operation of case endings relates to syntax:

We have a passage from the *Abhidharmakośa* translated into Chinese first by Paramārtha 真諦 (arriv. 546-569) and then by Xuanzang. This passage discusses about what constitutes “*ātman* (self)” in the notion of “*ātmadr̥ṣṭi* (view of self 我見).” Does it refer only to “aham (I)” or does it also include the idea of “*mama* (my)”? Vasubandhu, the author, answers: “For us, the ‘*ātmadr̥ṣṭi*’ includes both meanings of ‘I’ and ‘my.’ If the view of ‘I’ is distinct from the view of ‘my’ in the case of “*ātmadr̥ṣṭi*”, then the view of ‘by me’ would be another view, and the view of ‘for me’ would

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compounds, etc].

<sup>30</sup> *Fati* 法體 I took it to mean the thing itself. This mean fits well to Pāṇini’s rule that stipulates the nominative case – the nominative case express only the crude meaning of the word (*prātipadika-artha*), that is, the nominative case does not express any *kāraka* meaning.

<sup>31</sup> The Sanskrit terminology for 轉聲 is vibhakti. See footnote 28.

be yet another one.<sup>32</sup> The grammatical knowledge involved in this discussion is the operation of “nominal case-declension.” The four cases of “I” were given by Xuanzang’s disciple Puguang 普光 in his commentary to the text in question.<sup>33</sup>

### On Morphology

In the case of Chinese language, typically classical, a morpheme is usually mono-syllabic or mono-character, e.g., *tian* 天, *di* 地. Thus the morphemes *tian* and *di* are at the same time words. In some other cases, especially in that of the loaned words, words used to transcribe foreign words, a morpheme can be multi-syllabic or multi-character, e.g., *damo* 達摩 (dharma), *qiaokeli* 巧克力 (chocolate). In these two instances, the characters *da* 達, *mo* 摩, *qiao* 巧, *ke* 克, and *li* 力 are phonemes instead of morphemes. Given the nature of Chinese language, could ancient Chinese Buddhist scholars, when they read the word such as 達摩 or 菩

<sup>32</sup> “*ātmadr̥ṣṭir evāsau dvimukhī athāham ity etasmāt mameti dr̥ṣṭyantaram syāt / mayā mahyam ity etad apī syāt*” (Vasubandhu, 1967: 284). Paramārtha’s translation of these different nominal cases is obscure, while Xuanzang was able to use a declension-like expressions of these cases in Chinese. In Paramārtha’s translation “by me” was translated as “I with 我與” (probably, “with me”), and “for me” as “bring thing naming me?” 帶物稱我. In Xuanzang’s case, he could just give the “Chinese declension” of the word ‘I’, such that “my” is 我屬, “by me” is 由我, and “for me” is 為我. For such “Chinese declension” see the Section on Xuanzang’s instruction of Sanskrit knowledge.

<sup>33</sup> “I” the first case, “mine” the sixth case, “for me” the fourth case, and “by me” the third case.《俱舍論記》卷 19〈5 分別隨眠品〉：「『此即我見』至『見亦應別』者。有說：釋經此我所見即是我見，『由我』、『我所』二門轉故所以別說。『是我』是我見，第一轉聲。『屬我』是我所見，第六轉聲。『由我』謂由我如此，是第三轉聲。『為我』謂為我如此，是第四轉聲。於八轉聲中第一、第六若是別見，第三、第四見亦應別。三、四見既不殊，初、六見寧有異？」(T41, no. 1821, p. 300, b6-13)



提, tell the differences between the morphological units such as syllabus, phoneme, morpheme, or word?

According to van Gulik, the answer to the above question is clearly a “no.” He pointed out that “As is well known, the Chinese language consists of monosyllables that are not subject to any morphological changes. Grammatical distinctions are expressed by a number of auxiliary words and by the position of the word in the sentences. Thus the word *shu* [書] means ‘book’, ‘books’, ‘of the book’, ‘to the book’; also ‘to write’, ‘writing’, ‘what is written’, ‘I write’, ‘he wrote’, etc.”<sup>34</sup>

In contrast to van Gulik’s understanding, the following passages found in the indigenous Chinese Buddhist writings should demonstrate that some of the learned Buddhist exegetes had come to notice that Sanskrit is a multisyllabic language whereas Chinese is monosyllabic and thus had some ideas of different morphological elements. This can be attested, for example, in the *Dazhidu lun* 《大智度論》,

According to the morphology of India<sup>35</sup> a word (語) consists of multiple syllabuses (字); a sentence (句) consists of multiple words. For example, “*bo* 菩” is a syllabus (字) and “*dhi* 提” is a syllabus, too. When separated, each of them is not a word, but jointly bodhi makes up a word.”<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Gulik, 1956: 12.

<sup>35</sup> From the content of the discussion “*yufa* 語法” here should refer to “morphology.”

<sup>36</sup> *Dazhidu lun* 大智度論：「天竺語法，眾字和合成語，眾語和合成句。如：

This explanatory note on the word *bodhi* and the mention of the Sanskrit morphology was noticed and quoted by Jingying Huiyuan 淨影慧遠 (523-592) and Jizang in their commentaries.<sup>37</sup>

It would be difficult to estimate from these short explanatory notes the extent to which Huiyun and Jizang's understand the idea of (Sanskrit) morphology, nonetheless, we can safely suggest that they should have noticed that *pu* 菩 or *ti* 提 as a *zi* 字 (syllabus) in Sanskrit is different from the *zi* normally understood in Chinese.

### On Syntax

Chinese and Sanskrit languages differ greatly in their means of syntactical expression. Word orders and prepositions in a sentence in general play an essential role in the syntax of Chinese language, while in the case Sanskrit, syntax is expressed by the nominal declensions (Skt. *vibhakti*). Were the Chinese able to connect the nominal declensions to syntax? The following passages found in Chinese Buddhist commentaries provide us a window to the answer.

Dunyun 遁倫, one of Kuiji's disciples, who based on Kuiji's partial commentary to the *Yogācārabhūmi śāstra* wrote a complete

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『菩』為一字，『提』為一字，是二不合則無語；若和合名為『菩提』。」 (T25, no. 1509, p. 380, b28-c3) Additionally, such account also shows that, at least, this part of the text is not a Chinese translation from Sanskrit, that is, at least some part of the *Dazhidu lun* was composed in China for the Chinese rather than a translation by Kumārajīva.

<sup>37</sup> *Dasheng yizhang* 大乘義章：「又大智論句義品云：天竺語法眾字成語，眾語成句，字句語等。」 (T44, no. 1851, p. 468, c4-5), also, the *Dapinjing yishu* 大品經義疏：「天竺語法眾字和合成語，眾語合成句，菩薩為一字，是二字合為語，菩提為一語薩埵為一語合名句，如下以辭也。」 (X24, no. 451, p. 241, a15-17)

commentary to the text, entitled *Yujialun ji* 瑜伽論記.<sup>38</sup> In his commentary, Dunnyun pointed out an error in an earlier Chinese translation of the sentence he was commenting, and explained that the error was made because the translator did not understand Sanskrit nominal cases. The earlier translation made by Dharmarakṣa 曇無讖 reads, “There are ten *dharmas*, which are including the bodhisattva path, and which is included in the Mahāyāna.”<sup>39</sup> Dunnyun pointed out that according to the Sanskrit text, the words “ten *dharmas*,” “including 具,” and “included 攝” are all in nominative case therefore they are the agents, whereas the words “Mahāyāna” and “bodhisattva path” are in genitive case, and therefore the patient of the verb, that is, they are included, instead of including.

Dunnyun correctly identified the Sanskrit cases of those words; however, his knowledge about the logical meaning of the cases is dilettantish. The Sanskrit reads, “*daśeme dharmāḥ saphalasya bodhisattvamārgasya Mahāyānasya saṃgrahāya saṃvartante*,” which means, “There exist the dharmas for the inclusion of the Mahāyāna bodhisattva path together with its fruits.” Here the genitive case of “Mahāyāna bodhisattva path” is what the Sanskrit grammarians call “subjective genitive” (*kartari ṣaṣṭī*). If we read the sentence in the textual contexts it becomes clear that the text talks about Mahayana bodhisattva path together with its fruits include these ten qualities, and not the other way round as suggested by

<sup>38</sup> Dunnyun was a Korean monk active in the seventh century China. He studied with Kuiji and often quoted Kuiji in his commentary. (Yang, 2007: 584)

<sup>39</sup> *Pusadichi jing* 菩薩地持經：「有十法具足菩薩道摩訶衍攝。」(T30, no. 1581, p. 888, a12)

Dunnyun.

### On the Compounds (Skt. *Samāsa*)<sup>40</sup>

Sanskrit compound analyses and their applications are amply found in Chinese Buddhist commentaries composed after Xuanzng’s return from India as an exegetical device. The Sanskrit grammatical terminology, *ṣaḍ-samāsa*, transcribed into Chinese as *sha-san-mo-sa* 殺三磨娑, or translated as “six fold analyses of compounds” *liu-he-shi* 六 (離) 合釋 is mentioned about thirty times by eight Buddhist exegetes in their respective works. If one goes further to search the mentions of the individual names of the compounds, one would get much more. For example, the terminology *chiye shi* 持業釋 (Skt. *karmadhāraya-samāsa*) was mentioned more than a thousand times if we run the CBETA search. Curiously enough such grammatical exegetical phenomenon has been largely under-studied by the scholars of sinology and Chinese Buddhism alike. Few works that touch upon this phenomenon did not actually study it.<sup>41</sup> In what follows I will show, in brief, how this grammar operation called “compounds” could possibly understood and applied as an exegetical device.

The most comprehensive and complete discussion of the Sanskrit compounds 六離合釋 in medieval China writings is found

<sup>40</sup> For a more detailed study of Kuiji’s treatment of “compounds”, see Teng, 2014.

<sup>41</sup> Few works that mentioned this phenomenon are: 呂澂 1923, Silk 200, 孫良明 2005, 萬金川 2005. See 萬金川 p. 21-23 for more works that mention 六離合釋. As 萬金川 noted this phenomenon needs much more study in the future and Kuiji’s works are crucial source for study it.

in Kuiji's 窺基 Naming" (Ch. *Deming xuange* 得名懸隔). This essay is part of his introduction to his *Illumination of the Complex Meaning of the Mahāyāna Teaching* 大乘法苑義林章:<sup>42</sup>

According to the tradition in the West Region, the glossing of Buddhist terms is always based on grammar (*vyākaraṇa*),<sup>43</sup> namely the "six analyses of compounds."<sup>44</sup> The Sanskrit term *shasanmosha* (*ṣaṭsamāsa*) is called *liu-he* 六合 in Chinese language.

西域相傳。解諸名義皆依別論。謂六合釋。梵云殺三磨娑。此云六合。

<sup>42</sup> T45, no. 1861, 254c-255c.

<sup>43</sup> It is my speculation that Kuiji's use of the term 別論 means "grammar" (*vyākaraṇa*), since I did not find the term used in the same way by others. The Chinese character *bie* is a common translation for the Sanskrit prefix *vi* and since Xuanzang uses *ji-lun* for *vyākaraṇa*, it is reasonable for Kuiji to arrive at *bie-lun* for *vyākaraṇa*.

<sup>44</sup> I have not been able to find in the Sanskrit grammatical traditions prior to the seventh century a same classification of compounds as enumerated by Kuiji here. This list of the six types of Sanskrit compounds is not peculiar to Kuiji. This is the standard list found in all Chinese sources.

Patañjali, the author of the *Mahābhāṣya*, listed only four principal kinds of compounds, viz., *avyayībhāva*, *tatpuruṣa*, *bahuvrīhi*, and *dvandva*. Although Baṭṭojī Dīkṣita in his *Siddhanta Kaumidī* also mentioned six division of *samāsa*, but they refers not exclusively the nominal compound but instead to compound operations in general, viz., *supāṃ supā tiṅā nāmnā dhātunā 'tha tiṅām tiṅām | subanteneti vijñeyah samāsaḥ ṣaḍvidho buddhaiḥ |* "The case-inflected words may be compounded with another case inflected word, or with a tense inflected word, or with a crude noun, or with a root; the tense-inflected word may be compounded with another tense inflected word, or with a case inflected words. Thus compounds are of six kinds" (Vasu, 1904: 545).

Nonetheless, a same set of six types of compounds was enumerated by the post-Pāṇinian grammarians, such as Vopadeva, in his *Mugdhabodha-vyakarana and Anubhūtiśvarūpācārya* in the *Sārasvata-vyākaraṇa*. But these works were produced in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, much later than Xuanzang. (Srimannarayana Murti, 1974: 86)

*Sha* means six and *sanmosha* means compounding. When a term used to name a thing is constituted by two or more morphemes, only that type of term should be glossed with this analyses [of *samāsa*]. But when a term is constituted by only one morpheme, it does not receive such analyses. When a term consists of only one morpheme, then [the sense of the term] logically refers only to [that morpheme] itself. That term itself is not

established by other dharmas (i.e., other terms or morphemes). When a term is compounded with two morphemes, naturally, there is mutual syntactical relation between the two. Therefore, the six analyses of compounds are not applicable to a term consisting of single morpheme.

殺者六也，三磨娑者合也。諸法但有二義以上而為名者，即當此釋。唯一義名即非此釋。一義為名理目自體，不從他法而立自名。二義為名理有相濫，故六合釋無一義名。

The six compounds are analyzed firstly by glossing the two words separately and then jointly. Take for example the term – *jue-zhe* 覺者 (the Awakened-one), which is an epithet of the Buddha. The word *zhe* connotes the sense of the “owner 主” and is a common [name] for the five-aggregated, (that is, a person). The word *jue* conveys the meaning of “discerning,” which belongs to exclusively the [quality of] wisdom. This is the gloss (Skt. *vigraha*) [of the constituent words] separately. 初但別釋二義差別，後乃合之。如說佛陀名為覺者，者是主義，通於五蘊。覺是察義，唯屬於智。此別解已。

A *zhe* (person) who has the quality of *jue* is called *jue-zhe*,” is called compounding operation. Such is the compounding [of the two words], therefore it is called compound. There are six ways of analyzing compounds, thus it is known as the six analyses of compounds (*ṣaḍ-samāsa*).

有覺之者名為覺者。此即合之故名為合。釋此合名有其六種。名六合釋。

[To illustrate a counter example,] the term *pu-ti* 菩提 (*bodhi*) though consists of two characters, the two characters jointly should be regarded as one single morpheme, because it conveys the single meaning of “awakening.” Since the term [*pu-ti*] is of one morpheme it should be regarded as expressing only one thing. And since there is no [question of] mutual syntactical relations [of its constituting words], the analyses of the compounds are not applicable?

雖如菩提有其二字。二字但目一覺之義。義既是一理目一體。既無相濫。何用六合。

There are several complications in assessing Kuiji’s understanding of Sanskrit compound analysis and its application. The most immediate noticeable complication is that the language, the compounds that Kuiji analyzed are in Chinese language. Many formalistic features of a Sanskrit compound that were stipulated by Sanskrit grammarians for helping to determine the compound analyses do not work on Chinese compounds. The features such as the case inflections of the compound, which tell us about the case-ending, gender and the number of the compound, do not exist in

Chinese compounds. These features are crucial for determining whether the compound in question is an adjective or a substantive, and which in turn determine what type of the compound analysis is the correct analysis.

The other related problem is the compound to be analyzed is usually a Chinese translation of a Sanskrit word, that is to say, the Sanskrit origin of the Chinese compound is not even a compound word. Take the example in Kuiji's analysis, the "compound" *jue-zhe* 覺者 was supposed to be a translation of the Sanskrit word, "buddha," which obviously is not a compound word. Unfortunately there are many instances of this sort.

How do we give our assessment of that? The complications double when Kuiji presented his analyses in Chinese classical language which is entirely lack of basic grammatical terms such as noun, adjective, verb, particles, etc.

First let me list the six types of Sanskrit compounds known by the medieval Chinese exegetes, namely:

1. activity-bearing compounds (*chi-ye-shi* 持業釋 Skt. *karmadhāraya-samāsa*),<sup>45</sup>
2. master-dependent compounds (*yi-zhu-shi* 依主釋 Skt. *tatpuruṣa-samāsa*),

<sup>45</sup> Instead of using the usual English translations of these grammatical terminologies, for example, "descriptive compounds for *karmadhāraya*," I translated them literally to the Chinese origins, because such literal translations would reflect the Chinese understanding of these grammatical terminologies.



3. property-possessing compounds (*you-cai-shi* 有財釋 Skt. bahuvrīhi-*samāsa*),
4. mutual-distinct compounds (*xiang-wei-shi* 相違釋 Skt. *dvandva-samāsa*),
5. adjacent compounds (*lin-jin-shi* 隣近釋 Skt. *avyāyībhāva*),
6. number-containing compounds (*dai-shu-shi* 帶數釋 ; Skt. *dvigu-samāsa*).

Here, I will just introduce only one compound operation as described by Kuiji:<sup>46</sup>

The property-possessing compound is also called abundant-property compound, but this interpretation is not as good as “property-possessing. ‘Property’ means wealth and things. 有財釋者。亦名多財。不及有財。財謂財物。

The compounds that derive their names from the property other than the thing to which the compound refers are called bahuvrīhi compounds. For instance, then the world is called “property-processing,” it is metaphorically named.

自從他財而立己稱。名為有財。如世有財。亦是從喻而為名也。

To give an example, the Treatise by the name of Mahāyānābhidharma-samuccaya [is a bahuvrīhi compound]. Therein, Mahāyānābhidharma is the root text, a sūtra, and Samuccaya denotes both active and passive

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<sup>46</sup> See Teng, 2011 for a complete introduction Sanskrit compounds by Kuiji.

sense – that which assembles, i.e., the treatise, and that which is assembled, i.e., the sūtra. Now, the compound, ‘Mahāyānābhīdharma-samuccaya’ should be construed as: ‘that which takes the Mahāyānābhīdharma [sūtra] as what it[the Treatise] assembles’, and hence is a bahuvrīhi compound.<sup>47</sup>

如論名中大乘阿毘達磨集者大乘阿毘達磨。此乃根本佛經之名。集通能所。能集即論。所集即經。今以彼大乘對法為集。名大乘對法集。故有財釋。

Kuiji’s understanding of a *bahuvrīhi* compound as referring to a thing exterior to the compound itself is conformed by the Sanskrit definition given in the *Mahābhāṣya*, “When meaning of the word other than the words in the compound is the chief, such compound is called *bahūvrīhi samāsa*,”<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, Kuiji’s gloss of the compound “*mahāyānābhīdharma-samuccaya*” is completely agreeable to Sanskrit gloss which would be: *mahāyānābhīdharmaḥ samuccayaḥ yaśya tad śāstram* the treatise is that of which the assembled is the *mahāyānābhīdharma [sūtra]*.

Like in the Sanskrit language, a compound can be analyzed in more than one way, which in turn gives different meanings to the compound. In what follows I will demonstrate how this is so as presented by Kuiji. The two compounds to be examined are shown

<sup>47</sup> Vigraha: Mahāyānābhīdharmaḥ samuccayaḥ yaśya tad śāstram.

<sup>48</sup> *anyapadārthapradhāno bahuvrīhi* | (A bahuvrīhi compound is that of which the thing other than are denoted by its constituent words is the chief word) (*Mahābhāṣya* on Paṇini 2.1.6).

in the table below.

Chinese Compound	Sanskrit Construction
1. <i>yi-shi</i> 意識	<i>mano-vijñāna</i>
2. <i>Cheng-wei-shi-lun</i> 成唯識論	<i>Vijñapti-mātratā-siddhi-sāstram</i>

### 1. *yi-shi* 意識 (mind-consciousness Skt. *mano-vijñāna*)

The puzzlement pertaining to this compound term is that the compound *yi-shi* in one context refers to the sixth consciousness and in the other to the seventh consciousness in the eight-consciousness scheme. The question is how to explain one usage from the other. Here comes the aid of grammar:

When the compound *yi-shi* 意識 refers to the sixth consciousness it should be analyzed as a master-dependent compound (tatpuruṣa): “It is called *yi-shi* because it is the consciousness that depends on the mind [faculty]. Kuiji further explains that the mind (the seventh consciousness) is the depended.”<sup>49</sup>

#### 1.1 *yi-shi* as a tatpuruṣa compound 依主釋：

Compound	Compound analysis	Translation
意識	意之識	the consciousness of the mind
<i>manovijñāna</i>	<i>manaso vijñānam</i>	the consciousness of the mind

When the compound *yi-shi* 意識 refers to the seventh consciousness, it is a karmadhāraya compound— “The mind is

<sup>49</sup> *Chengweishi lun shuji* 成唯識論述記：「其第六識體雖是識。而非是意。非恒審故。彼依主釋。主謂第七。」(T 43, no. 1830, 377b)

[consciousness] itself, or the consciousness is actually the mind.”<sup>50</sup>

1.2 *yi-shi* as a *karmadhāraya* compound 持業釋：

Compound	Compound analysis	Translation
意識	意即識 <sup>51</sup>	The consciousness that is actually the mind
<i>manovijñāna</i>	<i>mana eva vijñānam</i>	The consciousness that is actually the mind

**2. chengweishi-(lun) 成唯識 (論) (establishing-only-consciousness-[treatise] Skt. *vijñaptimātratā-siddhi [śāstram]*).**

This compound *chengweishi-(lun)* can be analyzed into a *karmadhāraya*, *tatpuruṣa*, or *bahuvrīhi* compound.

2.1 *chengweishi-lun* as a *karmadhāraya* compound:

Compound	Compound analysis	Translation
<i>chenweishi-lun</i> 成唯識論	能成唯識 (之教) <sup>52</sup> 即論	the Treatise that is actually (The teaching) that establishes the [theory of] consciousness-only
<i>vijñaptimātratāsiddhi-śāstram</i>	<i>vijñaptimātratāsiddhi eva śāstram</i>	the Treatise that is actually (The teaching) that establishes the [theory of] representation-only

<sup>50</sup> “意是自體。識即是意。於六釋中是持業釋” Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Kuiji’s understanding of the compound *yi-shi* is what is called the “*rūpaka karmadhāraya*” in Sanskrit, the Chinese word *ji* 即 corresponds to the Sanskrit word, “*eva*.”

<sup>52</sup> The compound *Cheng-weishi* as interpreted as (The teaching) that establishes the [theory of] consciousness-only is actually a *bahuvrīhi* compound.

## 2.2 *chengweishi-lun* as a *tatpuruṣa* compound

Compound	Compound analysis	Translation
<i>chenweishi-lun</i> 成唯識論	成唯識之論	the treatise of (the teaching) that establishes the [theory of] consciousness-only
<i>vijñaptimātratāsiddhi-śāstram</i>	<i>vijñaptimātratāsiddhyāh śāstram</i>	the treatise of (the teaching) that establishes the [theory of] representation-only <sup>53</sup>

## 2.3 *cheng-weishi (lun)* as a *bahuvrīhi* compound:

Compound	Compound analysis	Translation
<i>chen-weishi (lun)</i> 成唯識 (論)	此論以唯識為所成	the treatise that takes the theory of the consciousness-only as what is to be established.
<i>vijñaptimātratāsiddhi</i>	<i>vijñaptimātratāh siddhiḥ yaśya tat (śāstram)</i>	the treatise that takes the theory of the consciousness-only as what is to be established.

Following Yamabe, Silk criticized Kuiji's analysis of the compound *chen-weishi-lun* 成唯識論 as “not quite at home with Sanskrit grammatical analysis.”<sup>54</sup> In my view, both Yamabe and Silk's

<sup>53</sup> The Sanskrit term *vijñapti* was traditionally translated into Chinese as *shi* 識, meaning consciousness, which if rendered into Sanskrit would then be *vijñāna*. Kuiji knew exactly what the original Sanskrit was since he has transcribed the term “毘若底”. He went on to explain that the translation of *vijñapti* into *shi* is justifiable since *shi* (*vijñāna*) is the substratum of *vijñapti*, which is its function.

<sup>54</sup> See Silk, “The Yogācāra Bhikṣu,” in *Wisdom, Compassion, and The Search for Understanding*, edited by Jonathan Silk, (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i press, 2000), 268.

criticism of Kuiji's handling of the compound *chen-weishi-lun* is problematic. First, quite in opposition to Yamabe's understanding of Kuiji, the treatise by the name of *chen-weishi-lun* can be regarded as the *establishment* of the theory of "mere cognition" *itself* (Silk's emphasis). And Kuiji *did* intend it to be the case. Kuiji pointed out that in fact more of the names of treatise should be understood as a *karmadhāraya* compound. Both Yamabe and Silk miss a nuance by taking *siddhi* simply as an abstract noun "establishment", whereas Kuiji took it as "a teaching that establishes 能成之教".<sup>55</sup> Secondly, when Kuiji took *chengweishilun* as a *bahuvrīhi* compound, he actually meant *chengwei-shi* excluding the word *lun* in the compound, just as Sanskrit discussion of the compound *abhidharmakośa*: the treatise by the name of the *Abhidharmakośa* is

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"Kuiji suggests that 成唯識論 = Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi is not only a *tatpuruṣa* but also a *bahuvrīhi*. The crucial sentence seems to be 255b15-16: 此論以唯識為所成。名成唯識論。亦有財釋, "This treatise takes mere cognition (\*vijñaptimātra[tā]) as what is to be proved (\*sādhya), and thus it is called Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi, which is a *bahuvrīhi*." Actually, if I understand the passage at 255a23-25 correctly, Kuiji also seems to suggest that the term is a *karmadhāraya*! As Yamabe suggested to me, it is possible to speculate that since Kuiji knows that the treatise itself is not equivalent to Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi, that is, he knows that the treatise explains the establishment of mere cognition but is not that establishment itself, he feels the terms must somehow be a *bahuvrīhi*. All of this would strongly suggest that Kuiji was not quite at home with Sanskrit grammatical analysis."

<sup>55</sup> "Among the names of the Buddhist treatises, the *karmadhāraya* compounds outnumber those of the *tatpuruṣa*. Such as the *Mahāyānasamgraha-bhāṣya*, the treatise that is actually the teaching that grasps (*saṃgraha*) the Mahāyāna Sūtra...so is the *Vijñaptimātratā-śāstram*, that is, the treatise that is actually the teaching that establishes the theory of the consciousness-only, are all taken as a *karmadhāraya* compound 諸論之中多名持業。少名同依。攝大乘論亦復如是。許能攝教即是論故...成唯識論。能成之教亦即是論。故皆持業" (T 45, no. 1861, 255a)

the *kośa* (*sheath*) from which the Abhidharma is drawn.<sup>56</sup>

Although in general Kuiji's analyses of Chinese compounds comparable to the Sanskrit compound analyses, there are several constraints in his understanding and his application thereof:

For the *karmadhāraya*, Kuiji recognized only one type of it and missed the most common type of the *karmadhāraya* compound, which is a descriptive compound with the first member being the adjective describing the second substantive, for example, “*nīlakamalam*” (blue-lotus). It should be noted that this particular shortcoming is not peculiar to Kuiji but common to all medieval Chinese Buddhist exegetes. And I think this shortcoming emerged from the nature of the Chinese language. I will explain what I meant by this.

Let's take for example, a compound, “*wulou-fa*” 無漏法 (uncontaminated- dharma, Skt. *anāśravadharmā*). It is a *karmadhāraya* compound by itself, which can be analyzed in Sanskrit into: *anāśravaḥ dharmāḥ* (uncontaminated dharma). The Chinese compound can be glossed similarly as *wulouzhi fa* 無漏之法, which would mean exactly “uncontaminated dharma.” However, this gloss would immediately be taken as a *tatpuruṣa* compound, just

<sup>56</sup> *atha vā so 'bhidharma etasyāśrayabhūtaḥ śāstrasya | tato hy etan nirākṛṣṭam | ataḥ sa evāśyābhidharmaḥ kośa ityetacchāstram abhidharmakośam |* Or the abhidharma teaching being the foundation of the treatise, is that from which the treatise is drawn. Therefore, the treatise is called Abhidharmakośa because it has the abhidharma teaching as its kośa. Vasubandhu, “Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam,” in *Tibetan Sanskrit works series*, ed. Prahallad. Pradhan (Pāṭaliputram: Kāśīprasada jāyāsavāla-Anuśīlan-Samsthānam, 1967), 2.

like the compound *jue-zhe*, which we saw in the previous section, was glossed as *youjuezhi-zhe* 有覺之者, and was mistaken to be a *tatpuruṣa* compound. The problem is that the Chinese could not differentiate the particle “*zhi* 之,” as a genitive case maker and as an adjective marker. In the case of 無漏之, 有覺之, and there are many examples of the same sort, the “*zhi*” is an adjective marker, and the compounds should therefore be a *karmadhāraya*.

### Conclusion

Ever since the transmission of Buddhism to China, the elite Chinese Buddhist intellectuals were searching for a more precise understanding of Buddhist terms and doctrines. Consulting with the original Sanskrit texts and using Sanskrit knowledge to explicate terms became one of the means in the process. In spite of the constraints mentioned above and possibly more, the Chinese conception of the grammatical operations analyzed in this article, especially the “nominal compound”, are more sophisticated than thought of by the modern scholars of the classical Chinese linguistics. Although their knowledge of Sanskrit grammar was far from perfect, their accounts of Sanskrit grammar provide us a rich source for studying how “grammar”, especially as alien and complex as that of Sanskrit language, was conceived and even applied by Chinese intellectuals of the medieval time. Thus, the broader picture of the grammatical history of the Chinese language is not complete if we miss this grammatical passage of the Chinese Buddhist history.



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## 漢傳佛教注疏與中古漢語文法學

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### 摘要

本文主要目的在於展示中古漢傳佛教文獻，特別是本土的佛教注疏，對於了解佛教古德的文法知識以及古代中國文法學的整體面貌，可能有的貢獻。佛教對中國文化的影響是巨大而多元的，舉凡文學、哲學、音韻學、宗教、政治經濟，甚至物質文明等等。近年來已經有很多學者讓我們注意到漢譯佛典語言對於古漢語研究的重要性。例如竺家寧、梁曉紅、萬金川、朱慶之、辛島靜志等學者指出古漢語出現新的語義、新的複合語、新的句法的出現與佛典的漢譯有密切的關係。然而這些研究比較缺乏本土的佛教注疏與古漢語文法的關係。本文因此主要考察古代僧人的梵語文法知識，試圖分析作為古代中國人的僧人對「文法」的理解以及局限性。這方面雖然有少數的研究，如周一良、呂澂、van Gulik、Harbsmeier 等，但大多的意見都認為古代文人，包括僧人對文法是沒興趣也沒有概念的。本文的研究發現，雖然古人對梵語「文法」的理解有許多局限，但也有許多精闢的解釋、評論及創新的運用。本研究的主要目的亦是在「佛教與中國文化」之課題下，介紹這個較少被注意到的面向。

**關鍵詞：**中國佛教注疏、中國梵語學、中國文法學、窺基

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