



Buddhism and Chinese Linguistics

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Abstract In this paper, different aspects of the relation between Buddhism and the Buddhist Chinese literature and the linguistic study of Chinese will be at issue. The introduction of Buddhism and the Buddhist literature not only introduced new methods for the traditional Chinese linguistic analyses, particularly, the analysis of the phonology of Chinese, but also new styles of writing. The highly educated translators of Buddhist texts into Chinese, who frequently were not native speakers of Chinese, developed a writing style which on the one hand displayed a strong influence from their traditional Chinese education, but on the other hand attempted to appeal to less formally educated readers and a more general audience, in order to achieve missionary success. Consequently, the Buddhist Chinese literature, though it is predominantly written in a variety of the literary Chinese language wényán 文言, displays a number of grammatical features which most likely reflect the vernacular language spoken at the time of the translation. Since all documents genuinely Chinese from the latter part of the Han period on (first century CE) are written in the wényán language, our knowledge about any spoken variety of Chinese in the first millennium of the Common

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22 Era would be non-existent without these Buddhist texts. Accordingly,
23 the study of Buddhist Chinese texts is most relevant for the study of the
24 history of the Chinese language; the only entirely vernacular corpus is
25 actually the Buddhist *biànwén* 變文 collection found in Dunhuang.

26 **Keywords** Buddhist literature · Chinese · Chinese phonology and
27 grammar · Buddhism · Linguistics · Interdependence

28 INTRODUCTION: BUDDHIST TRANSLATION TEXTS 29 AND CHINESE LINGUISTICS

30 The introduction of Buddhism and the Buddhist literature engendered
31 new methods for traditional Chinese linguistic analyses, particularly, for
32 the analysis of the phonology of Chinese, but also new styles of writing.
33 In the second century CE, the first translations of Buddhist texts into
34 Chinese made their appearance. The original sources these texts were
35 translated from were written in Indo-European languages: in Gāndhārī
36 and other Prakrit languages, Sanskrit and Pali. The sources, particularly
37 of the early translations, are usually not extant anymore (Nattier 2008;
38 Peyraube 2015). The translators of the early times were frequently not
39 of Chinese origin, the translations were conducted in translation teams
40 including native speakers of Chinese. These early translations are difficult
41 to understand and their value for comparative linguistic studies is limited
42 (Zürcher 1991; Peyraube 2015). During the subsequent periods a vast
43 corpus of Buddhist translation texts developed, and the linguistic quality
44 of the translations improved considerably. The highly educated translators
45 of Buddhist texts into Chinese developed a writing style which on
46 the one hand displayed the strong influence of their traditional Chinese
47 education, but on the other hand attempted to appeal to less formally
48 educated readers and a more general audience, in order to achieve mis-
49 sionary success. This has the effect that the Buddhist translation texts are
50 generally written in a kind of literary language, but also that they include
51 numerous innovative syntactic structures not present in the genuinely
52 Chinese *wényán* literature. Two different approaches towards the origin
53 of these innovative syntactic structures are predominant in the linguis-
54 tic debate: (1) the syntactic changes are reflections of the syntax of
55 the source languages from which the texts were translated; (2) the syn-
56 tactic innovations are native Chinese developments caused by changes



57 in the Chinese language. Since many of the linguistic innovations of
58 Early Middle Chinese are only attested in the Buddhist literature, but
59 not in the *wényán* texts, the study of Buddhist texts is invaluable for the
60 analysis of the diachronic changes of the Chinese language.

61 THE EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD AS A TRANSITION PERIOD 62 OF THE CHINESE LANGUAGE

63 In this article, the Medieval period is assumed to start in the first cen-
64 tury BCE, the beginning of Early Middle Chinese following Aldridge
65 (2012a).¹ The Early Medieval period (first century BCE—sixth century
66 CE) constitutes an important transitional period for the Chinese lan-
67 guage during which the grammar of Chinese changed considerably. All
68 aspects of the Chinese grammar, i.e. its phonology, morphology, syntax
69 and lexicon were affected by these changes. At the end of this period,
70 the basis of the grammar of Modern Chinese was established. During the
71 same period, the first translations of Buddhist texts into Chinese were
72 produced and in those many of the innovations of the Chinese language
73 appeared regularly in written sources for the first time. Due to the fact
74 that a considerable number of these innovations were basically confined
75 to the Buddhist translations texts, some of them had been attributed
76 to the influence of the source languages of the Buddhist texts by some
77 scholars (see, e.g. Zhu Qingzhi, Karashima, Cao, Cheung and many oth-
78 ers).² On the other hand, it has been proposed that these innovations
79 were diachronic developments within the Chinese language caused by
80 substantial changes in the morphology of Chinese; these morphological
81 changes, i.e. the loss of consonant clusters and the entire loss of a for-
82 mer derivational morphology triggered numerous changes in the lexicon
83 of Chinese, but also in its syntax (see, e.g. Wei 2003; Aldridge 2012a;
84 Aldridge and Meisterernst, ms.; Meisterernst 2015a, b, c; Feng 2001,
85 2016). These are assumed to have been already present in the vernacular
86 language before they appeared in the Buddhist translation texts.

87 EARLY TRANSLATIONS OF BUDDHIST TEXTS INTO CHINESE

88 The first reliable reports on contacts of China with the outskirts of the
89 Buddhist realm were those in the *Shiji* (ca. 100 BCE) on the travels of
90 the general Zhang Qian張騫 to the Western Regions. Despite these early



91 contacts reports on the Buddhist faith only appear later and merely very
 92 occasionally in the official Chinese sources, i.e. in the *Hou Hanshu* (fifth
 93 century CE), the history of the Eastern Han period; in these Buddhism
 94 is frequently connected to Daoism. Despite this evident underrepresentation
 95 of Buddhism in the official Chinese literature, at the time when the
 96 *Hou Hanshu* was compiled, the monk Fa Xian had already returned from
 97 his journey to India at the beginning of the fifth century and written
 98 his report on this journey. Identically, the translation of Buddhist texts
 99 into Chinese already achieved a first culmination with the erudite monk
 100 Kumārajīva, *Jiūmólúoshí* 鳩摩羅什 (344–413 or 350–409), from Kucha.
 101 Kumārajīva was the son of an Indian Brahmin and a Kuchean princess;
 102 he became the earliest of the ‘four great translators’ of Buddhist texts,
 103 together with Paramārtha of the sixth century, Xuanzang who travelled
 104 to India in the seventh century, and Amoghavajra of the eighth cen-
 105 tury. As many of his predecessors, Kumārajīva was not a native speaker
 106 of Chinese; he learned this language during sixteen years as a cap-
 107 tive of the General Lü Guang 呂光 (Hureau 2003: 7). He arrived in
 108 Chang’an in February 402, where he became the head of a translation
 109 project consisting of around 800 monks who translated and retranslated
 110 Buddhist texts. Besides his translations, Kumārajīva has been reported
 111 to also have written some genuine Chinese texts. Kumārajīva’s teacher
 112 was Buddhayaśas, Fótuóyésè 佛陀耶舍 (died 413 CE), another famous
 113 translator, who was born in *Jībīn* 罽賓國, Kashmir, in India, as the son
 114 of a Brahmin. Buddhayaśas was not only knowledgeable in Buddhism,
 115 but also in the traditional Indian sciences, including grammar and com-
 116 position, art, mathematics, and logic, additionally, he was educated
 117 in epistemology and philosophy. The most significant translator of
 118 Buddhist texts prior to Kumārajīva was Dharmarakṣa Zhú Fǎhù 竺法護,
 119 (230?–316), born in Dunhuang 敦煌 around 230 CE of Indian
 120 and Scythian parents of Yuezhi 月氏 (Tochari) origin. He was well
 121 acquainted with Confucian teachings, and his work has been regarded
 122 as the foundation of Buddhism in North China (Digital Dictionary of
 123 Buddhism (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/>)). Zhú Fǎyán followed his
 124 teacher to the West where he learned the ‘36 languages’ of the Western
 125 Regions and translated their texts into Chinese. One of the earliest trans-
 126 lators of Buddhist texts was the Parthian Ān Shigāo 安世高, a member of
 127 the royal family of the Arsacids, who probably arrived in Luoyang around
 128 148, during the reign of Emperor Huan. Already Pelliot referred in
 129 1911 to the important role Iranian people and Iranianised people played



130 in the dissemination of Buddhism in China. Zürcher (1959) remarks
 131 “it was probably he (An Shigao) who initiated the systematical transla-
 132 tion of Buddhist texts and who organised the first translation team. In
 133 this respect his importance is indeed very great: his translations primitive
 134 though they may be, mark the beginning of a form of literary activity
 135 which, taken as a whole, must be regarded as one of the most impressive
 136 achievements in Chinese culture” (see Meisterernst 2016a, b).

137 THE RELATION BETWEEN BUDDHISM AND CHINESE PHONOLOGY

138 In this section, the impact the Buddhist texts had on the study of the
 139 Chinese language and on genuine Chinese linguistics will be critically evalu-
 140 ated. A few examples will briefly refer to the development of the *fǎnqiè*反
 141 切 spelling system which constituted a milestone in the linguistic analysis of
 142 the Chinese phonological system and to the importance the Buddhist texts
 143 have for the reconstruction of the pronunciation of Medieval Chinese.

144 PHONOLOGY: THE *Fǎnqiè* 反切 SYSTEM AND CHINESE 145 TRANSCRIPTIONS OF FOREIGN NAMES

146 The origins of the *fǎnqiè* system, a spelling system for Chinese, are
 147 disputed. Although it has been assumed that this system was possibly of
 148 Indian origin or inspired by Indian scholars who entered China in the
 149 first century CE in order to introduce Buddhism to China, it has been
 150 demonstrated, for example in Branner (2000: 38) that the *fǎnqiè* sys-
 151 tem most likely was genuinely Chinese. The two most convincing argu-
 152 ments he presents are: (1) fusion words which already existed in the
 153 Later Archaic period; and (2) the fact that the *fǎnqiè* does not provide
 154 an alphabetic or syllabary system to represent the phonology of Medieval
 155 Chinese. In the *fǎnqiè* spelling, one syllable was divided into its initial
 156 and its rhyme; both were represented by different characters.³

(1) The *fǎnqiè* 反切 system

堂 <i>táng</i>	dan	反切: 徒郎	<u>d</u> [o]	l[an]
蕩 <i>dàng</i>	dan ⁴	反切: 徒朗	<u>d</u> [o]	l[an] ⁴
宕 <i>dàg</i> EMC	dan ^h	反切: 徒浪	<u>d</u> [o]	l[an] ^h
鐸 <i>duó</i> EMC	dak	反切: 待各	<u>d</u> [əj ⁴]	k[ak]



158 The most important source for the *fǎnqiè* is the *Qièyùn* 切韻 compiled
 159 by Lu Fayān 陸法言 (601) on the basis of older dictionaries; it is divided
 160 into different volumes according to the different tone categories of
 161 Middle Chinese. The *Qièyùn* itself had been lost for several centuries, but
 162 its materials have been transmitted in the *Guǎngyùn* 廣韻, 1008.

163 During the Tang period, when a great number of Buddhist texts were
 164 translated into Chinese a new development influenced by the Indian pho-
 165 netic theory, which involves labels for the different phonetic categories,
 166 became apparent in China (Halliday 2001: 42). In the ninth century,
 167 the monk Shǒuwēn 守溫 established a system of 36 initials which were
 168 ordered according to their place of articulation, probably inspired by the
 169 Indian phonetic system, although it does not show a complete termino-
 170 logical overlap (Jacques, web). As category label, Shǒuwēn choose some of
 171 the *fǎnqiè* characters indicating the initial of a syllable (Halliday 2001: 42).

172 Following places of articulation were distinguished:

(2) Places of articulation

Chún yīn 唇音 ‘labials’

p, p^h, b, m

Shé yīn 舌音 ‘linguals’

t, t^h, d, n, tr, tr^h, dr, nr

Chí yīn 齒音 ‘dentals’

ts, ts^h, dz, s, sh, tʂ, tʂ^h, (t)ʂh, ʂ, ʃh

Yá yīn 牙音 ‘molars’

k, k^h, g, ŋ

Hóu yīn 喉音 ‘gutturals’

ɣ, ɣ, j, ?

173 Downer (1963: 134) notes: “Compared with the earlier *faanchieh*
 174 [*fǎnqiè*] system, the *tzyhmuu* [*zīmǔ*] in some cases make subphonemic
 175 distinctions, in other cases merge phonemically distinct initials” (cf.
 176 Halliday 2001: 43). According to Halliday, this was the consequence of
 177 importing a phonetic system from a completely different language.

178 THE TRANSCRIPTION OF FOREIGN WORDS IN CHINESE

179 Interestingly, the Buddhist influence did not lead to the development
 180 of a consequently phonetic system to represent the precise reading of
 181 the Chinese characters or to write foreign names in Chinese, these were
 182 always transcribed by Chinese characters. Although not as precise as an
 183 alphabetic or syllabary system these transcriptions provide invaluable evi-
 184 dence for the reconstruction of the Chinese variety spoken by the respec-
 185 tive translator; the dialects employed in Kumārajīva’s and Buddhayaśas’



186 translation teams, for instance, were identified as ‘Old Northwest
187 Chinese’ by Coblin (1994: 152). But the transcriptions also serve to pro-
188 vide some evidence for the identification of the source language of the
189 respective translation text. Only two examples re-discussed in Karashima
190 (2009: 48) will be presented here:

191 (3) *Milè* (**mji lək* (Pulleyblank (1991)) 彌勒, Sanskrit: Maitreya,
192 which according to Bailey (1946, 780, cf. Karashima) rather corresponds
193 to the Tocharian ‘Mairāk, Metrak’ than to the Sanskrit form;

194 (4) *Dásà’ājié* (MC (nach Karashima: *tāt sāt ḡā gjät*) 怛薩阿竭, Sanskrit:
195 Tathāgata (*rúlái* 如來); this shows phonological characteristics typical for
196 the Gāndhārī language (Brough 1962 and others, cf. Karashima).

197 Both examples clearly demonstrate that different source languages
198 underlying the transcription of foreign names into Chinese have to be
199 expected.

200 BUDDHISM AND CHINESE GRAMMAR

201 As already mentioned the emergence of many innovations in the lexi-
202 con and the grammar of Chinese coincided with the first translations of
203 Buddhist texts from Indo-European languages into Chinese. Due to this
204 fact, the innovations in Chinese were partly attributed to the influence of
205 syntactic structures of the IE source languages of these texts. One of the
206 problems encountered with this approach is the fact that usually a direct IE
207 source text or even source language for the early Chinese translation texts
208 is difficult to determine. Whereas numerous Chinese Buddhist texts dat-
209 ing from as early as around the fourth century CE have been discovered in
210 Dunhuang and in Turfan in good condition due to the special climate of
211 the deserts of Xinjiang, this is not the case, for example early Sanskrit texts.
212 However, very early documents in the Gāndhārī language have been discov-
213 ered since the late nineteenth century (Salomon 2007); these provide ample
214 evidence for the importance of this language in the early years of Buddhist
215 translations in Central Asia. Still, a one-to-one correspondence of the early
216 source texts and their Chinese translations cannot easily be established.

217 The examples discussed in the following sections will demonstrate
218 the enormous value the Buddhist translations texts had for the investiga-
219 tion of the diachronic development of Chinese on the one hand, but it
220 will also provide some evidence for the independence of the linguistic
221 innovations from the introduction of Buddhism to China. Thus, it will
222 argue against the hypothesis that the emergence of some of the syntactic



223 innovations of Chinese was influenced by the syntax of the IE source lan-
224 guages of the Chinese translations.

225 LEXICO-GRAMMATICAL DIFFERENCES

226 A brief discussion of the disyllabic modal verb *yīngdāng* 應當 ‘should,
227 ought’ will serve as a representative example for the great number of
228 lexico-grammatical changes in the employment of function words in the
229 Buddhist texts of early Middle Chinese. This disyllabic verb consists of
230 the two almost synonymous monosyllabic verbs *yīng* 應 and *dāng* 當;
231 both verbs express deontic modality, i.e. the modal values of obligation
232 and necessity. The modal functions of the verb *dāng* 當 are regularly
233 attested from the Han period (206 BCE–220 CE) on. It predomi-
234 nantly appears in indirect suggestions uttered by the speaker with regard
235 to the—frequently unspecified—agent; the obligation is based on laws,
236 rules, and norms, but also on circumstances; it is frequently conveyed
237 in a more indirect way ‘something should be done’. In the Buddhist lit-
238 erature, the modal verb *dāng* 當 evidently belongs to the class of verbs
239 which are employed—besides other functions, for example to express
240 future tense—to express advice and admonishments, a function which is
241 typical for religious texts.

242 (5) 汝等但當勤修精進。↓ *Taishō* 9, no.262, p.13b

243 *Rǔ děng dàn dāng qín xiū jìngjìn*

244 You PL only DANG eagerly improve diligence

245 ‘You should only eagerly improve your diligence.’

246 The first part of the disyllabic verb *yīngdāng*, verb *yīng* 應 appears reg-
247 ularly as a modal auxiliary verb in the early Buddhist literature. In Late
248 Archaic (fifth—second century BCE) Chinese *yīng/yìng* 應 occurs almost
249 exclusively as a full verb, mostly in the meaning ‘answer, react, et cet-
250 era.’,⁴ or ‘deserve to’, ‘correspond to’; it is only very occasionally attested
251 as an auxiliary verb. In the early Buddhist literature, its employment as a
252 modal verb increases and simultaneously the number of its occurrences
253 as a full verb decreases. According to its syntactic environment, different
254 kinds of deontic modal values, from strict deontic modality, i.e. contexts
255 of direct command and advice, to modal values connected with wishes
256 (bóuletic), or goals (teleological values) are attested.⁵ *Yīng* 應 seems to
257 have the tendency to appear in complementary distribution with *dāng*
258 當. Whereas modal *dāng* 當 is more and more employed in direct com-
259 mands with a second person subject in the Buddhist literature, *yīng* 應



260 rather seems to be employed in indirect deontic contexts with a first or
 261 a third person subject and thus takes over functions *dāng* 當 previously
 262 had.

263 (6) 便作是念：『我為眾生之父，應拔其苦難，*Taishō* 9, n. 262, p.13a

264 *Biàn zuò shì niàn: wǒ wéi zhòng shēng zhī fù, yīng bá qí kǔ nàn*

265 Then make this thought: I be all living.being SUB father, YING pull.
 266 out its misery

267 “Then he thought: “I am the father of all living beings, I should pull
 268 out all their miseries [by the root], ...”

269 Particularly, in the Buddhist literature, the modal reading of obligation
 270 or necessity can additionally be expressed by the combination of the two
 271 near synonymous verbs *yīng* 應 and *dāng* 當: *yīngdāng* 應當. The addition
 272 of *yīng* 應 to *dāng* 當 disambiguates a possible future reading of *dāng* 當.
 273 This combination is still attested as a disyllabic modal auxiliary verb in
 274 Modern Chinese (see Alleton 1984: 195; Li 2004: 175f).⁶ According to
 275 Li (2004: 246) the combination *yīngdāng* 應當 appears first after the Han
 276 period and is in general infrequent in the Chinese literature (1 instance
 277 in the *Sānguózhi* and 3 in the *Hòu Hànsū*). His statement is based on
 278 the non-Buddhist literature; in the early Buddhist literature *yīngdāng* 應
 279 當 is comparably frequently attested (14 instances in the *Miàofǎ liánhuà*
 280 *jīng* and 7 in the *Xiànyú jīng*) and it always expresses deontic modal val-
 281 ues. In the examples in (7), it expresses an obligation the subject itself is
 282 under (a.) and an obligation on an addressee subject (b.).

283 (7)

284 a. 我有如是七寶大車，其數無量，應當等心各各與之，不宜差別。

285 *Taishō* 9, no.262, p.12c

286 *Wǒ yǒu rú shì qī bǎo dà chē, qí shù wú liàng, yīngdāng*

287 I have like this seven jewel great carriage, its number not.have meas-
 288 ure, YINGDANG

289 *děngxīn gè gè yǔ zhī, bù yí chābié*

290 equal-minded each each give OBJ, NEG appropriate difference

291 ‘I have carriages like these adorned with the seven jewels, their num-
 292 ber is measureless, I should be even-minded and give them one each,
 293 and I should not make any distinction.’

294 b. 如是眾過患，汝等應當知。』 *Taishō* 9, n. 262, p.26b

295 *Rú shì zhòng guòhuàn, rǔ děng yīngdāng zhī*

296 Like this all affliction, you PL YINGDANG know

297 ‘All those afflictions you should know.’



298 In (c.) the verb *yīngdāng* 應當 appears in a non-Buddhist text,
299 expressing an obligation on a third person subject.

300 c. 「欽之罪不容誅，其子固應當戮，然鸞、虎以窮歸命， *Sānguózhi, Wèi shū* 28

301 *Qīn zhī zuì bù róng zhū, qí zǐ gù yīngdāng lù,*

302 Qin GEN guilt NEG face punish, his son certainly should execute,

303 *rán Āng, Hū yǐ qióng guīmìng*

304 but Ang, Hu with exhaust switch.loyalty

305 ‘The guilt of Qin did not face punishment, and his son should cer-
306 tainly be executed, but Ang and Hu came to pledge allegiance because of
307 their strait ...

308 Both modal verbs are attested in the Early Medieval Buddhist and
309 Non-Buddhist literature; the more frequent evidence in the Buddhist lit-
310 erature of the disyllabic variant hints at a more frequent occurrence of
311 this form in the vernacular language. The evident increase in the number
312 of modal verbs in the Buddhist literature can be due to a greater need for
313 explicit prescription in religious texts on the one hand, but it can also be
314 attributed to the loss of a former aspectual morphology which may have
315 caused the development of a more elaborate system of modal markers
316 (Meisterernst 2017).⁷

317 PERSONAL PRONOUNS AND THE MARKING OF THE PLURAL

318 The number of marked plurals considerably increases in the Buddhist
319 literature. In Norman (1988: 120) it has been claimed that Archaic
320 Chinese belongs to those languages which are characterised by the
321 “lack of a number distinction” for personal pronouns, i.e. the nominal
322 items most likely to be marked in this respect.⁸ This claim is not cor-
323 rect (see Pulleyblank 1995: 76 and many others).⁹ In the earliest extant
324 literature, the oracle bone inscriptions, obviously a morphological dis-
325 tinction between singular and plural personal pronouns existed. For
326 the first person two morphologically distinct variants are attested: sin-
327 gular forms with the approximant initial *j-* in Middle Chinese, refer-
328 ring almost exclusively to the king¹⁰: *yú* 余 (EMC *jiä*), *yǔ* 予 (EMC
329 *jiä*) and Early Archaic *yí* 台 (EMC *ji*), together with *zhèn* 朕 (EMC
330 *drim*),¹¹ and plural forms with the nasal initial *ŋ-* in Middle Chinese,
331 referring to the Shang collectively: *wǒ* 我 (EMC *ŋa*’), *wú* 吾 (EMC *ŋo*),
332 and Pre-Classical *áng* 印 (EMC *ŋan*). In Late Archaic Chinese, this clear
333 distinction disappears: the pronouns of the first group retain their singular
334 references, the pronouns with a nasal initial start to be employed as



335 general pronouns indifferent of number.¹² Accordingly, in Classical
 336 Chinese, there is a distinction between general (singular and plural)
 337 number and the singular, in the first person pronoun (Unger 1987, I:
 338 14), i.e. the singular and not the plural is particularly marked. A similar,
 339 although less obvious distinction has also been proposed for the second
 340 person pronouns: *ěr* 爾 (EMC *ʒiʔ*) and *ruò* 若 (EMC *ʒlak*) indicate gen-
 341 eral number (singular and plural) in Late Archaic Chinese, and *rǚ* 汝, 女
 342 (EMC *ʒI@ʔ*) seems to be confined to the singular (Unger 1987, III:
 343 150f). Apart from the personal pronouns of the first and the second per-
 344 son, no morphological or lexical distinction of number can be assumed
 345 for Archaic Chinese. After the LAC period the plural markers *děng* 等,
 346 *cáo* 曹, and *bèi* 輩, or a combination of two of them, for example, *děng*
 347 *bèi* 等輩 appear more regularly (see also Norman 1988: 120); they attach
 348 to nouns and pronouns.¹³ Their employment is not obligatory yet in
 349 Early Middle Chinese, and in the beginning, they do not express a sim-
 350 ple, but rather an associative plural: i.e. *wǒ děng* 我等 does not mean
 351 ‘we’, but ‘me and others’. This can be evidenced by the fact that they
 352 often attach to names, and they actually have to be analysed as nouns
 353 which form a coordinative construction with the first noun.¹⁴

354 In the following, the combination of a personal pronoun with
 355 the plural noun *děng* 等 will be discussed. This, together with oth-
 356 ers, is supposed to have paved the way for the plural marker *men* 們
 357 of Modern Mandarin. In the *Dūnbuáng biànwén* 敦煌變文 collection,
 358 the first person pronouns *wǒ* 我 and *wú* 吾 have to be marked by one
 359 of the plural words when referring to the plural, whereas the second
 360 pronoun *rǚ* 汝 can refer to both the singular and the plural without being
 361 marked (Wu 2004: 2f). The marking of the plural of personal pronouns
 362 is another grammatical feature which is mostly attested in the Buddhist
 363 literature. The following figures show the occurrences of marked plu-
 364 ral pronouns in the Non-Buddhist Medieval texts according to the
 365 Academia Sinica database and in comparison to the *Miàofǎ liánhuā jīng*
 366 and the *Xiānyù jīng*.

367 The Academia Sinica database for the non-Buddhist Medieval texts
 368 lists 7 instances of *wǒděng* 我等 (0.4% out of 1381 instances of *wǒ*), 10
 369 instances of *wúděng* 吾等 (0.7% out of 1444 of *wú*); 17 instances of *rǚ*
 370 *děng* 汝等 (2% out of 874 = 2%).¹⁵

371 In *Miàofǎ liánhuā jīng*: 151 instances *wǒ děng* 我等 (almost 30% out
 372 of 661); no *wú děng* 吾等 (0% out of 15); 96 *rǚ děng* 汝等, (40% out of
 373 240).



12 B. MEISTERERNST

374 In *Xiányú jīng*: 66 *wǒ děng* 我等 (4.5% out of 1460), 3 *wú děng* 吾等
375 (2.7% out of 112), 55 *rǔ děng* 汝等 (8.1% out of 676).

376 In example (8a) the singular is marked by the adverb *dú* 獨 ‘alone’,
377 and the plural is marked by *děng*.

378 (8)

379 a. 我常獨處山林樹下，若坐若行，每作是念：『我等同入法性，云何如來
380 以小乘法而見濟度？是我等咎，非世尊也。』 *Taishō* 9; no.262, p.10c

381 *Wǒ cháng dú chǔ shān lín shù xià, ruò zuò ruò xíng,*

382 I always alone dwell mountain forest tree under, if sit if walk

383 *měi zuò shì niàn: wǒ děng tóng rù fǎ xìng, yúnhé Rúlái*

384 each make this thought: I PL together enter dharma nature, how

385 Rulai

386 *yǐ xiǎo shèng fǎ ér jiàn jìdù*

387 with small vehicle dharma CON see aid.liberate?

388 *Shì wǒ děng jiù, fēi shìzūn yě*

389 This.is I PL fault, is.not world.honoured.One SFP

390 ‘I have constantly lived alone in the mountain forests under the trees,
391 and whether sitting or walking I always had these thoughts: “We (I and
392 the others have together entered the dharma nature, and why does the
393 Tathāgata liberate us using the dharma of the Small Vehicle? But this is
394 our fault, it is not due to the World-Honoured-One.’

395 In most cases, plurals seem to be marked, but the marking of the
396 plural does not seem to be mandatory yet. This can be seen in example
397 (8b), in which the plural is mostly, but not always marked by *děng*. This
398 example additionally demonstrates that the plural of a noun can also be
399 marked by other lexical items such as *zhū* 諸 ‘all/PL’.

400 b. 爾時諸天子欲重宣此義，而說偈言：... 我等從昔來，數聞世尊說，
401 未曾聞如是，深妙之上法。世尊說是法，我等皆隨喜。大智舍利弗，今得
402 受尊記，我等亦如是，必當得作佛。... 我所有福業，今世若過世，及見佛
403 功德，盡迴向佛道。』 *Taishō* 9; no.262, p.12a17

404 *Èr shí zhū tiān zǐ yù chóng xuān cǐ yì, ér shuō jì yán ...*

405 That time PL deva son wish again spread this meaning, CON talk
406 gātha say

407 *Wǒ děng cóng xī lái, shuō wén shìzūn shuō,*

408 I PL from former come, frequently hear World-Honoured-One say

409 *wèi céng wén rúshì shēn miào zhī shàng fǎ.*

410 NEG_{asp} PST hear such deep wonderful SUB high dharma

411 *Shìzūn shuō shì fǎ, wǒ děng jiē suí xǐ.*



412 World-Honoured-One talk this dharma, I PL all follow happy
 413 *Dà zhì Shìlìfú, jīn dé shòu zūn jì, wǒ děng yì rúshì*
 414 Great wisdom Śāriputra, now can receive venerated record, I PL also
 415 such
 416 *Bì dāng dé zuò fó. Wǒ suǒ yǒu fúyè, jīn shì ruò guò shí,*
 417 certainly should get make Buddha. I Sg REL have karma, now time or
 418 passed time,
 419 *jí jiàn fó gōng dé, jìn huí xiàng fó dào*
 420 when see Buddha merit virtue, completely return to Buddha way
 421 ‘At that time, all the sons of the devas wanted to spread this meaning
 422 again and spoke in the words of a gāthā: ... From past times on we have
 423 frequently heard the Buddha talking, but we have never heard such
 424 a deep and wonderful superior dharma. When the Buddha told us this
 425 dharma we all became happy immediately. The great and wise Śāriputra
 426 could now receive this venerated record; we are also like this and will
 427 certainly be able to become Buddhas. ... The karma we (unmarked) have
 428 from present and past times will let us completely turn to the Buddha
 429 way when we (unmarked) see the merit and virtue of the Buddha.

430 The explicit marking of the plural is typical for Buddhist texts, but it
 431 is not unattested in the non-Buddhist literature. The nouns employed to
 432 mark the plural which eventually developed into the Modern Mandarin
 433 plural suffix *mén* 們 are already attested in this function in the LAC lit-
 434 erature; however, plural marking is not obligatory.¹⁶ The fact that plu-
 435 ral had been marked morphologically in the IE languages might have
 436 induced an increase of plural marking in the Buddhist literature and in
 437 Chinese in general.

438 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISPOSAL CONSTRUCTION

439 The development of the so-called disposal construction belongs to
 440 those that have occasionally been attributed to the influence of the lan-
 441 guages of Buddhist source texts. In the disposal construction NP_{agent}
 442 BA NP_{theme} V, *bǎ* 把 / *jiāng* 將 / *chí* 持 / *zhuō* 捉 appear as V₁ in a
 443 serial verb construction from the Early Medieval period on. The SVC
 444 underwent a number of changes before it developed into the disposal
 445 construction in its Modern Mandarin form. This construction is one of
 446 the constructions most extensively discussed in the linguistic literature.
 447 According to Cao and Yu (2015), the construction developed under the
 448 influence of translations from Sanskrit in order to reflect its OV word



449 order. The following is an example from the *Dūnhuáng biànwén* collec-
 450 tion. According to Zhang Lili (2001), this is one of the earliest examples
 451 for *jiāng* in a true disposal construction in Medieval Chinese.

452 (9)

453 a. 惠虛假，只貪才，早晚曾將智惠開，*Wéimójiéjīng jiāng jīng wén, ér 維*
 454 摩詰經講經文(二)》(cf. Zhang 2001)

455 *huì xūjiǎ, zhǐ tān cái, zǎo wǎn céng jiāng zhìhuì kāi*

456 kindness baseless, only crave talent, early late PST JIANG wisdom
 457 establish

458 ‘His kindness is baseless, he only craves talent, from early to late he
 459 once practiced wisdom, ...’

460 Mei (1990) distinguishes different kinds of disposals and refers par-
 461 ticularly to their historical development and their relation to the ancient
 462 disposals with *yǐ* 以. According to him the basic disposal constructions
 463 with *yǐ* 以 with the general meaning ‘give’ and ‘make’ already exist in
 464 Late Archaic Chinese; disposals with the meaning ‘arrive’ only develop in
 465 Early Middle Chinese with first examples in the *Shiji* (ex. (9b)).

466 b. 復以弟子一人投河中 *Shiji*: 126, 3212

467 *Fù yǐ dìzǐ yī rén tóu hé zhōng*

468 Again YI disciple one person throw river middle

469 ‘and again he threw the disciple into the river.’

470 Also, Peyraube admits that the *bǎ* disposal developed by analogy to the *yǐ*
 471 disposal, but he emphasises a grammaticalisation process from a verb to a
 472 preposition *bǎ* probably around the seventh century or earlier (Peyraube
 473 1996:170) and thus argues against the lexical replacement hypothesis of
 474 *yǐ* by *bǎ*. Recently, arguments have been presented by Paul and Whitman
 475 (2005) for the analysis of *bǎ* as a higher verbal head to be distinguished
 476 from lexical verbs, and by Aldridge (2012b) for an analysis of *yǐ* as a
 477 functional head, a high applicative within *vP*; these analyses support the
 478 assumption of a close syntactic relation between the *yǐ* and the *bǎ* con-
 479 structions and argue against a syntactic influence of the source languages
 480 of the Chinese Buddhist texts.

481 ASPECTUAL MARKING IN THE EARLY BUDDHIST LITERATURE

482 The V_1 (NP_{Obj}) V_2 -ASP construction in example (10), which expresses
 483 termination and the realisation of a situation, is another syntactic feature
 484 which figures prominently in the Buddhist literature. Due to the fact that
 485 it is the source structure of the Modern Mandarin aspectual suffix *-le* 了



486 the construction has been subject to an extensive debate and it has been
 487 proposed that it also developed under the influence of the translation of
 488 Buddhist texts from Sanskrit.

489 (10) 作是念已，疾走而去。 *Taishō* 9, no. 262, p.16c

490 *Zuò shì niàn yǐ, jí zǒu ér qù*

491 Make this thought YI, quick go CON leave

492 ‘After he thought that, he left quickly.’

493 Different verbs are available in the position of V₂ in Middle Chinese: 已 *yǐ*
 494 ‘finish, stop, complete’, 竟 *jìng* ‘finish, complete’, 畢 *bì* ‘finish’, or 訖
 495 *qì* ‘finish, cease’, and later 了 *liǎo* ‘finish, complete’. All verbs appear in
 496 nonfinite subordinate clauses indicating completion of one event before
 497 the beginning of a second event. Before the appearance of *liǎo* 了 the
 498 verb and aspectual marker 已 *yǐ* (see ex. 10) is most frequently attested;
 499 according to Jiang (2007) it is the predecessor of *-le* 了. Cheung (1977)
 500 proposes the hypothesis that V₂ END, TERMINATE, was a borrowing for the
 501 Sanskrit gerundial suffix *-tvā*, which surfaces in the same position as V₂-
 502 ASP, i.e. in clause-final position in subordinate clauses. This hypothesis
 503 has been challenged subsequently, for example, by Mei (1999) and Jiang
 504 (2001, 2007). Mei proposes that the aspectual structure with the marker
 505 *yǐ* 已 is of native Chinese origin. As an argument for this hypothesis, he
 506 provides example (11), which represents one of the earliest examples of
 507 this structure in the *Shǐjì* (ca. 100 BCE).

508 (11) 鑽中已，又灼龜首 *Shǐjì*: 128; 3240, from Mei (1999: 289)

509 *zuān zhōng yǐ, yòu zhuó guī shǒu*

510 bore center YI, again burn tortoise head

511 ‘After boring through the center (of the shell), then they burned the
 512 tortoise head.’

513 Jiang (2001, 2007) follows Mei’s argument, but he additionally proposes
 514 a functional extension of the aspectual marking under Sanskrit influence.
 515 Accordingly, he differentiates two markers *yǐ*: (a) YI1 with atelic events
 516 supplying the end point (a native Chinese development) and (b) YI2
 517 with telic predicates signaling accomplishment/achievement (the later
 518 extension under Sanskrit influence) (Aldridge and Meisterernst, ms.).
 519 Based on Mei’s hypothesis Aldridge and Meisterernst (ms.) recently
 520 proposed that the new aspectual structure developed at the end of the
 521 Archaic period (first c. BCE) in order to replace the aspectual morphol-
 522 ogy of Archaic Chinese which had lost its transparency entirely at that
 523 time. The new structure was probably already well developed in the



524 vernacular before it appeared in the Early Buddhist translation texts in
525 the second c. CE.

526 Different functions have been proposed for the reconstructed verbal
527 morphology of Ancient Chinese.¹⁷ The categories relevant here are
528 those deriving distinctions within the category aspect (perfective and
529 imperfective aspect), between transitive and intransitive verbs and/or
530 causative and unaccusative verbs. As an example, the most prominent
531 derivational affix to derive the resultative, ‘perfective’ aspect or unac-
532 cusative verbs, the suffix **-s* reconstructed for Archaic Chinese, will be
533 briefly introduced here. This suffix supposedly developed into the fall-
534 ing tone (Haudricourt 1954; Sagart 1999; Jin Lixin 2006; Meisterernst
535 2015a, 2016b and references therein) probably around the beginning
536 of the Early Medieval period; its function was most likely still transpar-
537 ent in LAC. In Meisterernst (2015b) it has been proposed that this
538 suffix marks telicity and the resultative, i.e. aspectual features similar to
539 those expressed by the V₁ NP V₂-ASP construction in Middle Chinese.
540 Example (12) shows the verb *chí/zhì* ‘govern, put in order’ / ‘well gov-
541 erned, in order’ which displays an alternation with the reconstructed suf-
542 fix **-s* in LAC.

543 (12) The suffix **-s* and the verb (*chí*/) *zhì* 治 in Archaic Chinese:

544 a. => [-SUFFIX] = transitive and/or imperfective aspect: **r-de*

545 => [+SUFFIX] = unaccusative and perfective aspect (resultant state):

546 **r-de-s* (Jin Lixin 2006)

547 b. 政以治民, 刑以正邪。

548 *Zhèng yǐ chí (*r-de) mǐn, xíng yǐ zhèng xié*

549 Government CON regulate people, punishment CON correct bad

550 ‘The government is necessary in order to correct the people, the pun-
551 ishments are necessary to correct the bad.’ (*Zuo zhuan*, *Yin* 11, fifth-
552 fourth c. BCE)

553 c. 使為左師以聽政, 於是宋治。

554 *Shǐ wéi zuǒshī yǐ tīngzhèng, yúshì Sòng zhì (*r-de-s)*

555 Cause become *zuoshi* CON manage.government, thereupon Song
556 ordered

557 ‘He made him *Zuoshi* and let him manage the government, and there-
558 upon Song became well ordered.’ (*Zuo zhuan*, *Xi* 9, fifth–fourth c. BCE).

559 The derivational system reconstructed for (Pre-)Archaic Chinese was
560 certainly not productive anymore in the LAC period; at the end of that
561 period, it probably had lost its transparency entirely. Due to the loss of
562 the Archaic morphology, the formal distinctions between telic and atelic



563 verbs become neutralised in Middle Chinese, this subsequently causes
 564 the development of a new aspectual structure at the beginning of Early
 565 Middle Chinese. Before the new aspectual structure V_1 (NP_{Obj}) V_2 -ASP
 566 develops, aspectual distinctions were increasingly expressed by lexical
 567 means, i.e. by aspectual adverbs and—possibly—by sentence final par-
 568 ticles. The increasing employment of aspectual adverbs starting in LAC
 569 was also most likely triggered by the loss of transparency of the verbal
 570 morphology; as long as a morphological distinction of the resultative
 571 was still transparent as in (12a and c), there was no need for a marking
 572 by adverbs in order to mark telicity with those verbs. But by the end
 573 of the LAC period, the two resultative and perfective adverbs *jì* 既 and
 574 *yǐ* 已 appear freely with all kinds of verbs which allow a perfective reading
 575 in their semantic structure. The perfective adverbs remain the predomi-
 576 nant aspectual markers in the *wényán* literature (example 13c), but they
 577 are also employed regularly in the Early Buddhist literature (see examples
 578 (13a) with *jì* 既 and 13b with *yǐ* 已).

579 (13)

580 a. 佛既成道與諸弟子遊行。語云。 *Taishō* 51, no.2085, p.858b

581 *Fó jì chéng dào yǔ zhū dìzǐ yóu xíng, yǔ yún*

582 Buddha already complete way with all disciples wander-about walk,
 583 speak say

584 ‘After the Buddha had perfected the way, he wandered about with his
 585 disciples and said.’

586 b. 今法王大寶自然而至，如佛子所應得者皆已得之。」 *Taishō* 9,
 587 no.262, p.17c

588 *Jīn fǎ wáng dà bǎo zìrán ér zhì, rú fó zǐ suǒ yīng dé zhě*

589 Now dharma king great precious naturally CON arrive, like Buddha
 590 son REL ought get NOM

591 *jiē yǐ dé zhī*

592 all already get OBJ

593 ‘Now the values of the Dharma king all arrive quite naturally, it is sim-
 594 ilar to [the fact] that everything the Buddha’s sons ought to get, they
 595 have already gotten [it].’

596 c. 今已飽，不復須駐。」 *Shìshuō xīnyǔ, xià*, 23,44

597 *Jīn yǐ bǎo, bù fù xū zhù*

598 Now already satiated, NEG again need stay

599 ‘Now I have already eaten it to satiation, I do not need to stay on.’

600 Whereas in the *wényán* literature the aspectual adverbs continue to
 601 constitute the predominant aspectual markers, in the early Buddhist



602 literature the new construction V_1 (NP_{obj}) $V2$ -ASP appears on a regu-
 603 lar basis in addition to the aspectual adverbs. This construction is basi-
 604 cally non-existent in the contemporary non-Buddhist *wényán* literature.
 605 The most frequent of the pre-*liǎo* 了 V_2 , the verb *yǐ* 已, is basically not
 606 attested as a V_2 in either the *Sānguózhì* (end third c. CE),¹⁸ the *Hòu*
 607 *Hànshū* (fifth c. CE), or the *Shìshuō xīnyǔ* (fifth c. CE). Contrastingly, in
 608 the *Miàofǎ liánhuā jīng* (fifth c. CE) altogether 249 *yǐ* in different func-
 609 tions are attested, of these it appears ca. 100times as an aspect marker
 610 (ca. 40%). In the *Xiányú jīng* altogether 630 instances are attested, in
 611 235 of these it appears as an aspect marker (ca. 37%). Example (14)
 612 shows the combination of the LAC adverb *jì* 既 with the new aspectual
 613 structure with *yǐ* in the *Miàofǎ liánhuā jīng*.

614 (14) 既知眾生，得其力已，末後乃為，說是法華。 *Taishō* 9, no.262,
 615 p.39b

616 *Jì zhī zhòng shēng, dé qí lì yǐ, mò hòu nǎi wéi, shuō shì*

617 Already know crowd living-being, get its strength YI, end after then
 618 make, say this

619 *fǎ huā*

620 dharma flower

621 ‘And after he had learned that all the living beings had gained their
 622 strength, then eventually he, therefore, recited this Lotus Sūtra.’

623 The examples clearly demonstrate that although the aspectual struc-
 624 ture V_1 (NP_{obj}) $V2$ -ASP is predominantly attested in the Buddhist litera-
 625 ture, there are strong arguments against the hypothesis that it developed
 626 under the influence of an IE source language. Its development can be
 627 neatly accounted for within the constraints of the diachronic develop-
 628 ments of Chinese; for example, the functional extension of YI under the
 629 influence of Sanskrit proposed by Jiang (2007) displays the same con-
 630 straints as the extension of the employment of aspectual adverbs in LAC.
 631 If we agree on the existence of a still transparent derivational morphol-
 632 ogy in Archaic Chinese, the development of the source structures of the
 633 aspectual system of Modern Mandarin can be deduced from the loss of
 634 this ancient morphology, no influence of Sanskrit or any other IE lan-
 635 guage needs to be involved.

636

CONCLUSION

637 The examples demonstrate the great relevance of the Buddhist literature
 638 for the study of the Chinese language, and in particular of the Chinese
 639 vernacular language, traces of which are to a great extent confined to the



640 Buddhist corpus in Early Middle Chinese. Due to the lack of space, the
641 linguistic characteristics of Chinese discussed here are confined to a very
642 brief introduction to studies on the phonology of Chinese, both con-
643 temporary and in Modern linguistics. Additionally, a few grammatical issues
644 typical for the early Buddhist texts have been discussed. These are: the
645 development of plural marking, modal verbs, the disposal construction,
646 and the development of the aspectual system. The following results can
647 be presented:

- 648 (1) In the evaluation of the relationship between the IE source lan-
649 guage and the Chinese translation the problematic situation with
650 regard to the determination of the source language has to be
651 considered.
- 652 (2) Statistically, the innovations discussed are considerably more fre-
653 quent in the Buddhist literature than in the contemporary *wényán*
654 literature, if they are existent at all in the latter; this accounts in
655 particular for the marking of the plural and the employment of
656 the new aspectual structure $V_1(NP_{Obj})V_2$ -ASP.
- 657 (3) The statistical predominance or the first appearance of a syntac-
658 tic structure does not necessarily argue for an influence of one
659 of the IE source languages on the emergence of the respective
660 structure.
- 661 (4) Many of the innovations most prominent in the Buddhist litera-
662 ture can be analysed as native Chinese developments caused by
663 the loss of a former morphological marking in the language.

664 The discussion demonstrates that some of the hypotheses proposed for
665 the influence of the IE source languages on the syntax of Chinese have
666 to be refused, because the syntactic innovations were caused by changes
667 inherent to the Chinese language. These innovations were probably
668 already well established in the vernacular at the time of the first Buddhist
669 Chinese translations. However, we would not know about this process
670 without the Buddhist translation literature. New and more compre-
671 hensive studies are necessary to reveal the precise relation between the
672 IE source languages the Buddhist texts were translated from and their
673 Chinese translations.



NOTES

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1. Peyraube (1996) distinguishes between a Pre-Medieval transition period (first c. BCE—first c CE) and an Early Medieval Period (second—sixth c. CE); according to Pulleyblank Early Middle Chinese is the language of the *Qiyùn* 切韻 (601 CE).
2. The value of particularly the early translations of Buddhist texts had been contested, e.g. in Peyraube (2015). Direct comparisons between Chinese translations and their Indian correspondences are in any case extremely difficult, since for the Early Medieval period it is basically impossible to determine the exact source language not to mention the exact source texts, which are usually not extant anymore. Karashima's (e.g. 2009) discussion of a number of examples from a phonological perspective clearly demonstrates the difficulties to be encountered in the analysis of phonetic transcriptions of foreign loan words in the early Buddhist translations.
3. The pronunciations are those reconstructed for Early Middle Chinese (EMC) by Pulleyblank (1991), i.e. for the language of the *Qiyun*.
4. See also Li (2004: 234f).
5. Anderl (2004: 417) assumes that *yīng* 應 also serves to express epistemic modality in the *Zútáng jí* and that this function was possible “introduced by Indian Buddhist logic which was introduced to China through the translation of Sanskrit scriptures”. On the other hand the development of an epistemic reading from originally deontic readings is well attested, e.g. in the Germanic languages (Meisterernst 2017).
6. In both Alleton (1984) and Li (2004) *yīngdāng* 應當 is classified together with *dāng* 當 as expressing basically deontic necessity, obligation.
7. A similar development has been proposed for the Germanic languages (see Meisterernst 2017 for a discussion).
8. This is a synopsis of Meisterernst (2012a, b). Norman notes that during and after the Han period different markers of plurality appear in combination with pronouns, but they are very likely not yet obligatory during these periods. Norman supports this hypothesis with the fact that Modern Chinese dialects display a variety of different plural forms which according to him argues for a late occurrence of an obligatory number distinction with pronouns. This can also be supported by the fact that apparently, dialects show different stages of grammaticalisation in marking the plural (Yue 2003: 85f).
9. See also for instance Wang (2004), Zhou (1980), Tang (2001), Zhang Yujin (2001).
10. The reconstructions of Middle Chinese are taken from Pulleyblank (1991).



- 714 11. In Wang (2004: 302) all first person pronouns of this category are recon-
 715 structed with the voiced dental initial *d*-.
- 716 12. At the end of the Late Archaic Period case distinction also start to disap-
 717 pear; in particular the marking of the genitive (Aldridge 2012a).
- 718 13. This combination is attested e.g. in the *Miaofa lianhua jing* (Taishō 262;
 719 33c) as a plural marker of the first person pronoun *wǒ* 我.
- 720 14. A number of articles have been devoted to these plural words, since they
 721 structurally resemble the plural marker *mén* 們 in Modern Chinese and
 722 have probably paved the way for *mén* 們 as its predecessors.
- 723 15. *Wǒ bèi* 我辈, *wú bèi* 吾辈, *nǚ bèi* 汝辈 are not attested.
- 724 16. For an overview on the development of plural markers see Jiang (2005).
- 725 17. An overview of the morphological affixes which derive different verbal
 726 categories (e.g. causatives, action verbs, etc.) is given in Sagart (1999).
- 727 18. There are altogether 632 instances of *yǐ* 已 in different functions in the
 728 *Sanguo zhi*, many of them in commentaries), in the *Hou Hanshū* there are
 729 582 instances, and in the *Shishuo xinyu* there are 240 instances, including
 730 commentaries.

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