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Volume 4

Shā–Z

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Mariana Münnig

Warring States to Medieval Chinese

The period at issue is an important transitional period for the Chinese language; by its end, the basis of the grammar of Modern Chinese had been fully established. The substantial changes the Chinese language is subject to during this period affect all aspects of grammar, i.e., phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon. This article is mainly confined to syntactic changes; changes in the phonology, the morphology and the lexicon are discussed in separate articles.

1. THE WRITTEN AND SPOKEN LANGUAGE ISSUE

Although most Chinese texts from the Archaic period (comprising Early Archaic Chinese or EAC: 10th–6th cents. BCE and Late Archaic Chinese or LAC: 5th–2nd cents. BCE; Peyraube 1996) up to 1919 are written in a literary language, the distance between the written and the spoken varieties of Chinese clearly increases between the Warring States period (481–221 BCE according to Lewis 2008) and the Medieval periods (in this article the Medieval period is assumed to start in the 1st cent. BCE, the beginning of Early Middle Chinese; Aldridge 2012a). While the Late Archaic Chinese language, the language of many of the most important Classical texts, clearly is a variety of written Chinese, it is assumed to be still relatively close to the colloquial language of the time, despite Mair’s (1994) claim that there is a distinction between the literary and the vernacular languages already from the oracle bone inscriptions (14th–11th cents. BCE) on (see also Feng 2016, who discusses this issue with regard to the *Shījīng* 詩經 [Book of Odes] on the basis of the newly developed stylistic-register grammar). This is testified by the so-called fusion words in the *Analects* (*Lúnyǔ* 論語; Warring States). By the Hàn period (206 BCE–220 CE), the literary language (*wényán* 文言) was quite different from any colloquial variety. Nevertheless, even during the Hàn period, some vernacular elements, such as, e.g., the first attested employment of *shì* 是 as a copula, can be traced to the *Shǐjì* 史記 [The Historian’s Records] (c. 100 BCE). A comparison of a number of grammatical words and constructions in the *Shǐjì* and the *Hànshū* (1st cent. CE) demonstrates that the *Shǐjì* in general displays a more vernacular style than the *Hànshū*. The *Shǐjì* tends to express grammatical functions more explicitly and accordingly displays many apparent “redundancies” in comparison with the *Hànshū* in its marking of grammatical categories and in its employment of function words (Meisterernst 2013). The following example represents a typical employment of the aspectual

adverb *cháng* 常 in the *Shǐjì*; however, it is omitted in the *Hànshū* version. Additionally, instead of a disyllabic verb in the *Shǐjì* variant, a monosyllabic verb appears in the *Hànshū*. Both features may be argued to represent a higher degree of colloquialism in the *Shǐjì* than in the *Hànshū*.

1. a. 月氏遁逃而常怨仇匈奴，無與共擊之。
 Yuèzhī dùn táo ér
 Yuèzhī withdraw flee CONJ
cháng yuàn qiú Xiōngnú,
 constantly resent be.hostile Xiōngnú
 wú yǔ gōng jī zhī.
 not.have with together attack 3PL
 ‘The Yuèzhī fled and always resented the Xiōngnú and were hostile to them, but they did not have anyone together with whom they could have attacked them.’
Shǐjì:123, 3157
- b. 月氏遁而怨匈奴，無與共擊之。
 Yuèzhī dùn ér yuàn
 Yuèzhī withdraw CONJ resent
 Xiōngnú, wú yǔ gōng
 Xiōngnú not.have with together
 jī zhī.
 attack 3PL
 ‘The Yuèzhī withdrew and resented the Xiōngnú, but they did not have anyone together with whom they could have attacked them.’
Hànshū:61, 2687

In the 2nd century CE, the first translations of Buddhist texts into Chinese made their appearance. All Buddhist texts were translated from original sources written in Indo-European languages; for the earliest translations these were mainly Prakrit languages and Gandhari. Unfortunately, most of the manuscripts found in the original languages date from centuries later than the 2nd century CE, as a result of which original sources for the early translations are not available (Nattier 2008; Peyraube 2015). The earliest translators were usually not of Chinese origin; the translations were conducted in translation teams including native speakers of Chinese. These early translations are often difficult to understand and

their value for comparative linguistic studies is limited (Zürcher 1991). Additionally, as Peyraube (2015) points out, regional differences have to be considered for the evaluation of the Buddhist translation texts for comparative studies. During the Medieval period, a vast corpus of Buddhist translation texts developed, and the linguistic quality of the translations improved considerably. Most of these texts are now stored in the database of the Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association: CBETA (cbeta.org). Most of the Buddhist translations are written in a kind of literary language, but they include numerous innovative syntactic structures not present in the genuinely Chinese *wényán* literature. Two different approaches towards the origin of these innovative syntactic structures are predominant in the linguistic debate: (1) the syntactic innovations are reflections of the syntax of the source languages from which the texts were translated; (2) they reflect Chinese syntactic structures existent in the vernacular. With regard to the development of the aspectual marker *yǐ* 已 discussed below, the first approach has been assumed, e.g., by Cheung (1977) and by Karashima (1998, 2001), and the second, e.g., by Mei (1981, 1999); Jiǎng (2001, 2007), Meisterernst (2011), Aldridge and Meisterernst (unpubl. ms.). The only texts that are considered entirely colloquial are the *Biànwén* 變文 texts found in *Dūnhuáng* 敦煌. The premodern kind of vernacular typical of *biànwén* texts is now referred to as (*gǔ*) *báihuà* (古)白話 (Mair 1994) and is considered to be the earliest variety of a written vernacular language in Chinese.

Since all documents genuinely Chinese from the latter part of the Hàn period on (that is, the 1st cent. CE) are written in the *wényán* language, our knowledge about any spoken variety of Chinese in the first millennium of the Common Era would be nonexistent without these Buddhist texts. Two structures may serve to demonstrate the differences between the *wényán* and the Buddhist literature: (a) the deontic disyllabic verb *yīngdāng* 應當 ‘ought, should’; and (b) the source structure of the aspectual suffix *le* 了 in Modern Mandarin: VP-YI.

1.1 *The deontic disyllabic verb yīngdāng 應當 ‘ought, should’*

Two of the most common deontic modal verbs in the Buddhist literature are the auxiliary verbs *yīng* 應 ‘should, ought’ and *dāng* 當 ‘should, ought’. These verbs differ slightly syntactically and semantically and they are usually employed in a complimentary way. According to Li (2004:246), the combination of the two verbs *yīngdāng* 應當 appears first after the Hàn period and is in general infrequent in the Chinese literature (there are one instance in the *Sānguózhì* 三國志 from the end of the 3rd cent. CE and three in the *Hòu Hànshū*, 後漢書, 5th cent. CE). Li’s statement is based on the non-Buddhist literature; in the early Buddhist literature *yīngdāng* is comparably frequently attested (there are 14 instances in the *Miàofǎ liánhuā jīng* 妙法蓮華經 and seven in the *Xiányú jīng* 賢愚經, both from the 5th cent. CE); it always expresses deontic modal values.

2. 我有如是七寶大車，其數無量，應當等心各各與之，不宜差別。

Wǒ yǒu rú shì qī bǎo dà
1SG have like this seven jewel great
chē, qí shù wú
carriage 3POSS number not.have
liàng, yīngdāng dǎngxīn gè
measure YINGDANG equal.minded each
gè yǔ zhī, bù yí
each give OBJ not appropriate
chābié.
difference

‘I have carriages like these adorned with the seven jewels, their number is measureless, I should be even-minded and give them one each, and I should not make any distinction.’
Taishō 9, no. 262, p. 12c

1.2 *The source structure of the aspectual suffix le 了 in Modern Mandarin: VP-YI*

The most frequent predecessor of the aspectual suffix *le* 了 is *yǐ* 已 in the construction VP-YI. The verb *yǐ* ‘stop, complete, finish’, the source of YI in VP-YI, is basically not attested in its aspectual function in either the *Sānguózhì* (altogether 632 instances of *yǐ* in different functions, many

of them in commentaries), the *Hòu Hànshū* (582 instances), or the *Shìshuō xīnyǔ* 世說新語 (5th cent. CE; 240 instances, including commentaries). Contrastingly, in the *Miàofǎ liánhuā jīng*, altogether 249 instances of *yǐ* in different functions are attested, in around 40% of them it appears in the aspectual structure VP-YI. In the *Xiányú jīng*, there are altogether 630 instances, in 37% of them *yǐ* appears in the aspectual structure VP-YI. This structure is briefly discussed below.

3. 既知眾生，得其力已，末後乃為，說是法華。

Jì zhī zhòng shēng, dé
already know crowd living-being get
qí lì yǐ, mò hòu nǎi
3POSS strength YI end after then
wéi, shuō shì fǎ huā.
make say this dharma flower
‘And after he had learned that all the living beings had gained their strength, then eventually he therefore recited this Lotus Sūtra.’
Taishō 9, no. 262, p. 39b

These few examples demonstrate the relevance of the Buddhist Chinese texts for the study of the history of the Chinese language.

2. WORD FORMATION

The development of disyllabic words (→ Disyllabification) can be identified as one of the most evident changes from Warring States to Medieval Chinese, although the lack of a morphological or graphical marking makes the establishment of criteria for the determination of polysyllabic words very difficult (e.g., Duanmu 2012). The Hàn period constitutes the first significant stage in the process of disyllabification. Based on Chéng (1982) and others, Feng (1996:355 and in this volume) in his study on the prosody of Archaic Chinese assumes that the disyllabic foot formation—a prosodic foot in Chinese is disyllabic—was completed in the Hàn period. Different hypotheses have been proposed in the literature for this change. These are listed in Feng’s contribution on disyllabification as: (1) aesthetic reasons lead to the pairing of

syllables; (2) socioeconomic reasons due to an increase in complexity in the Hàn period society; and (3) phonological change. Feng proposes that the “internal mechanism hypothesis”: the loss of consonant clusters changed the phonological system of the language. This change in the phonology (and morphology) of Chinese does not only constitute the trigger for changes in the lexicon of Chinese, but also in its syntax (see, e.g., Wei 2003; Aldridge 2012a).

In his study on changes in the lexicon in Hàn period Chinese, Chéng (1982:263) reports an impressive increase of disyllabic words in comparison to the Classical literature: in the *Lùnhéng* 論衡 (1st cent. CE), they already amount to more than 2,000. Most of the disyllabic words discussed in Chéng (1982) are coordinative compounds. Different concepts of → wordhood and compounding have been proposed for Chinese, e.g., by Chao (1968), Packard (2000), Feng (2001), Dōng (2004) (see the discussion in Arcodia 2007). Arcodia (2007:82) concludes that “there is at present a widespread agreement on the fact that compounding is indeed the combination of lexical morphemes, which may be free words, roots, etc.” Coordinative compounds usually consist of two semantically related or quasi-synonymous words juxtaposed to each other without any marking. This construction was very productive in the development of disyllabic words in Chinese. The coordination of two nouns usually results into a noun, the combination of two verbs results into a verb, but the combination of two adjectives can be employed to express an abstract noun. The word formation of Chinese always follows syntactic rules. The following examples of disyllabic coordinative compounds are already attested in the Classical Literature:

Disyllabic compounds in LAC

4. a. Coordination of two nouns: noun + noun = noun
Examples are: *fùmǔ* 父母 ‘father and mother > parents’; *qínshòu* 禽獸 ‘birds and quadrupeds > animals’
- b. Coordination of two verbs: verb + verb = verb
An example is: *biànhuà* 變化 ‘change and change > change’

- c. Coordination of two adjectives: adjective + adjective = noun

An example is: *chángduǎn* 長短 ‘long and short > length’

In example (5), the two verbs *huān* 歡 ‘happy, joyous’ and *xǐ* 喜 ‘pleased, happy’, which, in the reverse order, constitute the compound *xǐhuān* 喜歡 ‘like’ in Modern Mandarin, are coordinated. This coordination is basically non-existent in the Late Archaic Chinese literature, but its frequency increases considerably in the Medieval literature (the order of the two roots is still relatively free).

5. 天下并聞，吏民歡喜，咸知漢德豐雍，瑞應出也。

Tiānxià bìng wén, lì mín
empire together hear official people
huān xǐ, xián zhī Hàn dé
happy happy all know Hàn virtue
fēngyōng, ruìyìng chū yě.
flourishing auspicious.sign go.out SFP
‘When the entire empire heard about it, all officials and people were happy and they all knew that Hàn’s virtue was so excellent that auspicious signs would appear.’
Lùnhéng 59.3.17

Although compound words already existed in the Classical literature, the Hàn period clearly constitutes a first turning point for a development towards a greater number of disyllabic words. According to Shi (2002:75), the number of disyllabic words further increases from the 5th century and again from the 8th century on. In total, the frequency rate of disyllabic words in Late Archaic Chinese is 20% in contrast to Modern Mandarin where it is about 80% (Shi 2002:70–72). A lively debate on phonological change, the process of disyllabification, and the phenomenon of the supremacy of coordinate compounds in Chinese by a number of scholars specialized in the field (Matthew Y. Chen, Daniel Silverman, Mieko Ogura, Abby Kaplan, Wang Feng, Wolfgang Behr, Shengli Feng) appeared in the *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* (2015) as a response to an article “A Chinese Phonological Enigma” by Geoffrey Sampson (2015).

To be sure, coordination is not the only syntactic structure attested in compound words. Dong (2012) points out that all the main syntactic structures of Chinese could lexicalize. These are coordinate phrases, subordinate phrases, verb-object phrases, verb-result phrases, subject-predicate phrases. According to her not only lexical phrases, but also those containing functional words were available for the lexicalization of new words. Most of the syntactic structures listed in Dong (with the exception of coordinate phrases) are the result of the so-called explicitness process, discussed in Hú (2005, 2008, 2016) in a meticulous study within a lexical semantics framework. The explicitness process results in new disyllabic words usually of the same category as the monosyllabic source words in Late Archaic Chinese. These can have different structures in Medieval Chinese. Here are four examples:

Structures resulting from the explicitness process (Hu 2016:81)

6. a. subject predicate structures resulting into a new disyllabic verb with about the same meaning:
bēng 崩 'slide (of land)' (verb), *shānbēng* 山崩 lit. 'mountain-slide'; *pò* 破 'break' (verb), ≥ *shípò* 石破 lit. 'stone-break';
- b. modifier modified structures resulting into a disyllabic noun with about the same meaning:
bàng 棒 'stick' (noun), *mùbàng* 木棒 lit. 'wooden-stick'; *xuě* 雪 'snow' (noun), ≥ *báixuě* 白雪 lit. 'white snow' (subordinate phrases in Dong's analysis);
- c. predicate-object structures resulting into a disyllabic verb with about the same meaning:
qí 騎 'ride' (verb), *qímǎ* 騎馬 lit. 'ride-horse'; *qǐ* 啓 'open' (verb), *qǐhù* 啓戶 lit. 'open-door' (verb-object phrases in Dong's analysis);
- d. predicate-result structures resulting in a disyllabic verb with about the same meaning:
bǎo 飽 'full' (verb), *shíbǎo* 食飽 lit. 'eat-full'; *pò* 破 'broken' (verb), *dǎpò* 打破 lit. 'hit-broken'.

Of these only the predicate-result structures were entirely absent in Archaic Chinese. Although the word formation processes always comply with the syntactic constraints of Chinese, according to Hu (2016:104), they could also be a cause of change in the syntax of Chinese.

3. SYNTACTIC CHANGES

Syntactic changes from Archaic to Medieval Chinese are the subject of numerous studies on the history of the Chinese language. These include studies on particular syntactic structures just as well as general overviews of the history of the Chinese language (e.g., by Wáng Lì 1958, and Ohta Tatsuo 1987). A more recent overview has been presented in Wei (2003). Wei concludes that many of the considerable changes from Archaic to Medieval Chinese can be attributed to the loss of morphological distinctions in Archaic Chinese, which caused numerous changes in the morphology and the syntax of Medieval Chinese. Besides the morphological changes in the word formation process, he includes short notes based on his previous research on practically all grammatical changes from Archaic to Medieval Chinese: e.g., the diachronic change of the causative construction, the development of the pronominal system, the development of the copula structure, restrictions on the number of postverbal elements, i.e., the constraint on the position of adjunct PPs for which the preverbal position becomes mandatory, changes in the aspectual system, the comparative construction, the passive construction, the system of sentence final particles, the system of anaphora, the word order issue, the system of quantifiers, etc. Jiǎng Shàoyú and Cáo Guǎngshùn in their joint (2005) publication *Jīndài Hànyǔ yǔfǎ shǐ yánjiū zōngshù* 近代汉语语法史研究综述 provide a very informed overview on the state of research on different central issues in historical syntax focusing on the development from Medieval Chinese to Modern Mandarin. A selection of central syntactic changes from the Warring States to the Medieval periods are also discussed in Peyraube (1996). These include word order change, the development of the disposal construction, passives, dative constructions,

locatives, aspectual suffixes, coordinative conjunctions, resultatives, determinative particles, pronouns, including wh-pronouns, and classifiers within the framework of analogy and grammaticalization. A few of the central issues will be briefly referred to in this article.

3.1 Word order

The hypothesis that the basic word order changed from SOV to SVO in Archaic Chinese presented in the 1970s (Li and Thompson 1974) is based on three exceptions from SVO order which have been assumed to be vestiges of an older SOV order (→ Old Chinese Syntax: Basic Word Order). These are: the preverbal position of (a) object wh-pronouns; (b) pronouns in negative sentences; and (c) lexical object NPs in focalizing contexts. More recent studies, including Peyraube (1996) have falsified this hypothesis: Djamouri (2001) demonstrates that the basic word order in the oracle bone inscriptions has always been SVO. Aldridge (2010, 2012a) and Meisterernst (2010) have demonstrated that all these exceptions from the basic order are marked and may be the result of movement, and thus must be excluded from the debate on the basic, that is, unmarked, word order. During the Hàn, all three exceptions cease to be productive; wh-objects and personal pronouns no longer occur preverbally. Different hypotheses have been presented for this loss, including the hypothesis that it is due to a loss of morphological case distinctions (see Aldridge 2012a). Aldridge proposes the hypothesis that the general loss of case marking on pronominal elements may have triggered the loss of object fronting constructions, at least in the case of pronoun fronting with negation and of NP fronting. According to Aldridge, the morphological trigger for the loss of wh-fronting is more difficult to identify. However, it might be related to the loss of NP focus fronting.

3.2 Changes in the passive construction

The development of passive constructions from Warring States to Medieval Chinese has been subject to an extensive debate (Bennett 1981;

Táng and Zhōu 1985; Táng 1987; Peyraube 1989; Ren 1993; Wei 1994; Meisterernst 2000; Aldridge 2012a; Y. Li 2015; and many more). The following constructions are attested in Warring States and Medieval Chinese. Of these, constructions (a), (b), and (c) are typical for the Warring States period; (d) appears at the end of the Warring States period, whereas (e), the *bèi* 被 passive, only develops during the Early Medieval period; note that initially it does not permit the insertion of an agent into the structure.

(a) *yú* 於: NP_{Theme} V_t *yú* -PP_{Agent} (variant *yú* 于)

7. 內困於父母，外困於諸侯。

Nèi kùn yú fù mǔ,
within constrain by father mother
wài kùn yú zhū-hóu.
outside constrain by feudal-lord

'Within he was constrained by his parents;
outside he was constrained by the feudal lords.'

Guóyǔ: 8/3b/210 (5th–4th cents. BCE)

(b) *wéi* 為: NP_{Theme} *wéi* (NP_{Agent}) V_t

Example (8a) is agentless, two passive constructions are combined in one sentence; (8b) includes an agent.

8. a. 厚者為戮，薄者見疑矣。

Hòu zhě wéi lù, bó zhě
thick REL PASS execute thin REL
jiàn yí yǐ.
PASS doubt SFP

'The serious ones are to be executed and
the lighter ones are to be doubted.'

Hán Fēi 12 (3rd cent. BCE)

b. 必為諸侯笑。

Bì wéi zhū-hóu xiào.
certainly PASS feudal-lord laugh
'We will certainly be laughed at by the
feudal lords.'

Guóyǔ: 9/5b/238

(c) *jiàn* 見: NP_{Theme} *jiàn* V_t (*yú* 於 -PP_{Agent})

Example (9a) is agentless, (9b) includes an agent introduced by the *yú*-PP.

9. a. 即此言愛人者必見愛也，而惡人者必見惡也。

Jí cǐ yán ài rén zhě
then this word love man REL
bì jiàn ài yě, ér wù
certainly PASS love SFP CONJ hate
rén zhě bì jiàn wù yě.
man REL certainly PASS hate SFP
'Those who love others will certainly be loved, and those who hate others will certainly be hated.'

Mò: 27/16/71

- b. 吾嘗三仕三見逐於君，...

Wú cháng sān shì
1SG once three serve.in.office
sān jiàn zhú yú jūn, ...
three PASS dismiss by ruler
'I once had been in office three (several) times, and had been dismissed by my ruler several times...'

Shǐjì: 62; 2132

- (d) *wéi* 為...*suǒ* 所: NP_{Theme} *wéi* NP_{Agent} *suǒ* V_t

10. 漢軍卻，為楚所擠，...

Hàn jūn què, wéi Chǔ suǒ
Hàn army push.back PASS Chǔ PASS
jǐ, ...
press

'The Hàn army was forced to retreat and was put under pressure by Chǔ...'

Shǐjì: 7; 322

- (e) *bèi* 被: NP_{Theme} *bèi* V_t

Example (11a), one of the earliest examples, is agentless; (11b) from the vernacular *Dūnhuáng biànwén* literature includes an agent.

11. a. 信而見疑，忠而被謗，...

Xìn ér jiàn yí, zhōng
faithful CONJ PASS doubt loyal
ér bèi bàng...
CONJ PASS slander

'Faithful but being doubted, loyal but being slandered, ...'

Shǐjì: 84; 2482

- b. 子胥被夫人認識。

Zǐ Xū bèi fūrén rénshí.
Zǐ Xū PASS wife recognize

'Zǐ Xū was recognized by his wife.'

Dūnhuáng biànwén jí, 12

Different hypotheses have been proposed with regard to the emergence, analysis, and development of the different passive constructions, including the hypothesis that the appearance of marked passives was due to the loss of a morphological marking of different verb forms (Wei 1994; Aldridge 2012a; for a contrary view see Táng and Zhōu 1985). According to Peyraube, the development of the passive constructions follows the principles of analogy with regard to the replacement of the structures with *jiàn* 見 and *wéi* 為 by *bèi*, and of grammaticalization with regard to the development of *wéi* and *bèi* from verb to preposition, the "input of the grammaticalization process was the serial verb construction", a development analogous to that of the disposal construction discussed below (Peyraube 1996:178). However, not all authors agree with Peyraube's analysis. A new analysis of the development of the passive constructions from Warring States to Medieval Chinese and from Medieval Chinese to Modern Mandarin has been proposed in Y. Li (2015). Y. Li distinguishes monoclausal and biclausal passive constructions which eventually develop into the short and the long passives of Modern Mandarin respectively. According to him the short passive developed from the *jiàn* passive (ex. 9), which does not provide any extra space for hosting a potential agent in the structure. The long passive developed from the *wéi* passive, which he analyzes as a copula structure (ex. 8, particularly 8b). The direct ancestor of the long passive with BEI in Modern Mandarin is the WEI...SUO passive (ex. 10), which was reanalyzed as a biclausal structure from the WEI passive in Middle Chinese. The trigger for both developments was the DP complement's lexical ambiguity between noun and verb.

3.3 The Development of the disposal construction

In the disposal construction NP_{agent} BA NP_{theme} V, *bǎ* 把 / *jiāng* 將 / *chí* 持 / *zhuō* 捉 appear as V₁ in a serial verb construction from the Early Medieval period on. The SVC underwent a number of

changes before it developed into the disposal construction in its Modern Mandarin form. The BA-construction was finally established around the 12th century (Shi 2002:205f). The disposal construction is certainly one of the constructions most extensively discussed in the linguistic literature. According to Cao and Yu, the earliest object marker attested was the verb *qǔ* 取 ‘take’. They assume that the construction developed under the influence of translations from Sanskrit in order to reflect its OV word order. The following is an example from the *Dūnhuáng biànwén* collection. According to Zhāng (2001), this is one of the earliest examples for *jiāng* in a true disposal construction in Medieval Chinese.

12. 惠虛假，只貪才，早晚曾將智慧開，...
 Huì xūjiǎ, zhǐ tān cái,
 kindness baseless only crave talent
 zǎo wǎn céng jiāng zhìhuì
 early late PST JIANG wisdom
 kāi...
 establish
 ‘His kindness is baseless, he only craves talent, from early to late he once practiced wisdom, ...’
Wéimójiéjīng jiǎng jīng wén, èr 維摩詰經講
 經文(二) (cf. Zhāng, 2001)

Mei (1990) distinguishes different kinds of disposals and refers particularly to their historical development and their relation to the ancient disposals with *yǐ* 以. In contrast, Peyraube emphasizes a grammaticalization process from a verb to a preposition *bǎ* probably around the 7th century or earlier (Peyraube 1996:170). Although he admits that the *bǎ* disposal developed by analogy to the *yǐ* disposal, he employs the grammaticalization hypothesis as an argument against the lexical replacement hypothesis of *yǐ* by *bǎ*. Recently, arguments have been presented by Whitman and Paul (2005) for the analysis of *bǎ* as a higher verbal head (see also Sybesma 1999) to be distinguished from lexical verbs, and by Aldridge (2012b) for an analysis of *yǐ* as a functional head, a high applicative within *vP*; these analyses support the assumption of a close syntactic relation between the *yǐ* and the *bǎ* constructions and argue against a syntactic

influence of the source languages of the Chinese Buddhist texts (see also above).

3.4 Changes in the aspectual system

Major changes can be observed in the aspectual system of Chinese. In Ancient Chinese, the possibility of a morphological marking of verbal categories by affixation cannot be excluded (Sagart 1999; Gassmann and Behr 2005; Jīn 2006; Schuessler 2007), although it has been assumed that temporal and aspectual relations were only expressed by way of implication (Schuessler 2007:41). In Warring States Chinese, aspectual distinctions are mainly expressed by aspectual adverbs and the semantics of the verb (Meisterernst 2004, 2005, 2008, 2015a, 2016). In Early Medieval Chinese, the structure V_1 (NP_{Obj}) V_2 emerges, possibly due to a loss of earlier morphology, as the source structure of the aspectual system of Modern Mandarin (Aldridge and Meisterernst, ms.). At first, any one of several synonymous verbs could fill the slot of V_2 particularly with regard to the expression of the perfective aspect; these were all replaced by *liǎo* 了 during the Táng period. Example (3) above represents the aspectual marker YI which has been assumed to be the predecessor of *liǎo* in Medieval Chinese (Jiǎng 2007).

Different hypotheses have been proposed regarding the possible emergence of this structure under the influence of the source languages of the Buddhist texts on the one hand, and the path of grammaticalization of the different V_2 into aspectual markers as *V-suffix* NP_{Obj} on the other (Wú 2006; Cáo 1999; Jiǎng and Cáo 2005). These were fully grammaticalized during the Sòng (Jiǎng 1994; Chen 1997; Cáo 1986; Cáo 1995; Jiǎng and Cáo 2005). Cheung (1977), Karashima (e.g., 1998, 2001), and Zhào (1979) argue for an emergence of this structure under the syntactic influence of the Indian source languages of the Buddhist translations. Mei (1981, 1999), Jiǎng (2001, 2007), Meisterernst (2011), and Aldridge and Meisterernst (ms.) propose an internal development probably influenced by the Chinese vernacular language. Jiǎng (2007) argues for an extension of the structure, influenced by the translation of the Buddhist texts from Sanskrit.

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