

Article

“Buddhism for Chinese Readers”: Zhi Qian’s Literary Refinements in the *Foshuo pusa benye jing*

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Abstract: The present article continues the modern scholarship on the transmission of Buddhism from India to China by focusing on one of the most influential figures among the early Chinese Buddhist translators, namely, Zhi Qian (支謙, ca. 193–252 CE). His translation style is characterized as “kaleidoscopic,” as Jan Nattier describes, due to the high degree of diversity and variability in his language and terminology. In this study, we explore Zhi Qian’s literary refinements from the lexical, stylistic, and conceptual points of view based on his *Foshuo pusa benye jing* (佛說菩薩本業經, T. 281) in close conjunction with three related sūtras, the *Foshuo dousha jing* (佛說兜沙經, T. 280), the *Zhu pusa qiufu benye jing* (諸菩薩求佛本業經, T. 282), and the *Pusa shizhu xingdao pin* (菩薩十住行道品, T. 283), all attributed to Lokakṣema. We specifically discuss how Zhi Qian produced such a polished and “sinicised” version with various modes of literary modifications (e.g., using *wenyan* elements, four-syllable prosodic pattern, diverse vocabulary, and indigenous Chinese concepts) within the context of his life and times. In this article, we also argue that his main aim in producing the *Foshuo pusa benye jing* was to provide a more classical, elegant, and readable Buddhist scripture to the Chinese readers, but that he had to sacrifice being able to faithfully reflect the language used in the original Indic texts.

Keywords: Zhi Qian; *Foshuo pusa benye jing* 佛說菩薩本業經; early Chinese Buddhist translation; translated terminology

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1. Introduction¹

The production of Chinese translations of Indian Buddhist texts was not merely a translation from one language to another, both of which were major *lingua francas* of the first millennium, but also the encounter of two highly developed civilizations that had a great influence on the majority of countries in Central, East, and South Asia of the time. Thus, the historical and cultural significance of such an event proves to be a rich field for research, and indeed, the Chinese Buddhist translators and their works have for a long time been widely studied by a broad range of scholars from various perspectives. The present paper continues this scholarship on the transmission of Buddhism from India to China by focusing on one of the most important figures among the early Chinese Buddhist translators, namely, Zhi Qian (支謙, fl. ca. 229–252 CE).²

Born into a Yuezhi 月支 family, Zhi Qian started his career as a translator under Zhi Liang (支亮), who succeeded one of the first generation translators of Buddhist texts into Chinese, Lokakṣema (Zhi Loujiachen 支婁迦讖, fl. 168–186 CE), in the capital of the Han dynasty, Luoyang (洛陽). Due to the political and social turmoil at the end of the Han dynasty that spread throughout Northern China, he migrated from Luoyang to Jianye (

建業), the capital of the southern Wu kingdom. According to Chinese catalogues and biographies, his most productive years were spent there as a translator with the support of the Wu dynasty's first emperor, Sun Quan (孫權, r. 222–252 CE). His translation style is characterized as “kaleidoscopic,” as Jan Nattier describes (Nattier 2008b, p. 148), due to the high degree of diversity and variability in his language and terminology. Regardless of the genre of the texts, he produced a number of translations and revisions, including Āgama texts, didactic verses, Mahāyāna sūtras, and even a biography of the Buddha.

Research on his life and works has been conducted by various scholars (e.g., Tang 1938; Zürcher [1959] 2007; Maeda 1964; Lamotte 1965; Lancaster 1969; Saitō 2000; Nattier 2003a, 2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c; Cheung and Lin 2006; Park 2008; Zacchetti 2010; Karashima 2013b, 2016). Among them, two scholars in particular, Jan Nattier and Karashima Seishi, have made a great contribution to our understanding of Zhi Qian's life and legacy. Based on extensive and systematic research on Zhi Qian's works and related materials in Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese, Nattier has examined the list of his genuine works, the characteristics of his translation style, and impact on Chinese Buddhist translations.³ She has also analyzed Zhi Qian's language in general, which is used in the various genres of his works, and his translation terms in particular regarding the names of the heavens and ten epithets of the Buddhas (Nattier 2003a, 2008c). In his groundbreaking work, Karashima demonstrated that the language underlying the early Chinese Buddhist translations, including Zhi Qian's works, is Gāndhārī or Prakrit close to Gāndhārī (Karashima 1992, 2001, 2006, 2013a, 2013b, 2015, 2016).⁴

Building on their pioneering studies, we explore Zhi Qian's language and literary style by examining the lexical choices and stylistic features represented in the *Foshuo pusa benye jing* (佛說菩薩本業經, T. 281; hereafter *Benye jing*).⁵ Specifically, we first discuss how Zhi Qian produced a polished and “sinicised” version with various modes of literary modifications (e.g., using *wenyan* elements, four-syllable prosodic pattern, diverse vocabulary, and indigenous Chinese concepts) and place this within the context of his background and the literary tradition at the time.⁶ It is hoped that this paper will make a small contribution to our understanding of Zhi Qian's translation techniques and underlying strategies, showing the context and dynamics in his language and translation activities.⁷

2. Zhi Qian's *Foshuo pusa benye jing*

Before proceeding to the evaluation of Zhi Qian's words and expressions used in the *Benye jing*, let us briefly look at the *Benye jing* itself, its textual history and contents, in the light of current scholarly findings. The *Buddhāvataṃsaka* (Chi. *Huayan* 華嚴; Kor. *Hwaeom*; Jap. *Kegon*; Viet. *Hoa nghiêm*; Tib. *Sanṣ rgyas phal po che*), which can be translated as “Flower Ornament,” “Flower Adornment,” or “Flower Garland,” is one of the representative canonical collections of Mahāyāna Buddhism, which had greatly influenced the thought, religions, cultures, and even politics in Asia over the past two millennia. However, it was not until Nattier published the article on the proto-*Buddhāvataṃsaka*, a term coined by herself, in 2004 that the Zhi Qian's *Benye jing* and its textual relationship have attracted much scholarly attention (Nattier 2004).⁸ In her work on the *Ugraparipṛcchāsūtra*, published shortly before this in 2003, she briefly mentioned that the complete, or rather, the larger *Buddhāvataṃsaka* might be developed based on the Indic original of the *Benye jing*.⁹ Nattier has carried out further studies on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka* corpus in its early stage of textual development in 2004 and 2007. In this research, she reconstructed the formation process of the proto-*Buddhāvataṃsaka*, in which the *Benye jing* serves as textual evidence supporting the hypothesis that the three sūtras, viz. the *Foshuo dousha jing* (佛說兜沙經, T. 280), the *Zhu pusa qiufu benye jing* (諸菩薩求佛本業經, T. 282), and the *Pusa shizhu xingdao pin* (菩薩十住行道品, T. 283), were originally bound together as the first Chinese translation of a text we now refer to the proto-*Buddhāvataṃsaka* (Nattier 2004, 2007a).

According to her, Lokakṣema translated one *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtra* into Chinese, probably between 178 and 189 CE, but it was abruptly divided into the three sūtras mentioned above for an unknown reason. Even though these are traditionally attributed to three different translators, Lokakṣema, Nie Daozhen, and Dharmarakṣa, respectively, all of them share the distinctive linguistic footprints of Lokakṣema. Some discrepancies concerning the attribution of the texts found in the earliest extant catalog of Chinese Buddhist texts, the *Chu sanzang ji ji* 出三藏記集, compiled by Sengyou (僧祐, completed ca. 518 CE), also support this hypothesis (Nattier 2004, pp. 331–34).

Further, she suggests that the *Benye jing* is another translation or recension of the very same work of the three sūtras as each of them corresponds to a chapter in the *Benye jing*. Indeed, each chapter in the *Benye jing* corresponds to each one of the three sūtras without overlapping. To be specific, the *Benye jing* is composed of three chapters: Chapter 1. *Introduction* (*xupin di yi* 序品第一, T. 281, 446b29–447b4); Chapter 2. *Vow and Practice* (*yuanxingpin di er* 願行品第二, T. 281, 447b5–449b24); Chapter 3. *Ten Abodes* (*shidipin di san* 十地品第三, T. 281, 449b25–450c27). The first chapter of the *Benye jing* and the *Foshuo dousha jing* (T. 280) deal with the admiration for the Buddha and enumeration of the *buddhakṣetras*, buddhas, and bodhisattvas in the ten directions. The second chapter and the *Zhu pusa qiufu benye jing* (T. 282) present the bodhisattva's ways of practicing in his everyday life as the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī's answer to the question of the bodhisattva Jñānaśrī. The third chapter and the *Pusa shizhu xingdao pin* are made up of various lists related to the ten abodes (*shidi* 十地) of the bodhisattvas. Among these, the most notable parts are the second chapter of the *Benye jing* and the *Zhu pusa qiufu benye jing*, since both texts, mainly consisting of over a hundred sentences repeated in the same pattern, can be employed as important materials for the study of the textual relationship of the proto-*Buddhāvataṃsaka*.

3. Zhi Qian's Literary Refinements Employed in the *Benye jing*

The early Chinese Buddhist translation's main target audience can roughly be divided into two groups: one is the Chinese literati who received classical training; the other is the mass of ordinary people who had less opportunity for formal literary education at the time. People in both groups lived in a social and cultural milieu dominated by Confucianism as a ruling ideology during the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE).¹⁰ Zhi Qian has been hitherto regarded, together with Kang Senghui (康僧會, fl. ca. 249–280 CE) and Kang Mengxiang (康孟詳, fl. 190–220 CE), as one of the representatives who preferred to use the elegant and refined *wenyan* 文言 style of writing, which, needless to say, places him in the first group.¹¹ Zhi Qian's biography, included in the *Chu sanzang ji ji* (出三藏記集, T. 2145), states that soon after arriving at the capital of Wu kingdom, Jianye (ca. 299 CE), he was summoned by Sun Quan and appointed as an advisor of the crown prince, Sun Deng (孫登, d. 241 CE). From then until Sun Deng's death, Zhi Qian spent his most productive time as a translator at the Wu dynasty court for about ten years.¹² Thus, it is not surprising that his composition reflects the Chinese high-class literary tradition, and that its various elements and features are linearly interpolated in his works. Lokakṣema, on the contrary, is well known for his "exotic" or "cryptic" style of translation, in which one can find a variety of polysyllabic transliterations used for Buddhist names and technical terms (Nattier 2008b, pp. 17–19).

The *Benye jing*, mostly composed of four-character prosody that is a distinctive feature of classical Chinese literary composition (Knechtges 2010, pp. 160–61), presents itself as a perfect example of Zhi Qian's translation tendencies. In this section, we examine how Zhi Qian polished already existing translations to cater to the taste of the contemporary cultured gentry.¹³ To this end, Zhi Qian's literary refinements employed in the *Benye jing* will be evaluated from three different perspectives, namely, terminological, stylistic, and conceptual, in comparison with Lokakṣema's translations (T. 280, T. 282, and T. 283) that

are written in a free narrative style with various vernacular elements. There has been no Indic original of the *Benye jing* or Lokakṣema's translations found so far. Thus, in this study, we use the Tibetan version of the larger *Buddhāvataṃsaka*, the *Saṅs rgyas phal po che zes bya ba śin tu rgyas pa chen po'i mdo* (D 44), translated in about 800 CE by two Indian masters, Jinamitra and Surendrabodhi, and the Tibetan translator-cum-editor Ye shes sde, in order to trace the Sanskrit underlying the Tibetan. The translations are indicated with the abbreviations of the translators' names (i.e., "ZQ" for Zhi Qian's translation and "Lk" for Lokakṣema's translation).

3.1. The Use of Chinese Literary Words

As far as lexical choices made in the *Benye jing* are concerned, it was found that Zhi Qian tended to choose the literary style of vocabulary instead of the vernacular words used in Lokakṣema's translations. Here, we present some specific examples to illustrate such inclination.

(a) The first person pronoun *wo* 我 is used 54 times in Lokakṣema's translations (T. 280, T. 282, T. 283), but only four times in the *Benye jing*. In the early Buddhist Chinese translations, the character *wo* 我 is generally used in a casual or colloquial sense, while the character *wu* 吾, which also refers to "oneself," gives a formal or elegant impression. Zhi Qian, in his *Da mingdu jing* (T. 225), frequently replaced *wo* 我, used in Lokakṣema's *Daoting banre jing* (道行般若經, T. 224), with *wu* 吾 (Karashima 2013b, pp. 279–82).¹⁴ The same lexical replacement occurs in the *Benye jing*. See the example provided below, in which the expression *wo cao dengbei* 我曹等輩 is modified to the word *wu deng* 吾等.¹⁵

ZQ (T. 281, 446c9–11): 佛念吾等, 建立大志, 能悉現我諸佛世界, 所有好惡, 殊勝之。

[Var.: 能 = 乃 (三、宮、聖乙)]

The Buddha, thinking of us, sets a great aspiration, and displays all buddha-fields to us, in which the good and the bad are distinguished.

Lk (T. 280, 445a20–21): 佛愛我曹等輩, 諸菩薩等所念, 示現我等諸佛刹。

The Buddha, caring for us and [knowing] what all bodhisattvas think, displays all buddha-fields to us.

(b) The negative *mi* 靡 is considered as one of the *wenyan* elements (Zürcher [1996] 2013d, p. 516). The following example shows that Zhi Qian wrote a double negative sentence with the word *mi* 靡 in order to emphasize the meaning in a more refined manner:

ZQ (T. 281, 446c8–9): 三塗之事, 靡不貫達。

There is nothing that they cannot comprehend thoroughly in the three times.

Lk (T. 280, 445a19–20): 皆入過去當來今現在法中。

They all comprehend (literally "enter into") the dharmas in the past, future, and present.

(c) A direct speech introduced by the word *yue* 曰 is also regarded as a *wenyan* element (Zürcher [1996] 2013d, p. 516). It occurs only twice in Lokakṣema's translations (T. 280, 445a6, 446a7), while seven times in the *Benye jing* (T. 281, 446c9, 447b2, 447b6, 447b18, 449c13, 450b12). Here, we provide two examples that show Zhi Qian modifying Lokakṣema's expressions *yi* 議 and *yan* 言 to *tanyue* 歎曰:

ZQ (T. 281, 446c9): 至皆歎曰。¹⁶

They all praise:

Lk (T. 280, 445a20): 諸菩薩輩議如是。

All bodhisattvas discuss like this:

ZQ (T. 281, 447a8–9): 彼時, 敬首菩薩, 承佛聖旨, 歎曰。

At that time, the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, taking hold of the Buddha's power, praises:

Lk (T. 280, 445c26–27): 文殊師利菩薩, 持佛威神, 悉遍視諸菩薩, 皆遍以便舉慧言。

The bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, taking hold of the Buddha's power, looks at all bodhisattvas. Having looked around [them], he says with his wisdom:

(d) *Xia* 黠 is an interesting word that can be used in a positive or negative sense, namely “crafty, cunning” or “wise, intelligent.” According to Karashima (2013b, p. 277), it was more common to use this term in a negative way, but Lokakṣema frequently used it in a positive sense. However, such “unusual” usage of the term *xia* 黠 does not seem to be well accepted by later translators, including Zhi Qian. For example, it occurs 46 times in Lokakṣema's *Daoxing banre jing* (T. 224), whereas only ten times in the *Da mingdu jing* (T. 225), excluding its first chapter that is not generally attributed to Zhi Qian's genuine work. The rest were modified by the character *zhi* 智 or *hui* 慧, both of which mean “wisdom.” In the *Xiaopin banreboluomi jing* 小品般若波羅蜜經 (T. 227), translated by Kumārajīva early in the 5th century CE, the word *xia* 黠 used in a positive sense does not appear any longer (Karashima 2013b, pp. 277–78). Let us look at the following example taken from the *Benye jing* and its parallel in Lokakṣema's translation. Here, we can see that the term *xia* 黠 used in an unusual manner is replaced with *ming* 明, which means “light, bright,” but also “knowing, wisdom.” Interestingly enough, the literal meaning of *ming* 明, “brightness,” is opposite to the semantic component of *xia* 黠, that is, the radical *hei* 黑 “darkness.”

ZQ (T. 281, 446c12–13): 啓示 ... 十地、*十智、十行、十投、十藏、十願、十明、十定、十現、十印。

He reveals ... the ten stages, *ten knowledges,¹⁷ ten practices, ten dedications, ten treasures, ten vows, ten wisdoms, ten concentrations, ten presences, and ten marks.

Lk (T. 280, 445a26–445b3): 示現我曹十方諸有刹土, 現我等諸不可計佛所說, 現我等菩薩十法住, 現我等菩薩十法所行, 現我等菩薩十法悔過經, 現我等菩薩十道地, 現我等菩薩十鎮, 現我等菩薩十居處所願, 現我等菩薩十點, 現我等菩薩十三昧, 現我等菩薩*十飛法, 現我等菩薩十印。

He shows us all buddha-fields in the ten directions; he shows us the countless Buddha's teachings; he shows us the ten abodes of bodhisattvas; he shows us the ten practices of bodhisattvas; he shows us the ten contritions in the past; he shows us the ten stages of bodhisattvas; he shows us the ten congregations of bodhisattvas; he shows us the ten dwellings of bodhisattvas which they strive for; he shows us the ten wisdoms of bodhisattvas; he shows us the ten concentrations of bodhisattvas; he shows us the *ten presences¹⁸ of bodhisattvas; he shows us the ten marks of bodhisattvas.

(e) The demonstratives *ci* 此 and *si* 斯 are rare and usually only found in a “polished” literary context (Zürcher [1977] 2013a, pp. 48–50). In the *Benye jing*, Zhi Qian uses *ci* 此 six times (T. 281, 447a12, 447a18, 447a24, 447b2, 449c14, 450c25), while it occurs only once in Lokakṣema's version (T. 283, 455c24). In particular, the word *si* 斯 that is a mark of the process of “polishing” is not found in Lokakṣema's translation, but in the *Benye jing*, as follows:

ZQ (T. 281, 447b15–17): 除闇冥如燭火, 明天下如日月, 度衆人如船師, 賢過三界而爲上首。欲成斯道, 當何修行? [Var.: 冥 = 昧 (三、宮、聖乙); 界 = 昧 (聖乙); 首 = 導 (三、宮、聖乙); 道 = 道始 (三、宮); 修行 = 行 (三、宮、聖乙)]

[How should he practice] to take ignorance (literally, “darkness”) away like the flame of a candle? [How should he practice] to light up living beings (literally, “the world”) like the sun and moon? [How should he practice] to make the living beings cross over like a ferry-master? [How should he practice] to attain the perfect wisdom which surpasses [the sages] in the three worlds? [In sum,] if one bodhisattva intends to achieve these qualities, how should he practice?

Lk (T. 283, 451b6–11): 明於十方，如燈火、如炬火、如大火、如日月。過度諸世間人，如船佐、如船中人。有尊師於諸天、世間人民、蜎飛蠕動之類。... 如是法當何以致之? [Var.: 佐 = 棧 (三); 尊 = 導 (三)]

He lights the world in the ten directions like a lamp, torch, big fire, sun, and moon. He makes all living beings cross over like a sailor and crewman. He is a leader of all gods, people in the world, and all kinds of insects and animals ... What should one do to reach such qualities?

3.2. Stylistic Refinements

Zhi Qian’s translation style is difficult to define, partly because of his long and varied career, beginning as a pupil of Lokakṣema’s school in Luoyang and taking up residence as an official at the royal court in Jianye. Also, his works are not entirely original, but a “sinicised” revision of pre-existing translations, produced by earlier translators, such as Lokakṣema, An Xuan 安玄, and Yan Fotiao (嚴佛調, fl. ca. 180 CE). Accordingly, his works reflect the predecessors’ renderings and style of composition to a certain degree. In the case of the *Benye jing*, we find the following two stylistic features, which are clearly distinct from Lokakṣema’s translations (T. 280, T. 282, T. 283):

(a) Four-syllable prosody

A strong preference for using a four-syllable prosodic pattern is one of the most characteristic features of Zhi Qian’s translation style (Nattier 2008b, p. 119). The four-syllable pattern is the oldest and most traditional literary form, the origin of which can be traced to the *Shijing* 詩經 “Classic of Poetry,” the earliest extant anthology of poetry.¹⁹ In the Eastern Han period (25–220 CE), the five- and seven-syllable prosodic patterns began to be used. However, in Zhi Qian’s time, the four-syllable pattern still played a pivotal role as a dominant form in classical Chinese poetry in general (Knechtges 2010, pp. 160–66). The pattern usually occurs in Zhi Qian’s later and maturer works produced during and after the time when he was active in the royal circle of the Wu dynasty. Given that the imperial court was the center of literary activities at the time (Knechtges 2010, pp. 118–19), and that Zhi Qian’s works might have been carried out while interacting with the political-social elites of the Wu dynasty, it is hardly surprising that he sought to use an elegant and refined composition style, following the rule of the four-syllable prosodic pattern.

The majority of the *Benye jing* is set in the four-syllable prosodic pattern, whereas Lokakṣema’s translation (T. 280, T. 282, and T. 283) is composed in a free narrative style without any prosodic elements. As such, it is assumed that in the process of translation Zhi Qian polished Lokakṣema’s vernacular style of writing by adopting such a classical four-syllable prosodic pattern.

Another interesting observation in this regard is that the second chapter of the *Benye jing* (願行品第二, T. 281, 447b5–449b24) is well known for the repeated pattern of the expression *dangyuan zhongsheng* 當願衆生 “one should wish for all living beings.” The chapter almost entirely constitutes the four-syllable prosodic pattern and is arranged in verse form in every ancient edition available to us, viz. the second Koryō edition, the *Qisha zang*, the *Qing zang*, and the *Hongwu nan zang*, as well as in both major modern editions, the Taishō and the *Zhonghua dazangjing*.²⁰ Concerning the typesetting of the second chapter in the printed editions, Nattier remarks:

A long segment of the text has been typeset as verse in the printed Taishō edition (see 10.447b25–449b24), but it appears that the scripture does not actually contain any verse passages at all; instead, this is simply another example of Zhi Qian's well-established preference for four-character prosody. (Nattier 2008b, p. 138)

This hypothesis is supported by the fact that both Lokakṣema's translation (T. 282) and the corresponding part of the Tibetan version (D44, 212b3–219b3) are written in prose without any prosodic pattern. Accordingly, it is also assumed that the original Indic passage was expressed not in verse, but in prose, with a typical repetitive pattern. Indeed, such a repetitive pattern is one of the most common stylistic features of the Mahāyāna Buddhist literature (Zürcher [1996] 2013d, p. 520; Zacchetti 2005, p. 45). However, even if what Zhi Qian actually wrote here was in prose form, as suggested by Nattier, it should also be noticed that the later Chinese editors, including not only those of the Taishō, but also those of various other editions, regarded this segment as verse.²¹ Furthermore, the later translators, Buddhābhaddra (佛跋陀羅, 358–429) and Śikṣānanda (實叉難陀, 652–710), also adopted this long segment as verse form in their complete Chinese *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtras* (cf. T. 278, 430c2–432c14; T. 279, 70a4–72a17).

(b) Lexical diversity

Zhi Qian's works are also characterized by the variety in the use of vocabulary. For example, he used eight, seven, and five different terms for Skt. *arhat*, *saṃyaksambuddha*, and *bhagavat*, respectively (Nattier 2003a). This tendency does not appear to be limited to the use of technical terms and concepts. In the *Benye jing*, it is found that Zhi Qian frequently rendered the same verb in various ways. Here, we present a particular example to illustrate such lexical diversity, in which Zhi Qian uses at least ten different words (e.g., *dao* 導 “to lead,” *kai* 開 “to open,” *shi* 示 “to show,” *guanda* 貫達 “to penetrate”) for a single Indic term that is translated by Lokakṣema as *ru* 入 “to enter, penetrate.” Given the fact that the corresponding passage in the Tibetan version shows the term *dpyod pa* “to examine, investigate” without any variation (D44, 175b6–176a1), it is likely that the original Indic passage might also be written in a repeated pattern using the same verb. As such, it is probably fair to say that in the process of translation, Zhi Qian has inevitably sacrificed, to some extent, faithfully reflecting the language used in the original Indic texts in order to break the monotony of the text. It is also noteworthy that such a tendency of lexical diversity is observed in the corresponding parts in both complete Chinese *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtras* (T. 278, 418a29–b5; T. 279, 57c28–58a2). Let us look at the parallel passages dealing with the various qualities of the bodhisattvas in the presence of the Buddha's discourse, taken from the beginning of each text (T. 281 and T. 280):

ZQ (T. 281, 446c4–9): 時會菩薩，盡一生補處，神通妙達，周遍十方。導利衆生。開佛法藏。示泥洹要。都入人根，宿命智德，善權方便。訓化以漸，解內外法，終始不搖。
 *等諸佛土，無所分別，讚揚佛名，不可稱極。三塗之事，靡不貫達。 [Var.: 泥 = 漏 (聖乙); 都 = 覩 (三、宮)]

The bodhisattvas, who gathered at that time and whose births are limited to one time, achieve the supernatural ability completely, which they can present everywhere. They guide and benefit the living beings; they expound the Buddha's teachings; they show the essential [path] of the extinction (*nirvāṇa*); they know the inclinations of living beings [by means of] supernormal knowledge [comprehending] their previous lives. With the skilful means, they bring them to maturity by degrees and explain the internal (= Buddhist) and external (= non-Buddhist) dharmas. Their aspiration has never been disturbed from the beginning to the end. They treat the buddha-lands *equally,²² without any discrimination, and praise the names of the buddhas during immeasurable times. There is nothing that they cannot comprehend thoroughly in the three times.

Lk (T. 280, 445a13–20): 諸菩薩等各各從異國土來都大會，其數如十佛刹塵。一塵爲一菩薩，如是爲限。諸菩薩賜一生補處。皆入十方人民典安隱，皆入法處，皆入十方諸刹土，皆入十方泥洹慧，皆入十方所作世間人宿命，皆入稍稍增深菩薩，皆入諸慧法中，皆入內外法中，皆入不動不搖法中，皆入過去當來今現在法中。

All bodhisattvas come from different [buddha-]fields, and they all gather together. The number of the bodhisattvas is the same as that of dust particles in the ten directions. In the way that they are counted, one particle is one bodhisattva. All bodhisattvas are granted only one more birth. They all enter into an obligation to create comfort for people in the ten directions; they all enter into the field of dharmas; they all enter into all [buddha-]fields in the ten directions; they all enter into the wisdom of *nirvāṇa* in the ten directions; they all enter into the previous lives made by ordinary people in the ten directions; they all enter into the profundity of the bodhisattva by degrees; they all enter into the middle of teaching on wisdom; they all enter into the internal (=Buddhist) and external (=non-Buddhist) dharmas; they all enter into the middle of dharma without faltering; they all enter into the dharma in the past, future, and present.

3.3. The Adoption of Indigenous Chinese Concepts

In the early period of Chinese Buddhist translation, translators sometimes used indigenous Chinese terms in order to effectively convey the Indian Buddhist ideas and concepts, which had been exotic and unfamiliar to Chinese audiences up to that time. Together with the polyglot Yuezhi monk Dharmarakṣa (竺法護, ca. 230–316), Zhi Qian is considered as one of the representative translators who were actively engaged with such an approach in their works.²³

Until relatively recently, it was thought that there was a particular translation method called *geyi* 格義 “matching the meanings” in the early Chinese Buddhist translation. It was an exegetical technique for translating alien Buddhist ideas by adopting pre-existing comparable Chinese religious or philosophical concepts, mainly those of Daoism (Zürcher [1959] 2007, p. 184).²⁴ For instance, in the *Weimojie jing* (維摩詰經, T. 474), Zhi Qian uses the well-known Daoist concepts *dao* 道 “way” and *zhenren* 真人 “a genuine person” for translating Skt. *bodhi* and *arhat*, respectively.²⁵

However, Victor H. Mair (2012) demonstrated that *geyi* was not a historically significant phenomenon, but a rather modern scholarly construct based on scant historical evidence.²⁶ He also argues that, when Indian Buddhism was transmitted to China through the Silk Roads during the Eastern Han period, its doctrinal system was already highly developed on the basis of a number of canonical scriptures. On the contrary, Daoism was at that time still in its embryonic stage, like other religious–political movements with an eschatological vision such as the Great Peace (Taiping 太平) and the Celestial Masters (Tianshi 天師) (Mair 2012, pp. 56–57).²⁷ Thus, it seems unlikely that the sophisticated doctrinal aspects of a “mature” religion could possibly be matched with the context of a different “developing” religion.

In the *Benye jing*, Zhi Qian employs pre-Buddhist Confucian and Daoist vocabulary at least in two different places. Yet it is difficult to correlate them with the concept of *geyi* since both cases have nothing to do with the process of matching concepts. Rather, it appears to represent his ornamental use of indigenous Chinese concepts or expressions to fulfill the demands of contemporary audiences by producing a more refined “sinicised” piece. Let us have a look at the first case in which a traditional Confucian term occurs.

(a) *Rulin* 儒林

The term *rulin* 儒林 is a compound of two characters, *ru* 儒, meaning “(Confucian) scholar,” and *lin* 林, literally “forest” but used here to indicate “phalanx” (Csikszentmihalyi and Michael 2003, p. 70). It has been mostly understood in the context of Confucianism as referring to “a community of Confucians.” For example, it occurs in the title of the chapter *Rulin liezhuan* 儒林列傳 “Biographies of Confucian scholars” of the *Shiji* 史記 “Historical Records,” compiled during the Western Han period by Sima Tan (司馬談, ca. 180–110 BC) and his son Sima Qian (司馬遷, ca. 145–186 BC). However, according to Zürcher ([1959] 2007, p. 315), it is also possible that the word *ru* 儒 is a Chinese translation of Skt. *māṇava(ka)*, meaning “(Brahman) youth,” and thus that it can refer to “a boy from a family of (Confucian) literati” in the Chinese context. In the second chapter of the *Benye jing*, Zhi Qian uses this term concerning the bodhisattva’s daily practice, as follows:

ZQ (T. 281, 4448b11–12): 入林澤中 當願衆生 學爲*儒林 養徒以德。 [Var.: 林 = 樹 (三、宮)]

[When a bodhisattva] enters into the forest and swamp, he should wish that may all living beings learn to be *the Forest of Literati²⁸ and support his disciples by means of virtue.

Lk (T. 282, 452c2–4): 菩薩見林大樹時, 心念言: 十方天下人皆使無不歸仰供養者, 天上世間皆悉然。

When a bodhisattva sees the forest [filled with] great trees, he thinks: May all living beings take refuge in [the Buddha] and become worthy of offering to gods and the world.

Tib. (D44, 215b5–6): *nags tshal mthoñ ba’i tshe | byañ chub sems dpas sems can thams cad lha dan ’jig rten du bcas pas phyag bya ba’i gnas su gyur cig ces sems bskyed do | |*

When looking at the forest, the bodhisattva should wish that may all beings become a basis of worship together with gods and the world.

All these versions share the same keyword “forest” (Chi. *lin* 林; Tib. *nags tshal*) in terms of a bodhisattva’s activity. It is also found that Lokakṣema’s translation (T. 282) agrees more with the Tibetan version than that of Zhi Qian. Specifically, T. 282 and the Tibetan have the expression “to see a forest” (Chi. *jian lin* 見林; Tib. *nags tshal mthoñ ba*) as the bodhisattva’s main activity, while T. 281 has “to enter a forest” (*ru lin* 入林). Furthermore, the expressions *gongyang zhe* 供養者 “worthy of offering” and *tianshang shijian* 天上世間 “the heavenly realm and the secular world” in T. 282 respectively correspond to *phyag bya ba’i gnas* “an object of respect” and *lha dan ’jig rten du bcas pa* “gods and the secular world” in the Tibetan version. Yet Zhi Qian’s translation has no counterparts for these terms, and, instead, uses the Confucian term *rulin* 儒林, which does not agree with any word or phrase in the other versions.²⁹

Then why did he use this peculiar term here, even though there is no corresponding word in Lokakṣema’s translation or the Indic original? A plausible explanation is that the term *rulin* 儒林, literally “forest of scholars,” was deliberately chosen to make a parallel literary Confucian expression with the preceding character *lin* 林 “forest.” By exploiting this parallelism, he could have possibly provided a more refined description of the bodhisattva’s practice associated with the forest. In addition, adopting such a Confucian concept could have made his translation more favorable for the cultured gentry of the time, who were deeply influenced by Confucian tradition.

(b) *Nengru* 能儒, *shengxian* 昇仙, *tianshi* 天師, etc.

Another interesting case is found at the end of the first chapter. See the following passage, in which Zhi Qian provides an unusual list of the ten epithets of the Buddha (see the underlined parts):

ZQ (T. 281, 447a9–17): 觀其所止, 佛國清淨, 至於被服, 如來德戒。修行微妙, 成覺根力。演說經法, 得佛威神。隨刹清濁, 度人無極。分流道化, 靡不周匝。於此佛土, 國殊別者億百千姪: 賢愚好醜, 長短壽夭, 種種言異。皆聞佛德, 各自名之: 或有名佛爲大聖人、或有名佛爲大沙門、或號衆祐、或號神人、或稱勇智、或稱世尊、或謂能儒、或謂昇仙、或呼*天師、或呼最勝。 [Var.: 戒 = 式 (三、宮); 流 = 布 (三、宮、聖乙)]

I have seen the place where [the Buddha] stayed—the buddha fields are pure and even the people, who live there, obey the disciplines of the tathāgata. His practices are so excellent that he achieves [the seven factors of] enlightenment, [the five wholesome] roots, and [the five] powers. He gives a sermon on the dharma by means of the Buddha's power. He makes innumerable people to cross over in accordance with pertaining pure or impure buddha lands. Sorting them out, he teaches them limitlessly. In these buddha fields, there is a great deal of difference [among the people] in the worlds: they are either wise or foolish, either beautiful or ugly, either long-lifespan or short-lifespan, and they are different in language. They all hear the Buddha's merit, and name the Buddha in their respective ways such as Great Sage, Great Śramaṇa, Assembly of Blessings, Spiritual Being, Courageous and Wise One, Honorable One, Confucian Master, Ascending to Immortality, Heavenly Master,³⁰ or Great Conqueror.

On the nature of this unusual list of ten epithets, Nattier remarks:

This list does contain a few epithets, such as 衆祐 and 世尊, as well as 天師 (which may be a shortened form of the epithet 天人師 which does appear in Zhi Qian's more standard lists of the Buddha's titles). But most of the names here do not match the expected ones at all. While some of the epithets sound Buddhist (e.g., 大沙門, 最勝), other have greater resonance with indigenous Chinese religious beliefs (大聖人, 神人, 昇仙), and one even has an explicitly Confucian flavor (能儒). (Nattier 2003a, pp. 234–35).

Indeed, the terms *dashamen* 大沙門, *zhongyou* 衆祐, *shizun* 世尊, and *zuisheng* 最勝 match the well-known titles of the Buddha, *mahāśramaṇa*, *lokanātha*, *bhagavat*, and *jina*, respectively. However, the rest of the terms need to be further considered. In the first place, two strange terms, *nengru* 能儒 “Confucian master”³¹ and *shengxian* 昇仙 “ascending to immortality,” at first glance appear to be classical Confucian and Daoist expressions. Yet they do not occur in Chinese classical texts produced before or during Zhi Qian's time.³² The earliest occurrence of *shengxian* is in the *Baopuzi* 抱朴子, “Master Who Embraces Simplicity,” attributed to the 4th century Daoist philosopher and alchemist Ge Hong (葛洪, ca. 284–343 CE).³³ Secondly, the term *yongzhi* 勇智 is mentioned in several ancient historical records, such as the *Shangshu* 尚書, the *Yuejueshu* 越絕書, and the *Hanshu* 漢書, but all of them are used in a general sense, not as an epithet or descriptive phrase. Thirdly, the three terms *shenren* 神人, *shengren* 聖人, and *tianshi* 天師 are relatively frequent, and, interestingly, all occur in the early Daoist classic, the *Zhuangzi* 莊子, as follows:³⁴

故曰: 至人無己, 神人無功, 聖人無名。

Therefore, it is said: “The Perfect man has no (thought of) self; the Spirit-like man, none of merit; the Sagely-minded man, none of fame.”

黃帝再拜稽首，稱天師而退。³⁵

Huang-Di bowed to him twice with his head to the ground, called him his “Heavenly Master,” and withdrew.

Given that the corresponding part in Lokakṣema’s translation also contains the unfamiliar ten epithets of the Buddha,³⁶ it is assumed that the original Indic passage did not have the standardized ones, viz. *tathāgato ‘rhan samyaksambuddho ... buddho bhagavān*. However, Lokakṣema’s renditions here are not matched with those of Zhi Qian, as Nattier mentions (2003a, p. 234), and accordingly, it is not easy to know what the original Indic content was. Still, this list of ten epithets shows his “sinicising” style of translation in which various elements of Buddhist, Confucian, and Daoist flavors are used together.

4. Conclusions: Zhi Qian’s Linguistic Footprints on Chinese Religious Traditions

In this study, we examined Zhi Qian’s terminology and style, focusing on the *Foshuo pusa benye jing* (T. 281) in close conjunction with three related sūtras, the *Foshuo dousha jing* (T. 280), the *Zhu pusa qiufo benye jing* (T. 282), and the *Pusa shizhu xingdao pin* (T. 283), all attributed to Lokakṣema. We demonstrated how Zhi Qian produced a polished version with various modes of literary modifications, namely, the use of *wenyan* elements, four-syllable prosody, diverse vocabulary, and indigenous Chinese concepts. We then placed his literary efforts, his translation techniques, and underlying strategies within the context of his background and the social milieu of the time. In this paper, we also argued that his main aim in producing the *Benye jing* was to provide a more classical, elegant, and readable Buddhist scripture to contemporary readers of Chinese, but that he sometimes had to sacrifice faithfully reflecting the language used in the original Indic texts.

His works have played a significant role in the early propagation of Buddhist ideas and practices in Southern China (Zürcher [1959] 2007, p. 50). Despite his efforts and contributions, however, very little is known about his later years. His career as a prolific translator or a court official is not recorded in any contemporary historical source, including the *Wushu* 吳書 “History of the Wu.”³⁷ According to his biography included in the oldest surviving catalog, the *Chu sanzang ji ji*, after the crown prince Sun Deng’s death (241 CE), he retired from his position as a tutor of the crown prince and left the capital. It is unclear whether it was voluntarily or not, yet all the tutors did not necessarily leave their posts at that time. For instance, the Confucian scholar Wei Zhao (韋昭, 204–273 CE),³⁸ who had shared duties with Zhi Qian, continued to hold his position for the new crown prince Sun He (孫和, 224–253 CE). What is known about the rest of Zhi Qian’s life is only that he moved into the Qionglong Mountain 穹隆山, located in the southwest of Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, and stayed there until his death. In his biography, there is a brief description saying that the second ruler of the Wu dynasty, Sun Liang (孫亮, 243–260 CE), sent a letter to monks, expressing sympathy on the death of Zhi Qian. Given that the crown prince Sun Deng died in 241 CE, and that the emperor Sun Liang reigned from 252 to 257 CE, it is assumed that Zhi Qian lived in the Qionglong Mountain for at least ten years until his death. During this period, according to his biography, Zhi Qian did not get involved in secular affairs.

Although he did not occupy a higher position or exercise great political influence at the imperial court, some of his works had a great impact on Chinese literary and religious traditions, a good example of which is the *Weimojie jing*, which was a part of the trend of *xuanyan* 玄言 “arcane discourse” during the early Eastern Jin period (Tian 2010, p. 200). This is also the case for the *Benye jing* under study. Its considerable portions have been reproduced in various indigenous Chinese texts, including not only Buddhist, but also Daoist scriptures, as well (Nattier 2007a, pp. 135–37). Particularly, the Lingbao School 靈

寶派, one of the major schools of early medieval Daoism, was significantly influenced by the doctrinal content of the *Benye jing* (Bokenkamp 1983, 1990).³⁹

Further, the phrase *dangyuan zhongsheng* 當願衆生, repeated throughout the second chapter of the *Benye jing*, was reproduced by Buddhābhadda and Śikṣānanda in their complete Chinese *Buddhāvataṃsakasūtras* (cf. T. 278, 430c2–432c14; T. 279, 70a4–72a17), as well as in the apocryphal sūtra *Pusa yingluo benye jing* 菩薩瓔珞本業經 (cf. T. 1485, 1011c13–1012a14). More notably, it is found that the phrase still survives as a part of various daily rituals in the East Asian Buddhist traditions, e.g., *ruyu jie* 入浴偈 “verse of bathing”, *tifa jie* 剃髮偈 “verse of tonsure,”⁴⁰ *gongyang jie* 供養偈 “verse at meals,”⁴¹ and *ruce wuzhou* 入廁五呪 “five mantras for entering the toilet”.⁴² Thus, one may say that Zhi Qian’s language used in the *Benye jing* has acquired at least a modicum of “imperishability” in the history of Eastern Asian Buddhist traditions.

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Notes

- ¹ The expression “Buddhism for Chinese readers” in the title of this article is borrowed from the eminent sinologist Erik Zürcher (1928–2008). He used this expression to describe Zhi Qian’s attempt to make a polished version of Chinese Buddhist translation, according to the taste of the contemporary Chinese audience (Zürcher [1959] 2007, p. 46).
- ² For the writing of his name as Zhi Qian, not as Zhiqian, see (Nattier 2008b, pp. 27–28). The surname Zhi 支 refers to his origin, Yuezhi 月支. The same rule applies to other translators’ names, such as Zhi Liang, Zhi Loujiachen, and Zhu Fahu, but not to Xuanzang, a two-character monastic name.
- ³ For Zhi Qian’s genuine works, see (Nattier 2008b, 2019). Particularly for the *Laomu jing* 老母經 (T. 561) and *Da mingdu jing* 大明度經 (T. 225), see, respectively, (Nattier 2007b, 2008a).
- ⁴ For a brief overview of the hypothesis that the original Indic texts of the early Chinese Buddhist translations were written not in Sanskrit, but in North-Western Middle Indic Prakrit that is now generally known as Gāndhārī, see (Boucher 1998, pp. 471–75).
- ⁵ The meaning of the Chinese term *benye* 本業 is unclear. Several translations have been suggested: “basic endeavors” by Bokenkamp (1990, p. 123), “fundamental activity” by (Hamar 2015), and “original acts” in Buswell and Lopez (2013, p. 685).
- ⁶ The term “sinicisation” is problematic, as Zacchetti mentioned (2010, p. 178), and difficult to define in a few words. It has been used in a variety of ways in different contexts, e.g., localization, indigenization, and contextualization. In the present paper, we employ the term “sinicisation” according to the usage of previous scholars, such as Kenneth Ch’en (1973), Robert Gimello (1978), Erik Zürcher ([1959] 2007), and above all, Seishi Karashima (2013b, 2016). It is basically concerned with the early Chinese Buddhist translators’ various attempts to produce “refined” and even “polished” translations for the readers of Chinese in the Eastern Han dynasty and early Weijin period. It is the same in the case of the notion of *wenyan*. The term *wenyan* can be interpreted in various ways. It literally means “written speech,” but is used here to indicate “classical literary Chinese,” written by or for literati, which is opposite to “vernacular or colloquial Chinese,” mainly used by the so-called “early” Chinese Buddhist translators, such as An Shigao and Lokakṣema (Zürcher [1977] 2013a, [1991] 2013c). In this context, there seem to be some similarities in the use of both expressions, “to sinicise” and “to *wenyanise*.” Indeed, Zhi Qian’s *Da mingdu jing* (T. 225) is referred

to as “a sinicised version” (Karashima 2013b, p. 284) but also “a *wenyan*ised version” (Zürcher [1996] 2013d, p. 517) of Lokakṣema’s *Daoxing banre jing* (T. 224). See also the following passages, in which both terms, *wenyan* and sinicisation, are used in a similar context:

“... characteristics and trappings of standard *wenyan*, such as the use of rare literary expressions, prosody, obsolete or even archaic particles ... Zhi Qian is the one who is known to have indulged in that kind of literary reworking ...” (Zürcher [1996] 2013d, pp. 515–16)

“However, as he was born and educated in China, he [=Zhi Qian, added by the authors] was a master of Classical Chinese and could write in an intellectual manner, thus avoiding vernacular expressions and coarse transliterations. Therefore, the Chinese language in his translation is quite natural and readable. There are many cases which suggest that he did not always consult the original Indian text, but merely ‘sinicised’ Lokakṣema translation.”

(Karashima 2013b, p. 275)

- ⁷ The *Benye jing* and its parallel versions are parsed sentence by sentence and published as a result of our readings in the multilingual digital library of Buddhist literature, Thesaurus Literaturae Buddhicae (<https://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/index.php?page=volume&vid=1066>, accessed on 20 February 2021).
- ⁸ Almost 50 years before this study, in 1956, the Japanese scholar Sakamoto Yukio first proposed the possibility of the *Benye jing* playing a pivotal role in the genesis of the *Buddhāvataṃśaka* corpus (Sakamoto 1956).
- ⁹ “This intriguing little text is, in my view, the core out of which the voluminous *Avataṃśaka* sūtra eventually grew” (Nattier 2003b, p. 192n38).
- ¹⁰ Although the Daoist classical texts, such as the *Daode jing* 道德經 and the *Zhuangzi* 莊子, have been deeply rooted in Chinese religious–philosophical thought since the 4th century BCE, Daoism as a religion was beginning to take shape with its early semi-religious and semi-political movements, namely, the Yellow Turbans (Huangjin 黃巾) or the Five Pecks of Rice (Wudoumi Dao 五斗米道), born in turmoil at the end of Han dynasty. For more details, see (Hendrichke 2000).
- ¹¹ Zürcher notes that, in the period of “archaic” Chinese Buddhist translations, namely, from the end of the Han dynasty to ca. 390 CE, there were two main streams: one was Dharmarakṣa and his circle, and the other was the translators who were active in Wu dynasty (ca. 220–250), in which Zhi Qian is included. The latter group had a clear tendency to polish the pre-existing Chinese translations by using *wenyan* style of elements (Zürcher [1980] 2013b, pp. 117–18).
- ¹² See the following passage from his biography in the *Chu sanzang ji ji*: 從黃武元年，至建興中，所出維摩詰、大般泥洹、法句、瑞應本起等二十七經，曲得聖義，辭旨文雅。又依無量壽、中本起經，製讚菩薩連句梵唄三契。注了本生死經，皆行於世。[Var.: 義 = 意 (明); 製 = 制 (宋)] (T. 2145, 97c10–13). “From the first year of Huangwu (222 CE) to the middle of Jianxing (223–237 CE), he has translated twenty seven sūtras including the *Weimojie jing* 維摩詰經, the *Bannihuan jing* 般泥洹經, the *Faju jing* 法句經, and the *Taizi ruiying benqi jing* 太子瑞應本起經. His works attained the noble meaning, and his language, aim, and tone were elegant. Also, he composed the *Zan pusa lianju fanbei sanqi* 讚菩薩連句梵唄三契 ‘Linked Verses in Praise of the Bodhisattva Comprising Three Indian Songs’ based on the *Wu liang shou jing* 無量壽經 and the *Zhong benqi jing* 中本起經, as well as made the commentary to the *Liaoben shengsi jing* 了本生死經. They all became widespread in the world.”
- ¹³ In his seminal work on Chinese Buddhist history and literature, Zürcher makes use of the term “gentry” to refer to those who had received the traditional literary education and thereby had access to the government official position (Zürcher [1959] 2007, p. 4).
- ¹⁴ On Zhi Qian’s *Da mingdu jing* as a “sinicised” revision of Lokakṣema’s *Daoxing banre jing*, see (Karashima 2011, 2014, 2016).
- ¹⁵ For the meaning and usage of the expressions *wo cao* 我曹 and *wo cao bei* 我曹輩 as Lokakṣema’s terminology, see (Karashima 2010, pp. 504–5).
- ¹⁶ In this sentence, the meaning of *zhi* 至 is uncertain. It often corresponds to Skt. *yavat*, but here may be simply used for metrical purposes.
- ¹⁷ Alternatively, “ten abodes.” According to the contemporary scholar-monk Master Yinshun 印順 (1906–2005), *shiming* 十明 in T.281 agrees with *shixia* 十黠 in T. 280, and *shizhi* 十智 might be an error of *shizhu* 十住 as seen in the parallels in T. 278, T. 279, and T. 280 (Cf. CBETA 2020.Q4, Y37, no. 35, pp. 1012a10–1013a14). However, Karashima mentions that *xia* 黠 can be replaced with *zhi* 智, but, in this case, it appears to correspond to *ming* 明 that occurs between “vow” (*yuan* 願 in both texts) and “*samādhi*” (*ding* 定 in T. 281 and *sanmei* 三昧 in T. 280).
- ¹⁸ The meaning is uncertain (*shifeifa* 十飛法, literally, “ten flying dharma”?). We here refer to the description regarding *shizizai* 十自在 and *shihihou* 十飛法 in the *Huayanjing tanxuan ji* 華嚴經探玄記 (T. 1733), the commentary on the sixty-fascicle version of the *Huayan jing* 華嚴經 (T. 278) by Fazang 法藏 (663–712). Also, see the reference by Yinshun in the previous footnote.

Alternatively, it may be translated from a certain Indic form of Skt. *vi-krī*, given the corresponding Tib. *rnam par 'phrul pa* “magical display.”

¹⁹ The compilation of the *Shijing* is traditionally ascribed to Confucius (551–479 BC). It was first recorded by Sima Qian (ca. 145–86 BC) in his *Shiji* 史記, “Records of the Historians.” Here he described that Confucius collected three hundred poems from a pre-existing three thousand songs. For more discussion, see (Kern 2010, pp. 17–28).

²⁰ Cf. the second Koryō edition (K94 v8, p.1116b2-c20); the *Qisha zang* (vol. 8, pp. 340–41), the *Hongwu nan zang* (vol. 40, pp. 312–17), and the *Qing zang* (vol. 28, pp. 230–34).

²¹ For the tradition of visualizing verses in Chinese Buddhist prints and its importance in identifying verses, see (Park 2008, pp. 346–47).

²² The word *deng* 等, which appears to correspond to *ru* 入 in T. 280, is treated as a verb in the translation. However, it may refer to “countless,” as Zhi Qian’s erroneous rendering of Skt. *apramā*-a. See (Nattier 2008b, p. 120n27).

²³ See, for example, Sengyou’s account in the *Chu sanzang ji ji* (T2145, 101b13–15): 自大法東被始於漢明。歷涉魏晉經論漸多。而支竺所出多滯文格義。“Since the teachings of the Mahāyāna covered the east, beginning in the time of Emperor Ming of the Han dynasty, and passing through the Wei and Jin periods, the [number of] sūtras and śāstras gradually increased. However, the translations produced by Zhi Qian and Dharmakṣema are mostly pretentious literary expressions obstructing the original meaning.”

²⁴ See also the following description in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* article “geyi.” We can see here an example of how the concept *geyi* had been misinterpreted in modern scholarship, as Mair has shown:

Geyi, (Chinese: “matching the meanings”) Wade-Giles romanization ke-yi, in Chinese Buddhism, the practice of borrowing from Daoist and other philosophical texts phrases with which to explain their own ideas. According to tradition, *geyi* was first used by Zhu Faya, a student of many religions of the 4th century CE, as he came to understand Buddhism. The technique reached its height of development among translators of the Prajñā sūtras, who sought to make Buddhist thought more accessible to Chinese readers.

(*Britannica* 2010, accessed 1 February 2021)

With regard to such earlier interpretations of *geyi*, and the process of its theoretical reconstruction, see (Tang 1951; Lai 1978; Zürcher [1959] 2007, pp. 184–87).

²⁵ For the case of the term *dao* 道 used for Skt. *bodhi*, see the following examples and parallels:

VknSkt. 5a3–4: *imāni bhagavan pañcamātrāṇi licchavikumāraśātāni sarvāṇy anuttarāyāṃ samyak sambodhau samprasthitāni* |

Zhi Qian. T.474, 520a5: 此五百童子，皆有決於無上正真之道。

Kumārajīva. T.475, 538a15–17: 是五百長者子，皆已發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心。[Var.: 已 = 以 (聖)]

Xuanzang. T.476, 559a5–6: 如是五百童子菩薩，皆已發趣阿耨多羅三藐三菩提。

For the use of *zhenren* 真人 for Skt. *arhat*,

VknSkt. 39b4: *tadyathā mañjuśrīḥ arhataḥ rāgadoṣamohāḥ* |

Zhi Qian. T.474, 528a17: 如真人斷三垢。

Kumārajīva. T.475, 547b8: 如阿羅漢三毒。

Xuanzang. T.476, 572c16–17: 觀阿羅漢貪瞋癡毒。

²⁶ Similar interpretations of the notion of *geyi* have also been briefly mentioned by Robert Sharf (2002, pp. 97–98) and Max Deeg (2008, p. 89). See the following description:

“... I think that this delivers an appropriate heuristic tool for structuring early Chinese Buddhist terminology and thus may help to avoid the confusion which can be caused by the use of autochthonous categories such as *geyi* 格義, ‘matching of concepts,’ after all, is rather a theoretical concept used and discussed by scholar-monks who were not necessarily involved in the translation process itself.”

(Deeg 2008, p. 89)

²⁷ For more details on the early Daoist movements, see (Hendrichke 2000).

²⁸ The exact meaning is uncertain. Alternatively, “to learn [the teaching] for the Forest of Literati,” if we read the character *wei* 爲 as a dative particle. Indeed, the term *rulin* 儒林 is reminiscent of Skt. *vānaprastha*, which means “an ascetic life in the woods as the third stage of life for Brāhman.” If so, we can easily accept the function of *wei* 爲, meaning “for the sake of,” on the grounds that the bodhisattva should learn the Buddhist teachings to take care of (養) the non-Buddhist (儒林) with the virtue. Nonetheless, we translated *rulin* 儒林 into “the Forest of Literati,” as it is.

²⁹ It is uncertain, but the term *rulin* 儒林 may correspond to *gongyang zhe* 供養者 and *phyag bya ba'i gnas* in the sense that all the terms indicate the objectives of living beings in the bodhisattva’s wishes.

³⁰ Alternatively, “Teacher of Gods,” as Nattier suggests. She regards this term as an abridged form of *tianrenshi* 天人師, *śāstā devamanu*-yā-ām in Sanskrit (Nattier 2003a, p. 234).

- 31 Alternatively, “Powerful Scholar.” The meaning can be explained by the interpretation of Skt. *śākya* (powerful, 能) + *muni* (scholar, 儒). Cf. (Zürcher [1959] 2007, p. 315n127). On the later reception and interpretation of Confucius as a Buddhist saint, see (Lessing 1957).
- 32 For this tentative investigation, we used the Chinese Text Project. (<http://ctext.org>). (accessed on 19 February 2021).
- 33 抱朴子曰：按黃帝九鼎神丹經曰，黃帝服之，遂以昇仙。(available from: <https://ctext.org/baopuzi/jin-dan>). (accessed on 19 Feb 2021).
- 34 Bilingual Chinese–English version is available at the Chinese Text Project (<https://ctext.org/zhuangzi/enjoyment-in-untroubled-ease>). (accessed on 19 February 2021). The translation is by James Legge (1815–1897).
- 35 <https://ctext.org/zhuangzi/xu-wu-gui>. (accessed on 19 February 2021).
- 36 However, this list does not match that of Zhi Qian. See the following phrases in which the Buddha’s ten titles are translated with multisyllabic words, that is, a typical rendering style of Lokakṣema: T. 280, 446a7–11: 中有呼佛名曰勝達。中有呼世世慢陀。中有呼夷阿那坭提。中有呼釋迦文尼。中有呼鼓師薩沈。中有呼墮樓延。中有呼俱讀滑提。中有呼摩呵沙門。中有呼晨那愁樓提。中有呼質多愁樓提等。 [Var.: 阿 = 呵 (三、宮)]; 坭 = 坻 (三、宮); 愁 = 和 (三、宮)]
- 37 The early 6th century hagiography, the *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳, states that Zhi Qian was not mentioned in the *Wushu* because of his foreign birth. Indeed, Wei Zhao, who was the chief of the editors of the *Wushu*, was a well-known orthodox Confucian scholar who wrote the *Boyi lun* 博奕論 “Disquisition on *boyi*” to criticize the game of *weiqi* 圍棋. For more information about Wei Zhao and his inclinations, see (Zanon 1996; Lien 2006).
- 38 Also known as Wei Yao (韋曜), which was modified by the Western Jin historian Chen Shou (陳壽, 233–297), to avoid using a taboo character *zhao* 昭 from the Jin Emperor Wen’s name, Sima Zhao (司馬昭, 211–265). See also the previous footnote.
- 39 For more discussion on the Lingbao School, its history and doctrinal relations with Mahāyāna Buddhist metaphysical systems, see (Toshiaki 2000; Lucas 2020).
- 40 See the entries on *ruyu jie* 入浴偈 and *tifa jie* 剃髮偈 in the Digital Dictionary of Buddhism (<http://www.buddhism-dict.net/ddb/>). (accessed on 23 February 2021).
- 41 Cf. *Xianxin jing* 小心經 “rituals for meal-offering” in the *Sōngmun Ŭibōm* 釋門儀範 (An 1935, vol. 1, pp. 103–107). The *Sōngmun Ŭibōm*, the most influential modern Buddhist ritual manual, was first published by the Korean monk An Chinho (安震湖, 1880–1965) in 1935, and became a standard for rituals among all contemporary, traditional Buddhist orders in South Korea, including Jogye (曹溪) and Taego (太古) Orders. For more information, see (McBride 2019). Digital image of the *Sōngmun Ŭibōm* is available from the library of Dongguk University (<https://lib.dongguk.edu>). (accessed on 23 February 2021).
- 42 Cf. (An 1935, vol. 2, pp. 166–67).

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