

Article

The Formation of *Biaoquan* and *Zhequan* as a Pair of Philosophical Concepts in Chinese Buddhism

Junqi Wang

Institute for the Study of Buddhism and Religious Theory, Renmin University of China, Beijing 100872, China; wangjunqiwj@outlook.com

Abstract: The general consensus in the field of Buddhist studies is that the terms “*biaoquan*” and “*zhequan*” are a pair of Buddhist philosophical concepts often used to designate two diametrically opposed forms of rhetoric. The former term constitutes its affirmative statement, while the latter defines a fact in negative terms—known in Christian theology as cataphatic and apophatic uses of language, respectively. Looking at the terms for which *biaoquan* and *zhequan* initially served as translations, especially in Xuanzang’s works, it would seem that these two concepts have not always appeared as a related pair representing the above-mentioned affirmative–negative dichotomy. The former could designate both affirmation (**vidhi*) as well as the general activity of speech, syllables, and words (*nāma*). In the case of *zhequan*, it corresponds, in different texts, to the three Indian Buddhist concepts of negation (**pratiśedha*, **vyāvṛtti*, **nivṛtti*), implicative negation (*paryudāsa*), and exclusion of others (*anyāpoha*), with each use of the term “*zhequan*” carrying a different set of meanings and associated doctrines. Indeed, in various texts, the concept of *zhequan* might be opposed to the concept of *biaoquan* (**vidhi* **sadhana*) or opposed to pure negation (*prasajya*), or it might be applied on its own with no opposing concept. However, as Chinese Buddhism continued to develop throughout the Tang, *biaoquan* and *zhequan* came to be firmly associated and popularized as a pair of opposites. Looking at the doctrinal as well as the translation history of these two terms, this paper focuses on how they were used as a pair of opposing philosophical concepts, followed by an analysis of the profound influence of these two concepts on Chinese Buddhism.

Keywords: *biaoquan*; *zhequan*; Chinese Buddhism; Xuanzang



Citation: Wang, Junqi. 2023. The Formation of *Biaoquan* and *Zhequan* as a Pair of Philosophical Concepts in Chinese Buddhism. *Religions* 14: 516. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14040516>

Academic Editors: Ru Zhan and Jinhua Chen

Received: 14 February 2023

Revised: 2 April 2023

Accepted: 3 April 2023

Published: 8 April 2023



Copyright: © 2023 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

The terms *biaoquan* 表詮 and *zhequan* 遮詮, as a pair of concepts, have long been used in Chinese Buddhism to describe opposing rhetorical strategies for presenting truth statements. They have profoundly influenced the development of Chinese Buddhist philosophy, and they are still used by Chinese researchers to this day, informing the study of logic, doctrine, and Buddhist hermeneutics. In *Introduction to the Hetuvidyā*,¹ Wangdao Chen defines the two terms as follows: “What confirms the positive connection of [the subject and its predicate] is called *biaoquan* (logically affirmative proposition) in Buddhist logic (Skt. *hetuvidyā*). What expresses the disconnection of [the subject and its predicate] is called *zhequan* (logically negative proposition) in Buddhist logic.” Chen here distinguishes the theses (*pakṣa*) in terms of the *biaoquan/zhequan* dichotomy in Buddhist logic, each end of the spectrum corresponding to logically positive and negative propositions, respectively.

Litian Fang (2002, p. 483) further expands the use of these concepts in Buddhist studies beyond their confinement to Buddhist logic, using them as conceptual tools for interpreting Chan rhetoric such as it is found in the discourses between Mazu 馬祖 and his disciples. Litian Fang says:

[The statements] (1) “Mind is Buddha” and (2) “Neither mind nor Buddha,” are two ways of expressing the relationship between the mind and the Buddha-nature of sentient beings, namely, *biaoquan* and *zhequan*. *Biaoquan* uses positive rhetoric

to define the attributes and meanings of things, while *zhequan* uses negative rhetoric to reject attributes and meanings that things do not have. In the case of Mazu's exchange with his disciples, the [statement] "Mind is Buddha" is *biaoquan*, while the statement "Neither mind nor Buddha" is *zhequan*. These [two statements] illustrate that there is no difference between the mind of sentient beings and Buddha-nature via *biaoquan* and *zhequan* insofar as they are related in the present moment, both directly pointing to [the truth of] "Buddha" and "mind". As linguistic expressions, these two propositions are compatible [even though they seem to contradict one another] for they are complementary—they are not mutually exclusive statement.

Wei-qun Yao (2014) goes a step further, claiming that *biaoquan* and *zhequan* were utilized in ancient India by early seekers after truth. Yao argues that "the Brahminical sacred text begins negation (*zhe*), after which [uses positive terminology] to describe an independent entity or an essence. In Buddhism (especially Mahāyāna Buddhism) "negation" speaks to the reality of things insofar as it denies that there is an independent entity or essence."

Regarding the modern use of the term "*zhequan*", Cheng Lü (1991, p. 212) uses it in his Chinese translation of the title for the fifth chapter in Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* called "*An Investigation into Zhequan*" 觀遮詮品第五. In this instance, Lü uses *zhequan* to translate Dignāga's concept of *apoha*, or *anyāpoha*.² Weihong Zheng (1996, pp. 105–10), in an examination of *biaoquan* and *zhequan*, criticizes the previous notion that *zhequan* only designates negation or negative propositions, stating that *zhequan* is in fact conceptually closer to Dignāga's concept of *apoha/anyāpoha*. Recent studies by Liangkang Ni (2008) and Xiang-yanxiang Zhou (2017) have also interpreted *zhequan* in terms of Dignāga's concept of *apoha/anyāpoha*.

From the above discussion on *biaoquan* and *zhequan* in contemporary Chinese Buddhist scholarship, we may note that while they all use the concepts of *biaoquan* and *zhequan*, there are diverse opinions about the actual meaning of these two terms. The term *biaoquan* is less controversial among contemporary Chinese scholars, and disagreements regarding this conceptual pair usually revolve around the definition of *zhequan*.

The present consensus regarding the relationship between *biaoquan* and *zhequan* is that they constitute a conceptual pair. No one, however, has investigated the original meaning of these two terms or looked at when or why they were paired in Chinese Buddhism.³ To fill these gaps, this paper elaborates on their place in tradition, describing how they were established as a conceptual pair. As we see in this article, the terms *biaoquan* and *zhequan* came from Xuanzang's translation work, where they were initially not considered a conceptual pair. Indeed, these individual terms carry multiple distinct definitions and associations. The former could designate both affirmation (**vidhi*) as well as the general activity of speech, syllables, and words (*nāma*). The latter corresponds to at least three concepts: negation (**pratishedha*, **vyāvṛtti*, **nivṛtti*), implicative negation (*paryudāsa*), and the exclusion of others (*anyāpoha*). In his translation of Asvabhāva's *Mahāyānasamgrahopani-bandhana* (henceforth *MSU*), Xuanzang first used the terms to define a pair of complementary explanatory methods, namely the *biaoquan men* 表詮門 and *zhequan men* 遮詮門. This rhetorical dichotomy was used by later authors, gradually eclipsing the other definitions of *biaoquan* and *zhequan* so that, in time, they came to be exclusively associated with affirmation and negation in discourse. Later Buddhist interpreters continued using *biaoquan* and *zhequan* as a rhetorical pair, further cementing their association as a conceptual pair, leading in turn to the debates in our present day between modern Chinese scholars regarding the origins and the semantics of these terms. Bearing this in mind, the following provides context and definition for both *biaoquan* and *zhequan*.

2. The Three Instances of *Zhequan*

2.1. Implicative Negation

Because the concept of *zhequan* has more ambiguity than *biaoquan*, this paper first discusses the concept of *zhequan*. In Xuanzang's translation of Dignāga's *Nyāyamukha* (NM), the word *zhequan* is used to express what is called "implicative negation" in Buddhist logic.

There are two types of examples: those by similarity and those by dissimilarity. An instance of an example by similarity is: "sound is impermanent, because it is produced immediately after effort; whatever is produced immediately after effort is impermanent, as a pot etc." [An instance of an example by] dissimilarity is: "we see that things permanent are not produced immediately after effort, such as space". The former is *zhequan* 遮詮, and the latter is only *zhilan* 止濫, because they enable [people] to infer objects through *anvaya* and *vyatireka*, respectively. Therefore, even if the opponent does not admit the existence of space, etc., as a real substance, still the [example by dissimilarity is sufficient to] show that, were the probandum absent, the absence of the reason would be necessarily proved.⁴

In this translation, the concept of *zhequan* is not paired with *biaoquan* but is defined in contrast to the concept *zhilan* 止濫. Reading the relevant passages in the NM, the meaning of these two terms is not immediately clear. Because the Sanskrit version of the NM has not been made public and there is no known ancient Tibetan translation, it is not possible to use the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts of the NM to aid in its interpretation. Fortunately, according to Shoryu Katsura (1981, pp. 63–64) there is a parallel in the Tibetan translation to the third chapter of Dignāga's famous philosophical treatise, the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (PS). The parallel passage in Tibetan reads as follows:

*snga ma ni ma yin par dgag pa yin la phyi ma ni med par dgag pa yin par brjod do.*⁵

Looking at this passage in the PS, it would seem the word *zhequan* as it appears in parallel NM passage designates implicative negation (*paryudāsa*), while the word *zhilan* refers to pure negation (*prasajya*).⁶

In the PS, Dignāga (c. 480–540) elaborates on how *ākāśa* (space) can be used in Buddhist logic as an example based on dissimilarity (Skt. *vaidharmya-drṣṭānta*). In Dignāga's philosophy of inference, the example based on similarity enables one to infer the object of the proposition by positive concomitance (*anvaya*). On the other hand, the example by dissimilarity enables one to infer the object of the proposition by negative concomitance (*vyatireka*). According to Katsura (1981, pp. 63–65), given that this section elaborates on the properties of space, the implicative negation and pure negation—*zhequan* and *zhilan*, respectively—here relate to the words "impermanent" and "permanent", respectively. In the example by similarity, the word "impermanent" is an implicative negation insofar as it is used to designate things that are impermanent—the negation is not used to merely deny substantiality or permanence. In the case of examples by dissimilarity, the primary purpose of the word "permanent" is not to affirm what is permanent by saying "permanent", but to instead deny impermanence. Therefore, in Dignāga's investigation of space (*ākāśa*)—whatever that may be—its describing/qualifying word "permanent" is without necessarily implying the existence of permanent space, etc.

As demonstrated in the parallel passages found in the PS it is clear that the word *zhequan* in the NM designates implicative negation (*paryudāsa*), while *zhilan* designates pure negation (*prasajya*), a different pair with no mention of a concept that we could liken to *biaoquan*.

2.2. Negation

In the discussion on the epistemological principle that "every cognition has an object" in the fifth chapter of Samghabhadra's *Shun zhengli lun* 順正理論, the author explains how the cognition of non-existence (**abhāva*) is possible. In this treatise, the author mentions the word *zhequan*:⁷

Since this cognition has language (**abhidhāna*) as its object, it should not be thought that it arises without an object. The reason must be so. For example, people say “*abrahman*” or “*anitya*” and [other such negations]. [These words] negate things other [than what they refer to, such as Brahman-ness, permanence, etc.] but [these things] in and of themselves are not non-existent. Indeed, in these instances cognition arises of the language which negates Brahman-ness and permanence, etc. After language negates Brahman-ness and permanence, etc., it is the objects of speech that they refer to, namely a certain *Kṣatriya* and *Samśkāras*, etc. However, all **negative language** is either with or without an object. The [negative language] with an object is, for example, “*abrahman*,” “*anitya*,” etc. Negative language without an object is, for example, “non-existent,” “nothing,” and such. If cognition arises from [negative language] that has an object, the cognition initially arises only by having the [negative] language as its object, and thus can recognize that the negated object [such as Brahman-ness] does not exist. The [cognition] that arises afterwards has the object of speech [e.g., a certain *kṣatriya*] as its own object, and realizes the absence of the negated object [e.g., *brahman-ness*] in the object of speech itself [e.g., a certain *kṣatriya*]. If cognition arises of [negative language] without an object as its own object, both the initial and subsequent moments of cognition arise only by having [negative] language as their objects, recognizing that the negated object does not exist.⁸

Samghabhadra first points out that this cognizance of non-existence is actually the cognizance of negative language, continuing on to explain the two kinds of negative language (*zhequan mingyan* 遮詮名言): negative language with an object and negative language without an object. The former refers to implicative negation, and the latter refers to pure negation. Interestingly, Samghabhadra also explains the cognitive processes of these two kinds of negation. The cognitive process of implicative negation involves at least two steps: First, cognition arises by having the negative speech as its object and realizes the absence of “Brahman-ness”, etc.. The subsequent moment of cognition realizes the absence of “Brahman-ness” in, say, a human of the warrior caste (*kṣatriya*). However, in the cognitive process guided by pure negation, the initial and subsequent cognitions only have negative language as their object. Given that the word translated in Samghabhadra’s work as “*zhequan mingyan*” includes both implicative negative language and pure negative language, *zhequan* here seems to have a broader semantic field than in the NM. Indeed, it is used as a more general designation of negation that includes both implicative negation and pure negation.

A similar use of the word *zhequan* is also found in Xuanzang’s translation of Bhāviveka’s **Hastaratna* 大乘掌珍論.

In addition, other people who are arrogant in their cleverness make the following challenge: “If from the standpoint of ultimate reality all *saṃskṛtas* are like illusions, and are empty of essence, then they must be non-existent. Because [you] are attached to non-existence, you have the cognition of non-existence.” [Bhāviveka replied]: “[You detractors] want to cover up the faults of you own claims by uttering [such] slanderous words. Could it be that the reasoning established by those who cling to existence is correct, rather than those who make a claim for emptiness? Because to slander ultimate reality this way is a great mistake. The meaning of the word “non-existent” constitutes a **negation** (*zhequan*). You think that the primary purpose of this rhetoric is to affirm, but I would rather say that the primary purpose of this rhetoric is to negate. The word ‘non-existent’ only negates there being an “existent.” Once the function [of negation] is realized, there is no impetus to indicate other things. For example, if people speak of ‘not-white-silk’ we should not insist that this word indicates black [silk] and then claim the speaker has a faulty premise. [We hold that] the expression ‘not-white-silk’ is only a negation of ‘white silk,’ and once the function of [negation] has been fulfilled, there is no reason to speak of black, red, or yellow silk.”⁹

Bhāviveka's detractors argue that according to the Madhyamaka theory of emptiness, things that are empty of essence are non-existent, at which point the Mādhyamikas may cling to reified "non-existence". Bhāviveka explains that such a rebuttal is wrong, pointing out that the word "non-existent" in Mādhyamika thought is only an implicative negation aiming to negate "existents", without affirming the existence of an entity called "non-existent", just like the word "not-white-silk" only denies the whiteness of the silk without implying the silk itself is black, red, etc. Bhāviveka's reply is based in the logics of both implicative and pure negation. Therefore, the word *zhequan* here should be interpreted as general negation (*pratiśedha*) that includes both implicative negation and pure negation.

The term *zhequan* appears again in the translation of Bhāviveka's **Hastaratna*. It is Bhāviveka who developed the following argument, which was named as "the reasoning of the **Hastaratna*" in *Faxiang zong*: "An *asamṣkr̥ta* is not a real entity because it does not arise, like flowers in the sky"¹⁰. According to this reasoning, flowers in the sky are not real entities and they do not arise, a logic following the reasoning of the example by similarity. Regarding *asamṣkr̥ta* in relation to these sky-flowers, the Sāṃkhya school's position is presented as follows:

We believe that all things in the three realms, just like the flowers in the sky, arise through transformation—it is not that there are no flowers in the sky. Because the [flowers in the sky do in fact] exist, [to use of sky-flowers] in an example by similarity does not apply and goes contrary to that which you posit.¹¹

The Sāṃkhyas claim that flowers in the sky arise from the transformation of a primary matter and are therefore real existent things. According to them, sky-flowers can therefore not be used as an example by similarity for the object *asamṣkr̥ta*. In response to such a view, Bhāviveka concludes that:

Since, [in this case], flowers in the sky constitute an example by similarity, they do not belong to the three realms. You should not say that because the three realms do exist, [sky-flowers] also exist. This statement shows that your wisdom is lacking. **Negative language** (*zhequan yan*) mainly aims to negate. Once it negates, its function is fulfilled and it says nothing more about the specific object of negation. Such a questioning has been explained before. Therefore, it is not what the heart of a wise man should believe.¹²

Bhāviveka is arguing that flowers in the sky are different from other things in the three realms—the former are non-existents and the latter are existents. The validity of Bhāviveka's defense is not relevant to the subject of this paper, so I do not discuss it. In this second instance of the term *zhequan*, it is explicitly stated that the function of negation is key. Therefore, the term *zhequan* here in its usage does not refer to implicative negation but to pure negation. However, in view of the fact that Bhāviveka then states that this point has been explained in a preceding passage of **Hastaratna*, we have reason to believe that the preceding passage refers to the first passage of **Hastaratna* we analyzed above. If so, the term *zhequan* here must not have been translated from the Sanskrit *prasajya* but rather from the word *pratiśedha*. Therefore, it can be said that in the **Hastaratna*, the concept of *zhequan* is translated from *pratiśedha*, a Sanskrit word that simply means negation, and only when Bhāviveka states his own claim does *zhequan* specifically mean pure negation.¹³

The term *zhequan* also appears in Xuanzang's translation of the ninth chapter of Asvabhāva's commentary, the *She dacheng lun shi* 攝大乘論釋 (Skt. *Mahāyānasamgrahopaniḥṣaṇa*).

The śāstra [of *Mahāyānasamgraha*] says: "Here, the nature of the non-conceptual wisdom is to leave five characteristics: because (1) it is not without attention (**amanaskāra*); (2) it does not transcend the **savitarka-savicāra-bhūmis*; (3) it is not quietness caused by the cessation of representation and sensation (**samjñāved-itānirodha*); (4) it is not of the nature of forms (**rūpasvabhāva*); (5) it is not the conceptual cognition taking *tattva* as its object (**tattvārthacitrikāra*). It should be known that what leaves these five characteristics is called non-conceptual wis-

dom.” The commentary says: “Based on the nature of the non-conceptual wisdom, its leaving from the five characteristics is stated. Through *zhequan men* (遮詮門), its essence (**svarūpa*) is stated. Because it cannot be stated through *biaoquan men* (表詮門).”¹⁴

In this instance, *biaoquan* and *zhequan* are defined as two methods of explaining non-conceptual wisdom. According to the translated commentary, the essence of this form of wisdom can only be revealed by means of *zhequan*. Xuanzang’s translation is clear and unambiguous, making it is easy to understand the overall content of the commentary. However, it is not easy to tell from the Chinese translation what both these terms actually represent. Fortunately, there is a Tibetan translation of Asvabhāva’s commentary. It reads as follows:

ngo bo nyid kyi dbang du byas nas rnam pa lnga rnam par spangs pa zhes bya ba smos
so || bzlog pa’i sgo nas mtshan nyid ston te | dmus long la gzugs bsnyad pa bzhin du
bsgrub pa’i sgo nas brjod par mi nus pa’i phyir ro ||¹⁵

In parallel to this Tibetan translation, Xuanzang’s use of the term *zhequan* corresponds to the word “bzlog pa”, a translation of the Sanskrit words “**nivr̥tti*, **vyāv̥r̥tti*” meaning “negation”. The word *biaoquan* corresponds to “bsgrub pa”, a translation of the Sanskrit word “**vidhi*, **sādhana*” meaning “affirmation”. If this is true, then Asvabhāva here proposes that non-conceptual wisdom can only be described by means of negation, not by means of affirmation” This would be the earliest instance where we see the use of *biaoquan* (affirmation) and *zhequan* (negation) as a pair of opposite concepts. This confirms the earlier claim that the understanding of *biaoquan/zhequan* as an affirmation/negation pair espoused by Wangdao Chen, Litian Fang, and other scholars can indeed be traced back to a text translated by Xuanzang, namely the *She dacheng lun shi* 攝大乘論釋.

2.3. Exclusion of Others

The exclusion (*apoha*) theory, also known as the exclusion of others (*anyāpoha*) theory, is a system of semantics presented by Dignāga which holds that nominal words draw their meaning through the exclusion of everything other than their referents—the semantic correlate of a word such as “glass” is the exclusion of others such as “paper”, “plastic”, “metal”, etc. In Xuanzang’s translated oeuvre, there is no direct example of *zhequan* being used to translate Dignāga’s concept of *apoha/anyāpoha*. However, as Weihong Zheng (1996, pp. 107–8) points out, Xuanzang’s assistant Shentai 神泰 used the word *zhequan* to explain *apoha* in his own commentary on Dignāga’s NM. In addition, the same use of the term can be found in many Buddhist texts from the Tang dynasty onward, as we see in Woncheuk’s 圓測 *Boreboluomiduo xinjing zan* 般若波羅蜜多心經贊. Given that Dignāga’s PS, which explains the theory of *apoha*, had not yet been translated in the seventh century, it is likely that the *apoha* theory known to Shentai, Woncheuk, and others, would have been learned through the oral teachings given by Xuanzang during his translation work. Therefore, it is possible that the practice of interpreting the Sanskrit term *apoha* as *zhequan* may have come from Xuanzang’s oral teaching.

The following provides some examples of the use of the term *zhequan* in the commentaries written by Shentai and Woncheuk. For instance, in a commentary on Dignāga’s NM, Shentai writes:

[The NM says:] “The former is *zhequan*, and the latter is only *zhilan*.” This statement sets apart two separate instances [of inference]. The former [instance refers to] the example by similarity. The latter [refers to] the example by dissimilarity. All things have two properties. One is the particular property, only cognized by the five consciousnesses such as the visual [consciousness], though it may not be cognized by the conceptual mind and such. The second is the universal property, cognized by means of the conceptual mind and such. Words may only refer to universal properties, not to the particular properties of things because particulars are distinct from language. When referring to a universal prop-

erty, [a word] excludes [everything] other than its referent before it may refer to this [universal property.] For example, the word “blue” refers to the universal property of blueness only insofar as it excludes yellow, [red, orange, etc.] things which are non-blue. If the word “blue” did not indeed exclude yellow things, etc., then yellow things would come [to mind] when the word “blue” is said. In order to designate their referents, all words must refer to [their referents] by excluding (*zhe*) other things. There is no [word] that refers to something without excluding other things. However, some words can only exclude other things without designating a referent. For example, the word “not-blue” does not refer to a not-blue thing. In the example by similarity, [the word] “the-things-being-produced-immediately-after-effort,” excludes the things-*not*-being-produced-immediately-after-effort by referring to things produced immediately after effort. [The word] “impermanent” excludes permanent things and refers to impermanent things arising and ceasing. Therefore, it is said [in the example by similarity] that exclusion comes first, and the reference follows. In the example by dissimilarity, [the word] “permanent” only excludes impermanent things—the word is not necessarily referring to permanent things. [The word] “not-produced” aims to exclude produced things without referring directly to a not-produced thing. The aim [of the example by dissimilarity] is [to show] that only impermanent things—where there is no “thesis-property”—are not-produced. The statement is a *zhilan* and does not refer to any real object. Therefore, [the NM] notes that “the latter is only *zhilan*”. “Because they enable [people] to infer objects through *anvaya* and *vyatireka* respectively” is to explain the above-mentioned distinctions. Because [in Buddhist logic] the example by similarity enables [people] to infer insofar as it has the thesis-property and reason-property, it is therefore both exclusionary and referential. This is because its own “thesis-property” and “reason-property” constitute *zhequan*. Because the example by dissimilarity enables [people] to infer only by departing from its own thesis-property and reason-property, it is only *zhilan* without any further referential aim.¹⁶

This is Shentai’s commentary on the passage in the NM regarding *zhequan* and *zhilan* mentioned in the previous section. In the previous passage, we noted that the word *zhequan* designates implicative negation, and *zhilan* designates pure negation. In his commentary, however, Shentai also includes Dignāga’s exclusion theory, thus adding yet another semantic dimension to the term *zhequan*, wherein it effectively functions as an indicator for both exclusion theory and implicative negation.¹⁷ Interestingly, the first half of Shentai’s commentary seemingly models itself after Dignāga’s exclusion theory, stating that words may only refer to universal properties, and the cognition of these universals must be cognized by means of excluding others. Indeed, in this commentary, the term “*qianzhe yufa* 遣遮餘法” is effectively a translation of “exclusion of others”, the Sanskrit term “*anyāpoha*”.

Dignāga’s own works do not explicitly attempt to marry exclusion theory with the theory encompassing implicative and pure negation. Shentai elaborates on the theory of the exclusion of others in terms of the two negations theory. Indeed, Shentai seems to equate the exclusion of others with implicative negation. This results in an apparent self-contradiction in his exegesis: Shentai begins by saying that all words may refer to universals through the exclusion of others, but then proceeds to mention that some nominal words are exceptional in that they may only negate the other without having an actual referent. This two-fold system does not follow from Dignāga’s exclusion theory but is instead Shentai’s own synthesis of these two different streams in Buddhist logic. It would seem that although Shentai has a clear understanding of the two negations theory as well as the *apoha* theory, there is significant deviation in Shentai’s commentary from Dignāga’s own theory.

The problem in reading this commentary is that Shentai does not distinguish between *zhequan* as exclusion of others and *zhequan* as an implicative negation. Looking through

other related materials, we note that this problem is not unique to Shentai. For example, Woncheuk's (613–696) commentary on the *Heart Sūtra* states:

All things may have two properties: a particular property and a universal property. A particular property is only cognized by perception, because it is not grasped by provisional cognitions (*jiazhī* 假智) and words. If provisional cognitions and words have objects to grasp, these are universal properties. For example, the word “blue” [takes the universal property “blue-ness” as its object] while diverse [particular] properties of a stem and a leaf may only be grasped by means of perception. Through provisional cognitions and words, only the universal properties of blue things may be revealed. The word “blue” negates yellow things, etc., thus [insofar as it excludes non-blue things] it is said to refer to blue things. Since it does not refer to blue things directly, it is called *zhequan* (= *apoha*). Regarding *zhequan* there are two theories. The first one is of Bhāviveka's school which states that ultimate reality cannot be expressed using words or characterized by certain properties. [Bhāviveka] negates but has nothing to grasp, and establishes but has no commitment to its existence. The reasons and authoritative scriptures cited should be understood as above. The second is presented by Dharmapāla's school. [He argues that] both conventional and ultimate realities exist, and both are separate from words. Given that “true nature” (Ch. *zhenxing* 真性; Skt. **tattva*) is opposed to conventional [conditioned reality] the word “true nature” has a real referent. In Bhāviveka's school, a master proposes something similar to [Dharmapāla's] position. Therefore, Dharmapāla criticizes Bhāviveka: “On the level of ultimate reality, the [thesis] that all elements are empty holds the fallacy of **prasiddhasambandha*.” In Bhāviveka's theory, the *paratantrasvabhāva* is negated which is not accepted by Dharmapāla. Therefore, they hold different [theses.] Accordingly, the words “exist” and “not-exist” upheld by our school are both *zhequan*.¹⁸

In the first half of the above quotation, Woncheuk's explanation of *zhequan* is basically the same as that of Shentai. Woncheuk is essentially providing an introduction to Dignāga's *apoha* theory. According to his summary of Dignāga's theory, the word “blue” does not directly speak of blue things but does so through the negation of yellow, orange, red, etc., things. In the second half of the passage, the argument between Bhāviveka and Dharmapāla is used as a background to present two interpretations of *zhequan*: Bhāviveka believes that *zhequan* is pure negation, which only negates without any reference to a real object; Dharmapāla believes that *zhequan* is an implicative negation, wherein the word may have a real referent. Therefore, although it is not entirely consistent with the interpretation of *zhequan* by Shentai, Woncheuk's interpretation also mixes up Dignāga's theory of exclusion with the two negations theory. We may also note that it is in the Tang dynasty that the term *zhequan* was indeed associated to Dignāga's *apoha* theory, the intellectual origins of a tradition that came to color the understanding of *zhequan* in the works of modern scholars such as Cheng Lü and Weihong Zheng.

3. The Two Instances of *Biaoquan*

3.1. Affirmation

We noted at the beginning of this paper that the terms *biaoquan* and *zhequan* in Asvabhāva's *MSU* correspond to affirmation (*bsgrub pa*, **vidhi*, **sādhana*) and negation (*bzlog pa*, **nivr̥tti*, **vyāvṛtti*), respectively. This definition of *biaoquan* as “affirmation” is well attested to and is not further developed here.

3.2. The Activity of Speech, *Śabda*

Similar to the term *zhequan*, which has its own distinct history of usage in Chinese Buddhist scriptures, the term *biaoquan* also appears separately from its conceptual counterpart

in various other texts. For example, Samghabhadra's *Shun zhengli lun* 順正理論 says the following:

However, the speaker first grasps the *nāma* that he wants to [speak] in his mind, then he thinks: "I will make such-and-such a speech act and express such-and-such an object to others." Then he speaks according to his own will, and the speech invokes syllables, and the syllables invoke *nāmas*, and it is the *nāmas* that reveal the object. On the basis of this continuous process, it is said that speech invokes *nāmas*, and it is the *nāmas* that reveal the objects. The reasoning must be established as above. If the *nāmas* are not included in the mind at the beginning, even when [someone] is intent to speak, there will be no fixed *biaoquan* 表詮 and the object [of speech] will not be recognized by others.¹⁹

This passage of *Shun zhengli lun* is a rebuttal of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, wherein Vasubandhu argues that the "*nāma*", as a property dissociated from cognition, is useless.²⁰ The word *biaoquan* does not appear again in this passage of Samghabhadra's translated works, but its meaning is not difficult to determine. Samghabhadra establishes a relational and processual continuum of speech–syllable–*nāma*–object, in which speech invokes syllables, syllables invoke *nāmas*, and *nāmas* invoke their objects. Then, *biaoquan*, which is located somewhere between the speech act and the object, refers to the two links in the middle, the syllables and the *nāmas*. It is possible that the original Sanskrit word may be *abhidhāna*. In this instance, the concept of *biaoquan* is not opposed to *zhequan*. In fact, there is no opposing concept here: *biaoquan* is not defined in contrast to some other concept.

A similar use of *biaoquan* denoting a *śabda*, or speech act, is found in the first volume of the *Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論:

Others claim that the *śabdas* of the Vedas are permanent and can be used as a determined and correct means of cognition to speak of (*biaoquan* 表詮) *dharma*s. Some claim that all *śabdas* are permanent and depend on conditions for manifestation, after which reveal (*quanbiao* 詮表) [the objects]. These [claims] are all unreasonable. Why? First of all, since the *śabdas* of the Vedas are admitted to be viable for speaking of (*nengquan* 能詮) [the *dharma*s], then they would have to be impermanent, just like other *śabdas* given that other *śabdas* also have impermanent *śabdas* as their essence, just as bottles, clothes, etc. depend on many conditions.²¹

In this quotation, the three words *biaoquan*, *quanbiao*, and *nengquan*, are interchangeable and they all mean "speak of", "reveal", or the "*śabdas* that speak of *dharma*s". The use of the term *biaoquan* in the *Cheng weishi lun* therefore differs from that in the *Shun zhengli lun*, which uses the term to designate the syllables and the *nāmas* in speech acts. That being said, although these two uses of the term differ, they remain semantically related insofar as they both refer to speech elements and, more generally, the activity of speech.

Finally, in his commentary on the last verse of Deva's *Catuhśataka*,²² Dharmapāla also gives an example of *biaoquan* in relation to general words/speeches.

The opinion that "[something] exists" (*sat*) and the opinion that "[something] does not exist" (*asat*) have both been removed, and [the opinion] that "[something] exists and does not exist" (*sadasac*) and "[something] does not exist and does not non-exist" should be similarly removed. While existents, etc., are explicable (*ke biaoquan*), however, true nature (**tattva*) remains ineffable (*jue biaoquan*), showing that [true nature] is not an existent, etc.²³

According to Dharmapāla, existents may be properly expressed via language, while true nature remains beyond the reach of words. Unlike the other example provided above, Dharmapāla does not, in this instance, discuss the forms of speech used to explain these things. Without any reference to affirmative or negative rhetoric, the terms "explicable" (*ke biaoquan*) and "ineffable" (*jue biaoquan*) are here related to the general activity of speech, not distinguishing between cataphatic and apophatic uses of language.

4. From *Biaoquan* and *Zhequan* to *Biaoquan Men* and *Zhequan Men*

As noted above regarding the development of *biaoquan* and *zhequan* as philosophical terms in the Chinese Buddhist tradition, both these concepts were closely related to Xuanzang's translation activities. We also noted that in most early instances, these terms were not presented as opposing concepts, with the only exception being the treatise of interest in this section, the translation of Asvabhāva's *MSU*. In Asvabhāva's work, *biaoquan* and *zhequan* became two opposing methods (*men* 門) used to describe non-conceptual wisdom. Indeed, it would seem that the translation of Asvabhāva's two-part hermeneutic framework made up of the *biaoquan men* and the *zhequan men* was, in a sense, more practical and applicable than the other varied definitions of *biaoquan* and *zhequan*. The broad semantic fields for both of these words were therefore fitted into Asvabhāva's two opposing methods of interpretation, the *biaoquan men* and the *zhequan men*. In the *NM*, *zhequan* and *zhilan* are effectively presented as opposing concepts, but because they were not identified by Xuanzang as opposing methods of interpretation when they were translated, this perhaps made them less accessible, preventing them from being further promoted as a conceptual pair in Chinese Buddhism. Indeed, it would seem they were ultimately absorbed into the categories of *biaoquan men* and *zhequan men* as defined in the translation to Asvabhāva's *MSU*.

Ultimately, in the writings of Xuanzang's disciples, the pairing of *biaoquan* and *zhequan* became prevalent. For instance, in Kuiji's 窺基 explanation on how examples by similarity and examples by dissimilarity both constitute existent things, *biaoquan* and *zhequan* are used as a pair of opposites.

The example by similarity as [a part of] proof, when proving an existent [as a thesis subject], must be an existent [entity], and when proving a non-existent [as a thesis-subject], must be a non-existent [entity]. Both affirmation (*biaoquan*) and negation (*zhequan*) are valid in these instances. However, the example by dissimilarity is not so regardless of [whether the example by dissimilarity is] existent or not. It may only negate, for it is essentially pure negation (*zhilan*). In this way, the word “permanent” negates the thesis[-property] “impermanent”, and the word “unproduced” affirms the absence of the reason[-property] “produced”. However, these mentions of “permanent” and “unproduced” are not meant to express two [properties] with existent entities because the purpose [of such words in the *Nyāyapraveśa*] is to show that the example by dissimilarity can also be non-existent entities. The *NM* states: “The former is *zhequan*; the latter is only *zhilan*. Because they enable [people] to infer objects through *anvaya* and *vyatireka*, respectively”. The former example by similarity both negates (*zhe*) and affirms (*quan*) because [the thesis-subject with an] existent [entity] should be established by [instances with] existent [entities], and [the thesis-subject with a] non-existent [entity] should be established by [instances with] non-existent [entities]. The latter example by dissimilarity only negates (*zhilan*), that is to say, that it negates (*zhe*) without affirming (*quan*). This is because the example by similarity is connected with (*he* 合) the probandum, and the example by dissimilarity is separate from (*li* 離) the probandum.²⁴

Considering that Kuiji is one of Xuanzang's disciples, it is worth paying special attention to how he uses the terms *zhequan*, *biaoquan*, *zhe*, and *quan* in his commentary. Kuiji uses the word *zhequan* in two ways: *zhequan I* means negation, as opposed to *biaoquan*, which means affirmation here, whereas *zhequan II* consists of both negation (*zhe*) and affirmation (*biaoquan*; *quan*). *Zhequan II* only occurs when mentioning Dignāga's *NM* and is interpreted as a negation that also entails an affirmation.

Kuiji then comments that the example by dissimilarity, a proposition that “whatever is permanent is non-produced like space”, is a pure negation. That is to say, in this case, the words “permanent” and “non-produced” do not affirm the existence of some entity but appear only as the opposite of “impermanent” and “produced”. Kuiji explains that things that do not exist can effectively be used in an example by dissimilarity. In contrast, the

example by similarity can refer to either existents or non-existents, depending on whether the object of the proof exists. When the example by similarity is an existent thing, then the words “impermanent” and “produced” in the statement are affirmations, i.e., they affirm the existence of something. When the example by similarity is something that does not exist, then these elements in the statement are negations, i.e., denying the existence of something. In terms of definitions and philosophical content, we see a clear instance of how the concepts of *zhequan* (=prayudāsa) and *zhilan* (=prasajya) in the NM are subsumed into the framework of *zhequan men* and *biaoquan men* of Asvabhāva’s MSU. Indeed, it would seem that Xuanzang’s own disciples do not fully understand his translations.

In the *Commentary on the Humane King Sūtra*, Woncheuk also refers to the *zhequan men* and the *biaoquan men* to explain the question as to “whether reading the *Humane King Sūtra* could protect one from four grave karmas”. Woncheuk writes that:

Among the different schools, there are four distinct responses. (1) [According to] the Sarvāstivādas, [when a monk commits and act that triggers the four grave karmas, he] may never abandon the precepts. (2) [According to] the school of Sautrāntika and Yogacāra, [the monk] will definitely abandon the precepts. (3) [According to] the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, some of his precepts may be abandoned and some may not. (4) [According to] the *Vaitulya* scriptures and the *Sūtra of Meditating on Samantabhadra*, if he repents, he will not abandon the precepts; if not, he will abandon the precepts. The [third and fourth statements] become the third and fourth points [above]... Points three and four speak to the same teachings by negation (*zhe*) and affirmation (*biao*). If it is through affirmation (*biaoquan*), it will appear as it does in the third point. If it is through negation (*zhequan*), it will appear as it does in the fourth point. Therefore, the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and the *Vaitulya* scriptures reveal the same teachings but in different forms. Based on the *Vaitulya* scriptures as well as this *sūtra*, the meaning of the four heavy karmas and five cardinal sins are established.²⁵

The question with which Woncheuk struggles here is: If a monk commits one of the four grave sins, must he renounce the precepts? The *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra* and the *Vaitulya* scriptures seem to hold different opinions. In order to reconcile these two opposite theses, Woncheuk explains that although the third and fourth points are different, the meaning is essentially the same. This is because, according to Woncheuk, the third and fourth sentences are instances of *biaoquan* (point 3) and *zhequan* (point 4) that reveal the same teaching using different formulations of the same truth statement—namely that if he repents, he will not give up the precepts; if he does not repent, he will give up the precepts. By describing the third point of this fourfold logical argument (Skt. *catuskoṭi*) as affirmation (*biaoquan*) and the fourth point as a negation (*zhequan*), Woncheuk argues that they both represent the same meaning though they differ in terms of how they point to the truth—via affirmation or via negation. It is obvious that the use of the concepts of *biaoquan* and *zhequan* in this case is consistent with the *biaoquan men* and the *zhequan men* defined in Asvabhāva’s MSU, respectively.

Similarly, in a commentary on the *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, Wonhyo (617–686) elaborates on the four-part logical statement claiming that:

- (1) Some Buddha-nature belongs to deluded beings (Skt. *icchantikas*) but not to people with wholesome roots.
- (2) Some Buddha-nature belongs to people with wholesome roots but not to *icchantikas*.
- (3) Some Buddha-nature belongs to both of them.
- (4) Some Buddha nature belongs to none of them.²⁶

Wonhyo comments:

Regarding these two [kinds of people], the two first sentences expel two extreme opinions by relying on negation (*zhequan*). The latter two sentences that combine these two [kinds of] people are developed to show the middle way according to method of affirmation (*biaoquan men*).²⁷

Wonhyo states that the first sentence denies the one-sided statement that “*icchantikas* definitely have no Buddha-nature” by means of negation; the second sentence once again denies the equally one-sided statement that “*icchantikas* definitely have Buddha-nature” by means of negation; and the third sentence directly affirms that Buddha-nature, unlike the proposition that a rabbit may have horns, does not exist; the fourth sentence directly affirms that Buddha-nature, unlike empty space, does exist. Wonhyo is clearly using the conceptual pairing of *biaoquan* and *zhequan* in the sense of affirmation and negation. This is the basic meaning of *biaoquan men* and *zhequan men* in Asvabhāva’s *MSU*.

We can see that both *biaoquan* and *zhequan* were once widely used mainly as a hermeneutic tool in the exegetical works of Xuanzang’s disciples and of their contemporaries. The ambiguous and varied meaning of these two terms were gradually made clearer, and we saw that, in most instances, they were reduced to the two methods of affirmation and negation introduced in Asvabhāva’s *MSU*.

5. Conclusions

This paper showed that in most of Xuanzang’s translations, the terms *biaoquan* and *zhequan* are not opposite—or even related—concepts but instead have their own various definitions. We saw that the term *biaoquan* can designate either an affirmation, a general speech act, or speech elements such as syllables and *nāmas*. The term *zhequan* has three possible definitions: (1) implicative negation, (2) negation, and (3) exclusion of others. In the *NM*, the concept of *zhequan* (implicative negation) represents the opposite of *zhilan* (pure negation), while *biaoquan* is not mentioned at all. In the *Shun zhengli lun*, the terms *biaoquan* and *zhequan* are not related to each other—*biaoquan* is the activity of speech, syllables, and *nāmas*, while *zhequan* is negation. In the translation to Bhāviveka’s **Hastaratna*, it only mentions “*zhequan*” as negation, once again without *biaoquan*. In the works of several of Xuanzang’s disciples, the word *zhequan* is sometimes used to refer to Dignāga’s concept of exclusion of others (*anyāpoha*). It is, indeed, only in the translation of Asvabhāva’s *MSU* that the two first appear as a pair of opposing concepts.

Because Xuanzang’s translation of Asvabhāva’s *MSU* explicitly established the hermeneutic methods known as the *biaoquan men* and the *zhequan men*, this pair of concepts was given great theological significance, gradually subsuming the semantic variance of *biaoquan* and *zhequan* into the categories of affirmation and negation, respectively. The works of Kuiji, Woncheuk, and Wonhyo all show such a tendency in their exegesis. Therefore, although other uses of *biaoquan* and *zhequan* occasionally appeared in the Chinese commentarial tradition, these do not disprove a general trend in the Tang when the two terms *biaoquan* and *zhequan* were finally established as a pair of fixed terms. This is the early history of the formation of this pair of Buddhist terms, two concepts that have long been points of contention and debate among Buddhists and among scholars.

It would seem that in the short span of one generation, from Xuanzang to his disciples, there must have been some confusion vis-à-vis the original meaning of these concepts. Two important issues remain unanswered. Firstly, assuming that Xuanzang translated these texts with reference to Sanskrit manuscripts, there is little possibility that he could have completely misunderstood or perhaps confused these concepts. That begs the question: why did Xuanzang use the terms *biaoquan* and *zhequan* to translate so many philosophical concepts taken from Sanskrit? Should he not have used different words to describe different concepts? Secondly, during his translation workshops, Xuanzang often provided oral teachings such as may be found in the large number of explanatory phrases included in the translation to the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. It is likely that Dignāga’s theory of exclusion of others would also have been transmitted in a similar oral form.²⁸ Can we, therefore, conjecture that Xuanzang did not actually intend to treat *biaoquan* and *zhequan* as a pair of fixed terms and did not have a systematic teaching related to them, but that it was the disciples, influenced by the translation of Asvabhāva’s *MSU*, who actively tried to unify all the examples of *biaoquan* and *zhequan*? If such conjecture is justified, we must also consider a more crucial question: the scholarly community sometimes speculates about the

doctrine of the Faxiang school (*faxiang zong* 法相宗) as transmitted by Xuanzang based on the commonality of the various commentaries written by his disciples. Is such speculation not also shaken by the implication that these disciples played such an active role in the promotion of *biaoquan* and *zhequan* as a pair of concepts?

Funding: This research was funded by Major Project of the National Social Science Foundation of China: Indian Art and Literary Theories in Classical Sanskrit Literatures: Translation and Studies on Fundamental Works (中国国家社会科学基金重大项目“印度古典梵语文学重要文献翻译与研究”), and the grant number is 18ZDA286.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

- ¹ The original book was published in 1931, and Wangdao [Chen \(2006\)](#) is a reprint of it.
- ² Only two Tibetan translations of Dignāga's *Pramāṇasamuccaya* exist. First, in the translation by Vasudhararakṣita (D no. 4203; P no. 5701), the fifth chapter is entitled *gzhan sel ba brtag pa'i le'u ste lnga pa*, which can be approximated to Sanskrit as **anyāpoha-parīkṣā*. Kanakavarman's translation (P no. 5702) does not record the title of the fifth chapter.
- ³ [Ho \(2022\)](#), while analyzing the theory of *apoha* in Chinese Buddhism, especially among the works of Shentai, Kuiji, and others, also points out the polysemy of the concept of *zhequan*. However, this study does not trace the concept of *zhequan* further back to Xuanzang's translations or examine the original Sanskrit terms to which *zhequan* may correspond and its possible meanings.
- ⁴ 喻有二種：同法、異法。同法者，謂立聲無常，勤勇無間所發性故；以諸勤勇無間所發，皆見無常，猶如瓶等。異法者，謂諸有常住，見非勤勇無間所發，如虛空等。前是遮詮，後唯止濫。由合及離，比度義故。由是雖對不立實有太虛空等，而得顯示無有宗處，無因義成。(T1628.32.2c5-11).
- ⁵ V 60a6-7; K 148b2. For the translation and interpretation of this sentence, see [Kitagawa \(1965\)](#), pp. 241–42). Kitagawa has elaborated on the correspondence between this sentence in the NM and in the PS. However, Kitagawa's interpretation of this sentence is rather problematic. [Lü and Shi \(1934\)](#) also point out the correspondence between *zhequan* and implicative negation (*paryudāsa*), *zhilan* and pure negation (*prasajya*).
- ⁶ [Zamorski \(2015\)](#) focuses on the terminological confusion of the term *zhequan* in Shentai's *Zhenglimen lun shuji*, Wengui's *Ruzhenglilun shu*, and Kuiji's *Dashu*.
- ⁷ This material is also noted by [Zamorski \(2015\)](#), pp. 207–8).
- ⁸ 此覺既緣能詮為境，不應執此緣無境生。理必應爾。如世間說“非婆羅門”及“無常”等，雖遮餘有，而體非無。此中智生，緣遮梵志及常等性。能詮所詮，即此能詮能遮梵志及常等性，於自所詮剎帝利身、諸行等轉。然諸所有遮詮名言，或有有所詮、有無所詮者。有所詮者，如“非梵志”、“無常”等言。無所詮者，如說“非有”、“無物”等言。因有所詮而生智者，此智初起但緣能詮，便能了知所遮非有。後起亦有能緣所詮，知彼體中所遮非有。因無所詮而生智者，初起後起但緣能詮，於中了知所遮非有。(T1562.29.624a7-20).
- ⁹ 復有餘師，懷聰叡慢，作是難言：“若諸有為，就勝義諦，猶如幻等，空無自性，即是非有，執非有故，便為無見。”彼欲覆障自宗過難，矯設謗言。寧俱有過，勿空論者，所立量成，謗勝義諦過失大故。此“非有”言，是遮詮義，汝執此言表彰為勝，我說此言遮止為勝。此“非有”言，唯遮有性，功能斯盡，無有勢力更詮餘義。如世間說“非白絹”言，不可即執此言詮黑，與能說者作立宗過。“非白絹”言，唯遮白絹，功能斯盡，更無餘力詮表黑絹、赤絹、黃絹。(T1578.30.270c6-15). Also see [He \(2015\)](#), p. 38).
- ¹⁰ 無為無有實，不起似空花。(T1578.30.273c2).
- ¹¹ 我宗三界一切皆似空花轉變，非無空花。由彼是有，同喻不成，違所立故。(ibid.275b1-3).
- ¹² 若說空花為同法喻，即非三界，不應說言三界有故彼亦是有，此言顯汝自慧輕微。又遮詮言，遮止為勝，遮所遮已，功能即盡，無能更表所遮差別。如是難辭，前已具釋，故非智者心所信受。(ibid.275b11-15).
- ¹³ In the **Hastaratna*, the concept of *zhequan*, although literally meaning negation, is consistently regarded as pure negation by Bhāviveka from his Madhyamaka standpoint, and such an approach can also be seen in another work of Bhāviveka, the *Prajñāpradīpa*. Bhāviveka, in this work, says: “The negation of ‘not from self’ should be regarded as the meaning of pure negation (*med par dgag pa*, **prasajya*). Because negation is primary, and because [Nāgārjuna], by negating all the nets of conceptual constructions in this way, wants to establish non-conceptual wisdom that is endowed with all cognizable objects. If it is taken to be an implicative negation (*ma yin par dgag pa*, **paryudāsa*), because affirmation is primary, and [implicative negation] would teach non-origination by affirming that things are unoriginated, it would be contrary to [our] doctrine. For it is said in scripture that if one practices the non-origination of matter, one does not practice the perfection of discernment” (*bdag las ma yin zhes bya ba'i dgag pa 'di ni med par dgag pa'i don du lta bar bya ste | dgag pa gtso che ba'i phyir dang | 'di ltar rtogs pa ma lus pa'i dra ba dgag pa rnam par mi rtog pa'i ye shes shes bya'i yul ma lus pa dang ldan pa 'grub par dgongs pa'i phyir ro || ma yin par dgag pa yongs su bzung na ni de sgrub pa gtso che ba'i phyir chos rnam ma skyes so zhes sgrub pas skyed ba med pa ston pa'i phyir mdzad pa'i mtha' dang bral bar 'gyur te | lung las gzugs kyi skyed ba med pa la spyod na shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa la spyod pa ma yin no zhes 'byung ba'i phyir ro || PP Derge no.3853, 48b6-49a1). See [Ames 2019](#), pp. 28–29).*

- 14 論曰：此中無分別智，離五種相以為自性：一離無作意故、二離過有尋有伺地故、三離想受滅寂靜故、四離色自性故、五離於真義異計度故。離此五相，應知是名無分別智。釋曰：依智自性說離五相，由遮詮門說智體相，以表詮門不可說故。(T1598.31.429b27-c3).
- 15 D no.4051, 266a7-266b1.
- 16 前是遮詮，後唯止濫者。此簡二喻差別。前者同喻也。後者異喻也。諸法有二相：一自相。唯眼等五識等得，非散心意等得也。二共相。即散心意識等約也。名言但詮共相，不能詮表諸法因（自）相，以自相離言說故。詮共相要遣遮餘法，方詮顯此法。如言青，遮非青黃等，方能顯彼青之共相。若不遮黃等，喚青，黃即應來故。一切名言，欲最（顯？）其法，要遮餘詮此，無有不遮而詮法也。然有名言，但遮餘法，更無別詮。如言“無青”，更不別顯無青體也。今同喻云“諸是勤勇無間所發”，遮非勤勇無間所發，顯勤勇無間所發。“皆是無常”，遮是常住，詮顯無常生滅之法。故云前是其遮，後是詮也。其異法喻云“諸常住者”，但遮無常，故云“常住”，不欲更別詮常住。“即非所作”，但欲遮其所作，不別詮顯非作法體。此意但是無常宗無之處，皆無所作，但是止濫而已，不欲詮顯法體，故言“後唯止濫”也。“由合及離比度義故”者，此釋上差別。由同喻合本宗因，而比度故。故是遮而得詮。以本宗因是遮詮故。由異喻，但欲離本宗因，而比度故，故唯止濫，不欲別有詮表也。(X86.654b14-655a15).
- 17 There is indeed a correlation between the doctrine of exclusion of others and the two negation theories. For example, since Dignāga's time, the doctrine of the exclusion of others has undergone three stages: (1) the negative doctrine of the exclusion of others (Dignāga, Dharmakīrti), (2) the affirmative doctrine of exclusion of others (Śāntaraksita), and (3) the affirmation qualified by exclusion of others (Jñānaśrimitra, Ratnakīrti). Among them, the negation in the negative doctrine of the exclusion of others is considered to be pure negation; the negation in the affirmative doctrine of the exclusion of others is implicative negation. See Nagasaki (1984, pp. 347–48).
- 18 然一切法皆有二相：謂即自、共。自相唯是現量智得，非假智言所得故。若假智言所詮得者，謂即共相，且如說“青”。莖葉等相，其相各異，唯現量得。由斯假智及諸名言，但能詮表青上共相。而說“青”時，遮黃等，故名為說青。非正表青，故說遮詮。就遮詮中自有兩說。一清辨宗，其性道理，不可以名名，不可以相相。破而無執，立而無當。所引理教，準上應知。二護法宗，實有世俗勝義道理，皆離名言。於中真性對世俗故，說真性言，非無所詮。清辨宗中一師所說，亦同此釋。是故護法破清辨曰：“若依真性說，諸法空便成相符極成之失。”於清辨宗遣他性，護法不許，故有差別。由斯道理，內宗所說“有”“無”等言，皆是遮詮。(T1711.545b22-c7).
- 19 然能說者，以所樂名先蘊在心，方復思度：我當發起如是如是言，為他宣說如是如是義。由此後時隨思發語，因語發字，字復發名，名方顯義。由依如是展轉理門，說語發名，名能顯義，如斯安立其理必然。若不以名先蘊心內，設令發語無定表詮，亦不令他於義生解。(T1562.29.414b3-9).
- 20 *idam cāpi na jñāyate, katham vān nāmni pravarttata iti | kim tāvad utpādayaty āhosvit prakāśayati | yady utpādayati | ghosavabhāvatvād vācāḥ sarvaṃ ghosamātram nāmotpādayisyati, yādṛśo vā ghosaviśeṣa isyate nāmna utpādakāḥ sa evārthasya dyotako bhaviṣyati | atha prakāśayati | ghosavabhāvat vācāḥ sarvaṃ ghosamātram nāma prakāśayisyati, yādṛśo vā ghosaviśeṣa isyate nāmnaḥ prakāśakāḥ, sa evārthasya dyotako bhaviṣyati |* AKBh.
- 21 有餘偏執明論聲常，能為定量表詮諸法。有執一切聲皆是常，待緣顯發方有詮表。彼俱非理。所以者何？且明論聲許能詮故，應非常住，如所餘聲。餘聲亦應非常聲體，如瓶衣等待眾緣故。(T1585.31.3b14-19).
- 22 *sad asat sadasac ceti yasya pakṣo na vidyate | upālambhaś cirenāpi tasya vaktum na śakyate ||* Lang (1986, p. 150).
- 23 有非有見於此既除，俱是俱非皆應類遣，以其有等皆可表詮，真絕表詮故非有等。(T1571.30.250a12-14).
- 24 同喻能立，成有必有，成無必無，表詮遮詮二種皆得。異喻不爾，有體無體一向皆遮，性止濫故。故“常”言者，遮非無（無 should be deleted）常宗。“非所作”言，表非所作因。不要“常”“非作”別詮二有體。意顯異喻通無體故。理門論云：“前是遮詮。後唯止濫。由合及離比度義故。”前之同喻亦遮亦詮，由成無以無，成有以有故。後之異喻一向止濫，遮而不詮。由同喻合比度義故。由異喻離比度義故。(T1840.44.111c11-19). See Chen (2018, pp. 341–42) and Weihong Zheng (2020, pp. 307–9).
- 25 如是諸宗，應作四句：一一向不捨，如薩婆多；二一向捨戒，如經部宗及《瑜伽》等；三亦捨亦不捨，如《涅槃經》等；四非捨非不捨，如方等經及《普賢觀經》等。若憊不捨、不憊便捨，成第三句及第四句。所以者何？汎論四句，有其二種：一者別體，如婆沙等。第三第四別法成句，二者問（同？）體，第三第四遮表一法。若表詮門，成第三句；若遮詮門，成第四句。由此《涅槃》、方等法同，句別。今依方等及此經文，四重五逆諸義得成。(T1708.33.409c4-13).
- 26 《大般涅槃經》卷36：“或有佛性一闡提有，善根人無。或有佛性善根人有，一闡提無。或有佛性，二人俱有。或有佛性，二人俱無。”(T374.12.574c5-7).
- 27 前二人說二句者，依遮詮義以遣二邊。後總二人立句者，依表詮門以示中道。(T1769.38.252b21-23).
- 28 The biography of Xuanzang also shows the information of his oral teachings. See 《大唐大慈恩寺三藏法師傳》卷7：“每日齋訖，黃昏二時講新經論，及諸州聽學僧等恒來決疑請義。……日夕已去，寺內弟子百餘人咸請教誡，盈廊溢廡，皆酬答處分無遺漏者。雖眾務輻湊，而神氣綽然，無所擁滯。猶與諸德說西方聖賢立義，諸部異端，及少年在此周遊講肆之事，高論劇談，竟無疲怠，其精敏強力，過人若斯。”(T2053.50.260a22-23; 260a26-b2). The biography of Kuiji also tells that Xuanzang “lectured on Dignāga's epistemology”, and Kuiji “was very good at the three branches [of *hetuvidyā*].” 基聞之，慚居其後，不勝悵悵。樊勉之曰：測公雖造疏，未達因明。遂為講陳那之論，基大善三支，縱橫立破，述義命章，前無與比。”(T2061.50.725c27-726a1). From these records, it can be seen that Xuanzang gave oral teachings both publicly and privately.

References

- Ames, William Longstreet. 2019. *The Lamp of Discernment: A Translation of Chapters 1–12 of Bhavaviveka's Prajñāpradīpa*. Contemporary Issues in Buddhist Studies. Moraga: Institute of Buddhist Studies and BDK America.
- Chen, Wangdao 陈望道. 2006. *Introduction to the Hetuvidyā* 因明学概略. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company.
- Chen, Shuai. 2018. *Rethinking Indian Buddhist Logic in Tang China: An Analysis and Translation of the Sādhana Section of Kuiji's Commentary on the Nyāyapraveśa*. Heidelberg: Universität Heidelberg.
- Fang, Litian 方立天. 2002. *Essence of Chinese Buddhist philosophy Vol. 1* 中国佛教哲学要义（上卷）. Beijing: China Renmin University Press.
- He, Huanhuan 何欢欢. 2015. On Proving the Emptiness of Madhyamaka: Some Observations on the *Hastaratna Inference 中观空性的因明论证——掌珍比量辨析. *Studies in World Religions*, 35–42.
- Ho, Chien-hsing. 2022. The Notion of Apoha in Chinese Buddhism. *Dao* 21: 283–98. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Katsura, Shoryu 桂紹隆. 1981. A Study of the Nyāyamukha (4) 因明正理門論研究[四]. *The Hiroshima University studies, Literature Department* 41: 62–82.
- Kitagawa, Hidenori 北川秀則. 1965. *A Study of Indian Classical Logic* インド古典論理学の研究. Tokyo: Suzuki Gakujutsu Zaidan.
- Lang, Karen. 1986. *Āryadeva's Catuḥśataka: On the Bodhisattva's Cultivation of Merit and Knowledge*. Indiske Studier VII. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag.
- Lü, Cheng 吕澂. 1991. *Lü Cheng on Buddhism: Selected Works Vol. 1* 吕澂佛学论著选集（一）. Jinan: Qilu Press.
- Lü, Cheng 吕澂, and Yincang Shi 释印沧. 1934. Zhengwen on the Nyāyamukha 因明正理門論本证文. *Neixue* 4: 1–27.
- Nagasaki, Hojyun 長崎法潤. 1984. Gainen to Meidai 概念と命題. In *Ninshikiron to Ronrigaku*. Tokyo: Shunjusha, pp. 341–68.
- Ni, Liangkang 倪梁康. 2008. The Problem of Apoha in Hetu-vidyā from a Phenomenological Perspective 从现象学角度看佛教因明中的遮诠问题. *Studies in Logic* 1: 103–19.
- Yao, Weiqun 姚卫群. 2014. An Important thinking method in Buddhism 佛教中重要的思维方法. *Science of Social Psychology* 29: 3–6, 40.
- Zamorski, Jakub. 2015. On Chinese Interpretations of the Distinction Between Two Types of Negation in Indian Buddhist Logic. *Wiener Zeitschrift Für Die Kunde Südasiens/Vienna Journal of South Asian Studies* 56/57: 199–226. [\[CrossRef\]](#)
- Zheng, Weihong 郑伟宏. 1996. *An Introduction to Buddhist Logic* 佛家逻辑通论. Shanghai: Fudan University Press.
- Zheng, Weihong 郑伟宏. 2020. *Yinming Dashu Jiaoshi* 因明大疏校释. Shanghai: Zhongxi Book Company.
- Zhou, Xiang-yanxiang 周湘雁翔. 2017. A Study of Apoha and Siddha Based on Yinmingdashu 遮诠与表诠研究——以《因明大疏》为中心. *Journal of Yichun University* 39: 1–6.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.