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Lukáš Zádrapa

Medieval Chinese Syntax

1. General Observations and Periodization

A definition of the periodization of Early Medieval Chinese (EMC) in terms of syntactic development can only be provided tentatively. By convention, the beginning of Early Medieval Chinese is usually associated with the introduction of Buddhism to China, and the beginning of translation activities from Indic languages from circa the 2nd century CE onwards. This dating is based on the observation that many new grammatical markers and syntactic constructions for the first time *surfaced* (although some may well have existed earlier in the spoken language) in translated Buddhist texts, and that translation activities eventually had a considerable impact on language development.

However, some important changes can already be traced back to texts of the early Hàn Dynasty (e.g., the *Shǐjì* 史記; c. 109 BCE), and even before (although the first glimpse of these developments are practically exclusively seen in excavated texts from Northwestern Chinese; see for example Wèi 2000 and Jí 2004). The Eastern Hàn Dynasty (25–220 CE) can be regarded as a period of transition during which some of the features of Early Medieval Chinese are seen gradually emerging in written texts. A controversial case that has been widely studied in secondary literature is the development of *shì* 是 into a full copula during this period. Manuscript texts seem to feature an early usage of *shì* as a copula to a larger extent; however, also the usage in edited classical literature is disputed (see for example Guō 1990/1997, arguing for early usages in the *Mèngzǐ* 孟子, *Hánfēizǐ* 韓非子, etc.). Yáng (2009) argues against an early usage of *shì* as copula, and, analyzing manuscript literature, assumes that *shì* grammaticalized from the construction *shì wèi* 是謂 'this means' (> 'this is' > COP 'be'), current during the later Warring States and Qín periods. Although the origins of copula *shì* might have been considerably earlier, the regular use of this function can be traced to early Buddhist translation literature. However, systematic research on relatively recent archaeological findings (such as the manuscripts found at Lǐyé 里耶, dating from the late 3rd cent. BCE.) will hopefully shed new light on the development of the copula. As such, the very early/transition phase of Early Medieval Chinese should be dated to circa 2nd/1st century BCE, coinciding with major changes concerning the phonology

and morphology in the transition from earlier stages of Chinese to Medieval Chinese, and the Early Medieval Chinese period "proper" starting with the emergence of Chinese Buddhist texts. However, the question of periodization is (and probably will remain) a major headache for historical linguists.

The differentiation between Early Medieval Chinese and Late Medieval Chinese (LMC) is somewhat artificial, but expedient for the study of the varieties of Medieval Chinese. Traditionally, the differentiation between Early Medieval Chinese and Late Medieval Chinese was based on phonological considerations (in these studies the acronyms EMC and LMC usually stand for "Early Middle Chinese" and "Late Middle Chinese", respectively). However, this does not necessarily coincide with major syntactic changes. Because of the rather abrupt emergence of (nearly exclusively Buddhist) texts which show distinctively different features from Literary Chinese (LC), Early Medieval Chinese has been referred to as the "first vernacular revolution" by Mair (1994:717; and accordingly the emergence of highly vernacular LMC texts as a "second vernacular revolution" in the Chinese context), who also tries to determine the most important reasons for this development. Likewise, the transition to the colloquial Late Medieval Chinese takes place from circa 700 CE onwards, and might have been triggered by a larger context of committing spoken languages to a written form, taking place in Central Asia and Northwestern China, e.g., Old Uyghur (5th cent.), written Tibetan (mid-7th cent.); written Khotanese (from c. 700), and written Sogdian (from c. 700), and the multicultural and multilinguistic context of these regions (for an excellent concise discussion, see Takata 2000). In addition, Buddhist genres provided the ideal framework for the full surfacing of vernacular features (which might have been in use for a considerably longer time already), both syntactic and semantic, since their restrictions on style were far less rigid as compared to texts written in Literary Chinese.

Late Medieval Chinese texts show a significant amount of characteristics of the contemporary colloquial language of the Táng Dynasty (618–907), and feature the very early usage of many syntactic markers still current in Modern Mandarin and other contemporary Chinese dialects.

This period is also characterized by the non-standardized usage of phonetic transcriptions of newly emerging function words, e.g. (note that the final stop -*t* in the 沒/勿 pronunciations probably had disappeared by the 10th century):

1. 異沒時作勿生。
   Yìmò   shí   zuòwùshēng.
   /jiˋ(jiʰ)-mut/   /tsuɔˋ(tsɔʰ)-mut-ṣiaŋ/
   be.like (such)   time how.about
   'If it is like this what shall be done?'
   (8th cent.; ms. Pelliot 3047; *yìmò* 異沒/*zhǐmò* 只沒 also appear in ms. Dūnbó 77)

In this phrase (which roughly corresponds to Modern Mandarin *zhème shí zěnmeyàng*? 這麼時怎麼樣?), the only Chinese character used semantically is *shí* 時 'when > if', whereas all the other characters transcribe vernacular words which did not have a standardized graphical representation at that time.

During the early and mid-Sòng period (Sòng Dynasty: 960–1279) many of the Late Medieval Chinese texts were "sanitized" by removing phonetic loan characters typical for hand-copied texts (as evidenced by the Dūnhuáng 敦煌 manuscript remains) of the Táng, thereby streamlining the transcription of colloquial function words. A good example is the early development of Modern Mandarin *shénme* 什麼; the Chinese character 麼 became current in the early Sòng in order to represent the phoneme *mo/me* in colloquial function words (see for example Féng 2006):

[*héwù* 何物 (what thing → what)] ⇒ Circa mid- and late 8th century: 甚沒 [*Bǎolín zhuàn* 寶林傳, 801 CE], 是物, 是勿, 是沒 [ms. Dūnbó 77] (/ṣɦimiuət/ /ṣɦimuət/) ⇒ Circa late 8th–9th century: (是沒), 甚物, 甚摩 [ms. Stein 2503], 甚謨 [ms. Stein 2669] (/ṣɦima/) ⇒ Circa late 9th–10th century: 什摩, 什麽 (/ṣɦiᵐma/ /ṣɦimma/ /ṣɦimmo/) ⇒ "Standard" form from the early 11th century onwards: 什麼

(phonetic reconstructions according to Jiǎng 1994:142; according to the reconstruction, the final stop -t disappeared some time during the late 9th or early 10th cent.)

Scholarly attempts to determine more accurate features of the periodization of Early Medieval Chinese/Late Medieval Chinese are merely at its very beginnings and have to await more detailed studies. This is also complicated by the fact that text styles and linguistic features of earlier periods continued to be used, and that the different genres (and the language used in them) constantly influenced each other. In addition, there is not necessarily a linear development from less to more vernacular textual features (for an attempt to quantify this genre-dependency, see Zimmer 1999). For example, many of the Buddhist Hybrid Chinese (BHC) translations dating from the Táng period tried to adapt to Literary Chinese principles to a much higher degree than earlier texts. The famous translator Kumārajīva (343–413 CE), for example, had a great impact on successive translation practices, and the intrusion of new vernacular elements into Buddhist Hybrid Chinese decreased (for a very good discussion on which Buddhist texts should be used for the study of vernacular elements, see Zürcher 1996; for a list of scriptures, see Zürcher 1996:28–31; on the constraints imposed by prosody and versification, see Zürcher 1996:10f.; for a concrete example of the techniques of "re-literalization" of a Buddhist narrative, see Anderl and Pons, forthcoming, 389–392). → Buddhist Hybrid Chinese style texts typical for Early Medieval Chinese also continued to be a dominant Buddhist written medium in the Late Medieval Chinese period, and fully vernacular features only appeared in the *dialogues* of a small number of Buddhist genres (for a very good concise overview of vernacular literature preserved in Dūnhuáng, see Schmid 2000; most importantly the *biànwén* 變文 'transformation texts', the *jiǎngjīng wén* 講經文 '*sūtra* lecture texts' and related genres, certain types of poetry, and the dialogue sections of the early treatises and historiographies of the Chán 禪 school; as for printed texts, the 10th century

Zǔtáng jí 祖堂集 'Collection from the Patriarchs' Hall' (ZTJ) as preserved in an appendix to the Korean canon).

Genre dependence can also be deducted from the analysis of Early Medieval Chinese Buddhist texts: colloquial features (both in terms of the lexicon and syntax) mostly appear in the dialogue sections of narrative literature such as the *jātaka* (Birth stories, i.e., accounts of Buddha's previous lives), *avadāna* (noble deeds), *nidāna* (i.e., accounts of Buddha's life), or, more generally, collections of popular stories such as the *Bǎiyù jīng* 百喻經 [Hundred parables scripture] and the *Xiányú jīng* 賢愚經 [Scripture of the wise and foolish] (for an interesting comparison of LC and EMC features in parts of the *Xiányú jīng*, see Harbsmeier 2012). Among non-Buddhist Early Medieval Chinese texts, only relatively few show a significant amount of vernacular elements, such as the *Lùnhéng* 論衡 [The balance of discourses], the *Shìshuō xīnyǔ* 世說新語 [A new account of tales of the world], and (sections of) the Daoist *Tàipíng jīng* 太平經 [Scripture of great peace].

2. Aspects of the Study of Early Medieval Chinese

A broader interest in the study of Early Medieval Chinese only developed in recent years and since then certain aspects of Early Medieval Chinese grammar have received intense scholarly attention. This is exemplified by the numerous studies on various constructions, among them the passive (for a discussion of the various scholarly interpretations and ample bibliographical references, see Zēng, forthcoming) and object disposal forms (for references, see below). Concerning the passive construction, despite the great number of publications, there is as yet no coherent and convincing account of the development, let alone the transition from older strata of Chinese to the Hàn/Early Medieval Chinese periods. A close examination of Chinese and Western secondary literature on passives reveals some of the more general problems related to the approach to Early Medieval Chinese: during the last 20 years, there has been a strong focus on

tracing changes based on mechanisms as defined in various theoretical frameworks of historical linguistics. Whereas this has yielded many valuable insights, it also has led to certain oversights and shortcomings (see Zēng, forthcoming, showing that there is no mature passive with *wéi* 為 before the Hàn/early medieval period). Trying to mainly trace the developments of full words into function words, the exact analyses of syntactic features, as well as their pragmatic and idiomatic contexts have not received sufficient attention yet. In addition, important questions such as the restrictions and *constraints* on the use of passive need more investigation (Harbsmeier 2012:169), as well as the close study of the syntactic features of early translation literature.

There are very promising recent developments which eventually will enable a more systematic approach to and deeper understanding of the syntax of Early Medieval Chinese texts, such as the meticulous comparative studies on Buddhist translation literature, published in the form of word lists, comparative editions, and analytic studies (e.g., Karashima 1998, 2001a, etc.; Zacchetti 2005, 2007, 2012), the development of digital parallel corpora (e.g., *Thesaurus Literaturae Buddhicae*, TLB), and detailed studies on the development of specific constructions and systems (e.g., the immense complexity and the subtleties of the → medieval modal system; see especially Meisterernst 2008, 2010, 2011; for a rough outline of aspects of the LMC modal system, see Anderl 2004: vol. I, 384–435, 2006a). In addition, the important question of syntactic change has recently received renewed attention by Aldridge (2013), who emphasizes correctly that in passive sentences in the medieval period neither *wéi* 為 nor *bèi* 被 should syntactically be regarded as "coverb/preposition", nor as "agent marker", but as verbs with a sentential object.

Attempts to prove direct influences from Indic languages (e.g., Zhū Qìngzhī 1993; with rather doubtful conclusions concerning the interpretation of *suǒ* 所 in "passives") on the development of specific markers and constructions in Early Medieval Chinese are only in an initial stage of scholarly research. This is especially true for the formative period of Early Medieval Chinese reflected in early translation literature, due the lack of direct parallel texts. More often than not, it is not even clear on which source language a translation is based. Moreover, many early Chinese translations seem to be only rough renderings of specific Indic texts, or are even based on oral versions (see for example Mair 2012). Recently, meticulous philological studies on very early translations (and the distorted Chinese sometimes resulting from them) have produced important results concerning the understanding of Early Medieval Chinese texts. For example, Zacchetti (2007) analyzes the approach of Ān Shìgāo 安世高 (148–180 CE) and his translation technique of strictly following the syntax of Indic languages, which results in syntactic structures such as *zài fó* 在佛 reflecting ablative Pāli *buddhe* 'from the buddha'). Consider the following Chinese sentence, which tries to faithfully follow the syntax of the Indic original, becomes enigmatic in the target language. The key structure of the Pāli phrase, marking *ajjhattaṃ kāye kāyānupassī* 'reflect the body in the body' as a specification of *viharati* 'he dwelt', is lost in Chinese:

2. 比丘自身身身相觀行止。
   Bǐqiū   zìshēn   shēn
   monk   self.body   body
   shēnxiàngguān   xíngzhǐ.
   body.characteristic.contemplation   walk.stop
   bikkhu   ajjhattaṃ   kāye
   monk.NOM   inwardly.ADV   body.LOC
   kāyānupassī   viharati. (Pāli)
   body.reflect.PTCP   dwell-3SG
   (> concerning the body)
   'A monk dwells contemplating (the nature of) the body in the body in regard to himself.' (T.33, no. 1694. 173c-174a; translation based on Zacchetti 2007; the Pāli parallel and its English translation is taken from *Vibhaṅga*, 193)

More generally, it is assumed that for example the usage of plural markers *-děng* 等, affixed to human nouns, including pronouns, and *zhū-* 諸, which developed from a quantifier marking members of a class to more generally plural in prenominal position, rather than meaning 'all' (clear marking of 'all' usually requires an addition, such as *yīqiè zhū* 一切諸), as well as the

frequent and non-typical usages of *ér* 而 (reflecting dependent infinitives?), the frequent use of *qí* 其 as definite article rather than pronoun (其 X 'this X > the [aforementioned] X'; although this usage can be traced to much earlier periods, it reappears in Buddhist literature with a very high frequency) and the much higher frequency and varieties of "passives", were possibly influenced by syntactic constructions of Indic source languages.

3. Structural Imbalance and Syntactic Features

One of the important features of Buddhist Hybrid Chinese is a "structural imbalance" between the parts of speech observed in many texts, often in stark contrast to compositional principles of Literary Chinese. Sentences often contain multiple coverbal phrases (coVP) preceding and modifying the (disproportionally short) main verb (V), in this example *jù* 俱 'dwell together':

3. 佛在舍衛國祇樹給孤獨園與大比丘眾千二百五十人俱。

Fó   zài   Shèwèi-guó   Zhǐshù   Jǐgūdú-yuán
NPR   COV   NPR-country   NPR   NPR-garden
yǔ   dà   bǐqiū   zhòng
COV   great   monk   assembly
qiān-èr-bǎi-wǔ-shí   rén   jù.
NUM.1,250   person   dwell

'The Buddha *dwelled together* (v) *with* (cov) an assembly of 1,250 great *bikhṣus* (monks) *at* (cov) Jetavana Anāthapiṇḍadārāma in Śrāvastī.' (T.8, no.235, 748c)

In addition, in Buddhist texts there is often an attempt to express multiple time sequences by adding semi-grammaticalized verbs in final position. Nearly all of these verbs have the original semantics of 'to end, finish', such as *liǎo* 了, *yǐ* 已,

qì 訖, *jìng* 竟. In the following example, in order to mark a multiple temporal sequence of verbal phrases, the adverb *cìdì* 次第 '[sequence →] in the following sequence' is added. In addition, there is a certain *variatio* by using synonymous expressions for marking the completion of action (twice *yǐ* 已 and once *qì* 訖 '[to end →] after . . .'):

4. 於其城中次第乞已還至本處飯食訖收衣鉢
洗足已敷座而坐。

Yú   qí   chéng   zhōng   cìdì   qì
in   3POSS   town   middle   sequence   beg
yǐ   huánzhì   běn   chù   fàn
finish   return.arrive   original   place   food
shí   qì   shōu   yī   bō   xǐ   zú
eat   finish   tidy   cloth   bowl   wash   foot
yǐ   fū   zuò   ér   zuò.
finish   spread   seat   and   sit
'*After* (*yǐ* 已) they had begged in this city they returned to their original place (i.e., the monastery); *after* (*qì* 訖) they had eaten, and *after* (*yǐ* 已) they had arranged their garment and alms' bowls, they spread their sitting mats and sat down.'
(T.235, *Jīngāng bōrěbōluómì jīng* 金剛般若波羅蜜經/*Vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā jīng*, tr. in 402 CE by Kumārajīva)

In addition, one encounters a number of other fundamental problems in the analysis of Early Medieval Chinese texts: there is a significant unbalance of Early Medieval Chinese features as found in Buddhist texts compared to non-Buddhist literature. Research (and the resulting understanding) on Early Medieval Chinese will therefore be restricted by the genre and linguistic features of this type of texts (for a very good overview of different types of BHC texts, see Zürcher 1996; on the language of early translations, see McRae and Nattier 2012). Another aspect concerns the question to what extent texts of the medieval period reflect "natural" developments in the language and, as such, possibly reflect changes in the development of the spoken language (but see Nattier 1990 for BHC as a "church language"), or rather were "constructed" in the process of translation activities (for an interesting case study on the Chinese produced by

Ān Shìgāo in the course of his early translation activities, see Zacchetti 2007). This was probably also reinforced by the fact that translations frequently were the result of collective efforts in the framework of "translation teams" who worked at translation offices (*yìchǎng* 譯場; on the production process of translations, see for example Fuchs 1930; Tso 1963).

For instance, during the Six Dynasties period (3rd–6th century CE) more than 35 disyllabic quantifying adverbs with identical or nearly identical meaning ('all; each') were used in Buddhist texts (Chen 2008:58), in addition to numerous monosyllabic and even a few trisyllabic ones. Tables of distribution show that some of them were only used in Buddhist material, and others in both Buddhist and non-Buddhist texts, usually with significant differences concerning their frequency of occurrence. Despite the large amount of quantifiers, only very few have a high frequency, e.g., *jiēxī* 皆悉 and *xījiē* 悉皆 are clearly the dominating quantifiers in Buddhist texts of that period (for tables of distribution, see Chen 2008:66–69, 73–76). More generally, a huge diversification of adverbial modifiers can be observed (for an exhaustive list of adverbs in a historical perspective, see Hé 1994:1–258).

Changes in language use are disproportionally observable in Buddhist literature, and a number of reasons have been established for this phenomenon (see for example Mair 1994). Among Buddhist texts, usually those including lengthy, narrative passages and dialogues include more "colloquial" features. As such, narrative literature (or narrative passages in other Buddhist genres) such as the *jātaka, avadāna*, and *nīdana* are of great interest, in addition to the various compilations of Buddhist parables edited during the medieval period:

5. 我是王國中人，與盲父母俱來入山中，學道二十餘年，未曾為虎狼、毒蟲所見害，今便為王所射殺。

Wǒ	shì	wángguó	zhōng
1SG	COP	king.country	middle
rén,	yǔ	máng	fùmǔ
person	with	blind	father.mother
jù	lái	rù	shān	zhōng,
together	come	enter	mountain	middle

xué	dào	èr-shí	yú	nián,	wèicéng
study	way	20	more	year	never.ever

wèi	hǔ	láng,	dú	chóng	suǒ-jiàn
COV	tiger	wolf	poison	animal	PART.PART

hài,	jīn	biàn	wèi	wáng	suǒ
hurt	now	then	COV	king	PART

shè-shā.
shoot-dead

'I am a person from this kingly realm, having come together with my blind parents to enter the mountains (i.e., pursue ascetic practices); we have studied the Way for more than twenty years, and have never ever been hurt by tigers, wolves, or poisonous beasts; today, however, I have been shot dead by the King.' (T.3, no.174, 437a)

In the translation of T.175, 442c (*jīn biàn wèi wáng jiàn suǒ shè-shā zhī* 今便為王箭所射殺之), there is an additional *zhī* 之; this is an interesting (and not unusual) case of a redundant usage of the 3rd person object pronoun *zhī* in a passive construction. It follows after the complex verb *shè-shā* 'shoot dead' despite *shā* being already "passivized" by the construction [*wéi* + agent + *suǒ* 所 + passivized verb]; and, indeed referring back to the patient which is the speaker himself! The example sentences also feature the EMC passive marker *suǒ-jiàn* 所見 (more common in early Buddhist translations, e.g., the *Lotus sūtra* translation of Dharmarakṣa; see Karashima 1998, 435–436, Karashima 2001, 261; Ōta 1988, 54).

4. Accumulative and Inflative Features

In Early Medieval Chinese, and, to an even higher degree, in Late Medieval Chinese texts, one can often observe a certain "inflation" of grammatical markers and functions. On the one hand, a vast amount of grammatical markers have accumulated throughout the various periods of language development and they often co-appear in the very same Late Medieval Chinese text. These are sometimes unevenly distributed according to the structure of a text, e.g., the narrative passages in historiographical texts show markers typical for Literary Chinese

and Buddhist Hybrid Chinese, whereas in the dialogues vernacular markers will dominate. In some texts, obviously a "dual" system is used, for example for "what"-questions, a system based on *hé* 何 and compounds, and one based on the vernacular *shímó* 什摩, with near-identical meanings and functions. In addition, many markers of the Late Medieval Chinese period absorbed new usages or expanded their functional realm, thereby increasingly overlapping with other function words. For example, the coverbs of direction *cóng* 從 'from' and *xiàng* 向 'to, towards', were occasionally also used for indicating location ('at; in'). Interestingly, untypical usages of *cóng* were recently also observed in the earliest Buddhist translation literature (*cóng jiè* 從戒 'by means of discipline', reflecting *sīlena* 'with discipline'; in the text analyzed by Zacchetti 2007, *cóng* basically had assumed most of the functions of Literary Chinese *yǐ* 以 'with, by means of').

Another example is the established Early Medieval Chinese interrogative *rúhé* 如何 'how', which in Late Medieval Chinese is frequently used in syntactic environments preceding the copula *shì* for purposes of "topic raising" (*rúhé shì* 如何是 X 'how about X?'). Some particles such as sentence final *yě* 也 accumulated so many functions (indicating nominal predicates, emphasis, requests/orders, questions, perfective aspect, etc.) and became so all-pervasive that the informativeness of *yě* marking decreased, and, by consequence, eventually led to the emergence or proliferation of alternative markers. In addition, rare, highly specialized, or dialect markers could surface in texts. In Chán texts, e.g., *lán* 攔 'block' and *mò* 驀 'mount a horse' could mark a body part which is negatively affected by an action: *shī biàn mò miàn tuò* 師便驀面唾 'Thereupon, the master spat him into the face' (ZTJ, 2.026).

5. Nouns, Classifiers and Pronouns

In Late Medieval Chinese vernacular texts, the number of polysyllabic nouns increased further. One type of polysyllabic nouns frequently employed consists of reduplicated words, usually functioning as quantifiers (*zhǒngzhǒng* 種種 'all kinds of; various'), adverbs (*rìrì* 日日

'daily'), or merely indicating plural (*zǔzǔ* 祖祖 'all patriarchs'). Occasionally, AABB patterns are encountered (*zhīzhī yèyè* 支支葉葉 'each branch and each leave').

Several semi-grammaticalized nouns (*hòu* 後 'behind'; *lǐ* 裏 'inside'; *nèi* 內 'inside'; *qián* 前 'in front of'; *shàng* 上 'above'; *xià* 下 'below'; *wài* 外 'outside'; *zhōng* 中 'in the middle of'; *zhōngjiān* 中間 'in between') are often postposed to NPs, and have the function to localize the event relative to the NP they are attached to. Some of them are regularly attached to abstract nouns (*jiào zhōng yǐ hé wéi lǐ* 教中以何為禮 'What does one regard as propriety in [Buddhist] teaching?', ZTJ 4.123).

The noun phrases can be highly complex and modifying NPs and VPs can be linked to the head by the vernacular particle *dǐ* 底 (the predecessor of Modern Mandarin *de* 的) or Literary Chinese *zhī* 之.

The system of classifiers of Late Medieval Chinese (for an overview, see Anderl 2004, vol. I:113–120) is highly complex, each classifier having an individual history of grammaticalization. Classifier phrases (i.e., num+clf) can be preposed to the noun although post-nominal usage is still frequently encountered. Wáng (1992) is a thorough study of Táng classifiers; basic patterns of classifier usage are treated in Peyraube (1998). Economic treatises among the Dūnhuáng manuscripts contain a wealth of information on classifiers (including extremely rarely used classifiers; for a recent study, see Hóng 2004):

6. 白羅壹段紫絁壹緋紬壹段色物三事。

Bái	luó	yī	duàn	zǐ	shī	yī
white	silk	one	CLF	purple	silk	one

fēichóu	yī	duàn	sè	wù	sān	shì.
silk	one	CLF	color	thing	three	CLF

'*One item* of white silk gauze, *one* [*item*] of purple silk fabric, *one item* of bright red silk, *three pieces* of coloured things.'
(ms. Stein 5804)

By the middle of the 10th century, *gè* 個/箇/个 had developed into the general purpose classifier (replacing EMC *méi* 枚). In addition to combining with any type of noun, it can co-appear with (demonstrative) pronouns (e.g., *nǎ-gè* 那

個 'which one'; *zhè-gè* 這個 'this one'), and with postpositions (*gè-lǐ* 個裏 'here'). The numeral 'one' can be deleted before *gè*.

One of the most important changes as compared to Literary Chinese is the appearance of *noun affixes*, e.g., prefixes *ā-* 阿 and *lǎo-* 老 (e.g., attached to family names). "Plural suffixes" such as *-bèi* 輩 and *-děng* 等 became commonly used after nouns with human referents. In Early Medieval Chinese there also emerged a small number of affixes which could attach to verbs and adverbs, such as *zì-* 自, probably in the process of building disyllabic compounds, e.g., *zìdāng* 自當 'necessarily, certainly' (see Karashima 2001). However, the system of affixes did not fully develop before the Late Medieval Chinese period. Besides prefixes *ā-* and *lǎo-*, commonly used suffixes include *-tóu* 頭 (usually suffixed to concrete nouns, but also to some abstract nouns, localizers, and demonstratives, etc.), *-ér* 兒 (human and animal reference), and *-zǐ* 子 (human, animal, and concrete references).

There are also a few instances where suffixes attach to verbs, adverbs, and adjectives (e.g., *xiēzi* 些子 'little-adv'; *ruòzi* 若子 'like this, such'). Some suffixes developed specialized usages. Thus, from the Táng period, *-zǐ* combined with concrete nouns, where the resulting compound referred to low-status professions, e.g., *mén* 門 'gate' + *zi* 子 > *ménzi* 門子 'gatekeeper' (for an overview of LMC affixes, see Anderl 2004, vol. I:125–158). From the 10th century onwards, the vernacular verbal suffix *shēng* 生 (today still current in the →Wú 吳 dialect) became commonly used with VPs (emphatic: *tài gāo shēng* 太高生 'too lofty!', ZTJ, 1.150) and especially interrogatives (*shìmóshēng* 是摩生 'what does that mean?'). Other verbal affixes and structure words in Late Medieval Chinese include *dǎ-* 打 (*dǎ-shuì* 打睡 'to sleep'); *-dāng* 當 (*shì-dāng* 試當 'to try'); *-duàn* 斷 (especially used in the *biànwén* literature, such as *wàng-duàn* 望斷 'to hope'); *qí* 其 (*biànwén* literature, such as *shuō-qí* 說其 'to speak', *yǒu-qí* 有其 'have'); and *-yǒu* 有 (*zhī-yǒu* 知有 'to know').

One of the systems which underwent most drastic changes concerns the use of pronouns in medieval Chinese texts. The exact circumstances of this development are no quite clear yet but

wǒ 我 had developed into the all-purpose first-person pronoun by Qín times, and has remained so since then. The development of *wú* 吾 is highly complicated and still a matter of scholarly research. From the Hàn period onwards, the usage of *wú* decreased (or became oblique) in many texts, or is distributed unevenly, depending on the region and/or translator (compare Lokakṣema/Zhī Lóujiāchèn 支婁迦讖, born 147 CE in T.225, *versus* Zhī Qiān 支謙, *fl.* 222–252 in T.226, for example, *wǒ fùmǔ* 我父母 'my father and mother (parents)': *wú qīn* 吾親 'my relatives/parents'; see Zürcher 1996:5). In the Late Medieval Chinese period it reemerged in colloquial Buddhist texts as emphatic first person pronoun (*wú shī* 吾師 '*my* master'). *Shēn* 身 ('body' → 'I') was occasionally used as first-person pronoun from the Six Dynasties period onwards. More rarely, the pronouns of Wú 吳 origin, such as *nóng* 濃 'I' (Qin 1996:44), *wǒnóng* 我濃 'we' and *nóngjiā* 儂家 'we', are used. Among the newly emerging pronouns in Early Medieval Chinese/Late Medieval Chinese, there are also the deprecative *mǒuyǐ* 某乙 'so-and-so' → 'I' and *nú* 奴 'slave' → 'I'. We also find exotic varieties in the vernacular manuscript literature preserved in Dūnhuáng, such as *ānùshēn* 阿奴身 'pref.slave.body' → 'I' (ms. Pelliot 2187), a self-derogatory first person pronoun for females ('I, your slave').

Among the second person pronouns, *rǔ* 汝 is the most important one. In Late Medieval Chinese, the 2nd person pronoun *nǐ* 你 and the 3rd person pronoun *tā* 他 (with occasional usages in pre-Táng times) became current. *Tā* also developed important modal functions in Late Medieval Chinese and successive periods, an issue not studied thoroughly so far. In Buddhist texts, *xiàng* 相 'each other → him/her/it' started to be frequently used as 3rd person pronoun, preposed to the transitive verb ("unidirectional" *xiàng* as opposed to its original reciprocal usage, i.e., 'each other').

Besides Literary Chinese/Early Medieval Chinese *cǐ* 此 and *shì* 是 'this', important demonstrative pronouns in Late Medieval Chinese include *zhě* 者/*zhè* 這. Short-range demonstratives can also express modality (usually derogative): *zhè ā-shī* 這阿師 'This monk!' (ZTJ, 1.152). The common word for 'here' is *zhè-lǐ* 這裏. The most

important long-range demonstrative pronoun is *nà* 那, usually appearing with *gè* 個 in adnominal position (*nàgè rén* 那個人 'that person').

Dozens of new disyllabic interrogative pronouns became common in Early Medieval Chinese. For example, the ancient all-purpose pronoun *hé* 何 is frequently used in compound forms. Although some of the compounds can be traced back to pre-medieval times, they developed into frequently used interrogatives only during the medieval period, especially in Buddhist texts, e.g., *rúhé* 如何 (for a list of interrogative pronouns, see Anderl 2004, vol. I:232–235). In Late Medieval Chinese, the system of interrogatives expanded immensely, including colloquial *nǎ* 那 'which' (often prefixed: *ā-nǎ* 阿那, *ā-nǎ-gè* 阿那個 'which one', *nǎlǐ* 那裏, *ā-nǎlǐ* 阿那裏), *nǎ-biān* 那邊 all 'where?', and also used in rhetorical question patterns such as *zhēng nǎ…hé* 爭那…何 'how is it possible that / how can it be that'; *shímó* 什摩 'what' (with derived compounds such *shímó-rén* 什摩人 'who'; *shímó-chù* 什摩處 'where'; *zuòshímó* 作什摩 'for what purpose'; *wèi-shímó* 為什摩 'why'; *gèshímó* 個什摩; *jí gèshímó* 急個什摩 'what's the worry' [> relax!]? [ZTJ, 1.166]; *shímó-shēng* 什摩生 'what about'; and *zuòmó* 作摩 'how'; *zuòmóshēng* 作摩生 'how; how about'; *zuòmóchù* 作摩處 'where'). Interrogatives with an antonymic morphemic buildup were occasionally already used in Early Modern Chinese, but increased in usage during later periods, cf., e.g., *zǎowǎn* 早晚 'early-late → when'; *duōshǎo* 多少 'many-few → how many'; *duōshǎoshí* 多少時 'many-few-time → when', *dà-xiǎo* 大小 'big-small → what size'.

6. Verbs

One of the major developments concerning verb constructions is the consolidation of the copula *shì* (see also above). *Shì* appears in a variety of patterns, including emphatically postpositioning and indicating identity X *wǒ shēn shì yě* 我身是也 'X is my very body → is myself'. There is also an expansion of the functions of copulas, such as the marking of alternative questions, e.g., *wéi* 為 A B; *wéi* 為 A *wéi* 為 B 'is it A or B?'; *zuò yǔ xíng wéi tóng bù tóng*? 坐與行為同不

同？ 'Is walking and sitting the same or not the same?' (Ān Shìgāo, T.15, no.602, 166a). In these usages, the copula often was compounded with a suffix in Late Medieval Chinese. For a list of dozens of patterns with compounds, see Hé (1994:377–389).

The early medieval period also witnesses the development of complex *coverbal* (*prepositional*) *constructions*, some of them highly specialized (for an overview in a historical perspective, see Hé 1994:259–331 and especially Mǎ 2002), including many disyllabic and even trisyllabic function words. Frequently, the original semantics of the coverb is persevering, as in the following example:

7. 象坐牙死犀坐其角翠為毛故麈鹿為皮肉故。

Xiàng	zuò	yá	sǐ	xī
elephant	cov	tooth	die	rhinoceros
zuò	qí	jiǎo	cuì	wèi
cov	poss	horn	kingfisher	cov
máo	gù	zhānglù	wèi	pí
feather	cause	deer	cov	skin
ròu	gù.			
meat	cause			

'The elephant dies (i.e., is killed) *because* of his teeth, the rhinoceros *because* of his horn, the kingfisher bird *for* his feathers, and the Moschus deer *for* his skin and meat.'
(T.3, no.175a, 438c–439a)

Note the particular usage of *zuò* 坐 here, being used like a coverb expressing cause/reason. This usage is mentioned in Jiě (2008:1212–1213), and glossed as 'based on, because of'. The usage seems to be derived from the lexical meaning 'to be brought to justice' and 'to be liable for' attested for in Qín and Hàn times (see for example Lau and Lüdke 2012). Also note the *variatio* in the third and fourth phrases, using the more common *wèi* 為…*gù* 故 ('because of…reason') Literary Chinese construction.

In the following example, *lèi* 累 appears as part of a serial verb construction, functioning similar to a coverb, based on an extension of meaning 'to trouble → cause'; the object of the main verb *gòngyǎng* is fronted and marked with the coverb *yǐ* 以:

8. 以我盲父母累王供養道人現世罪滅得福無
量。

Yǐ   wǒ   máng   fùmǔ
COV   1SG   blind   mother.father
lèi   wáng   gòngyǎng   dàorén
trouble (>COV)   king   provide   way.man
xiànshì   zuì   miè   dé   fú
present.age   sin   perish   obtain   merit
wúliàng.
not.have.measure

'Troubling (→ causing) you, my King, to pro-
vide for my blind parents, then the present
guilt of mine, the man of the Way, will be
eradicated, and I will obtain merit without
limitations.'
(T.3, no. 174, 437b)

Among the serial verb constructions, the "dis-
posal form" (fronting the direct object of ditran-
sitive verbs), most importantly the one marked
with *jiāng* 將 (LMC: *bǎ* 把), has been studied
thoroughly. Moreover, the functional realm of
the pre-Buddhist *yǐ* 以 expanded significantly
during that period, and could form various pat-
terns. Based on the semantics 'to take', other
verbs with similar meaning grammaticalized
into this function by analogy, such as *qǔ* 取
'grasp' (especially in early translation literature;
see Cáo 2000; Yù 2000:555–556), *chí* 持 'hold',
and *zhuó* 著/着 'attach'. In narrative passages,
the object was regularly disposed of in front
of the main verbal phrase in constructions
with ditransitive verbs. In the example below,
the direct object is marked with *yǐ* 以, and the
indirect object with *xiàng* 'towards → to' (usu-
ally with human objects and appearing with a
restricted number of verbs indicating speech
acts; see Anderl 2004, vol. 1, 334–335). This strat-
egy of "differential object marking" was more
commonly used from the Táng periods onwards,
but there are occasional examples from earlier
periods:

9. 王以睒語向父母說。

Wáng   yǐ   Shǎn   yǔ   xiàng
king   COV   NPR   word   COV
fùmǔ   shuō.
father.mother   say

'The king told Śyāma's words to the parents.'
(T.3, no.175, 443b)

The parallel passage in a somewhat earlier trans-
lation shows a more complex and less trans-
parent construction, featuring a redundant (or
rather resumptive) third person pronoun *zhī* 之
after the main verb, referring back to the direct
object disposed of by *yǐ* 以 (which is followed by
a verbal phrase nominalized with *suǒ*):

10. 王具以睒口中所言向盲父母說之。

Wáng   jù   yǐ   Shǎn   kǒu-zhōng
king   ADV   COV   NPR   mouth-LOC
suǒ   yán   xiàng   máng   fùmǔ
NMLZ   speak   COV   blind   father.mother
shuō   zhī.
say   3PL

'The King entirely told the parents what
Shǎnzǐ had said (lit. inside his mouth).'
(T.3, no.174, 437c)

Also coverbal function words indicating the
temporal and spatial frames of events expanded.
Typically, coverbs indicating location grammati-
calized from lexical words indicating movement.

In Early Medieval Chinese, a limited number
of verb complements appeared, such as V-*sǐ* 死
(V and die) and V-*shā* 殺 (V and kill; see Méi
1991), e.g., *shè-shā* 射殺 (shoot and kill → shoot
dead). However, the system of verbal comple-
ments did not fully develop before the Late
Medieval Chinese period, when directional com-
plements after verbs of motion became com-
monly used (e.g., *tuīchū sǐshī* 推出死屍 'drag
that corpse out!', ZTJ, 5.021; *fēiguò* 飛過 'fly
by'; for occasional EMC examples, see Zürcher
1996:15: *yī shāmén lái-guò* 一沙門來過 'a monk
came by'). The object is occasionally inserted
between the main verb and its complement
(e.g., *rù dìyù qù* 入地獄去 '[it is like] entering
Hell', ZTJ, 2.112). *Dé* 得 'attain → be able to' is
frequently used in postverbal position express-
ing capability (*dān-dé* 擔得 'able to carry'; *chū-
bù-dé* 出不得 'not be able to escape'). *Jiāng* 將,
which in Early Medieval Chinese marks imma-
nent action/intention, can move to postverbal
position, often in the compound *jiānglái* 將來,

adding the notion of a request or mild imperative (*qǐng héshàng dǎpò jiānglái* 請和尚打破將來 'I request you, Preceptor, to destroy it!', ZTJ, 5.138). These complex verb phrases can combine with vernacular emphatic sentence finals (*bèi súhàn nòng jiāngqù zài* 被俗漢弄將去在 '[…] and will be made fun of by vulgar fellows!', ZTJ, 4.134). Other important complements include -*qǔ* 取 (indicating attainment/completion); -*què* 卻 (completion); -*zhao/zhe* 著/着 (completion or state/progression; e.g., *fùgài-zhe* 覆蓋著 'be covered'). For an overview of verbal complements in the transformation texts/*biànwén*, see for example Wú (1996:286–311).

7. Markers of Modality and Sentence Final Particles

One of the aspects which underwent most changes, is the modal system. The richness and complexity of modal markers manifests itself usually in the dialogue sections of the narrative passages (for recent studies of modal markers of the Hàn period and EMC, see Meisterernst 2008, 2011, 2012a; for a useful lists of function words of the modal system in a historical perspective, see Hé 1994:476–503; for modal verbs in LMC, see Anderl 2004, vol. I:385–435). The constituents of modal constructions include sentence initials, interrogative pronouns, a great variety of modal verbs, and sentence final particles. Among the last category, a variety of new markers emerged during the 4th and 5th centuries. One example is the vernacular sentence final particle *pó* 婆, appearing in a *Vinaya* translation at the end of the 4th century (T.24, no.1464). It marks interrogative sentences and is used like Literary Chinese *yé* 耶 and *hū* 乎. Karashima (1997) regards it as the predecessor of sentence finals such as *mó* 摩/磨 (→ *me* 麼 in early Mandarin), whereas others see it as phonetically related to *bù* 不 (Fēng 2000; see also Lóng 2004:36–37) in sentence final position. In Early Medieval Chinese, we also see an increasing usage of sentence finals marking yes/no questions, such as *bù* 不, *fǒu* 否, and *wèi* 未, the last one originally being 'tensed', maybe (see Harbsmeier 2012:183, fn.20.

In Late Medieval Chinese, the system of sentence final modal particles developed further, including *hǎo* 好, expressing deontic modality, often interacting with the modal verb *xū* 須 (*xū zǐxì hǎo* 須子細好！'[You] should be careful!', ZTJ, 3.039; compare *zhe* 者/著/着 with the similar meaning of exhortation: *zǐxì sīliàng zhe* 子細思量着 'Think carefully about it!', ms. Pelliot 2838) or double-negations. Particles giving emphasis to a statement include *lǐ* 裏/裡/俚 and *zài* 在 (*zhè-gè rén wèi chūjiā zài* 這個人未出家在！'This person hasn't left home yet (i.e., is not a real monk yet)', ZTJ, 2.048). Precursors of interrogative *ne* 呢 in Late Medieval Chinese include *nǐ* 你/聻/尼/呭/咿 (between the Southern Sòng until the Yuán, often replaced by *lǐ* 裏/里): *cǐ rén ne* 此人聻 'What about this person?', ZTJ, 2.146. A related particle is *na* 那, with occasional Early Medieval Chinese examples (appearing in interrogative questions or conveying suggestive mood/mild imperative; see Zürcher 1996:18–19: *bǐqiū nǎ qu* 比丘那去 'Where did the monk go to?'). Sentence final *qù* conveys the speaker's conviction that an event/action will take place (or is desired to be realized) in the future, in addition to giving emphasis to the apodosis in conditional sentences (both factual and hypothetical): *yùmó zé wú shèng qù yě* 與摩則無聖去也 'If that's the case then sages do not exist' (ZTJ, 1.082).

Although the study of Medieval Chinese has progressed significantly during the recent years, there are many aspects which need further investigation, and studies have to be systematized and related to each other to a higher degree, in order to gain an understanding of the general development of Medieval Chinese grammar. Non-edited handwritten texts are of paramount importance for the research on Medieval Chinese. First of all, manuscripts dating from the early Hàn have to be further analyzed in order to determine the early use of some Early Medieval Chinese syntactic features. Systematic research on the syntactic features of Dūnhuáng manuscript texts are only in its initial phase, and will occupy linguists for the coming decades. Another important topic for future research will be early Buddhist translation literature, including comparative studies with Indic parallel texts. Last but not least, the relation between language and genre (and the genre constraints on language expression) will

need much more detailed studies in order to understand how features of Medieval Chinese language were committed to a written form.

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