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YANG JIDONG

## Replacing *hu* with *fan*: A Change in the Chinese Perception of Buddhism during the Medieval Period

Glancing over early Chinese Buddhist texts such as *Chu Sanzang jiji* [Collection of Notes Concerning the Translation of the Tripitaka] 出三藏記集, one will be surprised to find that Chinese monks from the 2nd to 6th century used to relate Buddhist scriptures from Central Asia or India and the languages in which they were written with *hu* 胡, a Chinese word usually translated into English as “barbarian”. From Sui and Tang times on, however, this word suddenly disappeared in new Buddhist literature. Down to the later periods of the Yuan and Ming, even the character *hu* in all early texts was carefully picked out and replaced with *fan* 梵 by the monks who were re-editing the Chinese Tripitaka. So far only a few scholars<sup>1</sup> have touched upon this interesting phenomenon, which needs further examination because it reveals some important aspects of early Chinese Buddhism. In this paper I would like to trace the transition from *hu* to *fan* in some detail and to give it an interpretation based on the historical and cultural context.

The origin of *hu* is quite clear. During the pre-Qin period it usually referred to the nomadic people to the north of the Middle Kingdoms, who were mentioned in later Chinese sources as *Xiongnu* 匈奴 (the Huns).<sup>2</sup> By the end of the Eastern Han, however, this word had been used so widely that nearly all of the alien peoples in Central Asia and Mongolia were generally called *hu* by the Chinese, though they were also named specifically and distinguished from each other. At the same time, the Chinese attached the label of *hu* to whatever was imported from the west, such as *hujia* (a reed instrument) 胡笳, *huchuang* (a portable and multi-purpose bed) 胡床, and *huda* (dancing girls) 胡妲, etc. There is no doubt that in the Han Dynasty at the latest *hu* had had a

1. For example, Ji Xianlin, “Fanyu”, p. 75; and his “Zai tan Futu yu Fo”, pp. 28-29; also see Robert H. VAN GULIK, *Siddham*, p. 5. However, both of them do not give a full discussion on it.

2. Some scholars argue that *hu* was an abbreviated transcription of *Huna*, the name by which the Xiongnu called themselves; see Chen Yinke, “Wu hu wenti”, p. 27.

derogatory sense, which was dramatically exacerbated during the period of division that followed when the Chinese and their neighboring peoples were fighting each other for hegemony in north China.

Compared with *hu*, the etymon of *fan* in Chinese Buddhist vocabulary is much more ambiguous and requires close examination here. This character had never appeared in any early Chinese lexicons such as *Erya* 爾雅 and *Shuowen jiezi* 說文解字 until the fourth century, though it had been used everywhere in early Buddhist translations by that time. Several hundreds years later, a Song scholar named Xu Xuan 徐鉉 included *fan* in a new edition of *Shuowen jiezi* as a complementary entry and explained it as “coming from the Buddhist books of the Western Regions” 出自西域釋書,<sup>3</sup> which was obviously illogical. Fortunately, another Song scholar Hong Shi 洪適 found the character *fan* on an Eastern Han stone tablet and considered it equal to *peng* 茷 [luxuriant], a word that had emerged in pre-Qin texts.<sup>4</sup> Based on Hong’s finding, two Qing scholars, Niu Shuyu 鈕樹玉<sup>5</sup> and Zheng Zhen 鄭珍<sup>6</sup>, argue that *fan* existed long before the spread of Buddhism into China as a vernacular form of *peng*.

There is new evidence for the Qing scholars’ argument: in *Hou Hanshu* we see a man named Gao Fan 高梵.<sup>7</sup> Given the fact that Gao was an eunuch in the Han court, it seems quite reasonable that *fan* was a vernacular word<sup>8</sup> of that time because most court eunuchs came from the lower walks of society. Erik ZÜRCHER has shown us that early Chinese Buddhist translations were highly influenced by the vernacular language of the late Han.<sup>9</sup> It seems highly possible that *fan* was also among the large colloquial vocabulary applied by early Buddhist translators, most of whom came from foreign countries and possessed limited knowledge of the written language of Chinese gentry scholars.

From the very beginning of Buddhist translation in China, *fan* had been used to transcribe *brahmā* in Indian languages. Some scholars are

3. Xu Shen, *Shuowen jiezi*, p. 126b.

4. *Lishi*, pp. 14a, 15a.

5. *Shuowen xinfu kao*, vol. 1, p. 90.

6. *Shuowen xinfu kao*, vol. 1, p. 93. Do not confuse Zheng’s book with Niu’s that has the same title.

7. Fan Ye, *Hou Hanshu*, p. 3243.

8. We do not see *fan* appearing in any gentry literature of the Han period.

9. “Late Han Vernacular Elements”.

still wondering how these two words can be related to each other. In fact, as Edwin PULLEYBLANK<sup>10</sup> and South COBLIN<sup>11</sup> have reconstructed separately, the sound of the character 梵 in Early Middle Chinese or the Eastern Han was *buam<sup>h</sup>* or *\*b(r)jam*, much different from that in Modern Mandarin but very close to Indian *brahmā*. As it frequently appeared in Buddhist translations, the original meaning of *fan* was soon forgotten by gentry scholars and monk-translators, whose understanding of this word was totally based on the context of Buddhist scriptures. Thus we see Ge Hong 葛洪<sup>12</sup> of the fourth century explaining it as “clearness” (*jie* 潔), and Huang Gongshao 黃公紹<sup>13</sup> of the eleventh century saying that it means “peace” (*qingjing* 清淨), “correct saying” (*zhengyan* 正言), and “quietness” (*jijing* 寂靜). Besides all of these meanings which obviously derived from the concept of *brahmā* in Indian religions and thought, *fan* was also used by Chinese intellectuals in the senses of “Indian”, “Buddhist”, and “Sanskrit”,<sup>14</sup> which apparently showed respect to the foreign country and culture from which Buddhism originated.

However, it was not until the Sui Dynasty that *fan* appeared whenever India and Sanskrit were mentioned in Buddhist texts. In fact, *hu* was used in most of such cases during the whole span of the early period of Chinese Buddhism. In Sengyou’s 僧祐 (445-518) *Chu sanzang ji ji* alone we can find abundant evidence of such usage, such as:

[Zhi Qian 支謙] thought that although the great teaching was making its way [to China], nobody understood it due to the many *hu words* in the sūtras. Since he was good at both Chinese and barbarian languages, [Zhi Qian] collected various scriptures and translated them into Chinese. 以大教雖行而經多胡文，莫有解者。既善華戎之語，乃收集眾本，譯為漢言。（“Biography of Zhi Qian”）;<sup>15</sup>

There are thirty-six foreign languages and an equal number of scripts. Dharmarakṣa studied all of them, ... then he returned to China with a large number of *hu editions* [of Buddhist scriptures]. 外國異言三十有六，書亦如之。護皆遍學，遂大齋胡本還歸中夏。（“Biography of Dharmarakṣa [Zhu Fahu 竺法護]”）.<sup>16</sup>

10. *Lexicon*, p. 91; *A Chinese text*, p. 26.

11. “Notes on the Dialect”, p. 159.

12. *Yaoyong ziyuan*, p. 3a.

13. *Gujing yunhui juyao*, vol. 5, Ch. 24, p. 28a.

14. The reason why Sanskrit was called *Fanwen* 梵文 in Chinese is clearly related to the Brāhmī alphabet, in which Sanskrit texts were written.

15. T.55.2145, p. 97c.

16. *Ibid.*

The quality of Zhi Chen's translations [is not so good because it] has too many *hu sounds* (transcriptions). [支]識所譯者，辭質多胡音。 (“Note on the Combination of the Translations of *Sūrangama samādhisūtra*” 合首楞嚴經記).<sup>17</sup>

Faxian originally wanted to look for the Vinaya [books]. However, in northern Indian states [the teaching] was orally transmitted from teacher to teacher, [so Faxian] found no book to copy. Therefore, he traveled a long distance, arrived at central India, ... lived there for three years, studied *hu script and language*, wrote down all the books [he wanted], and then returned [to China]. [法]顯本求戒律。而北天竺諸國皆師師口傳，無本可寫。是以遠涉，乃至中天竺。... 住三年，學胡書胡語，悉寫之，于是還。 (“Biography of Faxian”).<sup>18</sup>

There is no need to list all the mentions of *hu* in early Buddhist texts, which would constitute a much longer paper. Based on the above citations, we can conclude that from the 2nd to 6th centuries the Chinese used to attach the label of *hu* (or “barbarian” in English) to everything related to Buddhism. It is notable that Buddhist monks and Buddhist-minded intellectuals also treated their holy religion in such a way, just as their religious opponents like the Daoists did.<sup>19</sup> Even Daoan 道安 (314-385), the most prominent Buddhist scholar of that time, did not avoid using *hu* when he was talking about the techniques of Buddhist translation.<sup>20</sup> The most surprising fact, however, is that even in their controversies with the Daoists who viewed the alien origin of Buddhism as one of its most vulnerable attributes, these monks and intellectuals still used *hu* to refer to the language in which the Buddhist sūtras from India were written. For example, in his “Treatise of Scoffing at the Daoists” (*Xiao Dao lun* 笑道論), Zhen Luan 甄鸞 of the Northern Zhou Dynasty writes: “*Namas* in the *hu* language means ‘to convert’ and ‘to save me’ in our language” 胡言南無，此言歸命，亦言救我。<sup>21</sup> In any event, such a usage is quite difficult to fathom at first glance.

However, shortly after China was reunified under the Sui Dynasty, the use of *hu* in Buddhist translations began to be seriously questioned. It might have been Yancong 彥琮 (557-610), the most prominent Buddhist translator and Sanskrit scholar during the Sui, who took the first step to

17. Ibid., p. 49b.

18. Ibid., p. 21a-b.

19. For a discussion on the Daoist perception of Indian culture, see Richard B. MATHER, “Chinese and Indian Perceptions”.

20. See his “Preface to the Copy of *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*” 摩訶鉢羅若波羅密經抄序 included in *Chu sanzang ji ji*, T.55.2145, p. 52a-b.

21. This treatise is included in Daoxuan, *Guang hongming ji*, T.52.2103, p. 147b.

replace *hu* with *fan*. In his “Treatise of Defending Righteousness” (*Bianzheng lun* 辯正論), which is known as one of the most important works on Buddhist linguistics written by a Chinese monk, Yancong criticizes Daoan’s confusion of *hu* with *fan* and appeals for a distinction between the two:

In the past [the Chinese people] generally called the other side [of the world] *hu* countries. Though he was very erudite, Daoan did not alter the conventional usage. The *hu* [people] are originally the offspring of various barbarians, but the *fan* [people] are the descendants of the true sages. Since their origins are totally different, they should not be confused with each other. ...The fact that the true and the false are not distinguished from each other is really sad. 舊喚彼方，總名胡國。安雖遠識，未變常語。胡本雜戎之胤，梵惟真聖之苗。根既懸殊，理無相濫。... 莫分真偽，良可哀哉。<sup>22</sup>

Though he gives geographical definition for neither *hu* nor *fan*, Yancong clearly claims that India, from where Buddhism came, should be excepted from the general notion of *hu* territory, and that Buddhism and its language thus could not be *hu* religion and speech. Such an opinion soon became a principle of “political correctness” among the Buddhist clergy during the Tang period that followed. When Daoxuan 道宣 (596-667), one of the most prominent Buddhist scholars and bibliographers in the early Tang, was editing a new sūtra catalog, namely *The Catalog of the Inner Classics of the Great Tang* (*Da Tang neidian lu* 大唐內典錄), he repeats Yancong’s distinction between *hu* and *fan* and then appeals for the replacement of the former with the latter.<sup>23</sup> For every entry in his bibliographical work whose title includes the character *hu*, Daoxuan carefully makes a comment pointing out that *fan* should be used instead of *hu*. For instance, under the entry of *A Sūtra of Hu Edition in Four Chapters* 胡本經四卷 we read:

It seems to have come from Chang’an. Now it should be called a *fan* edition. 似從長安出，今應言梵本。<sup>24</sup>

Daoxuan’s treatment of *hu* in early texts was continued by Zhisheng 智昇, another important Buddhist bibliographer during the middle Tang. In his *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* [*Catalog of Buddhism of the Kaiyuan Years*] 開元釋教錄, Zhisheng copied a great deal of biographical information about early Buddhist translators from Sengyou’s *Chu sanzang ji ji* but

22. See the biography of Yancong in Daoxuan, *Xu gaoseng zhuan*, T.50.2060, p. 438b.

23. T.55.2149, p. 224a-b.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 225a.

cautiously replaced *hu* with *fan* everywhere. For example, in Sengyou's book we read:

[Fayong] studied *hu* scripts and finally understood *hu* languages. [法勇]學胡書竟便解胡語。<sup>25</sup>

But in *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* the same sentence is altered to:

[Fayong] studied *fan* script and finally understood *fan* language. [法勇]學梵書竟便解梵語。<sup>26</sup>

It is notable that Tang monks made such changes merely in their own works when they were copying catalog entries or biographies from earlier Buddhist texts, but they did not intend to alter the latter themselves. Moreover, they preferred to preserve the original texts by making comments and pointing out what they changed. Even so, the character *hu* came to be considered totally unacceptable by Chinese monks, who showed a stronger and stronger tendency to rid all of their scriptures, no matter how old they were, of such a bad word. During the Song Dynasty, this movement must have evolved to such a large scale that some leading Buddhist scholars like Zanning 贊寧 (919-1001) attempted to dampen it:

Since there are [both] *hu* and *fan* [languages] in the western lands, why we do not distinguish between southern [*fan*] and northern [*hu*] and between right and wrong? [Because such a distinction has not been drawn,] three errors have resulted. The first is that because *hu* has been replaced with *fan*, but not distinguished from *fan*, it still is the same as *fan*. The second is that because the difference between *hu* and *fan* languages has not been understood, the *hu* has been considered the same as *fan*. The third resulting error is the misunderstanding of the fact that translation through several languages did exist. Just as at an early time [the Buddhist languages] were all called *hu*, the fact that since the Sui Dynasty they have all been called *fan* is what is called "going too far is as bad as not going far enough."

既雲西土有胡有梵，何不南北區分，是非料簡，致有三失：一改胡為梵，不析胡關，胡還成梵，失也；二不善胡梵二音，致令胡得為梵，失也；三不知有重譯，失也。當初盡呼為胡，亦猶隋朝已來總呼為梵，所謂過猶不及也。<sup>27</sup>

Zanning's point of view seems to have had little influence on late Buddhist writing and editing. From the Yuan period on, the character *hu* totally disappeared in the newly compiled Chinese Tripiṭaka. Looking at

25. T.55.2145, p. 114a.

26. T.55.2154, p. 530b.

27. *Song gaoseng zhuan*, T.50.2061, p. 723c.

the collation notes written by the compilers of *Taishō Shinshu Daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經 for early works like *Chu sanzang ji ji*, one may gain a deep impression of the thoroughness of this movement.

The history of *hu* and *fan* as shown above easily leads students of Chinese Buddhism to the conclusion that the early Buddhist sūtras brought to China were not written in Sanskrit (or Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit) but in Central Asian languages. Such an argument has been put forward by many scholars dealing with the linguistic aspect of Buddhist history since the beginning of this century. To name a few, Sylvain LÉVI<sup>28</sup> attested the Tocharian origin of some Chinese Buddhist terms. Harold BAILEY<sup>29</sup> and John BROUGH<sup>30</sup> presented many Chinese counterparts of Gāndhārī words. Ji Xianlin<sup>31</sup> claimed that early Chinese Buddhist scriptures were translated from Bactrian, Tocharian and other Central Asian languages. Ui Hakuju<sup>32</sup> made examinations of some early Chinese translations and showed their Prakrit origin. As W. PACHOW<sup>33</sup> and PULLEYBLANK<sup>34</sup> have concluded, it was not until the sixth century that the Buddhist sūtras arriving in China were mainly written in Sanskrit. Therefore, such a hypothesis seems very natural: Early Middle Chinese *hu* is roughly equal to the modern concept of Central Asia (including Pakistan), while *fan* means India; the switch from *hu* to *fan* in Chinese Buddhist translations reflected the key role played by Central Asia and its languages in the early stage of the eastward spread of Buddhism, which was overshadowed by India and Sanskrit during later periods.<sup>35</sup>

However, let us be more careful on this issue because there are some sources showing that *fan* was already used to indicate Sanskrit no later than the third century, although in much less cases than *hu* was, and that during the Northern and Southern Dynasties these two terms were interchangeable. For example, the postscript on the translation of *Buddhā-*

28. "Le 'Tokharien B.'"

29. "Gandhārī".

30. *Gandhārī*, pp. 50-54.

31. "Futu yu Fo" and "Zai tan Futu yu fo".

32. "Shishin" and "Shiken".

33. "Development of Tripitaka-Translation".

34. "Stages in the Transcription".

35. Ji Xianlin: "Zai tan Futu yu Fo", pp. 27-29.

*vataṃsakamahāvaiṇyasyūtra* (*Huayan jing* 華嚴經) preserved in *Chu sanzang ji ji* says:

In the fourteenth year of the Yixi reign (418) of the [Eastern] Jin Dynasty, ... the Indian *dhyāna* master Buddhahadra, holds [the sūtra in] *fan* script in his hands and translated from *hu* into Jin [language]. 晉義熙十四年，...天竺禪師佛度跋陀羅手執梵文，譯胡為晉<sup>36</sup>

Other pertinent evidence comes from the Buddhist catalog compiled by Sengyou when he talks about the sūtras brought by Faxian from India:

As for the above eleven sūtras, ... their *hu* editions were brought by Śramaṇa Shi Faxian from Ceylon in Central India. ... Among them the *Dīrghāgama* and *Samyuktāgama* are still in Sanskrit and have not been translated. 右十一部，...沙門釋法顯於中天竺師子國得胡本。...其長雜二阿含經，猶是梵文，未得譯出。<sup>37</sup>

In the early Tang, although the use of *hu* had been forbidden by Buddhist clergy, court historians still identified “Brahmanical Writing” 波羅門書 with *hu* writing of the Western Regions 西域胡書.<sup>38</sup> Obviously, for a very long period Sanskrit was thought by the Chinese to be a sort of *hu* language. It seems to me, therefore, that we have to improve our understanding of the relationship between *hu* and *fan* and its origin. Of course, I do not mean to suspect the opinions of numerous scholars on the issue of early Buddhist languages, which have been proved by a large number of linguistic materials. What I would like to say here is that we should reconsider the replacement of *hu* in Chinese Buddhist texts from a new perspective.

First of all, we have to take the ideological controversies among Buddhism, Confucian and Taoism during the early medieval period into account. It is well known that one of the most important anti-Buddhist arguments was based on the alien origin of this religion.<sup>39</sup> From *The Sūtra on Laozi Converting the Barbarians* (*Laozi huahu jing* 老子化胡經) to Gu Huan’s 顧歡 “Treatise on the Chinese and Barbarians” (*Yixia lun* 夷夏論), Daoists and anti-Buddhist intellectuals were gradually stepping

36. T.22.2145, pp. 60c-61a.

37. Ibid., p. 12a. The interchangeability between *hu* and *fan* can be traced back to a much earlier period; see the note on *Fanguang jing* 放光經 (a section of *Mahā-prajñāpāramitā* brought by Zhu Shixing 朱士行 during the Wei period (220-265) and translated in 291 (T.55.2145, p. 47c) for more information.

38. See Victor H. MAIR, “Cheng Ch’iao’s Understanding”, p. 333.

39. For more information of these attacks, see TANG Yongtong, *Han Wei liang Jin*, vol. 2, pp. 331-334; Kenneth CH’EN, “Anti-Buddhist Propaganda”, pp. 168-174.

up their attacks on the foreignness of Buddhism that reached a peak by the end of the Southern and Northern Dynasties. There was an urgent need for Buddhist clergy, therefore, to escape those assaults by differentiating their religion from the *hu* culture that was commonly thought to be uncivilized. This reason is clearly shown in the famous religious debate between Fu Yi 傅奕 and Falin 法琳 in the early Tang when the former says:

The *hu* people of the Western Regions have human faces but bestial hearts. They are a greedy and rebellious race. [Since] the Buddha was born in the west, he was [naturally] an evil demon full of weird spirits. 西域胡者人面獸心，貪逆惡種。佛生西方，妖魅邪氣者<sup>40</sup>

and the latter argues:

The *hu* people in the west are just [the residents] in the thirty-six states to the east of the Pamirs. They have nothing to do with India, where the Buddha was born. 西胡者但是蔥嶺已東三十六國，不關天竺佛生之地。<sup>41</sup>

Obviously, the idea put forward by Falin is that the Chinese should not view all foreigners as barbarians because there is at least one country, namely India where Buddhist sages were born, not less civilized than China. Given the emphasis on ancestors and origins in Chinese culture, the distinction between *hu* and *fan* was certainly very helpful for Buddhists to resist the attacks from Confucians and Daoists.

But why had such a distinction not been made until the Sui-Tang period? To answer this question we have to look through the general historical background from the third to sixth centuries. In this period we see the most lasting and ferocious war among different ethnic groups in Chinese history, which resulted in a long-standing and ever worse rivalry between the agricultural natives and nomadic foreigners. In fact, most non-Chinese rulers in the north tried very hard to improve the relationship between their compatriots and the Chinese.<sup>42</sup> Some of them, like Shi Le 石勒 (r. 319-333) of the Jie 羯 nationality, forbade his Chinese subjects to use the word *hu* and ordered that all the foreign people who had settled in China should be called "citizens" (*guoren* 國人).<sup>43</sup> However, such efforts seemed of no permanent effect. For most Chinese people at that time, they simply could not imagine that there

40. Falin, *Poxie lun*, T.55.2109, p. 482b.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 482c.

42. See ZHOU Yiliang, "Beichao de minzu wenti".

43. FANG Xuanling, *Jinshu*, pp. 2735, 2737.

was a “good” and “advanced” foreign culture,<sup>44</sup> because the prolonged war had dramatically restricted their view and tolerance. Apparently, it was the special situation of the period of division that made the replacement of *hu* in any kind of Chinese literature totally impossible.

The re-appearance of great and unified empires around the turn of the seventh century constituted a major turning point in Chinese history. After hundreds of years of ethnic fusion,<sup>45</sup> the new dynasties showed an unprecedented openness to foreign cultures. It is well known that the prosperity of the Sui-Tang dynasties was based on a highly developed cultural and economical exchange between China and other countries. Meanwhile, the Chinese people also became much more self-confident than before. The whole situation of the nation as well as the feelings of the people were totally different from the previous centuries as we see in a memorial presented by a Buddhist monk to the Emperor Sui Wendi 隋文帝 in 594 A.D.:

[Now, all within] the four seas have become [the members of] one family, the world has become peaceful, the distant countries and different customs appear as though they were right in front of our eyes. 四海為家，六合清泰。殊方異俗，宛若眼前。<sup>46</sup>

Here we can see a sense of friendliness and openness never seen before. Undoubtedly, profound changes in the historical background made it possible for Chinese people to treat their neighbors in a way much different from the previous centuries. It also enabled Buddhist monks to argue frankly that there was a civilized country in the west, from where

44. I have to express my opinion more delicately here. To view Buddhism as a *hu* or “barbarian” religion does not mean that the Chinese people and intellectuals did not like and could not accept it at all, which was certainly not true as we see in the history of the 3rd-6th centuries China. There is a striking similarity between the period we are talking about and the late Qing Dynasty, when lots of Western things such as weapons and machines were accepted and enjoyed by Chinese officials, but the “Western Learning” (*xixue* 西學) was thought alien to Chinese culture and unacceptable. As the most profound philosophy and amazing literature ever seen in Chinese history, Buddhism easily conquered a significant part of the Chinese intelligentsia as well as common people by the Sui-Tang period, just as Western weapons and machines did more than a millennium later. However, to change the Chinese perception of Buddhism as an alien or even “barbarian” religion would take more time.
45. The ruling families of both the Sui and Tang were of mixed ethnic origin; see CHEN Yinke, *Tangdai zhengzhi shi shulun gao*, pp. 1-13.
46. Fajing, *Zhongjing mulu*, T.55.2146, p. 149a.

the great teaching came to China, and that this country and its culture could be only related with *fan* (or “peaceful”) but not *hu* (or “barbarian”).

Yet the replacement of *hu* in Buddhist texts also reflects the fact that after hundreds of years Buddhism had finally become an internal part of Chinese culture. As Arthur WRIGHT has concluded, the establishment of the Sui Dynasty represents the end of the period of domestication and the beginning of the period of acceptance and independent growth in the history of Chinese Buddhism.<sup>47</sup> Throughout the Northern and Southern Dynasties Buddhism was thought to be more or less a foreign religion. As we mentioned above, even Buddhist monks themselves could not help but use *hu* to refer to the languages and sūtras in which Buddhism was brought from the west. As a special term applied in the period of division, *hu* always had a very strong racist sense and signified something uncivilized and inherently contradictory to Chinese culture. By contrast, as we have shown above, the term *fan* has much less ethnological significance. The shift from *hu* to *fan* in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, therefore, can be seen to some degree as a sign of the accomplishment of the domestication of Buddhism in China. By using *fan* to designate whatever was related with Buddhism, the Chinese were more at ease to accept Indian thought as a part of their own culture. It is also very interesting to find that the anti-Buddhist thinkers of the same period paid much less attention to the alien origin of Buddhism than its earlier opponents had. As seen in the seventh chapter of Daoxuan’s *Guang hongming ji*,<sup>48</sup> Fu Yi lists economical and social arguments as the most important issues but foreignness as the seventh of his eleven anti-Buddhist reasons. Probably due to the consideration that it is no longer a destructive fact, Daoxuan does not give the seventh reason a full discussion, but talks about the others at length.

In short, though it may seem to be a very small matter, the replacement of *hu* in Buddhist texts really gives us an appropriate window to examine some of the far-reaching changes in Chinese history and ideology which took place during the medieval period, and which undoubtedly contributed to the cultural prosperity of the Sui and Tang Dynasties.

47. “Buddhism and Chinese Culture”, p. 4.

48. T.52.2103, pp. 134a-135b.

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