

Whence Came the Name “Kuiji” Instead of Just “Ji”?

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USUALLY referred to as “Kuiji” 窺基 (632–682) in Chinese and “Kiki” in Japanese, this eminent Buddhist intellectual is among the most famous disciples of Xuanzang 玄奘 (600/602–664) and was the de facto founder of the Chinese Yogācāra (Weishi 唯識 or Faxiang 法相) school. He is also often referred to as “Grand Master Ci’en” 慈恩大師 (Ci’en Dashi; Jp. Jion Daishi) because he lived and worked at the temple Ci’en si 慈恩寺 together with his master Xuanzang, later passing away there as well. It is due to this connection that the Chinese Yogācāra school also goes by the name of the Ci’en school (Ci’en zong 慈恩宗). Master Ci’en composed many commentaries on Indian Buddhist texts such as the *Chengweishi lun* 成唯識論 (Skt. **Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi-śāstra*; Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only) and the *Bian zhongbian lun* 辨中邊論 (Skt. *Madhyāntavibhāga*; Treatise on the Distinction between the Middle and the Extremes), treatises that Xuanzang had translated. Altogether, he composed about forty-three works, thirty-one of which have been handed down to the present. Master Ci’en was no doubt one of the most productive and influential Chinese Buddhist scholar-monks in history, and his writings were widely studied by Japanese and Korean monks from the seventh century onward.

Despite this eminent standing in Chinese Buddhist history, there has been considerable confusion and disagreement as to the correct rendering of his name. All Chinese Buddhists and scholars of Buddhism in China refer to him as “Kuiji,” though they sometimes use “Jishi” 基師 (Jp. Kishi) or “Jigong” 基公 (Jp. Kikō) as abbreviated honorific titles since these contain the character *ji* of “Kuiji.” Contemporary Japanese scholarship, however, has asserted that “Kuiji” is an *incorrect* rendering of this master’s name.

According to this perspective, the correct name should simply be “Ji” 基 (Jp. Ki). In this essay, I will explain the background of these divergent understandings and will offer my own resolution of this discrepancy.

The Names “Kuiji” and “Ji” in Japanese and Chinese Publications

A close look at some authoritative Japanese Buddhist dictionaries reveals that those published in the late 1960s and early 1970s present different readings of Master Ci'en's name than those published later. The revised editions of the *Oda bukkyō daijiten* 織田佛教大辭典 (1969), the *Mochizuki bukkyō daijiten* 望月佛教大辭典 (1960), and the *Bukkyō jiten* 佛教辭典 (1974) edited by Ui Hakuju 宇井伯寿 (1882–1963) each contain entries that give his name as “Kuiji” and explain that “Ji” is an abbreviation of this name. They go on to explain that he is also known, in Japanese, as “Jion Daishi” 慈恩大師, “Daijō Ki” 大乘基, and “Reiki” 靈基.¹ On the other hand, the entries for his name in the *Iwanami bukkyō jiten* 岩波仏教辭典 and the *Tōyō bukkyō jinmei jiten* 東洋仏教人名事典, both published in 1989, give his name as “Ji” while providing annotations that “Jion Daishi” is his honorific title, and that he is also known as “Daijō Ki.” They go even further, though, and explicitly state that “Kuiji” is an incorrect rendering of his name.² Unfortunately, neither of these two dictionaries provides a reason for how this variant reading of his name has come about.

Although studies of the Chinese and Japanese Buddhist schools of Consciousness-Only (Ch. Faxiang zong 法相宗; Jp. Hossō shū) are voluminous, its founder's name is usually only mentioned briefly in passing, as if it were common knowledge. Thus, in his well-known *Chūgoku bukkyō shi* 中国仏教史 (History of Chinese Buddhism) of 1978, Kamata Shigeo 鎌田茂雄 (1927–2001) observed that “Ji” is the correct name and that “Kuiji” is incorrect, albeit without giving any explanation as to why. In his revised edition of 1999, the reading “Kuiji” (Jp. Kiki) is not even mentioned.³

It is clear that in Japanese publications from at least the late 1970s, the name “Ji” (Jp. Ki) came to be used frequently to identify Master Ci'en, and “Kuiji” (Jp. Kiki) was generally assumed to be incorrect.

In China, however, although expressions like “his original name is ‘Ji’” can occasionally be seen in dictionaries and monographs,⁴ most scholars

¹ See Oda 1969, p. 624; Mochizuki 1960, p. 500; Ui 1974, p. 168.

² See Nakamura 1989, p. 154; Saitō 1989, p. 87.

³ See Kamata 1978, pp. 240–41; Kamata 1999, pp. 639–40.

⁴ See for example, Zhongguo Dabaike Quanshu Zongbianweihui 2009, p. 208. The entry

and monks in China have been accustomed to using the name “Kuiji” and thus would not think that this usage could perhaps be a historical mistake.

In fact, Lü Cheng 呂澂 (1896–1989) came to this very conclusion in a 1955 essay titled “Ci’en zong” where he listed the four great disciples of Xuanzang and makes this observation concerning Kuiji’s name:

The character “*kui*” was added by people of the Song period; what character preceded the original name “*Ji*” is not known.⁵

The Chinese Buddhologist Tang Yongtong 湯用彤 (1893–1964) came to a similar conclusion in a lecture prepared in the 1920s. In it, he briefly discusses Master Ci’en’s name as follows:

According to inscriptions, epigraphs, and other early records, all [materials] mention the Master named “*Ji*,” but not “*Kuiji*.” The name “*Kuiji*” first occurred in the *Kaiyuan-Period Catalogue [of the Teachings of Śākyamuni]*. Master [*Ji*] styled himself as Hongdao, and the *Hong* 洪 can also be written as *Hong* 弘. (See the details in *Biography of Master Jion* by Saeki Ryōken.)⁶

It seems that Lü Cheng did not have the opportunity to read either the draft of Tang Yongtong’s lecture or the work of Saeki Ryōken 佐伯良謙 (1880–1963). Also, as we will see, Tang drew upon only some of Saeki’s conclusions. Therefore, the questions that Lü wrestled with still remain, namely: What was the original character that preceded *ji* if *kui* is incorrect, and how did the term *kui* become part of the name “Kuiji”?

Saeki Ryōken’s 1925 Work

Saeki Ryōken was a well-known scholar-monk who belonged to the Japanese Hossō school and was the one-hundred-and-fourth chief priest (*kanshu* 管主, or *kanju* 貫首) of Hōryūji 法隆寺, a temple in Nara Prefecture, as well as the founder of the Shōtoku 聖德 school. His magnum opus, *Jion Daishi den* 慈恩大師傳 (Biography of Master Ci’en), was published in 1925.

“Kuiji” is written by the well-known nun Longlian 隆蓮 (1909–2006).

⁵ 「窺」字是宋人加上去的，原名「基」上是何字，不詳。Lü 1991, p. 2938.

⁶ 據其碑文、塔銘及其他較早記載，均言師諱基，而未言窺基，《開元錄》始有窺基名。師字洪道，然洪亦作弘。（詳見佐伯良謙「慈恩大師傳」）。These lectures from the 1920s were edited and published in 1982 by his son, Tang Yijie 湯一介 (1927–2014). See Tang 1982, pp. 154–55. The *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 開元釋教錄 (Kaiyuan-Period Catalogue of the Teachings of Śākyamuni), T no. 2154, 55, is discussed below.

This biography begins by describing Master Ci'en's relationship with his master, Xuanzang, and goes on to examine in detail his birth, childhood, family, names, and the stories and legends concerning him. It also discusses the founding and development of his school, as well as its relationship with the Vinaya, Pure Land, and other schools of Chinese Buddhism. Although there do not appear to be any statements in Japanese sources stating that Saeki was the first scholar to point out that "Kuiji" is an incorrect rendering of Master Ci'en's name—and even Stanley Weinstein in his detailed discussion in 1959 of the matter seems unaware of Saeki's work⁷—the *Jion Daishi den* should probably be considered as the source for the consensus in the modern academy that the correct rendering of his name is *merely* "Ji" (Jp. Ki).

In fact, Master Ci'en has been referred to by a variety of names since ancient times, and Saeki has carefully combed through almost all of the materials containing these references. There is a particularly interesting summary of these names in the following passage from the *Fahuajing xuanzan yaoji* 法華經玄贊要集 (Essence of the *Glorification of the Lotus Sutra*),⁸ also known as the *Jingshui chao* 鏡水抄 (Selections from Jingshui), which was written in 877 by Qifu 棲復 (n.d.), the late Tang-dynasty (618–907) monk of the Jingshuisi 鏡水寺:

For the statement "written by Ji," the character "Ji" is the commentator's name. At that time, that is, the early Tang, there was no taboo regulation, but now [Ji] is a taboo character for the emperor. Many of the disciples of the Tang Tripitaka Master [Xuanzang] have a single-character name following the title "Dasheng 大乘 (Mahayana)," such as "Dharma Master Dasheng Ji" and "Dharma Master Dasheng Guang," etc. [Ji] is also named "Huiji" 慧基, as well as "Kuiji" 窺基. Among these three names, "Ji" and "Kuiji" are the most appropriate. In the *Memorial of the Tang Tripitaka Giving Thanks to the Monastery at the Time of Death*, there is the name "Kuiji." In the *Memorial Requesting an Imperial Preface*

⁷ Weinstein (1959, p. 129) states: "Modern reference works invariably include the biography of Tz'ü-ên under the name K'uei-chi (Jp. Kiki)." His study of Master Ci'en's biographies has not drawn much attention among Asian scholars. I review Weinstein's discussion of the names of Master Ci'en below.

⁸ See Saeki 1925, pp. 23–24. The *Fahuajing xuanzan* 法華經玄贊 (The *Glorification of the Lotus Sutra*; T no. 1723, 34) is Master Ci'en's commentary on the *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 (T no. 262, 9; The *Sutra of the Lotus of the Wonderful Law*, more commonly known as the *Lotus Sutra*).

[for the *Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom*],⁹ it reads: in the third year of Longshuo of the Great Tang [663], in the Yuhua Palace, [Xuanzang] translated more than six hundred fascicles [of the *Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom*]. On the twenty-third [*sic*; correctly, “twenty-second”] day of the eleventh month, [Xuanzang] commanded his disciple Kuiji to submit the *Memorial*.¹⁰

It is generally known that the inscriptions on Master Ci'en's grave and pagoda only contain the name “Ji.” In addition, both in his own writings—the so-called one hundred commentaries that are attributed to him¹¹—as well as in the writings of his contemporaries,¹² he is always referred to as “Ji,” “Dasheng Ji,” or “Shamen Ji” 沙門基, and not as “Kuiji” or “Huiji.”¹³

As Qifu reports in the above passage, it is indeed true that many of Xuanzang's disciples had single names such as Guang 光, Wei 巍, Lin 林, Qin 欽, Hui 暉, Xun 詢, Chen 諶, Yun 雲, and Quan 詮. Except for “Quan,” all of the others have as a prefix the common title “Dasheng.”¹⁴ This prefix probably has its origin in the fact that after Xuanzang won a famous debate

⁹ *Qingyuzhi daborejing xu biao* 請御製大般若經序表 (Memorial Requesting an Imperial Preface for the *Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom*). The text, discussed further below, is hereafter referred to simply as *Memorial*. This text is included in the *Sishamen Xuanzang shangbiao ji* 寺沙門玄奘上表記 (A Collection of Memorials of the *Śrāmaṇera* Xuanzang).

¹⁰ 言基撰者,基字是疏主名。當時唐初未諱,今時國諱字也。唐三藏弟子,多於大乘下著單名,大乘基法師、大乘光法師等。亦有云慧基,亦云窺基。三名之中,基與窺基最親。『唐三藏臨亡謝寺表』中有窺基名字。又於『奏請御製經序表』中云:大唐龍朔三年,於玉華宮,譯經六百餘卷,至十一月二十三日,令弟子窺基奉表聞奏。X no. 638, 43: 178a20–b2. Emphasis added.

¹¹ Because of his voluminous writings, Master Ci'en is also called the “commentator on one hundred texts” (*Baiben shuzhu* 百本疏主, or *Baishu lunzhu* 百疏論主) in the history of Chinese Buddhism. See for example Zhongguo Dabaike Quanshu Zongbianweihui 2009, p. 208; and Tang 1982, p. 155.

¹² See for example texts such as the *Chengweishi lun houxu* 成唯識論後序 (Postscript to the *Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only*) by Shen Xuanming 沈玄明 (n.d.), T no. 1585, 31, and the *Weishi ershi lun houxu* 唯識二十論後序 (Postscript to the *Twenty Verses on Consciousness-Only*), T no. 1590, 31, by Jingmai 靖邁 (n.d.).

¹³ See Sacki 1925, pp. 18–20. The *Amituojing tongzan shu* 阿彌陀經通贊疏 (Full Commentary on the *Amitābha Sutra*; T no. 1758, 37) and the *Dasheng baifa mingmen lun jie* 大乘百法明門論解 (Commentary on the *Lucid Introduction to the One Hundred Dharmas*; T no. 1836, 44) give the author's name as “Kuiji.” However, the former commentary is generally believed to be a forgery that was written after the death of Master Ci'en, and the second, although authentic, is based on a late Ming text, which was edited at a time when the name “Kuiji” was current. See Weinstein 1959, pp. 129–30.

¹⁴ See Tang 1982, pp. 153–54.

in Kānyakubja, India, he was given the laudatory name “Dasheng Tian” 大乘天 (Skt. Mahāyānadeva).¹⁵ After his return to China, Xuanzang added the honorific title “Dasheng” to the names of his disciples in order to highlight the orthodoxy of Mahayana Buddhism and to commemorate his success in India.¹⁶

According to the materials mentioned above, it seems clear that the single character *ji* is the correct rendering of Master Ci'en's original name. In addition, Saeki analyzed one passage from the *Chengweishi lun zhangzhong shuyao ji* 成唯識論掌中樞要記 (Record of the *Essentials of the Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only in the Palm of Your Hand*), where it is said that it became taboo to use the character for *ji* from the time of the reign of Emperor Kaiyuan Shenwu 開元神武 (r. 712–756) because one of his names, Longji 隆基, contains this character. Hence, “Dharma Master Ji” (Ji Fashi 基法師) had to be changed to “Dharma Master Ben” (Ben Fashi 本法師),¹⁷ probably because the character *ben* 本 has the same meaning as *ji* 基, that is, “foundation.” “Master Ben” in Chinese usually means “the, or this, master” without denoting any one specific individual. However, due to Master Ci'en's renown in the Tang period, it is possible that the title “the (or ‘this’) master” would not have been ambiguous or misleading at that time. This is similar to the Japanese use of *odaishi* お大師, “the master,” which usually refers to Kūkai 空海 (774–835), the founder of the Shingon 真言 school, and not to Buddhist masters in general.

We should note that although having the same title, the *Chengweishi lun zhangzhong shuyao ji* that is cited above is not the well-known sub-commentary by Zhizhou 智周 (668–723) on his teacher Master Ci'en's *Chengweishi lun zhangzhong shuyao* 成唯識論掌中樞要 (Essentials of the *Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only in the Palm of Your Hand*). Saeki deemed the authorship of the former to be unknown, and Weinstein assumed that the author was not a Chinese, but most likely a Japanese monk, although it was impossible to identify the author with the still meager information that was available at that time.¹⁸ However, at present, Japanese and Korean scholars now agree that this *Chengweishi lun zhangzhong shuyao ji*

¹⁵ See Xuanzang's *Datang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 (Record of Travels to Western Regions), T no. 2087, 51: 946b.

¹⁶ Weinstein suggested another reason for this “Mahayana” prefix: “The Ta-ch'êng probably signified that the disciple had received the Mahāyāna Precepts [Ta-ch'êng-chieh 大乘戒] set forth in the *Yogācāra-bhūmi* from Hsüan-stang” (Weinstein 1959, p. 131, n. 44).

¹⁷ See Saeki 1925, p. 21; and Kōfukuji 1982, pp. 134–35, 214–15.

¹⁸ See Weinstein 1959, pp. 126–27.

was written by the Silla 新羅 monk Ŭi Pin 義賓 (fl. mid. 8th c.), also known as Ŭi Yŏn 義演, who flourished about one or two hundred years later than the Tang Chinese monk Zhizhou.¹⁹

Another important clue given by Saeki is from the *Shōsan ki* 清算記 (Record of Shōsan). According to its colophon, this text was written on the seventeenth day of the eighth month of the year 984 in Dongjing 東京 (or Bianjing 汴京, modern Kaifeng 開封). The information in question is as follows: “The commentary master, surnamed Yuchi, named Kui, and styled himself as Hongdao.”²⁰

Saeki then pointed out that the single name “Kui” is not found anywhere else. Interestingly enough, when the above sentence was cited in the *Genjō sanzō shishiden sōsho* 玄奘三藏師資傳叢書 (Collection of Biographies of Tripiṭaka Master Xuanzang’s Lineage), collated by Saeki’s teacher, Saeki Jōin 佐伯定胤 (1867–1951), the one-hundred-and-third chief priest of Hōryūji, and Nakano Tatsue 中野達慧 (1871–1934), the key phrase “named Kui” (*hui Kui* 諱窺) was reedited and replaced by the phrase “named Ji” (*hui Ji* 諱基)!²¹

Saeki suggested that “Kui” might have been used mistakenly for “Ji” because of their similar pronunciations at the time, or, more likely, that the author Shōsan 清算 (1288–1362)—the Japanese monk who visited the Wutai 五台 Mountains in the early Song dynasty—was aware of the custom restricting the use of taboo characters in China, and thus chose to use a similarly pronounced “Kui” to replace “Ji.”

In his study of Chinese historical phonology, Wang Li 王力 reproduces the Tang pronunciation of 窺 as *kʰiwe*, and 基 as *kīə*,²² thus demonstrating that these are indeed quite similar. The Japanese pronunciation of these two characters as “Kiki” can also be adduced to support the fact that they had similar pronunciations in medieval China, despite their very different pronunciations, *kui* and *ji*, in contemporary Mandarin.

Furthermore, Saeki also noticed that most versions of the *Datang daci’ensi sanzang fashi zhuan* 大唐大慈恩寺三藏法師傳 (Biography of the Tripiṭaka Master of the Great Ci’en Monastery in the Great Tang Dynasty)—such as the xylographs of the Song, Yuan, and Ming periods that

¹⁹ For the Silla monk Ŭi Pin (Ŭi Yŏn), see Moro (2004) and his references to the studies of Korean scholars.

²⁰ 疏主大師。姓蔚遲。諱窺。字洪道。X no. 1651, 88: 382b11–12. Emphasis added. See Kōfukuji 1982, pp. 133, 214–15; Saeki 1925, p. 21.

²¹ See Saeki and Nakano, n.d., p. 89b.

²² See <http://xiaoxue.iis.sinica.edu.tw/ccr/#>, accessed October 15, 2019; and Li and Zhou 1993, pp. 42, 50.

were used for collating the Taishō canon—contain the name “Shengji” as in the following passage: “On the twenty-second day of the eleventh month, [Xuanzang] commanded his disciple Shengji 乘基 to submit the *Memorial [to the emperor]* to request an imperial preface for the sutra [i.e., the *Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom*].”²³

However, Saeki does note that “Shengji” was written as “Kuiji” in one manuscript of this biography as well as in the common versions of the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 開元釋教錄, the *Fahuaqing xuanzan yaoji*, and in other texts in which this very same sentence is quoted.²⁴

From this, Saeki Ryōken proposed that the original name in the *Datang daci'ensi sanzang fashi zhuan* should have been “Dasheng Ji” 大乘基 and that the character *da* 大 came to be omitted in the process of manuscript copying, so that we now merely have “Shengji.” While speculative, this conclusion may also be supported by the following passage from the longest classical biography of Maser Ci'en found in the *Song gaoseng zhuan* 宋高僧傳 (Song Biographies of Eminent Monks, 988) compiled by the Song-dynasty monk Zanning 贊寧 (920–1001) and others, and completed in the year 988:

Shi Kuiji 釋窺基. . . His name has been given in a number of different ways. In the *Biography of Ci'en*,²⁵ it says that “in the third year of Longshuo [663], Master Zang [that is, Xuanzang] finished the translation of the *Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom* in the Yuhua Palace. On the twenty-second day of the eleventh month of the same year, [Xuanzang] commanded his disciple Dasheng Ji 大乘基 to submit the *Memorial [to the Emperor]* to request an imperial preface for the sutra. On the seventh day of the twelfth month, the Interpreter-Secretary Feng Yi presented [the imperial preface].” Therefore, he is called “Lingji.”²⁶ The *Kaiyuan-Period Catalogue*

²³ 至十一月二十二日。令弟子乘基奉表奏聞。請御製經序。 (*Datang daci'ensi sanzang fashi zhuan*, T no. 2053, 50: 276b21–22). Emphasis added. See also Saeki 1925, p. 22.

²⁴ *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*: 至十一月二十二日。令弟子窺基奉表奏聞。 (T no. 2154, 55: 560c11–12); *Fahuaqing xuanzan yaoji*: 至十一月二十三日 (*sic*, 二十二日)。令弟子窺基奉表奏聞。 (X no. 638, 34: 178b1–2); *Zhenyuan xinding shijiao mulu* 貞元新定釋教目錄 (Zhenyuan New Catalogue of the Teachings of Śākyamuni): 至十一月二十二日。令弟子窺基奉表奏聞。 (T no. 2157, 55: 860c18–19). Emphasis added.

²⁵ The *Ci'en zhuan* 慈恩傳 (Biography of Ci'en) is an abbreviated title of the *Datang daci'ensi sanzang fashi zhuan*.

²⁶ It seems that *ling* 靈 here means *lingyan* 靈驗, “efficacious,” because Ji successfully received the imperial preface. *Ling* also has the meaning of “smart,” which is closer to the meaning of *hui* 慧.

[of the *Teachings of Śākyamuni*] uses “Kuiji” 窺基. [He] is also called “Shengji” 乘基, but [this is] incorrect. Although he should be called “Dasheng Ji” 大乘基, Huili and Yancong did not identify the entirety [of his name].²⁷ Therefore, he should be called “Dasheng Ji.”²⁸

In the end, Saeki concluded that Master Ci'en's original name was the single-character “Ji” and that, subsequently, the homophone *kui* was used in order to avoid using a character found in the Tang Emperor Longji's name. Thereafter, these two characters were combined so that the new name “Kuiji” was created, from which such aliases as “Huiji” 慧基 (Jp. Eiki) and “Lingji” 靈基 (Jp. Reiki) were derived.

Saeki also conclusively stated that the use of “Kuiji” (Jp. Kiki) that first occurred in the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* and its use in the *Fahuaqing xuanzan yaoji* were apocryphal. In addition, he argued that when composing the *Song gaoseng zhuan*, Zanning probably had the preconceived notion that both “Dasheng ji” and “Kuiji” can be abbreviated as “Ji.” Later Chinese Buddhist texts, such as the 1269 *Fozu tongji* 佛祖統記 (Chronicle of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs) of Zhipan 志磐 (n.d.) and the 1341 *Fozu lidai tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載 (A Comprehensive Registry of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs) of Nianchang 念常 (1282–1341), both have “Kuiji” as the full and formal name of Master Ci'en. We can see that, as a result, instead of “Ji” or “Dasheng Ji,” the two-character name “Kuiji” became much better known in academic circles in China and Japan.²⁹

The Problems with Saeki Ryōken's Analysis

The most notable feature of Saeki Ryōken's study is that almost all the materials he used were ancient manuscripts preserved in Japan between the Nara (714–794) and Kamakura (1185–1333) periods, that is, between

²⁷ Huili 慧立 (615–n.d.) and Yancong 彦悰 (fl. mid. 7th c.) are the composers of the *Datang daci'ensi sanzang fashi zhuan*.

²⁸ 釋窺基...名諱上字多出沒不同者，爲以《慈恩傳》中云「奘師，龍朔三年，於玉華宮譯《大般若經》終筆。其年十一月二十二日，令大乘基奉表奏聞，請御製序。至十二月七日，通事舍人馮義宣。」由此云靈基。《開元錄》爲窺基。或言乘基，非也。彼曰大乘基，蓋慧立彦悰不全斥，故云大乘基。T no. 2061, 50: 725b18–24. Emphasis added. See also Saeki 1925, p. 22.

²⁹ Weinstein asserted that modern reference works give the name “Kuiji” because scholars take their material solely from the problematic texts of the *Song gaoseng zhuan*. See Weinstein 1959, pp. 122, 130.

the eighth to fourteenth centuries. As the chief priest of Hōryūji, Saeki had access to one of the best Sino-Japanese Buddhist libraries in the world at the time, which included the so-called Hōryūji issaikyō 法隆寺一切經, one of the most important extant Chinese Buddhist canons. As a matter of fact, the two key pieces of evidence that Saeki adduces, that is, the phrases “Master Ben” and “named Kui,” can only be located in texts found in the Hōryūji issaikyō, namely, the *Chengweishi lun zhangzhong shuyao ji* and the *Shōsan ki*.

In addition, because different dynasties had different rules concerning the taboo surrounding the use of certain characters for names, one of Saeki’s conclusions may be questioned. As is well known, from the time of Emperor Taizong 太宗 (Li Shimin 李世民; r. 626–649) of Tang, the government did not strictly enforce these taboo regulations and, rather, often acted according to the *Liji* 禮記 (Book of Rites), where it states: “The rules do not require avoiding names that are merely similar in sound. When [an emperor or parent has] a double name, the avoidance of either character [used singly] is not required.”³⁰ Accordingly, when Longji 隆基 (r. 713–756) became the new emperor of the Tang (Emperor Xuanzong 玄宗) thirty years after Master Ci’en’s death, the use of the single character *ji* would have been allowed for the names of common people. For example, the famous poet Yuan Zhen 元稹 (779–831) once wrote in his *Lianchanggong ci* 連昌宮詞 (Poetry of the Lianchang Palace) the line: “The dance pavilion is tilted but the ground is still there,” which employs the character *ji*.³¹ Yuan Zhen did not, however, receive any punishment for using this character, which was also contained in the previous emperor’s name. Moreover, the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*—so titled because it was completed around 730 during the Kaiyuan period (713–741)—also used the same character. Similarly, Qifu in the late Tang period was able to write the name “Ji” in his *Fahua-jing xuanzan yaoji*. We can thus conclude that the use of the character *ji* in names such as Master Ci’en’s was not seen as violating taboo regulations from the time of the Kaiyuan and Tianbao 天寶 (742–756) periods through to the end of the Tang dynasty.

What is more important according to the principles of this taboo, though, is that because the character *ji* is left intact in the two-character name “Kuiji,” it would be meaningless to suggest that *kui* was used in order to avoid the use of the character found in Emperor Longji’s name. It was used together

³⁰ *Liji zhengyi* 2000, p. 100: 禮不諱嫌名，二名不偏諱。

³¹ See Peng et al. 1986, pp. 1023–24: 舞榭鼓傾基尚在。

with the supposedly taboo character *ji* and not as a substitute for it. There is thus no reason based on taboo regulations for inferring that Tang-dynasty authors would have used *kui* instead of *ji*, let alone created the entirely new name “Kuiji.” If the taboo regulations were to be enforced, one would expect to find names constructed according to its principles such as “Dasheng Kui” 大乘窺 and “Shamen Kui” 沙門窺 instead of “Dasheng Ji” and “Shamen Ji.”

In Saeki’s analysis, the key pieces of evidence—the phrases “Master Ben” and “named Kui”—were actually never recorded by Chinese monks. Rather, these were written by Japanese monks who had visited China. In addition, the ancient Japanese and Chinese manuscripts that Saeki adduced as evidence were neither personally inspected by Tang Yongtong, nor can they be further substantiated by other sources. Thus, Tang Yongtong merely introduced certain aspects of Saeki’s conclusions, namely, that only “Ji” is mentioned in inscriptions and other early materials but not “Kuiji,” and that the name “Kuiji” first occurred in the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*. However, it seems that Tang Yongtong intentionally did not mention Saeki’s new remark that “Kuiji” is an *incorrect* rendering of Master Ci’en’s original name. This indicates that Tang Yongtong most probably did not agree with Saeki on this point; on the contrary, he consistently used “Kuiji” as a *correct* and more common rendering of Master Ci’en’s name.

Two Proposals

As discussed above, most of the available texts from the Tang dynasty employ the name “Kuiji” when referring to the event of Master Ci’en submitting a memorial to the throne in 663 requesting an imperial preface for a sutra translation,³² despite there being a handful of texts that render “Kuiji” as “Sheng Ji” or “Dasheng Ji.” The *Datang gusanjang Xuanjang fashi xingzhuang*, for example, states that “[Xuanjang] commanded his disciple Kuiji to submit the *Memorial* to the emperor to request a preface for the

³² See, for example, the 688 *Datang gusanjang Xuanjang fashi xingzhuang* 大唐故三藏玄奘法師行狀 (Life of the Great Tang Late Tripiṭaka Master Xuanjang; T no. 2052, 50), written shortly after the death of Xuanjang in 664 by his disciple Mingxiang 冥詳 (n.d.), the 730 *Kaiyuan shijiao lu*, and the 877 *Fahua jing xuanzan yaoji*. Also, the *Fahua chuan ji* 法華傳記 (Record of the Propagation of the Lotus; T no. 2068, 51) by the Tang Dynasty monk Sengxiang 僧詳 (ca. 754) contains one of the earliest formal biographies of Master Ci’en that employs the name “Kuiji.” See T no. 2068, 51: 58a.

Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom.”³³ I would like to offer two proposals that seek to disentangle the various knots concerning the rendering of Master Ci'en's name and attempt to answer the question, “Whence came the name ‘Kuiji’?”

First, one must take into account the fact that changes often occur during the copying of manuscripts as well as in the transition from manuscript to printed text. It is true that the *Memorial* described above was first composed in the Tang period, but the versions handed down to premodern and modern scholars were no doubt collated and edited during the Song, Ming, and even Qing periods. That is to say, if we believe the statement that Xuanzang commanded his successor “Dasheng Ji” to submit the *Memorial* to the emperor to request an imperial preface, then during the course of copying and recopying, the character *da* was elided and the character *kui* was probably combined with *ji* or *shengji* resulting in the compound form “Kuiji.” This could have happened as early as the late Tang period if we accept the text of Qifu's *Fahuaqing xuanzan yaoji* which contains this compound form and is found in the *Hōryūji issaikyō* to be either an original, or a very early copy, brought by a Japanese monk who visited China during the Tang dynasty.

There are three likely reasons why *kui* and not another character could have made its appearance in the texts. First, it might have been due to the very similar pronunciation of *kui* (Jp. *ki*) and *ji* (Jp. *ki*) in medieval China. Second, the literal meaning of the name “Kuiji” is “[one who] glimpses (*kui* 窺) the foundation (*ji* 基) [of Buddhism].” This could be indicative either of the expected modesty of a great Buddhist scholar, or it might reflect an attempt by such opponents of Master Ci'en as Wōnch'ūk 圓測 (613–696) and his disciples, or by some other Chinese Buddhist schools, to ridicule him. That is, it could express a criticism suggesting that he merely *glimpses*, but does not understand deeply, the foundations of Buddhism. Further evidence of attempts to denigrate his status as a monk is found in the use of the derogatory title Sanche Heshang 三車和尚, or “Three-Cart Monk,” which was sometimes applied to Master Ci'en. This slanderous appellation was most likely later circulated by competing sects of Chinese Buddhism and has been well known since the time of Zanning's writings.³⁴ And, third, we

³³ See the *Datang gusanjang Xuanzang fashi xingzhuang*: 命窺基齋表。請聖上製大般若經序。(T no. 2052, 50: 219a3–4). Emphasis added.

³⁴ The two accounts of the “Three Carts” in the *Song gaoseng zhuan* are considered to be slanderous fabrications: (1) “Allow me three things, and I shall vow to become a monk who indulges in his passions, who eats meat and garlic, and who will have an afternoon meal.”

should at the same time also consider the development and influence of the trend toward disyllabic words in Chinese.³⁵ Two-character names gradually became more popular over the course of Chinese history. Zanning considered two-tone names to be the common rule as early as his *Song gaoseng zhuan*. This must have been one of the reasons he decided that the single character *ji* was an abbreviation of an original name “Kuiji,” rather than being itself the original name. As for the names “Huiji” 慧基 and “Lingji” 靈基, I would rather agree with Zanning that these were probably honorific forms of “Ji” in the Tang period, due to the pleasant meanings of the characters *hui* 慧, “intelligent,” and *ling* 靈, “efficacious,” and that these were not necessarily derived from “Kuiji” later on.³⁶

My second proposal is that the name “Kuiji” in the sentence “[Xuanzang] commanded his disciple Kuiji to submit the *Memorial* to the emperor” could actually be read as referring to two disciples, “Kui and Ji,” rather than to one person with a two-character name. That is to say, it is possible that two of Xuanzang’s disciples may have submitted his *Memorial* to the emperor Gaozong 高宗 (Li Zhi 李治; r. 649–683) and successfully received the imperial preface for the *Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom* in 663 when one of them, that is, Master Ci’en, or Ji, was thirty-one years of age. What is more, the textual source of the event itself, the *Memorial* (*Qingyuzhi daborejing xu biao*), has the single name “Kui.”³⁷ Saeki also found the single name “Kui” (Jp. Ki) in Shōsan’s note of 984.³⁸

Weinstein also believes that the name “Kuiji” is the result of some confusion, though not that of two names applied to the same person at different times which later became fused into one, but rather the confusion of the

(聽我三事方誓出家。不斷情欲葷血過中食也; T no. 2061, 50: 725c4–6); and (2) “On the way to Taiyuan to propagate the Dharma, he had three carts. In the first cart were boxes of sutras and *sāstras*; he himself rode in the second cart; and in the third cart were his family entertainers, female servants, and favorite delicacies.” (行至太原傳法。三車自隨。前乘經論箱帙。中乘自御。後乘家妓女僕食饌; T no. 2061, 50: 726a19–20.)

³⁵ For the development of disyllabic words in Chinese, see Dong 2011.

³⁶ See T no. 2061, 50: 726b18.

³⁷ The text, included in the *Sishamen Xuanzang shangbiao ji*, reads: 謹遣弟子窺奉表以聞 (T no. 2119, 52: 826c7–8). Emphasis added.

³⁸ Weinstein stated there is another text that contains the single name “Kui”—a postscript added to fasc. 348 of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sutra*, which is not found in any of the canonical editions of this sutra, but survives in a Tang-period manuscript of the sutra owned by Hōryūji. It is also said to be found in a manuscript version of this sutra in the possession of Onkōji 園光寺, wherein the name “Kui” appears separately from the name “Ji.” See Weinstein 1959, pp. 132–33. However, I have not been able to gain access to these texts.

names of two distinct disciples of Xuanzang, one a totally unknown Kui and the other Xuanzang's successor Ji. The former appears in connection with the *Prajñāpāramitā Sutra* (Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom), which is doctrinally unrelated to Master Ci'en, while the latter name appears in connection with Yogācāra writings.³⁹

The assumption of two different disciples, however, is no more than a hypothesis, since references to the so-called "unknown" disciple Kui cannot be found anywhere else by searching the CBETA database.⁴⁰ I would thus rather be inclined to agree with Lü Cheng's conclusion that the name "Kui" was added to the original name "Ji" by "people of the Song period." Although his thesis does not appear to be based on any textual evidence, it is a safe and reasonable one. Zanning, the creative author of the *Song gaoseng zhuan*, is certainly one of these "people of the Song period," but many other unknown transcribers, engravers, and others also undoubtedly played important roles in the transmission of the relevant texts discussed above.

Concluding Remarks

It is the name "Kuiji" that has found currency in China and Japan for more than one thousand years. It is thus a matter of fact that his original name "Ji" had been replaced by the so-called "incorrect" name "Kuiji." Nevertheless, the use of the word "incorrect" to describe the name "Kuiji" is rather misleading, as its use for over one thousand years has also been an important part of Buddhist history.

My answer to the question raised in the title of this essay, that is, "Whence came the name 'Kuiji' instead of just 'Ji,'" may be summarized in the following three points:

1. It is true that there was not an original character preceding *ji*. That is, Master Ci'en's original name was only "Ji." In addition, in the name "Dasheng Ji," "Dasheng" is an honorific prefix, and thus, "Shengji" is not a correct appellation.
2. Saeki Ryōken was most probably the first scholar to point out that "Kuiji" is an "incorrect" rendering of Master Ci'en's name. His observation has been prevalent in the Japanese academy since the late 1970s, but this has not been fully accepted by those in Chinese aca-

³⁹ See Weinstein 1959, pp. 132–33.

⁴⁰ CBETA: <http://cbetaonline.dila.edu.tw>, accessed October, 17, 2019.

demic circles. Chinese scholars still prefer to use “Kuiji” as the most common name for Master Ci’en.

3. Due to the very similar pronunciation of *kui* and *ji* in medieval China, and to the fact that the literal meaning of the name “Kuiji” indicates either the modesty of a great Buddhist or, perhaps, criticism of him by his opponents, the name “Kuiji” was created perhaps as early as the late Tang period and certainly by the Song. Furthermore, the influence of and trend toward the use of Chinese disyllabic words has contributed to the widespread acceptance and use of the new name “Kuiji” since the time of the Song period.

ABBREVIATIONS

- T *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經. 85 vols. Ed. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡辺海旭. Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–32.
- X *Shinsan dainihon zoku zōkyō* 新纂大日本續藏經. 90 vols. Ed. Kawamura Kōshō 河村孝照, Nishi Yoshio 西義雄, and Tamaki Kōshirō 玉城康四郎. Tokyo: Kokusho Kankōkai, 1975–89. CBETA electronic edition (version 5.3, October 6, 2016).

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- Bian zhongbian lun* 辨中邊論 (Treatise on the Distinction between the Middle and the Extremes). T no. 2131, 54.
- Chengweishi lun* 成唯識論 (**Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi-śāstra*; Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only). T no. 1585, 31.
- Chengweishi lun houxu* 成唯識論後序 (Postscript to the *Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only*). Composed by Shen Xuanming 沈玄明. T no. 1585, 31.
- Chengweishi lun zhangzhong shuyao* 成唯識論掌中樞要 (Essentials of the *Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only* in the Palm of Your Hand). Composed by Ji. T no. 1831, 43.
- Chengweishi lun zhangzhong shuyao ji* 成唯識論掌中樞要記 (Record of the *Essentials of the Discourse on the Theory of Consciousness-Only* in the Palm of Your Hand). Attributed to Ūi Pin 義賓 (Ūi Yōn 義演). X no. 810, 49. See also the photographic reproductions and

- the transcriptions given in Kōfukuji Yakushiji Jion Daishi Mie Shūei Kankōkai 1982, pp. 134–35, 214–15.
- Dasheng baifa mingmen lun jie* 大乘百法明門論解 (Commentary on the *Lucid Introduction to the One Hundred Dharmas*). Composed by Ji. T no. 1836, 44.
- Datang daci'ensi sanzang fashi zhuan* 大唐大慈恩寺三藏法師傳 (Biography of the Tripitaka Master of the Great Cī'en Monastery in the Great Tang Dynasty). Composed by Huili 慧立, and edited by Yancong 彦惊. T no. 2053, 50.
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- Datang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 (Record of Travels to Western Regions). Composed by Xuanrang. T no. 2087, 51.
- Fahua chuan ji* 法華傳記 (Record of the Propagation of the Lotus). Composed by Sengxiang 僧詳 (ca. 754). T no. 2068, 51.
- Fahuaqing xuanrang yaoji* 法華經玄贊要集 (Essence of the *Glorification of the Lotus Sutra*). Composed by Qifu 棲复. X no. 638, 43. Also known as the *Jingshui chao* 鏡水抄 (Selections from Jingshui).
- Fozu lidai tongzai* 佛祖歷代通載 (A Comprehensive Registry of the Buddhas and the Patriarchs). Composed by Nianchang 念常 (1282–n.d.). T no. 2036, 49.
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- Kaiyuan shijiao lu* 開元釋教錄 (Kaiyuan-Period Catalogue of the Teachings of Śākyamuni). Composed by Zhisheng 智昇 (669–740). T no. 2154, 55.
- Liji zhengyi* 禮記正義 (Orthodox Explanations of the *Book of Rites*). Composed by Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200). Edited by Shisanjing Zhushu Zhengli Weiyuanhui 十三經註疏整理委員會. 2000. Beijing: Peking University Press.
- Shōsan ki* 清算記 (Record of Shōsan). Composed by Shōsan 清算. X no. 1651, 88. See also the photographic reproductions and the transcriptions given in Kōfukuji Yakushiji Jion Daishi Mie Shūei Kankōkai 1982, pp. 133, 213–14.
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