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IN THIS ISSUE

Irina F. Popova	•
To the Blessed Memory of Professor Kychanov	3
Kirill Bogdanov A Portrait of State Preceptor Xibi Baoyuan: Case Study of Identification	10
Viacheslav Zaytsev, Chung-pui Tai Nikolai Nevsky, Ishihama Juntarō, and the Lost "Extended Manual" of Tangut Characters with Tibetan Phonetic Glosses	18
Nikita Kuzmin	
Pilgrimage in Western Xia: Research on Tangut Wall Inscriptions in the Mogao and Yulin Caves	49
Arakawa Shintaro The Tangut Dictionary by E.I. Kychanov and the Study of the Shapes of the Tangut Script	63
Nie Hongyin, Sun Yingxin The <i>Mixed Homonymic Characters</i> : Procedures for Primary Teaching as Recommended by the Tanguts	77
Sun Bojun	107
Tangut-Chinese Elements in the 12th Century Dialect of Hexi	107
Wang Peipei New Translations of Some Tangut Words	124
Chung Tsui-fun	
A Study on the Chinese Manuscript "Eight Gross Transgressions" (Bazhong Cuzhong Fanduo 八種粗重犯墮) from Khara-Khoto	136
Zhang Jiuling The Preface to the <i>Shiwang Jing</i> : An Early Legend of Revival	150
Kong Xianghui Kychanov's Study of the <i>Tiansheng Law</i> from the Perspective of Vocabulary Translation and Interpretation	163
Li Yu	
A Study of the Fragment Инв. No.7887-1 as a Supplement to <i>Tiansheng lüling</i>	176
Ma Xiaofang On the Tangut Version of the <i>Abhisamayālamkāra</i> Series Preserved at the IOM RAS	185
Meng Xia, Natalia Tsareva E.I. Kychanov's Translation of the "Revised and Newly Approved Code of the Heavenly Prosperity Reign" in the Context of the Development of Modern Translation Studies	195
ON THE COVER: A page from the newly discovered Tangut xylograph <i>Essential Selection</i> of Mixed Homonyms Often-Transmitted. Private collection.	

Arakawa Shintaro

The Tangut Dictionary by E.I. Kychanov and the Study of the Shapes of the Tangut Script

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Abstract: The late Professor, Dr. Evgeny Ivanovich Kychanov not only created a solid academic foundation for the research on history, society, law, and religion of Xixia, but also made a significant contribution to the study of the Tangut language and script. One of them is the *Tangut Dictionary* (Kyoto University, 2006). The author, as a co-editor of the dictionary, typed Tangut characters in the special font, checked phonetic-reconstruction forms, and worked on the arrangement of the characters in the index. Although the dictionary's method to find the character index is unique, it is useful for the study of the shapes of the Tangut script from the viewpoint of current research. The author discusses some topics from the viewpoint of linguistics.

Key words: Tangut script, Tangut language, Tangut lexicography, Tangut dictionary, E.I. Kychanov

1. Tangut language and script

1.1 Tangut language

The Xixia (Tangut) dynasty¹ occupied a dominant position in the northwestern part of China (1038–1227). Many Tangut documents written in the Tangut script are Buddhist documents.² After the extinction of the dynasty, however, the Tangut language and script³ were in use until the 16th c. Tangut belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family and is the most northwestern of the Tibeto-Burman languages. Although Tangut seems

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¹ See KYCHANOV 1968 and so on for the general history of Xixia.

² See KYCHANOV 1982 and so on for the Buddhism of Xixia.

 $^{^3}$ See NISHIDA 1989 and GONG 2003 for Tangut language, and see NISHIDA 2001 for Tangut script. See NIE 2021 for both of them.

to be close to Rgyalrongic, there is no confirmed language that is a direct descendant of Tangut.

Continued research by scholars in Russia, China, Japan, and other countries in the 20th c. revealed phonological and grammatical properties of Tangut. Decoding the language with extremely high accuracy was made possible by the existence of multilingual diacritical materials such as Chinese, Tibetan, and Sanskrit, in addition to the discovery of many kinds of rhyme dictionaries and syllabic tables based on "Tangut phonology" modeled after Chinese phonology. Tangut has interesting grammatical phenomena, directional prefixes, and pronominal suffixes that are not found even in Old Tibetan and Burmese.

1.2. Tangut script

The Tangut script 西夏文字 was created to represent the Tangut language and was promulgated in the name of *Li Yuanhao* 李元昊 in 1036. At this time, various new "Sinoform scripts 疑似漢字" were invented in northern and northwestern China, such as Khitan, Tangut, and Jurchen scripts. These scripts, which were similar to yet different from the Chinese writing system, played an important role in each culture.

Numerous Tangut documents of different kinds were unearthed from the *Khara-Khoto* ruins 黑水城. During the Tangut rule, Buddhist sutras⁴ were systematically translated and were circulated by means of a number of printed books and not a few manuscripts.⁵ While the Chinese classics were translated, a Tangut-Chinese bilingual glossary, original regal Tangut codes⁶, collections of poems, rhyme dictionaries⁷ and so on were compiled at the same time. It has been confirmed that approximately 6,000 Tangut characters were produced. This script continued to be used for several hundred years after the fall of the dynasty. The last written material has been confirmed to bear the date of the 15th year of *Hongwu* 洪武 (1502) in the *Ming* period. Later the Tangut script has become extinct.

⁴ See KYCHANOV ed. 1999 for the catalogue of the Tangut Buddhist documents in Russia.

⁵ See GORBACHËVA & KYCHANOV 1963 for the catalogue of the Tangut non-Buddhist documents in Russia. And see KYCHANOV 1988 and so on for the Tangut manuscripts.

⁶ See KYCHANOV 1987–89 for the Tangut famous codes, *Tiansheng* codex.

 $^{^{7}}$ See KYCHANOV 1995 for the study on the Tangut rhyme dictionary, *Wenhai baoyun* 文海寶韻.

2. The structure of Tangut script and indexes in previous studies

2.1. The structure of Tangut script

Although the Tangut script is influenced by Chinese characters, the glyph shapes are not congruent. However, the principle of glyph creation based on the concept of the main component might be considered an imitation of the "radical 部首" of a Chinese character.

Like Chinese characters, Tangut script characters can be divided into basic components such as the left part 偏 or the right part 旁, and their manner of composition is *huiyi* 會意 (compound ideographs) and *xingsheng* 形聲 (combining semantic and phonetic components). However, the composition *huisheng* 會聲 (combining phonetic components) is also popular.

Type of compounds

Chinese characters have "names of parts according to their position" such as the left part *pian* 偏, the right part *pang* 旁, the upper part *guan* 冠, and so on. Although the shapes of the Tangut script are different from those of Chinese characters, this "part by position" can be used to analyze the shapes.

⁸ In this paper, the reconstruction form follows ARAKAWA 2014 (+ rhyme number in Tangut phonology) and meanings of words are given by the author, although the dictionary originally used Sofronov's system (based on SOFRONOV 1968) and word meanings by Kychanov.

Type of disposition patterns

(ARAKAWA 2022a: 96)

2.2. Indexes in previous studies

Rhyme dictionaries of the time separated and arranged Tangut characters by phonetic properties. Although it is certain that Tangut radicals were recognized at that time, no material has been found that arranged characters by their radicals. On the other hand, for modern people who find it difficult to search for Tangut characters by pronunciation, an index to search for them by glyph shape is essential. In modern dictionaries, a "glyph index" is added based on a researcher's analysis. The most common is a system in which Tangut characters are categorized by "radical" and "other" and then further arranged according to the number of strokes.

Analysis of the main part and other

The shape and number of strokes of the "radical" do not match among researchers.

(4 strokes) in NISHIDA 1966: 366, LI 2008: 1043.

3. The Tangut Dictionary by E.I. Kychanov and the index

3.1. The history of the dictionary's publication

The late Professor, Dr. Evgeny Ivanovich Kychanov not only created an important research foundation in the historical, social, legal, and religious studies of Xixia, but also made a great contribution to the study of the Tangut language and script. Prominent among them is his *Tangut Dictionary* (Kyoto University, 2006). Here, we look again at this dictionary, an important achievement of Kychanov. The author will show that elements of its organization, especially the index, make it useful in current research.

Here is a brief history of the publication of the Tangut dictionary. In the 1990s, Kychanov and the late Professor Dr. Nishida Tatsuo came up with a plan to edit and publish the *Catalogue of Tangut Buddhist documents in the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences*. At the time, the author participated in the project as an "academic reviewer" ("издание подготовлено", i.e. "подготовка издания", lit. "preparation of the publication"). Actually, the author was in charge of assisting in the input of handwritten glyphs by Kychanov, checking Russian reconstructed forms of Tangut, and writing fair Tangut characters. At that time, there was no practical Tangut font in Japan, so writing by hand was the only option.

In 1999 and 2000, the author stayed in Saint Petersburg to research the Tangut versions of the *Vajracchedikā-prajñāpāramitā sūtra* and wrote his doctoral dissertation. After that, the author entered the Research Institute for Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies and began research career in Tokyo. At that time, a joint research project was launched again between Russia and Japan. This is Kychanov's *Tangut Dictionary*.

Just like in cataloging, he asked the author to input text in his manuscript, check the reconstructed forms, and "write all Tangut characters by hand." However, the handwritten version was expected to be very difficult, so the author instead used the Japanese-made "Konjaku Mojikyo" Tangut font. This dictionary was highly appreciated in Japan and received the 2nd Ritsumeikan University "East Asian Characters and Culture" Award in memory of the late Professor Shirakawa Shizuka (September 2007).

3.2. Index of the dictionary

In this dictionary, the index and method for arranging Tangut characters are very unique. In short, the characters are arrayed "from the last element of a character back to the first element." Tangut characters can be analyzed by elements, as in these examples. For example, in his index, the elements in boxes become heads.



This dictionary consists of a preface, a description of the dictionary entries, a list of abbreviations, indexes, and the main part. The index consists of a "parts index" and an "index of all characters." The former index divides all character parts into four parts: A the bottom part, B the right part, C the left and bottom part⁹ and D the encircling part.

A: , B: , C: , D:

Within each section, parts are roughly arranged from simple to structurally complex glyphs. Each part is assigned a three-digit classification number.

In B series, B001 [], B002 [], B003 []... B001: 0097-0 即, 0098-0 颏, 0099-0 纐... B002: 0213-0 溆, 0214-0 颏, 0215-0 젟... B003: 0218-0 紤, 0219-0 衲, 0220-0 衦...

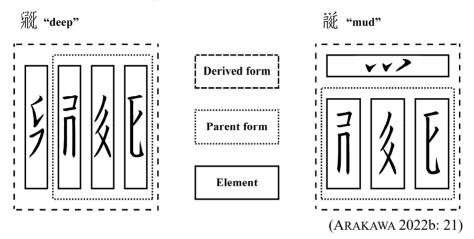
⁹ It is a rare index for searching Tangut characters in which C type is a stand-alone headline (ARAKAWA 2022b: 24).

4. Study of the Tangut script shapes using Kychanov's index

4.1. Derivations of the Tangut characters

New forms of Tangut characters are derived from "parent forms" with different elements.

Structure of the Tangut characters



As far as the author can see, there still seems to be a little figurative study of the derivation of the Tangut characters.

In Tangut, different syllables are usually written in different characters, even though the syllables are derived from the same word.

On the other hand, sometimes the derived forms are clearly shown by "derivational" elements.

In a very rare case, we can also confirm an example showing inflection of a verb stem in a glyph derivation.

e.g. "to get"

	verb stemA	verb stemB
Level tone	蓷 ¹ ri:r 1.79	羅 ¹ ryor 1.90
Raising tone	ਜ ² ri:r 2.72	龗 ² ryor 2.81
		(NISHIDA 2012: 422 etc.)

We distinguish two types of derivative elements:

Type A: What were originally "semantic components 意符" of something were diverted for derivation.

Type B: They were created specifically for derivation, neither "semantic" nor "phonetic" components.

Some representative examples are,

A1: $\stackrel{\text{\tiny H}}{=}$, A2: \checkmark and B1: $\stackrel{\text{\tiny D}}{=}$, B2: $\stackrel{\text{\tiny D}}{=}$

A1: originally a radical of "plant"

藏¹shi: 1.11 "tree", 蔬¹tsiq' 1.68 "tea", 蔬²ga:' 2.21 "pole"

Sometimes it functions as a derivative part without the meaning "plants"

The element makes synonyms but is essentially unrelated to the derivation of words, such as inflection.

A2: originally a radical of "act of a person" It functions as various types of derivations.

a. Word derivation type: Initial alternation

找 ² ba: 2.17 "to cut off (Vi)"	狱 ¹ pha: 1.20 "to cut off (Vt)"
ぎ ¹ jo:n 1.56 "to part (Vi)"	懘 ¹ cho:n 1.56 "to part (Vt)"

b. Word derivation type: Lax-tense alternation?

B1 functions as just a derivative element

This is the most productive of the elements considered derivative-only.

a. Word derivation type: Lax-tense alternation

b. Word derivation type: Tone alternation

戮 ¹ li:' 1.14 "trouser (n)"	
$ _{2} _{1} zi:q 1.67 $ "shoes (n)"	$ \overline{g}^{2}$ zi:q 2.60 "to put on shoes (v)"

B2 also makes many derivative characters.

覈 ²mir "to deceive" \Rightarrow 巅 ²lha:q "to deceive"

However, there are few examples of phonological relationships between basic characters and derived characters.

4.2. Study of the shapes of the Tangut script using Kychanov's index

When conducting research on derived forms, it is actually useful to be able to search by the parent form rather than by the element for derivation.

A great dictionary published recently by the Chinese scholar, Han Xiaoman, has several different indexes.¹⁰ In one of them, Tangut characters are classified by the part on the "right" and arranged in stroke order. First, the rightmost part becomes a head, and the characters are arranged in the order of the number of strokes including it.

RR36111

In fact, the rightmost element may not correspond to a radical, but may be an element of a radical. For example, in the following characters, although the part $|\hat{A}|$ is a radical, the part | is the headline.

紭, 敽, 飘, 敽, 飘, 縠 ...

For more complex glyphs, parent forms are less likely to be the headline. For example, the following characters which are all glyphically correlated, are arranged in completely different places because the total number of strokes is different in Han's dictionary.

 $^{^{10}\,}$ HaN 2021 is a great book in nine volumes and the last volume is an index of several different kinds. See the review on the volume: ARAKAWA 2022c.

¹¹ For example, (12) means "12 strokes including the radical".

ှ 梵 (14) Ⅲ-41 2.74 -jar ①672	前緒 (10) WI70 2.12 tśjii ③409	@\$ ` @\$` `
/ / / / / Ⅲ-41 2.74 -jar	祥都(10) I 142 1.68 mp ⑥137) 孫 (07) Ⅱ32 1.69 wjŧ ①203
(萒前 (10) VI35 1.36 tshjij ⑥228	薌 (10) Ⅷ _{切前} 1.82 tśjar ①182
蔬(15)Ⅲ91 2.77 djir ③152	孫梢 (11) Ⅲ34 1.20 tja ⑦35	荔 (11) IX78 1.6 źjuu ③67
戴 (18) I 28 2.33 mjij ⑦530	췌 (11) V _{切的} 1.23 kjaa	
RR158	(44之异体字) ⑤316	諾 (12) VI-108 1.24 tshã ③70
計 (05) VI86 1.30 tsjii ⑥169	��梢(11) V-133 2.48 kjow	滅(12) VI-59 1.17 tshwa
	⑦123	
	前前 (11) Ⅲ111 2.63 niọ ⑦217	(
萧(07) V73 1.54 khow ⑧248		臟 (12) IX-? 2.81 -jor ①205
萧 (08) IX-? 1.8 ze ⑧383	K (11) ₩92 2.42 ·o	荔(12) VI-59 1.17 tshwa
112	() () () () () () () () () ()	
第 (09) Ⅲ-29 1.26 dźjwa ③51	襚 (11) Ⅷ92 2.42 ⋅₀ ⑦254	①102
萧 (12) I-41 1.86 bjir ⑧593	猶 (11) Ⅲ-148 2.55 tjij ⑦368	薪 (12) VI112 2.1 dzu ⑤394
6017	췌 (12) V _{切約} 1.23 kjaa ⑤324	櫹 (12) VI86 1.30 tsji ②266
講 (06) IX15 1.11 zji ①44	İ (12) Ⅲ95 1.24 tā ⑧86	蔬(13) IX8 2.14 la ③94
(107) I 50 1.23 mjaa ①213	藏 (13) V 187 2.56 kha ③27	鏛 (13) V123 2.28 kji ④420
3浦 (07) VI36 1.42 tshjij ①530	节約 (13) IX 192 1. 24 lā ⑧336	満 (14) Ⅶ-28 2.43 -io ③133
科 (08) I 29 1.49 po ②7	都 (13) IX40 2.27 lji ⑧355	蔬 (14) VI34 2.33 tshjij ③139
X計 (08) W196 1.28 dźiə ②565	麓 (13) I-4 2.46 bioo ④406	蕭 (14) 119 1.17 ya ⑧190
洲 (08) ₩133 1.4 yu ①544	翻 (14) I 29 1.49 po ⑦111	5 鎌 (14) Ⅲ-4 2.22 thwā ①672
甬، (09) Ⅲ31 1.61 tjij ③216	齡前 (14) VI-100 1.12 tswee	鄾 (17) ₩161 1.21 dźjwaa
瓦靖 (09) V81 2.61 kji ③259	(8)484	2450

(HAN 2021, vol. 9: 152–153)

In Kychanov's index, on the other hand, these characters are placed consecutively.

1407-0 統 1408-0 統 1409-0 滅 1410-0 滅(→) 1411-0 魏 1412-0 森 (KYCHANOV 2006: 30)

There are many other examples like this in Kychanov's index.

7#				
7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7				
20 (17) V-22 2.5 khuu ⑦459 📈 (11) W-182 (声韵不详)				
双 (18) WI24 (声调不详) dzji ① fa				
⑧181 税 (12) V131 1.16 kjwi ⑤3				
廣 (15) Ⅸ-? 1.14 lhjii ②448 靗 (12) ₩-134 1.38 śieej	戦 (12) V 13 2.51 ku ⑧147			
	WM (12) 1102 1.20 (sja (1917)			
$ 1409 \qquad 13) V-101 2.44 g 34 $				
蘧 (19) K21 1.49 lo ①477 1 (13) K92 2.70 rjur ③4	-			
RR2 部 [4] (13) \184 1. 19 xja ⑧4				
	# (***			
$\frac{1}{2}$				
X (06) Ⅲ137 1.52 noo ⑥225	<u> </u> 刻 (09) IX27 2.38 lhew ①422			
$\ \underline{\beta} \ (07)$ I 46 1.36 pjij ①213 $\ \underline{\beta} \ (08)$ V 140 1.78 kier ④5				
$ \begin{array}{c ccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$				
)70 (
灵 (07) V114 2.28 khjwi	閬 (11) Ⅶ37 1.19 śjwa ②236			
(7)473				
)38 (新 (12) Ⅲ18 2.12 njii ④315			
前 (09) I 60 2. 17 bja ⑤286 (12) IX 146 2. 35 ljiij ③3				
倂 (09) W152 1.69 śji ②158 姒 (12) IX146 2.35 ljiij	閬 (12) Ⅶ-70 1.55 śiow ②277			
	()# (-=) + 1 ()***			
献 (09) WI-157 1.53 šioo 絺 (13) V-53 1.79 gjir ④3	379 靪 (13) Ⅱ 25 2.30 wej ⑤18			
3527	蒗 (13) IX112 2.14 la ④395			
$ \frac{1}{4} \left(\begin{array}{c} 10 \end{array} \right) \ 10^{-137} \ 2.64 \ \text{tj}_{0} \ 72 \ 10^{-7} \ 1$	VA (12) 1 00 2:20 Midd @011			
前 (10) VIT70 2.12 tšjii ⑤312 前 (08) IX140 1.20 lhja ②5	(X) (15) 112 1.05 KINI (10)			
刻 (10) V-49 1.44 khiew Ī刻 (09) Ⅷ-46 1.79 ·jir ③2	237			
⑦350 新祝(09) III-168 2.34 neej	蒙 (15) I 152 2.12 phjii ⑤129			
靜 (10) I-103 1.32 phj# ①1	163 孩(15) \M81 1.56 dźjwow			
	(4)508			
【 (11) Ⅶ-5 1.34 śiwej ⑤186 (桃 (10) Ⅲ-6 1.26 djā ⑥1	178 刻 (16) Ⅲ45 2.33 njij ⑧47			
	⁷⁾⁴			
稱 (11) I 111 2.56 pạ ⑤322 🕅 (11) III 142 2.29 njii ⑥)18 * * *			
	(HAN 2021, vol. 9: 102)			

73_____

0154-0 Ř 0155-0 Ř 0156-0 Ř 0157-0 新 0158-0 Ř

(KYCHANOV 2006: 12)

The dictionary is useful not only due to the index showing correlations of components, but also due to the explanation of the characters whether the correlation is by "meaning" or "pronunciation." We can immediately see the derivation by meaning and the derivation by pronunciation. Just by looking at the same page and knowing the pronunciation and meaning, we can understand the derivation of characters as follows:

0053-0 茶 vie 2.9 "низ; 0055-0 tho 2.42 "подошва (у дно; основание", "bottom; base", "底". обуви)", "sole of the boot (of shoes)", "靴底". 0056-0 уд vie 2.9 "хозяин", "master; owner", "主人". (KYCHANOV 2006: 99) 4311-0 4313-0 201 'a 2.14 "служебное ngın 1.36 "горный поток; слово; на; y; в; c;", "grammatical word; in; ущелье", "valley; mountain stream gorge; from", "虚詞; 中; 於; 從". ravin", "川; 岩; 谷". 4314-0 额 4315-0 御 iei 2.60 "вытягивать; ? ? "удлинять; растягивать", "stretch", "張". растягивать; долгие гласные", "stretch; widen; make longer; long vowel", "長; 引; 延". 4318-0 播 4317-0 "знамя", ngiwe 1.14 ngi 2.10"знамя", "banner", "旗". "banner", "旗".

(KYCHANOV 2006: 608–609)

75-

The dictionary is useful for investigating the function of the derivationonly elements shown earlier.

In conclusion, the index is still useful for investigating and studying derivation relationships for Tangut characters.

Unfortunately, this dictionary has been neither put into an electronic platform nor revised as the second edition. However, ideas such as the arrangement of Tangut script components will continue to be useful. In the future, research focusing on the derivation of Tangut characters and the index for searching characters are expected.

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