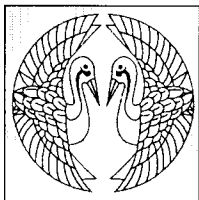


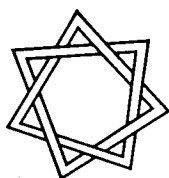
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TEXTS AND MANUSCRIPTS: DESCRIPTION AND RESEARCH

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TANGUT BUDDHIST BOOKS: CUSTOMERS, COPYISTS, AND EDITORS

In the colophons of Tangut-language books from the dead city of Khara Khoto, references have survived to more than 400 people involved in ordering Buddhist books, copying them, editing (collating) them, or carving boards for woodcut editions. An analysis of this information is of interest not only to specialists, but to all scholars who study the processes by which manuscripts and early print materials were created the world over.

In the course of working on this paper, the author studied over 160 references to customers, 125 references to copyists, 10 references to carvers and 14 to editors (collators), who are mentioned in the Tangut materials found in Khara Khoto. In the form of brief information about the social and professional status of these people we have first-hand data about those individuals who made possible the appearance of Buddhist books in the Tangut (Xi Xia) language.

It is known that Buddhist books from Khara Khoto in the Tangut language belong entirely to the time of the Tangut state of Xi Xia (982—1227). There are no books in P. K. Kozlov's collection which date from the Yuan dynasty or from the beginning of the Ming dynasty. The earliest Buddhist book among those dated is from 1084; the latest is from 1222. Although texts which date from 1226 have been discovered in the famous *suburgan*, the major source for the collection, it is generally accepted that the construction of the *suburgan* dates to 1222 or a little bit later. Buddhist books were placed there during the burial of a distinguished person. It is possible that various non-Buddhist books made their way to the *suburgan* later, under threat of invasion by Chingiz Khan; such books were placed above the burial site and the Buddhist books. This is possibly the reason why P. K. Kozlov asserted that in the placement of books in the *suburgan* he observed chaos (above) as well as strict order (below).

In all likelihood, a woman was buried in the Khara Khoto *suburgan*. L. N. Menshikov holds that this could be the empress Lo, a Chinese woman, widow of the well-known emperor Ren-xiao. She allegedly found herself in exile in Khara Khoto after his death. We have no information on empress Lo's exile from the capital, and the assumption of L. N. Menshikov, if tempting, requires addi-

tional argumentation. Empress Lo is mentioned only twice in Tangut texts. On a folio of the *sūtra Fo shuo chāngāhan jīng* we find a stamp in red vermilion which contains the following: “Dedicated to the task of teaching pure truth, the widow empress Lo of the Great state [of the descendants of those who came from] the White Heights. She made an addition to the already existing Great *Tripitaka* in the Tangut language. The newly copied [*sūtra*] is located in the monastery's archive of *sūtras*. Heavenly prosperity unto the ages upon what is read and those who make sacrifices”. The xylograph edition of the *sūtra* titled *Ren wang hu go boruo bolomido jing* indicates that this *sūtra* was distributed by the empress Lo in 1194. This is, in our view, still insufficient basis to claim that empress Lo was buried in the *suburgan*.

It is well known that participation in the reproduction of Buddhist canonical texts was recognized as a service which improved the believer's *karma*. For this reason, the customer was the central figure on the every-day level of distributing Buddhist books. His money made possible the acquisition of paper, brushes (*qalam*), and Indian ink; he paid for the work of copyists. The customer had to be a man of means, although we have references to orders for a single *juan* of *sūtra* submitted by a group of people, or orders for a copy of a section or half of a *juan*. References to many customers consist only of their names. There is also a sufficient number of cases where we learn about the social position of the customer. (We do not discuss here the emperors of Xi Xia as customers of copies and editions, or the distribution of *sūtras* to the population).

Thus, we find the following among customers: monks — 31 persons (slightly less than half of all customers). Among them: 6 persons who left their families (it is said of one of them that he left his family at age 12); 5 *śramaṇas*; 4 followers of *dhyāna*; 2 hermits; 1 *āyusman*; 2 nuns; 1 person “accepting orders” in the administration of Buddhist *saṅgha*; 1 prior; 1 “expert in texts”; 1 “student of the pure faith”

Among those customers about whom we learn more, one seventh are women. Aside from nuns, they were: 8 individuals simply called “lady”; 1 lady with the title *fu ren* (madame); 1 “woman of faith”.

A significant number of the customers are simply called “virtuous people” (cf. Chin. *shan ren* 善人) — fervent Buddhists, monks and lay-people who observe all the precepts of the faith. Degrees of virtue were designated as follows: those beginning a virtuous way of life, “those entering into virtue”, “those approaching virtue”, those who have “some virtue”, and “friends of virtue”. Clearly, the term “virtuous” and phrases “virtuous man”, “virtuous man of faith”, “virtuous son” designated individuals who had attained virtue. The most successful in virtuous deeds were “those who create virtue”, as well as “those who increase virtue”. 24 customers are mentioned as “virtuous” in some context. We cite examples of their

titles: “one who has approached virtue, a guide” (a guide for those occupying a mid-rank position in the administration of Xi Xia), “a monk who left his family and has approached virtue”, “a monk, a virtuous man”, “a *śhrāmaṇa*, a virtuous son,” “a monk, a virtuous and honored *āyusman*”, “a virtuous monk”, “a virtuous man, a follower of *dhyāna*”, and so on.

To elucidate the origins of the Buddhist books found in the *suburgan*, it is important to consider all references to the city of Khara Khoto. Among the customers, we find 11 people or residents of Khara Khoto, or people who placed orders in Khara Khoto (see *Table 1*).

Table 1

Won Ngiu-ru	an individual of “some virtue”	1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>
Gkha-xwa Ndon-ndzin-gkheiu	“master”	—	<i>Sūtra of the Peacock</i>
Lion Zhie-nia-wai (“Blooming Khara Khoto”)	servant of the inner palace chambers	1172—1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>
Mesi Ney Svey (Shan Min)	monk	1172—1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>
Ngwezhwei Gkhey-lkhiuo	shipping manager	1158	<i>Mahāratnakūṭa-sūtra</i>
Ngwe-ngwe Ti-kkhwa	master, clerk, servant of the inner palace chambers	1180	<i>Sheng da cheng shou hu da qian go jing</i>
Ngwe-zhwei Shan-nie	border emissary, “march commander”	—	<i>Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra</i>
Ngwo-zhe ndon-ndzhin-shie	—	1172—1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>
Ngwo-zhe Ndon-ndzhin,	“who has approached virtue”, monk who left his family	1172—1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>
Putskhie	<i>śramaṇa</i> , follower of <i>dhyāna</i>	1201	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>
Tskhazhwei	—	1172—1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>

Among these eleven customers, inhabitants of Khara Khoto or people who placed orders in this city, we find 3 monks, 3 clerks, 2 so-called “masters” (one of whom is a clerk), 1 soldier (border emissary, march commander), and one whom we might call a pious Buddhist, or the individual of “some virtue”. Information about two people is missing. “Master” was a special social category among residents of Xi Xia, which, in our view, included people with independent households — land-owners and farmers. One customer held the position of shipping administrator. He worked in the transport administration, which controlled shipments of grain collected as tax in addition to, it seems, the mail. The soldier was a border emissary, which fits with the border location of Khara Khoto, and a senior officer in the “march command”. Two customers were

servants in the inner palace chambers. They were not, in our opinion, people who lived in the capital. Rather, they administered crown lands in Khara Khoto and conducted various business connected with the needs of the court.

Among the *sūtras* copied in Khara Khoto on customers' orders, we find copies of such large works as *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (copies dating from 1172—1179 and 1201), *Mahāratnakūṭa-sūtra* (copied in 1158), *Mahāparanirvāṇa-sūtra* (no date). I believe that we can state with certainty that some of the Buddhist books from the *suburgan* were locally produced. Furthermore, among the copyists — that is, those directly involved in filling customers' orders — seven persons were also from Khara Khoto (see *Table 2*).

Table 2

Won Ngiuru-tskhi-wan (also a customer)	individual of “some virtue”	—	<i>Kongque jing</i>
Ldie-tsai Lkhiwe-pkhe-ldie	a monk who left his family	1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>
Lion Mban-shiu-ngen	—	1162	<i>Mahāratnakūṭa-sūtra</i>
Mingpu Shian-ndie	Chinese	1172—1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>
Ngwemi Gkhie-shie	glorious wise <i>paramita</i> , servant of the inner palace chambers	1172—1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>
Putsie	<i>śramaṇa</i> , follower of <i>dhyāna</i>	Year of the horse (1198 or 1210)	<i>Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra</i>
Pkhin-shio Shion	—	1172—1179	<i>Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra</i>

Among the 127 copyists of whom we know, 22 were monks, one an “imperial scribe”, 6 held the title of “holder of the brush”. Two copyists from the Shizhou-Ganzhou region took part in a copy of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* of 1152–1156. It seems that one copyist of this *sūtra* was from Tibet. He is mentioned under the year 1153 and it is said of him that he is “a teacher, a hermit, one who takes his place among the followers of *dhyāna* of Tibet”. One monk, with the religious name Bao Min, who also copied this text (1153), held the title “one who has gained vision at the Heavenly *wang*”. It is unclear to me whether this means that he was a personal servant of the emperor. There are indications next to the names of three copyists that they were Chinese; one of the copyists was a woman (1173). A monk by the name Hui Hu was apparently related to the imperial family; it is said of him that this is an “individual of the emperor's family”. One should note the monk and copyist Jie ta, who held the high title *fa shi* (teacher of Canon Law). It is said of one copyist that he knew how to write in gold — he was a “writer in gold”. One of the copyists encountered in our texts made a note, which describes his work: “Copying is difficult work. But one gains strength when people see what was written [by you]”.

The board-carver was an important figure in the production of xylograph editions. We encounter references to 10 names with the dates 1084, 1168 and 1206. As a rule, there is no information on the status or social position of the carvers. It is only said of one that he was a servant of the inner palace chambers. One can assume that the carvers were frequently simple craftsmen.

Sacred texts were checked before copying, during the copying process and after copying. There are many notes confirming that the texts are identical and that they were checked one, two and even three times. We know the names of 34 editors (collators), two of whom were also from Khara Khoto. These are Ngwemi Wemi (17), an individual who bore the family name of the emperors of Xi Xia, and Pu Gkha-wa (18) mentioned under 1172–1179 in connection with the preparation of the Khara Khoto copy of *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. Among the editors, three persons held the high title *go shi* (state mentor), one held the title *fa shi*, and two *chan shi* (mentor in Chan). One was a superior (the monastery is not indicated). The editor Tsiei Ldiei-gkhia (20) was the teacher of the emperor's grandsons. Three editors worked as senior officials in the administration of the Buddhist *saṅgha*, two as deputy senior officials in the administration of the Buddhist *saṅgha*, and two occupied the next position in the hierarchy after senior and deputy officials in the administration, being “accepting orders”. Some of the editors were officials in secular administration: one served at the ranks of head of a desk and work-organiser for the sentry-guard of the administration of the capital department (Zhungxingfu); another served as head of a desk and administrative organiser for publishing books in moveable type; yet another editor was the head of a workshop and head of a desk in the same administration (1216). The teacher of the emperor's grandsons served at the same time (or held the honorary title) of “accepting orders in the administration of cattle-breeding.” He also held an academic degree, evidently obtained through state exams. Among the editors with academic training was the monk Fa Bao, who held the title “teacher of the three Tangut teachings”.

One can suggest that this means simply the Chinese *san jiao* — Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism. As for their places of residence, it is possible that some of them were from the capital. It is known that the noted *śramaṇa* De Hui, who also worked as an editor, was from a residence in the Helanshan Mountains. Two editors were from the monastery “Peoples' Salvation”, one of the few monasteries mentioned in Tangut texts. Thus, as was the custom, all of the editors were educated people of high social status.

It should be added that once a book was in use, it would wear out. We encounter more than a few books which were restored still at the time of the Xi Xia state. The name of only one restorer has reached us: Lion Kionkay (19), mentioned under 1176.

Thus, we can state that the colophons on the pages of Buddhist books from Khara Khoto are an important source of valuable information on how the books were made, how *sūtras* were “multiplied” (not on the state level, but in the ordinary every-day Tangut life).

The Tangut materials found in Khara Khoto testify that the customer paid for the copy, or for part of the text if it was a voluminous text. There were “general customers” and “partial customers”. We know of 78 people who paid for a single copy of one *juan*. It is also known that 11 people paid for a copy of *juans* 71–80 of the *Da fang guang fo hua yan jing sūtra* — five of them together ordered *juans* 71, 78, 79 and 80; six ordered a single *juan* each (*juans* 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77). Each gave as much as he could. Unfortunately, we do not have information on the concrete costs of copying, if copies were indeed produced for pay.

The name of the customer was indicated on the pages of the reproduced sacred text, since the ordering of Buddhist text was considered as a pious deed.

If we do not take into consideration those who cut the paper and prepared the ink, then the copyist was the main figure in producing books. This had to be a literate man with good handwriting, an exact and assiduous individual. The role of the copyist retained its importance in the xylographic printing of books. Only moveable-type printing, an enormous advance in the reproduction of books made in China in the eleventh century, reduced the role of the copyist in the publication of books to practically nil. This method of book-printing was known and used in Xi Xia, although for reasons which remain unclear the employment of this method was limited.

As for the role of editors and collators, we know a rare case of their work from a note at the end of one of the texts. This note reads: “A sign is missing above”.

As said above, Buddhist manuscript books from the famous *suburgan*, be they a part of the empress Lo's library or entirely unrelated to this empress, were of local manufacture, all were produced in the city of Khara Khoto. I believe that in the current paper I have put forward arguments, persuasive enough, in favour of this statement. It is interesting, Khara Khoto, this third-rate city on the borders of the Tangut State, a place of exile for prisoners, saw intensive work on the production of Tangut Buddhist books for almost a century and a half. Logic suggests that such a rich collection of Buddhist books might exist in the Kidan and Jurjen languages, though this thesis demands further argumentation.

Anyway, the *suburgan*'s survival to the beginning of the twentieth century is a matter of chance. Without it,

scholarship would have at its disposal a limited number of texts and, consequently, show but little interest in what we now term Tangut studies. Contrary to popular wisdom, books do burn, and humanity has endured enormous losses throughout history. Perhaps the ruin and denial of the old provided natural conditions for the assertion of the new. However, this serves a weak consolation and in no

way simplifies the task of culture historians. In any case, the contents of the *suburgan* show the striking difference between what was reconstructed from surviving fragments and what became known on the basis of the investigation of those intact and integral materials which found their way into scholarly hands.

Appendix

LIST OF CUSTOMERS AND COPYISTS

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1. 那 孫 爾 壽 | 2. 教 經 爾 度 壽 |
| 3. 孫 壽 爾 壽 | 4. 經 經 經 行 善 明 |
| 5. 經 經 壽 那 | 6. 經 經 壽 那 |
| 7. 經 經 壽 那 | 8. 經 經 壽 那 |
| 9. 經 經 壽 那 | 10. 壽 那 |
| 11. 經 經 | 12. 經 經 壽 那 |
| 13. 孫 爾 壽 那 | 14. 壽 那 壽 那 |
| 15. 經 經 壽 那 | 16. 經 經 壽 那 |

LIST OF EDITORS

- | | |
|------------|----------|
| 1. 經 經 壽 那 | 2. 壽 那 壽 |
|------------|----------|

LIST OF RESTORERS

- | |
|----------|
| 1. 孫 爾 壽 |
|----------|

OTHERS

(teacher of the emperor's grandsons)

- | |
|------------|
| 1. 經 經 壽 那 |
|------------|

GLOSSARY

<i>āyusman</i>	壽 那 具 壽	"tending to the <i>sūtras</i> "	經 經 經 思
"entering into virtue"	經 經 善 入	imperial scribe	諸 教 須 壽 皇 帝 持
<i>go shi</i>	壽 那 回 壽	march commander	壽 那 行 主
"holder of the brush"	經 經 筆 持	some virtue	經 經 善 小
virtuous	經 善	monk	壽 經 僧
virtuous man	經 經 善 君 子	nun	經 經 壽 經 尼
"friend of virtue"	經 經 善 友	organizer	經 經 壽 導
<i>dhyāna</i>	壽 那 禪 定	mentor of the emperor's grandsons	壽 那 壽 壽 皇 孫 師

superior	絲 茲, 姪 茲 茲 坐主; 衆坐	head of a desk in the administration of printing books with moveable type	須 禮 義 務 謹 繼 繼 繼 字 生 印 案 頭 頭 導
possessing an academic degree	茲 才	increasing virtue	繼 鄭 善 補 (和)
border emissary	茲 反, 茲 反 藉 邊 口 便	administration of the Buddhist sangha	繼 貝 市 卍 德 用 司
“congratulating virtue”	繼 茲 善 起	administration of cattle-breeding	繼 卍 畜 司
“approaching virtue”	繼 茲 善 近	shipping administration	繼 有 繼 轉 治
“accepting orders”	繼 繼 承 旨	teacher of the three Tangut teachings	繼 繼 繼 繼 繼 繼 番 三 學 師
editor	繼 繼 義 觀	<i>fa shi</i>	繼 繼 法 師
relative (of the ruler)	繼 繼 節 親	master	繼 主
collator of texts (editor)	繼 繼 尙 (?) 考	official	繼 繼 臣 官
servant of the inner palace chambers	繼 繼 丙 事	<i>śramaṇa</i>	繼 前 沙 門
creating virtue	繼 繼 善 修	emissary	繼 藉 口 便
head of a desk	務 謹 繼 繼 案 頭 頭 導		