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Arakawa Shintaro

## On the Draft of a Tangut “Stone Launcher” Preserved in the Oriental Manuscripts Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences

A unique Tangut manuscript (Tang. 46 inv. No. 156(2006), st. inv. No. 5217) is preserved in the Oriental Manuscripts Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences. In previous works, it has been regarded as the schema of musical instrument. The author translates the whole text and concludes that the manuscript is the draft of a *Pao* 砲 (stone launcher, sling).

*Keywords:* Tangut manuscript, Tangut script, Oriental Manuscripts Institute (RAS), stone launcher, Khara-Khoto.

A unique Tangut manuscript (Tang. 46 inv. No. 156(2006), st. inv. No. 5217) is preserved in the Oriental Manuscripts Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences. In previous works, it has been regarded as the schema for musical instruments. Here, we translate the whole text and conclude that it is the draft of a *Pao* 砲 (stone launcher, or sling).

### 1. Outline of the material

The Tangut manuscript in question has been regarded as “No title. A figure of a musical instrument” in Kychanov and Gorbacheva (1963: 65). The explanation of the material is as follows:

“Manuscript. Scroll. 28×67 (cm). Not in bad condition (reconstructed).

Three illustrations on one side of a piece of paper; Right — the remaining half of the upper part of the neck of a musical instrument (the lower right part being broken). According to the glyph, it is probably a two-stringed musical instrument. The draft of the body is composed of two variants for different sides. Each size is recorded in detail in the schema. Sample illustrations of the nail and clamp for stability are drawn in the center of the plan. It is presumed that it is the name of the musical instrument which is written on the verso of the piece of paper in hard cursive hand-writing.”

Scholars<sup>1</sup> have agreed on the above view until recent years. Kyoto National Museum ed. (2009: 113) describes “Stringed Instrument. Paper, Indian ink, 12c, 34.0×76.7 cm.” The manuscript is now preserved in the Oriental Manuscripts Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences as the scroll numbered Tang. 46, inv. No. 156(2006) st. inv. No. 5217. According to my measurements, the original size is 29.8×73.4 cm.<sup>2</sup>

The thick paper is of fine quality but the edge of the paper is covered with other new paper. Since both sides of the paper have been discolored by the sun, the color of it is nearly ecru.

Old and new numbering for the material, such as “Tang. 46, inv. 156(2006g.), st. inv. 5217,” are recorded on the upper right part of the paper.

<sup>1</sup> Е.г. Дешпанде et al. (2008: 384), Терентьев-Катанкий (2009: 73) and Kyoto National Museum ed. (2009: 113).

<sup>2</sup> Since the material is repaired by means of clean papers, the whole is much bigger than the original.

## 2. Draft and Tangut scripts

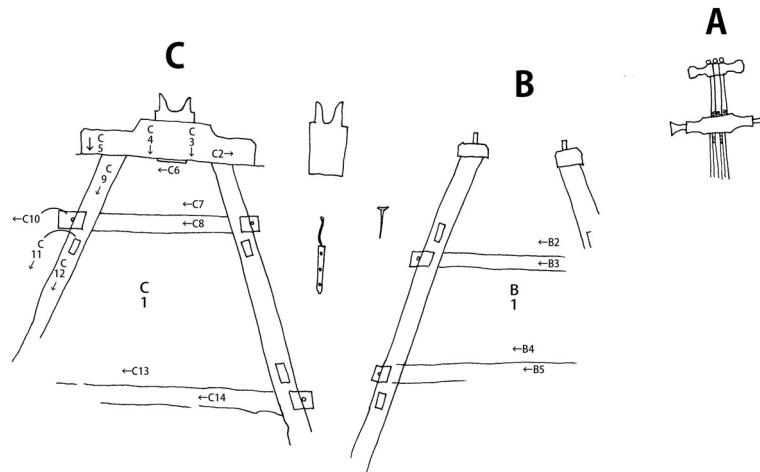
The draft contains three illustrations which we call A, B, and C from right to left. A is lacking the whole of the bottom part. B lacks more than half of the right side and the bottom part, while C lacks the extreme left and bottom part. The area of the blank parts in A, B, and C constitutes: 4.1 cm, 9.1 cm, and 7.3 cm respectively.

A sketch of three pieces is drawn between B and C. We call them D, E, and F from the top. They measure: D: 4.8 cm, E: 2.2 cm, F: 4.8 cm in height. The part D drills through the top of C.

Tangut scripts are written on both sides of the material. There are three Tangut characters in the blank between B and C (hereafter, X01) on recto. X01 is located in the top middle and could be the title (or name) of the draft. Every character of X01 is about 1.8×2.0 cm and square in shape.

All the scripts in the draft are vertical writings along the parts of the diagrams. A now has no Tangut script, however, it is possible that there had originally been some notes on it.

This figure indicates the position of the texts.



The size of the Tangut characters for B1 and C1 is 1.5×1.5 cm. The size of the others is 0.9×0.7 cm on the average.

The large characters on recto (three lines) are of extreme hard cursive. From right to left, we call them Y01, 02, and 03. Y01 and 02, the size of which is 8.0×7.0 cm per one character, are lacking one or two characters at the bottom. Of these, Y02 appears to be the same as X01. In other words, this probably refers to the title of the draft. Y03 is only one character, which is smaller than the one character of Y01 and Y02 (the size: 6×5cm).

## 3. Texts and translation

We show the Tangut scripts, phonetic transcriptions<sup>3</sup> and translation of the text with notes in the order of X, B, C, and Y. ‘?’ means unknown or indefinite. ‘□’ means supposition by the author. Many terms look like loanwords from Chinese or phonetic transcription of Chinese. We show the Chinese characters with approximate phonetic reconstructions. (LiXXXX) in the notes means the code number of the Tangut script, recorded by Li 1997 (Rev. 2008).

<sup>3</sup> According to my previous work (Arakawa 2002: 59–61), ‘1’ means ‘high-level tone’ and ‘2’ means ‘low-rising tone.’

X01

發 鏘 反

<sup>2</sup>'a: <sup>1</sup>weq<sup>2</sup> <sup>2</sup>phyo

A-WE? sling? (鴉?鳴?砲?<sup>4</sup>)

B01

祿 糶 窳

<sup>1</sup>cyen <sup>1</sup>'a? <sup>2</sup>nyeq<sup>2</sup>

Front (正一面)<sup>5</sup>

B02

穉 穉 穉 穉 穉

<sup>1</sup>ka <sup>1</sup>ldyIr <sup>2</sup>tshya <sup>1</sup>soq <sup>1</sup>tshywin

Distance — four *chi*, and three *cun* (間隔<sup>6</sup>四尺三寸)

B03

糶 糶 糶 糶 糶 糶 糶

<sup>2</sup>hwe <sup>1</sup>shyeu <sup>1</sup>ko:n <sup>2</sup>gu <sup>1</sup>jo: <sup>1</sup>cheu: <sup>2</sup>tshyan <sup>1</sup>kwI

Hui zhi guang (會<sup>7</sup>枝枕<sup>8</sup>) Both length — six and a half *chi* (共長六尺半)

B04

穉 穉 穉

<sup>1</sup>ka <sup>1</sup>sha:q <sup>2</sup>tshya

Distance- seven *chi* (間隔七尺)

B05

穉 穉 穉 穉 穉 穉 穉 穉 穉 穉

<sup>1</sup>hya <sup>2</sup>chye <sup>1</sup>ko:n <sup>2</sup>gu <sup>1</sup>jo: <sup>1</sup>'a:r <sup>2</sup>tshya <sup>1</sup>'a:r <sup>1</sup>tshywin

Xia zhai guang (下<sup>9</sup>寨<sup>10</sup>枕) Both length- eight *chi*, and eight *cun* (共長八尺八寸)

C01

糶 糶 糶

<sup>1</sup>pi: <sup>2</sup>'a <sup>2</sup>nyeq<sup>2</sup>

Front to PI (pi<sup>11</sup>與面)

C02

糶 糶 穉 穉 穉

<sup>2</sup>gu <sup>1</sup>jo: <sup>1</sup>soq <sup>2</sup>tshya <sup>1</sup>kwI

Both length— three and a half *chi* (共長三尺半)

C03

穉 穉

<sup>2</sup>tha <sup>1</sup>tin

<sup>4</sup> While this character (Li1961) originally means 'to chant' originally, it was used for transcription of the Chinese 鮑, 庖 and so on. Here, it should transcribe a Chinese *Pao* 砲 phonetically.

<sup>5</sup> The word order 祿糶窳 is grammatically unnatural. Actually the last character 糶 has the special mark 丿 meaning "mistake and change the order" on the right side. In the text, we show the right word order.

<sup>6</sup> The character looks like 穉 "sho" (Li0212) meaning 'to feed' and it is incorrect in this context. Or, it could be the cursive style of 穉 'ka (Li1135) meaning 'between.'

<sup>7</sup> 糶 <sup>2</sup>hwe (Li3617) is a special character for the transcription of the Chinese *Hui* 慧, 會 and so on. Because in the Song period, the names of parts of *Pao* 砲 included *Hui* 會 (e.g. 上會枕), the character is considered the transcription of *Hui* 會.

<sup>8</sup> 穉 <sup>1</sup>ko:n is a special character for the transcription of Chinese 宮, 恭 and so on. Here, it probably transcribes 枕 (meaning 'beam') which is a part of a *Pao* 砲.

<sup>9</sup> This one character has been lost. It might have the same function as C14.

<sup>10</sup> 糶 <sup>2</sup>chye (Li2153) might be the phonetic transcription for the Chinese 鑄, 釵 and so on.

<sup>11</sup> Though 糶 <sup>1</sup>pi: (Li2228) might be the transcription for the Chinese 壁, 鏗 and so on, we could not identify the name.

Iron *deng* (鐙<sup>12</sup> 鐙<sup>13</sup>)

C04

𠄎 𠄎

<sup>1</sup>a:r <sup>1</sup>tshywin

Eight *cun* (八寸)

C05

𠄎 𠄎

<sup>1</sup>ldyIr <sup>1</sup>tshywin

Four *cun* (四寸)

C06

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎

<sup>1</sup>ka <sup>1</sup>leu <sup>2</sup>tshya <sup>1</sup>a:r <sup>1</sup>tshywin

Distance — one *chi* and eight *cun* (間隔一尺八寸)

C07

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎

<sup>1</sup>ka <sup>1</sup>soq <sup>2</sup>tshya <sup>1</sup>nyl' <sup>1</sup>tshywin

Distance — three *chi* and two *cun* (間隔三尺二寸)

C08

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎

<sup>1</sup>sho:n <sup>2</sup>chye <sup>1</sup>ko:n <sup>1</sup>jo: <sup>1</sup>ldyIr <sup>2</sup>tshya <sup>1</sup>a:r <sup>1</sup>tshywin

*Shang zhai guang* (上<sup>14</sup>寨枕) Length — three *chi* and eight *cun* (長さ四尺八寸)

C09

𠄎 𠄎

<sup>1</sup>nyl' <sup>2</sup>tshya

Two *chi* (二尺)

C10

𠄎 𠄎

<sup>1</sup>soq <sup>1</sup>tshywin

Three *cun* (三寸)

C11

𠄎 𠄎

<sup>1</sup>nyl' <sup>2</sup>tshya

Two *chi* (二尺)

C12

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎

<sup>1</sup>ldyIr <sup>2</sup>byeq<sup>1</sup>shyin <sup>1</sup>jo: <sup>2</sup>'aq <sup>2</sup>tshya <sup>2</sup>'aq

Four pillar's length — ten *chi* and ten? (四<sup>15</sup>弦身<sup>16</sup>長十尺<sup>17</sup>十<sup>18</sup>)

<sup>12</sup> This character is considered to be <sup>1</sup>ma: (Li1721) 'iron' *deng* 鐙, though it looks like 𠄎<sup>2</sup>tha (Li3640) 'to depend.'

<sup>13</sup> 𠄎<sup>1</sup>tin (Li1134) is used for the transcription of such Chinese characters as 等, 燈, and 鐙. Here we should translate it as a phonetic transcription of *deng* 鐙.

<sup>14</sup> The character means 'guard' and the usage as in the transcription is for such Chinese characters as 尚, 昌 and so on (Li3774). Here, it most likely transcribes the Chinese *shang* 上.

<sup>15</sup> 𠄎<sup>1</sup>zhai 寨 was corrected to 𠄎<sup>1</sup>four 四 by rewriting of the first character.

<sup>16</sup> It shows the length of four pillars.

<sup>17</sup> It must be noted that not one *zhang* (一丈) but ten *chi* (十尺) measures length in the sentence. The Tangut measures *chi*, *cun* (尺·寸) come from Chinese, since Tangut had no word corresponding to the Chinese *zhang* (丈).

<sup>18</sup> Two characters exist after '10 *chi* (十尺).' We suppose that the first one is '10' and the second is '*cun* (寸).'

C13

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎  
<sup>1</sup>ka <sup>1</sup>sha:q <sup>2</sup>tshya <sup>1</sup>tshywin

Distance — seven *chi* and ... *cun* (間隔七尺...<sup>19</sup>寸)

C14

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎  
<sup>1</sup>hya <sup>2</sup>chye <sup>1</sup>ko:n <sup>2</sup>gu <sup>1</sup>jo: <sup>1</sup>gwyI' <sup>2</sup>tshya <sup>1</sup>woq <sup>1</sup>soq <sup>1</sup>tshywin

*Xia zhai guang* (下寨桃) Both length — a little more than nine *chi* and three *cun* (共長九尺強?<sup>20</sup>三寸)

Y01

𠄎? 𠄎? 𠄎?  
<sup>1</sup>bI: <sup>2</sup>T? <sup>1</sup>we

Enemy? defense? (敵?<sup>21</sup>防?<sup>22</sup>擊?<sup>23</sup>)

Y02

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎  
<sup>2</sup>a: <sup>1</sup>weq2 <sup>2</sup>phyo

A-WE? sling? (鴉? 鷓? 砲?)

Y03

𠄎  
<sup>1</sup>tsI:

Small (小?)

#### 4. What does the draft describe?

##### 4.1 Is it a musical instrument?

We have some problems, when we suppose that the draft describes a musical instrument.

First, the sizes of the parts are extremely large. If the length of *chi* 尺<sup>24</sup> was about 30 cm in those days, the large part (e.g. C12, 14 are nine and ten *chi* 九尺、十尺) will be too large (about 300 cm) for a practical musical instrument.

Second, although in figure B and C, the size of all the parts has been specified by remarks, beside the remaining figure A has no remarks. It is strange that the main part of a 'musical instrument' is lacking all mention of size. In other words, the main purpose of this draft is an instruction for the 'main' parts B and C.

The last problem is the shape of A. If A is the neck of a stringed instrument, it is strange that the tuning 'pegs' penetrate straight through the instrument. It is unnatural that the pegs are located as in the draft, because, usually, the pegs are set alternately.

##### 4.2 The draft describes a *Pao* 砲

It is expected that B and C have a strong relation in construction. One of the reasons is that the positions of the beams and the sockets of the pillars are the same. The second reason is the adequacy of the proportion of length and width.

<sup>19</sup> The strokes on the upper part remain unclear. The character would seem to be the Tangut numeral 'two', 'three,' or 'five'.

<sup>20</sup> 𠄎 <sup>1</sup>woq (Li1805) means 'coarse, prosperity.' Here, it might be 'larger' since the word follows 'sizes.'

<sup>21</sup> It is possible that the two characters are a phrase xxx<sup>1</sup>zer <sup>2</sup>tshenq 'graceful, beautiful.'

<sup>22</sup> The character is assumed to be 𠄎 (Li0613) which means 'to refuse, to defend'. These three characters should modify the name of weapon as in 'defending against the enemy.'

<sup>23</sup> It might be 𠄎 <sup>1</sup>we (Li4916) meaning 'to fight, to shoot,' however the lower part has been lost.

<sup>24</sup> According to Shiraishi (2007: 129–131), one *chi* 尺 in Tangut is 29.6 cm.

Based on the composition B plus C, we can imagine a three-meters-high wooden object whose profile is trapezoid. It resembles the base of an ancient weapon *Pao* 砲, which is a stone launcher (sling) in China.<sup>25</sup> Probably, the draft C is the front of the base and B is a side illustration. Therefore, A is not the neck of an instrument but the rotary pole of a *Pao* 砲. If the draft did not lack the lower part of A, the perfect draft would show the figure below.



Figure *Pao* 砲

From *Wujingzongyao* 武經總要

A careful scrutiny of the labeling, sizes, and numbers on the draft reveals high affinity. There are four kinds of beam: upper and lower beams of B and C respectively. The last word of all is 稜 <sup>1</sup>ko:n, which is used for Tangut phonetic transcription of Chinese. It probably transcribes the Chinese *guang* 杙 meaning ‘beam.’ Below we compare the names of the parts in the Chinese version from *Wujingzongyao* 武經總要 with the Tangut names in the draft.

Table 1

Chinese	Tangut (Underline means phonetic transcription)
上會杙會枝杙	(B03)
上扇杙上寨杙	(C08)
下會杙下寨杙	(B05)
下扇杙下寨杙	(C14)

The Tangut name of a *Pao* 砲 is apparently derived from the Chinese.

The top part of the object is *Antoumu* 鞞頭木 in Chinese. Instead of the name, the part like a wedge is called ‘iron *deng* 鞞’. Probably, it was named ‘iron’ because of the material and shape.

<sup>25</sup> Yoshida (1967, Rep. 1997: 220–223) describes in detail the Chinese *Pao* 砲 of the Song and Yuan periods.



Let us look at the length of the parts. As seen above, while the length such as nine or ten *chi* (九、十尺) is too big for a musical instrument, it is appropriate for a weapon like a *Pao* 砲. From *Wujingzongyao* 武經總要, we show some sizes of the longest parts of a *Pao* 砲.

**Table 2**

Name	Size of pillar (脚柱)	Size of lower beam (下會栳)
<i>Danshaopao</i> 单梢砲	1 <i>zhang</i> and 8 <i>chi</i> 一丈八尺	1 <i>zhang</i> and 3 <i>chi</i> 一丈三尺
<i>Wushaopao</i> 五梢砲	1 <i>zhang</i> and 2 <i>cun</i> 一丈二寸	1 <i>zhang</i> and 9 <i>chi</i> 一丈九尺
	( <i>Wujingzongyao</i> 武經總要 vol. 12, leaf 36, 40)	
Tangut <i>Pao</i> 砲	10 <i>chi</i> and ? 十尺+?	8 <i>chi</i> and 8 <i>cun</i> 八尺八寸

While the size of the Tangut version is a little smaller than the Chinese one, it is nevertheless long enough for the base of a *Pao* 砲. Therefore, it is reasonable that the draft indicates such a weapon.

In the draft, there are several expressions for ‘pair.’ For example, B03, 05, C02, 08, and 14 have the same words ‘Both length...’. If the object is a *Pao* 砲, these parts will be used as pairs in construction. And the Tangut numeral ‘four’ precedes ‘pillar’.

#### 4.3 The *Pao* 砲 in the Tangut document discovered in Khara-Khoto

Sato (2007) discusses the situation of the Khara-Khoto area in the last period of Xixia based on the two Tangut documents which were discovered in the Khara-Khoto ruins. Of these, No. 2736 document is a letter or proposal by the Tangut officer *Renfu* 仁負. It is undoubtedly the most important source for the study of the situation of Khara-Khoto in those days. The officer *Renfu* emphasized his own achievements in the texts. We would like to pay attention to one sentence of great importance. We cite Sato’s translation.

...since *Renfu* 仁負 has come to Khara-Khoto for defense of the citadel...defending the citadel, preparing provisions, arms, and fifty six *Pao* 砲?, large ones and small ones... Sato (2007: 59)<sup>26</sup>

Kychanov (1971) was the first to translate the Tangut character 𐰇 as a *Pao* 砲, the view is still discussed.<sup>27</sup> The character in question is the last character of the name of this weapon in the material. And in the documents, the Tangut *Pao* 砲 has several types such as ‘large’ and ‘small.’ If the last word of the title on recto is considered to mean ‘small,’ then it can be concluded that the Tangut regarded the weapon as a ‘small *Pao* 砲’ (stone-launcher).

#### 5. Conclusion

Based on the decipherment of the size and parts of the object, it seems reasonable to conclude that the Tangut material in question (Tang. 46 inv. No. 156(2006) st. inv. No. 5217) housed in the Oriental Manuscripts Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences is the draft of a stone launcher *Pao* 砲. However, the name of this weapon is still unknown.

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<sup>26</sup> Sato (2007) is a Japanese translation of the original Tangut text. Translation from Japanese into English is by the author.

<sup>27</sup> E.g. Matsuzawa (1984) and so on.

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## Summary

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### О рисунке тангутского «камнемета», хранящемся в ИВР РАН

Уникальная тангутская рукопись (Tang. 46 inv. No. 156(2006), st. inv. No. 5217) хранится в Институте восточных рукописей РАН. В предыдущих работах считалось, что в ней изображен рисунок музыкального инструмента. Автор статьи полностью перевел текст с тангутского языка и пришел к заключению, что рукопись и рисунок являются изображением камнемета *Pao* 砲.