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IN THIS ISSUE

**Peng Xiang-qian 彭向前. Xi xia wen "Mengzi" zhengli yanjiu 西夏文
《孟子》整理研究 (The complex study of the Tangut translation of the
"Mengzi")**. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe 上海：古籍出版社, 2012. —
295 页。

The most important part of literary legacy of the Tangut state Xi Xia (982–1227)
is the Tangut translations of Chinese classical works which in the Chinese Tangut
studies are denoted with the abbreviation *xia yi han ji* 夏译汉籍. They include trans-
lations of works of Chinese Confucian canon, military treatises, historical works,
and translations from Chinese compiled by the Tanguts themselves.

Among the vast variety of handwritten books and xylographs discovered by
Kozlov's expedition in Khara-Khoto in 1908–09 was the Tangut translation of the
Mengzi treatise. Now it is kept in the Tangut collection of the Institute of Oriental
Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The text of this classic was intro-
duced into scholarly circulation by V.S. Kolokolov and E.I. Kychanov, who pub-
lished the facsimile edition of *"Kitaiskaia klassika v tangutskom perevode ("Lun'*
yui", "Men tsy", "Siao dzin").Faksimile tekstov, perevod i slovar' V.S. Kolokolova i
E.I. Kychanova (Pis'mennye pamiatniki Vostoka, IV. Moskva, 1966 [Chinese Clas-
sics in Tangut translation (Lun Yu, Mengzi, Xiao-jing) Facsimile of the texts. Intro-
duction and glossary by V.S. Kolokolov and E.I. Kychanov (Written Monuments of
the Orient IV. Moscow, 1966]

The damage to nearly every page of the manuscript, fragmentary state of many
characters and cursive handwriting – for a hundred years these factors made reading
difficult and, probably, discouraged researchers who intended to study this work.
As a result, the *Mengzi* in Tangut was deciphered and studied much later than other
translated Chinese works.

Peng Xiang-qian, a researcher of the Academy of Xi Xia Studies at the Ningxia
University, was not deterred by the difficulties just mentioned. Six years of his work

on the Tangut translation of the *Mengzi* resulted in the monograph "A complex study of the Tangut translation of the *Mengzi*", published by the Shanghai publishing house "Ancient Books" (Shanghai guji chubanshe) in 2012 in the series "The Study of the Tangut Script Monuments" edited by Du Jiang-lu. The following year Peng Xiang-qian's monograph received an award from the government of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region for outstanding achievements in the field of social sciences.

Peng Xiang-qian's monograph consists of three chapters. The structure of the work reflects the author's intention to make acquaintance with the results of his research as convenient as possible. The first introductory chapter (pages 1 to 61) is divided into 11 sections and covers several important subjects.

The first chapter begins by establishing the time when the Confucian canon appeared in the state of Xi Xia and the date of the Tangut translation of the *Mengzi*. The author believes that the Tangut ruler Liang-zuo (1048–1068) addressed the authorities of the Northern Song with a request of a collection of canons and historic works, which brought the *Mengzi* to Xi Xia in 1063. At the beginning of Emperor Qian-shun reign (1086–1139), the Tangut Empire undertook a series of actions aimed at disseminating Confucianism. That suggests that the Tangut translation of the *Mengzi* was produced in the first half of Xi Xia's 250-year existence. During the reign of Ren-xiao (1139–1193) Xi Xia saw an unprecedented surge in translation and publication activity. A considerable number of translations of Chinese classical works were produced, as well as original works in Tangut, which were strongly influenced by the Chinese literature. The author confidently asserts that during that period the Tangut translation of the *Mengzi* continued to be published.

In Xi Xia, it was a common practice to make the personal names of the rulers as a taboo. A distinctive feature of the books published during the Ren-xiao reign was constant absence of the last vertical line in the second hieroglyph of sovereign's personal name: 軒, which corresponds to the Chinese *xiao* 孝. In the Tangut translation of the *Mengzi* this character occurs twice, both times in its full form, because the character was not a taboo. Therefore, Peng Xiang-qian concludes, that the translation of the *Mengzi* with inventory number 6738 could not have appeared during the Ren-xiao era, but was rather translated into Tangut during the reign of either Liang-zuo (in the 1160s) or Qian-shun (first quarter of the 12th c.) (p. 31).

In the next section the author reconstructs correct order of the manuscript's surviving fragments. The text of the translation of the *Mengzi* "was simply unreadable before restoration" (Kolokolov, Kychanov, 1966, p. 17), but as the result ofr restoration certain fragments were wrongly joined together and the order of some pages was confused. Laboriously analyzing the fragments of the manuscript Peng Xianqian has restored the original appearance of the surviving parts of the text which

comprises 51 pages. It turned out that the upper left-hand corner of the 6th page was actually the beginning of the last three lines of the 8th page, while the fragment 57 went with fragment 51. The author managed to identify the proper position of the fragment 56, a tiny and severely damaged piece of the text, only after the main work on monograph under review has been completed. Fragment 56 is the beginning of the first line on the 51st page (p. 8–9).

Further on the author carries out an analysis of special translation technique, which is of great interest. Following Nie Hong-yin's guidance , the author of the monograph discovered that in translation from Chinese to Tangut the characters in complex words and homogeneous elements in complex sentences could often be reversed. Here are a few examples from the monograph. Combination of words 富贵 "rich and noble" in the sentence 人亦孰不欲富贵 (*Who of the people doesn't desire to be rich and noble*) was written in reverse in Tangut translation: 𘜶𗱬 (i.e. = 贵富). In the phrase 屦大小同，则贾相若 (*Shoes of the same size would have the same price*) the word 大小 "size" turned out to be inverted in translation 𗤙𗥫 (i.e. = 小大). The sentence 鹄不日浴而白，乌不日黔而黑 (*For the swan does not need to bathe every day to be white; the raven does not need to be smeared with mud to be black*) from the chapter "The Cycle of Heaven" of the Zhuang-ziwas translated into Tangut with inversion: first it mentions the raven, then the swan: 𗉛𗵆𘜔：𗰖𘏞𗾈𘃸𘂤，𗊬𘏞𗦻𘃸𗫸. An awareness of such translation changes may prove to be very useful, because this technique was used by other peoples who had their own system of writing: the Tibetans and even the Khitans, whose language was very different from Tangut (p. 31–36)

The section "Tangut transcriptions of Chinese words and the north-western dialect of the Chinese language in the Song era" presents rich phonetic material, based on the three surviving chapters of the Tangut translation of the *Mengzi*. Peng Xiang-qian found 108 Tangut transcriptions of Chinese proper nouns, among which there are names of peoples, places, rivers, states and dynasties, posts and philosophical schools. A total of 140 phonetic units were identified by the author (p. 36–53).

Based on Tangut transcriptions, the author describes several features of the north-western dialect of the Chinese language in that era: sonant initials became hollow, dorsal and dental initials were unified, dentolabial initials appeared, terminal consonants -p, -t, -k as well as terminal sonants -m, -n, -ŋ fell apart. Since these characteristics completely coincide with the phonetic phenomena found in bilingual Tangut-Chinese dictionary "Pearl on the Palm" from the year 1190, the author concludes that such phonetic changes in the north-western dialect of the Chinese language in the Song era may appear in the previous century (p. 53).

Peng Xiang-qian also points out that the translation inevitably reflects Tangut specific understanding and perception of certain phenomena and concepts. The section "Tangut translation of the *Mengzi* as a source of data on Tangut society" is de-

voted to this subject. The translation now and then reveals information about Tangut society. For instance, Confucius's name is rendered not in transcription but with the glyphs 絟𦏾, which literally mean "The Great Teacher". This apparently reflects both the desire to distinguish Confucius among other philosophers, and the veneration of Confucius in the Tangut state. For this reason the Tangut translator used the word combination 𫟭𗣼 (literally "scholars, educated people, "Confucian scholars"). At the same time the names of other philosophical schools are rendered in transcription, for example Mohism 𗀗𗣴. The official history of the Song dynasty confirms the fact that Confucianism witnessed great power in Xi Xia. The chapter "Xia guo zhuan" states that in the time of Ren-xiao's rule Confucius was granted the title Wenxuan-di 文宣帝 ("The Perfect Enlightened Emperor") which surpasses the title Wenxuan-wang 文宣王 ("The Perfect Enlightened King") granted to Confucius during the Tang time (p. 54–55)

Facsimiles of all surviving fragments of the work are published in the second chapter "Correspondence of Chinese and Tangut Characters" (p. 62–118). These are the second part of the "Gongsun Chou" chapter and both parts of the "Teng Wen-gong" chapter. Under each facsimile image the author placed a Chinese word-by-word translation with notes to each line of it. All lines of the Chinese interlinear translation are numbered, for example 1201 signifies the first line on the 12th page of the manuscript. It should be noted that placement of the verbatim translation directly under each facsimile page of the manuscript appears to be a certain novelty. Such presentation makes it possible to match the glyphs at any time and to verify the accuracy of the reconstructed Tangut text. That is particularly important because some words in the manuscript have survived only in fragments.

While writing a word-by-word translation, the author used an important tool: the original text of the *Mengzi* published in "Thirteen Classics with Comments and Explanations" (Zhonghua publishing house, 1980). Since Peng Xian-qian made an attempt to reconstruct the Tangut text, her sought to fill in the most damaged parts of the manuscript. All characters, added by the author, are underlined. The footnotes to the Chinese interlinear translation specify notes and changes made by the Tangut copyist, as well as inversions and places where the correct sequence of lines or pages is violated.

It is truly admirable that the author not only identified indistinct characters, but also mistakes made by the Tangut translator, and pointed out missing words. For example Peng Xiang-qian discovered that in a sentence with a double negative 城非不高 (*It's not the matter that the walls aren't tall*) the negative 𗦼 (不) was changed by error with the Tangut character 𗦹 (后), which can be easily confused (p. 63).

The author deduced that the sentences 非直为观美也，然后尽于人心 (*Not only to look at the beautiful, but to completely show human feelings*) and 王如用予,

则岂徒齐民安, 天下之民举安 (*If the king hired me to serve him, is it only the people of Qi will be in peace, — the entire people of Tianxia will be in peace*) one and the same mistake was made. In both cases the Tangut character "only, exclusively" 觞 is mistakenly replaced by the similar character 觞 (真) (pp. 71, 78).

The third chapter "Translation and Commentary of the Tangut text of the *Mengzi*" (pp. 119–183) consists of a computer printed Tangut text of the classic, its translation into Chinese and detailed commentary. Before each Tangut sentence. the page and line numbers are indicated, which allows the reader to return promptly to the second chapter and find the relevant phrase in the facsimile copy. In the manuscript the titles of the chapters are missing. Chapters and sentences are marked with large and small circles. For convenience the author has added modern punctuation to the printed Tangut text. The commentary is made in accordance with the traditional Chinese practice of text commentary, where Tangut words lacking equivalent in Chinese, auxiliary particles and transcriptions are clarified. Comments are sequentially numbered, with 381 comments in total.

The contents of comments speak eloquently of tremendous analysis carried out by Peng Xian-qian. For instance one of the comments is a parsing of the sentence 于宋, 馈七十镒而受 (*At Song [you] were presented with 70 yi, and [you] accepted [them]*). It is translated into Tangut as 𘗗 𗷀 , 𗣼 𗤁 𗀔 𗣼 𗤁 . The unit of weight *yi* 镒 was translated with the Tangut character 𗀔 that corresponds to the Chinese *jin* 斤, which is a mistake. The author painstakingly explains why: "The Tangut state created an agency to produce standards for measuring various units of weight and volume, similar to the Chinese Wensi yuan 文思院 ("Chamber of Fine Craftsmanship and Artistry"). It was determined that 16 *liang* correspond to 1 *jin*. According to the Tangut dictionary "The Sea of Writings" the character 𗀔 (*jin* 斤) means: "In weight sixteen *liang* are equal to one *jin*". ZhaoQi's (赵岐, 108–201) commentary on the *Mengzi* says:"In weight twenty-four *liang* are equal to one *yi*"(p. 126).

The Tangut language usually is attributed to the Qiangic languages of the Tibetan-Burmese group. The Tibetan language may be a certain aid to deciphering Tangut texts, as it still uses words that at some point were employed in Tangut. In the commentarys the author frequently and rather successfully tries to apply his knowledge of the ancient Tibetan language.

The sentence 劝齐伐燕, 有诸 (*May it be possible to advise Qi to go to war against Yan?*) is translated into Tangut as 𗀔 𗀔 𗀔 𗀔 𗀔 𗀔 , 𗀔 𗀔 . The author comments on the grammar particle 𗀔 in the following way: "It is a verbal affix, and it has imperative meaning. Imperative verbs in the Tangut language are formed in two modes: morphological and syntactical. The first mode is the alternation of consonant and sonant, the second mode is when an affix is added to the verb, as in this sentence. In the ancient Tibetan language formation of imperative mood occurs in the same manner" (p. 134).

Another sentence from the *Mengzi* "古之君子, 其过也, 如日月之食" (*In the ancient times if a noble man committed a mistake, it was like lunar or solar eclipse*) is translated into Tangut as 𗂀𗰗𗓽𗏇𗉧𗦲𗤁𗴮𗰖𗴺𗉢. The literal translation of the characters 𗴮𗰖 is "Luohou has hidden". In the Tibetan language solar eclipse and lunar eclipse are written as *nyivdzin* and *zlavdzin* respectively, the literal meaning is "the Sun is captured" and "the Moon is captured" which has to do with the Indian mythology where the demon Luohou (Rahu) devoured the Sun and the Moon from time to time, and that was when eclipses happened. The Tangut word combination 𗤁𗴮𗰖𗴺 (*the Sun and the Moon have been hidden by Luohou*) is constructed in a similar way in terms of word formation, which means that through Tibetans the Tangut people were subject to great Indian influence in astronomy and the calendar (pp. 55–56, 58). Such original comments and interpretations are to be found in abundance in the monograph.

The monograph contains three appendixes: a selected bibliography, the text of the corresponding chapters from the Chinese original of the *Mengzi* and a glossary. The glossary (pp. 198–294) contains all the glyphs encountered in the manuscript. The characters are listed in ascending order by their numbers according to Li Fanwen's "Tangut-Chinese Dictionary". For each character there is a number by the four-corner method; phonetic reconstruction; meaning; all word combinations from the manuscript that include the character; number of the commentary for this character; and character coordinates, for example 080614 means that the hieroglyph is encountered on the 8th page in the 6th line and is the 14th in the row. Obviously, the creation of such a substantial glossary took a lot of effort and is worthy of the highest praise.

In the words of Nie Hong-yin, a well-known Chinese Tangut scholar, "the study of the Tangut manuscripts is an endless research process, especially as researchers have l not yet developed any unified methods of text reading, not even the most basic principles that would be observed by everybody" (Nie Hong-yin 聂鸿音. Xi Xia wenxian lun gao 西夏文献论稿 [On the Tangut manuscripts]. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2012, p. 1). Possibly, the only flaw in the monograph under review is the coding of verbal indicators of direction of action with the symbol "Δ". There is no analogy for such particles in the Chinese language. When naming the verbal prefixes with a single sign the grammatical functions of these particles are not taking into consideration. It seems a certainty that Peng Xiang-qian will improve the coding in his future works.

The amount of information that a source may reveal in the hands of a particular researcher depends on individual experience and skill. It seems that Peng Xiang-qian has literally "squeezed" all possible information from the Tangut translation of the *Mengzi* down to the last drop. Thanks to his formidable training in history and philology, the author of the monograph was able to skillfully and seamlessly employ the approaches of both fields, and explore a variety of issues and subjects, each of

them being investigated in every manner. The volume of work done as well as the degree of complexity of this research is impressive.

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