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Matsui Dai

Uighur Scribble Attached to a Tangut Buddhist Fragment from Dunhuang*

The relationship between the Tangut (Xi-Xia) and the Uighurs has been a target of the academic studies related to the history, cultures, Buddhism and other religions, linguistics, and other fields of the Central Asian studies. Our esteemed jubilee Prof. Dr. Evgeny Kychanov has contributed to the issue with his numerous articles and monographs.¹ In this short paper I deal with a Uighur scribble attached to a fragment of a Buddhist Tangut blockprint, whereby I would like to honour Prof. Kychanov on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

The Tangut fragment in question is now preserved under the shelf number Peald 6f in the East Asian Library and the Gest Collection of Princeton University. The size of the paper is 15.6 × 18.8 cm. The contents of the Buddhist Tangut text can be identified with the Chinese version of 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 *A-pi-da-mo da-pi-po-sha-lun* (Skt. *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣāśāstra*). Five of other Tangut fragments of the Princeton Collection (Peald 6c, Peald 6d, Peald 6e, Peald 6h and Peald 6i) and one (Txd 39-08b) in the Tenri Library, Nara, Japan also belong to the same print as Peald 6f, and all of these fragments must have been brought from the Northern Caves of Dunhuang Mogaoku.²

The 1st line of the Tangut text of Peald 6f shows the ideograms corresponding to the Chinese chapter heading as 雜蘊第一中愛敬納息第四[之一] *za-yun di-yi zhong ai-jing na-xi di-si [zhi yi]* “[Section 1] of (Chapter) 4 of *Ai-jing na-xi* in (Part) 1 of *Za-yun*” of *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣāśāstra*.³ In fact, the line ends with the Tangut ideogram for Chin. 四 *si* “4, four” before the bottom marginal line, and

* I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Shintarō Arakawa, Prof. Peter Zieme and Dr. Simone-Christiane Raschmann for their kind and important suggestions.

¹ E.g. Kychanov 2004.

² Arakawa 2011, p. 148; Arakawa 2012, pp. 6–7. Cf. Matsui 2011, pp. 32, 42; Matsui, forthcoming, for the Uighur almanac divination texts on the reverse side.

³ Taishō Tripitaka, vol. 27, No. 1545, p. 150c12.

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Peald 6f recto

The East Asian Library and the Gest Collection, Princeton University

http://idp.bl.uk/database/oo_scroll_h.a4d?uid=159286112011;recnum=79512;index=1

the ideograms for Chin. 之一 *zhi yi* “one of” should have been at the top of line 2, which is now lost but there is blank space left beneath. Accordingly the current second line was originally line 3, and it comprises the Tangut text corresponding to the following Chinese text [云何愛], 云何敬, 如是等章 [*yun he ai*], *yun he jing, ru shi deng zhang* “The section concerning (the questions about) [what is love], what is respect, and so on.”⁴

The reverse side of our fragment Peald 6f was reused for a Uighur text of almanac divination, which apparently belongs to the Mongol-Yuan times (13th–14th cc.) and has nothing to do with the Tangut text on the recto side. However, we find another Uighur note scribbled in the blank beneath the original line 2 of the Tangut text on the recto side. It is also written in the cursive script of the Mongol

⁴ Arakawa 2012, pp. 8, 13.

times, but the clumsiest handwriting hardly allows us to decipher all of the words in full.

For two upper lines, I would propose a tentative transliteration and transcription as shown below:

Transliteration	Transcription
1. PYRD' 𐰚	birdä 𐰚
2. TWRT	tört

${}_2TWRT = tort \sim tprt$ seems to be a mistake for $TWYRT = tört$ “four”. Then *birdä* *tört* should be literally interpreted as “four of one.”⁵ Still we find an ideograph below *birdä* (rendered as 𐰚 in the text above), which seems to be written by the same hand as the Uighur inscription. Prof. Shintarō Arakawa proposed to regard it as a rough sketch of the Tangut script “one”, appearing as the third ideogram in the first line (𐰚).⁶

The Uighur writings beneath are most difficult to decipher. Judging from the vertical positioning, they seem to run from upper-right to bottom-left, in the order reverse to the normal Uighur writing.

Transliteration	Transcription
3. ČWDK'Y TWYD 夫	čodk'i töđ 夫
4. Č'W PYRD' 𐰚	Č'W birdä 𐰚

For ${}_3ČWDK'Y$, which looks like $ČWDYRW$ at a glance, I would place *čodk'i* as a mistake for $ČWD'KY = čodaki \sim čodake$ “questioner, asker, objectioner, pupil” (< Skt. *codaka*).⁷ The following ${}_3TWYD = töđ$ may be modified into $tö(r)đ \sim tört$ “four”. The meaning of a sign or symbol like a Chinese character 夫 *fu* beneath ${}_3töđ$ is totally ungraspable for me. If we may modify ${}_4Č'W$ into $ČW$, it might be regarded as *čod[aki]* repeated but interrupted. Reading ${}_4PYRD' = birdä$ “in one” needs some explanations: Its initial strokes *P*- and *-Y*- are written intermittently, and the oval stroke of *-D*- is so small that it is nearly indistinguishable from the tail of *-Y*-.

If I am right in my transcriptions and interpretations of the Uighur scribble shown above, ${}_1birdä$ ${}_2tört$ “four of one” can be interpreted as “(Section) 4 of (Part) 1”, and it should be the translation for the Tangut text corresponding to Chin. 雜蘊第一中愛敬納息第四 “Chapter 4 (of *Ai-jing na-xi*) in Part 1 (of *Za-yun*)”. Also ${}_3čodk'i töđ$ ${}_4ČW birdä > čodaki töđ čod[aki] birdä$ “In [Questioner] 1 (of) Questioner 4” may correspond to the following Tangut text for Chin. [愛敬納息]第四[之一, 云何愛]云何敬, 如是等章 “[Section 1] of (Chapter) 4 of *ai-jing na-xi*, i.e., the section concerning (the questions about) [what is love], what

⁵ However, reading in reverse as *tört birdä* “in four-one; in one (of) four” would be possible if it had been written from right to left similar to lines 3-4.

⁶ Arakawa 2011, p. 148; Arakawa 2012.

⁷ See Shōgaito 2008, p. 542. I am grateful to Prof. Peter Zieme for suggesting this reconstruction.

is respect, and so on”. In the Uighur *Abhidharma*-texts, *čodaki* ~ *čodake* “questioner, asker, objectioner, pupil” is frequently used in the phrases as *čodake sözlär* “the questioner says (= questions) [as following]” or *čodake sezik ayıdu* “the questioner asks a question (as following)” to begin a catechism.⁸

As the result, we may now consider that the scribe of our Uighur scribble was able to read and understand the chapter heading of the Tangut Buddhist text and even translate it into Uighur language. The quite clumsy handwriting of the scribble might suggest that the scribe was not a native Uighur. On the other hand, the sketch 𐰚 for the Tangut ideogram 𐰚 “one” is too rough to be regarded as written by a native Tangut. The letters for numbers are most fundamental. Moreover, it would not have been necessary for the Tangut scribe to translate only the chapter heading in his/her native language into Uighur. Accordingly, for the time being I would assume that the scribe was of Uighur origin, or of any other ethnic origin but familiar with the Uighur language.⁹

Here we may mention also that several Uighur *Abhidharma*-texts have been brought from the Dunhuang Mogaoku. So far as hitherto is known, all of them are based on Chinese originals.¹⁰ Of course we need more materials to prove that the scribe of our scribble knew the Tangut script as well as the Buddhist doctrine of *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣāśāstra* from the Tangut blockprint, but our fragment might be a first attestation of the Tangut texts as sources of the Uighur Buddhist texts in the Gansu region.

Even though some Chinese historical records inform us about the contribution of Uighur Buddhist monks to the translation of the Chinese Buddhist canons into the Tangut language during the Tangut-Xi-Xia Kingdom, contradictorily we have thus far no Tangut Buddhist text to declare that it was translated from the Uighur original or by the Uighur monk(s), or to show linguistic influence by Uighur.¹¹ It has been debatable how close or how remote was the Buddhist relationship between the Tanguts and the Uighurs during the 10th–14th centuries.¹²

Our fragment may well demonstrate the real existence of the Tangut-Uighur bilingual Buddhist in the Mongol times, and it can throw a light on the practical aspects of the cultural interaction between the Tanguts and the Uighurs.

⁸ See Shōgaito 2008, lines 79, 2596, 2658, 2827, 3559.

⁹ For this assumption I owe many to the discussion with Prof. Shintarō Arakawa. Also see Arakawa 2012, p. 9.

¹⁰ Kudara 1982, pp. 1–5; Kudara 1984, p. 65. Especially, see Kudara 1986, pp. 155–153, for the Uighur *Abhidharma*-text in the Tenri Library that corresponds to *Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣāśāstra* (or its variant Chin. 阿毘曇毘婆沙論 *A-pi-tan-pi-po-sha-lun*) and even comprises modifications and additions to the Chinese original. For the up-to-date information on extant Uighur *Abhidharma*-texts, see Shōgaito 2008, pp. 1–2.

¹¹ But we may note the Sino-Uighur inscription for the memory of the Tangut officials' family, who governed the circuit of Suzhou through the Mongol period. See Geng Shimin 1986; cf. Moriyasu 1982, pp. 14–15.

¹² E.g., Kychanov 1968, pp. 286, 287–278; Kychanov 1978, p. 208; Kychanov 2004, p. 156; Nishida 1975, pp. 5–6; Moriyasu 1985, pp. 74, 88 & n. 27.