

manuscript cultures

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Letter from the Editors

Dear reader

On the evening of May 22, 2008, the research group 'Manuscript Cultures in Asia and Africa' (MCAA) was formally inaugurated with a public lecture given by the renowned medievalist Horst Wenzel (Berlin). This evening brought to a successful close three years of preparation by a group of scholars working in the fields of Asian and African Studies and Informatics, mainly based at Hamburg University. Two months earlier, the German Research Foundation (DFG) had announced the decision to support this project with a generous grant, initially for a period of three years.

The topic of the lecture by Professor Wenzel 'The hand as tool and the hand as pointer: on the anthropological foundations of visual deixis and textual deixis' served well to epitomize the goal of our project: to contribute to historical and comparative research on manuscript culture in an anthropological perspective. In nine sub-projects, we will integrate evidence from largely neglected areas in current research on media and culture. For the first period of three years, our focus will be on the variance of texts and its dependence on the medium of manuscript. Our work on the sub-projects and our regular internal meetings will be supplemented by interactions with guest lecturers and with visiting fellows spending longer periods of time with us.

This first issue of our newsletter will, hopefully, offer something to everyone interested in manuscript cultures: an article on an autograph of a famous Indian scholar from the fifteenth century by Professor Isaacson, a survey of a South East Asian manuscript tradition by Professors Grabowsky and Hundius, a research note on a 'letter' accompanying the richest and best-known ancient Chinese tomb library by one of the editors of this newsletter, a review of a recent edition of new materials from Turfan by Dr Wang, and finally, two news-items: one on a website for Ethiopian manuscripts by Dr Wion, and the other on ancient Chinese manuscripts recently acquired on the Hong Kong antique market by Professor Chen.

Besides the publication of this newsletter, and the publication in due course of the results of the sub-projects of the research group, we have conceived of an 'Encyclopedia of Manuscript Cultures in Asia and Africa'. De Gruyter has already agreed to publish it, and we have formed a board of area editors. For this ambitious project we will need support from the scholarly community all over this planet, and will very soon be requesting many of our readers to contribute.

Suggestions regarding our project are most welcome, of course, and if you yourself have a note, an article or any news you might be interested in publishing in our newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact us. In case you are interested in our activities, please visit our website to register (<http://www.manuscript-cultures.uni-hamburg.de>). Or, if you happen to pass through Hamburg, visit us at our beautiful premises at Rothenbaumchaussee 34, within walking distance of the Asien-Afrika-Institut and Dammtor Bahnhof. Our coordinator, Dr Hanna Hayduk, herself an historian of European art specialising in medieval manuscripts, will be happy to show you around and introduce you to the members of our group.

With best regards

Michael Friedrich, Jörg B. Quenzer

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Article

Himalayan Encounter: The Teaching Lineage of the *Marmopadeśa*

Studies in the Vanaratna Codex 1 • Harunaga Isaacson | Hamburg

Among the collections of Nepalese Sanskrit manuscripts held outside of Asia, the Hodgson Collection of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, is one which, despite the publication of a catalogue as early as 1876, has not received attention commensurate to its significance.¹ Although the collection comprises, according to its catalogue, ‘only’ 79 items, and although many of these are recent manuscripts of texts that are already plentifully represented (and often by much better MSS) in other collections, for the study of tantric Buddhism—that still largely neglected final frontier of South Asian Buddhism—it is of particular value.

To mention just a few of the precious manuscripts of Buddhist tantric texts in this collection: Hodgson 68 is the *codex unicus* (to the best of our present knowledge) of the *Guṇabharanī*, a commentary by Raviśrījñāna on the *Śaḍaṅgayoga* of Anupamarakṣita, a central text of the Kālacakra system;² Hodgson 69, dated *Nepāla Samvat* 218, corresponding to CE 1098, transmits a rare and valuable manual for the practice of new initiates into the religion, Anupamavajra’s *Ādikarmapradīpa*;³ Hodgson 34 is a manuscript of an otherwise apparently unknown, and so far completely unstudied, commentary on the *Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti*; and Hodgson 46, a manuscript of the *Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra*,

as I shall demonstrate elsewhere, of even greater importance than it was realized to be by Christopher George, for it is not only the oldest manuscript of this tantra that is known to be extant, but also is the direct ancestor of the second-oldest known manuscript (George’s B).⁴

Among these riches, the manuscript Hodgson 35 stands out, however, as a unique treasure. Some years ago, already, in the remarks prefacing an edition of one of the texts preserved in this manuscript, I wrote the following.⁵

For a description of the manuscript, a ‘Sammelhandschrift’ containing a large number of Buddhist tantric works, see Cowell and Eggeling 1876, 26–28. Though this description is in need of correction on many points, it may suffice here merely to add to it that the manuscript is palm-leaf; that it was a ‘religious gift’ (*deyadharmā*),⁶ and probably an autograph,⁷ of

¹ One factor which may have played a role in this is the difficulty which scholars have—regrettably—sometimes experienced in obtaining microfilm or other types of reproduction from the Royal Asiatic Society. My own studies of manuscripts from this collection were mainly conducted during a series of visits to the Royal Asiatic Society in the late 1990s. I take this opportunity to thank the Royal Asiatic Society, and in particular its then librarian, Michael Pollock, for allowing me to examine and read manuscripts in the premises at 60 Queens Gardens (which have since then been left by the Society). I would also like to thank Dr Lalita du Perron, with whose help I was able to acquire a microfilm of Hodgson 35 in early 2001.

² For an edition of the *Guṇabharanī* see Sferra 2000. Prof Sferra informs me that he intends to publish a revised edition in the near future.

³ Edited first, on the basis of this manuscript, in de La Vallée Poussin 1898; a more recent edition, can be found in Takahashi 1993. In this case too a new edition is a desideratum (and one must hope that it will not again take nearly a hundred years in coming), in part because although Takahashi has used a manuscript of this work (the only other manuscript to be discovered so far: Tokyo University Library, MS 57), he was not able to use Hodgson 69 directly, but had to rely on de La Vallée Poussin’s reporting of the manuscript.

⁴ On the manuscripts of the *Caṇḍamahāroṣaṇatantra* and their relationship see the discussion in George 1974, 5–12. George’s failure to realize that his manuscript A is the direct ancestor of B—his interesting analysis of the relationships of the manuscripts seems to conclude that the three oldest manuscripts (A, B and C) are all independent of each other (cf. e.g. George 1974, 12, Table 3)—was caused mainly by the fact that he evidently collated the sources only for the first eight chapters of the text, the portion which he edited. The testimony of Hodgson 46 is, however, lacking for the greater part of these chapters (from 2.41 to 6.6 of George’s edition), so that George had too small a sample to assess accurately the importance of this manuscript and its place in the transmission.

⁵ Isaacson 2002, 460–461. Footnotes 6–9 here reproduce without change footnotes 9–12 of the original publication.

⁶ After the colophon of the *Hevajrasahasadyoga*, there is a further colophon, which I transcribe (without emendation or normalization) thus: *deyadharmmo ’yam pravaramahāyānāyāyinām* [here 5–6 *akṣaras* have been rubbed out, the last of which possibly was *śrī*] *ya* [perhaps this *akṣara* was intended to be cancelled too?] *śākyabhikṣumahāsthaviraśrīvanaratnapādānām yad atra puṇyan tad bhavatu* [the *akṣara dbha* has been squeezed in, possibly by a later hand] *ācāryopadhyaṃyāmātipiṭṭrabhṛtisamastatvānām iti* (f. 45v10). One expects that this would have been originally intended to be the end of the codex, but if so, the scribe changed his mind, for there follow further folios, numbered continuously and in the same hand.

⁷ Or if not an autograph certainly prepared under close supervision of Vanaratna. The manuscript contains a verse that refers to Vanaratna in the first person (*mayā śrīvanaratnena* f. 50v8), and gives for several of the works/teachings that it contains guru-lineages that all end with the name

Vanaratna; and that the date of its copying therefore probably lies between AD 1426 and AD 1468,⁸ rather than some time in the late eighteenth century.⁹

These few sentences,¹⁰ and the accompanying rather compressed footnotes, only scratched the surface of the interest and importance of a manuscript that is one of a kind. In the present paper, the first of a series of shorter publications on what I shall call the Vanaratna Codex,¹¹ I draw attention to a few more references to Tibetan scholars found in this important document,¹² and consider some of the remarkable implications of those references.

The following lineage of teachers is given at f. 76r10–76v1, after the text of a *Marmopadeśa*.¹³

of Vanaratna (ff. 50v9–10, 55v6–7, 68r2–4, 76r10–76v1, 77r3–5). Some of the evidently ‘scribal’ material emphasizes the secrecy of these teachings; at one place, for instance, we read that the scribe has ‘written this special teaching so that I may not forget it; may the *dākas*, *dākinīs* etc., [and] all the wrathful deities forgive [me for putting so secret a teaching down in writing]’ (*ayaṃ viśiṣṭopadeśo ‘vismaraṇahetor mayā likhitaṃ* (sic for *likhito*) *ḍākaḍākinīyādayaḥ sarvā* (sic for *sarvāḥ*) *krodhadēvatāḥ kṣamantām iti* f. 52v10).

⁸ Assuming the commonly given dates for Vanaratna’s first trip to Tibet and for his death. For these dates, and for a biography of Vanaratna, see *Blue Annals* II, 797–805. The reason for placing the *terminus post quem* at the date of Vanaratna’s first visit to Tibet is that the manuscript contains several references to celebrated Tibetan teachers such as Milarepa (Mi la ras pa; written *mileraspa* at f. 68r3) and Ko brag pa (*kobraḥpādēna* f. 75v10), and to the Tibetan language (*sambhoṭabhāṣānuḡaṃ* f. 73v7).

⁹ As Cowell and Eggeling suggest when they write ‘Very minutely written about the end of the last century’ (1876, 26). Although I am not an expert in palaeography, the East Indian hand in which the manuscript is written seems more likely to me to be of the fifteenth than the eighteenth century.

¹⁰ Since they were written, important contributions to our knowledge of Vanaratna’s life and career have been made by Franz-Karl Ehrhard; see Ehrhard 2002 and 2004.

¹¹ In the future I hope to be able to devote a monograph to the codex. Though I would not claim to have proved that the Vanaratna Codex is an autograph of Vanaratna himself, as I do myself regard as extremely probable, the evidence, of which part was presented in Isaacson 2002 and quoted just above, seems to me to be sufficient to establish that, if it is not his autograph, it was copied at his instigation, and that its contents are a direct reflection of the texts and teachings studied by the famous pandit.

¹² In the case of some Tibetan authors and works referred to below, I add references to the Resource ID of the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre (TBRC); such references are not given in the case of particularly famous individuals (nor, of course, where I could not locate the individual concerned with any certainty in the TBRC database).

¹³ This work has yet to be identified; it is not identical with the *Marmopadeśa* (*Gnad kyi ḡdams pa*) attributed to a rNon pa ba chen po (?) that is found in the Tanjur (Tōhoku 2447 = Ōtani 3275); it remains to be tested whether it is a Sanskrit translation of a Tibetan work such as the *Mgon po leam dral sgrub thabs kyi ḡdams pa* (TBRC W1551), also known as i.a. *Sku rags ma’i gnad kyi ḡdams pa*, of the Sa skya pa author rDo rje rgyal po (TBRC

idānīm gurupāraparyāṃ likhyate|| virūpākṣaḥ| ḍombīherukaḥ| alalavajraḥ| garbharīpādaḥ|jayaśrījñānaḥ|ap rāptacandraḥ| śiṃha[f. 76v]|vajraḥ| vīravajraḥ|gaṅgādharaḥ| śākyajñānaḥ| śilālpagrhaḥ| mātulakāntāraḥ| ānandagarbhaḥ| panyāgraḥ| kīrtidhvajaḥ| ānandadhvajaḥ| āryadharmmarājaḥ| ratnaśrīḥ| vastraśilāḡuḡaḥ| puṇyadhvajaḥ| ānandaśrīḥ| gurusiddhaḥ| ānandamatidhvajaśrībhadraḥ| śrīvanaratnaḥ||

This list of names contains several surprises for a Sanskritist. Aprāptacandra, literally ‘Not-obtained moon’, is no normal name; and when we come to a name like Śilālpagrha, ‘Stone small house’, anyone with a little familiarity with Sanskrit onomastics will smell a rat, even though it might not necessarily be immediately apparent (if the Sanskritist has but small Tibetological experience) just where the rodent is. I must admit that when I first encountered the list, more than ten years ago, I simply filed these oddities away among many questions raised by the codex to be clarified later. It was not till quite a few years later, when my colleague Prof Jan-Ulrich Sobisch (Copenhagen), to whom I owe many thanks, kindly sent me a draft of his work on *Hevajra and Lam ’bras Literature of India and Tibet Seen Through the Eyes of Ames-zhabs* (now just recently published: Sobisch 2008) that the penny dropped, and I realized that what we have here is an Indo-Tibetan teaching lineage very close indeed to some of the Sa skya Lam ’bras lineages, culminating in transmission back to an Indian, Vanaratna.

The subject of the Sa skya lineages of their central tantric teaching, the Lam ’bras (‘Path with its Fruit’), is a complex one; for information on it I refer to Sobisch’s monograph of 2008 and his papers of 2002 and 2003.¹⁴ Rather than a detailed comparison, I shall here comment in brief on the list of the Vanaratna Codex.

Virūpākṣa, Ḍombīheruka

The list begins with two famous *siddha*-names: Virūpākṣa¹⁵ and Ḍombīheruka. The text of the *Marmopadeśa* itself makes it explicit that the teaching it contains is attributed

P127); the ‘Lam ’bras connection’ which will become apparent below lends such a preliminary hypothesis some *prima facie* plausibility. Although the *Marmopadeśa* is mentioned in the description of Hodgson 35 in Cowell and Eggeling (1876, 28), unlike some other texts in the codex, it has not found its way into the standard bibliography of Buddhist tantric works surviving in Sanskrit (Tsukamoto, Matsunaga and Isoda 1989).

¹⁴ For an online database of Sa skya lineage records, the result of a collaboration between the Ludwig-Maximilian-Universität München (LMU) and the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre (TBRC), see http://www.indologie.lmu.de/tibetan_lineages/index.htm.

¹⁵ Also known as Virūpa; but the Vanaratna Codex always uses the longer form of the name of this *siddha*.

to Ḍombīheruka.¹⁶ It is thus not surprising that, of the Sa skya lineages included in the online database of the LMU and TBRC, one of the closest to that of the *Marmopadeśa* is LORKL303, which is the lineage of initiation of the ‘Dombhi’ tradition (*dombhi lugs*), i.e. the practice and teaching lineage of Ḍombīheruka, as given by A mes žabs (CE 1597–1659).¹⁷ In that lineage Virūpa/Virūpākṣa is preceded by Vajradhara and Nairātmyā.

Alalavajra, Garbharīpāda, Jayaśrījñāna

In LORKL303, and commonly in similar Sa skya pa lineages, the name Nags khrod pa is inserted between Alalavajra and Garbharīpa (= Garbharīpāda; this variation is certainly non-substantive). I cannot determine at present whether the omission of a Sanskrit equivalent for this name in the *Marmopadeśa* lineage is an error of some kind, or whether we have here a genuine variant; nor is it clear what Sanskrit name may underlie Nags khrod pa (‘Forest hermit’: Aranyavāsin or Vanavāsin?).

Aprāptacandra

As mentioned above, this is a name likely to raise a Sanskritist’s eyebrows. It provides us, in fact, with an important clue as to the nature of the list in the Vanaratna Codex. For Aprāptacandra can be nothing but a wrong back-translation into Sanskrit of Mi thub zla ba, the normal Tibetan translation, found also in LORKL303, of Durjayacandra,¹⁸ the name of an Indian teacher who played a key role in systematizing the Ḍombīheruka tradition of Hevajra-practice.¹⁹ When the Tibetan master from whom Vanaratna received the *Marmopadeśa* recited the lineage of the teaching, the Indian

¹⁶ The opening verse runs:

ādināthaṃ namaskṛtvā śūnyāśūnyasvabhāvakaṃ
ḍombīheruka-āmnāyaṃ (!) likhyate ’kṣarasādhanaṃ||

¹⁷ Also A myes žabs; I follow the orthography (though, simply as a matter of my own conventions, not the Wylie transliteration system) used by Sobisch in his publications on this theme.

¹⁸ It has recently been suggested that the Sanskrit name that is rendered usually into Tibetan as Mi thub zla ba was not Durjayacandra but Durgacandra (Stearns 2001, 212 n. 34). In itself it is not very implausible that *mi thub* should be a reflex of Sanskrit *durga* (although I am not aware of any certain attestation of this). But the form Durjayacandra is not merely a reconstruction, as Stearns apparently thought, but is well attested in sources which survive in their original Sanskrit. Most of these sources are at present unpublished; these include one of the central works pertaining to the Ḍombīheruka-tradition of Hevajra practice, the *Ṣaḍaṅgasādhana*, which is contained in what I refer to as the *Hevajrasādhanaṣaṃgraha* codex, a unique manuscript photographed in Nor Monastery by Rāhula Sāṅkrīyāyana, on which see Isaacson 2002, 461–462 and Isaacson forthcoming *b*. A published source is the *Durjayacandrodhṛtaṃ Saptākṣarasādhanaṃ (Sādhanaṃālā* 250; see Tsukamoto, Matsunaga and Isoda 1989, 469).

¹⁹ Cf. Isaacson forthcoming *a*.

must have misheard Mi thub zla ba as Mi thob zla ba; and when he set the lineage down, translating the names into Sanskrit, he rendered this, reasonably enough, as Aprāptacandra. The error here clearly points to oral transmission of the names in Tibetan, for the change from *thub* to the phonetically very similar *thob* is unlikely in copying from a written source.

Siṃhavajra, Vīravajra, Gaṅgādhara

Of these names, Siṃhavajra has no equivalent in LORKL303, which therefore has Vīravajra (Dpa’ bo rdo rje) receiving the teaching directly from Durjayacandra.²⁰ Siṃhavajra is not unknown, however, in Sa skya pa Lam ’bras lineages; in LORKL249a,b,c,d,f,g (six alternative lineages of a transmission of the ‘three *Hevajratantras*’) Seṅ ge rdo rje (Siṃhavajra) together with Dpa’ bo rdo rje (Vīravajra) and Sgra can ’dzin (Rāhula) receives the teaching from Durjayacandra.

Gaṅgādhara obviously corresponds to Gayadhara, the famous Indian translator/teacher who played a key part in the transmission of the *Hevajratantra* and related teachings to Tibet.²¹ Gayadhara is however missing from the similar Ḍombīheruka and Hevajra-tantra lineages, which usually (as in e.g. LORKL303 and the various variants of LORKL249) have the transmission passing from Dpa’ bo rdo rje (Vīravajra) directly to ’Broḡ mi/Śākya ye śes (Śākyajñāna). It is hard to decide how we should evaluate Vanaratna’s ‘Gaṅgādhara’. In view of his Aprāptacandra above, one might well doubt whether it has any particular authority.

Śākyajñāna, Śilālpagrha, Mātulakāntāra

With Śākyajñāna the lineage moves to Tibetans, for this translates Śākya ye śes, the name of the great translator commonly known as ’Broḡ mi, ‘the nomad’. The bizarre sounding Śilālpagrha can now be recognized as a rendering in Sanskrit of Se mkhar chuñ ba, a name by which Se ston kun rig, one of the prominent students of ’Broḡ mi, is known; and the equally odd (to the Sanskritist) Mātulakāntāra (‘Maternal uncle’s wilderness’) is similarly an attempt to render Žaṅ dgon pa (ba), a designation of Žaṅ ston pa Chos ’bar.

²⁰ Thus also in the two closely related lineages LORKL230 (‘Dombhi ba’i ldan [i.e. lhan] cig skyes grub’ from a *gsan yig* of Kun dga’ bsod nams lhan grub recorded by A mes žabs) and LORKL393 (‘Dombhi lhan cig skyes grub’ from a *gsan yig* of A mes žabs).

²¹ For detailed recent treatments of Gayadhara’s life and visits to Tibet see Stearns 2001, esp. 47–55 and 91–99 (the latter section translating from the early biography of Lam ’bras masters, the *Žib mo rdo rje or Bla ma dam pa bod kyi lo rgyus* of Dmar ston Chos kyi rgyal po), and Davidson 2005, esp. 178–183 (Davidson consistently gives the name in the form Gayādhara).

Ānandagarbha, Paṇyāgra (sic!), Kīrtidhvaja, Ānandadhvaja, Āryadharmarāja

Here we come to a sequence with the names of the five Sa skya pa founding hierarchs, all famous teachers. There are no problems with identifications here. *paṇyāgraḥ* is, beyond doubt, simply a slip of Vanaratna's pen, for *puṇyāgraḥ*. With this obvious correction:

- Ānandagarbha = Kun dga' sñiñ po
- Puṇyāgra = bSod nams rtse mo
- Kīrtidhvaja = Grags pa rgyal mtshan
- Ānandadhvaja = Kun dga' rgyal mtshan (Sa skya Paṇḍita)
- Āryadharmarāja = Chos rgyal 'Phags pa ('Phags pa blo gros rgyal mtshan)

Ratnaśrī, Vāstraśilāguha, Puṇyadhvaja, Ānandaśrī

The four teachers (the second of whom again is given a Sanskrit name which is hardly conceivable except as an attempt to literally render a Tibetan one) who follow the five great Sa skya hierarchs in this list can all be identified with certainty. They take the lineage up to the fifteenth century.

- Ratnaśrī = dKon mchog dpal [TBRC P1062]
- Vāstraśilāguha = Na bza' brag phug, a.k.a. Bsod nams dpal [TBRC P3092]
- Puṇyadhvaja = bSod nams rgyal mtshan [TBRC P1226]
- Ānandaśrī = Kun dga' dpal [TBRC P2010]

Gurusiddha, Ānandatidhvajaśrībhadra, Vanaratna

With the last two names of the lineage before Vanaratna, uncertainty increases slightly. I am not quite sure with whom Gurusiddha is to be identified; perhaps Man lung gu ru [TBRC P5291] might be a candidate. As for Ānandatidhvajaśrībhadra, whose name precedes Vanaratna's in all the lineages found in the Vanaratna Codex, he may tentatively be identified with the Kun dga' rgyal mtshan dpal bzañ po (this name would give us, translated into Sanskrit, Ānandadhvajaśrībhadra) who is reported to have assisted Vanaratna in the transmission of the Cakrasaṃvara cycle at the court of the Phag mo gru pa rulers in AD 1453.²² This Kun dga' rgyal mtshan dpal bzañ po in turn may possibly be identical with the Kun dga' rgyal mtshan from sNe'u

²² See Ehrhard 2004, 255; I am very grateful to Prof Dr Franz-Karl Ehrhard for discussing the possible identity of Vanaratna's Ānandatidhvajaśrībhadra with me, and for drawing my attention to this prime candidate.

gdoñ who was an important teacher of one of Vanaratna's Tibetan students, Lo chen bsod nams rgya mtsho.²³ A less plausible alternative candidate might be the Śar ka ba Kun dga' blo gros rgyal mtshan,²⁴ for whom van der Kuijp proposes as dates 1365?1430/43.²⁵ Of this figure little is yet known; it will be interesting to see whether the as yet unpublished ninety-six-folio handwritten biography of him by (a) Rin chen bzañ po²⁶ sheds any light on him and on the possibility that he might have interacted with the Indian pandit.

The two lines of the Vanaratna Codex which have been examined here show us, as I hope to have demonstrated above, something remarkable. They are part of a record of a unique encounter, during which the Indian, who was fêted during his visits to Tibet and imparted many teachings there to Tibetan students, in his turn received from a Tibetan lama a series of esoteric instructions handed down within Tibet though supposed to be (ultimately) of Indian provenance. The light shed on fifteenth-century Indo-Tibetan interactions in the Himalaya may, I hope, serve as a small illustration of the ways in which the often neglected 'metatexts' in Sanskrit manuscripts sometimes provide evidence that significantly enriches our picture of social or religious (or, not infrequently, political) history, and not only in South Asia 'proper'.

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- ²³ On Lo chen bsod nams rgya mtsho and his interactions with Vanaratna we have the fine monograph-study Ehrhard 2002; on the Kun dga' rgyal mtshan from sNe'u gdoñ see especially 39ff.
- ²⁴ Whose name is given in the TBRC record (P2463) simply as Kun dga' blo gros, with as name variants Grub chen kun blo and Kun blo, grub chen.
- ²⁵ See van der Kuijp 1994, 604
- ²⁶ Mentioned by van der Kuijp 1994, 604 n. 21; the manuscript is in the China Nationalities Library of the Cultural Palace of Nationalities in Beijing.

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Article

The 'Announcement to the World Below' of Ma-wang-tui 馬王堆 3

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On 6 December 2007, Hsin-hua news agency reported that the owner of tomb 1 at Hsieh-chia-ch'iao 謝家橋 (HCC) had been identified as a noble lady named Hui 慧. The tomb is situated in the south-eastern part of today's city of Ching-chou 荊州 in Hupei and had been unearthed during a rescue excavation conducted from 20 November to 29 November 2007. In its eastern chamber, a silk bag was found containing a bundle of 208 bamboo strips and 3 bamboo tablets held together by silk threads. According to Hsin-hua, the contents of the documents mainly consist of the tomb inventory (*ch'ien-t's'e* 遣策) and an 'announcement to the world below' (*kao-ti shu* 告地書).¹

Other examples of this genre, which is unknown to transmitted literature, had previously been found in seven other tombs of early imperial China. They are believed to be communications to the bureaucracy of the world below, announcing the passage of the deceased from one world to the other. Chinese scholars have called them, amongst other things, *i-wu ch'üan* 衣物券, *wen-kao tu* 文告牘, *kao-mu shu* 告墓書, *kao-ti-hsia shu* 告地下書, *kao-ti ts'e* 告地策, or *kao-ti shu*, the latter two apparently having established themselves in the evolving terminology for the study of ancient manuscripts. These texts have been utilised to draw sometimes far-reaching conclusions on Chinese ideas of afterlife, even though in more than one case their exact meaning and function are far from clear. The most prominent of these 'announcements' is written on a wooden tablet unearthed from the eastern chamber of the outer coffin of tomb 3 of Ma-wang-tui 馬王堆 (MWT) (Fig. 1).

In 1981, Yü Ying-shih translated the 30 characters as transcribed and normalised in *Wen-wu* 1974.7, 43:

十二年乙巳朔戊辰家丞奮移主藏郎中移藏物一編書到先撰具奏主藏君

On *wu-ch'en* [24th] day, second month, the twelfth year [of Emperor Wen's reign, 168 BC] Household Assistant named Fen to *Lang-chung* in Charge of the Dead: A list of mortu-

ary objects is herewith forwarded to you. Upon receiving this document please memorialize without delay to the Lord of the Dead.

For Yü, the meaning is unambiguous:

Clearly, here Household Assistant Fen is notifying his counterpart in the underworld bureaucracy of the arrival of the newly deceased.²

This interpretation is based on Chinese scholarship and has been adopted by Anna Seidel and others in the West as *opinio communis*.³ But as Ch'en Song-ch'ang 陳松長 has shown in two articles from 1994 and 1997, there is evidence which casts doubt on this classification as a message to the world below.⁴ In what follows, I will summarise the arguments of Ch'en, then consider other so-called announcements and, finally, compare them with the specimen of MWT 3. A reference list of the materials is given in an appendix.

MWT 3

Contrary to Yü and others, Ch'en tries to show that the message was not addressed to some Chinese Hades, but to persons involved in the funeral rites. His main argument is based on a ritual text and a different reading of the text of the 'announcement':

According to the *Chi-hsi li* 既夕禮 (*Obsequies of an ordinary officer = I-li* 13), where the transport of coffin, gifts and funeral goods to the burial ground is outlined in some detail, all presents are noted down (書遣於策) and put on display. After the farewell offering, the scribe of the master of ceremony (主人之史) then reads out the list with a tally-man checking the presents. When the procession has reached

² Yü 1981–1982, 82.

³ Seidel 1985, 163; Seidel 1987, 25; for a recent contribution see Röllicke 2006.

⁴ Ch'en Sung-ch'ang 1994 and again 1997. –These articles seem to have escaped the attention of most Western scholars; Harper 1994 mentions the first one on page 17, n. 13.

¹ http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2007-12/06/content_7211907.htm (July 5, 2008). –Throughout this article, only non-simplified characters will be used.



Fig. 1: MTW 3: 'Announcement to the world below'



Fig. 2: MWT 3: Wooden board, part of the tomb inventory

the burial pit and the coffin has been lowered into the grave, vessels and offerings are 'stored' at the side of it (藏器於旁; 藏苞筭於旁).⁵

Ch'en normalises character 25 of the 'announcement' as 質

⁵ Text in ICS edition, 13/84/5, 20–22; 85/1–2; translation in Steele 1917, 2, 86, 89, 91; see also de Groot 1894, 390–394.

instead of 撰, and based on glosses to *Han-shu* giving 對 for 質, reads it as 'check against' (驗對).⁶ In this way, the text of the 'announcement' corresponds to the description of the ritual handbook, even though the wording is completely different. As further evidence, he adduces a wooden board with a table of part of the inventory of MWT 3 which bears a note from a second hand saying that 15 items had not been issued (乙笥凡十五物不發) (Fig. 2). According to Ch'en, this note was added during the process of comparing the gifts on display with the inventory.⁷ Finally, he reads the character appearing three times (14, 18 and 28; a graphic variant of 贓) not as *tsang* 葬, as is often done,⁸ but as *ts'ang* 藏, meaning 'store', just as in *Chi-hsi li*. In consequence then, the titles should be understood as 'chamberlain in charge of burial' and 'lord in charge of burial'.

According to the interpretation by Ch'en, the text might be transcribed and roughly translated as:

十二年乙巳朔戊辰，家丞奮移主藏郎中，移藏物一編，書到先質，具奏主藏君

Day *wu-ch'en*, new moon *i-ssu*, year 12: Majordomus Fen sending [it] to Chamberlain in charge of burial, sends a batch [of documents listing] burial goods. As soon as the documents have arrived, check [the goods according to the lists], and completely report to Lord in charge of burial.

Who was 'in charge of the burial'?

I-li 13 mentions a 'scribe of the duke' (*kung-shih* 公史) reading out the list of presents for a second time and an 'assistant minister of state' (*tsai-fu* 宰夫; Hucker No. 6816) sent by the duke with a parting gift. In the notes (*chi* 記) transmitted with this text, there is given the alternative for either 'the ruler being present at the major dressing' of the corpse (*chün shih lien* 君視斂), or if 'he does not wish to view the dressing, he comes after the lid has been put on and stays to the end'.⁹ The requirement for the ruler to be present at the funeral rites for his ministers and officers, or at least be represented by a high-ranking official, seems to have survived into early imperial times. An ordinance from 199 BC provides for soldiers having died in service to be brought back to their home district and

⁶ Ch'en Sung-ch'ang normalises differently in his two articles (1994 and 1997), but with the same result; for the glosses see HS 40/2048; 50/2318.

⁷ Ch'en Sung-ch'ang 2001 interprets strokes and hooks in the inventory on a wooden board from Yin-wan 6 as marks from the checker.

⁸ The excavation report has 葬 and mentions the other reading only en passant, see Ho 2004, 43.

⁹ Text in ICS edition 13/84/22, 25, 87/18; translation in Steele 1917, 89, 90, 104.

provided with a burial and offerings, supervised (*shih-tsang* 視葬) by the senior official (*chang-li* 長吏).¹⁰ If ordinary soldiers were thus rewarded, this must hold true even more so for members of the nobility. An ordinance from 148 BC gives detailed regulations for the funeral of kings and the lower nobility. Members of the latter were to be honoured by the presence of a representative of the imperial court overseeing the funeral (*shih sang-shih* 視喪事) and investing the heir. This ordinance also restricts expenditure at funerals which, together with a desire to control these important ritual events, might have been the original intention.¹¹ It surely does not mean that before this date funeral rites for noblemen were never performed with the participation of the imperial court.

An exceptional case from the time of empress Lü (reigned 187–180 BC) shows how even the funeral of the mother of the bearer of only an honorary title could become an important event: her son was poor and after a marquis had been persuaded to donate 100 pieces of gold for the funeral clothing, 'nobles and men of high position' (*lieh-hou kuei-ren* 列侯貴人) went and donated another 500 pieces of gold.¹² Funerals must have been important occasions for all participants to publicly display wealth and status (or the lack of either one).

We still do not know who the tomb owner of MWT 3 was, neither do we know the customs followed at the kingly courts during early Han; we cannot even exclude the possibility that some marquises tried to hold court in a manner resembling kings and emperors. But since the inventory of MWT 3 (which had not been disturbed!) mentions items 'received from the centre' (*shou-chung* 受中) as well as such 'received from the family in Lin-hsiang' (臨湘家), a relation of the deceased to the court in Ch'ang-sha or Ch'ang-an has to be presumed.¹³ The title 'lord in charge of the burial', therefore, probably refers to a representative of either one.¹⁴

Formulaic language in official documents

Ch'en has tried to explain the somewhat irritating double occurrence of 移 by referring to a formula found in a Han document from Chü-yen 居延. He thinks the second 移 should be understood as an ellipsis for 所移, but as the context of the

quoted document shows, this case is not comparable.¹⁵ Even though his argument is not convincing in this regard, the formula has some bearing on the problem under discussion. It seemingly was part of the official cover note for documents dispatched to some higher authority, and may be presented in the following way:

[date]

[sender]

kan yen chih 敢言之

[optional: content]

[adverbial modification of the following, in most cases *chin* 謹, sometimes *su* 速, 寫 or other]

i 移

[different types of lists, registers or files: *ho-chuang* 劾狀, *ming-chi* 名籍, *pu* 簿, *ying-shu* 應書, *yüan-shu* 爰書]

i-pien 一編

kan yen chih 敢言之¹⁶

Leafing through the edition of documents from Chü-yen by Hsieh Kuei-hua 謝桂華 and others, I have counted 28 occurrences of the complete form and 28 fragments which most probably also belong to this type.¹⁷ The phrase 一編 is clearly used in the sense of 'batch [of documents]', since in some cases not only one list, but two or more are mentioned.¹⁸

Returning to the 'announcement' of MWT 3, there are more discrepancies besides the second 移: the opening and closing formula 敢言之 ('presume to report') is missing; the phrase 一編 is not preceded by the title of document(s) dispatched, but by the words 藏物; the recipient never seems to be mentioned in official documents of this type (probably because the cover note and documents never came alone); lastly, and perhaps, most importantly: the attached documents are missing—the inventory had been placed in the western chamber. And yet, there were writings found in the eastern chamber, namely the contents of the library chest.

i pien 一編 or *i pien shu* 一編書?

The phrase 一編 does not seem to occur in transmitted literature of pre-imperial or early imperial times. There is one

¹⁰ HS 1A/65.

¹¹ HS 5/145.

¹² HS 43/2117

¹³ Ho 2004, 63, No. 236; the editors assume that 'centre' refers to the court of the king of Ch'ang-sha. The same wooden board mentions a 'family in Lin-hsiang' (臨湘家) which is usually understood to mean the seat of the Li family in the capital of Ch'ang-sha.

¹⁴ Ch'en Sung-ch'ang 1997; his article from 1994 mentions the possibility that the latter refers to the king of Ch'ang-sha.

¹⁵ 所移 seems to introduce and quote a document issued by a higher authority. —Ch'en quotes an early reference to the Chü-yen materials concerning FHS 168 by Ch'en Chih 1977, 76.

¹⁶ A typical example is A33–10.34A–B, discussed in Giele 2005, 375.

¹⁷ Hsieh 1987; it is a pity that in quite a few cases the photographs in Chung-kuo 1980 are illegible or even completely black.

¹⁸ I am grateful to Enno Giele (Tucson) who first drew my attention to the fact that 一編 must be a set phrase, since there are no occurrences with other numerals than one.



Fig. 3: KT 18: 'Announcement to the world below'; recto, verso

exception, though, to be found in the famous encounter of Chang Liang 張良 with the sage. The narrative reaches its climax with Chang Liang finally having got up early enough to receive 一編書 (a batch of writings), only later finding out that these were the *T'ai-kung ping-fa* 太公兵法.¹⁹ This wording must have been considered unusual even in the 7th

¹⁹ HS 40/2024; SC 55/2035.

century, when Yen Shih-ku 顏師古 felt the need to comment: 'pien is to join s.th. in a series; by joining bamboo strips and wooden boards books were made' (編謂聯次之也, 聯簡牘以為書).

Since four-word-phrases beginning with *shu tao* 書到 are quite frequent in Han documents, it is unlikely that one should read 移藏物一編書, 到先質. However, there still remains the possibility that a reduplication mark following 書 was forgotten or has disappeared. Then the phrase 移藏物一編書 might be translated as 'sends funeral goods and a batch of writings' or 'sends a batch of writings as funeral goods'.

The formula *kan yen chih* 敢言之 in 'announcements' In the 'announcement' on a wooden board unearthed from tomb 18 of Kao-t'ai 高台 (KT) situated about 100 m east of the wall of Chi-nan 紀南, the capital Ying 郢 of ancient Ch'u, the formula *kan yen chih* 敢言之 occurs where it might be expected (Fig. 3):

recto: [date]

[sender]

敢言之

[content]

書到為報

敢言之

[date]

[sender]

敢移

[recipient]

亭手

verso, bottom left: 產手

This arrangement corresponds in all respects to the format of Han official documents before the middle of the second century BC as analysed by Enno Giele: a message written by one official who 'signs' *verso*, bottom ('so-and-so handled [this]'), with notes or decisions added by other officials in between.²⁰ Even the toponym An-tu 安都 (City of peace), which is resonant with otherworldly associations, has been identified with a short-lived marquisate established in 176 BC.²¹ In other words: the 'announcement' of KT 18 appears just like (the copy of) an ordinary document issued in

²⁰ Giele 2005, 364, n. 33 on the 'announcement' from KT 18: 'here it is much more difficult to decide whether different hands were involved or not'.

²¹ SC 19/1000; HS 15A/432; Wang 1995 vol. 1, 148 quotes Ch'ien Ta-chao 錢大昭 who identifies An-tu with ruins 39 miles south-east from Kao-yang, then Chihli, today Hopei; for An-tu as home of the deceased see Huang 2000, 224.

173 BC forwarding the request to change the place of registration (*shou ming-shu* 受名數) to the office responsible.

The 'announcement' from tomb 8 of K'ung-chia-p'o 孔家坡 (KCP) (Fig. 4) is similar in form to that of KT 18. It has the opening *kan yen chih*, asks the recipient to register the deceased (*shou shu* 受數) and also has a 'signature' *verso*. In comparison with other 'announcements', however, the text seems to be incomplete, since the list of persons and goods accompanying the deceased is neither followed by a verb, nor is the formula *kan yen chih* repeated. Furthermore, in the second entry (probably by a different hand) a *ti-hsia ch'eng* 地下丞 (deputy of the world below) is mentioned as the recipient. This seems to be the only exception, thus far, to the rule that the world below is addressed by the verb *kao* 告 ('announce').²²

Since only the first part of the 'announcement' of HCC 1 has been published, it is not possible to draw any conclusions on its usage of the formula *kan yen chih*.

References to the world below in 'announcements'

There are more 'announcements' explicitly addressed to the world below. They also make use of formulaic language, namely of *kan kao* 敢告 ('presume to announce') or *ching kao* 敬告 ('respectfully announce') addressing some authority *ti-hsia* 地下 ('below the ground') or, once, a *t'u-chu* 土主 ('master of land').

Three or, if an emendation of Ch'en is accepted, four 'announcements' belong to this type: those from tomb 1 Mao-chia-yüan 毛家園 (MCY), tombs 168 and 10 at Feng-huang-shan 鳳凰山 (FHS), all in the southern part of the ancient Ch'u capital and lastly, the 'announcement' from tomb 5 at Hu-ch'ang 胡場 (HC) in Chiangsu. The first three all begin with the formula, only FHS 168 uses it at the end, FHS 10 does not; MCY 1 is only partially published. Just as with *kan yen chih*, they list in different wording persons and goods accompanying the deceased, with these lists sometimes being introduced by a third person.

HC 5 is peculiar, not only because of its late date (70 BC) and its remoteness from the centre of ancient Ch'u, but also because it reports a legal case, thus in some sense resembling KT 18. The tomb owners have died prematurely, the man at the age of about 30 years and, the woman probably before reaching her twenties, which has led the editors of the preliminary excavation report to speculate that their death was caused by punishment or poor treatment. Furthermore, a

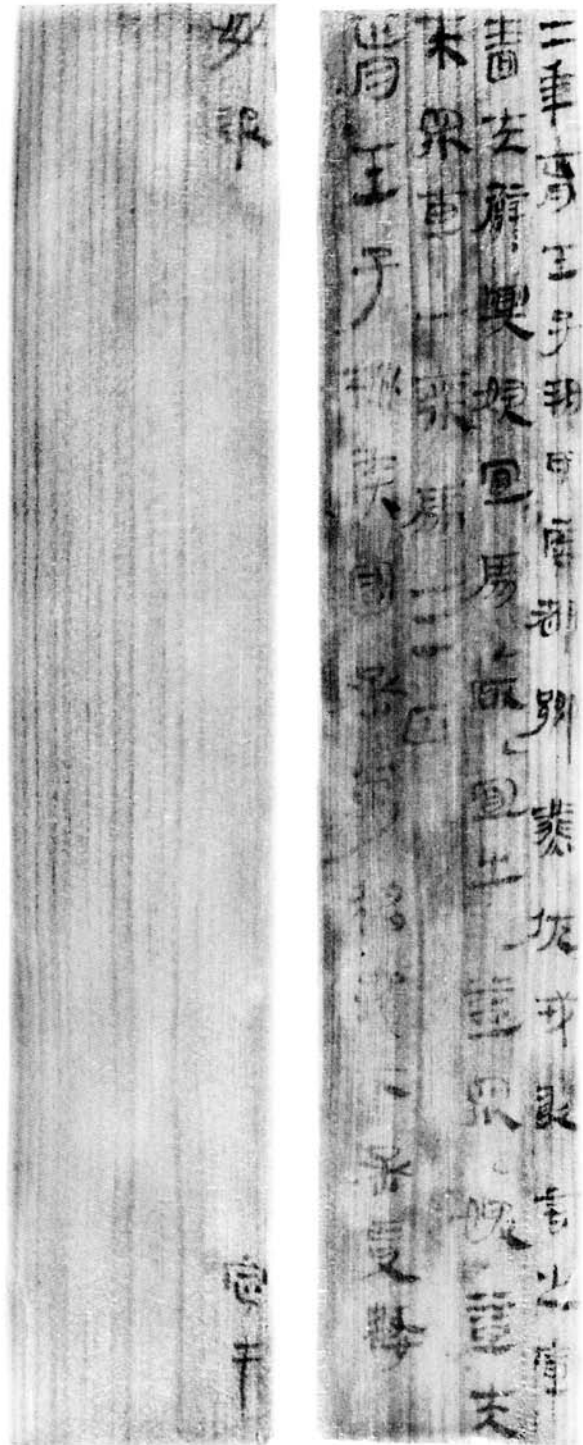


Fig. 4: KCP 8: 'Announcement to the world below'; verso, recto

'master of land', the recipient of the 'announcement' seems to be otherwise unknown in contemporaneous sources. Finally, HC 5 has in its second entry (only the year is given!) a formula well known from Han documents: *ch'eng-shu ts'ung-shih ju lü-ling* 承書從事如律令 ('upon receiving this letter, set to work according to the statutes and ordinances')²³. This

²² Another problem is posed by the sender in the second entry, the major-domus of a marquisate of T'ao (桃侯國丞), since there must have existed two fiefs with the same title; Wu 2007, 7 has tried to bring light into this matter.

²³ See Giele 2005 for terminology.

formula is usually reserved for higher authorities to instruct the lower echelons. HC 5 is clearly not listing any funeral goods at all, but giving notice of a legal case and, perhaps, filing a suit in the pit (移詣穴).

The term *tzu-yen* 自言

Both formulas, *kan yen chih* as well as *kan kao/ching kao*, are found in conjunction with the legal term *tzu-yen* 自言 ('to report in person')²⁴, the former in HCC 1 and KT 18, the latter in MCY 1 and FHS 168. In all instances, the sequence is as follows:

[date]
[sender]
kan yen chih or *kan kao* or *ching kao*
[another person as subject of]
tzu-yen
[accompanying persons and / or funeral goods]
[...]

For KT 18 and FHS 168, the funeral goods prove that the person named as the subject of *tzu-yen* is the tomb owner. In the case of MCY 1, this is at least possible (and indeed proposed by the preliminary report); for HCC 1, it is a son of the deceased. This means that these 'announcements' are intimately related to the funeral goods and to the burial.

Inventory and 'announcement'

It may not be mere accident that in three of the tombs inventory and 'announcement' were physically joined, the one from FHS 10 on the same wooden board; the one from HCC 1 in the same silk bag; the one from KT 18 was bound together with three wooden boards consisting of an address label, a list of persons identical with those of the 'announcement', and the inventory. The one from FHS 168 was placed in the side chamber together with the strips of the inventory originally perhaps joined to them in some way; the position of inventory and 'announcement' of MCY 1 is still unknown. No inventory was found in KCP 8, but there are images of six slaves, a carriage baldachin and three horses perfectly matching the figures given for the entourage in the 'announcement'.

Only the 'announcements' from HC 5 and MWT 3 are not immediately related to an inventory; the first one lacking it, the second one spatially separated from it.

Synopsis of some features of 'announcements' (see Table 1) The table allows for some tentative conclusions, even if the number of 'announcements' is far from being significant:

The evidence suggests the existence of two sets of formulae, one more or less faithfully copying the style of contemporary administrative documents (*kan yen chih*), one perhaps resorting to more archaic language and directly, albeit politely, addressing the authorities below (*kan* or *ching kao ti-hsia*)²⁵. There are hybrid 'announcements' (KCP 8) and there is one concerned with a legal case (HC 5), but almost all are in some way or another related to the funeral goods and, if present, the inventory, which supports Giele's assumption that they originated as cover notes for the tomb inventory. Distribution in space (5 from the capital region of ancient Ch'u in southern Hupei; 1 from central Hupei; 1 from Hunan; 1 from Chiangsu) as well as in time (7 between 183 and 142 BC, 1 from 70 BC) may be responsible for this remarkable variety up to a certain degree, but KT 18 (174 BC) is only seven years earlier than FHS 168 (167 BC) and separated by the city wall of Chi-nan and perhaps 500 m, and yet each represents a different type. This probably reflects differences in background, status and observances.

The table also shows that the 'announcement' of MWT 3 is completely different from all others. It is most probably unique—just like the MWT complex *in toto*. With the exception of *i* 移 (send), not even one term agrees with the language of the other specimen of this 'genre'. It should, therefore, be deleted from the list of 'announcements'. Of course, if it was intentionally placed in the eastern chamber, it is part of the tomb ensemble and has to be interpreted in this context. But this holds true for other objects as well which were originally produced for different purposes.

Post scriptum

After having prepared the above text for publication, Professor Ch'en sent me a recent publication of his discussing more or less the same topic.²⁶ He quotes from Ch'in administrative documents found in Li-yeh 里耶 to show that the form of the 'announcements' is adopted from official letters, which nicely fits the evidence given by Giele. He does not only delete MWT 3 from the list of announcements, but also HC 5, because he thinks the latter was written at a time when the person mentioned in the text was still alive.

²⁴ I am grateful to Ulrich Lau (Berlin) who drew my attention to Lien 1987, 60 who quotes HS 97A/3962.10 and the commentary of Yen Shih-ku HS 97A/3963 glossing as: 自訟理. —Lau defines the meaning of *tzu-yen* based on his corpus of legal texts: 'persönlich (der Behörde) melden' (personal communication 5.10.08).

²⁵ For administrative usage see Giele 2006, 113: 'in Han times *gān gào* must have already been an archaic expression that perhaps only the well educated knew how to use appropriately'.

²⁶ Ch'en Sung-ch'ang 2008.

Table 1: Synopsis of some features of 'announcements'

	formula			second entry		
	inventory	opening	closing	tzu-yen		'signature'
HC 5	-	敢告土主	-	-	承書從事如律令	-
FHS 10	+	敢告地下主	-	-	-	-
FHS 168	+	敢告地下丞	敢告主	+	-	-
MCY 1	+	敬告地下主	?	+	?	?
HCC 1	+	敢言之	?	+	?	?
KCP 8	-	敢言之	-	-	移地下丞	+(1)
KT 18	+	敢言之	敢言之	+	敬移安都丞	+(2)
MWT 3	-	-	-	-	-	-

Appendix: Reference list of 'announcements'

The following list is meant for quick reference only. The 'announcements' are given in chronological order of their first date of publication with the texts taken from the cited sources, transcribed into non-simplified and normalised characters with punctuation and, in a few instances, commented upon and corrected. In those cases where no photographs have been published, the transcriptions should be treated with even greater caution. Western dates are given according to Hsü 1997.

No. 1. FHS 10: Feng-huang-shan 鳳凰山

四年後九月辛亥，平里五大夫張偃敢告地下主：偃衣器物所以祭具器物，可令吏以律令從事

Site: in south-eastern corner of ancient Ch'u capital Ying 郢, today Chi-nan 紀南, to the north of Ching-chou 荊州, Hubei.

Date: year 4 of emperor Ching, additional month 9, day 8 (25.10.153 BC).

Source: Ch'iu 1974, 49: wooden tablet No. 1, *verso*; reproduction in 'Chiang-ling Feng-huang-shan shih hao mu ch'u-tu mu-tu' 1974, plate V.2—most of the characters are hardly decipherable at all. Transcription as given in Ch'en Sung-ch'ang 1997.

The text follows an inventory beginning *recto* and continuing for one column *verso*.

No. 2. MWT 3: Ma-wang-tui 馬王堆

十二年乙巳朔戊辰，家丞奮移主藏郎中，移藏物一編，書到先質，具奏主藏君

Site: in the eastern part of Ch'ang-sha 長沙, Hunan; the wooden board was found in the eastern chamber where also

the lacquer chest containing the tomb library had been deposited, whereas the inventory had been stored in the western chamber.

Date: year 12 of emperor Wen, month 2, day 24 (4.4.168 BC).

Source: Ch'en Sung-ch'ang 1994; first report in Hu-nan and Chung-kuo 1974; photographs in many volumes on MWT, of fairly good quality are those in Ho 2004, colour plate XVII.1, plate XX. 1.

No. 3. FHS 168: Feng-huang-shan 鳳凰山

十三年五月庚辰，江陵丞敢告地下丞：市陽五大夫遂自言：與大奴良等廿八人、大婢益等十八人、軺車二乘、牛車一兩、口馬四匹、騶馬二匹、騎馬四匹，可令吏以從事，敢告主

Site: see No. 1 (FHS 10); bamboo board with five flattened surfaces used as columns for writing; together with inventory at the bottom of the middle of the side chamber.

Date: year 13 of emperor Wen, month 5, day 13 (10.6.167 BC).

Source: Hu-pei sheng wen-wu k'ao-ku yen-chiu-so 1993, 499, plate XI; first report and discussions in Chi-nan 1975 and 'Kuan-yü Feng-huang-shan i-liu-pa hao Han-mu tso-t'an chi-yao' 1975.

Name Sui 遂 written as on a seal found in the tomb.

Images and funeral goods do not only match the short list in the 'announcement', but also most of the inventory.

No. 4. HC 5: Hu-ch'ang 胡場

卅七年十二月丙子朔辛卯，廣陵宮司空長前丞口敢告土主：廣陵石里男子王奉世有獄事，事已復，故郡鄉//里遣自致移詣穴

冊八年，獄計承書從事如律令

Site: 7 km west of Yang-chou 揚州, Chiangu, the two wooden boards with the 'announcement' were found in the side chamber.

Date: year 47 of the first king of Kuang-ling, month 12, day 16 (23.1.70 BC).

Source: Yang-chou and Han-chiang 1981, 17 (here, the reduplication mark following 事 has not been taken into account for the transcription); plates.

No. 5. MCY 1: Mao-chia-yüan 毛家園

十二年八月壬寅朔己未，建卿疇敬告地下主：泗陽關內侯官大夫精死自言：以家屬臣牛從令牒書所具……

Site: in south-east corner of Chi-nan, 110 m from Feng-huang-shan to the west, 190 m from south wall of Chi-nan.; no location is given for the 'announcement', neither for the inventory mentioned.

Date: year 12 of emperor Wen, month 8, day 18 (22.9.168 BC).

Source: Yang 1987, 204; no photograph; incomplete.

No. 6. KT 18: Kao-t'ai 高台

七年十月丙子朔庚子，中鄉起敢言之：新安大女燕自言：與大奴甲、乙、大婢妨徙安都，謁告安都受名數，書到為報，敢言之

十月庚子，江陵龍氏丞敬移安都丞 亭手 產手背

Site: about 100 m outside of east wall of Chi-nan; the boards were placed in the head chamber.

Date: year 7 of emperor Wen, month 10, day 25 (4.12.174 BC).

Source: Huang 1994; id., 2000, 222; table 163.1-2, colour plate 20.1-2, plate 34.1-2; first report in Hu-pei sheng Ching-chou ti-ch'ü po-wu-kuan 1993.

[Punctuation added by Michael Friedrich].

Originally probably bound with three wooden boards: one with address (An-tu 安都) and sender (Chiang-ling ch'eng yin 江陵丞印), one with a list of persons and the status of the family corresponding to the 'announcement'; one with inventory.

No. 7. KCP 8: K'ung-chia-p'o 孔家坡

二年正月壬子朔甲辰，都鄉燕佐戎敢言之：庫嗇夫辟與奴宜馬、取、宜之、益眾，婢益夫、末眾，車一乘，馬三匹

正月壬子，桃侯國丞萬移地下丞，受數正毋報 定手背

Site: Sui-chou 隨州 in central Hupei, not far from the tomb of count I of Tseng; the wooden board with the 'announce-

ment' was found next to a *li-rih* 歷日 for the same year in the head chamber; second entry probably by second hand.

Date: It is impossible to have a *chia-ch'en* day in a month commencing with *jen-tzu*. The editors, therefore, suggest in agreement with the second date that the beginning should be read as 二年甲辰朔壬子: year 2 of the Later origin 後元 of emperor Ching, month 1, day 9 (3.3.142 BC).

Images of six slaves, a carriage baldachin and three horses perfectly matching the figures given in the 'announcement' were found; no inventory.

Source: Hu-pei sheng wen-wu and Sui-chou 2006, 197; photographs: 125, colour plate 4.

No. 8. HCC 1: Hsieh-chia-ch'iao 謝家橋

五年十一月癸卯朔庚午……西鄉虎敢言之：郎中大夫昌自言：母大女子恚死，以衣器葬具……

Site: Sha-shih-ch'ü 沙市區 in south-eastern part of Ching-chou.

Date: year 5 of empress Lü, month 11, day 28 (26.12.184 BC).

Source: http://news.xinhuanet.com/newscenter/2007-12/06/content_7211907.htm (July 5, 2008); no photograph; incomplete.

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Picture credits:

Fig. 1: Ho 2004, plate XX. 1.

Fig. 2: *ibid.*, plate LI. 407.

Fig. 3: Huang 2000, plate 34.1–2.

Fig. 4: Hu-pei sheng wen-wu and Sui-chou 2006, fig. 125.

Article

Tai Manuscripts in the Dhamma Script Domain: Surveying, Preservation and Documentation, Part 1

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From 22–23 March 2001, an international conference on ‘Studies of History and Literature of Tai Ethnic Groups’ was convened in Chiang Mai under the auspices of the Japanese Toyota Foundation. Two dozen philologists and historians from Thailand, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), China, Japan, the United States and Germany came together to examine the research of the past and to explore new directions for future studies. They underscored a disturbing trend: While during the last three decades the corpus of accessible primary source material—notably manuscripts and inscriptions—has increased enormously, the number of scholars able to read and analyse this material has decreased dramatically in the same period. This observation not only pertains to the decline of philologically oriented ‘Thai and Lao Studies’ in Europe and North America but also to the academic environment in Southeast Asia itself, where basic research in the fields of philology, history and literary studies is under pressure to justify its ‘social relevance’.

There is no reason for Thai-Lao (Tai) philology to put on sackcloth and ashes. On the contrary, the present writer will try to demonstrate that Tai manuscripts provide an extensive, fascinating, and rewarding field of research for scholars coming from a wide range of disciplines—linguistics, philology, history, religious studies, and others. This article will give an overview of how manuscripts have been surveyed, registered, documented, and edited in the Tai speaking areas of Southeast Asia and Southwest China. The geographical scope will be limited, mainly for practical reasons, to those areas where the Dhamma script (*tua aksòn tham*) was either used for writing religious texts (thus the script’s name) or became the only script for religious as well as secular texts. In ethno-linguistic terms, this is a region that includes Lao (Laos and Northeast Thailand or Isan), Tai Yuan (Northern Thailand), Tai Khün (Chiang Tung or Kengtung), and Tai Lü (Sipsòng Panna). In historical terms, this is the land under the political and cul-

tural influence of the kingdoms of Lan Na and Lan Sang. In the middle of the sixteenth century, the two kingdoms were united and ruled, albeit for a very short period, by a Lao king and his son.¹

The ‘Dhamma script domain’ comprises an area of more than 400,000 square kilometres, with a population of approximately 30 million inhabitants, of which more than 80 per cent are native speakers of Tai languages. The earliest evidence of the Dhamma script, probably a derivative of the ancient Mon alphabet of Hariphunchai,² is from the year 1376. It is a Pāli inscription of one single line discovered in the early 1980s on a golden leaf in a *cetiya* in Sukhothai.³ The earliest datable evidence of the Dhamma script used for writing a vernacular Northern Thai text that has been identified so far is inscribed on the pedestal of a Buddha image housed in Wat Chiang Man in the city of Chiang Mai. This inscription dates from 1465. It comprises two short lines (mentioning the names of Buddhist dignitaries who supported the casting of the Buddha image as well as the name of the laywomen who sponsored it), that are preceded by two lines written in Pāli.⁴ Since the late sixteenth century, the Dhamma script has become the main media of written communication in Lan Na, replacing two other scripts that were used for secular texts. The first, called *tua aksòn fak kham* or ‘Tamarind-Pod script’, appears to have been used almost exclusively for inscriptions.⁵ The

¹ King Photisarath (r. 1520–1548) married the daughter of King Ket Kao of Lan Na. His son Sai Settha, became ruler of Chiang Mai in 1546 but returned to Luang Prabang, the Lao capital of that time, after his father’s death in 1548. King Sai Setthathirat, however, did not renounce the throne of Lan Na until 1551.

² Penth (1992, 60) argues on the basis of epigraphical evidence found in the Chiang Mai-Lamphun area that ‘the Tham script had been the local Mon script of Lamphun around 1250–1300 which the Thai Yuan naturally used when they study religious matter’.

³ The whole inscription runs over four lines. Three lines are written in Thai language and Sukhothai script; only the fourth line, containing a Pāli phrase, uses the Dhamma script. See Udom 1999, 2363. Cf. Hundius 1990a, 119.

⁴ Hundius 1990b, 10 n. 1.

⁵ According to Penth (1992, 52 and 76), the Fak Kham script spread further north to the region of Chiang Tung and beyond. From the fact that a Chinese

* This article draws upon several published and unpublished papers by Harald Hundius. I am grateful to him for giving his kind permission to use this material. However, any shortcomings in the analysis are my own responsibility.

second and relatively short-lived variant, called *tua aksòn thài nithet*, has been used mainly for transmitting works of classical Lan Na poetry.⁶ In the decades after 1850, the Thai Nithet script fell out of use and the Dhamma script eventually became the exclusive ‘script of the country’ (*tua müang*).

The diffusion of the Dhamma script in the Upper Mekong region has still to be studied thoroughly. However, based on our present state of knowledge, we may assume that the script spread from Lan Na to Chiang Tung and Chiang Rung (Sipsòng Panna) no later than the mid-fifteenth century. It ultimately reached Lan Sang, where it made its first documented appearance in 1520/21 (CS 882) in a monolingual Pāli palm-leaf manuscript kept at the Provincial Museum in Luang Prabang (formerly the Royal Palace).⁷ The oldest epigraphical evidence of the Dhamma script in Lan Sang is from an inscription in Luang Prabang, dated 1527.⁸ This occurred during the reign of King Phothisarath (1520–1547), when cultural and dynastic relations between Lan Na and Lan Sang became very close. Unlike Sipsòng Panna and Chiang Tung, Lan Sang developed a secular script nowadays called ‘Old Lao script’ (*tua aksòn lao buhan*). According to Lorrillard, ‘the first true example’ of an inscription in secular Lao script is from a stele found in the central Lao town of Thakhek. Though influenced by the Fak Kham script of Lan Na, the secular Lao script also shows traces of independent development.⁹

The Lao, Lan Na and Tai Lü versions of the Dhamma script are very similar to one another, and the lexemes of the Lao, Lan Na and Tai Lü languages are to a very high degree identical.¹⁰ Manuscripts in these languages and scripts from

Laos, Northern or Northeast Thailand, and Sipsòng Panna can be read and, to a certain extent, understood by anyone literate in any one of them. However, somebody reading a manuscript from a different region would normally pronounce the written words according to the phonology of his or her own mother tongue. For example, words written with consonants representing the voiced Pāli sounds of /b/, /d/, /g/ are pronounced in Lao as voiceless aspirated /ph/, /th/, /kh/, whereas they are pronounced in Lan Na as voiceless unaspirated /p/, /t/, /k/. Another example is that in spoken Tai Lü, the historical diphthongs /ia/, /ua/, /ua/ have been monophthongised into /e/, /ə/, and /o/, and their written forms are pronounced accordingly. Texts written in Pāli language in any of these scripts are normally read according to the phonology of the vernacular. Lastly, orthographic usage in general is not strictly consistent, which adds to the number of variant spellings of the same title. These will be left unchanged, as they do not pose a problem to the user.

1. Inventories and Documentations

The earliest systematic efforts of surveying and documenting traditional manuscripts, mostly kept in monastic libraries but some also in private households, started in Northern Thailand already in the 1960s. Given the relative political stability of Thailand in the second half of the twentieth century, this does not come as a surprise. Political unrest and civil war in the rest of the region delayed similar efforts among Thailand’s neighbours. Civil war in Laos ended in December 1975 with the proclamation of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic. The revolutionary regime neglected the cultural and literary heritage of the country during the initial phase of socialist transformation and took a renewed interest in the preservation of traditional Lao literature only in the late 1980s. The neglect of the Tai cultural and literary heritage was most significant in Yunnan (China), where even Buddhist temples and the manuscripts they harboured were deliberately destroyed on an unprecedented scale during the so-called ‘Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution’. Serious efforts toward the preservation and documentation of Tai manuscripts in China began in the late 1990s. In Myanmar the situation appears to be most difficult, as the ruling military regime seems to regard projects that aim at a systematic survey of the literary heritage of non-Burman ethnic groups,

polyglot collection of dictionaries and documents from ten *tusi* (non-Chinese tributary states or ‘Pacification Commissionerships’ of the Ming and Qing dynasties) include examples from Chiang Mai written in Fak Kham script, Penth concludes that this script had been the ‘official script of Lan Na’ for quite a long period. The holdings of the Tōyō Bunko (Tokyo) contain bilingual (Tai-Chinese) memorials presented by various Tai vassal rulers to the Ming court. One of these memorials was sent by the king (*cao*) of Lan Na, probably by King Müang Kaeo (r. 1495–1526), in c. 1522; it is written in Fak Kham script. For details, see Liew-Herres et al. 2008, 152–155.

⁶ This script has also been known by the misleading name *tua aksòn khòt müang*. See Penth 1992, 53.

⁷ The palm-leaf manuscript, written in a Lao variant of the Dhamma script, is a copy of parts of the Parivāra. A copy of this manuscript is accessible in the collection of the Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts (DLLM) in Vientiane. I thank Harald Hundius and David Wharton for providing me a frame showing the date of the manuscript.

⁸ See Lorrillard 2005, 372.

⁹ Ibid., 371.

¹⁰ This can bring about incorrect classifications of Tai manuscripts by researchers not sufficiently familiar with the regional variations of the Dhamma script. For example, almost all manuscript listed by Wenk (1975)

in his catalogue of Lao manuscripts in Germany are in fact Lan Na manuscripts. The same holds true for Cœdes’ catalogue of Pāli, Lao and Siamese manuscripts, all ‘Lao’ manuscripts being of Northern Thai provenance. See Cœdes 1966.

such as the Shan or Tai Khün, as a potential challenge to the political unity of Myanmar.¹¹

In the context of preservation and documentation of ancient Tai manuscripts, one often encounters the colloquial term ‘Palm-leaf Manuscript Projects’ (Thai: *khrongkan bai lan* โครงการใบลาน). Though it is true that palm-leaves were the preferred material for writing traditional texts, due to their durability in the humid climate of Southeast Asia,¹² other writing materials were also used. A small, but not insignificant, number of Northern Thai and Lao manuscripts are leporello manuscripts made of paper. The standard paper pulp is derived from the *sa* tree, a kind of mulberry (*Brousonetia papyrifera*). Thus the folding books made of mulberry paper are colloquially called *pap sa* (*pap* being a word meaning a folding book similar to the Siamese *samut khòì*).¹³ In addition, bound books exist, notably in the Tai Lü areas, where each piece of paper has been folded over once vertically, so that it becomes much longer than it is broad. By folding the paper, both the front and the back page of one sheet can be used for writing. These sheets of paper are sewn together along one of the vertical sides. This kind of manuscript is called *pap hua* (พับหัว).¹⁴

In the manuscript tradition of the Tai Lü and the Shan, *pap sa* manuscripts play a very important role and are even more widespread than palm-leaf manuscripts, the latter being restricted to the writing of religious texts. In contrast, less than one tenth of the Lan Na and Lao manuscripts are written on mulberry paper, though for certain genres—notably astrology, traditional medicine and white magic—the proportion of *pap sa* manuscripts runs to between one fifth and one third of the total (Tables 1 and 2).

¹¹ In Myanmar, the National Commission for the Preservation of Traditional Manuscripts has been engaged in field preservation and inventory of palm-leaf and *parabaik* (leporello) manuscripts since its establishment in 1994. In addition to compiling an electronic database of manuscripts in Myanmar, it began field-microfilming manuscripts in 1998, and also undertakes digitisation and printing. It is unknown to the present author whether and to what extent this project also includes the preservation and documentation of Tai, in particular Tai Khün and Tai Lü, manuscripts in the Shan State.

¹² The method and the material employed in the manufacture of palm-leaf manuscripts is described in Sirichai and Kunlaphanthada 1992, and in Kòng-kaeo 1987 and 1989. For a very concise description see Schuyler 1908/09 and Koson 1999.

¹³ The production process of mulberry paper manuscripts is described in detail in Chaichuen 2005 and Terwiel 2003, 17–20, who also provides a typology of Shan mulberry paper manuscripts (*ibid.*, 20–26).

¹⁴ See Buppha 1998; the *pap hua* of the Tai Yuan and the Tai Lü resemble the *pap kiñ* of the Shan (see Terwiel 2003, 24–26).

1.1 Northern Thailand (Lan Na)

Lan Na, the land of a ‘million rice fields’, comprises—in the narrow sense of the term—the eight provinces of today’s Northern Thailand, namely Chiang Mai, Lamphun, Lamphang, Chiang Rai, Phayao, Phrae, Nan, and Mae Hông Sòn. More than four-fifths of the population of Northern Thailand belong to a Tai ethnic group called (Tai) Yuan, making up almost five million people. They represent the majority of the population in all the above mentioned provinces, except for the thinly populated mountainous province of Mae Hông Sòn in the western region where the Shan (Tai Yai), Karen and other hill peoples are predominant. The Yuan also live in the northern parts of the provinces of Tak, Uttaradit, and Kamphaeng Phet, as well as in enclaves in the central Thai provinces Saraburi and Ratburi, and in north western Laos. Apart from the Tai Yuan, there are large communities of other Tai ethnic groups, such as Tai Lü, Tai Khün, and Shan (Tai Yai), scattered throughout Northern Thailand. Descending from forced resettlements that took place mostly in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as well as from voluntary migration, these communities not only preserved but continued to copy manuscripts that their ancestors had once taken from their places of origin. Thus, the appearance of Tai Khün manuscripts in San Kamphaeng (Chiang Mai province) or Tai Lü manuscripts in Pasang (Lamphun province) would have to be studied against a background of historical population movements.¹⁵

When and how did the first survey of Northern Thai manuscripts begin? In the early 1960s, the Siam Society started a survey of manuscripts in the possession of various monastic libraries in the North. The leading scholar responsible for this survey was Achan Singkha Wannasai (1920–1980), a specialist on Lan Na literature and culture. Focussing on Achan Singkha’s home province of Lamphun, the survey was completed in 1966. Six years later Harald Hundius initiated another project which, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), aimed at establishing a microfilm collection of manuscripts representative of the indigenous literary tradition. The research project, entitled ‘Dokumentarische Erfassung literarischer Materialien in den Nordprovinzen Thailands’ (Documentation of literary material in the northern provinces of Thailand), collected and microfilmed more than one thousand manuscripts from 98 monastic and private libraries. The microfilms are housed in the Thai National Library collections (since 1974), as well as

¹⁵ Up to two-fifths of the present-day Northern Thai population, but four-fifths in Lamphun province, are descendants of war captives who were resettled in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century during the age of *Kep phak sai sa kep kha sai müang* (‘Put vegetables in the basket, put people in the politics’). For details on that subject see Grabowsky 1999 and 2004.

Table 1: Statistics of microfilmed texts of the manuscript project of the Social Research Institute, Chiang Mai (Balance: 31 Dec. 2002)

no.	genre	manuscripts	in %	palm-leaf (fascicles)	pap sa (volumes)	total	in %
01	Buddhism พระพุทธศาสนา	3,602	69.98	14,683	233	14,916	86.43
02	Folktales นิทานพื้นบ้าน	11	0.21	19	1	20	0.16
03	customary law กฎหมายโบราณ	191	3.69	120	17	137	0.79
04	ethics จริยศาสตร์	68	1.31	73	3	76	0.44
05	history ประวัติศาสตร์	189	3.65	289	18	307	1.77
06	astrology โหราศาสตร์	168	3.25	194	55	249	1.44
07	poetry โคลงกลอน	110	2.12	114	42	156	0.90
08	traditional medicine ยาสมุนไพร	189	3.65	202	97	299	1.73
09	rites and rituals ลัทธิพิธีกรรม	128	2.47	145	55	200	1.15
10	(white) magic ไสยศาสตร์	103	1.99	113	51	164	0.94
11	miscellany ปกรณัม	402	7.91	666	67	733	4.24
Σ	Total	5,168	100.00	16,618	639	17,257	100.00

Source: Social Research Institute 1991.

Table 2: Statistics of microfilmed texts of the manuscript project of the Social Research Institute, Chiang Mai. Only texts of religious provenance (Balance: 31 Dec. 2002)

no.	genre	manuscripts	in %	palm-leaf (fascicles)	pap sa (volumes)	total	in %
01A	legendary history พุทธตำนาน	48	1.33	189	4	193	12.94
01B	<i>mahā jāti jāta</i> มหาชาติชาดก	450	12.76	6,167	2	6,169	41.369
01C	<i>dasa jāti jāta</i> ทศชาติชาดก	40	1.33	154	–	154	1.03
01D	general <i>jātaka</i> ชาดกทั่วไป	952	24.31	3,711	126	3,837	25.72
01E	<i>sutta</i> พระสูตร	328	8.95	1,270	11	1,281	8.59
01F	<i>abhidhamma</i> พระอภิธรรม	31	0.93	94	5	99	0.66
01G	<i>vinaya</i> พระวินัย	74	2.23	257	1	2585	1.73
01H	<i>dhamma</i> (general) ธรรมทั่วไป	601	17.06	1,206	27	1,233	8.27
10I	<i>ānisaṃsa</i> อนิสงส์ต่างๆ	246	7.06	298	5	303	2.03
01J	cosmology ทฤษฎีเกี่ยวกับจักรวาล	64	1.80	176	3	179	1.20
01K	history of Bud- dhism ประวัติศาสตร์ พุทธศาสนา	46	1.24	306	2	308	2.06
01L	history of sacred objects ตำนานปูชนียวัตถุ	402	11.37	436	16	452	3.03
01M	famous disciples พระสาวกที่มีชื่อเสียง	60	1.39	120	4	124	0.83
01N	prophecies พยากรณ์เหตุการณ์อนาคต	176	4.92	211	2	213	1.43
01O	prayers and rituals บทสวดมนต์และ พิธีกรรม	23	1.70	15	10	25	0.17
01P	<i>Samgha</i> ceremonies พิธีกรรมสงฆ์	52	1.52	62	7	69	0.46
01Q	Buddhist myths เทพนิยาย	9	0.28	11	8	19	0.13
Σ	Total	3,602	100.00	1,483	233	14,916	100.00

Source: Social Research Institute 1991.

at the Chulalongkorn University (Department of History; as a donation from the German Foreign Office in 1978/79), and Chiang Mai University (Department of Thai; also a donation from the German government), as well as at the universities of Kiel and Göttingen in Germany. A list of texts contained in the microfilm collection, including a large number of parallel versions, exists in the form of a computer print-out¹⁶ available upon request from Harald Hundius.¹⁷

1.1.1 The Social Research Institute (SRI)

The survey and documentation of Northern Thai manuscripts that are scattered among the over 3,000 Buddhist monasteries of the region gained further momentum in 1976 when a group of sociologists and social anthropologists from the Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University, established the ‘Social Science Research Centre’ (ศูนย์วิจัยสังคมศาสตร์) with the goal, among other objectives, of promoting research in palm-leaf manuscripts. In 1978, this centre, headed by Sommai Premchit, became the core of a ‘Project to prepare the founding of a Social Research Institute’ (โครงการจัดตั้งสถาบันวิจัยสังคม). It was almost three years before the Social Research Institute (สถาบันวิจัยสังคม) was officially inaugurated on 28 January, 1981 as an autonomous institution attached to Chiang Mai University. The Social Research Institute (SRI) made the survey and documentation of Lan Na manuscripts and inscriptions as a task of primary importance. The activities carried out by the SRI and its predecessor can be roughly divided into the following three phases:

1.) 1978–1981: The Toyota Foundation and the National Museum of Ethnology, Osaka, jointly supported a project on ‘The Survey and Microfilming of Palm-leaf Manuscripts in Northern Thailand,’ which covered four densely populated districts in Chiang Mai province (Müang, Saraphi, Sansai, and San Kamphaeng), as well as additional districts in the provinces of Lamphun, Lampang, Phayao, Phrae, and Nan.

2.) 1982–1992: Based on the experience gained during the first phase, the survey and microfilm documentation continued in Chiang Rai, Mae Hong Son, Tak, and Uttaradit,¹⁸ as

¹⁶ See Hundius 1976.

¹⁷ Professor (emeritus) of ‘Languages and Literatures of Thailand and Laos’ at the University of Passau (1993–2004).

¹⁸ Tai Yuan make up more than one half of the population in Tak province and form a significant minority in Uttaradit, especially in the province’s northern districts. There are isolated pockets of Tai Yuan settlements in the central Thai provinces of Saraburi and Ratburi, whose ancestors were deported from Chiang Saen in 1804. Tai Yuan manuscripts are still being kept in these two provinces; the most famous one is a version of the *Mangraisat* translated by Griswold and Nagara 1977.

well as in a few other districts of Chiang Mai. Most of the work was accomplished by 1987. Since 1988, the project has concentrated on increasing the number of microfilmed texts related to genres such as astrology, poetry, and traditional medicine, which so far remain under-represented.

3.) Since 1993, very few additional manuscripts have been added to SRI’s microfilm collection. The Institute’s researchers concentrate on editing the wide range of publications that are based on manuscripts from the microfilm collection.

By 2002, a total of 5,168 manuscripts comprising 17,257 fascicles (of palm-leaf manuscripts) or volumes (of mulberry paper manuscripts) had been microfilmed on more than 220 reels. 720 monasteries in 78 districts of ten Northern provinces had been surveyed. The texts were systematically classified into eleven different genres, including Buddhism, Customary Law, History, and Poetry. As more than two thirds of the collected manuscripts fitted the category ‘Buddhism’, this genre was divided into seventeen sub-categories running from legendary histories of the Buddha to cosmological texts and Buddhist myths. The system of categorising Tai manuscripts will be discussed in detail in a subsequent chapter, suffice it here to mention that a number of texts fit into more than one category. In particular, the borders between the genres ‘history’ (No. 05) and ‘history of Buddhism’ (No. 01K) or ‘customary law’ (No. 02) and ‘rites and rituals’ (No. 09) are somewhat fluid. Moreover, in a few cases manuscripts are a collection of completely disparate texts. These manuscripts are usually listed under the category ‘miscellany’.

1.1.2 Centre for the Promotion of Arts and Culture, Chiang Mai University

In 1986, Harald Hundius initiated the Preservation of Northern Thai Manuscripts Project (PNTMP), which was coordinated by Chiang Mai University’s Centre for the Promotion of Arts and Culture (CPAC) and funded by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs through its Cultural Assistance Programme. The CPAC was established in 1985 as an institution with the express aim of fostering cultural awareness in academic circles as well as among the general public, and to conduct projects leading to the preservation and restoration of the cultural heritage of Lan Na. The Preservation of Northern Thai Manuscripts Project was the first and thus far most prestigious project initiated by the Centre. Recognised as an important institution, the CPAC became an official entity in July 1993, and its researchers were granted status equivalent to that of university faculty.

In contrast to previous projects, the PNTMP did not restrict its activities to a survey and documentation of manuscripts but pursued a wider goal: The aim of the project was to give a strong incentive to local academic as well as non-academic institutions to take effective measures for the preservation of the vast literary heritage of this region. This heritage had been neglected by monks and local villagers for more than three decades.¹⁹ The PNTMP defined three main objectives: (1) to restore and preserve the existing traditional Buddhist palm-leaf and paper manuscripts through the application of scientific techniques before they will be further damaged; (2) to promote awareness of the value of the manuscripts and encourage active participation among local people in their preservation with the collaboration of scholars and technicians from Chiang Mai University as well as other agencies involved, and (3) to set up a model for preservation with continuous technical support from Chiang Mai University as well as provincial centres of higher education.

Out of a total of some 3,300 registered monasteries, approximately 160 were pre-selected by a committee of local scholars and researchers. Due to budget constraints and the requirement that the survey be completed within five years (1987–1992), only a reduced number of monasteries was finally selected for manuscript preservation based on the following criteria:

- 1.) Historical, religious, cultural, and social value of the manuscript collection.
- 2.) Size of the collection (from 100 manuscripts upwards).
- 3.) Ethnic affiliation of the monastery (Tai Yuan, Shan, Tai Lü, etc.).
- 4.) Geographical location (special attention given to monasteries with sizable collections that were located in remote areas).
- 5.) Amount of interest in preservation activities on the part of a monastery and its lay community.

The most important and valuable manuscripts stored in the libraries of these monasteries were microfilmed. Priority was given to unique and rare texts and very old manuscripts (those older than 150 years). A committee of scholars from Chiang Mai University and other institutions was set up for the selection of monasteries and manuscripts including, among others, Udom Roongruangsri, Mani Payomyong, Aroonrut Wichienkeo, and Sommai Premchit. Of great

¹⁹ An important factor contributing to this neglect was the centralisation of monastic education in the early 1940s replacing Northern Thai texts with Siamese (Central Thai) books in the studies of monks and novices.

importance was the active participation of the project's special advisor, Harald Hundius, who also helped establish a Master's Degree (MA) programme in Lan Na Language and Literature in the Thai Department of Chiang Mai University from 1983 until 1992 (seconded by the German Academic Exchange Service or DAAD).²⁰

The Preservation of Northern Thai Manuscripts Project was headed by MR Rujaya Abhakorn, then head of the Central Library of Chiang Mai University, as director. In the course of the project, from 1987 to 1991, 336 reels of microfilms containing selected primary sources of the Lan Na tradition were reportedly produced.²¹ The original microfilms are stored at the Thai National Library in Bangkok. A complete copy of the microfilms is kept at the main office of the CPAC, a colonial-style building formerly belonging to Arthur Lionel Queripel, a British resident in Chiang Mai, which was used as the office of the Social Research Institute until 1994. A second set of copies is available at the 'Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur' (Academy of Sciences and of Literature) in Mainz.

1.2 Northeast Thailand (Isan)

While Northern Thai manuscripts have been systematically surveyed since the 1970s and a considerable number of them also microfilmed, manuscripts in Northeast Thailand have been largely neglected.²² A preliminary survey of manuscripts was conducted from 1984 until 1987 through a joint project undertaken by several local Institutes of Higher Learning under the leadership of the Teacher Training College of Mahasarakham, now Mahasarakham University. This project, supported by the Toyota Foundation, resulted in fourteen volumes of inventories. However, no preservation, microfilming, or digitisation was carried out.²³ One of the authors used these inventories in 1998 to identify Lao texts to be studied in a research project on 'Traditional Lao literature in the Late Lan Sang period'. Many of the identified

²⁰ In recognition of his contribution to Northern Thai studies, Harald Hundius was awarded an honorary doctorate in Lan Na Language and Literature by Chiang Mai University in 2000.

²¹ According to the original plans, almost 6,000 manuscripts comprising 27,570 fascicles (or volumes in the case of *pap sa* manuscripts) were to be microfilmed. In September 1987, the microfilming started at Wat Sung Men (Phrae province), which has by far the largest collection of manuscripts in Northern Thailand. Because of the huge volume of manuscripts, the Microfilming Project operated in this place for one full year.

²² A general short overview of the studies of manuscripts in Northeast Thailand is provided by Jaruwan 2005.

²³ The proceedings of the *Sammana bai lan thua pathet khang thi ning* (Centre de Recherche Artistique et Littéraire (ed.), Vientiane 1989) mentions a survey of 214 monasteries and 8,908 manuscripts undertaken by a group of teacher training colleges of Northeast Thailand in 1983 (BE 2527).

manuscripts were either wrongly documented or no longer in the place where they were originally found and recorded. We were told by some monasteries that a certain manuscript once in the possession of their respective libraries had been lent out to other monasteries and not returned. Many monastic libraries in Northeast Thailand were poorly organised and manuscripts kept without proper care. This illustrates how surveys of manuscripts without a preservation component are of limited value.

Further research carried out between 1997 and 1998 focused on the manuscript holdings of Wat Mahathat in Yasothon province. The research site was chosen by the Japanese historian Akiko Iijima (Tenri University) because the *hò trai* (library of scriptures) of Wat Mahathat held a large number of manuscripts, many of which originated from Vientiane (where they were carried from after 1830). With the help of research staff from the Documentation Centre of Palm-leaf Manuscripts (ศูนย์ข้อมูลเอกสารใบลาน) at nearby Mahasarakham University, a preliminary survey was conducted between August 1997 and October 1998. In the course of this survey, the research team listed ‘almost 2,700 titles of palm-leaf manuscripts; of which 1,002 titles were found on eight-stage shelves and 1,694 in nine scripture boxes and cabinets.’ Due to several shortcomings of the preliminary survey, it was later ‘decided to carry out a second round and a more careful reinvestigation’ to compile a durable catalogue.²⁴ The oldest dated manuscript, entitled ‘Somdet Thewarat’, is from CS 936 (AD 1574/75).

By 1998, the Documentation Centre of Palm-leaf Manuscripts had conducted surveys of manuscripts kept at three other locations, including Wat Sawang Khongkha in Kalasin province. It was also engaged in activities not directly related to palm-leaf manuscripts. For example, it cooperated with the Archaeological Office and the National Museum in Khon Kaen to study the inscriptions—written in Lao Dhamma script or Lao Buhan (Thai Nòi) script—found in the seven provinces of the ‘Upper Northeast’.²⁵

To be continued in the next issue

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²⁴ Iijima 2005, 341.

²⁵ Research Institute on Isan Arts and Culture 1998, 8.

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Review

Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, Li Xiao 李肖, and Meng Xianshi 孟憲實 (eds.), *Xinhuo Tulufan chutu wenxian* 新獲吐魯番出土文獻 [*Newly Discovered Turfan Documents*] (Tulufanxue yanjiu congshu jiazhong zhi er 吐魯番學研究叢書甲種之二 [Library of Turfan Studies, Series I.2]; Beijing: Zhonghua Book Co., 2008, 1.800 RMB¥), pp. 22+13+388+48, 2 vols., ISBN 978-7-101-05812-3.

Together with the founding of the Academia Turfanica (Tulufanxue yanjiuyuan 吐魯番學研究院) as a research institution attached to the Turfan Bureau of Cultural Relics in 2005, local scholars have started to publish the results of their research, to which the 'Library of Turfan Studies, Series I' belongs. Now the first two numbers have been published: 1. *Tulufan Baizikelike shiku chutu Hanwen Fojiao dianji* 吐魯番柏孜克里克石窟出土漢文佛教典籍 [Chinese Buddhist scriptures excavated at the Bezeklik Caves of Turfan], 2 vols. (Beijing 2007); 2. the two folio volumes under review. Both include new textual materials from Turfan and surrounding areas.

Newly Discovered Turfan Documents (hereafter NDTD) is a huge collection consisting of textual materials not only excavated through archeological work, but also offered to the Turfan Museum by private connoisseurs. A part of it even came from the local police which had confiscated the preys of captivated 'treasure-seekers'. With few exceptions, the texts were found in the course of the last twenty years and the most recent discoveries only date back to 2006.

During the process of editing the new collection, the members of the NDTD team, enjoying editors' privilege, published a series of essays on a number of important texts before issuing the final edition. As a result, these articles are quoted now in the apparatus as basis of readings and interpretations which is a new way in dealing with an *editio princeps* of unpublished data. Furthermore, openness to international cooperation is encountered in this enterprise: for Sogdian texts the editors invited the Japanese Iranist Yoshida Yutaka 吉田豊 to take over the decipherment.

Mention must be made of the editorial perfection: the photographic reproductions are of superb quality; plates and edited texts are placed in parallel above and below or on facing pages; vermilion notices and marking in original texts are reproduced properly. The reading of the texts is in almost all cases reliable.

NDTD consists of three principal parts as follows:

Part I: Introductory

Preface (pp. 1–2); introductions 'Recent archaeological discoveries in Turfan' (pp. 3–11) and 'A survey of the newly discovered Turfan documents'

(pp. 12–22); editorial guidelines (pp. 1–2); bibliography (pp. 3–4), detailed table of contents (pp. 1–13).

Part II: Edition with facsimile plates (pp. 1–389)

(1) Texts excavated at the Graveyard of Astana in 2004; (2) ditto, 2006; appendix: ditto, 1965; (3) Texts excavated at the Graveyard of Badamliq in 2004; (4) Texts excavated at the Graveyard of Munar in 2004; (5) Texts excavated at the Graveyard of Yankhe in 1997; (6) ditto, 2006; (7) Texts excavated at the ruins of ancient Yarkhoto in 2002; (8) Texts from the Taizang Stupa in Astana, acquired from a private collector in 2005; (9) Texts from the Turfan region, acquired from a private collector in 2006; appendix: texts excavated in the Khotan region, acquired in 2006; (10) Texts acquired from Shanshan (Pichan), 2001; (11) Newly excavated epitaphs.

Part III: Indices (reverse pagination pp.3-48)

(1) Personal names, appendix: names of divinities (pp. 3–22); (2) place names (including Buddhist temple names, pp. 23–25); (3) check list of texts arranged according to original inventory numbering in chronological order (pp. 27–48).

The necropolis Astana and the ruins of Yarkhoto, where a large number of documents had come to light already during the international expeditions about a century ago and the excavations by Chinese archeologists particularly in the time from 1950's to 1970's, again yielded new evidence for the medieval history of the region. More significantly, with this monograph the small localities Badamliq, Munar, and Yankhe must be added to the archaeological map of the Turfan region. This broadened scope of sites adds new data on local life and sheds new light on the administrative structure at that time. It is to be regretted that the editors seem to have overlooked to include a map showing all the sites concerned as a companion to their exact descriptions of the discoveries. I am very grateful to the Academia Turfanica which has put a map at my disposal and gave permission to reproduce it here with slight modifications (Fig. 1).

Counting the headlines given by the editors, NDTD comprises 308 texts or, in most cases, textual fragments. One should bear in mind that many fragments have been reunited into their original state and thus the number of separate pieces has decreased. Among these 308 items are 292 texts on paper, textile and wood, while the remaining are epitaph inscriptions (*mubiao* 墓表 and *muzhi* 墓誌) on bricks or wood tablets. With the exception of a small number of fragments written in Sogdian, Tibetan and Brāhmī, the overwhelming majority are Chinese texts.

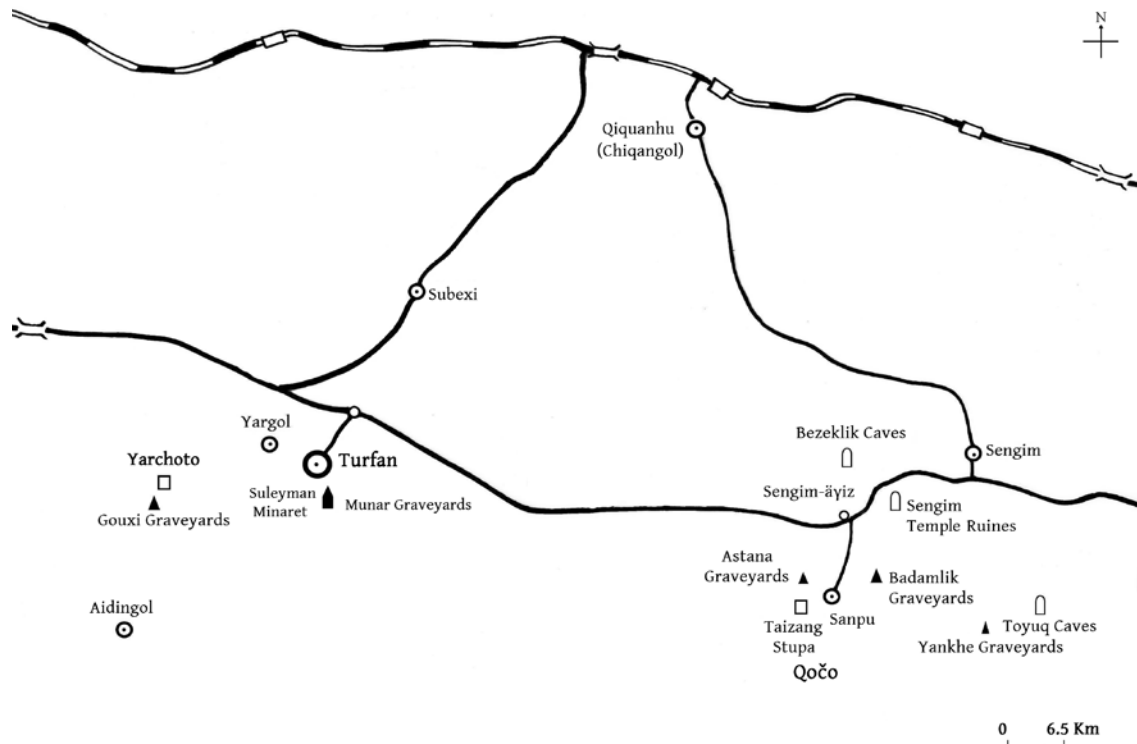


Fig. 1: Map of Excavation Sites of the Newly Discovered Turfan Documents (Courtesy of The Academia Turfanica)

The new texts, especially those of the secular group, cover the time span from Former Qin, Northern Liang, the Gaochang Kingdom and the Area Command of the West under the Tang, i.e. from the late 4th century through to the second half of the 8th century AD. The earliest dated manuscript in NDTD is a household-register of Anyi hamlet, Gaoning county in the Gaochang Commandery of the Former Qin, in 384 AD (*Qian Qin Jianyuan ershi nian sanyue Gaochang jun Gaoning xian Du xiang Anyi li ji* 前秦建元二十年三月高昌郡高寧縣都鄉安邑里籍, pp. 176–179). This document enriches our knowledge of the early stage of the local administrative system in the Chinese borderlands and should be added to the monumental corpus of the Chinese administrative registers and inventories by Ikeda On 池田溫.¹ The latest date in NDTD represents a group of official communications relating to logistic matters and military operations from 751, i.e. only a few years before the An Lushan rebellion. The activities documented in these letters suggest their interrelations to the Sino-Arabic confrontation in Talas which took place in the same year.² The age of some Buddhist texts dis-

covered in the ruined temples on the west shore of Yargol could be a little later than Tang.

In view of contents and genres, this edition can be roughly divided into the following eight categories:

1. Official documents: documents relating to general administration, registers, inventories, communication dispatches, monastery economic documents, contracts, documents for the liberation of slaves, military documents etc.
2. Documents relating to juridical matters, such as complaints, vindications, guarantees etc.
3. Private documents: testaments, letters (among them one complete specimen), private contracts etc.
4. Literary works: copies of canonical texts and their commentaries, such as the *Book of Songs* (*Shijing*) (pp. 187–191), the *Analects* (*Lunyu*) (pp. 165, 181–183), and the *Book of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing*) (p. 167). There are also copies of elementary readers for school children and the less learned, e.g. the *Jijiu pian* (p. 73) and the *Thousand Characters Text* (*Qianziwen*) (p. 67), and some fragments of poetic works.
5. Materials related to religion: The only place yielding Buddhist texts was Yarkhoto. As the editors state, most of these written in regular ductus (*kaishu*) were copied during the Tang. In addition, the register of monks of Si'en monastery from 662³ (*Tang Longshuo ernian zhengyue Gaochang xian Si'en si sengji* 唐龍朔二年正月高昌縣思恩寺僧籍) deserves special attention. With respect to popular belief, numerous specimen of the genre usually called *Suizang yiwu shu* 隨葬衣物疏 ('list of burial garments and utensils') are included. These texts supposedly served as a passport for the deceased to enter the underworld. In one of them the expression *yiwen* 移文

¹ Ikeda On 池田溫, *Chūgoku kodai sekichō kenkyū* 中國古代籍帳研究 (Tōkyō: Tōkyō daigaku shuppankai 1979).

² On this question, see Bi Bo 畢波, 'Tulufan xinchu Tang Tianbao shizai Ji-aohu jun keshi wenshu yanjiu' '吐魯番新出唐天寶十載交河郡客使文書研究', *Xiyu lishi yuyan yanjiu jikan* 西域歷史語言研究集刊 1 (2008), 55–79.

³ On p. 2 of the table of contents and p. 61 the year is misprinted as 622.

occurs which probably is the then contemporary designation for this genre.⁴ The word *yi*, of course, is the technical term for sending official messages to another office on the same level.

6. Mantic texts and calendars: There are several types of fragments of mantic books, such as one called *Yi zazhan* 易雜占 'Miscellaneous divinations according to the *Book of Change*' (pp. 151–157) by the editors as well as diverse minor mantic techniques. Particularly noteworthy is a group of calendar fragments, of which the earliest ones stem from the late 5th century (e.g. pp. 158–159), while the later ones are pieces of a fine paper scroll of the years 683 and 684 AD (pp. 258–261). The latter are even furnished with the official seals which indicates central control over calendar issuing.

7. Epitaph inscriptions: All 18 pieces (pp. 97, 103, 124, 375–389) are accompanied by informations about the sites. Since this type of text as a rule bears exact information on the dates of death and burial ceremony, they are the best evidence for dating other objects from the same tomb.⁵

8. Non-Chinese texts: two fragments in Sogdian discovered in a tomb beneath cotton fields in the small village Badamliq adjacent to the ruins of Qoço (pp. 57–59, 102), and several tiny fragments in Brāhmī and Old Turkish which were collected at the ruins of a temple at Yarkhoto (p. 257).

The edition is an utmost satisfying philological work of its kind. The reading and punctuation are reliable. Even in dealing with strongly faint characters and crabbed handwritings, the editors show an admirable mastery of their craftsmanship. For damaged characters only showing partial strokes, they always try to do their best in providing a readable text.⁶ At first sight some reconstructions seem to be a little audacious, but in most cases one cannot argue their improperness nor provide an alternative. On the other hand, for instance, on p. 5 line 18 口皆舉 the reconstruction of the second character seems to lack a solid base; on p. 12 line 28 the personal name is given as 翟知行, but on the plate one cannot recognize *xing* 行 at all. Of course, in such cases the editors might have checked the original which might be more distinctive here and there than the photo at readers' disposal. The descriptions of manuscripts are elaborate in meeting codicological criteria, such as paper quality, size, color, thickness, frames and ruled lines, seal impression, features of scribal hands, ink, additional reader's notices and so on. While going through the volumes, I have noticed a few problems worthy of discussion:

⁴ Liu Anzhi 劉安志, 'Ba Tulufan xinchutu Tang Xianqing yuannian (656) Song Wuhuan yiwen' '跋吐魯番新出唐顯慶元年(六五六)宋武歡移文', *Wei Jin Nanbeichao Sui Tang shi ziliao* 魏晉南北朝隋唐史資料 23 (2006), 198–208.

⁵ For a hitherto complete collection of epitaphs from Turfan, cf. Hou Can 侯燦 and Wu Meilin 吳美琳, *Tulufan chutu zhuanzhi jizhu* 吐魯番出土磚誌集注, 2 vols. (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 2003).

⁶ As regards the editorial principles for filling lacunae, it is interesting to compare the present definitive version under review and that in Rong Xinjiang 榮新江, 'Xinchu Tulufan wenshu suojian Tang Longshuo nianjian Geluolu buluo posan wenti' '新出吐魯番文書所見唐龍朔年間哥羅祿部落破散問題', *Xiyu lishi yuyan yanjiu jikan* 西域歷史語言研究集刊 1 (2008), 13–44. Rong here provides many more reconstructions.

(1) Vol. 1, p. 7, line 30 范羔眼: the correct reading seems to be 范黑眼. This personal name has appeared in an undated colophon to a copy of the Lotus Sutra in the Berlin Turfan collection (Ch 5509), where the second character is more clear. In the introductory note to this text (p. 3), the editors properly point out that many names in this list are recurrent in some other documents. With the definite date of this new name list at hand, we may assert that Ch 5509 must have been copied around 686 AD.

(2) Page 311, line 4 the editors read 白逢湍. The first character clearly is not *bai* 白. In case that it is indeed a surname, *mu* 目 probably would be a better candidate. The second character seems to be *jian* 建. The last character looks somewhat peculiar, so that I would not take the reading 湍 for granted. As to *Mu* 目, although it is an unusual surname in the Chinese onomasticon, there are several examples in the Turfan documents, for instance, *Mu Bosi* 目波斯 (Ast. III.3.10, ed. pr. Maspero⁷ No. 297; Chen Guocan⁸ 2004, p. 103), *Mu Zhigu* 目知谷 (tcw⁹ 8/23), *Mu Fuzhipen* 目浮知盆 (tcw 6/47), etc. Some of the given names are of non-Chinese origin, for example, *Bosi* 波斯 is a geonym employed as personal name, in this case probably signifying the Persian origin of the name bearer;¹⁰ 浮知盆 (also attested in the name of a person originating from Tashkent, *Shi Fuzhipen* 石~) MCh *b'jū ũiç buən, is a transcription of the Sogdian name *pwtyprn* 'glory of the Buddha'.¹¹

(3) Vol. 2, p. 311, line 11 并譯牒泥熟口口: the first character 并 in fact should be read as 等 (Fig. 2). The fragment could thus be paraphrased either as '[so and so] have translated this

⁷ Henri Maspero, *Les documents chinois de la troisième expédition de Sir Aurel Stein en Asie centrale*, (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1953).

⁸ Chen Guocan 陳國燦, *Sitanyin suohuo Tulufan chutu wenshu yanjiu* 斯坦因所獲吐魯番出土文書研究 (Taipei: Xinwenfeng, 2004).

⁹ Guojia wenwuju guwenxian yanjiushi 國家文物局古文獻研究室, Xinjiang Weiwuer zizhiqu bowuguan 新疆維吾爾自治區博物館, and Wuhan daxue lishixi 武漢大學歷史系 (eds.), *Tulufan chutu wenshu* 吐魯番出土文書, 10 vols. (Peking: Wenwu chubanshe, 1981–1991).

¹⁰ Compare the personal name *Mu Boxi* 穆鉢息 (tcw 3/119, c. end 6th to beginning 7th cent.) to *Mu Bosi* 目波斯 (722 AD): 穆 and 目 are homophone MCh *mīuk. The MCh. pronunciation of 鉢息 *puat sīāk resembles Sogd. *p'rsyk* which is attested as name component in an Upper Indus inscription. See N. Sims-Williams, *Sogdian and other Iranian inscriptions of the Upper Indus*, II (London: SOAS, 1992), 63: *p'(rs)'(k)*. In Chinese Turfan documents from the 6th century, there occurs a term *Bosi jin* 鉢斯錦 'Persian damask', which provides another variant form of 'Persia' in Chinese phonetic rendering.

¹¹ On Sogdian names belonging to the *pwty* as well as on the *Fuzhi*-group in Chinese transcription, see D. Weber, 'Zur sogdischen Personennamengebung', *Indogermanische Forschungen* 77 (1972), 191–208, here 199; Yoshida Yukata, 'Sino-Iranica', *Seinan Ajia kenkyū* 西南アグア研究 XLVIII (1998), 33–51, here 40.

dispatch (or: these dispatches): Nishu [...]', or as '[...] and so on. Translator(s) of this dispatch (or: these dispatches): Nishu [...]'.¹²



Fig. 2: Fragment 2006TJ1:115

(4) Page 318, line 27: for the editors' reading 安稽 I would suggest a slight modification: 安輯. The scribe was a bit hesitant while writing the second character, yet the radical on the left is unambiguously 車. The compound *anji* 安輯 'to pacify, stabilize' is a frequent term for dealing with rebels and unruly peoples.

(5) Generally the editors follow a strictly diplomatic way for text transcription. Only a few inconsistencies stand out: the second character of the title *zhubu* 主簿 'recorder handling bureau affairs' is mostly written with the grass radical 薄 instead of the bamboo radical in mediaeval times. NDTD reproduces this special feature on the whole carefully, but not consequently, e.g. p. 29, line 38; p. 120 line 6; p. 192b, line 2; p. 195a, line 5; p. 201b, line 8; 295, 1. 7.

(6) Here and there one and the same character has been read differently, e.g. *mao* 毛 / *tun* 屯: p. 150, line 4 we read Shao Maoda 邵毛達, whereas in another name on p. 352, line 3 the same character is given as *tun* in the personal name Zhai Tunnu 翟屯奴; *mao* seems to be correct.

(7) The editors have paid due attention to the official seal impressions on manuscripts and provided in each case a separate enlarged detail-photo along with a full description of the content and external features. In two cases (pp. 33, 40), however, the information of the seal size is missing.

In a work of such dimensions there are some points where the reader may find alternative readings and interpretations. But he cannot lay it down without a feeling of deep gratitude. Here is a task of extreme complexity admirably accomplished with remarkable speed: a source-work of finest philological quality and a valuable contribution to Central Asian studies.

Reviewed by Wang Ding | Hamburg

¹² I am much indebted to Prof Y. Yoshida for helpful comments on this point and to Prof P. Zieme and Dr D. Maue for stimulating discussions.

Notes and News

On-line Index of Ethiopian Manuscripts

<http://menestrel.in2p3.fr/spip.php?rubrique694>

This on-line directory is an attempt to identify world-wide all public collections of Ethiopian manuscripts. ‘Ethiopian manuscripts’ here include: codices of Ethiopian Christian and Ethiopian Jewish origin (Ethiopian Jews are also known as Bétā Israel or *falasha*); magic scrolls; and *aethiopica*, which are defined by Robert Beylot and Maxime Rodinson (*Répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits éthiopiens* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1995), 11) as ‘modern copies made by or for an Orientalist, historical documents, scientific archive and notes of “éthiopisant”’. This means that here ‘Ethiopian manuscript’ covers very diverse material, the categorization of which varies from one library to another. We have tried not to neglect the Ethiopian Muslim tradition of manuscripts, which typically are classified separately in libraries, still not widely known by the scientific community and scarce in public collections, in Ethiopia as well as abroad. We would refer readers to the pioneering work of Ewald Wagner, *Afrikanische Handschriften, II: Islamische Handschriften aus Äthiopien* (Stuttgart, Franz Steiner, 1997; Xx+200 and facsimiles). This catalogue lists nearly 88 Harar manuscripts preserved in German collections.

We have annotated some of the manuscripts in the collections presented here according to their dating, rarity, or documentary interest. This information is illustrative and not exhaustive.

We list the libraries keeping Ethiopian manuscripts according to country. The list is not complete. Our directory is essentially based on Robert Beylot and Maxime Rodinson (1995). We wish to thank Robert Beylot for allowing us to continue his work.

Rather than re-write the above mentioned book, we chose, in addition to the updating imposed by the recent acquisitions of manuscripts, to develop the history of the collections whe-

never possible and to indicate websites that provide on-line catalogues, descriptions of the collections and sometimes images of the manuscripts. This work is not yet complete. However, for countries such as Germany, Ethiopia, France, Italy, United States or United Kingdom, the work is almost completed. This online publication guarantees us the flexibility to provide regular updates. This version is the second, the first having been published in pdf format in April 2006. Given the wide range of collections and their descriptions, we have no plans to publish a print edition of this work.

Call for participation of the scientific community

We appeal to the community of researchers as well as curators in charge of the collections described in this index, to help improve this finding aid. Obviously, some of us use some collections more assiduously than others and therefore have knowledge rarely shared in scientific publications. We would like this online catalogue to become a forum for sharing such information. For some countries, we have carried out exploratory work, but the results are still incomplete. This is the case for Egypt, Greece, Israel, Poland, Russia, Ukraine and Switzerland. We would favourably welcome any proposal for collaborative work on these countries’ collections. Ultimately, for countries not yet included in the database, we would, again, welcome any initiative. Of course, each contribution will be signed by its author.

For further information, please contact:
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Anaïs Wion | Paris

Notes and News

Qin Bamboo Manuscripts in the Possession of the Yuelu Academy

In December 2007, Yuelu Academy of Hunan University in Changsha invested considerable funds for a rescue acquisition of Qin bamboo manuscripts from the Hong Kong antique market. When conservation specialists had preserved and processed the bamboo strips, there were 2,098 numbered items of which more than 800 strips are quite complete. Since these strips have passed through many hands, their original sequence at the time of excavation is not known. According to a first survey, they mainly belong to the following categories: calendars (*lipu* 歷譜), diary entries (*rizhi* 日志), mathematics (*suanshu shu* 算數書), dream divination (*mengshu* 夢書), admonitions to officials (*guanzen* 官箴), excerpts from statutes and ordinances (*luling zachao* 律令雜抄), and revision cases (*zouyan shu* 奏讞書).

There are two calendars, one from year 34 and one from year 35 of the reign of King Zheng of Qin (223 resp. 222 BC); the diary entries are mainly from his year 27 (230 BC).

The mathematical texts are the oldest excavated known so far, they are some dozen years earlier than those of tomb 247 of Zhangjiashan 張家山 in Hubei. The same holds true for the dream manual, the content of which is different from

the divinations of dreams found in the ‘*rishu*’ from Shuihudi 睡虎地 in Hubei. It is a collection of divinations not related to a certain date.

The admonition to officials is similar to the ‘Way of the Official’ (*Wei li zhi dao* 為吏之道) found at Shuihudi, but its content is different, so that both may be considered complementary.

The excerpts from statutes and ordinances and the revision cases make up most of the bamboo strips. Many paragraphs supplement the legal texts from Shuihudi, especially the ordinances, such as 內史倉曹令, 內史戶曹令, 內史官共令, 四司空共令, 四謁者令, 縣官田令, 食官共令, 郡卒令, 遷史令, 捕盜賊令, 贖令. Since none of these were known from the Shuihudi materials, they are of great significance for the study of the Qin legal system as well as of the history of law under the Qin. Furthermore, in these legal texts some names of commanderies and districts occur, such as 清河郡, 江湖郡, 恆山郡, 衡山郡, supplying the study of the historical geography of the Qin period with brand-new materials of great value.

Chen Songchang 陳松長 | Changsha
Translated by Michael Friedrich | Hamburg

Notes and News

Warring States Manuscripts in the Possession of Tsinghua University

In a press release from October 23rd, 2008, Tsinghua University announced the acquisition of more than 2,000 inscribed bamboo and wooden slips from the Warring States period. According to a first survey, among the texts are, besides transmitted parts, previously unknown chapters of the Book of Documents (*Shang-shu* 尚書) such as The Mandate of Fu Yue (*Fu Yue zhi ming* 傅說之命); annals covering the

period from the beginning of Western Zhou until early Warring States; furthermore, materials related to The Book of Changes (*Zhou yi* 周易). Further information at:

<http://news.tsinghua.edu.cn/new/news.php?id=19180>

<http://news.tsinghua.edu.cn/new/news.php?id=19307>

<http://news.tsinghua.edu.cn/new/news.php?id=19522>

Michael Friedrich | Hamburg

Inside MCAA

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Inside MCAA

MCAA Calendar

■ 22 May

Prof Dr Horst Wenzel, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

Werkzeughand und Handzeichen: Zur anthropologischen Grundlegung von Bilddeixis und Textdeixis. Lecture given at MCAA, Universität Hamburg

■ 3 July

Dr Florian Sobieroj

Didaktische Dichtung in al-Qushayris Kitab 'Uyun al-agwiba': ein sufischer Diskurs über die Liebe. Lecture given at the international conference in honour of Prof Dr Wolf Dietrich Fischer, Universität Erlangen, Germany

■ 10 July

Dr Agnieszka Helman-Wazny, Cornell University

The Secrets of Asian Papermakers Preserved in Ancient Manuscripts. Lecture given at MCAA, Universität Hamburg

■ 23–24 July

Prof Dr Harunaga Isaacson

Cataloguing Sanskrit Manuscripts. Training offered at the request of a visiting team of scholars from Geumgang University, South Korea at MCAA, Universität Hamburg

■ 29 August

Dr Eva Wilden

Aaciriyappaa—The Unwritten Rules of Classical Tamil Metre. Lecture given at the 11th International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences, Potsdam, Germany

■ 15–26 September

Prof Dr Harunaga Isaacson

Organized and participated in the First International Workshop on Early Tantra, Kathmandu, Nepal. During the workshop drafts of editions of four important early tantric texts, based on old Nepalese palm-leaf manuscripts, were read and discussed. This workshop was made possible by the support of the DFG and ANR.

For a report see: <http://www.tantric-studies.org/projects/early-tantra/1iwet/>

■ 22–26 September

Prof Dr Ludwig Paul, Nafiseh Sajjadi, MA

Participation at the Summer School on Persian Codicology. Institute of Iranian Studies/Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria

■ 30 September–6 October

Dr Eva Wilden

Research trip to London and Cambridge (BL and Cambridge University Library)

■ 2 October

Dr Orna Almogi

The Cult and Culture of Sacred Books in Tibet: Doctrinal, Political and Economical Factors. Lecture given at Tsukuba University, Japan

■ 16 October

Prof Dr Harunaga Isaacson

Participated in a Panel on Sanskrit Studies in the 2008 Beijing Seminar on Tibetan Studies, at the China Tibetology Research Center, Beijing. The panel was concerned with the present and future state of research on Sanskrit manuscripts in Tibet

■ 18 October

Dr Eva Wilden

Représentations de la langue et des langues dans la littérature tamoule ancienne: comment le tamoul est devenu frais et sublime. Lecture given within a presentation of the research group 'Les noms de la langue' at the CNRS, laboratoire 'Histoire des théories linguistiques', Paris, France

■ 19 October

Dr Ding Wang

The Questions about the Emin-Qoja's Portrayal from the Ziguang Pavillion of the Forbidden City. Lecture given at The Third International Conference on Turfan Studies in Xinjiang, China

■ 19 October

Prof Dr Harunaga Isaacson

Participated in a Seminar on Sanskrit Manuscripts at Peking University, China

■ 13 November

Prof Dr Verena Klemm, Universität Leipzig

Die 'Refaiya' aus Damaskus: Eine historische Familienbibliothek und ihre Erforschung. Lecture given at MCAA, Universität Hamburg

■ 20 November

Dr Hanna Hayduk

Text and Picture in the Codex Balthazaris Behem. Lecture given at the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, Cracow, Poland

■ 25 November

Dr Orna Almogi

The bsTan-'gyur and its Patrons and Editors: The History of the Transmission of the 'Treatises in Translation' Based on Historical Sources. Lecture given at the International Institute for Buddhist Studies, Tokyo, Japan

■ 11 December

Imre Galambos, Ph.D., British Library, London

Records of a Pilgrimage: A Group of 10th Century Sino-Tibetan Manuscripts from Dunhuang. Lecture given at MCAA, Universität Hamburg

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