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Nie Hongyin

Tangut Pillars of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* in Baoding Prefecture: The Last Monuments of Xixia Descendants

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Abstract: In the Park of Lotus Pond in the Baoding city of China, there is a pair of stone pillars of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* erected in 1502, which proves to have been the latest Tangut relics existing so far. A textual investigation of their inscriptions indicates that they were built in memory of two monks of the Xingshan Temple, which was first established in the southeastern corner of the city in the 13th c. and repeatedly rebuilt later. After a reconstruction at the end of the 15th c., three Tangut monks first came and lived in the temple, two of whom died within a dozen years, and they were the buried monks for whom the pillars were erected. The pillars were originally located in a graveyard next to the Hanzhuang village outside the city, and, as mentioned in the inscription, near the village there was a considerable settlement of descendants of the Tangut warriors conscripted and transferred by the Yuan government to protect the Central Kingdom.

Key words: Baoding city; Tangut inscription; Buddhist relics; temple; *dhāraṇī*

Introduction

After the fall of the Xixia State (1038–1227), the traditional language and script of Tanguts were still used in their homeland and the environs of the Yuan-Ming capital, Beijing. The latest relics in the Tangut script preserved nowadays are a pair of stone pillars stored in the Park of Lotus Pond in Baoding City,¹ Hebei Province, China. They are valued by academic circles for their unique shape and are regarded as the last monuments of the Tangut script, for the inscription indicates the fifth reign year of Hongzhi 弘治 (1502). But when the pillars were discovered in the 1960s, the Tangut studies were just revived in China. The fact that vast amount of excavated sources had not yet been published at that time resulted in the lack of aca-

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¹ The Lotus Pond (*lianchi* 蓮池), as one of the ten famous landscape architectures in Chinese history, was first established at the center of Baoding city in the Tang dynasty, and was renovated and extended successively during the Yuan-Ming period. It is now used as a public park and the site of the Lotus Pond College for popular education.

demographic accumulation, which led the researchers to some inexact understandings of the Tangut script, and, in particular, to the mistaken identification of the temple sites and the figures recorded in the inscription. Since the end of the 20th c., significant progress has taken place in the Tangut study all over the world, and numerous new materials have been published, which gave us the basis for a re-examination of the inscriptions contents and the history of the relevant temple, in order to increase the knowledge of the activities of Tanguts in the environs of the capital during the Yuan-Ming period.

Description of the pillars and the previous studies

A pair of stone pillars were found at a ruin to the west of the Hanzhuang 韓莊 village in Lianchi Region, Baoding. The buildings there in those years may have been of some size, but in the first quarter of the 20th c. they were completely destroyed, with the exception of a single white pagoda.² The pillars, tipped over in a ditch outside the north wall, were unearthed by archaeologists from the Hebei Provincial Bureau of Culture and then moved to the Park of Lotus Pond in 1962, where they are now preserved in its East Yard Stele Gallery. (Pl. 1)

The two pillars are octagonal columns with mushroom-shaped caps and simple bases. The Pillar No. 1 is 2.63 and No. 2 is 2.28 m high.³ Because the quality of the stone is too poor to preserve the inscription completely, after hundreds of years it is impossible to have clear rubbings.⁴ As far as can be seen, the contents of the inscription are divided into five sections:

1. Title of the pillar in Tangut.
2. Prologue, cause of erecting the pillar in Tangut.
3. Complete version of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī*⁵ in Tangut.
4. List of more than eighty donors in Tangut.
5. Autographs by the initiator and carvers of the pillars, one in Chinese and one in Tangut.

² According to the interview by Zheng and Wang (1975), a local old man described the undamaged building he saw in his early years. He said that it was called *xisi* 西寺 (Western temple) or *dasi* 大寺 (Large temple), where Yama and the Three Women of Kindness were enshrined in the main hall.

³ The pillars are numbered according to the date of the death.

⁴ For the photos of illegible rubbings, see: *ZXW* 18: 185–188. For the transcription of the texts except *dhāraṇī*, see: SHI & BAI 1977, also SHI 1988: 329–331.

⁵ *Foding Zunsheng Tuoluoni* 佛頂尊勝陀羅尼 (*Dhāraṇī* of Jubilant Buddha-Corona) was used to destroy all the hardships of all living beings.



Pl. 1. Tangut pillars in the Park of Lotus Pond

The two pillars were erected at the same time by the same person, whose Chinese title and name are recorded on the Pillar No. 2 together with the carvers from the family Bi and the date of engraving:

大明弘治十五年十月日，住持吒失領占建立。鎮陽畢景昌，畢恭鑄。

[On a certain day of the tenth month, the fifteenth reign year of Hongzhi, the Great Ming dynasty, erected by Superintendent Zhashi Lingzhan, and engraved by Bi Jingchang and Bi Gong from Zhenyang].⁶

A brief autograph may be seen on the Pillar No. 1:

鎮陽畢從刊。

[Engraved by Bi Cong from Zhenyang].

The Chinese name of the superintendent, *zhashi lingzhan* 吒失領占, is transcribed into Tangut *tsia šjir jjiŋ dzjiŋ*⁷ 𐰇𐰏𐰢𐰏𐰢𐰏 on the Pillar No. 1.

⁶ Zhenyang 鎮陽, now Zhengding 正定 County in Hebei Province, is located approximately 130 km to the south of Baoding.

⁷ Phonetic symbols for Tangut come from Huang-cherng Gong's reconstruction quoted by LI 1997. Most of Gong's reconstructions are adoptable, but there is no convincing evidences for the existence of the medial *-i-*, *-j-* and the final *-j*, which should be ignored in research practice.

(ZHENG & WANG 1975) correctly pointed out that his Chinese and Tangut names both were transcriptions from the Tibetan name *Bkra-shis Rin-chen* (lit. auspicious treasure). According to the tradition of the Yuan-Ming dynasty, the Tangut Buddhists used to place their surname before their religious appellations. The surname of the superintendent is absent on the Pillar No. 2, but appears on the Pillar No. 1 as *phjij-sjo* 𐰇𐰏𐰍, which was transcribed into Chinese *pingshang* 平尚 in previous studies without finding its source. Now it should be mentioned that this surname is recorded in the 20th line in the chapter of the *Tangut Names* of the Tangut primary reader *Sancai Zazi* 三才雜字,⁸ and its Chinese equivalence should be *bingshang* 並尚 recorded in another Chinese reader *Zazi* 雜字 compiled in Xixia.⁹ At least eight members of the Bingshang family are inscribed in the list of donors on the pillars.



Pl. 2. The top of the pillar

⁸ *EHW* 10: 49.

⁹ SUN 2000.

The title of the pillars, *jij bu džjow* 鷓禰數, is carved on the top of the pillar (Pl. 2), which was literally read in Chinese *xiang sheng chuang* 相勝幢 by Shi and Bai,¹⁰ but Zheng and Wang¹¹ translated it as *sheng xiang chuang* 勝相幢. Then a pointless debate took place over the title,¹² as scholars at that time were unaware that in the Khara-Khoto collection of the IOM, RAS, there are both Tangut and Chinese versions of the Tibetan work *Gtsug-tor rnam-par rgyal-ma'i gzungs phan-yon dang bcas-pa' mdo ltar bsdus-pa*,¹³ in which the word *rnam-par* is translated as Tangut *jij bu* and as Chinese *sheng xiang*.¹⁴ It can be understood unquestionably from this comparison that the real meaning of the Tangut title of the pillars, *jij bu džjow*, is *shengxiang chuang* (pillar of jubilant appearance) in Chinese, which may also be interpreted as Tibetan *rnam-par rgyal-mtshan* and Sanskrit *Uṣṇīṣavijayā dhvaja*.

From this it is evident that the pillars, as they should be called in Chinese *shengxiang chuang*, were erected in 1502 by Phjij-sjo Bkra-shis Rin-chen, the superintendent of the temple, and engraved by stone carvers from Zhengding. The purpose of inscribing the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* on the pillar was to remove the hardships from the two dead monks and deliver them from the miserable Hell.

Translations and annotations of the prologs

Before the inscriptions of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* respectively, there are short prologs to explain the cause of erecting the pillars, which were translated into Chinese by Zheng and Wang,¹⁵ and Shi and Bai.¹⁶ It is now necessary to give new translations and annotations, in order to correct the oversight in the previous studies.

¹⁰ SHI & BAI 1977.

¹¹ ZHENG & WANG 1977.

¹² Beside Zheng and Wang, and Shi and Bai. See: also LI 1979 and SHI & BAI 1984. This debate was summarized by PENG & YANG 2011.

¹³ Tangut title: *tšjw pju :jij bu zji jji rjiŕ low lwər bju šjə* 鷓禰數禰纒綉踴禰禰禰, Chinese title: *Shengxiang dingzun zongchi gongneng yi jing lu* 勝相頂尊總持功能依經錄 (Effect of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* collected from the *sūtra*).

¹⁴ DUAN 2010.

¹⁵ ZHENG & WANG 1977.

¹⁶ SHI & BAI 1977.

Pillar No. 1:

𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵, 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵, 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵. 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵. 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵. 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵. 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵. 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵. 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵.

𣎵𣎵: 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵.

[In the fourteenth reign year of Hongzhi, the Great Ming dynasty, *Śrāmaṇera* Dpal-ldan Rdo-rje in the Xingshansi Temple died prematurely on the twenty-fourth day of the fourth month. I erected this pillar in the fifteenth year, and ordered the carving of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* to be completed. Pillar erector: Phjij-śjo Bkra-shis Rin-chen.

Transcriber: transcription by Gegen-širi from the Rjur-kię Shengfo Temple].

The Pillar No. 1 was erected in 1502 to remember a *śrāmaṇera* (Tang. *śia mji* 𣎵𣎵; Chin. *shami* 沙彌) who died on May 20, 1501. His Tangut name, *pja dja dow džjij* 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵, was literally transcribed by Shi and Bai into Chinese *bada nazheng* 巴答那征.¹⁷ It should be noted that the name consists of two words, the second one, *dow džjij*, is evidently the Tangut transcription of Tibetan *rdo-rje* (diamond, Chin. *jingang* 金剛). It was repeatedly borrowed by Mongols for their appellations during the Yuan-Ming period, reading *dorji* in Mongolian and *duerzhi* 朵爾只 in Chinese transcription. Now it was transcribed by a disyllable word, the correct Chinese transcription should be *duozhi* 朵只.¹⁸ As for the first word, *pja dja*, it is by no means a Tangut surname, for neither of the two characters was used in Tangut appellations, but only in the transcription of the Buddhist *dhāraṇīs* for *pa* and *da*. An possible identification for this should be the Tibetan common name *dpal-ldan* (possessing glory). It is not surprising that the Tangut monks borrowed Tibetan words for their names, as this was the custom among the Buddhists of the Yuan-Ming dynasty.

The Chinese name of the temple does not appear there, but its Tangut name can be seen on both pillars as *xji śji sə tśjow* 𣎵𣎵𣎵𣎵, which was literally transcribed by Shi and Bai into Chinese *xishisi zhong* 稀什寺中, of course not being a real name of any monasteries. Zheng and Wang correctly pointed out that it ought to be identified with Xingshansi 興善寺 (Temple of promoting goodness) recorded in the *Baodingfu Zhi* 保定府志 (Chronicle of Baoding Prefecture). But they mistakenly transcribed the Tangut character

¹⁷ Zheng and Wang transcribed the name as *baping nazheng* 巴平那爭. It is evident that the Tangut character *dja* 𣎵 was mistaken by them for a similar *phjij* 𣎵.

¹⁸ This name can also be found in a vowing article of a Yuan edition (SUN 2019)

tšjow by Chinese *zhong* 眾, because in available materials at that time the scholars did not find the semantic meaning of *tšjow*, except its Chinese phonetic transcription. Now it should be pointed out that the Tangut character appears in volume 15 of the Tangut code *New Laws*, where a clause is recorded narrating the administration of the temples, in which 50 temple names are listed with an ending *tšjow*, such as *tha tšhja ɣwər bju tšjow* 敬胤廟禱絜 (Temple of Great Master respecting Heaven), etc.¹⁹ Thus it can be realized beyond any question that the Tangut *tšjow* means “temple”.²⁰ That a phonetic *sə* and a semantic *tšjow* are tied for expressing the same meaning of “temple” is a common translating technique in China, as in the Uyghur-Chinese translation *Mushitage Shan* 慕士塔格山, the word *muztagh* in Uyghur language means “ice mountain”, in which *tagh* is also tied with Chinese *shan* for expressing the meaning “mountain”.

The Tangut phrase *mji dja we* 𐰇𐰏𐰔 𐰇𐰏𐰔 may be translated as “become a corpse”, which is an extremely unusual expression, and seems to suggest that this is not a natural death. The translation *shi gao cheng* 屍告成 (corpse telling becoming) by Zheng and Wang is complete nonsense, while the translation *yuanji* 圓寂 (*nirvana*) by Shi and Bai is a bit of a misnomer. According to the Buddhist convention, the word *yuanji* is used only for indicating the death of eminent monks, so it is appropriate to use “premature death” for the young *śrāmaṇera* here.

The Tangut word *zji jji* 禪絜 was mistranslated by Zheng and Wang as *xi bing* 悉稟 (all report),²¹ and then corrected by Shi and Bai as *zongchi* 總持, equivalent to Sanskrit *dhāraṇī* and Tibetan *gzungs*. Here the *ji bju zji jji* 禪禱禪絜 indicates the *Uṣṇīṣaviṣayā dhāraṇī*.

The Tangut word *rjar mjijr* 禱彥 (transcriber) here indicates the Chinese term *shudan* 書丹 (writing in red). Before a carver begins his work, the erector of the pillar must invite a calligrapher to write the contents of the inscription in cinnabar ink on the stele as a specimen of the characters to be engraved. The calligrapher is named *gia giā šjir jji* 𐰇𐰏𐰔 𐰇𐰏𐰔, which was transcribed as *geyan shiling* 葛巖石領 and *henghe shiling* 恒河失領 by

¹⁹ For relevant Russian translation and plates of the original. See: KYCHANOV 2013: 227–228, 465–466.

²⁰ The etymology of Tangut *tšjow* (temple) remains unclear to us. Considering other words with similar pronunciation, there is an earlier Tibetan word *jo* (Buddha) as in *jo-khang* (Buddha’s palace) and a later Mongolian word *ḷoo* (temple) in *yihe ḷoo* (great temple, Chinese toponym: Yikezhao 伊克昭), but those words in Tibetan and Mongolian indicate the monasteries of Lamaism, while in Xixia it does not specially indicate the places of Tibetan Buddhism.

²¹ *Bing* 稟 should be *bing* 秉 (to hold). This mistake came from the 27th folio of *Fanhan Heshi Zhangzhongzhu* 番漢合時掌中珠 (KWANTEN 1982: 215).

Zheng and Wang, and Shi and Bai respectively. Indeed, Tangut *gia giq* may be used for Sanskrit *Gaṅgā*,²² but it is not recorded in the chapter of *Tangut Names* in *Sancai Zazi*, and was never used as anybody's surname. It maybe suspected here that these two words might have been the transcription of Mongolian *gegen širi*, in which the first word has its Chinese meaning *ming* 明 (bright),²³ and the second word seems to come from the Sanskrit word *śri* (auspicious). Tanguts may take Mongolian names in the Yuan-Ming dynasty, for it can be seen that there are more than twenty donors listed in the Tangut vowing text attached to the Ming edition *Gaowang Guanshiyin Jing* 高王觀世音經 (*Mahārājāvalokiteśvara sūtra*),²⁴ where all of the donors take Mongolian words as their last names, but their surnames suggest that they are Tangut descendants.²⁵

The calligrapher, *Gegen širi*,²⁶ was invited from the *rjur kie šjij tha tšjow* 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣, which must have been the appellation of a specific temple, but the temple with corresponding name does not appear in any historical materials available. Indeed, adopting these words as an appellation for a temple is extremely curious.²⁷ Purely as a supposition, there is a homophone of *rjur kie* 𐰇𐰏 𐰇𐰏 (capital, Chin. *jingshi* 京師) with *rjur kie* 𐰇𐰏 𐰇𐰏 (Chin. *zhujin* 諸金).²⁸ If this is the case, *rjur kie šjij tha tšjow* will make sense of the “Temple of Saint Buddha in the capital”, and one can even suppose

²² NEVSKY 1960: II, 195.

²³ KURIBAYASHI 2009: 173.

²⁴ A xylograph preserved in the Palace Museum, dated 1430 (ZXW 12: 402–408).

²⁵ Some typical example: [Zji-o] *jir-r kja tha-i* [𐰇𐰏𐰣] 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 (Mong. *irgetei*; Chin. *Yiergetai* 亦兒格台), [Phjij-šjo] *khia rar džia-ŋ* [𐰇𐰏𐰣] 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 (Mong. *qaraŋang*; Chin. *Halazhang* 哈喇章), [ja xwa] *bu ya tja-i* [𐰇𐰏𐰣] 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 (Mong. *buqadai*; Chin. *Buhedai* 不合歹), [phjij-ŋ] *bu ya tji-m rjir* [𐰇𐰏𐰣] 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 (Mong. *buqa temür*; Chin. *Buhe tiemuer* 不合帖木兒). See: NIE 2022 for detail.

²⁶ According to the inscription on Pillar No. 2, his status in the temple was a *bhikṣu* (Chin. *bichu* 苾芻, qualified monk).

²⁷ The *rjur kie šjij tha tšjow* may be literally translated into Chinese *Zhujin Shengfo Si* 諸金聖佛寺, in which the *zhujin* (each gold) is not a word. If the appellation is *Jinfo Si* 金佛寺 (Temple of Golden Buddha) or *Jinsheng Si* 金聖寺 (Temple of Golden Saint) or *Shengfo Si* 聖佛寺 (Temple of Saint Buddha), they are common appellations for monasteries, but according to the chronicle of the Ming dynasty, those temples were too far from Baoding to send somebody to transcribe the inscription, and what is more, it seems that there were no calligraphers who knew Tangut.

²⁸ The most common meaning of *rjur kie* is “the world”, but occasionally it may be used for “the capital”, as in Chen Huigao’s vowing article of the *Suvarnaprabhāsa sūtra* there is a phrase *tha kie ŋhij rjur kie džiejji* 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣 𐰇𐰏𐰣, which should be translated as “believers in the capital of the Great Dynasty”. SHI 1988: 315 translated as “believers in the world of the Great Dynasty”, which does not make sense.

mu 塔寺墓 (tomb of the *stūpa* temple) in order to go along with the “Palace of Yama” or the “Large Temple” in local legend they heard, but actually, the Tangut *io* 窰 never had the meaning “palace” or “temple”. The location suggested for erecting the pillar, i.e., the tomb in the *stūpa* courtyard four *li* to the north of Baoding city, is precisely the Hanzhuang village where the pillars were unearthed. According to the ancient custom, the *stūpa* courtyard where the dead monks were buried should have been situated at some distance from the temple, and in a large courtyard there might have been a simple building for sacrifice. Materials available have led to the affirmation that the site was but a graveyard of monks, rather than the Xingshan Temple which was held by previous scholars. Such a fact is attested in the local historical chronicles that there had never been any monasteries in the vicinity of Hanzhuang. As shown in the *Map of the Baoding Prefecture* in the *Baodingfu Zhi* 保定府志 (vol. 35, f. 2) compiled in the reign year of Guangxu (1871–1908), the Xingshan Temple was located in the southeast corner inside the old city, beside which there was a vegetable garden. It is self-evident that large graveyards could not be built in areas within the city walls, and that two temples in the same area could not share the same appellation, so it is believable that the temple in the southeast corner inside the city drawn in the *Map of the Baoding Prefecture* must have been the very site of the Xingshan Temple, and that the ruin near Hanzhuang was only the *stūpa* courtyard for burying monks. What ought to be noticed is that the “tomb of the *stūpa* courtyard”, the place of burying, is emphasized specifically in the inscription. This is unnecessary in terms of habit, because monk tombs must be in the *stūpa* courtyards, only mentioning the village name is enough without repeating the “*stūpa* courtyard”.³³ There may, of course, be another explanation, namely, that the pillars were carved at temples within the city and then transported to Hanzhuang after they were completed. Moreover, one can think of Zheng and Wang’s interview concerning that Yama and the Three Women of Kindness being enshrined there, which may not be the case, as there are no temples in China dedicated specially to Yama, the Lord of Hell. It is unclear whether these buildings were created at some other time after the 16th c., and were not directly related to the former *stūpa* courtyard.

The first character of *siow khjw dzjij* 甯甯髡, the name of the tomb owner, was misjudged by Shi and Bai as *phji* 穉 with similar form, and the

³³ If the burying place of somebody was mentioned in Chinese history, only a relevant village or “ancestors’ graves” were recorded at most, and never used the word as “*stūpa* courtyard”.

whole appellation was mistranslated as *biqu shi* 比丘師 (*bhikṣu* master). In fact, the *śiow khjiw* is a normative Tangut surname,³⁴ which was recorded on the 35th line of the primary reader *Sancai Zazi*,³⁵ merely its Chinese transcription cannot be found in history. The correct understanding of the appellation should be “Master Śiow-khjiw”. Just as above mentioned Phjij-śjo, the surname of Bkra-shis Rin-chen, is omitted in the Chinese autograph of the pillar, the last name of Śiow-khjiw is omitted here, but hereinafter it will be shown that he is the preceptor of Dpal-dan Rdo-rje, the tomb owner of the Pillar No. 1, and his real name is Shes-rab Rgyal-mtshan.

***Dhāraṇī* and the donors**

Zheng and Wang first investigated the entire inscription on the pillars in 1977. Comparing the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā dhāraṇī* on the pillars with the cognominal one on the gateway of the Juyongguan Pass in Beijing in the Yuan dynasty, they realized that many differences existed between the transcribing characters on both inscriptions.³⁶ After that, Li Yang³⁷ restored the entire *dhāraṇī* on the pillars, finding that there were few divergences between the pillars and the versions in Xixia period kept in the IOM, RAS. It is even possible to believe that the *dhāraṇī* on the pillars were engraved based on the cognate version in Xixia, and that the inscription at Juyongguan appears to be a retranslation directly from its Sanskrit or Tibetan original.³⁸ In other words, the intrinsic Buddhist tradition of the Xixia period was maintained at the Xingshan Temple.

The Xixia edition of the *Shengxiang Dingzun Zongchi Gongneng Yijinglu* 勝相頂尊總持功能依經錄, in which there are the entire *Uṣṇīṣavijayā*

³⁴ Another *Śiow khjiw dzjij kja* 𐰇𐰏𐰤𐰆𐰏𐰤 as a donor appears in the list on the Pillar No. 2.

³⁵ *EHW* 10: 49.

³⁶ The reason for this misjudgment is that they did not refer to the rubbing of the inscriptions at the Juyongguan Pass, but only collated the *dhāraṇī* on the pillars with the inaccurate handwritten copy of the Juyongguan inscriptions by LUO 1930.

³⁷ Li 2010.

³⁸ The inscription at Juyongguan was completed in 1345, more than a century after the fall of Xixia, when the compilation and printing of the *Tangut Tripiṭaka* had just been completed by some monks who acquainted with the Tangut language and script. On the contrary, the pillars in Baoding were erected nearly three centuries after the fall of Xixia, when it was impossible for people to write even a few simple sentences in Tangut, so that it is hard to imagine that there were monks who could translate *sūtras* in Tangut.

dhāraṇī and its effect of chanting, was transmitted by an official monk named Jayānanda and was translated into Chinese and Tangut respectively under the instruction of Emperor Renzong (1124–1193). Both versions were printed and donated for a *dharma* assembly held in 1149. Renzong said in his vowing article attached to the Chinese text:

朕觀茲勝因，倍激誠懇，遂命工鏤板，雕印番漢一萬五千卷，普施國內。臣民志心看轉，虔誠頂受，朕亦躬親而口服，每當竭意而誦持。

[Seeing these wonderful effects inspires my double purity of heart, and I ordered the craftsmen to engrave and print fifteen thousand copies of the Tangut and Chinese editions for donating to the domestic people. The subjects should read it wholeheartedly and receive it with devotion, and I myself shall also carry and chant it with devotion from time to time].

The print run of fifteen thousand copies was tolerably enough, but it was still not sufficient for the demand, so various manuscripts and xylographs emerged in succession, such as what was read in the postscript attached to the reprinting of Kwo Śja-tǝjǝ 貢藏訛 (Chin. Guo Shanzhen 郭善真):

隨瓊黼繡緞，繡燉鞞瓞瓞瓞，鞞瓞彥瓞瓞，鞞瓞彥瓞瓞瓞，
貢藏訛總鞞瓞瓞瓞瓞瓞，鞞瓞彥瓞瓞。³⁹

[As the book shows such effects, it was successively engraved and printed for numerous retainers and chanters, which has resulted in the blocks being damaged within a short time. Accordingly, I, Guo Shanzhen, ordered a new edition to be engraved for the convenience of receiving and keeping].

The form of the books is rather small for the convenience of those who carry with them for their own protection. In addition to the vigorous promotion by the Emperor, it became one of the most popular *sūtras* in Xixia, and one of the *sūtras* most copiously preserved in the world.⁴⁰ It is conceivable that one or more copies of the *sūtra* were brought to the capital and its environs by the adherents of the Tangut in their eastward migration, and were subsequently put into the temple collection.

³⁹ NIE 2016: 47–48.

⁴⁰ Dozens of fragments of this *sūtra* are preserved in Russia, China and Britain, of which the collection at the IOM, RAS is the most abundant. Except numerous fragments, the relatively complete Chinese pieces were catalogued by MEN'SHIKOV 1984: 223–226, the relatively complete Tangut pieces were catalogued by KYCHANOV 1999: 580–581.

After the *dhāraṇī*, more than eighty appellations of donors are inscribed separately on the two pillars.⁴¹ The list begins on Pillar No. 1 with the monks who lived in the temple:

辨級胤翳熾絃絃扁毳

[Living in the Xingshansi Temple on Baoding Prefecture]

Most of the appellations of the monks are Tangut phonetic transcriptions of common Tibetan names. Borrowing Tibetan words for their own names proves to be a common practice among the Tangut monks of the Yuan-Ming dynasty,⁴² but it is interesting to see that some of the monks in the Xingshan Temple directly shared the names of prominent monks of the Sa-skyia Sect of Tibetan Buddhism. Some of the words I could make out were as follows:

So no zjḗ bḡ 禿 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 < Tib. *bsod-nams rce-mo*

Pja dja dow tṣju 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 < Tib. *dpal-ldan don-grub*

So no kja tshja 禿 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 < Tib. *bsod-nams rgyal-mtshan*

So no sjḗ gjj 禿 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 < Tib. *bsod-nams seng-ge*⁴³

As shown above, Bsod-nams Rce-mo (1142–1182), the second son of the founder of the Sa-skyia Sect, Sa-chen Kun-dga' Snying-po (1092–1158), was respected as the second patriarch of the Sect. Dpal-ldan Don-grub (1182–1251), the primitive name of Sa-skyia Paṇḍita Kun-dga' Rgyal-mtshan, was the fourth patriarch of the Sect. Bsod-nams Rgyal-mtshan (1184–1239), the grandson of Kun-dga' Snying-po, was the father of 'Phags-pa Bro-gros Rgyal-mtshan (1235–1280), the fifth patriarch of the Sect. Bsod-nams Seng-ge (1429–1489) was a representative figure of the Sa-skyia Sect in the Ming dynasty. This fact confirms that the Xingshan Temple of the Yuan-Ming dynasty inherited the tradition of the Tangut-Tibetan Tantrism spread in

⁴¹ Most of the names recorded there need not be deciphered, because all of them written in Tangut script are formed in “surname with Tangut pronunciation + last name with Chinese meaning”, which can only be translated according to their literal pronunciation and meaning without historical evidence.

⁴² Besides, in the inscription on the Pillar No. 1, there are donors named in Sanskrit, such as *pja mja ṣji rjijr* 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 comes from Sanskrit *Padmaśrī*, and *dja rjṛ mja ṣji rjijr* 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 𑖑𑖔𑖕𑖖 comes from Sanskrit *Dharmaśrī*, which were common appellations for Serindia monks from the Yuan dynasty, as the Uyghur transcriber of the inscription in Juyongguan Pass was also called *Darmaśrī* (MURATA 1957: 278).

⁴³ The Tibetan word *seng-ge* (lion) was pronounced *sing-ki* in the Yuan-Ming period, and was transcribed as *xingji* 星吉/惺機 in Chinese.

Xixia from the middle of the 12th c.,⁴⁴ and, as Sperling pointed out,⁴⁵ the Sa-skya-pa was just the most valued Tantric sect during the late period of Xixia.

Story about the Xingshan Temple

In the year 1977, Zheng and Wang noticed an article titled *Chongxiu Xingshansi Jilue* 重修興善寺記略 (A brief narration on reconstructing the Xingshan Temple) recorded in the *Chronicle of Baoding Prefecture* compiled in the reign years of Guangxu (1875–1908).⁴⁶ It is parallel to the illustration of the *Map of the Baoding City* and tells definitely that the temple was located in the southeastern corner within the city. They did not conclude that it was the site of the Xingshan Temple, but only mentioned it in a footnote to their article, because they considered the incongruity of the temple with the ruins where the pillars were unearthed.

“A brief narration on reconstructing the Xingshan Temple”, written by Guo Fen 郭棻 (1622–1690) in the tenth reign year of the Qing Emperor Kangxi (1671), is the only remaining record concerning the Xingshan Temple (Pl. 3). The beginning of the article (line 1–3) reads:

The Xingshan Temple is located in the southeastern corner of the prefecture, but its date of creation remains unknown. Its reconstruction is recorded in the Ming inscriptions of the Yongle and Xuande reigns, while the Yuan stele is too deteriorated to read. It has been going on now for three hundred years.

It is accordingly known that the Xingshan Temple was built no later than the Yuan dynasty, and was repeatedly rebuilt afterwards, but again fell into dilapidation in the early Qing period. Guo Fen describes the wretched appearance he saw in the temple (line 3–7):

⁴⁴ There are four words for “temple” in Tangut language, in which *tshə* 𐰇𐰏 is the phonetic transcription of Chinese *si* 寺, *mjiir·jij* 𐰇𐰏𐰃 is the semantic translation of Chinese *jingshe* 精舍 (Skr. *vihara*). Besides, *tšjow* 𐰇𐰏 roughly indicates native Xixia temples and *jimji* 𐰇𐰏𐰃 roughly indicates Tibetan Tantric monasteries. Here the name of Xingshansi uses *tšjow* rather than *ji mji*, showing that Tibetan Buddhism had been integrated into the native Buddhism in the late period of Xixia.

⁴⁵ SPERLING 1987.

⁴⁶ See: Vol. 77, f. 3.

子母宮在城隍廟西

古大士巷在府城紀家胡同南口迤西舊稱北白衣巷

南白衣巷在府城穿心樓東南

銅佛寺在府城內西南

興善寺在府城內東南康熙初重修俱同

郭榮重修興善寺記略郡城東南隅之有興善寺者不知
 創自何時明永樂宣德間碑皆記重修也元時碑沒滅不知
 可讀歷今三百年矣風雨損之烏鼠害之苔繡香臺燼網
 佛歷嶺楓棟宇欹落掃掃兒婦衣者流望之卻步寺有棗數
 株歷嶺楓棟宇欹落掃掃兒婦衣者流望之卻步寺有棗數
 狐兔窟也嗟乎佛者熟時兒童摘食之乃有人履迹過此則
 此地為之乎人為之乎抑時為之乎我朝定鼎之年郡置防
 朝定鼎之年郡置防守官兵有分得據什庫郭杜者蒙古
 人也性明敏而好善與人謙以羅織布苦者吞拳公獨潔
 而獲之氓也而俘之且株連且羅織布苦者吞拳公獨潔
 陰而嚴焉其丁人威德之公駢節處密邇日塵土中手運木
 石刻期告竣復三延僧請講為住持置園田五畝五分五釐
 供立翁所修殿三楹配殿六楹鐘鼓兩樓禪堂六間且高

保定府志

卷七十七

雜記 寺觀

三

其門以莊觀標其鎮以表盛而丹雘金碧之功固弗備焉
 嗚呼天下事盡有他人與時之相須數百年而一際者有
 如此舉也讀明碑所記當日重興此寺卓錫者則班丹端
 竹也其修者朱驥堅泰與其徒班丹朶爾只也相去三百載
 官崇武也莫非西士人相去三載乎地
 而重修之慢慢乎若有所感而勤者其非時至則然乎地
 之靈也佛之靈也吾不能不
 為傑感焉時康熙十年三月

崇慶寺在府城北關西元至正中建東廡下有大樓可十圍元

時植雍正古木蔥鬱游僧雲集頌聲聞數里為郡第一禪林

舊明天順三年嘉靖六年前後重修縣志

國朝乾隆三十八年總督周元理重修縣志

明劉恩重修崇慶寺記略保定北城門外沿城河而西有
 寺對城中為崇慶寺元古刹也我朝永樂初年寺僧覺體修
 之父李有日會一修之直德五年僧之師望雲罷禪師又增修
 之李爾定無修焉歲月彌久傾頹荒觀記諫董觀望罷禪師又增修
 薄慈君何化度焉然有願無財眾心徒善御馬監太監李
 能偉均人也少遊寺中志存依歸至正德七年饑已成首以
 乃廣明亦指資甚圖材良工善祀日謹始歷年者成首以
 山門標題寺號不請有承成知唯仰付設鐘鼓樓則晨昏

Pl. 3. A brief narration on reconstructing the Xingshan Temple in Chronicle of Baoding Prefecture

Wind and rain damaged it; birds and rats hurt it. Mosses filled the sacrificial altars; cobwebs hid the seats of the Buddhas. Bricks and beams were mutilated and crumbling, and the men in black⁴⁷ were afraid to go forward when they saw it. In the temple, there were a few date-trees which were distinguished from the rest. When the dates were ripe each fall, children picked and ate them. When someone passed by, he could only see the holes of foxes and rabbits. Alas! Buddhism had long flourished in China, and to what harsh extremes had this temple alone fallen! Who was at fault for this, the circumstances, the people, or the time?

Guo Fen then praises the incorruption of Nadu, a local officer who initiated the rebuilding of the temple, in contrast to the corruption of the local soldiers (line 7–11):

In the tenth year after our Emperor ascended the throne, garrisons were established in the prefecture, where officers and men performed their duties. Nadu,⁴⁸ a Boshiku,⁴⁹ is a Mongol with an intelligent and kind-hearted nature, humble in manner and amiable to others. Everywhere at the time, most of the soldiers in the garrison were civilians who had been plundered and captured in large numbers, enduring hardships one by one without daring to say a word. Only Nadu preserves his purity and keep his subordinates under strict control, so that people thank him for his morality.

Nadu's contribution to the rebuilding of the temple is recorded after the preceding paragraph (line 11–17):

The place where he was stationed is the adjoining neighborhood of the Xingshan Temple, and Nadu used to sigh there when he visited it, and he accordingly contributed money to recruit laborers, and personally led them in their operations. He used to carry the wood and stones himself in the dust under the burning sun, and the project was completed on schedule. He then invited Monk Qingru to be the superintendent, and purchased a garden of five *mu* and five *fen* and five *li*⁵⁰ to supply the *bhikṣus*. The reconstruction included a principal hall of three-*ying*,⁵¹ two side halls of six-*ying*, two

⁴⁷ “The men in black” (Chin. *ziyizheliu* 淄衣者流) indicates officials or gentlemen who, as stated, must wear black clothes in formal occasions.

⁴⁸ *Nadu* 哪杜 seems to be an Uyghur name, but I cannot trace the etymology of it.

⁴⁹ *Boshiku* 撥什庫 is the Chinese transcription of Manchurian *bošokū* (Chinese translation: *lingcui* 領催), a junior officer in charge of documents and provisions.

⁵⁰ According to the area measurement in the Qing dynasty, 1 *mu* 畝 = 10 *fen* 分 = 100 *li* 厘 ≈ 667 square meters.

⁵¹ *Ying* 楹 indicates the stand column in traditional architecture. The distance between two columns (≈ 6 m) was used to measure the width of a building.

towers for a bell and a drum, and six rooms for meditation. Moreover, the gate was heightened to represent its solemnity, and a flagstaff was erected to show its prosperity. All the red, white, golden, and green coatings were painted there without a single omission. Alas! The achievements of the world require a combination of circumstance, people, or time. Only on one occasion in hundreds of years has such a project come into action.

At the end of his article, Guo Fen quoted a statement from the Ming inscriptions available at the temple, and emphatically mentioned the names of three monks who first came to the temple for Buddhist practice (line 17–22):

The record on the stele of the Ming dynasty reads: In those days it was Dpal-dan Don-grub who came and revived the temple, and it was Shes-rab Rgyal-mtshan and his apprentice Dpal-dan Rdo-rje who practised with burning incense, and the donor was Dagan Chaiwu,⁵² all of whom were native Serindians. Now Master Nadu, also a native Serindian, rebuilt it after three hundred years. This fact struck me deeply. Was it not a consequence of the coming of time? Was it caused by the supernatural of the circumstance or the supernatural of Buddhas? I could not refrain myself from being deeply affected by it.

In the third month of the tenth reign year of Kangxi.

The appellations of three monks in the temple mentioned above came from Tibetan, i.e., Dpal-ldan Don-grub (*bandan duanzhu* 班丹端竹, virtuous achievement), Shes-rab Rgyal-mtshan (*shilai jiancan* 失曠堅參, wisdom pillar) and Dpal-dan Rdo-rje (*bandan duoerzhi* 班丹朵爾只, virtuous diamond), which led Zheng and Wang to decide that the temple was run by Lamaists in the Ming dynasty. It is recorded on the stele that the monks in the temple and the donor were regarded as Serindians (*xituren* 西土人), which was only a geographic concept, actually including Tibetans, Uyghurs, and certainly including Tanguts. It must be reminded that the Serindian Lamaism believers at that time did not limit to Tibetans, but also to Tanguts who, like Mongolian Lamas, used to borrow Tibetan names for themselves. That is to say, the Tibetan names did not prevent the understanding that the temple was run by Tanguts. It should be noted that Zheng and Wang overlooked an important fact that the three monks recorded in the inscription

⁵² This donor (Skr. *dānapati*, Chin. *tanyue* 檀越) seems to be a Mongol, whose name is formed by a Turkic borrowing *tarqan* (officer) and a Mongolian *ča'ur* (go to campaign), which was transcribed as *dalahan chawuer* 達刺罕察兀兒 in the tradition of the Yuan dynasty. The first word is repeatedly found in the *Yuan shi* 元史, the second word appears in the 11th volume of the *Secret History of the Mongols*, § 254, 255 (KURIBAYASHI 2009: 106).

appear just right on the pillars of Baoding. As one of the donors to erect the *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* pillars, the name of Dpal-ldan Don-grub (pja dja dow tsju 絳 讚 禪 韻) may be found in the second line of the eighth side of the Pillar No. 2. Dpal-dan Rdo-rje (pja dja dow dzjij 絳 讚 禪 霞) is just the tomb owner of the Pillar No. 1. If the identification of the two names is correct, one can further presume that the tomb owner of the Pillar No. 2 is the preceptor of Dpal-dan Rdo-rje, Shes-rab Rgyal-mtshan, whose surname is recorded on the pillar without his last name, while his last name is recorded by Guo Fen without his surname.⁵³ Shes-rab Rgyal-mtshan came to Baoding with Dpal-dan Rdo-rje sometime in the Ming period and practiced at the Xingshan Temple revived by Dpal-ldan Don-grub, but both died within a dozen years after their arrival. The exact date of their arrival is suggested by the age of *Śrāmaṇera* Dpal-dan Rdo-rje, who was a juvenile apprentice in the learning stage. According to the Buddhist institutions, a child may become a *śrāmaṇera* not earlier than the age of seven, and may change his identity to *bhikṣu* at least at the age of twenty. Assuming that he arrived at the temple early at the age of seven and died at nineteen, he would have remained there for at most twelve years. Thus, it may be inferred that the Xingshan Temple was rebuilt no earlier than 1489, most likely in the 1490s, when the three monks came to practice there.

After the death of Dpal-dan Rdo-rje and Shes-rab Rgyal-mtshan, no *stūpas* were built for them, but two simple and crude pillars were put there. This may have been a reflection of the hierarchy within the temple. According to the ancient tradition, only eminent monks were eligible to enjoy *stūpa* tombs, and the number of *stūpa* layers reflected their position in the temple. The reason why Dpal-dan Rdo-rje and Shes-rab Rgyal-mtshan did not enjoy *stūpa* tombs was that they were in lower positions in the temple. As the preceptor of Dpal-dan Rdo-rje, Shes-rab Rgyal-mtshan may have been an ordinary *bhikṣu*, for, except in special cases, the preceptor of a *śrāmaṇera* need not be held personally by a senior monk. Moreover, the fact that the pillars were completed at the same time, one year and a half after the death and half a year after another death, may be due to the limited financial resources of the

⁵³ The above assumption needs to meet such a condition that the stele entitled “A brief narration on reconstructing the Xingshan Temple” recorded by Guo Fen was not a relic in the reign years of Yongle and Xuande, but erected in almost half a century later, the reign years of Hongzhi, otherwise we shall not explain why Dpal-dan Rdo-rje lived always as a young *śrāmaṇera* at least from 1435 to 1501. It is a pity that Guo Fen did not give the exact date of the erection of that stele, and that all of the steles in the Xingshan Temple have been long lost, so that the relevant history cannot be examined further.

temple, otherwise it would not have been necessary to mobilize more than eighty men and women for donation to erect the pillars of such coarse stone.⁵⁴

Tangut settlements in Hebei Province

It is common sense to assume, there must have been a settlement of Xixia descendants near the temple of Tangut tradition.⁵⁵ As shown by the surnames of donors to the pillars, the inhabitants there were the descendants of Tangut warriors of local garrison in the Yuan dynasty, belonging to several families as *ɲwe mji* 纒纒 (*weiming* 嵬名) of the Imperial clan, *ljow* 𐰽𐰚 (*liang* 梁) of the Queen's clan, and *sjɛ pji* 𐰽𐰚 (𐰽𐰚) (*xianbei* 鮮卑) clan,⁵⁶ etc. A similar case appears in another temple in Dingzhou, Hebei Province, where several wooden plates for printing a Tangut *sūtra* were found, but it is a pity that the site of the temple has already had no ways for investigation, and the original plates also have been missing, only four photos of paper printing left at the beginning of the *Bulletin of the National Library of Peiping*. Wang estimated in the introduction to the *Bulletin* that those were printed from the old plates engraved long ago, on which the leaf surfaces were fragmentary and illegible because of the abrasion plate.⁵⁷ Zhang revealed that this xylograph was a Tangut version of the *Sūtra of the Ten Kings* (*Shiwang jing* 十王經) never seen before,⁵⁸ which shows considerable difference from the version of Xixia in the collection of the IOM, RAS. From this an assumption will be thought of that if this edition was a new translation and a new xylograph in the Yuan dynasty, it will prove that near the temple in Dingzhou during the Yuan era, there might have been a settlement of a Tangut garrison, in which there were intellectuals who knew the Tangut language.

A different fact is a stele unearthed in 2013 in Chenzhuang village of Daming County, Hebei Province. According to the related historical accounts, the village near the tomb site was not a garrison, but a single noble family of the Yuan dynasty. On the stele there are two lines of Tangut inscriptions (Pl. 4):

⁵⁴ Assuming that all the monks adopted Tibetan and Sanskrit names as their own, and that all of them participated in the donation, the number of monks in the temple would not exceed a dozen. This suggests that the Xingshansi was a small-scale temple with limited funds.

⁵⁵ The Hanzhuang village is now out of public view, as it was completely demolished during recent urban construction.

⁵⁶ The surname *xianbei* suggests that they were descended from the Northern Dynasties (439–581), but incorporated into Tanguts after the founding of Xixia.

⁵⁷ WANG 1930.

⁵⁸ ZHANG 2019.



Pl. 4. Rubbing of the stele of Xiaoli Qianbu

𐰇𐰏𐰍𐰎𐰏𐰐
 𐰇𐰏𐰍𐰎𐰏⁵⁹

[Madam Tian, the mother
 Xiaoli Qianbu, the father]

The Tangut word *gia bju* 𐰇𐰏𐰍 means “commander of an army” (Chin. *tongjun* 統軍). Xiaoli Qianbu 小李鈐部, also called Xili Qianbu 昔里鈐部 in the volume 122 of *Yuan shi* 元史, was the *daruqači* (chief executive) of the Daming Road.⁶⁰ His eldest son and eldest grandson also held the office as heredities, and his elder brother, Julisha, was the *daruqači* of the Suzhou (now Jiuquan city) Road.⁶¹ Previously, a Chinese inscription on the tomb stele of his son Li Ailu was unearthed near the tomb of Xiaoli Qianbu.⁶² Documents and unearthed records prove that it was a prominent family. To meet the demands of their office-holding, some members of their

⁵⁹ According to the writing regulation of Chinese tomb stele (male left female right), the positions for men and women should be transposed with each other. The present sequence is read from left to right, which may have been influenced by Mongolian writing form.

⁶⁰ His life and family are recorded in Chinese on the back of the stele. (ZHU 2014) carefully studied the inscription by the combination of the materials in the collection of the Yuan dynasty and the chorography of the Ming dynasty.

⁶¹ BAI & SHI 1979.

⁶² ZHU & LIU 2012.

forefathers remained in their native country in the Gansu Corridor, and others, with some attendants, emigrated to Daming, and took the shape of a small settlement in their new abode.

The re-engraved tomb stele dedicated to Laosuo in 1360 is preserved in the Park of Lotus Pond, and the Chinese inscriptions on the stele were transcribed and studied in detail by Liang.⁶³ According to the inscriptions, Laosuo came from the Tangwushi 唐兀氏 (Family of Tangut's) in the Gansu Corridor, who followed Genghis Khan in his invasion of the Middle East and followed Ögötai to march southward and destroy the Jin dynasty. He died in 1260 at his official post of *daruqači* of the Shuntian Road. He was buried in Taijing village in Qingyuan County, where the present-day Xiezhuang village is located in Baoding, seven kilometers from Hanzhuang village where the pillars were found.⁶⁴ Because subordinates had to try to be in tune with the Mongol potentates, the consciousness of traditional Tangut culture was downplayed in the family of Laosuo, whose descendants left no vestiges of Tangut character and even whose names were changed to Mongolian type. For example, his son was named Manggu 忙古 (Mong. *mangqut*), and his grandson was named Hudu Buhua 忽都不花 (Mong. *quduq buqa*). Similar case may be seen in the family of Xiaoli Qianbu, whose descendants took the Chinese surname Li 李. His Tangut appellation is recorded only on his tomb stele, suggesting that the ability of his descendants to use the Tangut language was insufficient to support them in writing a complete inscription. It is clear that such a custom differed from that of the Tangut donors recorded on the pillars of Baoding, who wrote their names in Tangut or Tibetan until the middle of the Ming dynasty.

When the Xixia state was destroyed by the Mongols, the Tanguts who had submitted to the Mongol-Yuan dynasty enjoyed a higher social status than Chinese, though lower than Mongols. As education was relatively more developed in Xixia and Tangut officeholders had a higher level of culture, many Tanguts were included into the ruling clique of the Yuan government,⁶⁵

⁶³ LIANG 2007.

⁶⁴ The materials of Laosuo's family are not recorded in histories, except the information incidentally mentioned in the *Lingchuan Ji* 陵川集 (vol. 35) by Hao Jing 郝經 (1223–1275) in the Yuan dynasty, the *Heyang Dunshi Goujun Muming* 河陽遁士苟君墓銘 (Stele Inscription of Hermit Gou in Heyang), in which Gou Shizhong 苟士忠 (1199–1258), the tomb owner, came to Hebei for escaping from the chaos of war. The Imperial Envoy, Laosuo, came to Shuntian Prefecture, and, knowing Gou's intelligence, intended to invite him to become a senator; but he stoutly declined and did not arrive. (苟士忠... 居燕趙之間. 宣使老索來蒞順天, 知其材, 欲引為參佐. 力辭不就).

⁶⁵ For the official careers of Tanguts in the Yuan government. See: BAI 1989: 48, 52.

and their families and subordinates migrated with them to the environs of the capital. Around that time, the Yuan government successfully conscripted a large number of Tanguts from the Gansu Corridor to be stationed everywhere, including the Tangut Garrison (*Tangwuwei* 唐兀衛) near the Central Kingdom. On the previous suggestion of the inscriptions at the Juyongguan Pass, it has been assumed that the Tangut were chiefly quartered to the north of the capital, and the pillars at Baoding prove that they were also quartered in the south.

During the Mongol-Yuan period, two ethnic groups immigrated on a large scale to the area around the capital. The Tanguts entered the interior in two ways, through the migration of noble families led by official needs, and through the migration of the families of common soldiers led by conscription. As a rule, the nobles, in order to be dependent on the new governors, deliberately and actively pandered to the culture of the ruling people, while ordinary soldiers living in relatively confined environments expect to retain their native language, script and lifestyle forever, and to avoid the infiltration and influence of non-native cultures. Therefore, the reason why the Tangut culture in Chenzhuang and Xiezhuang did not survive as long as in Hanzhuang is that the inhabitants in Chenzhuang and Xiezhuang belonged to the upper aristocracy, while those in Hanzhuang belonged to the lower class. In addition, religious beliefs favored the continued use of the Tangut language and thus delayed the demise of Tangut culture. However, less than ten years after the erection of the pillars, the Ming government issued the *Ming Huidian* 明會典 (Assembled code of the Ming dynasty), in which the volume 141 stipulates the marriage of Mongols and Semus, admitting the marriage between a Mongol or a Semu with a Chinese, but they must be mutually willing; marriages within the same race are not allowed; offenders will be punished with 80 stick-lashes, and they, male and female, will be made slaves to be confiscated by the government.⁶⁶ It was just this restriction on marriage that led to the eventual demise of the Tangut people and led to the Tangut pillars of *Uṣṇīṣavijayā* in Baoding Prefecture being regarded as the last monuments of Xixia descendants.

Abbreviations

EHW: Ecang Heishuicheng Wenxian 俄藏黑水城文獻 [Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia], vol. 4, compiled by the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of the Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Nationality Studies of the

⁶⁶ Chinese original: 凡蒙古色目人, 聽與中國人為婚姻, 務要兩相情願. 不許本類自相嫁娶, 違者杖八十, 男女入官為奴.

Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, Shanghai: Shanghai Chinese Classics Publishing House, 1997.

ZXW: *Zhongguo cang Xixia Wenxian* 中國藏西夏文獻 [Tangut Manuscripts Collected in China], vol. 18, compiled by the Center for Xixia Studies of Ningxia University, the China National Library, the Compilation and Translation Center for Chinese Classics and Archives Collation of Gansu Province, Lanzhou: Gansu People's Publishing House, Dunhuang Literature and Arts Publishing House, 2005.

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Du Weimin

Introducing the New *Tangut Literature Series (TLS)*

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Abstract: This article introduces the first ten texts published in colour in the new *Tangut Literature Series (TLS)* started in 2021 jointly by the Ningxia University, China, and the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences. All ten works of exceptionally high research value have been thoroughly studied and were published in black and white in 1990s in the collection titled *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia*. Their publication in the new TLS series is important as it makes visible all the colour stamps and punctuation marks on the manuscripts and woodprints.

Key words: Tangut studies, Tangut literature, Khara-Khoto, Pyotr Kozlov, Ningxia University, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, RAS.

From their early days, Tangut studies were an international research field. The Tangut (Xixia) state was located on the territory of present-day central northern China and was deeply influenced by Chinese culture. The main part of the Xixia cultural legacy is now kept in Russia. Therefore, cooperation between scholars of both countries is of utmost importance for the academic world.

In 2021 the Ningxia University (China) and the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Russia) started a collaborative program in order to preserve Tangut written heritage contemporary with the Chinese Song dynasty (960–1279) and to pass it to future generations. The *Tangut Literature Series (TLS)* project aimed at publishing in colour the most important Tangut documents, unearthed in the dead city of Khara-Khoto located in Ejina aimag in Inner Mongolia (China) by Pyotr Kozlov's expedition in 1908 and now kept at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, RAS, in Russia. The TLS, published by Gansu Culture Press, is co-edited by Professor Du Jianlu and Professor Irina Popova, Directors of

the Sino-Russian Joint Institute of Tangut Studies. Among the ten classical works selected to be published first were the most important and informative documents, including “Sea of Meanings Established by the Saints” (*Sheng li yi hai* 聖立義海), “Three Tactics of Huangshi-gong” (*Huangshi gong san lue* 黃石公三略), “Twelve Kingdoms” (*Shi er guo* 十二國), “Forest of Categories” (*Lei lin* 類林), “Collection of Xixia proverbs: New Refined Verses in *ci* Genre” (*Xixia yanyu ji: xin jijin he ci* 西夏諺語集: 新集錦合辭), “Military Treatise of ‘Sunzi’ with Three Commentaries” (*Sunzi Bingfa san zhu* 孫子兵法三注), “Collection of Verses” (*Shi ge ji* 詩歌集), “Mixed Categories” (*Za zi* 雜字), “Mixed Symbols of Three Parts of the Universe” (*Wen hai za lei san cai za zi* 文海雜類三才雜), “Tangut-Chinese Timely Pearl in the Hand” (*Fan Han heshi zhangzhongzhu* 番漢合時掌中珠). Description of all these works follows.

(1) *Sheng li yi hai* is a Tangut classical work by unknown author. In the 13th year of Qianyou reign (1182) of Xixia, it was engraved on woodblocks by the Tangut Bureau of Lettering and then printed on hemp paper in the butterfly-binding format. Its black and white facsimile was published in *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia*, Volume 11. The work has the same format and structure as the Chinese “Collection of Literature Arranged by Categories” (*Yi wen leiju* 藝文類聚) and explains various categories, such as constellations, celestial phenomena, seasons, mountains and rivers, plants and trees, agricultural fields, natural resources, farm tools, products of animal husbandry, wild animals, clothing, food, royal household, the system of officials, Buddhism, military affairs, relatives and marriage. The original text was divided into 15 chapters covering 142 categories, and its total length was about 60,000 words. The extant Tangut version includes 35 categories, that is, one fourth of the entire text. Each category is explained using different words and phrases, accompanied by two lines of commentary in small characters that mostly deals with Xixia natural geography, social life, ethics and morals.

(2) *Huangshi-gong san lue* was translated from Chinese into Tangut, engraved and then printed on hemp paper in the butterfly binding. Its black and white facsimile was published in *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia*, Volume 11. Compared with the extant *Huangshi-gong san lue* discovered in Dunhuang in Gansu Province (China), this Tangut version has more detailed commentaries and preserves its original form, serving as an important source for the study of the Chinese version of *Huangshi-gong san lue* and ancient Chinese military thought in general.

(3) *Shi er guo* was translated into Tangut by an unknown translator from the Chinese historical didactic compilation written by Sun Yu 孫昱 of the Tang dynasty. It was printed on hemp paper in the butterfly binding. The original Chinese version of the *Shi er guo* is lost. It was a collection of stories from the Spring and Autumn Period that contained numerous citations from historical works, such as “Spring and Autumn Annals with Commentaries by Zuo Qiuming” (*Zuo zhuan* 左傳), “Historical Records” (*Shi ji* 史記), “Discourses of the States” (*Guo yu* 國語), “Strategies of the Warring States” (*Zhan guo ce* 戰國策), “Garden of Stories” (*Shuo yuan* 說苑), “Master Lü’s Spring and Autumn Annals” (*Lü shi Chun qiu* 呂氏春秋), “The Han Feizi” (*Hanfeizi* 韓非子), “The Liezi” (*Liezi* 列子). The Tangut *Shi er guo* consisted of three volumes, with the first two considerably different from those in the original Chinese version. The content of this work was identified by Nikolai Nevsky in the 1930s. In 1963, Zoia Gorbacheva and Evgenii Kychanov described its physical condition in detail.¹ In 1995, Kirill Solonin published a facsimile of *Shi er guo* with a Russian translation.² The work was published first in *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia*, Volume 11.

(4) *Lei lin* was translated into Tangut from the Chinese text compiled by Yu Lizheng 于立政 of the Tang dynasty, and was then engraved by the Bureau of Lettering in the 13th year of Qianyou reign (1182) of Xixia. The original Chinese version of *Lei lin* was lost and only fragments of the reduced version titled *Zengguang fenmen lei lin zashuo* 增廣分門類林雜說 by Wang Pengshou 王鵬壽 of the Jin dynasty were later found in Dunhuang. The Tangut xylograph originally had 10 chapters (*juan*), but the first two were lost. Thus, chapters 3–10 are now available only in Tangut translation. The Tangut *Lei lin* was studied by the Russian scholar Kseniia Kepping³ and by the Chinese scholars Shi Jinbo, Huang Zhenhua and Nie Hongyin.⁴ The work was published in *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia*, Vol. 11.

(5) *Xixia yanyu ji: xin jijin he ci* was compiled by scholar Liang Deyang 梁德養 in the 7th year of Renzong Qianyou reign (1176) of Xixia, and was later supplemented by Wang Renchi 王仁持 in the 18th year of Qianyou of Xixia (1186). It is preserved intact in two versions. The text was published in

¹ GORBACHEVA & KYCHANOV 1963: 42–43.

² SOLONIN 1995.

³ KEPPIG 1983.

⁴ SHI JINBO & HUANG ZHENHUA & NIE HONGYIN 1993.

Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia, Volume 10. Nikolai Nevsky translated 23 couplets of proverbs, which were published as part of his fundamental *Tangut Philology* in 1960. In 1974, Professor Kychanov translated *Xin jijin he ci* into Russian and published it.⁵ In 1993, Chen Bingying 陳炳應 prepared its Chinese translation based on the black and white facsimile of the original Tangut text in Professor Kychanov's Russian book.⁶

(6) *Sunzi bingfa san jia zhu*, a Tangut version translated from the Chinese text of *The Art of War* by Sunzi, was printed on hemp paper in the butterfly binding. The Chinese text of *The Art of War* by Sunzi exists in three versions, namely the Bamboo Slip version, the Military Canonical version and the Eleven Commentaries version. The Tangut version is rather different from these three and might be considered the work's "fourth version." It is likely that the Chinese text of *Sunzi*, which served as the original for the Tangut translation, is no longer extant. This Tangut version of *Sunzi* sheds light on the textual development of the *Sunzi* treatise under the Tang and Song dynasties, and for this reason it is highly valuable for research.⁷

(7) Tangut *Shi ge ji* was engraved by the Bureau of Lettering in the 16th year of Qianyou reign (1185) of Xixia and then printed on hemp paper in the butterfly binding. It includes verses "The Truth" (*Daoli* 道理), "Clever" (*Congyi* 聰穎), "Poetic Essay" (*Fu shi* 賦詩), "Great Poem" (*Da shi* 大詩), "Melody of the Moon" (*Yue yue yue shi* 月月樂詩), etc. In *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia*, its black and white facsimile was published under the name "A Collection of Palace Poems" (*Gongting shi ji* 宮廷詩集).

(8) *Za zi*, a textbook of Chinese characters for beginners, is one of the few preserved among Chinese non-Buddhist works of Xixia. Published on hemp paper in the butterfly binding, Xixia Chinese *Za zi* encompasses words, which were in common use at that time, and covers all aspects of Tangut life including family names, daily necessities, physical hygiene, production activities, cultural and political life, etc. This work was published in *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia*, Vol. 6.

(9) *San cai za zi*, a textbook of Tangut characters for beginners, survives intact in many versions. The extant woodblock version was engraved in the 18th year of Qianyou reign (1188) of Xixia and the manuscript one is dated to the 2nd year of Qianding (1224). *San cai za zi* is divided into three chapters under the headings: *Heaven*, *Earth*, and *Man*, with a number of

⁵ KYCHANOV 1974.

⁶ CHEN BINGYING 1993.

⁷ KEPPING 1979.

categories in each chapter, and numerous words listed under each category. For example, the first chapter *Heaven* includes the following categories: sky, sun, stars, lightning, thunder, clouds, hail, frost, dew, wind, and the Milky Way. The second chapter *Earth* includes the categories: earth, mountains, rivers and seas, treasures, silk, men's and women's clothes, trees, vegetables, plants, grains, horses, camels, cows, goats, birds, beasts, reptiles and insects. The third chapter *Man* contains surnames of ethnic minorities (*Fan* people), surnames of the Chinese-*Han* people, words related to family members, body, house, food and drink utensils. The colour facsimile in the TLS presents an enhanced and reassembled version of *San cai za zi* which is much more complete than the black and white version found in *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia*.

(10) *Fan Han heshi zhangzhong zhu*, the earliest known bilingual dictionary in China, was compiled to facilitate learning each other's languages for the Chinese-*Han* and Tangut people. The text was first engraved on woodblocks and then printed on hemp paper in the butterfly binding. In *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia* it was reassembled into three parts. The content of the whole dictionary is divided into the categories of *Heaven*, *Earth*, and *Man* and includes words such as the sun, the moon, stars, wind and rain, thunder and clouds, the four seasons and the five elements, the heavenly stems and earthly branches, year, eight directions, rivers and seas and mountains, treasures and mineral resources, fruits and vegetables, grains and cereals, birds, flowers, fish and insects, poultry and beasts, human organs, and the system of officials. Among them, the third volume containing the category *Man* (*Renshixia* 人事下) takes up almost half of the entire work. It includes words concerning human life, such as birth, studies, official promotion, trial, banquet, marriage, etc. In addition to words, it also contains phrases. This dictionary is an important text for research on Tangut language and characters, Xixia social history, culture and customs.

All ten works described above are exceptionally valuable for research. They were studied thoroughly and were published in black and white in the 1990s in the collection *Heishuicheng Manuscripts Collected in Russia*. Importantly, this new publication in the TLS series makes visible all the colour stamps and punctuation marks in full detail. The TLS series paves the way for a new stage in research on Tangut texts making it possible, in particular, to study them from the codicological point of view.

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The Manchu-Chinese Manuscript
***Emu tanggû orin sakda-i gisun sarkiyān* 百二老人語錄**
in the Collection of the IOM, RAS

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Abstract: A unique Manchu-Chinese manuscript “The stories of one hundred and twenty old men” *Emu tanggû orin sakda-i gisun sarkiyān* is kept in the collection of the Institute of Oriental manuscripts. It is a rare sample of Manchu original literature that was compiled by a Mongol Sungyûn (Songyun 松筠) in 1790. The text was edited by Furentai, and in 1809 was translated into Chinese by a famous connoisseur of Manchu and Chinese literature Fugiyûn (Fujun 富俊). The bilingual manuscript from the IOM, RAS bears red personal seals of Fujun and the red seal of the printing house *Shao-yi-tang* 紹衣堂 that prove that the copy belonged to the translator. The text consists of 120 stories told by 120 old men. They mostly concern the life of simple Manchu bannermen, their everyday problems and financial difficulties often caused by Chinese merchants. The author solves them according to the Confucian moral teachings. Much attention is paid to training of the army and education. Descriptions of daily life in this work are of interest for historians, while its Manchu text is a good source for studies of Manchu original literature and language.

The compilation history of “The stories of one hundred and twenty old men” is described in three prefaces to the manuscript. Their English translation, accompanied by a transcription of Chinese and a transliteration of Manchu originals, is given in this article.

Key words: Manchu literature, Manchu manuscript, Sungyûn, Songyun, Fugiyûn, Fujun, *Emu tanggû orin sakda-i gisun sarkiyān*, IOM, RAS

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“The stories of one hundred and twenty old men” *Emu tanggû orin sakda-i gisun sarkiyân* is one of rare works of Manchu original literature. It was written by the Korcin Mongol Sungyûn (Song-yun 松筠 1752–1835)¹ during his service in Urga in 1785–1789. The stories are about the history and administration of the Manchu state, Manchu and Manchu-Chinese culture, philosophical and moral texts, which are partly known to the sinologists. Of special interest are plots describing everyday life of Manchu bannermen as seen by an eyewitness. There are rather few extant descriptions of this kind, and among them is the Manchu diary of Zeng Shou titled *Beye-i cooha babe yabuha babe ejehe bithe* “Personal diary following the troops”.² Several Manchu reminiscences are mentioned in the book by Pamela Crossley “Orphan Warriors. Three Generations and the End of the Manchu World”.³ Another example of Manchu literature in prose *Donjina-i sabuha donjiha ejebun* (“Stories of what was heard and known by Donjina”, Urumqi, 1989) was introduced by Giovanni Stary in 1997.⁴ In addition to these samples of Manchu original literature, the stories from the work by Sungyûn in *Emu tanggû orin sakda-i gisun sarkiyân* tell about the life of simple Manchu soldiers, their everyday problems and financial difficulties often caused by Chinese merchants. The author solves them according to the Confucian moral teachings. His descriptions of daily life are of interest for historians, while the work’s Manchu text is a good source for studying Manchu original literature and language.

The Manchu text of *Emu tanggû orin sakda-i gisun sarkiyân* was made known to European readers by Richard Rudolf in his article published in 1940 in which he described the Manchu manuscript kept at the Far Eastern Library of the Chicago University.⁵ A facsimile of this manuscript was published only in 1982 with introduction by the Japanese scholar Prof. Kanda Nobuo.⁶ A year later, Prof. Giovanni Stary from Italy made the first (and the only) full translation of this manuscript from Manchu into German and provided a transliteration of the Chicago manuscript comparing it with two other manuscripts kept at the libraries of the Osaka University and the Peking University of Nationalities.⁷

¹ For biographical details on Song-yun see: HUMMEL 1991, Vol. 2: 691–962; HEISSIG 1962: 85–89; DABRINGHAUS 1994, *QING SHI GAO* 1927: ce 95, *Le zhuan* 129, 2a–5b.

² The fourth chapter of this text was published by Ji Yonghai (JI YONGHAI 1987).

³ CROSSLEY 1990.

⁴ STARY 1997: 1–6.

⁵ RUDOLPH 1940: 554–563.

⁶ *Emu tanggû orin sakda-i gisun sarkiyân* 1982.

⁷ STARY 1983.

From the title we may assume that the text is divided into 120 chapters, and this author's decision is explained by Sungyûn at the beginning of his preface as follows: "With reverence I think that the enlightened ruler had issued a special decree that says: "The number of "green mice" in the calendar, doubling, will give the number "120" and then the life cycle of all people inside and outside all seas will be increased. <...> and for sincerity and truthfulness to increase in the heavenly realms." I, Sungyûn, in my free time from service, recalled various stories of old men, whom I listened to with respect, and which amazed me since childhood. [I] counted them and there were 120 of them. Fortunately, they were compiled in the order of the "green mouse" calendar approved by the emperor. <...> That is why, in my free time from service, I compiled the chapters in order, bound them into eight notebooks and called them "The stories of one hundred and twenty old men" (B 15 mss, ff. 1a–1b).

According to Kanda Nobuo, explaining the number "120" Sungyûn refers to the imperial decree issued by the Qianlong emperor in the 35th year of his reign (1770–1771). Celebrating his 60th anniversary, the emperor said that during his peaceful reign the number of people over 60 increased, and thus the life cycle should be not 60, but 120 years long.⁸ The emperor Qianlong ruled the Qing dynasty till 1796 dying in 1799, and Sungyûn used that auspicious number "120" and collected "The stories of one hundred and twenty old men". Every story begins with the words *Emu sakda hendume* — "One old man said...", with *sakda* meaning "a sage, an old man over 70".⁹

The compilation history of this text is clear from the prefaces to the manuscript. The first preface belongs to its author Sungyûn (Song-yun 松筠) who characterized his work as follows: "[the stories] contain all the examples of what our bannermen should know and study, and how the new generation should serve and work" (B 15 mss, f. 2a). This preface is dated *Abkai wehiyehe-i susai duici aniya. sohon coko tuweri ten-i biyai sohon coko inenggi* (the day of the yellowish rooster of the yellowish rooster moon during winter solstice of the 54th year of Abkai wehiyehe) — January 12, 1790.

The second preface belongs to Furentai (Fuluntai 富倫泰) from the Manchu Wan-yan clan to whom Sungyûn sent his manuscript for further editing (B15 mss, fasc. 1, ff. 4a–6a). As becomes clear from this preface, Furentai has arranged the text according to several topics: "the first 60 stories are about the origin of the Manchu dynasty, descriptions of imperial graves, imperial teachings, achievements of state-men and officials. The next

⁸ KANDA Nobuo 1981: 225. See also VON MENDE 1984: 273.

⁹ ZAKHAROV 1875: 558.

50 stories are about everyday life of Manchu bannermen, while the last 10 stories are dedicated to ancient Chinese history” (B15 mss, fasc. 1, f. 5a). This preface is dated *Abkai wehiyehe susai ningguci aniya sunja biyai ice de* (the 1st day of the 5th moon of the 56th year of Abkai wehiyehe) — June 2, 1791. It means that Furentai has spent one and a half year editing the manuscript and arranging the material. Both prefaces are present in all known Manchu versions of the text.

The collection of the Institute of Oriental manuscripts, RAS, contains a unique Manchu-Chinese version of “The stories of one hundred and twenty old men.” This bilingual version was first introduced in 1999 by T.A. Pang in her article in Russian.¹⁰ In addition to the first two prefaces by Sungyûn and Furentai (both given in Manchu and Chinese), there is the third bilingual preface by a Mongol Fugiyûn (Fujun 富俊 1749–1834),¹¹ who has translated the Manchu manuscript into Chinese. Explaining his work with the manuscript, Fugiyûn wrote, that in the year of the green dragon (1808) he got the Manchu manuscript from one of his friends with a request to translate it into Chinese: “Even if I did not understand it quickly, I could not refuse. In my spare time from the service, I studied the meaning of the speeches and the wisdom of the views expressed in the book, and translated story after story into Chinese. I finished the translation in one year.” (B 15mss, fasc. 1, ff. 7a–9b). This last preface by Fugiyûn in the bilingual Manchu-Chinese version of the text is dated *Saicungga fengšen-i juwan duici aniya sohon meihe-i bolori jakûn biyai niohon honin inenggi* (the day of the greenish sheep of the eighth autumn moon of the yellowish snake of the 14th year of Saicungga fengšen) — September 16, 1809.

Thus, “The stories of one hundred and twenty old men” existed only in Manchu for 19 years (from 1790 to 1809). In 1808 Fugiyûn obtained the Manchu version and added a Chinese parallel translation, finishing the work in 1809. The text has never been published and its Manchu version is kept in the libraries of the Chicago University, Osaka University, University of Nationalities in Peking, State Library in Ulaan-Baatar, State Library in Beijing (former Capital Library), Institute of Oriental manuscripts, RAS (only the first fascicle). The Chinese version is known in Taiwan, and it coincides with the version in the bilingual manuscript kept at the IOM, RAS.¹² The full bilingual Manchu-Chinese text is known in three copies

¹⁰ PANG 1999: 73–81.

¹¹ About Fujun (1749–1834) see: *QING SHI GAO* 1927: ce 95, *Le zhuan* 129, 5b–7b.

¹² PANG 1999: 73–81.

stored in the State Library in Beijing, Tōyō Bunko in Tokyo, Japan, and the Institute of Oriental manuscripts in St. Petersburg, Russia.¹³

The manuscript from the IOM, RAS is listed in the "Description of Manchu manuscripts at the Institute of the Peoples of Asia, AS USSR" by M.P. Volkova as follows: 8 fascicles: I — 103 ff., II — 92 ff., III — 83 ff., IV — 86 ff., V — 65 ff., VI — 65 ff., VII — 79 ff., VIII — 75 ff.; size of the folio: 27.5×15 cm with 6 parallel lines in Manchu and Chinese.¹⁴ The fascicles are put into a card-board cover *dobton/tao* bound in blue fabric.

Every fascicle bears a vertical label with the title and the number of *debtelin/juan* in two languages and an ex-libris of the Library of the Asiatic department (a double-headed eagle with the crown, orb and scepter as symbols of the Russian empire and the Romanov family, with a laurel wreath around). Under the title label is a red seal with the legend in Chinese: *Shao-yi-tang* 紹衣堂, a seal of the most famous and old printing house situated in the north-eastern corner of the inner city, near the Longfu-si 隆福寺 temple in Beijing.

The fascicles are numbered by eight trigrams from the "Book of Changes" *Yijing*, but their order in the Manchu and Chinese versions do not coincide. The Chinese trigrams correspond to the arrangement of Wen-wang, while the Manchu ones follow the order of Fu-xi¹⁵: *kulun-i ujui debtelin* 乾部卷之一, *lifan-i jai debtelin* 坎部卷之二, *ilihen-i ilaci debtelin* 艮部卷之三, *aššan-i duici debtelin* 震部卷之四, *dosin-i sunjaci debtelin* 巽部卷之五, *eldehen-i ningguci debtelin* 離部卷之六, *dahasun-i nadaci debtelin* 坤部卷之七, *urgujen-i jakûn debtelin* 兌部卷之八. Every fascicle begins with a list of its content, at the end of the fascicles there are two personal square seals of Fugyûn: *Fujun zhi yin* 富俊之印 and *Song Yan* 崧巖, Song Yan being a name (*zi* 字) of Fujun. The other red seal of Fugyûn *Fujun* 富俊 and the seal of the printing house *Shao-yi-tang* 紹衣堂 are put at the end of his preface. These red seals indicate that the manuscript kept at the IOM, RAS belonged to the translator Fugyûn/Fujun.

The copy from the IOM, RAS keeps traces of those people who worked with it. There are corrections of Manchu text on white pieces of paper glued on the ff. 62a, 64b and 65a of the first fascicle. Translations of some Manchu words into Russian are written in pencil in the 19th c. handwriting style, which means that someone tried to translate some stories into Russian.

¹³ NAKAMI 2000: 23–36.

¹⁴ VOLKOVA 1965: 59, n. 106.

¹⁵ The order of trigrams by Fuxi is 乾, 兌, 離, 震, 巽, 坎, 艮, 坤, and the arrangement of trigrams by Wen-wang is 乾, 坎, 艮, 震, 巽, 離, 坤, 兌.



Pl. 1 — the cover of the first fascicle B 15 mss, IOM, RAS

Each fascicle includes 15 stories, and their content is as follows:

The 1st fascicle: *kulun-i ujui debtelin* 乾部卷之一

gurun neihe baita emu meyen 開國事一條 “The foundation of the Empire, one chapter”

munggan-i ba emu meyen 陵寢地方一條 “Imperial burial places, one chapter”

dergi hese juwe meyen 上諭二條 “Imperial orders, two chapters”

enduringge niyalmai doro. fucihi-i tacihyan be leolehe emu meyen 聖道佛教論一條 “Discussion about sages and the Buddhist teaching, one chapter”

dorolon de ginggulere baita emu meyen 敬禮事一條 “About respecting the rites, one chapter”

erun be olhošoro baita emu meyen 慎刑事一條 “About caution in punishment, one chapter”

gūsai hafasai baita jakûn meyen 旗員事八條 “About banner officers, eight chapters”

The 2nd fascicle: *lifan-i jai debtelin* 坎部卷之二

gūsai hafasai baita uyun meyen 旗員事九條 “About banner officers, nine chapters”

goloi hafasai baita ninggun meyen 外官事六條 “About provincial officers, six chapters”

The 3rd fascicle: *ilihen-i ilaci debtelin* 艮部卷之三

goloi hafasai baita juwan juwe meyen 外官事十二條 “About provincial officers, twelve chapters”

seremšeme tehe ba-i baita ilan meyen 駐防事三條 “About garrison life, three chapters”

The 4th fascicle: *aššan-i duici debtelin* 震部卷之四

tulergi aiman-i baita jakûn meyen 外藩事八條 “About outer territories, eight chapters”

cooha baitalara baita ninggun meyen 用兵事六條 “About using the army, six chapters”

beye hūsutuleme kicere be leolehe emu meyen 自行奮勉論一條 “Discussion on self-devotion and diligent work, one chapter”

The 5th fascicle: *dosin-i sunjaci debtelin* 異部卷之五

sefu-i tacibure baita juwan meyen 師教事十二(sic.)條 “Instructions for teachers, ten chapters”

juse sargan be tacibume kadalara baita ilan meyen 訓教妻子事三條
“Instructions for girls, three chapters”

booi banjire be kicere baita juwe meyen 家計事二條 “Diligent regulation of home affairs, two chapters”

The 6th fascicle: *eldehen-i ningguci debtelin* 離部卷之六

tondo hiyoošun be leolehe ninggun meyen 忠孝論六條 “Discussion on filial piety, six chapters”

tacire kicere be leolehe uyun meyen 勤學論九條 “Discussion on diligent studies, nine chapters”

The 7th fascicle: *dahasun-i nadaci debtelin* 坤部卷之七

tacire kicere be leolehe tofohon meyen 勤學論十五條 “Discussion on diligent studies, fifteen chapters”

The 8th fascicle: *urgunjen-i jakūci debtelin* 兌部卷之八

tacire kicere be leolehe sunja meyen 勤學論五條 “Discussion on diligent studies, five chapters”

julgei baita juwan meyen 古事十條 “Stories from ancient times, ten chapters”

Judging from the content of the manuscript, it is obvious that the main topics of the stories are “About banner officers” (17), “About provincial officers” (18), “About outer territories” (8), “About using the army” (6), “Instructions for teachers” (10), “Discussion on filial piety” (6), “Discussion on diligent studies” (29) and “Stories from ancient times” (10). The prefaces say that the material was arranged by Furentai, though Sungyûn continued to work on the manuscript for another 17 years. The prefaces to “The stories of one hundred and twenty old men” were never translated into English. Thus, we suggest our translation of the Manchu language prefaces by Sungyûn, Furentai and Fugiyûn from the Manchu-Chinese manuscript of “*Emu tanggû orin sakda-i gisun sarkiyān* 百二老人語錄 kept at the Institute of Oriental manuscripts, RAS.

**The preface to the “Stories of 120 old men” by Sungyûn
(B 15 mss, fasc.1, ff. 1a–3a)**

Transliteration of the Manchu

(1a) *Emu tanggû orin sakda-i gisun sarkiyân šutucin. /
gingguleme gûnici. / enduringge ejen cohotoi / hese wasimbuŋi erin forgon-i
ton-i bithede. niowanggiyan singgeri-i ton be. dabkûrilame emu / tanggû orin
obume nonggime arabuhangge. cohome gubci mederi dorgi tulergi niyalma /
irgen be bireme se jalgan nonggikini sere // (1b) gosingga gûnin. / gosingga
ofi. / jalafungga seme. bisirele niyalma irgen fekuceme urgunjeme / enduringge
ejen-i tumen se be. hukšendume jalbarire unenggi. yala abkai fejergide
jalukabi. / Sungyun (sic.) bi sula šolo de. mini ajigan ci ebsi gûnin ferešeme
donjiha saha sakdasai / hacin hacin-i fe gisun be gûnime. simhun bukdame
bodoci. emu tanggû orin meyen bi. // (2a) jabšan de / ejen-i tokotbuha erin
forgon-i ton-i bithei niowanggiyan singgeri-i ton de acanambime. muse / gûsai
niyalma ofi saci acara. tacici acara. jai niyalma jalan de banjinjifi. kiceci /
acara. yabuci acara hacin. yooni amba muru baktakabi. tuttu siden-i baitai
šolo de. / meyen aname arame tucibuŋi. uheri jakûn debtelin kiyalaŋi. emu
tanggû orin sakda-i / gisun sarkiyân seme gebulehe. damu Sungyun (sic.) mini
taciha manju gisun cinggiya mincihiyan (sic.) de. // (2b) ejeme arahangge
ufaran bisirahû seme. tuttu niyaman hûncihin gucu gargan. jai / gûnin adali
agusai tuwancihiyara be aliyambi. ere udu gemu jugûn de donjifi. / giyei de
gisurehengge secibe. hono erdemu-i waliyan de isinarakû. erei dorgi geren /
niyalmai gûnin jorin. saha yabuha baita faššan. ainci tuwara hûlara gûsai
gucuse de / eimeburakû teile akû. uthai emu tanggû orin sakda be emu cimari
andan de / sabuha adali be dahame. gûnin de inu ambula sebjelembi dere. //*
(3a) *Abkai wehiyehe-i susai duici aniya. sohon coko tuweri ten-i biyai sohon /
coko inenggi Marat hala Sungyun (sic.) gingguleme araha. //*

Transcription of the Chinese

[1a] 百二老人語序。 / 恭維。 / 皇上特降。 / 諭旨將時憲書花甲
之數。疊算重週。增為百二。 / 祇期薄海內外人民。 / 咸登壽域用
協。 // [1b] 仁心惟。 / 仁者。 / 壽人民觀洽共祝夫。 / 皇帝萬
歲。感戴之誠。遍於寰區矣。 / 松筠於退食之餘。憶及幼年所聞老人
舊言。 / 屈指計有百二十條。 // [2a] 幸合。 / 欽定時憲書花甲之

數。凡 / 係吾旗人當知當學。以及人生當務當行之事。 / 大概可舉矣。爰於公暇。 / 逐條錄出。集為八卷。名曰百二老人語。 / 第松筠所習清語淺鮮。 // [2b] 誠恐記註有失。 仍俟親友。及 / 同志君子就正焉。是編雖云道聽而塗說。 / 尚非德之棄者。其中諸老 / 意旨。所知所行各事。旗友觀之不惟讀之不厭。 / 亦可如見百二老人於目前。 / 豈不大快於心也哉。 // [3a] 乾隆五十四年。己酉。冬至月。己酉日。 / 嗎拉忒氏。松筠敬識

Translation from Manchu

With reverence I think that the enlightened ruler had issued a special decree that says: “The number of “green mice” in the calendar, doubling, will give the number “120” and then the life cycle of all people inside and outside all seas will be increased. Human intentions generate humanity. Speaking about longevity, all people are extremely happy (literally — jumping for joy) and with a feeling of gratitude they pray, wishing ten thousand years for the enlightened ruler, and for sincerity and truthfulness to increase in the heavenly realms.

I, Sungyûn, in my free time from service, recalled various stories of old men, whom I listened to with respect, and which amazed me since childhood. [I] counted them and there were 120 of them. Fortunately, they were compiled in the order of the “green mouse” calendar approved by the emperor. They contain all the examples of what our bannermen should know and study, and how the new generation should serve and work. That is why, in my free time from service, I compiled the chapters in order, bound them into eight notebooks and called them “Stories of the One Hundred and Twenty Old Men”.

However, my, Sungyûn’s, knowledge of the Manchu language is shallow and insufficient, and I cannot note the existing errors. In this regard, I expect corrections from relatives and close people, friends and acquaintances, as well as like-minded gentlemen. And although all this is what was heard on the roads and said in the streets, [I] am still no closer to perfection in my work. The thoughts of people, their deeds and actions contained in it will not cause contempt among my bannermen who have read [this book]. It is as if one morning I met one hundred and twenty old men, and [my] heart rejoiced.

On the day of the yellowish rooster, on the moon of the yellowish rooster of the winter solstice, in the 54th year of the reign of Abkai wehehe (January 12, 1790 — *A.I., T.P.*) this was written with respect by Sungyûn from the Marat clan.

The preface by Furentai
(B 15 mss, fasc. 1, ff. 4a–6a)

Transliteration of the Manchu

[4a] *mini gucu / Sung agu. amargi jecen-i kuren sere bade tefi. šolo de ere bithe be / banjibume šanggafi. tumen ba be goro serakû. mimbe acabume duilekini seme / jasiha. bi sula tehe de kimcime akûmbume tuwaci. yargiyan-i muse gûsai / niyalma-i saci acara. tacici acara hacin-i amba ajige narhûn muwa baita be / gemu tucibuhebi. erebe hûlara niyalma. aikabade urebume niyeleme kimcime gûnime // [4b] mutebuhe baha ba bihede. beye boo ci badarambume gamame. hafan tere baita / icihiyara de isitala. gemu yargiyan tusa bahambi dere. bi geli beyei albatu be / bodorakû. hacin meyen-i jergi ilhi be mini saha teile juleri amala be faksalame / toktobuha. neneme / gurun-i mukdengge wesihun. / tacihyan wen-i selgiyebuhe turgun. amba hafan-i baita faššan ci. buya hafan-i // [5a] hûsutuleme kicere de isibume. ninju meyen be. julergi duin debtelin obuhangge. / niyalma be / gurun booi durun kemun. eiten baita be neneme murušeme safi fororo ici bahakini / serengge. sirame sefu-i tacibure baita ci. niyalmai tacire hacin de isibume. susai / meyen be. amargi duin debtelin obuhangge. niyalma be uttu tacibume tacime muteci. / eiten baita yabun de teisu ubu niyalmai giyan be unenggileme akûmbure be saci // [5b] ombi serengge. julgei baita-i juwan hacin be. wajima debtelin de kamcibuhangge. niyalma be / julge te-i giyan emu. ne-i durun kemun baita yabun. gemu julgeci ebsi ulan ulan-i / ulanjihangge. umai acu akû be sakini serengge. tuttu bime julergi duin debtelin / oci. baita yabun be gisurehebi. amargi duin debtelin oci. tacire hacin be / leolehebi. uttu obume faksalahangge. amba tacin-i jaka be hafure ci beye / boo be dasara de isibuŋi. teni dasan-i baita be daci ojoro ilhi be an-i // [6a] saci ombime. inu fejergi ci tacifi wesihun hafunambi sere gûnin be dahahabi: / Abkai wehiyehe-i susai ningguci aniya sunja biyai ice de Wanyan Furentai ejehe.*

Transcription of the Chinese

[4a] 吾友。 / 松公。居北疆庫倫地方。閒暇編輯是書成帙 / 不遠萬里。寄余較質。 / 余於閒居時詳細參考。凡我旗人當知當 / 學之事。鉅細精粗。 / 皆備載焉。讀之者果能研習窮思。 // [4b] 有得而成。則由身

家推而至於居官理事。 / 無不獲效。余故不慚鄙陋。 / 就余所知將條目次第。分定前後。 / 先以興 / 國之盛。宣 / 化之由。及大僚功業。小吏勞績等。 // [5a] 六十條。置於前四卷。 / 俾人知。 / 國家規模政治之大端。德所趋向。 / 然後繼以師較。及為學等五十條。 / 叙於後四卷。俾人知如是教如是學。 / 則於一切事物品術。明其所以盡分順理。 // [5b] 以古事十條附於卷末。俾人 / 知古今一理。今之制度之事。皆古之流傳。 / 並無異致。然前四卷係論事體。 / 後四卷係論學業。 / 由此剖晰。即可知大學格物以至身修家齊。 / 漸悉為政之序。 //

[6a] 亦從下學而上達之意也。 / 乾隆五十六年。五月朔。完顏富倫泰識

Translation from Manchu

[4a] My friend Sung-*agu*¹⁶, having received the appointment to the place named Urga on the northern border, has been compiling this book during free time from his service. Having finished [this work], in spite of the distance of ten thousand *ba*¹⁷, he wrote me a letter asking to judge the book and arrange it. Being retired, I have thoroughly studied the book and concluded that it contains all that is necessary to know and study for our bannermen — important and simple, delicate and uncomplicated questions. A reader, in case he reads attentively and thinks over thoroughly, will definitely get a lot of benefit starting from arranging his household to conducting official affairs. I, a humble person, have divided [the book] in parts and chapters, putting them in order from the beginning to the end. First of all, into the first four fascicles I put sixty chapters about the rise and flourishing of the state, about the importance of education, about meritorious deeds of high officials and diligence of low officers. [5a] Thus, people will know in general about everything that concerns the system of state governance, and then will know how to conduct affairs. Into the last four fascicles I put fifty chapters about teaching by tutors and studies of students. Thus, people may teach and learn how, in every deed and in every action, to conscientiously fulfill their duty and act in accordance with human orders. [5b] Ten stories about ancient times are put into the last fascicle. Thus, people will be able to understand that the orders of ancient and modern times

¹⁶ *agu* — a respectful term of address for men: sir, master (ZAKHAROV 1879: 109; NORMAN 1978: 7).

¹⁷ *ba* is a Chinese mile *li* 里 (0,5 km).

are the same, that there is absolutely no difference between them, and that all the provisions and practices of the current system have come down to us from ancient times, passed on from generation to generation.

Thus, the first four fascicles talk about deeds and actions, [while] the last four fascicles discuss education. Only such an interpretation [of the content] will make it possible to understand [its] sequence, [compliance with] which can help in matters of management — starting with a thorough comprehension of the great teaching and ending with managing one’s own household. [6a] Moreover, [this division of the book] matches the idea [of Confucius]: “Start exploring from the bottom to reach the top.”

On the 1st day of the 5th moon, 56th year of Abkai Wehiyehe (June 2, 1791 — *A.I., T.P.*) written by Furentai from the Wanyan clan.

The preface by Fugyûn (B 15 mss, fasc. 1, ff. 7a–10a)

Transliteration of the Manchu

[7a] šutucin. / kimcime gûnici Jeo gurun-i Wen wang-ni wesihun funde (sic!). gosingga dasan be ambarame / badarambuha de. juwe sakda yendefi dahaha. U wang han Kang šu de targabuhangge. / damu Šang gurun-i ujen gingi (*sic.* = jingji) sakda be enteheme gûni seme ulhibuhe. Kungdzi seci / enduringgei tacin be acabume amba šanggan oho bime. hono sakda peng / halangga de duibulehe bihe. ereci ilhi ningge be oci. Siowan wang fon-i // [7b] Fang Šu. Han gurun-i Šang šan-i gesengge. hono hing hing seme ujen gingi (*sic.* = jingji) sakda seme / tukiyehebi. julge de amuran urse. fe sakdasa-i ulahangge be. sara fujurulame donjire de / isinarakû babe badarambuhe seci. niyalma de urunakû yooni. mergen gisun de urunakû yooni /giyanggan be baiburakû. unenggi abkai giyan niyalma buyenin-i ten de acanaha. erin / forgon tacin wen-i fulehe de holbobuhangge be. soroko gugureke sakdasai emgi / šumin sekien be amcame sibkifi sonjome ejere de belhebuçi ombi. Sung Siyang // [8a] Pu serengge. tacire de amurangge. hacingga bithe be ambula tuwafi. yargiyan yabun be / wesihuleme. ajigan ci bithe tacire de. manju bithe de ele hafu ulhifi. julgei / niyalma be kimcime. te-i niyalma de acabume. hanciki beye de duibuleme. goroki niyalma ci / gaime. uthai gašan falga-i sesheri gisun seme. inu gemu gûnin werešeme kimcime / baicafi. jaka be hafufi sarasu de isibure de obuhabi. bi aifini

hungkereme / dahaha. damu ini banjibuha manju hergen-i sakda-i gisun emu yohi be. umai bahafi // [8b] sabuhakû. suwayan muduri-i juweri forgon de mini gucu sarkiyafi asaraha debtelin be / tucibufi minde tuwabume hetuhengge. ere bithe gûnin gaihangge narhûn baitalarangge / ambula. duibule bimbime oyonggo bi. amgan tacire ursei doro tuwakû obuci / ombi. damu umai nikarame ubaliyambuhakû hûlara urse ememu kelfişere adalişara / calabun bisire be akû obume muterahu seme. dalbade nikan hergen ashabufi. / sasan amuran urse de uheleme manju nikan kancime tuwame ja-i ulhikini seme // [9a] afabuhabi. ede bi ulhisu akû seme andame banjirakû ofi tuttu-i baita be / icihiyaha şolo de. terei gisun leole-i şumin mincihiyan. bithei giyan-i narhûn / muwa be tuwame. meyen aname nikarame ubaliyambufi. emu aniya oho manggi şanggaha. / damu sonjohongge narhûn akû. gisurehengge tomorhon akû. muwa albatu-i basucun / tutaburahû sembi. ineku sakda usisi erin sara. sakda morin jugûn takara / adali obume. hûlara niyelere ursei kincime baicara de majige tusa bici. inu // [9b] oihori kai. aika baita be tuwame mujin ilibure da dube be sara. / meyen be ilgame debtelin-i juleri amala faidara babe. sung agu fu agu juwe / nofi emgeri tucibufi ujude araha be dahame. fulu dalhidarakû oki. tuttu ofi / şutucin araha //

[10a] Saicungga fenggşen-i juwan duici aniya soho meihe-i bolori jakûn biya-i niohon / honin inenggi Jot hala Fugiyûn gingguleme araha

Transcription of the Chinese

[7a] 序。 / 粵稽周文盛時。覃敷仁政。 / 二老興歸。武王戒康叔誥及丕遠惟商 / 耆成人。孔子 / 集聖學之大成。老彭竊比。 / 降而下之。宣之方叔。 // [7b] 漢之商山。猶殷殷老成是望焉。 / 好古者訪故老之流傳。擴見聞所未及。 / 人不必盡賢。言不必盡合。 / 苟有協於天理人情之至。關乎 / 氣運風化之原。未始不可於黃髮駘背 / 輩溯淵源而備採擇也。松湘圃 // [8a] 者嗜學士也。博覽群書。崇尚實行。 / 習弟子業。尤長清文。古人 / 與稽。今人與居。近取諸身。遠取諸物。 / 卽里巷瑣屑之俚言。罔不留心考正。 / 為之格物以致知。余欽佩者久之。 / 舊集清字老人語一部。向未之覩。 // [8b] 戊辰夏。有友人藏得抄本。 / 持以質余。謂厥取精用宏。 / 有倫有要。堪為後學津梁 / 惜未譯漢。恐讀者不無魯魚亥豕之訛。 / 囑為旁註。 / 以公同好。俾獲合璧可循。 // [9a] 余不敏。復不感謝。試於勾當餘閒。 / 按其言論之深淺。文義之精麤。 / 逐條譯漢。閱歲而成。 / 竊慙擇焉不精。語焉不詳。未免始譏謏陋。 / 不過此於老農知時。老馬識路。 // 或有補於咕嚕考核之資。抑亦 //

[10a] 幸矣。若夫因物見志之由來。 / 分條卷之先後。松富二公。 / 已弁簡端。不復贅焉。是為 / 序。 //

[10a] 嘉慶十四年。己巳秋八月乙未日。 / 卓特氏富俊謹識

Translation from Manchu

[7a] Preface. When one carefully studies [ancient times, it becomes clear] that during the flourishing times of Wen-wang from the Zhou state,¹⁸ the generous rule expanded, and the two old men¹⁹ submitted (obeyed) to him with enthusiasm. U-wang-han²⁰ warned Kang Šu:²¹ “Always think about the sage old men from the Shan state!”²²

Though collecting sacred teaching was a great achievement of Confucius, still [he] compared himself with the sage from the Peng clan.²³ Continuing further on, [people] sincerely praised [all sages] like Fang Šu²⁴ from the times of [the Zhou ruler] Siowan²⁵ [7b] and [four] Han [sages from the mountain] Shang-shan,²⁶ calling them deep elders of perfect virtues. Lovers of antiquities collect the stories about previous sages, and from what they know they spread something previously unheard; but among them not necessarily everyone is wise and his words are reasonable — Indeed, that lies in the roots of Heavenly laws and human relations. Speaking about the roots of fate and enlightenment, yellow-headed and bow-backed old men together thoroughly study the deep source? And only then they can select [the material] and write it down. [8a] [If] we talk about Song Xiangpu,²⁷

¹⁸ Wen-wang 文王 (1099–1050 BC) — the ruler of the Zhou state 周 (1099–256 BC).

¹⁹ Probably, Fugiyūn speaks about Bo Yi 伯夷 and Tai-gong 太公 who decided to serve at the court of the Zhou state.

²⁰ Wu-wang 武王 (1050–1043 BC) — the son of Wen-wang.

²¹ Kangshu 康叔 — the younger brother of Wu-wang from the Zhou state.

²² *damu Šang gurun-i ujen ginji sakda be enteheme gūni* — a translation of the phrase from *Shujing*: 汝丕遠惟商耆成人.

²³ A reference to the phrase of Confucius in *Lunyu*: 述而不作，信而好古，竊比於我老彭. During the Qing dynasty Lao Peng was considered a sage in the service of the Shang dynasty.

²⁴ Fang Shu 方叔 — a general of the Zhou state known for his victorious raid against the Chu state.

²⁵ Xuan-wang 宣王 (828–782 BC) — the ruler of the Zhou state.

²⁶ Dong Yuangong 東園公, Jue Li 角里, Qi Liji 綺里季 and Xia Huangong 夏黃公 are the four sages who refused to serve Liu Bang 劉邦 (206/2–195 BC), the founder of the Han state 漢 (206/2 BC–220 AD), and lived as hermits on the Shangshan mountain.

²⁷ Song Xiangpu 松湘圃 is a Chinese name *zi* 字 of Sungyūn.

[one must admit that he] loves to study. Being a well-read person, [he] extols honest deeds. Since childhood, he fully mastered the study of books and, especially, Manchu writing. Having studied [the actions of] the people of antiquity and comparing them with the people of modern times,²⁸ comparing with himself [everything that is] nearby and taking from [all those who are] far away,²⁹ [he] immediately pays attention to the hubbub of the streets and rude speeches, studying [them] carefully; [thereby] he penetrates into the [essence] of things and gains knowledge.

I have long respectfully observed him [Sungyûn — *A.I., T.P.*], but I have never seen his book with the stories of old men, which he wrote in Manchu. In the summer of the year of the green dragon [1808 — *A.I., T.P.*], one of my friends took out a copy that he kept and showed it to me with the words: “This book contains many discussions, important questions and examples. It can be a good example for future students. However, it has never been translated into Chinese. The reader could avoid some mistakes, if the Chinese text would be nearby. Reading a parallel Manchu-Chinese text could make it easier for all concerned to understand.” With these words he gave me the book. Even if I did not understand it quickly, I could not refuse. In my spare time from the service, I studied the meaning of the speeches and the wisdom of the views expressed in the book, and translated story after story into Chinese. I finished the translation in one year. However, what is selected is imperfect, what is said is not clear, rude speeches are left. It is like “an old man knows the time to plow, and an old horse knows the way.” And although there will be little benefit to people who read books carefully, they will still enjoy it.

By recognizing the source of thought in each [described] story, [I] distributed the chapters in the notebooks from beginning to end. Since Sungagu and Fuagu have written [the book] long ago, I do not want to repeat too much. That is why I wrote [this] preface.

On the day of the greenish sheep of the 8th autumn moon of the yellowish snake, the 14th year of the reign of Saicûngga fengšen (September 16, 1809 — *A.I., T.P.*) respectfully written by Fugyûn.

²⁸ *julgei niyalma be kimcime, te-i niyalma de acabume* — a phrase from *Liji*, but in different order 今人與居，古人與稽，concerning a righteous Confucian man.

²⁹ *hanciki beye de duibuleme, goroki niyalma ci gaimo* — a Manchu translation of the citation from *Xi ci zhuan* 繫辭傳, a commentary to *Yijing* 易經: 近取諸身，遠取諸物。

4

降而下之
宣之方叔

集聖學之大成
老彭竊比

考成人
孔子

二老興歸
武王戒康叔誥及丕遠惟商

粵稽周文盛時
單敷仁政

序

不肖

Pl. 2 — preface by Fugyûn, B 15mss, IOM, RAS

葦溯淵源而備採擇也
 氣運風化之原
 未始不可於黃髮駘背
 松湘圃
 尚有協於天理人情之至
 關乎
 言不必盡賢
 言不必盡合
 人不必盡賢
 好古者訪故老之流傳
 擴見聞所未及
 猶般般老成是望焉
 漢之高山
 95

Pl. 3 — preface by Fugyûn, B 15mss, IOM, RAS

舊集清字老人語一部

向未之觀

為之格物以致知

余欽佩者久之

即里巷瑣屑之俚言

固不留心考正

與稽

今人與居

近取諸身

遠取諸物

習弟子業

尤長清文

古人

者嗜學士也

博覽群書

崇尚實行

みんがくしんせんとしよんがくをせいのまのうまよすいそしよの

以公同好
俾獲合璧可循
囑為旁註
恐讀者不無魯魚亥豕之訛
惜未譯漢
有倫有要
堪為後學津梁
謂厥取精用宏
持以質余
有友人藏得抄本
戊辰夏

Pl. 4 — preface by Fugyûn, B 15mss, IOM, RAS

或有補於咕嗶考核之資

抑亦

イホクシノシラシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ

不過此於老農知時

老馬識路

イホクシノシラシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ

竊慙擇焉不精

語焉不詳

未免貽譏謗陋

イホクシノシラシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ

逐條譯漢

閱歲而成

イホクシノシラシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ

按其言論之深淺

文義之精麤

イホクシノシラシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ

余不敏

復不敢謝

試於勾當餘閑

イホクシノシラシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ ンガシ

序

已弁簡端

不復贅焉

是為

分條列卷之先後

松富二公

幸矣

若夫因物見志之由來

93

Pl. 5 — preface by Fugyûn, B 15mss, IOM, RAS

卓特氏富俊謹識

嘉慶十四年

己巳秋八月乙未日



Handwritten vertical text in seal script, likely a transcription of the main text and date.

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Olga Klimova

***Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [A Monologue of an Elderly Rural Man]
by Sugita Genpaku as a Source on Early
Russian-Japanese Relations**

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Abstract: This study introduces and examines the work of Sugita Genpaku (20.10.1733–01.06.1817) — *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [A monologue of an elderly rural man] — a valuable historical document that describes the reaction of the Japanese government to the expedition of Khvostov and Davidov to Sakhalin in 1806–1807. It was written at the beginning of the 19th c., the period which is considered a turning point in the early Russian-Japanese relations, when Russia began to be perceived as a major dangerous enemy. This unique document, which is hardly ever mentioned in research, stands out in the long list of Japanese archival documents of the 19th c. as one of the very few that depict Russia as a possible trade partner and not an enemy. It was originally written by Sugita Genpaku in 1807 and was published for the first time in 1934 as a part of the multi-volume book called *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 大日本思想全集 [Complete collection of intellectual history works of Great Japan]. Nevertheless, it has been ignored by most scholars throughout the world, including those in Russia and Japan. This study introduces the most interesting parts of the work, which describe the response of the Japanese government to the actions of two Russian officers, lieutenant Khvostov (1776–1809) and midshipman Davidov (1784?–1809), in Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands in 1806 and 1807. This article answers the following questions: what was the image of Russia in Japan? What impact did the expedition to Sakhalin have on Japanese government and society? What was the best way to address the challenges Japan was facing and could trade with Russia help to solve them?

Key words: Sugita Genpaku, Sakhalin, Russia, Japan, Khvostov, Davidov

Introduction

Yasōdokugo 野叟獨語 [A monologue of an elderly rural man] is a valuable historical document, which was written in 1807 by the brilliant scholar Sugita Genpaku¹ (20.10.1733–1.06.1817). His mother died in

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¹ Sugita Genpaku 杉田玄白.

childbirth, and his father was working as a physician in Obama-han 小浜藩 in Wakasa province (present-day Fukui prefecture). Genpaku was expected to follow in his father's footsteps and, therefore, started studying medicine from a very young age. Miyase Ryūmon 宮瀬龍門 (19.01.1720–18.02.1771) was teaching him Chinese science, while Nishi Geni (or Nishi Gentetsu 西玄哲 1681–1760), who was a personal physician of the Tokugawa shogun, guided him through the foundations of European surgical knowledge.

At the beginning of 1771 Sugita Genpaku started his research on human anatomy by conducting post-mortem examinations. In 1774 together with Maeno Ryōtaku (前野良沢 1723–1803), who was a surgeon himself, he translated the Dutch study *Ontleedkundige Tafelen* into Japanese and named it *Kaitai Shinsho* 解体新書 [*New Book of Anatomy*]. This was the first scientific book about human anatomy in Japan. The publication of this study is considered the starting point of the western academic medicine in Japan, which in turn had a significant impact on promotion of *rangaku* 蘭学² throughout the country. In 1815 Sugita Genpaku published a biographical work titled *Rangaku Kotohajime* 蘭学事始 [*The Beginning of Dutch Studies*], in which he provided a thorough description of the events which led to the advances in scientific medicine in Japan. Two years later, in 1817, he passed away at the age of 85.

Sugita Genpaku was a very talented and outstanding scholar who is mostly known for his translation of the above-mentioned work. Although famous as an anatomist and physician, he is hardly ever mentioned as a prominent philosopher and a brilliant writer. His sarcastic and unique way of describing Japanese society at the beginning of the 19th c. in the pages of his rarely mentioned work titled *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]³ deserves close attention.

This manuscript was originally written by Sugita Genpaku in *kanamajiri* style⁴ in 1807, and nowadays is stored in the Archive of Rare Materials at the Kyoto University in Japan. It consists of 66 pages without pagination, which are bound in a book. The size of the manuscript is 25×18 cm. It is a

² *Rangaku* 蘭学 (Japanese: “Dutch learning”), concerted effort by Japanese scholars during the late Tokugawa period (late 18th–19th cc.) to learn the Dutch language in order to be able to learn Western technology; the term later became synonymous with Western scientific learning in general.

³ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2–42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. (<https://rmda.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/item/rb00010288>).

⁴ *Kanamajiri* style 仮名交り — i.e. the text consists of Chinese characters supplemented by *kana* syllabary.

part of *Tanimura Bunko* collection 谷村文庫 [Tanimura manuscript and book collection], which is also known as *Tanimura kyū zōhon* 谷村旧蔵本 [Book collection previously owned by Tanimura]. This collection originally belonged to Tanimura Ichitarō 谷村一太郎 (1871–1936) — a prominent businessman and former chairman of the board of Fujimoto Bill Broker Bank. Tanimura Ichitarō had a deep interest in classical Japanese and Chinese books, and readily spent a fortune to acquire rare books. This library was created in 1942 by Tanimura Ichitarō’s heir, Tanimura Junzō, who inherited the will of his father to use the documents and books in his family collection to contribute to the advancement of academic studies. He donated more than 9200 books. In order to commemorate Mr. Ichitarō’s donation, these books are affixed with the red seal of *Shūson Bunko* 秋村文庫, as his pseudonym was Shūson 秋村.

Yasōdokugo was published for the first time in 1934 as a part of the multi-volume book called *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 大日本思想全集 [Complete collection of intellectual history works of Great Japan], which was used in the process of deciphering the original manuscript. The name of the source, *A monologue of an elderly rural man*, might be the reason why it was ignored by the majority of scholars throughout the world. Genpaku was surely an elderly man, 74 years old at the time of creating this work, but he was far from being “rural”.

His whole life Sugita Genpaku had close connections with bakufu and was privileged to have an audience with the shogun himself. His last meeting with the eleventh shogun Tokugawa Ienari 徳川家斉 (18.11.1773–22.03.1841, 1787–1837 as shogun) took place in 1805,⁵ and during this audience he offered the latest medicines to the head of the government as a gift. Through his close connections with the political elite he had access to information and government understanding regarding the events of that time. So, it is likely not a coincidence that Sugita Genpaku decided to leave his medical practice and delegate all responsibilities to his son in 1807 — the year when the second expedition of Khvostov and Davidov to Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands took place. Immediately after that he started working on *Yasōdokugo*, each page and sentence of which is filled with worry about the future of his own country, Japan. It is not entirely clear if the retirement of Sugita Genpaku and publication of his work are linked in any way, but one thing is certain — he knew about the bakufu policies first-hand.

⁵ *Nihonshi sōgō nenpyō* 2001: 441.

There is one more reason why Genpaku refers to himself as an “elderly man.” In 1806, a year before his retirement, Sugita Genpaku witnessed the Great Bunka Fire 文化の大火 (*bunka no taika*), during which 1200 people were killed, 530 towns, 80 samurai houses and 80 temples and shrines burned down to the ground. Although Sugita Genpaku was one of the few lucky ones whose house was not damaged during the fire, his beliefs were shaken to the core. On the 20th of March, 1806, sixteen days after the fire, Genpaku sent a letter to his colleague *rangakusha*⁶ Koishi Genshun⁷ 小石元俊 (1743–1809), where he mentions, that “during the fire that consumed Edo, many houses burned down to the ground, and the world was engulfed in unrest. My soul is filled with anxiety”.⁸ It was not only the devastating fire, but also the turbulent state of the world that worried Genpaku the most. “Every day our bodies grow old, there is a chance we will not be here [in this world] tomorrow. There is nothing left from my desire to live a long life. I have witnessed the end of the world, I have seen the world reaching its peak, so there is nothing to regret. The only thing that worries me the most is the future of our children and grandchildren”,⁹ wrote Genpaku.

In this sense, *Yasōdokugo* is Genpaku’s attempt, being an “elderly man,” to guide the next generation through the difficult times of turmoil and share a piece of advice that would help them build a new better world. In the pages of this valuable text Genpaku blames the government for an incredibly poor state of the country and criticizes its policies. He also emphasizes the fact that Japan was not capable of winning any fight or war as the soldiers were not ready.

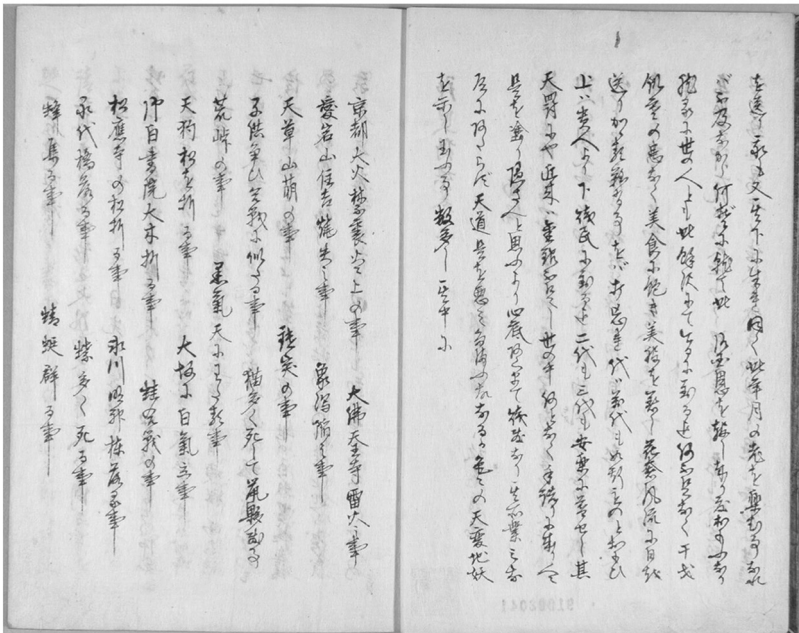
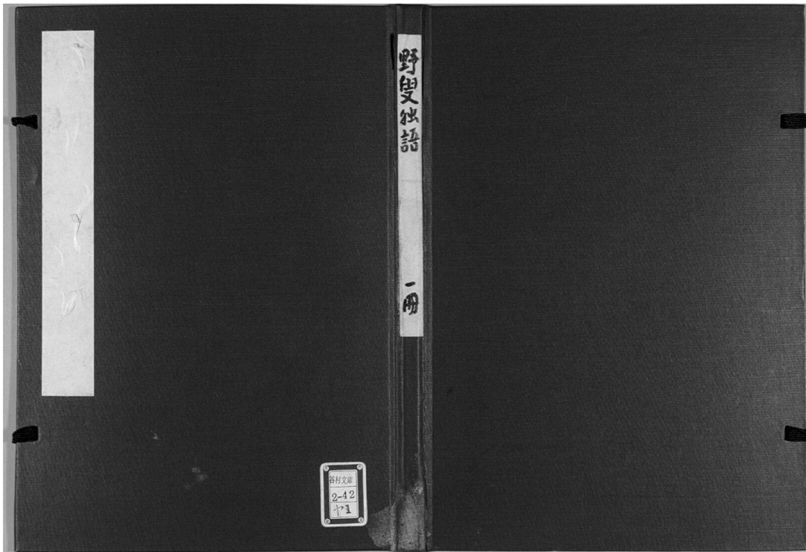
All these condemnatory ideas are hidden behind a deceptive and self-deprecatory title of the source — *A monologue of an elderly rural man*. Genpaku uses the word “monologue,” as he was most likely sure that only few people at the time would understand and support his thoughts about Japanese society and changes the country was going through. On the other hand, this kind of pejorative name would not raise any questions and draw any attention of the government officials. Probably for the same reason it also stayed out of scholars’ focus for more than a century.

⁶ *Rangakusha* 蘭学者 — scholars of Dutch studies, Japanese scholars of the late Tokugawa period who studied Western science using works written in the Dutch language.

⁷ His name can be found in *Rangaku Kotohajime* authored by Sugita Genpaku, since he was acquainted with *rangakusha* in Edo.

⁸ KATAGIRI 1971: 345.

⁹ *Ibid.*: 346.



“Yasoudokugo” 野叟獨語 [A monologue of an elderly rural man].

Kyoto University Main Library the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041,
record ID RB00010288. (<https://rmda.kulib.kyoto-u.ac.jp/item/rb00010288>)

This photo is from the Digital Archive of Kyoto University

Also, in the records of the Archives of Rare Materials at the Kyoto University this manuscript has an additional title (*Gaikō jijitsu*) *Yasōdokugo* (外交事実)野叟獨語 [(Diplomatic facts) A monologue of an elderly man]. It is interesting that the words “Gaikō jijitsu” 外交事実 [Diplomatic facts] are written on the cover of the text in a different handwriting, which suggests that they were added later in an attempt to emphasize the importance of this source.

Yasōdokugo is written in a very peculiar manner: it describes the conversation of two people — Sugita Genpaku himself and *kagebōshi* 影法師 — a silhouette on the *shōji* screen that eventually disappears with the rising sun. It consists of three volumes: in the first one, the author describes Japan and compares it to the Russian Empire; in the second, he depicts the poor state of Japanese society at the beginning of the 19th c.; in the third one, he comes up with arguments proving that Japan could profit from trade with Russia. *Yasōdokugo* starts with the main question about Russia and its people, who “for the past 30 years have been moving further towards our islands north of Oku-Ezo,” and recently got more active. This was true, because at the beginning of the 19th c. Russia was putting much effort to open trade with Japan.

Establishing trade relations with this country would allow access to its ports and food, which in turn could solve one of the biggest problems the Russian Empire was facing at the time — organizing a food supply for Russian colonies in North America. However, Japan was following the policy of national isolation — so called *sakoku*¹⁰ — under which no foreigners could enter the country. The Russian government made an attempt to obtain exceptional rights to trade with Japan and sent its first official mission to Nagasaki in 1804. The head of the mission N.P. Rezanov¹¹ was aware of the critical state of the colonies and was determined to make everything possible for this plan to succeed.

In the pages of *Yasōdokugo* Genpaku mentions that after spending six months in Nagasaki, Rezanov received a refusal from the Tokugawa government: “There is shocking news that Nagasaki *bugyō*¹² rejected the foreign mission”. The head of the Russian mission was distressed and not

¹⁰ *Sakoku* (鎖国) — literally “closed country,” but meaning “national isolation”.

¹¹ Nikolai Petrovich Rezanov (Николай Петрович Резанов) (1764–1807) was a Russian nobleman and statesman who promoted the project of Russian colonization of Alaska and California.

¹² 奉行 *bugyō* — often translated as “commissioner” or “magistrate” or “governor,” was a title assigned to samurai officials of the Tokugawa government in feudal Japan.

willing to settle for this negative answer. Upon his arrival to Petropavlovsk port in Kamchatka, in 1805, he met N.A. Khvostov¹³ and G.I. Davidov,¹⁴ and began planning an expedition to Sakhalin as a means to make Japan open its doors to Russian trade. On the 8th of August, 1806, he issued a directive that authorized the expedition to Sakhalin; however, on the 24th of September, 1806, he issued another directive that cancelled the expedition (although this was carried out in a confusing and unclear manner). Lieutenant Khvostov, after some hesitation, interpreted the last directive from Rezanov as permission to undertake the expedition, and departed from the port of Okhotsk in Kamchatka to Sakhalin. Moreover, the following year, in 1807, together with midshipman Davidov, he undertook the second expedition, this time not only to Sakhalin, but to the Kuril Islands as well.

In various studies by Japanese scholars this expedition is mentioned under different names, such as “The Incident with Khvostov and Davidov” (フヴォストフ・ダヴィドフ事件),¹⁵ “Attack of Khvostov” (フヴォストフ来寇事件),¹⁶ “Russian assault” (露人の暴行),¹⁷ “Sudden attack on Karafuto” (カラフト襲撃),¹⁸ “The Russian attack in the Bunka Years” (文化魯寇事件).¹⁹ Russian and overseas researchers tend to use a more neutral term — “expedition.” In Japanese studies Khvostov is mainly depicted as an oppressor and pirate who attacked the Japanese and scared away the Ainu. On the other hand, in Russian studies Khvostov is described as a patriot, and the expeditions to Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands are seen as the start of the exploration and development of Sakhalin.²⁰ Sugita Genpaku does not evaluate his personality, but refers to his actions as *Ezochi ranbō* 「蝦夷地亂妨」 — “Ezo land disturbance”.

The Sakhalin expedition of 1806–1807 is considered not only a turning point in the early period of the Russian-Japanese relations, but also one of the main reasons why Russia began to be perceived as a major dangerous enemy from the beginning of the 19th c. Japanese archival historical documents often reveal how scared and paranoid the Japanese government

¹³ Nikolai Aleksandrovich Khvostov (Хвостов Николай Александрович) 1776–1809.

¹⁴ Gavriil Ivanovich Davidov (Давыдов Гавриил Иванович) 1784–1809.

¹⁵ ARIIZUMI 2003: 184.

¹⁶ NAKAMURA 1904: 58.

¹⁷ INOBE 1942: 219.

¹⁸ KIMURA 2005: 63; HIRAKAWA 2006: 39.

¹⁹ MATSUMOTO 2006: 43.

²⁰ POLEVOI 1959; SENCHENKO 2006; CHEREVKO 1999; POZDNEEV 1909; SOKOLOV 1852; DAVIDOV 1848.

became. Countless exaggerated reports were delivered to the shogunate: “Huge ships shaped like mountains appeared at the horizon with 600 Russians on them. They burned everything down to the ground and took all Ainu away with them. Everybody feels fear towards Russia”.²¹

The majority of the Japanese people supported the idea of fighting back against the Russians, but there were people who were against military actions and supported the idea of opening commerce with Russia. Sugita Genpaku was one of the few people who dared to mention that Russia might have been only trying to establish trade with Japan and was not interested in colonizing it.

This study introduces the most interesting parts of the work *Yasōdokugo*, which describe Russian-Japanese relations and the response of the Japanese government to the actions of two Russian officers — lieutenant Khvostov (1776–1809) and midshipman Davidov (1784?–1809) in Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands in 1806 and 1807. This valuable document provides information, clarifying the following questions: what was the image of Russia in Japan? What impact did the expedition to Sakhalin have on Japanese government and society? What was the best way to address the challenges Japan was facing and could trade with Russia help to solve them?

The First volume of *Yasōdokugo*: Japan at the beginning of the 19th c.

In the first volume of *Yasōdokugo*, which consists of thirteen handwritten pages, Sugita Genpaku describes Japan in a rather unflattering manner: the country needs to be renovated, its laws have to be revised, and its attitude towards Russia should be reconsidered. The author sees Japan of the early 19th c. as an “old house”. Genpaku examines the first Russian official diplomatic mission to Japan and the turmoil on Sakhalin and Iturup islands that followed later. He explains it all as a “common misunderstanding”, and mentions that, if all the “rumours” will turn out to be true, the “dark time”²² will be inevitable.

Sugita Genpaku’s words are full of acute criticism and are as sharp as a samurai sword, when he talks about Japanese government and its political actions. He also makes an interesting observation when he mentions that

²¹ *Tsūkō ichiran*: 218–219.

²² *Tsūkō ichiran*: 270.

people in Japan were opposed to the decision of the Tokugawa bakufu, which had decided to refuse to open trade with Russia.

He also mentions a terrifying letter from lieutenant Khvostov and Davidov with the following threat: “If you refuse to open trade with us, be prepared that next spring we will send our fleet and conquer these lands.” Possible existence of this letter meant only one thing for Genpaku: the beginning of the end. He states: “The world will become a chaos and the dark time will come”.²³

Japanese text of the source

兼好法師が思ふこといはざれば腹ふくるととなり、これはいはんとすれば他人の聞んことを恐る。又止めんとすれば胸問えて堪へがたし。

[…]

いつとなく無盆の住居を建續ぎ、覺えず次第々々に大家になり、扱時々の修復も加へずして捨置しに、夫が一度損し、今は已に倒れんとするに至り、修復を加る時は、不用なる建續を取棄ざれば、用立候様には成らざるもの也、然るに夫も惜し是も捨てがたしとして修復せば、必調はざるもの也、国家も其如く何となく色々仕癖しなしの付たる處を改めんとすれば、又彼の是のといふ差支有様に見えて、夫を改る事氣のごとくの様と思ふ事のみ多く、故に中興の業はかたきと也、此事は英斷にあらざれば行ひがたしといへり、申も恐れ多き事ながら、此時節は世將亂の萌見えたるやう也、専中興の御政道を行ひ可給御時代かと存る也。

先其萌の第一と申すは、近来諸人聞候處の魯西亜國の外串也、三十年以來東北奥蝦夷の諸島を蠶蝕し、又頻りに隣誼交易を取結ふの事を願ひ、これ迄段々次第して、甲子の秋長崎表へ使節を送り候處御論文を被下御取上なく差戻されし故に、彼其宿意に背きし事なれば不快に思ひしと見へ、長崎の御取扱嚴酷に過ぎ、前約異變也とて憤り、夫を名として去秋當夏蝦夷西北諸島へ亂入せしと申すなり、是事情を通ぜざる行違に出たる事なるべし。

然れとも、愚夫庸俗の類は委細の事をも辨へず、何か御異變の様にのみ心得、はるばる音物を持衆せし使者を空しく御返し被成しは、夷狄ながら大国へ對し御無禮のやうに申、彼を是とし此を非と思ふ

²³ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [A monologue of an elderly rural man]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 270.

様に申聞ゆる也、是無識者の論ずる事なれ共、我國の人心迄服せざる様に聞ゆる所あるに似て、以ての外の事也、天の時は地の利にしかず地の利は人の和に如ずと承れば、何事有ても我が人心に服せざるの所は大切な御事也。

[...]

抑彼魯西亜國と申すは所謂設斯箇夫亞にて、昔は一つ王國なりしが、常時より四五代以前の英主「ペテルゴロード」といふ男其近國を切從へ、其國を中興し、段々勢ひ盛になり、次第々に手を延ばし、我蝦夷の向ふ方「カムシカツト」と云處迄己が領國になし、遂に彼の方の帝位を履み、今時世界第一の強盛大邦となりして由。

[...]

扱右申「ペテル」帝より後の女王の時、我日本へも通路なし度思付しよし、是は我元文の初年の事と聞ゆ、其四年の夏我東海を通行せし異船は、此國の船と見ゆる也、しかれば七十年斗り前の事也、此頃より我國へ通じたきことを心懸しとぞ思はる々也、兎角彼地方の人は惣じて事を謀る事は心長く、子々孫々も其志を繼ぎ 色々に手をかへ品を替へ、望みを達る事と見へ、とふとふ去る頃は松前にて興へし信牌を持衆り、彌信義を通じ交易をも取結び度よしにて、長崎へ使節を遣したる事になしたり、然るに其節の御扱不宜といふを名として、去秋より當夏に至り、蝦夷地西は樺太の内、東はエトロウ島へ上陸亂妨し、若し交易御免無之は来る春は、數艘の船を差向、北地の分は攻取り可申との書を涉し一先歸帆せしよしの聞へ也、是實事ならば世は亂るべき端にして誠に御大切な御時節到来せしと存ざるなり。

Translation from Japanese

If I do not share what is on my mind, I will get sick to my stomach, but I am afraid, that even if I try to share my sincere thoughts with others, they will not listen to me, but on the other hand, if I do not say anything, I will start questioning my own morals.²⁴

[...]

Japan is like an old house, which for some time was enlarged with multiple useless rooms. It grew big, but nobody was taking care of it. When it reached a horrible condition, and the time has come to get rid of all the things that were not in use anymore, everybody started saying that they were

²⁴ Ibid.: 262 Sugita Genpaku is using the Japanese term *ring* the spirit of Japan — the it is within the country: in its old rituals and burocr.

too dear to the heart, too precious to throw them away. There is no way one can build a new house this way. This is similar to the country.²⁵ It is essential to break down all the bad habits. It is believed that it takes a lot of work to start reforms on all levels. Therefore, only a person with a strong will can succeed in reviving something that has once declined. I am afraid to say this, but if we observe present matters carefully, we will see a lot of turmoil and disturbance in this world. In my opinion, the time has come to rule people and land in a new way that will help the country to recover and grow.

There is one thing that causes disturbance in the country — the news concerning Russia that everybody is talking about. The people of that land²⁶ for the past 30 years have been moving further towards our islands north of Oku-Ezo.²⁷ Their desire to get permission to trade with Japan increased so much that they even dared to come here and ask for it. In the autumn of the year of the Wood Rat²⁸ the first mission arrived to Nagasaki, but they were denied. Displeased with the answer of the Japanese government, they furiously declared: “The way we got treated in Nagasaki crossed all the limits of harshness, and this act clearly violates the previous treaty”. Furthermore, in the autumn of the previous year and summer of the current year [autumn of the 3rd year of Bunka and summer of the 4th year of Bunka] twice in a row they invaded the islands north-west of Ezo. Most likely, it happened due to an ordinary misunderstanding.²⁹

Among people who are criticizing the warrior government, there is a perception that ordinary officials have absolutely no clue about the current situation in the world and they see the Russians only as invaders. The fact that they ignored the head of the official mission who brought the presents all the way from the other side of the world and sent him back home proves Japan to be an uncivilized country.³⁰ However, such an ill-treatment of a powerful country is unacceptable!

Of course, it is limited to those without any knowledge, but this inconsistent decision of the Japanese government planted the seed of fear

²⁵ *Nihonshi sōgō nenpyō* 2001: 266.

²⁶ The Russians.

²⁷ One of Japanese names for the Sakhalin Island.

²⁸ 甲子 *kōshi* — Wood Rat — 1st year of Bunka — 1804.

²⁹ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 267.

³⁰ Sugita Genpaku is using the term *iteki* 夷狄, which can be translated into English as “barbarian,” although in Japanese this word has a more moderate connotation — *mikaikoku* 未開國, which literally means “the country that has not been opened (developed) yet”.

and anxiety even in the souls of all Japanese people.³¹ There are other things as well. It is said that the opportunities given by heaven cannot match the favorable conditions of the land, and the favorable conditions of the land cannot match the harmony of the people's hearts. No matter what happens, it is important that we do not submit to our human feelings.

[...]

The original name of Russia, as we call this country now, used to be Moscovia, and it occupied a relatively small territory. However, a great monarch (ruler) named Peterugorodo,³² reformed it into a prosperous country and spread his influence all the way to Kamchatka,³³ which is very close to our Ezo.³⁴ Apparently, he became the emperor of all the countries he invaded, and his country became one of the strongest empires in the world.³⁵

[...]

After the reign of the emperor named Peteru, the era of the Empress has begun. This Empress wanted to start trade with our country, and in the 4th year of Genbun,³⁶ foreign ships — very similar to Russian ones — have entered the waters of the Northern Sea causing quite an uproar. It is clear that already then, about 70 years ago, they were planning to establish commerce with Japan. It seems that once people from that place have a goal they do everything possible and impossible to achieve it, and put all their energy into it. If the goal is impossible to achieve within one man's life, they leave it to later generations, to their children and grandchildren. That way, by changing tactics, they do not stop until they get it their way.³⁷

Eventually, after going to Matsumae and receiving a permission to trade, they decided to establish commerce [with Japan] by sending a mission to

³¹ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 267.

³² Peter the Great (1672–1725) ruled the Tsardom of Russia and later the Russian Empire from 7 May (O.S. 27 April) 1682 until his death. “Peterugorodo” likely comes from his name in the Dutch language “Peter de Grote”.

³³ In the original Japanese text Kamchatka is called *Kamushikatsuto* カムシカツト.

³⁴ Ezo 蝦夷 — the former name of Hokkaido, the northern island of Japan.

³⁵ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 269.

³⁶ Genbun 元文 — the name of the period that lasted five years: 1736–1741.

³⁷ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 270.

Nagasaki, but were treated disrespectfully. Therefore, from last autumn to this summer they reached the lands of Ezo and caused disturbance on Karafuto [Sakhalin] in the west and on Etorofu [Iturup] in the east. They also sent a letter which said: “If you refuse to open trade with us, be prepared that next spring we will send our fleet and conquer these lands”. If this is true, the world will become a chaos and the dark time will come.

The Second volume of *Yasōdokugo*: the state of the Japanese society at the beginning of the 19th c.

In the second volume, which consists of twenty-five handwritten pages and is the longest one, the author describes the disturbingly bad state of Japanese society on all levels at the beginning of the 19th c. Samurai, feudal lords, retainers, commoners — all of them become victims of Sugita Genpaku’s sharp criticism. His very bold, at times sarcastic, remarks about effeminate feudal lords and warriors who were not able to sit in the saddle are quite entertaining and shocking at the same time.

While comparing the state of the two armies — Japanese and Russian — Genpaku repeatedly emphasizes strength and superiority of the latter, comparing it to a “young hot-blooded soldier”.³⁸ He disapproves the use of armed force against Russia, saying that “Japan does not even have the third of the army it used to have and be proud of”.³⁹ To prove his point of view, he emphasizes that the Russians “defeated the Mongols — and that is something that even Chinese troops could not do. [...] If our weak warriors with no spirit even think of fighting the Russians, who have won the war with the Chinese emperor of the Qing dynasty, I believe that the outcome is obvious”.⁴⁰

It is quite interesting that Sugita Genpaku was one of the very few people who did not fully trust and were critical of all the reports with horrifying information about the Russians on Sakhalin in 1806–1807. In fact, they were exaggerated. The first Russian-Japanese conflict on Sakhalin in 1806 was described as a large-scale armed conflict with 500–600 “red people”⁴¹ involved, when, in fact, it was a fight between three Russians⁴² and four

³⁸ Ibid.: 277.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.: 276.

⁴¹ *Akajin* 赤人 — the Russians.

⁴² Lieutenant Khvostov, Karpinskyi, Koryukin.

Japanese.⁴³ According to revealed historical documents that shed light on the course of the fight, it becomes obvious that it was basically a small fist fight,⁴⁴ in course of which the Japanese were “biting buttocks and legs of the Russian soldiers”.⁴⁵

Genpaku, convinced that it all happened due to a common misunderstanding, claims that Russia has no intention to colonize Japan. He writes: “We should satisfy their wish to trade with us for our own sake. It will make common people of our country only happier”.⁴⁶ Moreover, he suggests a way, quite innovative for its time, to solve this problem. The idea was to conquer the fear, send people to Russia, talk and discuss all the problems, ask for forgiveness and open the doors to trade with the Russian Empire.

Japanese text of the source

[...]

されども今日の世の武家内の情態を見るに、二百年近く豊なる結構至極の御代に生長し、五代も六代も戦ひといふ事は露程も知らず、武道は衰へ次第に衰へ、何ぞの事あらん時御用に立つべき第一の御旗本御家人等も十が七八は其形ち婦人の如く、其志しの卑劣なることは商賣人の如くして、士風廉耻の意は絶たる様也、其中にて能き分の武藝を嗜と申人、弓馬鎗劍は懸れ共、是を以立身出世御番入の手元とする了簡にて、物の師医に阿り諂らひ頭前を拵、身分の節に至り仕合、能尺二の的を射はづさず、また猫の様に仕入たる馬に打跨り、地道を恙なく仕おふすれば、その功にて御番入立身し、其後は何もかも棚へあげ置見向きせず、世話に成たる師家へも無沙汰し薄情の至極いふべからざる徒のみ多し、其専ら志す處の實心は數代

⁴³ Torizō, Genshiti, Tomigorō, Fukumatsu.

⁴⁴ *Ekstrakt iz jurnala fregata Yunony, plavaniya ot Okhotska v gubu Aniva i obratno v Kamchatku, Gavan Petra i Pavla. Sentiabria s 24, noyabria po 10e chislo 1806 goda* [Extract from the logbook of Frigate Yunona, the journey from Okhotsk to the Aniva bay and back to the port of Peter and Paul. From 24th of September till 10th of November 1806]. RGAVMF. F. 14. Op. 1. Ed. hr. 183.

⁴⁵ *Roshia ibun* 魯西亜異聞 [*Strange rumours about Russia*]. Kept at the Historiographical Institute, The University of Tokyo. This handwritten historical document consists of five parts, which were written based on the words of Torizō and Fukumatsu who were captured by Khvostov and brought to the port of Petropavlovsk. Without pagination.

⁴⁶ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 286.

奢りに長じすり切たる身代を御役料や御番料の後蔭を以、取直さんと思ふ斗のみなり、又左なくは何の知恵分別もなく、歌舞伎の大將役者同然に一幕也とも人に尊敬されたき望迄也。

其柔弱なる證據は先年小金原御鹿狩の時、數日の間繋き置、或は目を縫い候猪鹿を捕ふさへ、如何なる戰場にも向ふの様、暇迄して盃取かはす様成事の振舞なり、さるにより其後に八官野鹿狩に、人か鹿かの身分けも付ず、傍人に鏑付る様なるうろたへたる事も出来たり、其他水普請の輩は朝夕に唄浄瑠璃、琴三味線、歌舞妓者の眞似に日をくらし、能き分が茶湯生花歌誹諧、又是等を不好等は唐鳥を飼ひ植木を作り、町人を相手に内々にて商をなし、馬好きと呼る々人は駒を乗入癖馬を直し、下直の馬を商賣する思案をめぐらし、大抵が武士が武士たる志有人はなし。

[…]

御旗本何萬人何石に何程といふ御軍役の御定有共、至て御手薄き事の様に奉存候事也。

又大名逆同じ事にて[…] 依ノ是又何事ぞん云ん時は、一人も危き供に可立者は有べからず、然は一騎分の軍役を可持人も人數不足して戰場へ向ふ時は自身鏑長刀持行より外は有べからず、

殊に夫々馬の數は不揃、よし揃へんとても、俄に買集見ても其馬もつみに矢玉の音も聞かず甲冑を帶せて人を見た事も無之事なれば、物怖して用に立べからず、然れば御旗本衆も倍臣も、人馬共に用に立ざる時といふべし。

[…]

まだ其内にならば取扱方も有へき也、夫は先頃の長崎使節御取扱の不行届は、今更すへき様なし、此度夫を名として蝦夷地亂妨をなすといふもの、左のみ此方人民を害せしといふ程にもあらず、唐太エトロフ島の小屋陣屋を焼、米も大方は送り返したりと聞、こなたにてこそ御紋付の御道具を奪れしと承れば、狼籍亂妨とも思へ共、畢竟此方の御備兼て手薄く油斷して居るゆへ、有合ふ人々上陸させ、勝手次第にいたさせ敗走したる故、腹のたてども初めこなたよりいたすまじ、是はこれ彼等が深意はどこ迄も交易を望む宿願也と聞ば、我國備の程も知れぬ事に、何んぞ最初よりかくの如き勝ちを取んと思ふべきや、全こなたの油斷からして、大敵を受けし心地して敗走せし故の事と見ゆる也、彼國にては彼方にて悪む程の不法と思へるにもあらざるもしれず、詰まり交易さえゆるし給はば、何もかも如故の事にして、擒も送り可返と申越せしなれば、一旦の腹いせ小兒の鬪事同前の仕打、彼と是と其情態と接せざる處より出たる如しと見へたり。

[...]

愈彼王命に出たるか、又は北境の者共思ひ企しか、何れにも海上の氷り解て後、通船もなるべき頃、其邊の渡海に馴たる夷人を土地の案内者にして、物に耐て且才氣有人を御撰有て、一先彼領地カムシヤーツカ迄被遣、彼地には和語も通ずる者有よしなれば、荒立ざる様に對話問答し、能々其情を聞糺し、扱彼の所望も能聞抜け、僞忽を陳謝し、偏に交易を望む趣なれば、是迄の事は宜事情の通ぜざるより行違有しと、其所を辨別し、全く御國威の引けさる様に言葉を調べ、一先交易を許たき物なり、かく通辨能く整ひなば、彼も是迄我國への願事應對、文辭言語の通せざる事を得道し、且つ宿願の義成就を幸にして、速に事済むべし、但其交易濟こと經日の後に、根強き夷狄の情不知飽習なれば、又年経る内には色々望生じ、如何様の難題を申すべきも斗られず、其時こそ、手切の一策、合戦に及ぶ事の奇計良術も有べし、尤夫迄には十年も十四五年も間有べし。

但此節の事故なきに氣たゆまず、何卒此間に武族を養ひ軍兵を訓練し、是迄の風俗も御改めさせ、武風を勵し武備嚴重に整て、御用に立候様御世話有之、萬端整度との事也、其時は魯西亜より攻来る共、彼を防ぐ事足り可申、一戦し給ふ共御勝利を得給ふべきなり、此度は衰弱の時勢を案し、世を救い給ふが第一の御趣意にて、まげて交易を御免被成候はば御恥辱の様なれ共、其時こそ必雪き給ふべし。

[...]

Translation from Japanese

[...]

Have a close look at the samurai. They have not known wars for more than 200 years and lived in a peaceful environment: five or even six generations have not even witnessed war. As a result, martial arts have declined. Even if there is a small dispute, 7 or 8 out of 10 retainers of the shogun, who are supposed to react first in such situations together with the vassals of the shogun (*gokenin*⁴⁷), have become so similar to women that

⁴⁷ 御家人 — *gokenin* — was initially a vassal of the Kamakura and Muromachi shogunates. In exchange for protection and the right to become *shugo* (governor) or *jitō* (military estate steward), in times of peace *gokenin* had the duty to protect the imperial court and Kamakura, in case of war had to fight with his forces under the shogun's flag. During the Edo period the term finally came to refer to a direct vassal of the shogun below an *omemie* (御目見), meaning that they did not have the right to an audience with the shogun.

they spend days putting their makeup on. They are vulgar like merchants, and the spirit of the samurai has been lost.⁴⁸ Of course, one cannot say that there are no longer people familiar with martial arts, but they, as a rule, use this ability only as a tool to get social status and to achieve growth in their own career. Indeed, there are only a few left who fully dedicate themselves to the way of the warrior — *bushidō*. They carry out their duties every day, but they hardly have any interest in what they are doing.⁴⁹

Feudal lords can hit the mark only if it is 1 *shaku* 2 *sun*⁵⁰ away from them! Similar to cats, they can sit in the saddle of only a trained⁵¹ horse, and ride it only if there are no holes in the ground!

As a result of their deeds, they were promoted to a higher position, and after that they put everything on the shelf and did not look back. There were many people who were extremely callous and uncaring, neglecting the masters who were taking care of them.

Living a comfortable prosperous life for a few generations, they cannot change a thing now and can only count on their own income. Living a life without fear and worries, they became very similar to kabuki theatre actors, playing the roles of generals on the big stage, trying to attract our attention in the very first act.

Here is a clear example of the weak spirit of the samurai. Last year,⁵² there was the Koganehara Deer Hunt,⁵³ during which nonsensical things took place, such as hunting deer and wild boars that were tied up for a few days or had their eyes sewn.⁵⁴ Right before that, they exchanged sake cups⁵⁵ with their relatives as [warriors do when] they are about to go and fight thousands of enemies on the battlefield to the last drop of blood. Later,⁵⁶ during the

⁴⁸ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [A monologue of an elderly rural man]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 272.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ 35 cm.

⁵¹ Sugita Genpaku is using the Japanese term 仕入れたる馬 *shiiretaru uma* which literary means “a horse that was bought (or trained)”.

⁵² 1795 or 7th year of Kansei period that lasted from 1789 to 1801.

⁵³ Koganehara Deer Hunt, also known as *Koganehara Oshishikari* 小金原御鹿狩, was a large-scale hunt during the Edo period in which Tokugawa shoguns hunted deer, wild boars, etc. It mainly took place in Nakanomaki and Koganemaki area (present-day Matsudo City in Chiba Prefecture).

⁵⁴ *Me wo nuu* 目を縫う, literally, “to stitch the eyes”.

⁵⁵ *Sakazuki* 盃.

⁵⁶ First year of Bunka 文化元年 corresponds to 1804.

Yakanno Deer Hunt⁵⁷ some so-called warriors could not even distinguish a man from a deer and were shooting people standing nearby.

This poor state of affairs can be seen not only among the shogun's vassals, but among the feudal lords as well. In case of serious danger they will not risk their own lives to defend others. Due to the lack of warriors, generals have no other way but to take swords and fight for themselves.⁵⁸

As for warriors of lower rank, they spend their days playing *koto*⁵⁹ and *shamisen*,⁶⁰ acting as kabuki theatre actors. Those who have abilities are involved in flower arrangement (*ikebana*), recite *waka* and *haikai* poems, while others, not fond of these [pastimes], raise foreign birds *karatori*⁶¹ and plant trees.⁶²

Some of them are doing part-time jobs informally, horse-lovers are training horses and selling them for a triple price, concerned only with their own profit. One can say that there are almost no people left who could be called true samurai.⁶³

There are not enough horses in the cavalry. Even if you get all the necessary horses in case of an emergency, these horses never heard the sound of a gun or an arrow, never saw an armour-clad warrior, and they would not be able to make a single step on the battlefield. As a result, there are no respectable warriors left nowadays neither among the shogun's retainers, nor among other vassals and cavalry soldiers.⁶⁴

[...]

There is shocking news that Nagasaki *bugyō*⁶⁵ rejected the foreign mission. There is nothing one can do about it now. Our government sees it as the cause of all the trouble and chaos, which is happening in the land of Ezo now. But there were almost no casualties on our side, and even though some

⁵⁷ Yakanno Deer Hunt is also known as *Yakanno Shishigari* 八官野鹿狩.

⁵⁸ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 275.

⁵⁹ 琴 *koto* — a traditional Japanese half-tube zither played by plucking its strings.

⁶⁰ 三味線 *shamisen* — a three-stringed traditional Japanese musical instrument.

⁶¹ 唐鳥 — *karatori* — foreign birds such as parrots and peacocks.

⁶² *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 273.

⁶³ *Ibid.*: 274.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*: 276.

⁶⁵ 奉行 *bugyō* — often translated as “commissioner” or “magistrate” or “governor,” was a title assigned to samurai officials of the Tokugawa government in feudal Japan.

huts (shacks) and encampments on Karafuto⁶⁶ and Etorofu⁶⁷ were burned down to the ground and some food was taken, all people who were captured were returned back home safely. Of course, if we believe all the rumours saying that some government officials' armour with family crests were taken, then it does look like a violent disturbance. On the other hand, our own defences were weak, which in turn allowed foreigners to reach our shores and move around freely on our land. If we had been strong, it would have never happened. Therefore, it would be wiser to accept their offer to trade while they are giving us this opportunity peacefully. We should not start a war without being confident in our own forces.⁶⁸

[...]

It is unclear whether it happened upon the orders of their monarch or it was a random act of violence of people from the north. That is why it would be wiser to send a talented patient messenger, escorted by the Ainu experienced in sailing, from Ezo to Kamchatka as soon as ice breaks and navigation starts. As there are people who understand Japanese, we should carefully and without anger gather all necessary information to be able to understand the current situation. We should ask about their desires and wishes, repeatedly apologize to them, and if the only thing they are asking for is trade, we should forget about what happened, and with words that would not be too disgraceful to our country, we should grant them a permit to trade with us. This way, if we succeed in reaching mutual understanding, Russia will be pleased and will bury all the problems in the past. Of course, the problem will not be solved if the Russians after satisfying one need will demand more, or another problem will arise. Then it will be time to use force. However, until that time comes, we have at least 10 or even 14–15 years.⁶⁹

If we do not change anything within the next decade, then nothing is going to help us. It is very important to use this time wisely to raise the spirit of warriors, reform the army and train our soldiers. We need to be really careful and pay attention to all the details, only then we will be ready. In that case, even if Russia attacks us, we will be able to chase them away from our land. If the bakufu will agree to trade for the sake of the people, it will of

⁶⁶ 樺太 — Karafuto — the Japanese name of the Sakhalin Island.

⁶⁷ 択捉 — Etorofu — the Iturup island.

⁶⁸ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 280.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*: 281.

course be somewhat shameful, but this disgrace will certainly be wiped out then [when the bakufu is ready].⁷⁰

[...]

The third volume of *Yasōdokugo*: “to trade or not to trade” — Russia as a potential trade partner

In the third volume, which consists of twenty-two handwritten pages, Sugita Genpaku explains his thoughts about the ways Japan could use trade with Russia for its own benefit and turn into a prosperous country that can face any enemy who dares to attack Japan.

According to Sugita Genpaku, the most important thing was to gather all necessary forces and finances to strengthen Ezo. He admits that it is one of the crucial and most difficult problems that should be immediately solved, and accuses the government and feudal lords of their unwise way of spending money on different kinds of unnecessary old rituals.

The author encourages the government and the vassals to spend less money on meetings and gatherings, and to make decision-making process faster, in case foreign ships show up at the shores of Japan. As an example, he brings up the case of one Chinese ship that reached the borders of Japan in the 4th year of Bunka.⁷¹ Then it took almost half a year to go through all bureaucratic procedures to let the ship enter the waters of Japan. The author worries: “It would not create a good image of Japan, if the same happens when Russian ships come”.⁷² It becomes obvious that Sugita Genpaku was thinking of the global image of Japan as an open country, which would only profit from trade with the Russian Empire.

The only way to save Japan, according to Sugita Genpaku, is to revive the samurai spirit, make aristocrats and officials send their families away from the capital to villages (in order to benefit the country’s finances), and make everybody work hard towards the common goal of restoring the country by doing everything possible.

Why did Sugita Genpaku not make a proposal to the government sharing his ideas with the officials? The answer that the author gives us in the pages

⁷⁰ Ibid.: 282.

⁷¹ 1807.

⁷² *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [A monologue of an elderly rural man]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 290.

of his book is simple: he did not want to be considered crazy. He was convinced that nobody would believe him and take him seriously. He felt helpless, worried and angry. It seems that even this work, his monologue, did not relieve his almost physical pain as his very first and very last words are “I feel sick to my stomach”.

Japanese text of the source

[…]

有徳院様の御時、山下幸内と申せし浪人在寄申出し事有しが、寄特者としてさして御咎もなかりしが、今は時代も替りし事なれば如何者べし、罪を得ん事固より不厭とも、猶狂氣もせずして亂心ものに取扱れん事の残念なれば、申出もならず、只足下の我と限りなき憂をのみ語り合ひ、ふくれし腹内の有雑無雑を、思ひ残さず吐き盡す迄也、必々他人に聞せ給ふなと語れば、夜はほのぼのと明にける。

Translation from Japanese

[…]

In the Yūtokuin's⁷³ time, one *rōnin*,⁷⁴ whose name was Yamashita Kōnai, shared his thoughts,⁷⁵ and nobody blamed him [for that]. Time has changed and nobody knows how it will go this time. I do not mind committing a sin [and sharing my thoughts with everybody], but I am silent and will stay this way, only because I do not want to be considered crazy [or mad], since I am not. We have been talking about sorrowful things for such a long time that I started feeling ill and sick to my stomach. Promise me that you will keep secret everything we talked about here”. The shadow on the *shōji* screen, that has talked to me for a long time, disappeared. I looked around and realized that the night has passed, the light of my lantern got almost invisible, and that I am silently sitting all alone in my room.⁷⁶

⁷³ Yūtokuin 有徳院 is the dharma name (acquired during Buddhist initiation) of Tokugawa Yoshimune 徳川吉宗 (1716–1745).

⁷⁴ 浪人 — *rōnin* — a samurai with no lord or master in feudal Japan (1185–1868).

⁷⁵ In 1721 Yamashita Kōnai (山下幸内, ?–?) sent a proposal to the government. He criticized the reforms of the Kyōhō era (*Kyōhō no kaikaku* 享保の改革), which were aimed to reform Japan's social and economic conditions, and were implemented during the 30-year rule of the eighth Tokugawa shogun, Tokugawa Yoshimune (徳川吉宗, 1716–1745).

⁷⁶ *Yasōdokugo* 野叟獨語 [*A monologue of an elderly rural man*]. Kyoto University Main Library, the Archives of Rare Materials. 2-42/ヤ(ya)/1 ID 91002041, record ID RB00010288. *Dainippon shisō zenshū* 1934: 301–302.

Special Signs

[...] — text is omitted by the author of this article

[] — additional comments by the author of this article

Conclusion

In the pages of *Yasōdokugo* Russia appears as a prosperous country that spreads its influence and cannot be defeated. The Russians are described as people with a strong spirit, who never stop until they reach their aim, while the Japanese are described as a nation that has lost its spirit, with “effeminate feudal lords”, soldiers “chewing fried chicken”, and weak samurai lacking spirit.

Sugita Genpaku makes it clear that the true enemy is not outside Japan, but within the country: it is found in its old rituals and bureaucratic procedures that become obstacles to further growth of the country. As a solution, he proposes to renovate the country on all levels: political, financial, military and economical. The author suggests that opening trade with Russia could only help in these undertakings. The main goal would be restoring the spirit of Japan, the spirit of the samurai.

Yasōdokugo lets us see Japan and its people from a new perspective. In a quite unusual way Sugita Genpaku provides evidence confirming that N.P. Rezanov (1764–1807), the head of the first Russian diplomatic mission to Japan, was to some extent right when he assumed that “many Japanese minds are supporting Russia”.⁷⁷

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The Place of Shen-nong in the System of Legendary History of the Apocryphal Text *Chunqiu Minglixu*

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Abstract: Shen-nong (Divine Farmer) is one of the sovereigns who was believed to rule All-Under-Heaven in ancient times. Although from the 1st c. BC onwards his place in the legendary history of China was generally defined, some conflicting accounts still remained. One of these contained in now lost apocryphal text *Chunqiu Minglixu*, notable for its unique system of ancient history. Although Shen-nong is only twice mentioned in the surviving quotations from this apocrypha, fragments of other lost texts that were influenced by *Minglixu* testify its special treatment of Shen-nong. They allow to conclude that in this apocrypha's system of ancient history there were two Shen-nongs: the first one, the August Shen-nong, ruled at the dawn of history and was endowed with cosmogonic activities, while the second one, also called Yan-di from the Da-ting clan, reigned much later and was perceived as a founder of his own dynasty.

Key words: China's legendary history, Shen-nong, Yan-di, *Chunqiu Minglixu*, Chinese apocrypha

I. Shen-nong and Yan-di

In traditional China the ideas of the legendary history were always far from being unified. The different views on this subject flourished during the Warring States (453–221 BC) period, resulting in a number of conflicting accounts. The composition, identity and sequence of legendary monarchs were prone to debate. Although during the Han (206 BC — 220 AD) these views underwent some degree of unification, it was far from being definitive. While some monarchs, such as Huang-di 黄帝 (Yellow Thearch), have firmly taken their place in the system of ancient history, the situation of others was not so unambiguous. One of such sovereigns was Shen-nong 神農 (Divine Farmer), the legendary inventor of agriculture and patron of pharmaceuticals.

In the pre-Han sources Shen-nong is mentioned quite rarely. A.C. Graham dates his appearance in extant texts to the late 4th and 3rd cc. BC.¹ The

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¹ GRAHAM 1990: 70.

earliest references to him are in *Mengzi* 孟子, where certain Xu Xing 許行 is said to “implement the words of Shen-nong” (*wei Shen-nong zhi yan* 為神農之言),² and in “Xici zhuan” 繫辭傳 (“Commentary of Appended Judgments”) chapter of *Zhouyi* 周易 (*Changes of The Zhou*), where Shen-nong turns out to be a sovereign who ruled after Fu-xi 伏羲³ and before Huang-di, as well as the inventor of the ploughshare, plow and markets.⁴

Some pre-Han sources imply that Shen-nong was perceived as the founder of his own dynasty or as the name of the ruling clan. In one of the chapters of *Lüshi Chunqiu* 呂氏春秋 (*Master Lü's Springs and Autumns*) it is said that “Shen-nong owned All-Under-Heaven for seventeen generations”.⁵ A phrase similar but different in one important respect is contained in a fragment of the now lost treatise *Shizi* 尸子 by Shi Jiao (390–330 BC), preserved in the *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 (*Imperial Reader of the Taiping Era*): “The Shen-nong clan owned All-Under-Heaven for seventy generations”.⁶ The difference in the number of generations given in the two texts is the result of a reversal of the characters *shi* 十 (“ten”) and *qi* 七 (“seven”). It is obvious that one of the versions is the result of an error, but it is impossible to say unequivocally which one; however, it can be assumed that the *Shizi* version is more authentic, since the number seventy in Early China was an analogue of the number seventy-two, which played an extremely important role in Chinese culture,⁷ while the number seventeen, as far as I know, was devoid of any numerological background.

At some point Shen-nong has been merged with another legendary ruler — Yan-di 炎帝 (Flaming Emperor). References to Yan-di in ancient sources are even less numerous. His name appears in *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (*Zuo Tradition*) and *Guoyu* 國語 (*Discourses of The States*), where he figures as a sovereign who ruled after Tai-hao 大皞 and Gong-gong 共工 and before Huang-di,⁸ as well as Huang-di's brother born from the marriage of Shao-dian 少典 with a girl from the You-jiao clan 有嬌.⁹ In addition, in *Liji* 禮記 (*Records on Rituals*) chapter “Yueling” 月令 (“Monthly regulations”), Yan-

² *Mengzi zhengyi*: juan 11 [3A]: 365. A.C. Graham specifies that Xu Xing came to the state of Teng 滕, where he met Mengzi, about 315 BC. See GRAHAM 1990: 67.

³ In “Xici zhuan” he is called Bao-xi 包犧.

⁴ *Zhouyi zhengyi*: juan 8: 351–352.

⁵ *Lüshi chunqiu jishi*: juan 17, ch. 6: 461.

⁶ *Taiping yulan*: juan 78: 365.

⁷ WEN 2006.

⁸ *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*: juan 48 [Zhao 17]: 1567.

⁹ *Guoyu*: juan 10 [Jin yu 4]: 356.

di is associated with summer¹⁰ and, as a result, with the south and the Power of Fire.

The identification of Shen-nong with Yan-di occurred most likely as a result of attempts to combine two systems of ancient rulers: the chronological one, in which Shen-nong was perceived as a monarch who ruled before Huang-di, and the correlative one, in which Yan-di acted as one of the sovereigns associated with various cardinal points, seasons and Powers.¹¹ The earliest known attempt to combine these two images was made by Sima Qian 司馬遷 (145/135–86? BC). In the beginning of the first chapter of his *Shiji* 史記 (*Records of the Historian*) it is implied that Yan-di was the last sovereign of the Shen-nong dynasty: “During the time of Xuan-yuan 軒轅 (i.e. Huang-di — *A.T.*), the Shen-nong clan had been declining for generations... Yan-di had a desire to oppress the feudal lords, and the feudal lords all turned to Xuan-yuan. Xuan-yuan then... fought... against Yan-di in the wilds of Banquan... The feudal lords all honored Xuan-yuan as the Son of Heaven. He replaced the Shen-nong clan. This was The Huang-di”.¹²

The identity of Shen-nong and Yan-di was finally established by the end of the 1st c. BC. In its finished form, it was reflected in the text *Shijing* 世經 (*Canon of Generations*), compiled by the famous scholar Liu Xin 劉歆 (50? BC — 23 AD), which reports the following: “[As for] Yan-di, *Changes* say: ‘Pao-xi (i.e. Fu-xi — *A.T.*) clan disappeared, and Shen-nong clan was established’...¹³ With the help of the [Power] of Fire, he succeeded the [Power] of Wood, so he became Yan-di. He taught the people to plow and farm, so [the people] of All-Under-Heaven gave [him] the title ‘[ruler] from the Shen-nong clan’”.¹⁴ Since then, the identification of Shen-nong with Yan-di has become generally accepted.

Most of the sources agree that Shen-nong was the name of the dynasty, and Yan-di, one of its rulers. For example, the commentary to the *Zuozhuan*

¹⁰ *Liji zhengyi*: juan 15: 574, juan 16: 582, 594.

¹¹ KARLGREN 1946: 221–224. One of the possible reasons for this merger may be the fact that they almost never appear together in ancient sources. The only exception seems to be *Guanzi* 管子 chapter “Feng Shan” 封禪 (“*Feng* and *Shan* Sacrifices”) where Shen-nong and Yan-di are listed side-by-side as the third and fourth among ancient rulers that performed Feng and Shan sacrifices (*Guanzi jiaozhu*: juan 16, ch. 50: 953; cf. *Shiji*: juan 28: 1361). For other reasons of their identification, see HENRICKS 1998.

¹² *Shiji*: juan 1: 3; tr. adopted from *The Grand Scribe’s Records* 1994: 2–3, slightly modified.

¹³ See *Zhouyi zhengyi*: juan 8: 351.

¹⁴ *Hanshu*: juan 21b: 1012.

says that “[the authors] of *Succession of Emperors* (*Dixi* 帝系)¹⁵ and *The Roots of Generations* (*Shiben* 世本)¹⁶ all believed that Yan-di was the [ruler] from the Shen-nong clan; Yan-di was [his] personal title (*shenhao* 身號), and Shen-nong was a dynastic title (*daihao* 代號).¹⁷ A similar statement can be found in a Later Han text *Qianfulun* 潛夫論 (*Comments of a Recluse*) by Wang Fu 王符 (78/85–163) where it is said that this ruler’s “personal title (*shenhao*) was Yan-di, and hereditary title (*shihao* 世號) was Shen-nong.”¹⁸

II. *Minglixu* and *Lushi*

Some interesting developments of Shen-nong’s image can be found in *Chunqiu Minglixu* 春秋命歷序 (*Spring and Autumn: The Sequence of The Periods [of Rule Established by Heaven’s] Mandate*, hereafter *Minglixu*), one of the texts from the corpus of so-called apocrypha (*chenwei* 讖緯), religiopolitical miscellanea that were created during the first centuries AD to legitimize the rule of the Later Han (25–220) dynasty. As most of the apocryphal texts, *Minglixu* was lost and now exists only in fragments, quoted in medieval encyclopedias and commentaries to the classical, literary and historical works. What makes it unique is its subject matter, that is, the legendary history of China. Of course, other apocryphal texts also included some historical content, but it is *Minglixu* that focuses primarily on this topic. In this work the system of ancient Chinese history underwent a significant revision: while in earlier tradition history was believed to span several thousand years and include several reigns of pre-dynastic rulers, here it turned into the one few million years long. It was divided into ten eras (*shiji* 十紀), Cyclopean periods represented by many dozens of ruling clans.

¹⁵ It is not clear which text is meant by *Dixi* in this case. In the *Da Dai liji* 大戴禮記 (*Elder Dai’s Records on Rituals*) chapter of the same name neither Shen-nong nor Yan-di is mentioned.

¹⁶ *Shiben* is a now lost text of late Warring States origin. In all probability the identification of Yan-di and Shen-nong mentioned here was not implied by the original text, but introduced by Song Zhong’s 宋忠/衷 (Song Zhongzi 宋仲子, d. 219) commentary (WANG Mo 1957: 3).

¹⁷ *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*: juan 48 [Zhao 17]: 1567.

¹⁸ *Qianfulun jiaozheng*: juan 8, ch. 34: 386.

Although among the *Minglixu* fragments we find no indication of the number of the monarchs ruling during these periods, it can be hinted by some later texts, which most probably were influenced by that apocrypha. For example, the now lost work *Liuyilun* 六藝論 (*Discussion on the Six Arts*) by the famous Later Han scholar Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127–200 AD) said that six eras included 91 dynasties (*dai* 代). A commentary by certain Fang Shuji 方叔機 specifies that Zheng Xuan referred to the first six eras and indicates the number of dynasties that ruled during each of them: one during the first one (Jiu-tou 九頭), five during the second (Wu-long 五龍), seventy-two during the third (She-ti 攝提), three during the fourth (He-luo 合雒), six during the fifth (Lian-tong 連通) and four during the sixth era (Xu-ming 叙命).¹⁹ Unfortunately, no list of the rulers of these eras has survived. Nevertheless, we have such a list of sovereigns for the eighth (Yin-ti 因提) and ninth (Shan-tong 禪通) eras. It was preserved in a quotation from the now lost medieval source of unknown origin called *Danhushu* 丹壺書 (*Book of The Cinnabar Kettle*), cited in the most complete treatise on legendary history — *Lushi* 路史 (*Grandiose History*) by the Southern Song (1127–1279) intellectual Luo Mi 羅泌 (1131–1189/1203).²⁰ This list names 13 clans which ruled for 68 generations during the eighth era and 16 clans which ruled for 88 generations during the ninth. Moreover, Luo Mi himself compiled the list of 22 ruling families of the seventh era (Xun-fei 循蜚), which reigned for “more than sixty generations”.²¹ Finally, the tenth era (Shu-yi 疏仡) was believed to begin with Huang-di,²² and thus roughly corresponded to the version of ancient history presented in *Shiji*. Although we can’t be certain that these lists (especially, Luo Mi’s one) accurately reflect the content of *Minglixu*, they help us to imagine the scope of this new version of the legendary history.

Nevertheless, in the surviving fragments of *Minglixu* itself we only find mentions of three eras (the first two and the fourth one) and 16 sovereigns (some of which were perceived to be the founders of their own dynasties). Some of them, such as Huang-shen 黃神, Ju-shen 狙神 (Wei-shen 為神), Chen-fang 辰放 or Li-guang 離光, do not appear in earlier texts, while others, such as Huang-di, Shao-hao 少昊, Zhuan-xu 顓頊 and Di-ku 帝嚳, are well known from previous tradition.

¹⁹ *Liji zhengyi*: juan 1: 2.

²⁰ See *Lushi jianzhu*: Qianji, juan 3: 20.

²¹ See *Lushi jianzhu*: Qianji, juan 3: 19–37.

²² *Bu Shiji*: 966.

Shen-nong is mentioned in one of the surviving fragments of *Minglixu*, quoted in Song encyclopedia *Taiping yulan*: “There was a divine person called Shi-er 石耳. [He had] a green face, large eyebrows, and a jade pattern on his head.²³ [He] drove [a chariot harnessed] by six dragons, came from Difu 地輔 and bore the title of the August Shen-nong (Huang Shen-nong 皇神農). [He] first established the forms of the earth and accurately measured [the space between] the four seas, [ascertaining that it stretches for] 900.000 *li* from east to west, and for 810.000 *li* from south to north²⁴.”²⁵ This passage contains much information unknown from earlier sources, such as Shen-nong’s personal name, description of his appearance, mode of travel, place of origin, and activities that can be considered cosmogonic. However, from this fragment it is not clear which period of history Shen-nong’s reign belongs to.

²³ *Taiping yulan* cites an original commentary that says: “The sun and the moon were pure and clear and complied with the order and sequence [of their appearance in the sky], therefore the Divine [farmer], having responded to the [influence] of harmonious vapors, was born. ‘Jade pattern’ (*yuli* 玉理) is the same as ‘jade flower’ (*yuying* 玉莢) or ‘jade hairpin’ (*yusheng* 玉勝)” (*Taiping yulan*: juan 78: 365).

²⁴ *Taiping yulan* cites an original commentary that says: “That what he has done was like this, his instructions were like those of the divinity; [he] farmed plants and planted trees, ordered the people to eat cereals, therefore [the people] of All-Under-Heaven [gave him] the title of August Shen-nong. [He] accurately recorded [information about] the distance and proximity of the forms of the earth and [about] where mountains, streams, forests and lakes extend” (*Taiping yulan*: juan 78: 365).

²⁵ *Taiping yulan*: juan 78: 365. Parts of this fragment are cited in a number of other texts from the 7th c. onwards. The earliest of these is the Tang encyclopedia *Yiwen leiju* 藝文類聚 (*Classified Collection Based on the Classics and Other Literature*), completed by 624 AD. It contains the first half of the *Taiping yulan* quotation with an accompanying commentary and explanation that the “divine person” in question is Shen-nong, though his name is written as Shi-nian 石年 (*Yiwen leiju*: juan 11: 209). Another relatively early version of this citation is given in Li Shan’s 李善 (630–689) commentary to the literary anthology *Wenxuan* 文選 (*Selections of Refined Literature*) (*Xin jiaoding liujia zhu Wenxuan*: juan 19: 1169). Moreover, the second half of the *Taiping yulan* quotation is contained in Northern Song (960–1127) encyclopedia *Shiwu jiyuan* 事物紀原 (Beginnings and Origins of Phenomena and Things) (*Shiwu jiyuan*: juan 7: 361). Besides, brief pieces of this fragment are cited in *Chuxueji* 初學記 (*Records for The Beginning of Learning*) and *Kaiyuan zhanjing* 開元占經 (*Classic of Divination of The Kai-yuan Era*) (*Chuxueji*: juan 9: 202; *Kaiyuan zhanjing*: juan 4: 199). In the collections of apocryphal texts a word-for-word matching fragment is attributed to another work — *Shang shu Xuan ji qian* 尚書璿璣鈴 (*Venerated Scriptures: Seal of The Xuanji [Star]*) (*Liang Han chenwei wenxian*: 18973); however, its source — the so-called *Qinghe jun ben* 清河郡本 (*Tome from Qinghe County*) — is not trustworthy (see, for example, YU 2013; LUO 2017).

In this situation, it seems logical to turn to *Lushi*. In this text, Shen-nong is presented as the founder of the Yan-di clan, the last dynasty of the ninth of ten eras, which was succeeded by Huang-di, the first monarch of the last era. Luo Mi devotes a whole chapter to Shen-nong (*Houji*, *juan* 3), in which a number of quotations from *Minglixu* are given. Yet, all of them are parts of the fragment and its commentary cited in *Taiping yulan*.²⁶ Thus, it could be assumed that in *Minglixu* Shen-nong was also seen as a founder of his own dynasty which ruled at the end of the ninth era.

III. The Da-ting clan

At the first glance this is consistent with another surviving fragment of *Minglixu* that says that “Yan-di bore the title ‘[ruler] from the Da-ting 大庭 clan’, [power in his family] was transmitted [over] eight generations [that ruled] for a total of 520 years”.²⁷ The fragment continues with the enumeration of the dynasties of Huang-di (10 generations, 1520 years), Shao-hao (8 generations, 500 years), Zhuan-xu (20 generations, 350 years) and Di-ku (10 generations, 400 years).²⁸

The identification of Yan-di with the “ruler from the Da-ting clan” is also far from being unproblematic. The name Da-ting *shi* 氏 appears in ancient sources quite rarely. It is first mentioned in *Zuozhuan* as a name of storehouse (*ku* 庫) in Lu 魯;²⁹ later it also appears in a list of twelve ancient rulers in *Zhuangzi* 莊子 chapter “Cutting open Satchels” (“Quqie” 祛箠) along with Shen-nong, as second and last sovereigns, respectively. Ruler from Da-ting clan figures in *Hanshu* 漢書 (*Book of Han*) chapter “The Table of Ancient and Modern Men” (“Gujin renbiao” 古今人表) as the fourth of eighteen “middle upper: humane persons” (*shangzhong renren* 上中仁人) who is placed after “Thearch Tai-hao from the Fu-xi clan” (Tai-hao di Fu-xi

²⁶ The only difference is Shen-nong’s personal name which is written (probably via *Yiwen leiju*) as Shi-nian 石年; *Taiping yulan*’s version “Shi-er” is explicitly discarded as an erroneous one (*Lushi jianzhu*: *Houji*, *juan* 3: 153, 157, n. 4).

²⁷ *Liji zhengyi*: *juan* 46: 1508.

²⁸ *Liji zhengyi*: *juan* 46: 1508–1509. Similar passage, but without the number of generations can be found in another apocryphal text, *Yiwei Jilantu* 易緯稽覽圖 (*The Apocrypha of Changes: Chart of Critical Examination*) (*Liang Han chenwei wenxian*: 18851–18852).

²⁹ *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*: *juan* 48 [Zhao 18]: 1581. Du Yu 杜預 (223–285) in a commentary specifies that “Da-ting shi” is “the name of ancient polity within the walls of Lu” (*Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*: *juan* 48 [Zhao 18]: 1581).

shi 太昊帝宓羲氏) and before “Yan-di from the Shen-nong clan” (Yan-di Shen-nong shi 炎帝神農氏).³⁰ The idea that the sovereign from the Da-ting clan ruled between these two monarchs was followed by the authors of such texts as *Diwang shiji* 帝王世紀 (*Genealogical Annals of The Emperors And Kings*) and *Dunjia kaishantu* 遁甲開山圖 (*Dunjia Chart for Opening Mountains*), who mentioned Da-ting as a monarch who ruled right after Nü-wa 女媧 (an immediate successor to Fu-xi) and a number of generations before Shen-nong.³¹

In *Lushi* Da-ting is also represented as a separate sovereign, the fourth monarch of the ninth era who “ruled for 90 years, reigned under the auspices of Fire and bore the title Yan-di”.³² The commentary accompanying this passage states that “due to the fact that he [reigned under the auspices of] the Power of Fire, subsequent generations believed that he was Shen-nong... [but this is] nonsense”; it also mentions that Liu Shu 劉恕 (1032–1078), the author of *Zizhi tongjian waiji* 資治通鑑外紀 (*The Annals Outside of “Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance”*), “believed that Shen-nong was [called] Da-ting, arguing [that he] was different from [the sovereign] from the Da-ting clan which was after Bao-xi (i.e. Fu-xi. — *A.T.*), and [thereby] created two Da-tings. [This] is even more misleading”.³³ Thus, Luo Mi acknowledged that Da-ting bore the title Yan-di, yet distinguished him from Shen-nong the founder of the Yan-di dynasty.

Yet, it seems that at least in the Later Han there was a separate tradition that followed *Minglixu*’s identification of Yan-di and Da-ting. It was shared in particular by Zheng Xuan, who in his commentary to *Liji* stated that “Yan-di was [the ruler] from the Da-ting clan”.³⁴ The fact that this tradition goes back to *Minglixu* is hinted by the phrase following the above-quoted citation containing the enumeration of ancient ruler’s dynasties beginning with Yan-di as a ruler from the Da-ting clan: “This is what Zheng [Xuan] based [his ideas] on”.³⁵

All of these names — Yan-di, Shen-nong and Da-ting — come together in “*Chunqiu* interpretation” (*Chunqiu shuo* 春秋說) quoted by He Yin 何胤

³⁰ *Hanshu*: juan 20: 863–866.

³¹ *Diwang shiji jicun*: juan 1: 2, 9; *Taiping yulan*: juan 78: 365.

³² *Lushi jianzhu*: Qianji, juan 6: 75. Elsewhere it is mentioned with reference to the lost text *Danhushu* that monarchs from the Da-ting clan ruled for five generations (*Lushi jianzhu*: Qianji, juan 3: 20).

³³ *Lushi jianzhu*: Qianji, juan 6: 76, n. 3; cf. *Zizhi tongjian waiji*: juan 1a: 5.

³⁴ *Liji zhengyi*: juan 15: 574.

³⁵ *Liji zhengyi*: juan 46: 1509.

(446–531), which is most likely one of the apocryphal texts associated with the *Chunqiu* classic: “Yan-di bore the title ‘[ruler] from the Da-ting clan’. Below [he] was the August One of Earth (*dihuang* 地皇). [He] created plough and ploughshare, sowed hundred cereals and was called Shen-nong”.³⁶ Considering the fact that Da-ting clan is mentioned only twice in surviving fragments of apocryphal corpus, and that the first part of this quotation matches the *Minglixu* fragment cited above, it can be surmised that the “*Chunqiu* interpretation” in question is *Minglixu*. Thus, it seems that the above assumption that Shen-nong’s place in *Minglixu* is consistent with that in *Lushi* (disregarding the issue of Da-ting clan) seems to be correct.

IV. *Jindai qianshu*

Nevertheless, it is refuted by a quotation from another lost text — Meng Shen’s 孟誥 (621–713) *Jindai qianshu* 錦帶前書 (*Former Book of the Brocade Belt*), also known as *Jindaishu* 錦帶書 (*Book of the Brocade Belt*).³⁷ Almost no information about this book has been preserved; however, a number of its fragments were cited in later writings, primarily in the Northern Song encyclopedia *Shiwu jiyuan* by Gao Cheng 高承 (11th c.). In particular, it says: “In Meng Shen’s *Former Book of Brocade Belt*, [in the subsection] ‘Kuo-ti Era’ (‘Kuo-ti ji’ 括提紀)³⁸ [of the section] ‘Initial eras’ (‘Zaoji’ 早紀) it is said: ‘There was [a ruler] from the Shen-nong clan; [he] established the forms of the earth³⁹ and created the four seas. This was the former Shen-nong’ (*ci qian Shen-nong ye* 此前神農也)”.⁴⁰ It is easy

³⁶ *Liji zhengyi*: juan 15: 574.

³⁷ Apparently, the character *qian* 前 (“former”) was added to the title of this book to distinguish it from the treatise of the same name, which was traditionally attributed to Xiao Tong 蕭統 (501–531), but in reality was probably compiled at the beginning of the Song (960–1279) period (LUO & GUO 2019).

³⁸ Kuo-ti is an alternative name for the She-ti era, the third of the ten. The fact that it was called Kuo-ti in *Jindai qianshu* is reported in the commentary to *Lushi* (*Lushi jianzhu*: Qianji, juan 2: 14, n. 1).

³⁹ In the modern version of the text, there is a character *she* 蛇 (“snake”), which does not make sense in this context. It is an obvious mistake for *di* 地 (“earth”), outwardly similar to one of the allographs of character “snake” (*she* 虵). This assumption is confirmed, in particular, by a parallel quotation from *Minglixu*, also given in *Shiwu jiyuan*, which have the character *di* in the same position (*Shiwu jiyuan*: juan 7: 361).

⁴⁰ *Shiwu jiyuan*, juan 1: 6. It is not clear if this last phrase is a part of the quotation from *Jindai qianshu* or Gao Chen’s own explanation; however, the first option is more likely.

to notice that the second and third parts of the quotation from *Jindai qianshu* correspond verbatim to the surviving fragment of *Minglixu* quoted above. This textual match, as well as the mention of one of the ten eras, suggests that Meng Shen was familiar with *Minglixu* and its system of ancient history.

Based on this quotation, two important conclusions can be drawn about the content of *Jindai qianshu*. First, it turns out that this book consisted of several sections, at least two of which dealt with the ten eras: the presence of an “Early Eras” section implies that there must have been either “Later Eras” section (“Wanji” 晚紀?), possibly preceded by a section on the “Middle Eras” (“Zhong ji” 中紀?), or, more likely, special sections on each of the “later” eras, about which, in contrast to the “early” ones, more could be said. Taking into account the fact that in the standard version the She-ti (Kuo-ti) era is the third of the ten eras, it can be argued that the “early” eras in *Jindai qianshu* (provided that the order of the eras in this work was not different from the traditional one) included at least the first three eras. Provided that there were no “middle eras” in Meng Shen’s system, it can be assumed that the next three eras whose lists of rulers are not found in the texts that have come down to us, He-luo, Lian-tong and Xu-ming, and possibly the seventh era, Xun-fei, whose list of sovereigns is given in *Lushi*, but is not in the above-mentioned quote from *Danhushu*, also belonged to the “early” ones. In addition, it is clear that at least the “Early Eras” section was divided into subsections dedicated to individual eras.

Second, the fact that the reign of Shen-nong in *Jindai qianshu* is placed in the She-ti era makes this book the only known work to mention by name at least one sovereign of this era; as a consequence, it can be assumed that other monarchs of this period were also mentioned in *Jindai qianshu*, but since the fragments in which they were mentioned have not survived, this hypothesis can’t be either proved or disproved. In addition, this fact gives meaning to the phrase about the “former Shen-nong” that closes the above quotation. In the context of traditional version of the ancient history, the word “former” (*qian* 前) used here is meaningless. If we assume that in this case Shen-nong figures as the first ruler of his own dynasty, then the choice of the word *qian* to denote this fact seems unobvious to say the least and has no analogues in other texts. If we assume that part of this phrase was simply lost (in this case, the existing characters could be translated as “Before this, Shen-nong...”), then it is difficult to explain why the surviving fragment ends with the final particle *ye* 也. Nevertheless, if we take into account that the

reign of Shen-nong usually dated to a much later time it can be assumed that in Meng Shen's system there were several rulers of this name. One of them, Shen-nong known to us from other sources, ruled in one of the "late" eras, while the other — "early Shen-nong", or the "August Shen-nong" as he is called in the fuller version of *Minglixu*'s fragment — during the She-ti era.

Although the coincidence of the names of different characters is not uncommon in the ancient Chinese tradition,⁴¹ the "two Shen-nongs" are not, as far as I know, reported in any surviving text, and thus may be a feature of *Minglixu* inherited by *Jindai qianshu*.

V. *Gushikao*

This argument is corroborated by another lost text — Qiao Zhou's 譙周 (199–270) *Gushikao* 古史考 (*Investigations of Ancient History*). Although there are no verbatim matches between *Gushikao* and *Minglixu*, their systems of ancient history show certain similarities. Besides, Qiao Zhou was a representative of a scholarly tradition that went back to Yang Hou 楊厚 (or Yang Xu 楊序, 72–153),⁴² a specialist in apocryphal texts with particular connection to *Minglixu*,⁴³ so it is highly probable that Qiao Zhou saw this text and could include some of its propositions into his own work.

Several of *Gushikao*'s surviving fragments and expositions of its contents touch upon the relationship between Shen-nong and Yan-di. For example, in the commentary to *Zuozhuan* it is said that "Qiao Zhou,

⁴¹ In the lists of monarchs of the Ten Eras that have come down to us, there is at least one such case: there is a sovereign called Da-chao 大巢 in the list of the rulers of the eight era, and You-chao 有巢 in the list of the rulers of the ninth (*Lushi jianzhu*: Qianji, juan 3: 20); in *Lushi* both of them are called You-chao (*Lushi jianzhu*: Qianji, juan 5: 55; juan 9: 107). In addition, *Lushi* contains an essay specifically dedicated to this problem: "Distinguishing [people] with the same personal and family names" ("Tong mingshi bian" 同名氏辨) (*Lushi jianzhu*: Fahui, juan 1: 905–906). Moreover, a number of similar examples is given in "Shiben jilan tonglun" 世本集覽通論 ("The Penetrative Discourses on the Collection [Fragments] of the Roots of Generations") by Wang Zicai 王梓材 (1792–1851), included in his reconstruction of *Shiben* (WANG Zicai 1957: 61–66).

⁴² FARMER 2007: 17–21.

⁴³ A prophecy contained in *Minglixu* is cited in *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 (*Book of Later Han*) in connection with Yang Hou's memorial to the throne, thus implying that he either quoted or based his argument on it (*Hou Hanshu*: juan 30a: 1048–1049).

investigating the ancient history, believed that Yan-di and Shen-nong each was a single person”.⁴⁴ Similar statement is found in the commentary to *Liji*: “Qiao Zhou believed that Shen-nong and Yan-di were different people, and also believed that Shen-nong [ruled with] the Power of Wood”.⁴⁵ Provided that the idea of Wood (which was associated with color green) as Shen-nong’s patronizing Power goes back to *Minglixu*, it can explain August Shen-nong’s “green face” (*cangse* 蒼色) in the fragment of this apocrypha quoted above.

As for Yan-di, Qiao Zhou regarded him as the founder of his own dynasty, which ruled before Huang-di: “According to the [books] of many sages and *Investigations of Ancient History*, there were eight generations of Yan-di’s descendants altogether, [which ruled] for more than 500 years, and the [sovereign] from the Xuan-yuan clan replaced them”.⁴⁶ Moreover, Qiao Zhou shares *Minglixu*’s idea of Yan-di as the sovereign from the Da-ting clan: “Qiao Zhou’s *Investigations of Ancient History* says: ‘[Sovereign] from the Da-ting clan was surnamed Jiang 姜, ruled under the auspices of the Power of Fire, and therefore bore the title Yan-di’ ”.⁴⁷ The name of the clan (Da-ting), the number of generations (eight) and the duration of the reign (520 years/500-odd years) coincide with those indicated in the *Minglixu* fragment.

Although in the surviving fragments of the *Investigations of Ancient History* there is no mention of the ten eras, we are told that “Qiao Zhou believed that... [from] Shen-nong to Yan-di [there was] 133 families”.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*: juan 48 [Zhao 17]: 1567.

⁴⁵ *Liji zhengyi*: juan 1: 21.

⁴⁶ *Bu Shiji*: 965.

⁴⁷ *Chuxueji*: juan 9: 202. It could be argued that this Da-ting was not the Yan-di mentioned in the previous quote, but the one mentioned in *Lushi*, who also bore the title Yan-di, but Jiang as a surname of Yan-di the dynastic founder is attested in a number of earlier sources (*Guoyu*: juan 10 [Jin yu 4]: 356; *Chunqiu Zuozhuan zhengyi*: juan 58 [Ai 9]: 1901).

⁴⁸ *Liji Zhengyi*: juan 1: 21. The number 133 here is problematic. It seems that in ordering early sovereigns Qiao Zhou adhered to the Five Powers (*wuxing* 五行) theory in its mutual generation (*xiangsheng* 相生) sequence: Wood → Fire → Soil → Metal → Water. In the fragment just quoted it is also said that according to *Gushikao* the period between Fu-xi (traditionally associated with the Power of Wood) and Nü-wa (explicitly connected with the Power of Water) there were 3 families (i.e. Fire, Soil and Metal), and between Nü-wa and Shen-nong (who was said to rule under the auspices of Wood), 50 families (i.e. ten times the full rotation of Five Powers). Thus, the number of families between Shen-nong (Wood) and Yan-di (Fire) should also be a multiple of 5 — that is, 130 or 135. Therefore, the number 133 might be a mistake of either of these numbers.

If we confront this information with the ten eras system, this period might be seen as an interval between the third and the ninth eras.

Thus, although Qiao Zhou apparently didn't call Yan-di Shen-nong, it seems likely that his discrimination of Shen-nong and Yan-di is rooted in the "two Shen-nongs" concept of *Minglixu*.

VI. Conclusions

As a result, it can be concluded that in *Minglixu* there were two monarchs with the name Shen-nong: the first one, the August Shen-nong, ruled at the dawn of history, in the third of the ten eras, while the second one, also known as Yan-di from the Da-ting clan, was the founder of his own dynasty, in much later times.

This view distinguishes the ideas about the legendary history of China reflected in this text both from earlier ones, according to which the Shen-nong clan ruled for seventy (or seventeen) generations, from the ideas popular at the time of the creation of this text, according to which Shen-nong was the name of the dynasty, the most famous representative of which was Yan-di, and from a much later version of *Lushi*, according to which Shen-nong was the first ruler of the Yan-di dynasty. This circumstance testifies to the significant originality of the ideas about the legendary history of China reflected in *Minglixu*.

Minglixu's view of Shen-nong and Yan-di influenced some later works, such as *Gushikao* and *Jindai qianshu*. However, by the time of Luo Mi these ideas were lost, as well as *Minglixu* itself, as otherwise he would have mentioned the inconsistency between the content of this text and his own views on the succession of ancient rulers, as he often did in similar cases.

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The Case of the East Syriac Lectionary *Sir. 26*: Improvement or Forgery?¹

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Abstract: Among Syriac manuscripts of the Institute of the Oriental Manuscripts in Saint Petersburg, there is an East Syriac lectionary *Sir. 26*. Being an Evangelary (Evangelion), it is meant for the Gospel lections of the whole liturgical year. The manuscript contains a number of miniatures that were added to it later, as pointed out by Nina V. Pigulevskaia. The additional folia with the miniatures contain also the date of completion and the name of the person involved. Besides, a part of the representations is marked in his hand as ‘a new image’, while the others are called ‘an old image’. Their iconographic features and the data provided by the notes enable us to see in a new light various tendencies that appeared in the manuscript production of the Chaldean (East Syriac Catholic) Church in the 19th — early 20th cc. Besides, the ‘restorer’ wrote quatrains in the miniatures that used to accompany the latter, hence they became an important element of the manuscript illumination.

Key words: East Syriac lectionary, European art market, manuscript miniature, calligraphy, Alphonse Mingana

General characteristics of the manuscript and history of study

The collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Science in St. Petersburg possesses manuscript *Sir. 26*, which is an East Syriac Gospel lectionary (Evangelion) containing readings from the Gospel for the entire church liturgical year. The manuscript has repeatedly attracted attention of the scholars studying artistic decoration of Syriac Church manuscripts.

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period. The author of the note, Abrāḥām Šekwānā (1849–1931), was a Chaldean Church priest, poet, and scribe active in the late 19th — early 20th cc.⁸ This scribe, from the famous Alqosh family of Šekwānā, who were literati and scribes, was active in copying manuscripts, of which about thirty have survived.⁹ Lists of this author’s own works, including poems, are known as well.¹⁰ In their notes, scribes of this family usually mention the name of their ancestor, the prominent poet and scribe Isrāel of Alqosh (early 17th c.), also known as the founder of the poetic tradition in the New Aramaic dialect of Northern Iraq.¹¹

The contemporary scholar Natalia S. Smelova has studied in detail the history of this manuscript’s provenance.¹² The lectionary is one of twelve manuscripts originating from Northern Iraq, acquired in 1910 and now conventionally referred to as the ‘Dietrich Collection’. The formation of this small collection is linked to the personality of Alphonse Mingana (1878–1937), then a teacher at the Chaldean (Syro-Catholic) Seminary in Mosul (until 1913), who was also a manuscript collector.¹³ He insisted on transporting this group of manuscripts to Germany, where it was described by the Berlin theologian and biblical scholar Gustav Dietrich in 1909.¹⁴ Natalia Smelova has suggested that Abrāḥām Šekwānā carried out the ‘improvement’ of the lectionary of *Sir. 26* on behalf of Alphonse Mingana in order to increase the price at the sale. This collector is known to have used Abrāḥām’s services to ‘improve’ manuscripts.¹⁵ In this case, too, according to the researcher, the paper of the inserts with miniatures was also intentionally aged.¹⁶

⁸ SAMIR 1982; KAUFHOLD 1983; KESSEL 2011.

⁹ KESSEL 2011: 40.

¹⁰ Primarily in the collection of the Chaldean Church of Alqosh: DCA 00015 (poems added at the end after the Psalms text), DCA 00033; and also at least one manuscript in the Chaldean Church of Thrissur, India, where it came from Alqosh: APSTCH THRI 00068. They all have been digitized, cataloged, and are fully available online at the vHMML:

DCA 00015: <https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/128670>.

DCA 00033: <https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/128688>.

APSTCH THRI 00068: <https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/138285>.

¹¹ See, e.g., MENGOSZI 2002; MURRE-VAN DEN BERG 2015: 93, 189–192.

¹² SMELOVA 2018a: 121; SMELOVA 2018b: 51.

¹³ KIRAZ 2011: 292–293.

¹⁴ SMELOVA 2018a: 120.

¹⁵ There is an example of their joint work, which was intended to deliberately falsify a manuscript. This is the famous list of the History of Arbela, the forgery of which largely calls into question the authenticity of the text itself. See KESSEL 2013: 40; SAMIR 1982: 217.

¹⁶ SMELOVA 2018b: 51, cat. 15.

These considerations seem correct, especially with regard to the identification of the participants in this process and their relationships. Undoubtedly, the manuscript in question originally did not have any miniatures. This is evident, among other things, from the quire foliation, in which there are and have been no losses, and the new leaves with miniatures that are additional paste-ups between pre-existing leaves with text. In addition, as far as we know, only the lectionaries of a particularly ornate format that were usually written in the monumental *Estrangela* handwriting were typically decorated with miniatures,¹⁷ while *Sir. 26* is scribed in East Syriac (Nestorian) cursive. Such folios frequently feature modest decorative borders, which we observe on the manuscript's main leaves (see, e.g., f. 13r, 20v).¹⁸

Decorative program: forgery or handbook of the manuscript decoration?

A number of ornamental features of the manuscript and the inscriptions accompanying the miniatures raise questions about the decoration program or, more precisely, the renovation of this lectionary. First, some of the images are labeled as 'old image' (ܩܘܒܘܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܘܠܐ), some as 'new image' (ܩܘܒܘܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܘܠܐ ܕܘܫܒܘܠܐ), and some are left unlabeled altogether. In addition, many of the miniatures bear the date: 1908, written by the same hand, i.e., by Abrāhām Šekwānā. Moreover, this date is present both on the miniatures labeled 'new' (see f. 33v) and those labeled 'old' (see ff. 101v, 141v, 150v). If the 'restorer' had intended to make the miniatures older, he would hardly have inscribed the actual date of their completion. Moreover, it is not quite clear how these two markings should be understood, given that both marked groups of images were added later, and simultaneously, to a manuscript that originally contained no miniatures at all, as we noted above. In order to answer this question, it is necessary to consider in more detail which particular miniatures are accompanied by each of these characteristics, or lack thereof.

Labeled as 'new' are: *a cross with a crucifix (f. 28v; pl. 1)*, *a decorative border with a portal enclosing the text of the Lord's Prayer (f. 33v; pl. 2)*, *a cross with geometric ornamentation (f. 84v)*. First, for the East Syriac tradition the crucifixion is not characteristic, the cross is always depicted

¹⁷ See, for example, PRITULA 2020a.

¹⁸ We discuss these features of the design of the lectionaries in more detail in special articles: PRITULA 2020a; PRITULA 2020b.

without it. It is usually filled with a geometric ornament and is often surrounded by various architectural forms. Therefore, this composition, which is not typical of the decoration of Syriac manuscripts, is obviously a European influence, most likely brought in after the accession of the East Syriac Church (the patriarchal line of the Rabban Hurmizd monastery) to the Catholic Church in 1830. The same applies to the second image, which is a decorative border in the form of a stylized portal enclosing the text of the Lord's Prayer. This prayer is not usually accented by such portals; moreover, it is depicted in three-dimensional perspective, which again is not characteristic of the Syriac manuscript tradition. As far as we know, portals of this shape appear in manuscripts in the 19th c. and are more characteristic of the West Syriac (i.e., Jacobite) tradition.¹⁹

The following miniatures are marked as 'old image': *the frontispiece in the shape of a portal* (f. 1v; see pl. 3), *the scene of the Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem* (f. 69v), *the cross with geometric ornament* (f. 96v; see pl. 4), *the cross with two lamps* (f. 141v), and *a finispiece ('carpet-page') in the form of a cross with geometric ornament* (f. 150v; see pl. 5). All these miniatures are executed in accordance with a rigid iconographic canon, which is followed by the extant East Syriac manuscripts from the 16th c. to the beginning of the 20th c., numbering in the dozens, if not hundreds.²⁰

One more example of the cooperation of the same two persons is the manuscript *Syr. 537*, in the collection of Mingana at Birmingham that was evidently commissioned by him. The copyist clearly had no intention of creating a forgery. The colophon gives his name as Abrāhām Šekwānā and the date of the correspondence: 2222 AH/1911 AD (f. 123v).²¹ The manuscript is written in monumental Estrangela and decorated with a set of miniatures standard for lectionaries of this format. The miniatures, clearly executed by the copyist himself, are extremely similar in style and iconography to those of the St. Petersburg manuscript.

The best known East Syriac decorated Gospel lectionary is a unique artifact executed by 'Aṭṭāyā, a prominent 16th c. calligrapher who worked in both Gazarta and Alqoṣh; this manuscript, now in the Vatican Library (Borg.

¹⁹ See, for example, manuscripts from collections digitized by vHMML and available online: Al-Tahira Syrian Orthodox Church, Mosul — SOCTQM 00003 (1910), SOCTQM 00004 (late 19th c.); Saint George Syrian Orthodox Church, Bartella — SGSCCB 00003 (1808); Mor Aksenoyo Church, Midiyat — MACM 00001 (1954).

²⁰ For instance, Borg. Sir. 169, DCA 00096, CCB 00009, CCM 00063, CCM 00059 (PRITULA 2020a).

²¹ MINGANA 1933: 979–984.

Sir. 169), was created by the calligrapher during his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1576.²² Its decoration was probably influenced by the West Syrian pictorial tradition.²³ Overall, it remains not entirely clear to what extent the decoration of this piece influenced subsequent manuscript production. In one way or another, all East Syriac Gospel lectionaries decorated with miniatures date from later times and repeat the compositions of this manuscript completely. Such are the ones labeled in the manuscript Sir. 26 as 'old'. The compositions like the Entry of the Lord into Jerusalem (f. 69v) are especially characteristic. Its obligatory features are the following: children sitting on trees and people placing their clothes under the feet of a donkey. This iconography appears already in the manuscript production of 'Aṭṭāyā of Gazarta.²⁴ Also traditional and even canonical is a cross filled with geometric ornament (f. 96v), as well as a cross with two hanging lamps on its sides (f. 141v). This composition is also known already in the 16th c.²⁵ Finally, a finispiece (a carpet-page) with a cross filled with geometrical ornamentation occupying the whole folio field. This decorative element, which usually completes the decorative program of manuscripts, is very traditional (see, for example, Borg. Sir. 169, f. 50v). Of course, in all these cases there is no crucifixion, for it is not characteristic of the East Syriac tradition, as mentioned above.

Thus, the mentioned marking probably characterizes the manner and style of the images: traditional or innovative, i.e. Europeanized. The image of St. George on horseback (f. 101r) and the scene of the adoration of the Magi (f. 9v, see pl. 6) are left without any markings at all. Both of these images are unconventional in terms of iconography. As noted above, the second of these compositions attracted the attention of researchers for this very reason. The first of them, the image of St. George, is also quite unusual for the Syriac figurative tradition. The image of this saint, like other miniatures of the manuscript, is an obligatory part of the decoration of a decorated lectionary, but usually this saint is depicted in a flatter, static manner (see, for example, Borg. Sir. 169, f. 87v); in addition, the shape of the saint's headdress and the form of the dragon are unusual. On traditional miniatures of East Syriac lectionaries the saint is depicted without a headdress, with a halo, while the dragon is depicted as a serpent (limbs are absent), with two

²² The manuscript is available in its entirety on the Vatican Library website: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Borg.sir.169.

²³ LEROY 1964: 404–408.

²⁴ PRITULA 2020a; Borg. Sir. 169, f. 64v.

²⁵ PRITULA 2020a; Borg. Sir. 169, ff. 82r, 95r.

kinks in its body.²⁶ Obviously, these two miniatures were made under the influence of images other than those used in East Syriac manuscripts. Whether they were European or Middle Eastern, but of a different style and character, remains unclear. It is also unclear whether the two images were left unmarked ('old' or 'new') by accident or whether this was done intentionally. The latter seems more likely, since these images are not trivial.

Thus, it can be assumed that at the request of the seller, probably Alphonse Mingana, Abrāhām Šekwānā added miniatures to the manuscript to increase its value. He added on pastedown sheets that set of miniatures that was standard for an expensive, decorated lectionary, thus 'upshifting' the manuscript. In doing so, he approached the process thoroughly and creatively: he used the various styles and trends that existed at the time in the manuscript decoration and documented this in detail, providing as much information as possible. Thus, the intention was to accompany the manuscript with a selection of examples of decoration in various styles, which could have been a very valuable addition for a potential buyer in Europe. It is possible that Alphonse Mingana himself had the idea of creating such a manuscript decoration 'manual'.

This is especially evident in the two decorative borders filled with geometric ornamentation, executed by the same hand and located on the same sheet, one below the other (f. 1v). The upper one is characterized as 'old' and the lower one as 'new'. At the same time, they do not differ from each other in technique and color solution; hence, the difference must lie in the ornamental style itself. Thus, the decorator obviously juxtaposed two samples: one of traditional ornamentation, the other of more modern ornamentation, so that they contrasted with each other.

Quatrains inscribed in miniatures of the lectionary of Sir. 26

As noted above, three quatrains are inscribed in the miniatures of the manuscript of Sir. 26, two of them are integrated in a composition with a cross in the center. They contain a prayer for the scribe in poetic form. Such poems became, at least from the 16th c., an important part of the artistic design of manuscripts. They were incorporated into decorative compositions, most often with images of the cross. The earliest manuscript known to us

²⁶ See, for example, manuscript CCB 00009 (f. 80v), in the collection of the Chaldean Church of Batnaya, Iraq; available on the vHMML website: <https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/135415>.

with such poems is the above-mentioned lectionary of Borg. Sir. 169, written by ‘Attāyā in 1576. Such scribal poems became even more widespread thereafter, with many of them being in use for several centuries, and each scribe inserting his own name into them. We discuss the typology and circulation of such texts in two special articles.²⁷

The two quatrains inscribed in the composition with the cross in *Sir. 26* are among such ‘wandering’ scribal poems. It is quite significant that during this ‘renovation’, Abrāhām Šekwānā felt it necessary to inscribe them in miniatures with the cross, as had been practiced for centuries, certainly inserting his own name in them. Thus this kind of poetry becomes an indispensable element in the decorative program of the traditional Church book manuscripts.

1) The quatrain is inscribed in two compositions: a cross with geometric ornamentation filled with ‘wattle’ (f. 84v) — in Nestorian cursive on both sides of the cross in two lines each, — and in the composition of a cross with two lamps (f. 141v):

ܐܘ ܕܡܫܚܐ ܫܡܫܐ ܕܟܪܝܫܬܐ ܕܝܫܫܘܬܐ: ܘܕܒܠܕ ܩܚܐ ܡܢ ܒܘܕܝܬܐ.
 ܠܟܪܝܫܬܐ ܕܝܫܫܘܬܐ: ܠܚܝܫܐ ܡܠܝܫ ܒܘܕܝܬܐ ܕܟܪܝܫܬܐ.

Oh, who bore the Cross of reproach
 and endured the slap of the slave,
 guide your servant Abrāhām
 to Your assembly, and make him rejoice with Your chosen ones!

2) The quatrain is inscribed in the composition of the cross with geometric ornamentation filled with ‘wattle’ (f. 96v) in small Nestorian cursive at the very bottom of the folio, below the decorative border enclosing the composition.

ܫܡܫܐ ܐܘ ܕܒܠܕ ܡܫܫܝܬܐ: ܡܝܫܫܝܬܐ ܕܝܫܫܘܬܐ ܕܟܪܝܫܬܐ.
 ܘܕܒܠ ܕܫܡܫܐ ܡܢ ܩܚܐ: ܒܠ ܕܝܫܫܘܬܐ ܕܟܪܝܫܬܐ.

Look, oh brother and beloved one
 and contemplate this Cross,
 and ask mercy from the beneficent one
 about the scribe Abrāhām!

²⁷ PRITULA 2020a; PRITULA 2020b.

One more quatrain inscribed on the sides of the composition of the *Adoration of the Magi* (f. 9v). Unlike the two quatrains above, this one has not occurred in other manuscripts. Since the miniature depicting the *Adoration of the Magi*, as noted above, differs from other known ones and is innovative, it seems reasonable to assume that the poem was written specifically for this pictorial context. This is also indicated by the fact that, unlike other quatrains, this one is written in eight-syllable meter rather than seven-syllable, which is not typical for such scribal poems. It is very likely that it was composed by Abrāhām himself, the ‘restorer’ of this manuscript, also known as the author of poems of various forms.

ܩܕܝܫܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ
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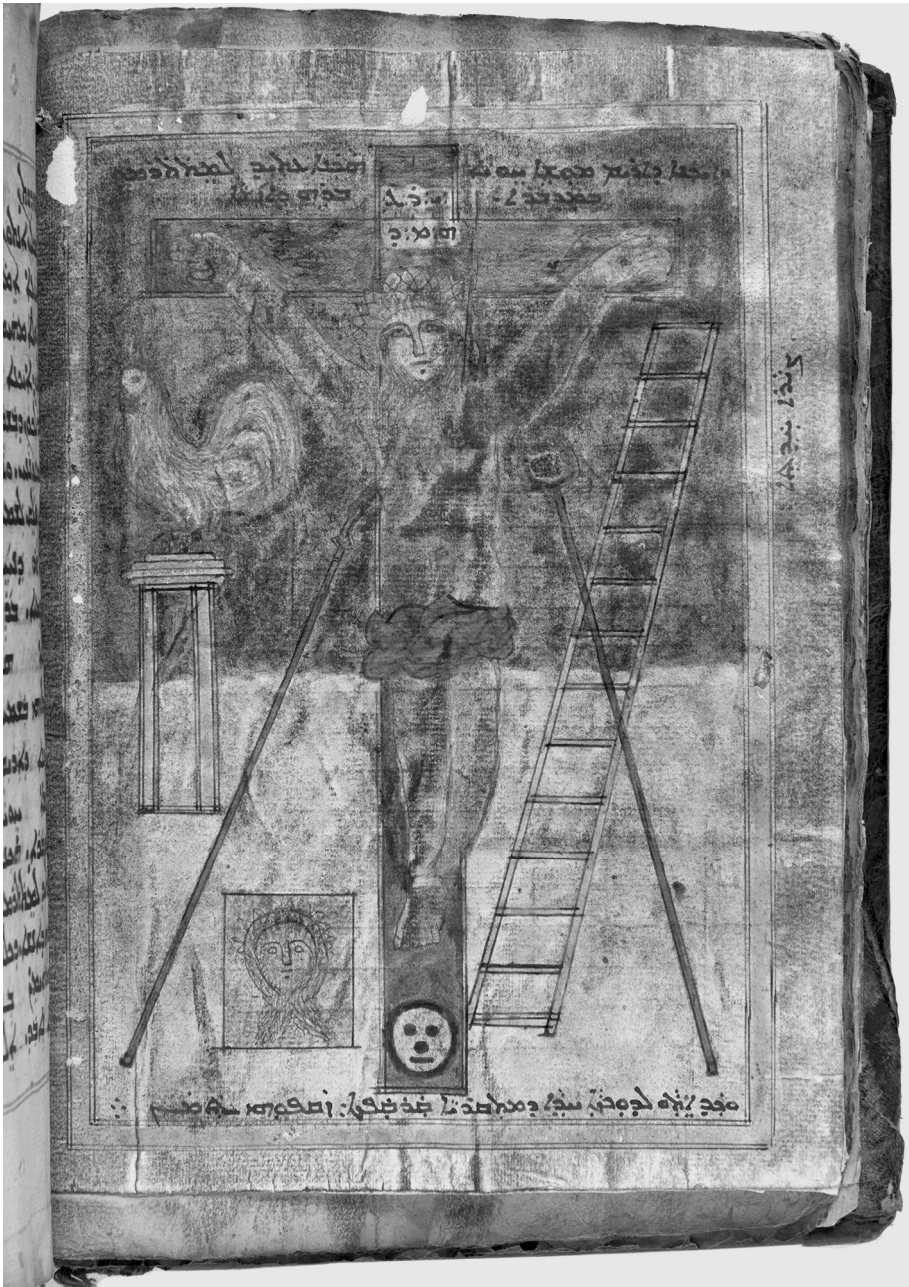
In the days of Caesar Augustus.
The kings of Fars, twelve magi
presented abundant gifts to Jesus.
They despised Herod and mocked him.

Thus, new scribal quatrains of this kind appeared, replenishing the already existing quatrains, expanding the repertoire of texts that had already become an important part of the artistic design of manuscripts.

Restoration and renovation of manuscripts in Alqosh in the late 19th–20th cc.

In general, ‘renovation’ of church-book manuscripts was a fairly common activity for Abrāhām Šekwānā and his contemporaries, the Alqosh scribes. At the same time, it was usually related to ecclesiastical needs rather than to the Western market. Many such repaired manuscripts are still in the library of the Chaldean Church of Alqosh. At least one manuscript restored by Abrāhām has survived. This is another copy of the Gospel lectionary (the current source-number is DCA 00096). It was scribed by the aforementioned calligrapher ‘Aṭṭāyā in 1585 in the monumental *Estrangela* handwriting, and contains a number of miniatures.²⁸ On f. 108r, there is a note about the

²⁸ The manuscript has been described and digitized; available at vHMML, permanent link: <https://w3id.org/vhmml/readingRoom/view/208321>. For more on this manuscript. See PRITULA 2020a.



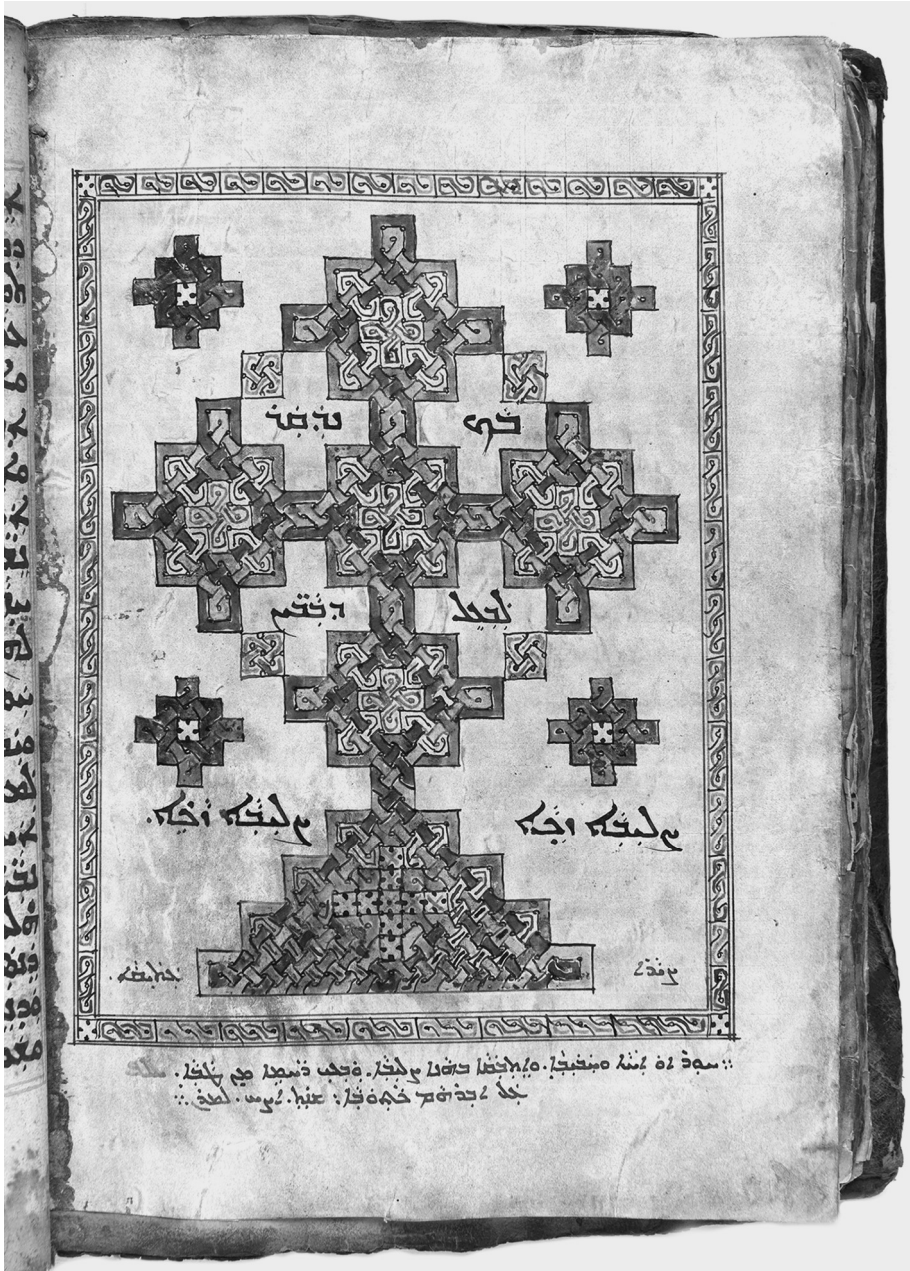
Pl. 1. Syriac collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts
of the Russian Academy of Sciences. MS. Sir. 26, f. 28v



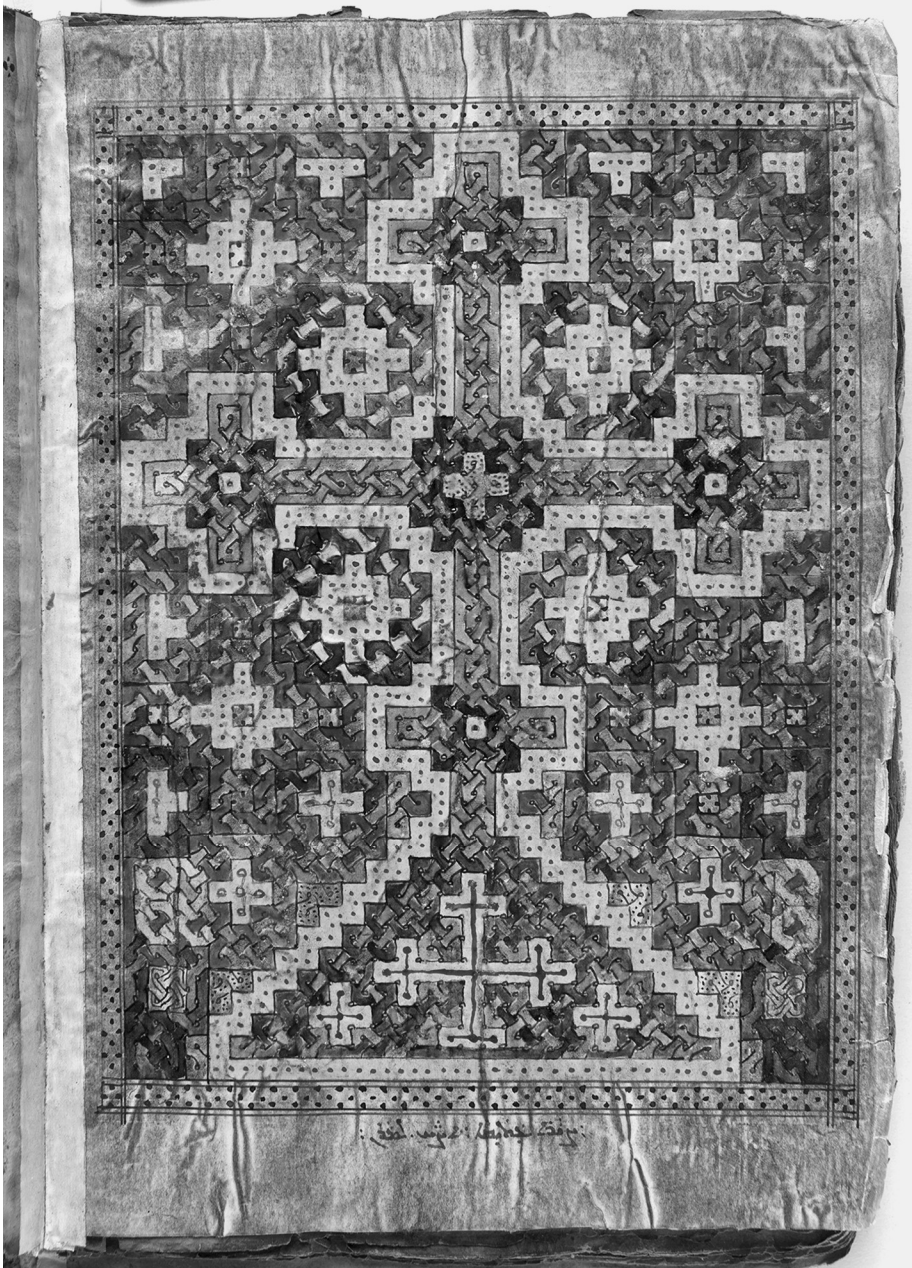
Pl. 2. Syriac collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts
of the Russian Academy of Sciences. MS. Sir. 26, f. 33v



Pl. 3. Syriac collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts
of the Russian Academy of Sciences. MS. Sir. 26, f. 1v



Pl. 4. Syriac collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences. MS. Sir. 26, f. 96v



Pl. 5. Syriac collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts
of the Russian Academy of Sciences. MS. Sir. 26, f. 150v



Pl. 6. Syriac collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts
of the Russian Academy of Sciences. MS. Sir. 26, f. 9v

Conclusion

The East Syriac lectionary *Sir. 26* is a valuable sample of East Syriac manuscript production, reflecting the complex phenomena that took place in this tradition in the 19th — early 20th cc. On the one hand, there was a mass restoration of manuscript church books, i.e. an attempt to preserve the heritage of the manuscript tradition. In this process, miniatures were often ‘restored’ (i.e., drawn anew), as well as poems, usually quatrains, containing a call to pray for the scribe. The text of these poems (with the exception of the scribe’s name, which, of course, varied), as well as the iconographic schemes of the miniatures, constituted a certain unchanging canon that persisted at least from the sixteenth century on.

On the other hand, the 19th c. saw the increasing influence of European culture, especially after the incorporation of most of the East Syrian dioceses of Iraq with the Catholic Church in 1830 and the formation of the Babylon Patriarchate of the Chaldean (East Syrian Catholic) Church. This was reflected in the church art, which actively began to copy European iconographic models.

Finally, it was during this period that European interest in the art and manuscript tradition of the East reached its peak. Numerous collections of Oriental manuscripts were formed in Europe, often acquired from resellers who had connections with local scribes. This phenomenon is reflected by the lectionary *Sir. 26*, written in the 17th c. and ‘improved’ in 1908 by the Alqosh priest, poet, and scribe Abrāhām Šekwānā. Apparently at the request of a reseller, he pasted a number of miniatures with inscriptions and verses into this originally undecorated manuscript. It was probably intended to increase its value. This renovation cannot be called a forgery in the exact sense, since their actual year of manufacture and the name of the maker are indicated. What is certain, however, is that in this case the process was related to the requests of the European market, which distinguishes the manuscript in question from many others restored during this period.

Equally important is the fact that Abrāhām Šekwānā supplied the miniatures with scribal quatrains, as had been customary during several centuries. This suggests perception of such poems as an important part of the decorative program of a church book. The ‘restorer’ probably used both old, ‘wandering’ verses and new ones composed by himself.

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Arabographic Manuscripts of the Akhty and Rutul Regions of the Republic of Dagestan¹

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Abstract: The paper presents the results of two field expeditions in 2022–2023 to Southern Dagestan: within the framework of these archaeographic expeditions, the manuscript collection of the Akhty State Museum of Local Lore (village of Akhty, the Akhty district of the Republic of Dagestan), including manuscripts, documents, lithographs and early printed books in Arabic, Turkic and Persian languages, as well as a small private manuscript collection in the village of Khlyut (the Rutul district of the Republic of Dagestan) have been fully described and digitized. Materials of these collections allow us to draw a number of conclusions about the specifics of the transformation of intellectual tradition in Southern Dagestan, its differences and similarities compared with other regions of Dagestan, and the peculiarities of the distribution of manuscripts from the Middle East, Shirvan and the Ural-Volga region in this area.

Key words: arabographic manuscripts; Turkic manuscripts; digitization; Southern Dagestan; private and state collections

Over the past two years, several expeditions have been conducted to various regions of Russia in order to identify, describe and digitize² Muslim Arabic handwritten heritage at places of its storage (within the framework of the RSCF project No. 22-18-00295 “Electronic library of arabographic

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¹ This research was carried out with the support of the Russian Science Foundation, project no. 22-18-00295 “E-Library of Arabic, Persian and Turkish Manuscripts from archival, library, museum and private collections of Russia”.

² For details about description and digitization of Dagestan manuscripts see: MUSAEV & SHIKHALIEV & ABDULMAZHIDOV 2021.

manuscripts from archival, library, museum and private collections of Russia”). Digital copies of manuscripts are placed in the public domain.³ This work with private, mosque and state collections contributes to preservation of manuscript collections, which are often at risk of disappearing due to fires, theft or improper storage, and also makes manuscripts located in distant regions of Russia available for study by specialists.

During two seasons of fieldwork in 2022 and 2023, a group of researchers from the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of History, Archaeology and Ethnography of the Dagestan Federal Research Centre of Russian Academy of Sciences traveled to various regions of the Republic of Dagestan. In particular, our study covered villages in the southern part of the region. Thus, in 2022, two previously unknown private collections in the village of Alhajikent (the Kayakent district of the Republic of Dagestan) were described and digitized,⁴ and we also started working with a voluminous collection of manuscripts and printed books of the Akhty State Museum of Local Lore (the Akhty district of the Republic of Dagestan). In August-September of 2023, the work in the museum was fully completed. Moreover, it was possible to digitize a relatively small private collection in the village of Khlyut (the Rutul district of the Republic of Dagestan).

The manuscript and book collection of the Akhty State Museum of Local Lore

Not much is known about the formation of the manuscript and book part of the collection of the Akhty Museum, since no records about acquisition of manuscripts and books by the museum have been preserved or never existed at all. The museum was opened in 1937 in the Juma Mosque of the village of Akhty, and N. Daglarov became its first director. Apparently, it was during the years of anti-religious persecution that residents of Akhty and nearby villages donated libraries of mosques, *madrasahs* and private collections to the Museum. The collection was replenished under the next director of the Museum, F.N. Daglarov, and in 1996 it was moved to a new building. Currently, the museum is headed by the third representative of the Daglarov family of directors, Akhmet Fikretovich Daglarov. As we learned from

³ See: <http://manuscriptaislamica.ru/ru>.

⁴ ANIKKEVA & CHMILEVSKAYA 2022.

private conversations with him, the book and manuscript part of the Museum's collection has not been replenished in the last 20–30 years. Today, the Museum exhibits many artefacts of archeology, numismatics, ethnography, ceramics, as well as household items of the Akhty people, chronologically covering the period from ancient time to the present day.

As for the book and manuscript part of the collection, it is not exhibited to the public and is kept in the storerooms of the museum. It has about three hundred items of storage: arabographic manuscripts, lithographs, early printed books in Arabic, Turkic and Persian languages. The manuscripts of the Akhty Museum have already been studied as part of the annual archaeological expeditions of professor A.R. Shikhsaidov (1928–2019) in the 2000s. Brief information about them is found in two articles.⁵ However, a full description of the collection, its repertoire or individual manuscripts has not been published and, for sure, the collection has not been digitized. Moreover, while working directly at the museum, we found out that A.R. Shikhsaidov's group did not study some manuscripts, as well as individual documents and manuscript fragments (this was evident because they had no special numbered stickers attached).

In terms of genre, the collection is not very diverse. The Qurans make up about eighty-five percent: both complete copies and separate parts (*juzs* and *surahs*), there are also lithographed and early printed Qurans from Shirvan and Kazan. Among the separate handwritten *surahs*, the 2nd *surah* “al-Baqarah,” the 18th *surah* “al-Kahf” and the 36th *surah* “Ya-Sin” are very common, since they are the ones mainly used in religious ritual practices in Dagestan. Many copies of the Quran are decorated with rich geometric ornaments and provided with detailed colophons and additional external records that are linked, in particular, with *waqfs*. One of such notable records can be found on the pages of the Quran no. 178. It states that this Quran was handed over to the *waqf* of the Akhty mosque in 1237H (09/27/1821–09/16/1822) by Zuriyat b. Muhammad Qasim Afandi, the wife of *alim* and *qadi* Mirza Ali of Akhty (1770–1859), who was very widely known in Dagestan. We believe that the inscription on this copy of the Quran is made by her hand. Detailed and numerous colophons of Qurans can help to clarify lacunae in toponymy, the origin of *nisbahs* and the microhistory of individual Dagestan villages. The oldest manuscript in the collection is also the Quran under the number 286. It has no colophon, but judging from the features of its paper and handwriting, this manuscript likely dates to the 14th c.

⁵ SHIKHSAIDOV & NAVRUZOV 2011; SHIKHSAIDOV & NAVRUZOV 2014.

About thirty manuscripts in the collection are grammatical works in Arabic, mainly on morphology. They are distributed throughout all collections of Dagestan due to their inclusion in *madrasah* educational programs.⁶ They, both manuscripts and early printed books, include “al-Muqaddima al-ajurrumiyya fi mabadi' ‘ilm al-'Arabia” (“Prolegomena of Ibn Ajurrum on the Science of Arabic Grammar”) by Abū ‘Abdallāh Muḥammad al-Sinhājī Ibn Ajurrum (1273–1323), “Mi'at ‘āmil” (the treatise on Arabic grammar) by ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d. 1078) and some others. The collection contains several works on *Shafi'i fiqh*, in particular, “al-Mukhtaṣar al-ṣaghīr” (“The Shorter Abridgment”) by the Dagestani *alim* ‘Alī al-Ghumūqī (d. 1528). There are also rare works on Sufism and ethics, logic, mathematics and astronomy, poetic works, Arabic-Ottoman Turkish dictionaries, separate collections of prayers, one *fatwa*, *tafsirs*, including one that is a subscript to the Quran.

A separate place in the collection is occupied by documents, mainly of the Russian imperial period.⁷ Some of them are quite rare and are associated with the work of the judicial system in the Dagestan region. In particular, we came across a small fragment of the judicial *defters*⁸ of the Akhty rural court (no. 278), dated 1910, which recorded the dates of the trials, the testimony of the plaintiffs and defendants, and the decisions made by *qadi*, certified by Russian stamp seals and personal Arabic-language seals of the members of the court. Equally interesting is the document of this type no. 258, a small (17.5×22 cm) notebook, copied in Dagestan *naskh* on Russian paper with the stamp of the Markov Society. It is a fragment of a personal *defters* of a *qadi* of an unidentified village which dates from 1915–1920. In it, the owner wrote out separate norms of *Shafi'i fiqh* (among them the conditions of loan, inheritance and donation, wills on *nazr*, conclusion of *nikah*, etc.), mainly with reference to *faqihs* and *alims* considered authoritative in Dagestan, for example, Ibn Hajar al-Haythami (1503–1566). Apparently, such records served as an aid for rapid adoption of legal decisions. There is also a decree dated to 1914, a small document of a *qadi* named Chupalav (who served in the Dagestan People's Court), in which he discusses several pressing issues of the work of the rural court using a special “question-answer” format typical for judicial texts in Arabic. For example, he explains the duties of a *qadi* of a rural court, the order of distribution of property between heirs, how to determine the fine for murder or mutilation, and he also describes judicial

⁶ KEMPER & SHIKHALIEV 2015: 599.

⁷ From the time when Dagestan was incorporated into the Russian Empire (1860) till 1917.

⁸ Registry book.

bureaucracy, records that should be kept by a *qadi* and much more. Researchers of law in post-reform Dagestan (1860s–1880s) have not encountered similar documents before, that is, internal local documents that are not projects of officials written in Russian.

Diversity of manuscripts in Turkic languages in the collection deserves special attention, since the presence of such texts is a striking distinctive feature of Southern Dagestan in comparison to other regions.

It is customary to distinguish several main historical and geographical areas of distribution of Turkic manuscripts: East Turkestan, Central Asian, Turkish (Asia Minor), Transcaucasian (Azerbaijan), Volga-Ural.⁹ The territory of the Transcaucasian (or the South Caucasian) area included the eastern part of Transcaucasia (modern Northern, or Soviet, Azerbaijan and Dagestan) and the northern regions of Iran (Southern, or Iranian, Azerbaijan). The main language of the area was Azerbaijani Turkic (known as *turki*).

In terms of genre, Turkic manuscripts contain various collections of prayers, divination on the Quran, poetic and folklore works.

Among these manuscripts in the Turkic language, the collection of prayers in Arabic (no. 277) is noteworthy: it precedes the story about Ashik Garib (“*Hikayat-i Aşik Garib*,” with the *unwan*) in Turkic. The manuscript is not dated, however, judging from paleographic features, it was likely created in the second half of the 19th c. The narrative about Ashik Garib existed in written and oral form and was spread by storytellers-*meddahs* very widely on the territory of Turkey, Crimea, and among Turkic-speaking peoples of the Caucasus and Central Asia. It is one of the popular, favorite plots of so-called folk narratives (*hikayats*), a special genre of Ottoman Turkish and Turkic folklore that combines features of fairytales and epics, fragments of *aşik* folk poetry and also borrows many plots from the Arab-Persian literary tradition. The story about Ashik Garib is set in Tiflis and Tabriz (the cultural center of Azerbaijan in the Middle Ages), which allows us to approximately localize the origin of this plot (South Caucasus).

Also, among the manuscripts in the Turkic language there is the Turkic divan of Fuzuli (1498–1556), copied in 1261H/1845 (no. 232), presumably in Azerbaijan or Iran. Copies of this divan are very commonly found in different collections of Turkic manuscripts.¹⁰

In addition, there is a notable absence of some didactical works in Turkic, which were widely known among *madrasah* students in Central Asia and

⁹ DMITRIEVA 1987: 408.

¹⁰ See, for example, DMITRIEVA 2002: no. 1198–1210.

more generally in Muslim territories of the Russian Empire during the 2nd half of the 19th cc. and the beginning of the 20th c. (“Thabat al-‘Adjizin”/ “The Support of the Weak” by Sufi Allah Yar), that is explained by the difference in the educational program of the *madrasahs* and, ultimately, the difference in the *madhhabs* (the Hanafi in the Volga-Ural region and Central Asia and the Shafi'i in Dagestan).

Turkic manuscripts copied in Dagestan, as well as lithographs and early printed books in Turkic printed there, still remain insufficiently studied, partly because there are relatively few of them in collections of state museums, archives and institutes outside the republic).

Private manuscript collection from the Khlyut village

The expedition participants were fortunate to gain access to the private collection of Latif Kurbanovich Kurbanov from the village of Khlyut (the Rutul district of the Republic of Dagestan). However, it was not possible to personally discuss the formation history of this collection with its owner. We have only learned some information about his family, several members of which spoke Arabic and had a traditional Muslim education.

In total, there are 16 items in the collection — manuscripts, lithographs and early printed books in Arabic and Turkic languages (in Arabic script). The Arabic-language part of the collection is quite typical: it includes fragments of the Quran, collections of prayers, “Sharḥ al-unmūdḥaj” (the commentary on brief treatise on the grammar of the arabic language by Mahmud b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhshari) by Muḥammad al-Ardabīlī (d. 1626). Dated manuscripts mostly belong to the end of the 19th and the first third of the 20th cc.

A third of the collection consists of manuscripts and books in Turkic. Among the works in Turkic language, there was a small manuscript (7 ff., 7×12 cm) which attracted our attention. Sewn from lined notebook sheets, it contains various prayers and appeals to Sheikh Mahmoud Efendi al-Almali (Mahmoud b. Muhammad al-Daghistani al-Shirvani al-Hanafi al-Naqshbandi al-Mujaddidi). A native of the village of Almali (Almalo; azerb. *Almali*) of the Zakatala district of Tiflis province, now the Qakh district of modern Northwestern Azerbaijan, Mahmud Efendi (1810–1877) was a sheikh of the *Naqshbandiyya* Sufi brotherhood, the founder of its *Mahmudiyya* branch,¹¹ poet and scholar. He was sent into exile to Perm, then

¹¹ SHIKHSAIDOV & KEMPER & BUSTANOV 2012: 140.

he moved to Hadji Tarkhan (Astrakhan), where he died and was buried. Religious authority of Sheikh Mahmud Efendi al-Almali was generally recognized in Southern Dagestan, as evidenced by this manuscript (we can date it to the first half of the 20th c.) in the private collection.

Summarizing the above discussion, it is worth to note that the work in the Akhty State Museum of Local Lore and some private collections of Southern Dagestan contributes not only to preservation of manuscript copies and making access to them easier, but also allows to evaluate the features of the intellectual tradition in this whole microregion. Thus, we see a profound influence of Shirvan on manuscript collections of Southern Dagestan, which is absolutely not observed in other collections of the Republic. An important distinctive element of these collections is the presence of manuscripts in the Turkic language. This reflects, firstly, a wide dissemination and usage of the Turkic language by the inhabitants of Southern Dagestan, and secondly, their interest not only in classical works on Arabic grammar or commentaries on the Quran, but also in poetry, historical works and collections of prayers. Although the collection of the Akhty State Museum of Local Lore is not very diverse in terms of genre, it provides specific information to researchers about the peculiarities of decorating Qurans in Dagestan in the 18th–20th cc., important information about the toponymy and origin of the *nisbahs* enclosed in colophons and much more. It also includes truly rare imperial documents clarifying the specifics of the judicial system in the Dagestan region. As for research on private collections in villages, the collection of the village of Khlyut allows us to confirm the hypothesis about the spread of Turkic literature in Southern Dagestan.

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Five Years of the Serindica Laboratory in the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, RAS: Results and Prospects

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Abstract: The article presents a review of the main results achieved in the first five years by the Serindica Laboratory at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The author points out that initial planning of the Laboratory's work made it possible to implement a cross-regional approach to the study of Central Asian manuscripts. This article also examines the prospects for further research to be conducted by members of the Laboratory.

Key words: Written heritage, Central Asian manuscripts, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Serindia Collection, Serindica Laboratory

The Serindica Laboratory at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences started its work at the end of 2018. It was created as part of the project “New Laboratories” launched by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation. The Laboratory aimed at restoration, digital cataloguing, research and publication of the manuscript heritage of the Serindia Collection kept at the IOM, RAS.

At the start, the Laboratory team consisted of 9 people (researchers and technical staff) working together on the project “Administrative management, language and cultural situation on the borders of medieval empires in Central Asia (based on the materials of Serindia, Dunhuang and Tangut Collections of the IOM, RAS).” As the title suggests, the Laboratory's work was planned so that it could be expanded to include new members working on related topics. In this way, working within a single research framework, members of the Laboratory have the opportunity to present results of their research in accordance with the comprehensive approach to the study of the ancient and early medieval manuscript heritage of the entire Central Asian region.

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Initially, the Laboratory focused on the Sanskrit,¹ Old Uyghur, Tibetan and Tokharian sub-collections of the Serindia Collection of the IOM, RAS. In 2022, Kirill M. Bogdanov, who is engaged in research on the Tangut Collection of the IOM, RAS, joined the project as the head of the Laboratory. Currently, research on the Tangut Collection is focused on preliminary cataloguing of manuscripts that are not described in existing catalogues. This work includes, in particular, textual research with the aim of identifying manuscripts, selecting texts that need restoration, and making digital photocopies of the most valuable documents. At the same time, K. Bogdanov works on creating electronic resources that contain entries of all Tangut manuscripts with brief catalogue descriptions. Since the Tangut Collection of the IOM, RAS is the world's largest archive of manuscripts and books in the 'dead' Tangut language (about 10,000 items), and Russian Tangutology has given rise to all fundamental research in this field of Oriental Studies, it is important to continue the study of Tangut manuscripts at the IOM, RAS in order to preserve the academic tradition, which began at the beginning of the 20th c.

In 2023, Viacheslav P. Zaytsev became a new member of the Laboratory and the study of the Khitan script was added to the main tasks of the Laboratory's team. V. Zaytsev also carries out historico-philological and linguistic studies of unique Khitan and Jurchen materials kept at the IOM, RAS. Since 1968 fragments of manuscripts written using the Jurchen script in the 'dead' Jurchen language have been discovered in the Tangut Collection. In 2010, the only extant manuscript book written in the undeciphered Large Khitan script in the 'dead' Khitan language was identified in the IOM, RAS Collection (now in the *Nova* Collection). This book, which contains the most extensive texts in the Large Khitan script known to date, gave a new impetus to research (interrupted in the 1990s) on sources in the Large and Small Khitan scripts in Russia, thereby helping to preserve continuity of the Russian academic school of Khitan studies.

In the same year, research on the Sogdian part of the Serindia manuscript Collection was reinforced when Olga M. Chunakova, the leading specialist in Sogdian manuscripts at the IOM, joined the project. Thus, by 2023 the Serindia Laboratory has reached the initially stated goal of conducting comprehensive research on the manuscript heritage of Central Asia—Serindia and neighboring regions. O. Chunakova works on Iranian-language manuscripts of the Serindia and Dunhuang Collections. First results of her work were published in the monograph *Manichaean manuscripts from Eastern Turkestan. Middle Persian and Parthian fragments* [Манихейские

¹ MESHEZNIKOV & SHOMAKHMADOV 2020.

рукописи из Восточного Туркестана. Среднеперсидские и парфянские фрагменты] (Moscow, 2011) that includes 80 previously published and newly discovered fragments in the Middle Persian and Parthian languages. Later, continuing to work with Middle Persian and Parthian manuscripts, O. Chunakova began to explore Sogdian manuscripts, too. The results of this work are published in the monograph *Manuscripts from Eastern Turkestan. Middle Persian, Parthian and Sogdian fragments in the Collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts* [Рукописи из Восточного Туркестана. Среднеперсидские, парфянские и согдийские фрагменты в собрании Института восточных рукописей] (St. Petersburg, 2019) that includes 14 manuscripts from the Serindia Collection (6 Middle Persian and Parthian manuscripts, and 8 Sogdian ones) and 10 Sogdian fragments from the Dunhuang Collection, not published previously. In terms of content, Iranian-language manuscripts are divided into three categories: Manichaean (hymns, dogmatic treatises, parables), Buddhist (translations of Buddhist writings) and secular (letters, lists, etc.).

In its first five years of work, the Serindica Laboratory has achieved important results. More than 1,000 items, manuscripts and fragments, were restored (by Kristina V. Korosteleva). Also, since the Laboratory's foundation, digital photocopying of more than 4,000 manuscript fragments has been carried out (by Mark A. Kozintsev, Artiom V. Meshezhnikov).

In our view, creation of the electronic database of manuscripts and fragments of the IOM, RAS Serindia Collection by the Serindica Laboratory team deserves special attention. This painstaking and time-consuming work has been carried out since the early days of the Laboratory. The main challenge lies in the difficult task faced by the Laboratory team to develop universal criteria for describing different manuscript collections, which are very heterogeneous in composition, content, peculiarities of paleographic and codicological description. Well-known foreign and domestic databases of manuscript collections have their specifics for Sanskrit, Tokharian, Chinese, etc. Working on creating the database, members of the Laboratory studied the experience of Austrian colleagues ("A Comprehensive Edition of Tocharian Manuscripts" (CEToM), German specialists in the Turfan Studies ("Turfanforschung"), and colleagues from "The International Dunhuang Project" that combines data on manuscripts from Dunhuang stored in Oriental studies centers around the world.

The Serindica Laboratory team also gained experience by examining the creation of a manuscript database by an international team of scholars working on the project "The Schøyen Collection: Manuscripts from around the world spanning 5000 years of human culture and civilization." The

peculiarity of this collection of manuscripts and old printed books owned by the private collector Martin Schøyen lies in the fact that it contains written sources in different languages (Oriental as well as European), different formats and on different materials (paper, wood, palm leaves, birch bark, clay, etc.).² Thus, approaches used to create this database, as well as methods of describing very different written artifacts, are potentially highly useful for the creation of the IOM, RAS Serindia Collection database. It is expected that principles for creating the digital database will be finalized in the near future.

Importantly, the process of describing the manuscripts of the Serindia Collection has been active since the Laboratory's foundation. Data gathered in the course of this work will form the basis of the future digital database. During the five years of the Laboratory's functioning, more than 600 Sanskrit written sources of the Serindia Collection were described (by Artiom V. Meshezhnikov, Elena V. Tanonova, Safarali H. Shomakhmadov). One of the peculiarities of describing Sanskrit manuscripts is that in the process of identifying separate fragments originally inventoried under different shelf numbers, it is possible to find that they represent parts of the same leaf or manuscript. In this case, fragments have to be grouped under a single shelf number.

Moreover, A.V. Meshezhnikov and S.H. Shomakhmadov began to examine manuscript fragments in Indian scripts from the Dunhuang Collection of the IOM, RAS, once again demonstrating the integrated approach to research in the Serindica Laboratory.

In addition to examining Sanskrit manuscripts from the Serindia Collection during five years, members of the Laboratory created inventories of Sogdian (119 items), Old Uyghur (500 items), Tibetan (54 items), Tokharian (200 items) and Khotanese (200 items) manuscripts. The Laboratory team has prepared a complete bibliographical description and inventory of the collection of Central Asian and Siberian prints that includes 788 items (stone steles, rock inscriptions) in 11 languages (Old Turkic, Arabic, Bulgar-Tatar, Syriac, Manchu, Chinese, Sogdian, Turkic, Tibetan, Mongolian and Sanskrit).

A relatively small collection of forgeries (100 items described) is of particular interest. During excavations of archaeological artifacts in Serindia oases, expedition participants extracted manuscripts in languages and scripts which were unknown at that time. Taking advantage of this situation, unscrupulous 'manuscript dealers' actively made forgeries in order to sell them to researchers. In this case, the materials and techniques used to create such 'manuscripts/books' may be of some academic interest (such as paper format, binding, type of writing imitated by 'dealers'). For example, there

² SHOMAKHMADOV 2014.

are some forged manuscripts that imitate the Indian (Brāhmī) script, but the binding type is more in line with the Chinese book tradition.

The Serindica Laboratory members actively present their research results to the academic community. More than 60 articles were published during the five years of the Laboratory's work. In addition, the first volume of "The Catalogue of the Old Uyghur Manuscripts and Blockprints in the Serindia Collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, RAS" was published (Tokyo: The Toyo Bunko, 2021). The Catalogue includes fragments in the Old Uyghur language studied by Russian and international scholars over the past 100 years. The Catalogue is the first published volume with the Old Uyghur fragments from the Serindia Collection. It is a compilation of all the information scattered in various publications that are often difficult to access.

Moreover, over the past five years, members of the Laboratory have given more than 90 presentations at conferences of various types, mainly international ones. In their reports, our researchers highlighted interim results of the Laboratory's work and prospects for further research. Organization of annual international conferences is a significant achievement that makes it possible to present activities of the Serindica Laboratory to the international academic community.

The First International Academic Conference "Oriental Manuscript Book: Codicology and Conservation Issues" was held between December 4–6, 2019 at the IOM, RAS³ with thirty-one speakers. The Second International Codicological Conference "Oriental Manuscripts: Scriptoria, Monastic Libraries and Workshops in the Medieval East") took place between November 15–17, 2021 at the IOM, RAS with 30 participants. Another conference, "The Written Heritage of the Orient," came to be organized annually and immediately gained popularity among the international specialists in the Oriental manuscript studies. Each annual Conference is dedicated to one of the outstanding Orientalists and manuscript scholars — Buddhologists, Tibetologists, Indologists, specialists in Mongolian studies, Arabic studies, etc. Moreover, the Conference is meant to bring together manuscript researchers as well as specialists in epigraphy, blockprints, numismatics, etc. The First Conference,⁴ originally conceived as the All-Russian (The First All-Russian Academic Conference "The Written Heritage of the Orient"), in fact, immediately gained the international status. A third of 33 participants were foreign speakers.⁵

³ TURANSKAIA 2020.

⁴ The First All-Russian Academic Conference "The Written Heritage of the Orient" was dedicated to the memory of the outstanding Sanskrit manuscript expert, researcher of manuscripts from the Serindia Collection, Margarita I. Vorobiova-Desiatovskaia (1933–2021).

⁵ SHOMAKHMADOV 2022.

The Second Academic Conference, held as an international one, was dedicated to the 160th Anniversary of Piotr K. Kozlov (1863–1935), an outstanding traveler, geographer, ethnologist, archaeologist, researcher of Central Asia. The name of P.K. Kozlov is inextricably linked with the history of the discovery of the “dead city” of Khara-Khoto (“The Black Town”) and the lost Tangut culture of the Xi Xia (West Xia) state. The conference was attended by 41 scholars, including 19 foreign participants.⁶

Thus, during its first five years of intensive activity, the Serindica Laboratory has widened its research scope and made significant progress in academic studies. The Laboratory has attracted new members capable to handle a variety of complex tasks. New results of research on the manuscript heritage of the Serindia Collection and future research perspectives are actively and regularly presented to the international academic community in publications and conferences.

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⁶ SHOMAKHMADOV 2023.

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