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New Translations of Some Tangut Words

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Abstract: Some important documents, such as the Tangut legal texts “Revised and Newly Approved Code of the Heavenly Prosperity Reign (1149–1168)” (*Tiansheng lüling*) and “New Laws of the Pig Year” (*Hainian xinfa*), are not fully clarified. One reason is that some Tangut words cannot be understood correctly. The main key to finding exact meanings of Tangut words are translations of Chinese classics. In this paper it is shown how using the Tangut translation of a Chinese *leishu*, “Forest of Categories” (*Lei lin*), and finding correct interpretations of nine words results in reasonable translations of legal provisions.

Key words: Tangut Code, Tiansheng lüling, Hainian xinfa, Lei lin

More than one hundred years have passed, since the discovery of Tangut documents in Khara-Khoto by the expedition of Petr Kuz'mich Kozlov. Most of these documents have been published, and many studies interpreting these texts have been conducted. All of these works are used to reveal the truth of history. However, some important documents have not been fully interpreted, such as the Tangut legal texts “Revised and Newly Approved Code of the Heavenly Prosperity Reign [1149–1168]” (*Tiansheng gaijiu xinding lüling* 天盛改舊新定律令 or *Tiansheng lüling* 天盛律令)¹ and “New Laws of the Pig Year” (*Hainian xinfa* 亥年新法), even though they are very important for historical research. One reason is that Tangut dictionaries focus on meanings of individual Tangut characters, but do not pay great attention to vocabulary. So, numerous words in the legal codes remain unknown. Furthermore, these blind spots obstruct our understanding of the law.

It is known that, apart from Tangut dictionaries, the main key to finding exact meanings of Tangut words are translations of Chinese classics. These

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¹ In Chinese academic literature, the titles of Tangut works are referred to by translated Chinese titles, which we cite here.

translations are more accurate and convincing. In this article Tangut words will be looked up in the Tangut translation of a Chinese *leishu* (類書) titled “Forest of Categories” (*Lei lin* 類林) to confirm their Chinese meanings. This will clarify the meaning and reading of several articles of Tangut law. This study demonstrates that Tangut translations of Chinese classics have great research value.

1. 繼孩

This Tangut word is literally translated as “householder”. Previous studies indicate that “繼孩” means “the head of the family”.² Looking up the word in “Forest of Categories” (hereafter *Lei lin*), we find the following two sentences:³

繡蕪姑甌屛繼孩駸訛戮窳，蕪嗽禱彗發彗猴慨祀。⁴
昔因郡中住戶多火，乃皆禁人夜作。

In the past, fires often occurred between residents, so night work has been forbidden.⁵

彗蕪甥鬮繡玳翁彗彗，戮窳蕪繡，慨嗽禱，發猴慨繡而駸屛繼孩訛訛
駸蕪祀。⁶

应闵为广汉太守时，欲德名而常贫，指挥吏下往住戶觅钱。

When Ying Min was the Grand Guard of Guanghan, he wanted to be virtuous and stayed poor. He commanded junior officials to look for money from the residents.⁷

² PAN 2016.

³ The Tangut text of “Forest of Categories” is quoted in this article from three editions (all based on the facsimile of the same copy): KEPPING 1983; SHI JINBO et al. 1993 and *ECHW* 11. The sequence number of the stories in this Tangut text are given by the numbering in the Russian translation by K.B. Kepping. See KEPPING 1983. The Tangut text of “Revised and Newly Approved Code of the Heavenly Prosperity Reign” is quoted from the facsimile edition: *ECHW* 8. The article numbers in this text are given by the numbering in the Russian translation by E.I. Kychanov. See KYCHANOV 1987–1989. The Tangut text of “New Laws of the Pig Year” is quoted from the facsimile editions: *ECHW* 9 and KYCHANOV 2013. It should be noted that these editions reproduce different copies of the text kept at the IOM, RAS.

⁴ *Lei lin*, Chapter 4, no. 83; *ECHW* 11: 250 (f. 18b); KEPPING 1983: 258; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 88.

⁵ Cf. KEPPING 1983: 51; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 88.

⁶ *Lei lin*, Chapter 4, no. 90; *ECHW* 11: 251 (f. 21b); KEPPING 1983: 264; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 91.

⁷ Cf. KEPPING 1983: 52; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 91.

It is obvious that “繼發” means “residents”, generally referring to people living in a certain area. Thus, the following legal provision from “Revised and Newly Approved Code of the Heavenly Prosperity Reign” (hereafter *Tiansheng lüling*) can be translated as:

居民中有持拿盜竊者時，附近居民當立即協助救護。若協助救護不及，不往報告時，城內城外一律所屬大人、承旨、行巡、檢視等徒一年，迂溜、檢校、邊管、盈能、溜首領、行監知覺，有位人等徒六個月，此外居民徒三個月。又已與盜相遇，趕及不往報告時，有官罰馬一，庶人十三杖。⁹

一居民中有持拿盜竊者時，附近居民當立即協助救護。若協助救護不及，不往報告時，城內城外一律所屬大人、承旨、行巡、檢視等徒一年，迂溜、檢校、邊管、盈能、溜首領、行監知覺，有位人等徒六個月，此外居民徒三個月。又已與盜相遇，趕及不往報告時，有官罰馬一，庶人十三杖。

When a resident captures a thief, the neighborhood residents should give immediate help. If this assistance is not timely, or they do not report, officials including the *daren* (大人; Tribal Overseer), *chengzhi* (承旨; Recipient of Edicts), *xingxun* (行巡), *jianshi* (檢視) who come from inside and outside the city will be sentenced to one year’s imprisonment, and other officials, such as the *qianliu* (迂溜), *jianjiao* (檢校), *bianguan* (邊管), *yingneng* (盈能), *liushouling* (溜首領), *xingjian* (行監), if they know about [it] and have an official position, [they] will be sentenced to imprisonment for six months, and residents will be sentenced to imprisonment for three months. Moreover, when any people encounter a thief, have time to report but do not, in this case, officials will be punished with a fine of a horse and non-official people will be flogged 13 times.¹⁰

2. 變心

This Tangut compound is literally translated as “changing one’s mind” (心归). Some articles explain this word as “surrender” (投降).¹¹ Looking up this word in *Lei lin*, we find the following sentences:

⁸ □ is the symbol for a missing character.

⁹ *Tiansheng lüling*, Chapter 3, Article 147; *ECHW* 8: 91.

¹⁰ Cf. KYCHANOV 1987, vol. 2: 93; SHI JINBO et al. 2000: 179–180.

¹¹ SHI JINBO et al. 2000: 116.

隨而受席循鮮燧駸駸。¹²

费仲紂之幸臣也。

Fei Zhong, the favored minister of King Zhou.¹³

The archaism 幸 means “favorite”. The meaning can be expanded as “desertion to the enemy”, in Chinese 投诚. It is an intentional behavior which is different from surrender. So, the following legal provision from *Tiansheng lüling* can be translated as:

叛虜駢形讒亂訖，歸罪讒賊，駸形讒賊駸駸，維駸駸隨鮮燧駸駸，
綸綸茲梯夥駸駸，緝讒駸駸駸，駸駸駸，讒駸駸梯夥讒駸駸駸，讒駸駸駸
駸駸駸駸駸駸。¹⁴

一诸人往来敌界，提供密事，及为敌人侦查、隐藏等者，其人计划投诚他国，则与叛逃同样承罪，家门连坐，畜物没收，当依叛逃已行法办。所捕获侦查者，皆以剑斩之。

People who have contacts with the enemy territory, provide secret information, as well as provide shelter for enemy spies and so on, when they plan to desert to another state, they will be punished in the same way as for defection. Furthermore, their family members will be treated as guilty associates and their livestock will be confiscated according to the law for committing defection. All those who are caught spying are executed with swords.¹⁵

3. 彝緘

The first character 彝 in this compound means “market”, the second 緘 means “long” or “all around”. The whole compound 彝緘 is literally translated as “all around the market” (遍市). Looking up the word in *Lei lin*, we find the following sentences:

頌彘恢緘彘精効，緘訖駸駸駸駸。緘駸駸駸駸駸駸駸駸駸。彝緘駸駸。¹⁶
阮宣又名宣子，陈留地方人也。出时常杖头挂百钱，行至市井。

¹² *Lei lin*, Chapter 3, no. 21; *ECHW* 11: 229 (f. 15a); KEPPING 1983: 177; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 48.

¹³ Cf. SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 48.

¹⁴ *Tiansheng lüling*, Chapter 1, Article 12; *ECHW* 8: 52.

¹⁵ Cf. KYCHANOV 1987, vol. 2: 19–20; SHI JINBO et al. 2000: 116–117.

¹⁶ *Lei lin*, Chapter 7, no. 270; *ECHW* 11: 300 (f. 32b); KEPPING 1983: 452; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 185

Ruan Xuan, also known as Xuanzi, is from Chenliu County. When going out, he often hangs 100 coins on the top of his cane and walks to the market.¹⁷

From the above example, we know that 彘 means “marketplace”, where goods are traded. So, the following legal provision from “New Laws of the Pig Year” (hereafter *Hainian xinfā*) can be translated as:

撈販朮解核彘，彘形啜慨猓，撈核馭鞣黠總髮。彘徹撈蔽行蔽撈，
懶撈發騰報校，彘發發羊猓。¹⁸

一品边中卖市场，畜敌人不同，买卖利寻中屡捕。金多买已昌已重，疑心不觉等有，故判捕当问。

In the border and interior marketplaces, different enemies trade seeking profit and often gain it. Excessive buying of gold is widespread and frequent. If there is suspicion, officials should arrest and interrogate everyone concerned even without evidence.¹⁹

4. 霽散

The characters 霽 and 散 that always appear together are translated as “wide”. In *Lei lin*, however, the word means “generous, loose”, as in the following sentence:

散霽風形霽散霽霽修霽惜散。²⁰

太子性宽厚，柔而不刚。

The prince is generous, soft and weak.²¹

So, the following legal provisions from *Tiansheng lüling* and *Hainian xinfā* can be translated as:

彘散霽循校版霽霽，散散總猓，散散霽霽彘散後報散散校能彘彘
彘報。²²

¹⁷ Cf. SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 185.

¹⁸ *Hainian xinfā*, Chapter 7; *ECHW* 9: 250 (f. 23b); KYCHANOV 2013: 377.

¹⁹ cf. KYCHANOV 2013: 131, Chapter 7b, Article 2, § 27.

²⁰ *Lei lin*, Chapter 6, no. 212; *ECHW* 11: 283 (f. 35b); KEPPING 1983: 386; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 152.

²¹ Cf. SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 152.

²² *Tiansheng lüling*, Chapter 9, Article 577; *ECHW* 8: 194.

若去狱囚之手枷，使其松绑，狱囚自搜寻刀、铁棍、他器等得手而上吊、断喉。

If shackles on a prisoner's hands are removed allowing him to move freely, the prisoner will get hold of a knife, an iron rod, and other implements to commit suicide by hanging himself or cutting his throat.²³

甞罷研破嫩莪，甞甞發甞甞甞甞甞甞，甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞，甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞，甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞，甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞，甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞，甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞，甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞。

违诈盗罪之人，捕获私畜期限宽松，恃仗盗律罪轻，与局分人知晓，亲自获得畜物，买卖遣分，不论肥瘦辘骑，以低价卖。

As for those who committed a fraud, captured private livestock, [officials] can generously extend the arrest deadline a few days. However, because of less serious offenders, the person who committed the crime communicated with officials privately to capture livestock illegally and then sell them at a low price [...].²⁵

5. 爰爰

This word is literally translated as “always, certainly”. In *Lei lin*, a related sentence can be found:

甞奸甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞，爰爰甞甞甞甞甞甞。²⁶

今比干屡屡进谏，心必有孔。

Now that Bigan has admonished you many times, there must be holes in his heart.²⁷

Here the words 爰爰 means “must”. Used in law articles, this word embodies mandatory nature, authority and seriousness of the law. For example:

甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞，甞甞甞甞、甞甞甞甞、甞甞甞甞，甞甞甞甞甞甞甞甞，爰爰甞甞甞甞。

²³ cf. KYCHANOV 1989, vol. 3: 60; SHI JINBO et al. 2000: 328.

²⁴ *Hainian xinfu*, Chapter 3; *ECHW* 9: 148 (f. 17a); KYCHANOV 2013: 310.

²⁵ Cf. KYCHANOV 2013: 52, Chapter 3, Article 15.

²⁶ *Lei lin*, Chapter 3, no. 20; *ECHW* 11: 229 (f. 14b–15a); KEPPING 1983: 176–177; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 47–48.

²⁷ cf. SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 47–48.

²⁸ *Tiansheng lüling*, Chapter 6, Article 362; *ECHW* 8: 146.

一上述所分抄中，军首领、帐门后宿、閤门等分抄时，入下法条，必依此执行。

The allocation of *chao* (抄; a unit of Tangut army) mentioned above to *junshouling* (军首领), *zhangmenhousu* (帐门后宿), *hemen* (閤门) and so on, who are related [to the allocation of *chao*], must follow the law given below.²⁹

𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿，𠵿𠵿、𠵿𠵿、𠵿𠵿、𠵿𠵿、𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿，𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿，
𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿。³⁰

一守大城者，军士、正军、辅主、寨妇等众人必须聚集而住，城司各自间或校验。

The defenders of the great city such as soldiers, *zhengjun* (正军; regular army), *fuzhu* (辅主; auxiliary troops) and *zhai fu* (寨妇; women soldiers) must line up and be stationed. *Chengsi* (城司; city administration) has to inspect them once in a while.³¹

6. 徯纘

The first character 徯 in this compound means “a long time” or “a large number”, the second 纘 means “large quantity”. Previous studies only pointed out that the whole compound 徯纘 means “amounts of”. From the sentences in *Lei lin*, we find that this word means “rich”, usually referring to riches and wealth. For example:

徯徯徯徯徯徯徯徯徯徯，𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿。𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿。³²

蒙君厚恩，无所报恩。

Thank you for your great kindness, and I have no way to repay for it.³³

徯徯徯徯徯徯徯徯徯徯。𠵿𠵿𠵿𠵿。³⁴

如此与王愷比富。

In this way to compare who is richer than Wang Kai.³⁵

²⁹ Cf. KYCHANOV 1987, vol. 2: 192; SHI JINBO et al. 2000: 259.

³⁰ *Tiansheng lüling*, Chapter 4, Article 205; *ECHW* 8: 103.

³¹ Cf. KYCHANOV 1987, vol. 2: 116; SHI JINBO et al. 2000: 197.

³² *Lei lin*, Chapter 7, no. 254; *ECHW* 11: 296 (f. 24b); KEPPING 1983: 436; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 177.

³³ Cf. SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 177.

³⁴ *Lei lin*, Chapter 8, no. 276; *ECHW* 11: 303 (f. 4a); KEPPING 1983: 460; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 189.

³⁵ Cf. SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 189.

8. 後戮能 and 後殺能

The expression 後戮能 appears in law documents frequently. It is literally translated as “to start, begin with”. In *Lei lin*, the following related sentence can be found:

後戮能，後殺能，後戮能，後殺能，後戮能，後殺能。⁴⁴

〈尹虞〉讨伐杜孜，战败。二女为孜所获，将欲妻之。

[Yin Yu] was defeated in the war by Du Zi. The two daughters who were captured by Du Zi were forced to marry him.⁴⁵

In this case we know that 後戮能 means “capture” and, by extension, an action that has been carried out. In Chinese it means 获. So, the following legal provisions from *Tiansheng lüling* and *Hainian xinfu* can be translated as:

後戮能，後殺能，後戮能，後殺能，後戮能，後殺能，後戮能，後殺能。⁴⁶

一牢狱中狱因为他人强行救拔出监者，获囚则有逆罪，劫囚者造意不论官，斩，从犯庶人当绞杀。

If the prisoner was rescued from jail by others, and was secured successfully, the conspirators commit a crime of rebellion. The person who instigated the rescue scheme, no matter if he is an official or not, will be condemned to death. Accomplices who are commoners will be strangled.⁴⁷

後戮能，後殺能，後戮能，後殺能，後戮能，後殺能，後戮能，後殺能。⁴⁸

群盗一种，与强盗不同，畜物大小如何获得，一律造意。无论主、从，杀断门户为重罪，情节严重，依据轻重考量。

[In case of] a theft committed by a gang, unlike [a theft by] a robber, no matter what they have captured, all of them will be considered instigators [who have committed an intentional crime]. If a family was murdered, the criminals will be severely punished, because the case is serious.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ *Lei lin*, Chapter 6, no. 207; *ECHW* 11: 282 (f. 33b); KEPPING 1983: 382; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 150.

⁴⁵ Cf. KEPPING 1983: 65; SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 150.

⁴⁶ *Tiansheng lüling*, Chapter 9, Article 578; *ECHW* 8: 194.

⁴⁷ Cf. KYCHANOV 1989, vol. 3: 60–61; SHI JINBO et al. 2000: 328.

⁴⁸ *Hainian xinfu*, Chapter 3; *ECHW* 9: 142 (f. 5a–5b); KYCHANOV 2013: 294–295.

⁴⁹ Cf. KYCHANOV 2013: 45, Chapter 3, Article 2.

The negative form of 未獲救 is 未獲救. It means “not get”, or an action that has not been finished. A related sentence in *Lei lin* can be translated as:

後獲救未獲救，未獲救。⁵⁰

<许褚>后为将军，与贼相遇，未交战。

Later, [Xu Chu] became a general. He did not wage war with the enemy, when he met with them.⁵¹

So, the following legal provision from *Tiansheng lüling* can be translated as:

後獲救未獲救，未獲救，未獲救，未獲救，未獲救，未獲救，未獲救，未獲救，未獲救，未獲救。⁵²

若囚未获救而伤人时，依强盗执器械物未获而伤人法判断。若未获囚亦未伤人，则比囚之量罪减一等。

If the prisoner was not rescued, but other people were injured, he will be convicted of armed robbery when nothing was taken, but people were injured. However, if the prisoner was not rescued and no one was injured, he will be punished one degree more leniently than the prisoner.⁵³

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⁵¹ Cf. SHI JINBO et al. 1993: 223.

⁵² *Tiansheng lüling*, Chapter 9, Article 578; *ECHW 8*: 194.

⁵³ Cf. KYCHANOV 1989, vol. 3: 60–61; SHI JINBO et al. 2000: 328.

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