The 'Phags-pa Mongolian Inscription of Toyon-temür qarqan's Edict

By Masa’aki Sugiyama

The solitary hill of I-shan 鄂山 rises out of the plain some fifteen km. south of T'ou-hsien 蘇縣 in Shantung 山東. It has been famous from ancient times for its inscription of an edict from the First Emperor 秦始皇 (a version of which said to be from the Sung can be found in Si-an 西安). In the Yuan period, the Taoist temple of Hsien-jên wan-shou-kung 仙人萬壽宮 was located here and its remains are still visible today. On the top of the hill, there stands the Sino-Mongolian stele of Toyon-temür qarqan's edict issued in 1335⁹. However, the surface of the stele is so defaced that it cannot be deciphered directly. Fortunately, the Research Institute of Humanistic Studies, Kyoto University, possesses a rubbing of the front side of this bilingual stele (see plate). On the upper part of the stele the 'Phags-pa Mongolian edict is inscribed, and on the lower part a Chinese version of the Mongolian in the so-called literal translative style is to be found. The Chinese text is already known from Ts'ai Mei-piao’s 竇美彪 catalogue, Yuan-tai p'ai-hua-pei chi-lu 元代白話詩集錄 (no. 83, p. 87), but the Mongolian text is unknown. As one can see at a glance, the rubbing is not very clear and lacks the lower one third of the Chinese version. The most interesting point about this bilingual stele is that the 'Phags-pa Mongolian text itself includes several incredible mistakes, suggesting that the writer was not completely versed in the 'Phags-pa script. Moreover, the Chinese version makes many mistranslations, which are in some places very simple and careless. If one compares all thirteen of the Sino-Mongolian bilingual edicts that have been published (from inscriptions)⁹, one finds that the Chinese translations do indeed deteriorate with time. From this fact, we may surmise that the translators came to be quite careless and that this tendency reached its peak in this bilingual edict. In making the transliteration and transcription, I mainly follow L. Ligeti’s system⁹.

Transliteration

1 môn-k’a dên-ri-yin k’u-č’un-dur
2 yekâ su ja-li-yin ‘i-h‘än-dur
3 qa’an jar-liq ma-nu
4 ëä-ri’-u-dun no-yad-da ëä-rig ha-ra-na bala-
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Transcription

1. mönkä dén rîn kučùn-dür
2. yege su jali-rîn 'leč'en-dür
3. qa'an jarliq manu
4. čeri'üd-dün noyad-da čerig haran-a bala-
5. -qad-un daruča-sa noyad-da yörči-
6. -qun yabuqun elčin-e du'ulpaqüi
7. jarliq
8. jingis qan-u
9. Öködej (qa'an-u)
10. (Sečen qa'an-u)
11. Öljeitü (qa'an-u)
12. Külüg qa'an-u
13. Buyantu (qa'an-u)
14. (Gege)en qa'an-u
15. Qu(tuq)tu qa-an-u
16. Jayaatu qa'an-u
17. Rinčen-dpal qa'an-u ba jarl'i'ud-dur doyid érke'üd sen-siñ-ud aliya alba qubchirü ulü üjen
18. dénri(-yl) jałbarju hirü'er ögün atuqai ke'egdegse aju üjü edü'e ber bööstü uridan-u
19. (jarliq)-un yosur'al aliya alba qubchirü ulü üjen
20. dénri(-yl) jałbarju
22. tin-tin yuq-tu-tu qayi k'äd bår bolju k'u
23. tin(tuq)tu qa'an-u
24. jarliq "(āo)g-(bäe) e'da-nu gäun'-göndur gäyid-dur "a-nu elči'n bu ba'ut'u-qayi 'u-la'a s'i'-sun'b bu ba'ut'u-qayi e'da-nu gäun-göndur e'lá qa-ri-ya-tan jhán-ten
25. qa-(jar) 'u-sun baq t'agir-mäd gäy-dem-k'u dem kä-bid qa-la'ün 'u-sun sër-gä k'ao-nör-gä-däčä "al-ba "al-ban' qubči-rü bu ab'tu-qayi k'äd k'äd bår bolju k'u
26. e'lu bu k'ur-gä-t'ugüe ya'ü k'ä-jí 'ä-nu buliju tu'a-ta'ju bu ab'tu-qayi e'da ba-sa sän-siñ-üd
27. jarliq-t'an (k'a)ju yo-su 'äz'än-qun 'äue-län bu 'äue län-t'ugüe 'äue-län-dü'ä-sü 'äu-lu'-u 'ayu-qun mud
28. jarliq ma-nu' (yä)n-tuñ qutu'ar hön qa-qayi jil (na)-nu-run t'ä
29. ri'ün za-ra-yin (ha)-ban
30. döör-bën-sän-du-da bu
31. k'ue-(dur) biči-bäe
29  ri’un zara-yin (h)jan
30  dörben-e Šan-du-da
31  bygüi-(dür) bičibej

Translation

1 With the Might of Everlasting Heaven
2 With the Protection of the Great Fortune Flame
3 Imperial Edict of Us, the Emperor.
4 An Imperial Edict, addressed to military commanders, military personnel,
5 daruvas and noyans of castle-cities, and to messengers
6 going to and fro.
7 In the Imperial Edicts of
8 Činggis-qan
9 Ögödei-qan
10 Selén-qan
11 Öjetü-qan
12 Külüg-qan
13 Buyantuq-qan
14 Gegegen-qan
15 Quturq-qan
16 Juyurutu-qan
17 Irinenbal-qan, it was stated that Buddhist, Nestorian and Taoist clergy,
not observing any tribute or taxes, were to pray to
18 Heaven and to pronounce benedictions. Even now, stating that in
accordance with previous
19 Imperial Edicts, not observing any tribute or taxes, they are to pray to
20 Heaven and to pronounce benedictions for
21 Us (=Činggis-qan’s descendants or the Mongol royal family), we have bestowed
22 an Imperial Edict to be retained and taken away by Li Tao-shih,
Great Teacher, pure and calm penetrator of emptiness and
knower of the mystery, assigned as Chief Director under the
main [temple] and the exalted pure man of the rank of Great
Virtue and spiritual [mystery?]

Notes

1) This stele is recorded in the Chüan-kü-lu 經典錄 by Wu Shih-fen 蘇世芬, chüan 19, p. 32b.
2) See Masa’aki SUGIYAMA, “Babuša-daiš no ryū-ji-hi you” (From the Inscription of Prince Babula’s Edict), Tōyōki Kenkyū (The Journal of Oriental Studies), (in print).
3) Except for two cases, we have no data about the question of who translated the
Inscription of Buyantuq-qan’s Edict in Yunnan xian 元氏縣, belonging to Čičen-balagqun, Zhuban: Memoirs of the Research Institute for Humanistic Studies, Kyoto
University, no. 22, 1987, pp. 17-18 and p. 21, n. 7.
4) L. Ligeti, Monument en Ecriture ’Phags-pa. Pièces de Chancellerie en Transcription
chinoise, Budapest, 1972.
5) The ’Phags-pa script mistakenly has n where ŋ should appear. Representing the Chinese
word kung 红?
6) Usually in ’Phags-pa Mongolian edicts s—u—s—u without n.
7) Likewise, usually “al-be<albe without n.
9) Ts'ai Mei-piao writes jen 聘, although it is clear from ’Phags-pa chih that 聘 is meant. Moreover, this same person (Li Tao-shih) appears in another inscription possessed by the Jihun-kun, the Hsien-jen wan-shou-kung ch‘ung-chien-chi 仙人萬壽宮重建 (1922; this inscription is recorded in the Shun-chou chin-shih-chih 山左金石志, chüan 23, 21b).
In this case, his title is indeed given as Tung-ch‘ung ch‘u- ch‘ing 洞銘銘, thus confirming the ’Phags-pa version. See also Mêng-ku t‘ai-yin 蒙衣字譜, which gives 聘 as a character represented in ’Phags-pa script as chih.
10) Ts’ai’s text omits the character corresponding to yun in the ’Phags-pa script.
11) Ts’ai prints blanks for these two characters, but they can be determined from the
’Phags-pa script to be kui-te 红食. In addition, this person, Wu Chih-ch‘u-tan, appears in another inscription, Ch‘ung-hsü ch‘ung-ch‘en-hsüan-chi 章輝生觀志 (1934), in the
Jihun-kun collection, where his title is given in exactly this same form with the
characters kui-te.
12) Ts’ai leaves out the two words Tu-hi [Chinese 藤巖] that appear in the ’Phags-pa script.
13) These four words are rendered in the 'Phags-pa script as a transliteration of the Chinese characters chū-ch'ung t'i-ten 偶光提點. This surprising fact suggests that the entire passage starting from subtotal [note 14] was adapted from a previous Chinese-language document.

14) Except for this inscription and the Sino-Mongolian inscription of the Ch'ung-yang wan-shou-kung 重陽萬壽宮 dating in 1351 (Ts'ei, no. 89, p. 95; Ligeti, no. 12, pp. 77-82), in all of the other eleven inscriptions this sentence appears with the 'Phags-pa Mongolian word agun rendered into Chinese as yu-te 有的. The above-mentioned two inscriptions give the word subtotal 住持 instead.