

## Review

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

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

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

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in the apparatus as basis of readings and interpretations which is a new way in dealing with an *editio princeps* of unpublished data.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

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

NDTD consists of three principal parts as follows:

### Part I: Introductory

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

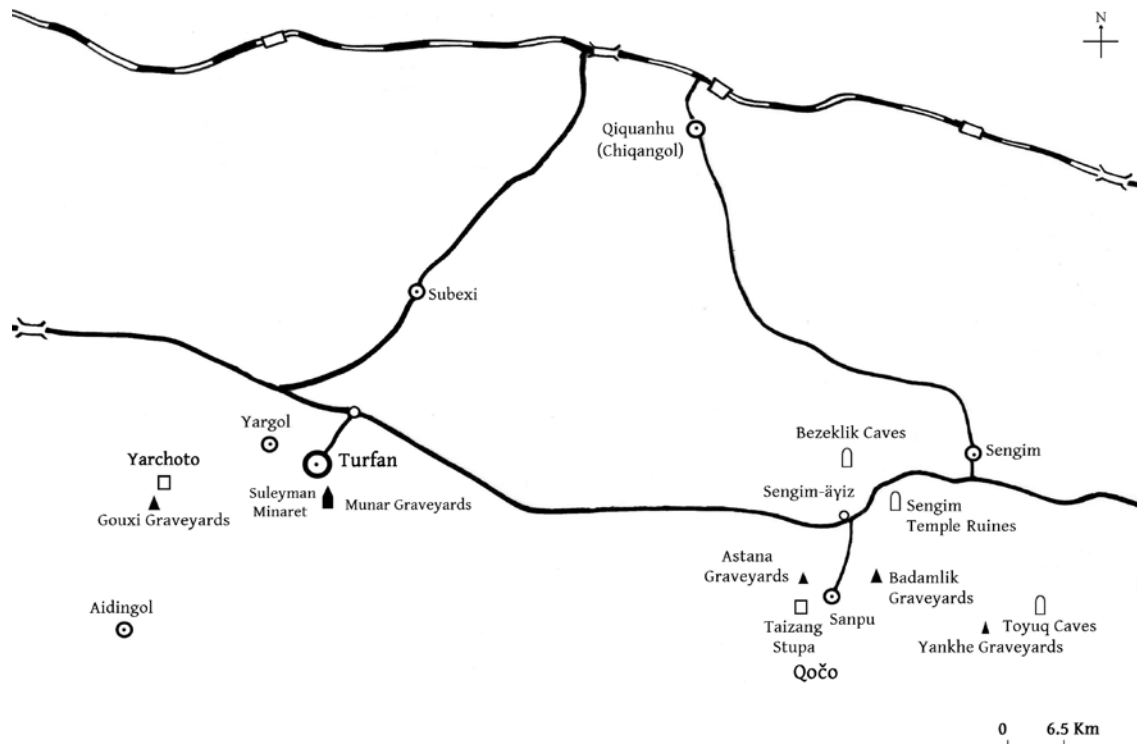


Fig. 1: Map of Excavation Sites of the Newly Discovered Turfan Documents (Courtesy of The Academia Turfanica)

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

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

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

1. Official documents: documents relating to general administration, registers, inventories, communication dispatches, monastery economic documents, contracts, documents for the liberation of slaves, military documents etc.
2. Documents relating to juridical matters, such as complaints, vindications, guarantees etc.
3. Private documents: testaments, letters (among them one complete specimen), private contracts etc.
4. Literary works: copies of canonical texts and their commentaries, such as the *Book of Songs* (*Shijing*) (pp. 187–191), the *Analects* (*Lunyu*) (pp. 165, 181–183), and the *Book of Filial Piety* (*Xiaojing*) (p. 167). There are also copies of elementary readers for school children and the less learned, e.g. the *Jijiu pian* (p. 73) and the *Thousand Characters Text* (*Qianziwen*) (p. 67), and some fragments of poetic works.
5. Materials related to religion: The only place yielding Buddhist texts was Yarkhoto. As the editors state, most of these written in regular ductus (*kaishu*) were copied during the Tang. In addition, the register of monks of Si'en monastery from 662<sup>3</sup> (*Tang Longshuo ernian zhengyue Gaochang xian Si'en si sengji* 唐龍朔二年正月高昌縣思恩寺僧籍) deserves special attention. With respect to popular belief, numerous specimen of the genre usually called *Suizang yiwu shu* 隨葬衣物疏 ('list of burial garments and utensils') are included. These texts supposedly served as a passport for the deceased to enter the underworld. In one of them the expression *yiwen* 移文

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

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

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

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



Fig. 2: Fragment 2006TJ1:115

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

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

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

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

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

*Reviewed by Wang Ding | Hamburg*

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