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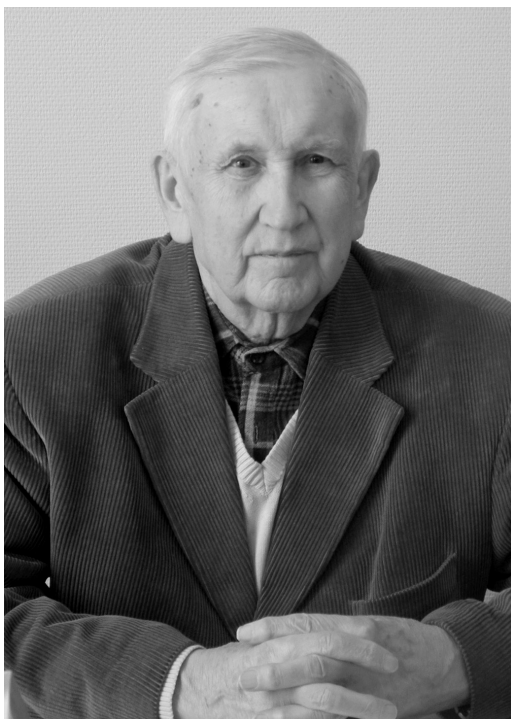
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ON THE COVER:

A page from the newly discovered Tangut xylograph *Essential Selection of Mixed Homonyms Often-Transmitted*. Private collection.

To the Blessed Memory of Professor Kychanov



Professor Evgeny I. Kychanov
at his desk at the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the RAS,
October 22, 2012. (Photograph by V.P. Zaytsev).

On June 22, 2022, Tangutology specialists worldwide celebrated the 90th anniversary of the outstanding researcher Yevgeny Ivanovich Kychanov (1932–2013).

Prof. Kychanov was an exceptional person with a rare talent for research work. Having linked his scholarly destiny to Tangutology, he wrote one of the most brilliant chapters in the history of this extremely difficult discipline of the Oriental studies. In doing so, Yevgeny Ivanovich also carried out superb work on many topical issues in the history of statehood, law, ethnogenesis and written legacy of the peoples of China and Central Asia.

Prof. Kychanov was born to a well-educated family in the small town of Sarapul on the Kama river in Udmurtia. His parents came from families of lower middle-class craftsmen and sturdy peasants, and they were not involved in any academic work. In 1950, Yevgeny Ivanovich set off for Leningrad with the intention of studying either history or philology at the Leningrad State University. However, he eventually decided to devote himself to the study of Chinese history.

In 1955, he moved on to post-graduate studies at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences. During that time Zoya Ivanovna Gorbachëva (1907–1979), Kychanov's post-graduate research supervisor, worked with materials of the Institute's Tangut collection. She was cataloguing the Tangut collection and Nikolai Nevsky's archive kept at the Institute of Oriental Studies. Gorbachëva's invaluable contribution to Tangut studies was to prepare for publication Nikolai Nevsky's dictionary and works in two volumes of *Tangutskaiia filologiia* [Tangut Philology] (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura Publishers, 1960). In 1962, nominated by Academician Nikolai Konrad (1891–1970), this work was awarded the prestigious Lenin Prize.

By autumn of 1958, Kychanov had drafted the text of his Candidate's (PhD) dissertation, *The Hsi Hsia State (982–1227)* and defended it brilliantly on June 30, 1960 at the Faculty of Oriental Studies of the Leningrad State University. This dissertation was the first work by a scholar anywhere in the world specifically devoted to the history of the Tangut state. The dissertation was ground-breaking because all earlier works in Tangutology had focused on the study of the language and its writing system.

On December 1, 1958, Kychanov joined the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies as a junior researcher. Kychanov's work in the Institute included completing the full inventory of the materials from Khara-Khoto that had been begun by Aleksei Ivanov and Nikolai Nevsky. The result of the initial stock-taking of the collection was the publication of a brief annotated catalogue compiled jointly with Zoya Gorbachëva: *Tangutskie rukopisi i ksilografiya* [Tangut Manuscripts and Woodcuts] (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura Publishers, 1963). This catalogue summed up the results of 50 years of work with the collection, with Kychanov contributing descriptions of 4,242 items — more than half of all the catalogued works.

In 1962, together with Mikhail Sofronov, Yevgeny Ivanovich engaged in deciphering Tangut phonetic tables. The results of their work were published jointly in *Issledovanie po fonetike tangutskogo iazyka (predvaritel'nye rezul'taty)* [Research on the Phonetics of the Tangut Language (preliminary

results)] (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura Publishers, 1963). The monograph outlined methods that made it possible to determine how to read characters contained in phonetic dictionaries of the Tangut language. The work identified the main resources, both external (Tibetan and Chinese) and internal (phonetic tables and glossaries), for a reconstruction of the phonetics of the Tangut language. In 1963, Yevgeny Ivanovich prepared one more work: *Zvuchat lish' pis'mena* [Only the Writings Can Be Heard] (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), this time intended for a wider readership. This fairly short monograph, which took the form of a series of essays on the history of Tangut studies, revealed his wonderful storytelling talent.

It is worth noting that Kychanov's organizational abilities were also immediately noticed by the Institute's administration: for two years after joining the staff he performed duties of the academic secretary of the Far Eastern Cabinet of the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies. In January 1963, Kychanov became the head of the newly organized Tangut group. The tasks were distributed between its members as follows: Vsevolod Kolokolov — Chinese classic literature translated into Tangut; Ksenia Keping — non-canonical translated works and also the study of Tangut grammar; Anatoly Terentyev-Katansky was to study Tangut book culture; while Kychanov embarked on the study of original Tangut writings, including the translation of the 12th c. anthology of proverbs — *Freshly Collected Precious Parallel Sayings*. His study of this literary monument with a facsimile was published in 1974.

From March to July 1964, Kychanov attended the Higher Preparatory School for Foreign Students in Beijing as one of the last people sent on exchange from the Soviet Union to China just before the cooling of relations between the two states that would persist for many years. In China Kychanov repeatedly expressed his desire to meet with the outstanding researcher Wang Jingru, who had worked in the field of Tangutology in the 1930s, but at that time Kychanov's efforts were fruitless. Yevgeny Ivanovich met with Wang Jingru only in 1989.

From May 1965, Yevgeny Ivanovich worked at the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies as a senior researcher and in June of the same year, Yu.A. Petrosyan, the head of the Leningrad Branch, invited him to become his deputy responsible for research work. Kychanov remained in this position until January 1, 1997.

In 1966, together with Vsevolod Kolokolov, Professor Kychanov published facsimiles of Tangut translations of the Chinese classics, *The Analects*

of *Confucius*, *The Sayings of Mencius* and *The Classic of Filial Piety*, from the collection of the Institute of Oriental Studies. An important element of this project was a Tangut-Chinese glossary of 1,350 characters found in the published texts. Many of these characters had not been included in Nevsky's dictionary and were identified for the first time. Besides, the work was supplied with a Chinese-Tangut word list, a table of cursive elements in Tangut characters and also the text of chapter 4 of *The Classic of Filial Piety* with standard Tangut and Chinese characters presented in parallel. Making these unique texts known to scholars had great significance for the study of the ideology of China and Hsi Hsia and was an important contribution to the deciphering of the Tangut script.

The year 1968 saw the publication of one of Yevgeny Ivanovich Kychanov's chief works: *Ocherk istorii tangutskogo gosudarstva* [An Outline History of the Tangut State] (Moscow: Nauka, Glavnaia redaktsiia vostochnoi literatury), which in 1970 he submitted as his thesis for the doctoral degree in history. This was the first scholarly work in the world to present the history of the Tangut people from the moment of their origin to their tragic demise in 1227. The work clarified in detail the issues of ethnogenesis, the formation and consolidation of the state of Western Xia, its political, economic and military history, and also the peculiarities of the distinctive culture, religion and writing system of the Tanguts.

In 1969, Yevgeny Ivanovich began to study Tangut legal works and made it his goal to translate the *Izmenennyi i zanovo utverzhdenyi kodeks deviza tsarstvovaniia Nebesnoe protsvetanie (1149–1168)* [Revised and Newly Endorsed Code of Laws of the 'Celestial Prosperity' Reign (1149–1168)] (chapters 1–7). Work on this unique and voluminous (20 chapters, 1,460 articles) relic of East Asian jurisprudence lasted almost 20 years and resulted in the fundamental 4-volume publication in 1987–1989 in the series *Pamiatniki pis'mennosti Vostoka* (Written Monuments of the Orient). This study immediately attracted attention of specialists. It was published partially in China in 1987 and in 1997 it was awarded the Oldenburg Prize of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

In addition to identifying and studying many other works of Tangut legislation in the course of preparing this publication, Kychanov also came close to settling a number of major issues concerning the system of government and legal regulation among the nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples of Asia. Research on the Tangut law code led Kychanov to the study of mediaeval Chinese law. The result of Kychanov's research on the legislation of the Tang and

Song dynasties was the monograph *Osnovy srednevekovogo kitaiskogo prava (VII–XIII vv.)* [The Foundations of Mediaeval Chinese Law (7th–13th cc.)] (Moscow: Nauka, 1986), which for the first time expounded systematically and comprehensively the main provisions of traditional law in China.

While investigating the history of the ethnogenesis of the Tangut and their fate after the Mongol conquest, Kychanov developed an interest in the ethnic and political history of the neighbouring Khitan, Jurchen, Oirat and Mongol peoples. The most striking result of his research in this direction in the 1970s and 1980s was a series of books aimed at a general readership that presented historical portraits of rulers of the nomadic world: *Zhizn' Temuchzhina, dumavshego pokorit' mir* [The Life of Temüjin Who Thought to Conquer the World] (Moscow: Nauka, 1973), *Povestvovanie ob oiratskom Galdane Boshoktu-khane* [The Tale of the Oirat Galdan Boshugtu Khan] (Novosibirsk: Nauka, 1980), *Abakhai* [Abahai] (Novosibirsk: Nauka, 1986) and others.

Until the early 1980s, China remained closed for Soviet researchers. Yevgeny Ivanovich managed to acquaint himself with current works in Chinese on the history of law and Tangutology in 1978, during a study visit to the Nordic Institute for Asian Studies in Copenhagen. However, direct personal contacts with Chinese Tangutologists were established almost a decade later, when in the winter of 1987 the leading figures in this field in the People's Republic of China, Professors Li Fanwen and Shi Jinbo, arrived in Leningrad. They were acquainted with some of Kychanov's works, parts of which had even been translated into Chinese. Then, in 1989, Yevgeny Ivanovich visited China for the first time after a long interval.

It was at that time that the PRC's Academy of Social Sciences approached the administration of the USSR Academy of Sciences with a proposal to publish a full set of facsimiles of the manuscript materials from Dunhuang and Khara-Khoto kept at the Leningrad Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies. This suggestion met with approval and gave rise to many years of collaboration. As part of this publishing project, between 1993 and 2000 a group of researchers and photographers led by Professor Shi came several times to Saint Petersburg (the historic name was restored in 1991). The team included Tangutologists Bai Bin and Nie Hongyin, as well as three representatives of the Shanghai-based *Ancient Book* publishing house, Jiang Weisong, Liu Jingyun and Yan Keqin. Yevgeny Ivanovich Kychanov acted as the editor on the Russian side. The result was the publication of 31 volumes of Tangut writings. The publication of the Khara-Khoto collection immediately gave a powerful impetus to Tangut studies around the world and above all in China.

The 1990s and early 2000s brought the publication of major summary works on which Kychanov had worked for many years. In 1997, the monograph *Kochevye gosudarstva ot gunnov do man'chzhurov* [Nomadic States from the Huns to the Manchus] (Moscow: Vostochnaia Literatura) came out containing an analysis of the processes involved in the formation of statehood among the nomadic peoples of Central Asia.

In 1999, *Katalog tangutskikh buddiiskikh pamiatnikov Instituta vostokovedeniia Rossiiskoi Akademii nauk* [A Catalogue of the Tangut Buddhist Texts in the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, compiled by Ye.I. Kychanov, introduction by T. Nishida, prepared for publication by Sh. Arakawa. Kyoto, 1999] was published by the Kyoto University. The list drawn up by Kychanov and Gorbachëva back in 1963 contained a description of the non-Buddhist part of the Tangut collection, while Buddhist texts in the Tangut language were simply listed. It took Kychanov more than 30 years to sort out and identify the Buddhist writings from Khara-Khoto. "The immense size of the material," he noted in the introduction, "required many years for the present description to be made available to scholars" (Catalogue of the Tangut Buddhist Texts, p. 1). Now the scholarly community was presented with the complete contents of the Tangut collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences, except for administrative and official documents.

In 2006, an outstanding book was published that represented the outcome of 40 years of efforts by Yevgeny Ivanovich Kychanov: the *Tangut-Chinese-Russian-English Dictionary*. (Editor Ye.I. Kychanov, co-editor Sh. Arakawa. Kyoto, 2006). From his early days of working with the Tangut collection in 1959, Yevgeny Ivanovich kept a card-file dictionary that he expanded and supplemented throughout his life, taking account of both his own information, ascertained in the course of deciphering handwritten texts, and information published in the works of colleagues. Thus, this unique Dictionary summed up the achievements of scholars around the world in deciphering the Tangut writing system over the entire history of its evolution. The dictionary was mentioned in the Report of the Russian Academy of Sciences as one of the achievements of 2006.

In 2008, the publishing house of the Faculty of Philology and Arts of the Saint Petersburg State University produced a collection of Kychanov's published research under the title *Istoriia tangutskogo gosudarstva* [A History of the Tangut State], bringing together more than 50 articles on the history, law, military affairs and culture of Hsi Hsia. The publication of works from dif-

ferent years was not only of fundamental scholarly importance, but also showed the evolution of Kychanov's research, the routes to improving translations and interpretations of the sources, and the changes in approaches to the study of the Tangut civilization.

Besides works of general nature, Kychanov continued at this time to publish studies and translations of Tangut writings that were of enduring significance for the analysis of the history and culture of the East Asian region. In 2000, he published a study of the apocryphal text *Zapis' u altaria o primireanii Konfutsiia* [The Note at the Altar on the Reconciliation of Confucius] (Moscow: Vostochnaia literatura, 2000), which is a rare surviving example of a discussion between Taoists and Confucians in or immediately after the period of the "Hundred Schools of Thought." This text, the Chinese original of which is not extant, testifies to the dissemination of Taoist ideas in the state of Hsi Hsia and their influence on a certain part of its population.

It should be noted that Yevgeny Ivanovich wrote all his works while playing a major organizational role in the Institute. In the difficult period from 1997 to 2003 he was the director of the Saint Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies. He was a member of many editorial, scholarly and dissertation boards and committees, and he was awarded honorary professorships by many foreign universities. Yevgeny Ivanovich had dozens of students — post-graduates at the Institute and undergraduates at the Faculty of Oriental Studies of the Saint Petersburg State University. In 1986, he was awarded the academic title of professor.

Until the last, before illness made him too weak, Yevgeny Ivanovich worked tirelessly for the benefit of scholarship and learning. He prepared documents from Khara-Khoto for publication and, together with Kirill Bogdanov, processed the Tangut collection aiming to take account of all the achievements that had been made in identifying and re-assembling Tangut writings.

Formally, Professor Kychanov was not a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences. However, his contribution to Tangutology and Sinology made him absolutely unsurpassed among many generations of academicians.

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