ANOTHER SOURCE FOR INFORMATION ON AYUTTHAYA THAI

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The Hia-Yi yi yü 業者譯譯 , Chinese-Foreign language (bilingual) vocabularies, are a valuable and interesting source of information for our knowledge of the earlier history of many Asian languages, the major period of extant record being the Ming (1368-1643) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties (Féng 1981). These topically arranged word-lists have been well known to sinologists, and to Western ones since the late eighteenth century (Davidson 1975:1, 296), the first of them being published, or 'edited', with translations in 1822 (loc. cit.). Of special relevance to South East Asia are the studies or annotated translations of the yi yü relating to the Bã-Yí (Yunnan Tais) and Bábí (Chiangmai Tais) (Müller 1892); to Malacca Malay (Edwards & Blagden 1931) and to Cham (Edwards and Blagden 1939), both of which are based on a manuscript, the Gêgô yì yü (c.1549), in the archives of the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London; Vietnamese (Gaspardone 1953; Ch'en Ching-ho 1966-68; Davidson 1975), and Thai (Shintani 1974).

When describing a particular language these yi yü are, even so, not identical copies of one another, as can be seen from the detailed survey conducted by Féng Zhēng (1981),1 hence this is definitely 'indicative of discontinuous compilation and of different periods and compilers' (Davidson 1975:1, 299, n.17), a point of considerable importance when one is using one particular text as a source of definitive information in the study of a given language (cf. Shintani 1974). The yi yü have, however, not been used extensively as a means for the analysis of the foreign languages through a phonological study of the Chinese transliterations characters used to represent those foreign languages, or, if it is present as well, an investigation of the foreign languages' script entries and a comparison of these with the Chinese transliterations as an additional tool for interpretation. Phonological analysis has, none the less, been done in a thesis for Thai of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries (Shintani 1974) and also for Vietnamese (Davidson 1975).

Since it is obvious, therefore, that these yi yü for a certain language are not copies of one another, even though some of the entries may be identical, their use is of increased interpretational value because they provide a varied range of data for different periods in the historical development of the foreign languages with which they are concerned. Thus, the Lockhart Chinese and Arabic Dictionary, which I found in the
SOAS Library archives through the interested assistance of our former Chinese Librarian, John Lust, led to my discovery of the unique Chinese–Thai ḫīyū in it, and has excited me to write this introductory paper.2

This text is incomplete, comprising only six topical sections3 (cf. Davidson 1975:I, 299, n.17), but has 505 entries (not all of which are in themselves complete, e.g. L.207). It is untitled, and has had additional entries noted as such in margins made to its basic text; it is written in very clear major entry and Chinese transliteration characters in Míng style kāishū, above which is the Thai equivalent in an eccentric but informative Thai script, for the word the Chinese transliteration is attempting to reproduce. This all suggests that the manuscript is probably of late sixteenth to early seventeenth century (i.e. 1579–1630) date although the fact that it has no title may speculatively imply that it was compiled before 1579, the date when the Xiānluōguān (Siamese translation bureau) was established4 (Míngshí J.324/19blf.; note 19al; Wild 1945:625,637; cf. Siyīguān j.12/14a7–8; cf. op.cit. J.7/13al and 15blf.) and that name was included in the titles of the  yıyū it prepared. Nevertheless, internal evidence proves the Míng Dynasty and Ayutthayā period date of the manuscript (see L.88,89; fig.) while external historical evidence supports this too.

The Thai script certainly differs from the standard form introduced from 1932, its eccentricity leading my Thai specialist colleagues to maintain that it cannot have been written by a native Thai. Noted variations in spelling may perhaps be indicative of changes in tones, and the entries also include a large Indic (Pāli?) element,5 hence script and spelling are definitely worth further study.

The vowels recorded in the transliterations and in the Thai script range very widely, which is suggestive of differing articulations, representing considerable change between the Ayutthayā and the Modern Standard (=Central) Thai (MST =Th. in examples) forms, such changes requiring detailed investigation. Of interest is the fact that the Chinese continue to use transliteration characters of the ʂ/tʂ/ vocalics to describe MST /ʂ/ /ɕ/ (cf. also Davidson 1975:I, 311) even though this is not always the case. There is, none the less, a suggestion that a change from /ʂ/ to a preferred more centralized /ɕ/ was underway, since we find it represented by [a] [a] in many cases of transliteration (e.g. L.95 ৎārāng 'waves', Th. khrān, Ch. kēlēng 可/ [kvloŋ]; also L.128,158,369, etc.), and we also find it more closed and longer (because of the absence of a final consonant) in certain instances (e.g. L.329 nā 隔 'to hold', Th. thnā, Ch. tè 特 [tʰv]; note L.95 above).

Consonantal changes taking place during and from the early Ayutthayā to the present MST period are, however, more
immediately obvious and of very great interest. Shintani Tadamiko (1974) has neatly established the devoicing of sonorant occlusives in common Thai, dating that to the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries; has shown that uvular occlusives also existed; that the passage from /r/ to /h/ was taking place in the sixteenth century (though in an unspecified dialect); and that /b/ and /d/, were preglottalized by this time. Few of these features are, on the other hand, apparent in the Lockhart yi yü. Where consonants are concerned, evidence preserved in the Chinese transliterations and in those words in Thai script that are identifiable is intriguing. The Lockhart yi yü tells us the following (and more) about Ayutthaya period Thai of c. 1579–1630 (or, one hopes, even earlier!)

Finals

Stops: -p, -t, -k

-p: There is confusion over the -p, -t, -k final stops (e.g. L.38) in many instances when they are unvoiced, unaspirated plosives, though this is not a regular occurrence, and it is interesting to note that in several entries, the final -p is actually transliterated by a separate character, bû [布] (GSR 102a; e.g. L.13 被 bao 'hail!', Th. lâuk hêp, Ch. lâixêbû [陆]; see also L.12, 77, etc.), which suggests that on these occasions it was distinctly more audible, perhaps indicating voicing and/or aspiration away from which the language was developing at the time.

-t: In most cases the transliterations record this final accurately (e.g. L.34 日晒 rǐshài 'to dry in the sun', Th. tâk désèt, Ch. dâiè [待]; GSR 291a-t; L.194,331, etc.) but, surprisingly, the entry for the Thai word 'preacher' nák thêêt (L.206, Ch. 'eunuch') finds both transliteration characters ending with -p. (GSR 695h,618q). Could there be a reason for this? such as an attempt at euphony?.

-k: Normally the unaspirated velar final stop is recorded by such transliteration characters (e.g. L.8,17,21,49,etc.) but there is a suggestion that it may have been an aspirated plosive (like -p = bû?) in certain contexts (e.g. L.194 月月 mûnyûê 'intercalary month', Th. aathiknêt, Ch. 阿陽 nûnì thuì [阿陽] 'nûnì thuì ; cf. GSR 277).

Nasals:

-m: This seems to fall into three sets of either recipient awareness or of phonetic change - the latter interpretation being my favourite - two of which suggest a shift from a softly articulated dental nasal final /-n/ or velar nasal final /-ŋ/ in the