5 Manuscript and print

The corpus of Tangut texts discovered among the ruins of Khara-khoto includes the Art of War of Sunzi with Three Commentaries (T. Swë tsa gja jwir sọ bijj 孫子兵法), an annotated version of the renown Chinese military classic Sunzi bingfa 孫子兵法 (hereafter referred to as Sunzi). The length of the surviving part of the book and the fact that it was a translation of such a famous work immediately singled it out as an interesting material worthy of research. An additional feature that made it special is that it was found in two, partly overlapping, versions, one printed and one manuscript copy. As a result, the text has been among the most studied ones in our present Tangut corpus, with numerous articles and two monographs devoted to it. The first monograph was Ksenia Kepping’s Russian annotated translation published in 1979, which also presented facsimiles of the text, for the first time making them available for scholarly research.548 She also wrote an extensive (nearly 170 pages) grammatical overview which took up a significant portion of the book. She aligned the translation of the Tangut version with that of the Chinese received text in order to show their similarities and discrepancies. The second monograph was a two-volume study by the Taiwanese linguist Lin Ying-chin, published in 1994 as part of the Academia Sinica Monograph Series. Volume 1 provided a close reading of the text with copious annotations of its linguistic features.549 Unlike in Kepping’s translation, here each Tangut character was transcribed with a Chinese character, thereby making the author’s reading of that particular character specific and unambiguous, which at that point of studying the language was a useful device. Volume 2 was a character concordance to the text with Chinese translations, essentially functioning as a dictionary of the language of the Tangut Sunzi.

Kepping relied on the printed edition alone, using the manuscript version only for parts that were missing from the printed one. Likewise, the facsimile images she published in her book were only those of the printed version, whereas the manuscript at the time remained unpublished. Part of this one-sided presentation was obviously due to the fact that the printed edition was easier to decipher and thus it offered a more reliable source for reading and translating the text. Yet equally important was the notion that the printed copy was superior to the manuscript which had served as its pre-publication draft, an assumption I will challenge below. It is also clear that most former studies treated the Tangut Sunzi as

an abstract “text,” the physical instantiations of which were regarded as relatively unimportant. On the conceptual level this is yet another reason why the manuscript was treated as of secondary importance in comparison with the more legible printed edition.

Wherever they overlap, the manuscript and the printed version are almost identical in wording, confirming that they are but two versions of the same translation. Comparing the discrepancies between them, modern scholars concluded that the manuscript must have been a draft to what later became the printed edition and therefore it represented an earlier stage in the evolution of the Tangut translation. In this chapter I reconsider the issue of temporal priority of the two versions and advance an argument that it is more likely that the manuscript was copied from the printed edition, even though not necessarily from this particular one. In addition, I intend to draw attention to the complex relationship between manuscript and print following the invention and spread of printing. The materials excavated from Khara-khoto are invaluable in this respect, as they provide first-hand evidence to the extensive use of manuscripts in an age when other options of book production were already available.

5.1 Tangut contribution to the spread of printing

The Tanguts are often evoked in connection with the development of printing technology in East Asia.550 A particularly important aspect in this regard is typography, of which the Tanguts were among the first users. Nevertheless, until the beginning of the 20th century little was known about their book culture, and the very existence of their unique script became known in the West only at the end of the 19th century. The situation changed drastically with the discovery of the ruins of Khara-khoto and Kozlov’s excavation of the library stupa, which provided a vast body of material for the study of Tangut history and culture. A significant portion of what was found in the stupa comprised printed books, although there were also many manuscripts. It is clear that printed and manuscript books circulated concurrently and scribal culture did not disappear with the spread of printing. In comparison, the contents of the Dunhuang library cave, principally from the 9th–10th centuries, contained merely a handful of printed texts against tens of thousands of manuscripts. In addition, the composition of the Khara-khoto corpus also attests to the extensive use of printing in this region and thereby to the contribution of the Tanguts to the spread and development of the technology.

Apart from being much more numerous, printed books from Khara-khoto also differed from those found at Dunhuang in that they included many longer texts bound in a butterfly, pothi, concertina or scroll form, whereas those from Dunhuang were largely single-page leaves or calendars. In Dunhuang, there were very few printed copies of “proper texts,” that is, longer works of philosophical, literary or religious nature which are usually handed down as part of a chain of transmission. A prominent exception in this regard is the 868 copy of the Diamond sutra, now part of the Stein collection at the British Library, which was however printed in Sichuan and brought to Dunhuang after that. While the existence of this scroll proves that religious and presumably other types of texts were occasionally also reproduced using woodblock printing before the 11th century, the limited number of printed material that survived in Dunhuang reveals that during the 9th–10th centuries print technology—at least in the north-western peripheries of China but perhaps also elsewhere—was predominantly used for producing one-page prayers, calendars, images or incantations, and that religious or literary texts were almost always copied by hand. This in itself demonstrates that long after its invention, printing was not seen as an alternative, and especially not a more advanced, technology to duplicate religious texts but that it had its own distinct range of applications which only partially overlapped with manuscript production.

The Khara-khoto materials allow us to see the situation in yet another location with a Buddhist setting, a couple of centuries later than in the case of Dunhuang manuscripts. What we see is a much greater overlap between the functions of print and manuscript. By this time a significant portion of Buddhist texts was printed, even if there were also plenty of manuscripts. Moreover, books were printed not only in Chinese but also in Tangut, which demonstrates the adaptability of the technology to any language or script. Specimens of Tangut sutras printed with movable type attest not only to the feasibility of the technique for publishing Tangut texts but also to the important role Tangut Buddhism played in the development of printing in Central and East Asia. Especially so that even though the technology itself was invented in China proper, to date no physical specimens of Song books printed with movable type have been found.

The use of movable type for printing Tangut Buddhist texts is confirmed by both the Khara-khoto material and subsequent discoveries at other sites. Even so, the detection of prints produced with movable type is not always straightforward.

551 For a concise description of the various book forms used for medieval Chinese manuscripts, see the section “Formes et formats” in Drège and Moretti 2014, 345–380. A more indepth study of the concertina and butterfly form is found in Drège 1984 and 1996, respectively.
and there are cases when even specialists do not agree whether a book was printed with woodblock or movable type technology. Scholars working on the history of the book list a number of objective criteria that can be used to spot specimens of movable type printing. In most cases these involve some sort of printing error or out of the ordinary detail that signals that something is amiss. For example, Shi Jinbo points out that the characters the types were based on were not always written by the same person at the same time, therefore when they appear together on the page, they may exhibit differences in terms of the thickness of strokes, the overall balance of characters, or even size.\(^{552}\) When the typesetting is not done perfectly, the characters may appear slightly out of alignment or leaning to one side. When at the time of printing the surface of the types is pressed against the surface of the paper unevenly, the ink may be distributed unevenly. In such cases looking at the verso of the page would be perhaps even more useful because the ink may bleed through the soft Chinese paper with different intensity for separate characters. This is in contrast with woodblock printed pages where the ink, if seen on the verso, is evenly distributed or, at least, does not show sudden variation from character to character. Often it is also possible to detect that some characters were pressed down harder and for these the physical indentation of the paper may still be noticeable, especially if viewed at an angle. In each case, the traits that let us determine whether a page was printed with movable type are essentially printing errors. Theoretically, a perfectly printed page would not give us any clues with regard to how it was produced.

Perhaps the most unambiguous sign of a page being printed with movable type is the presence of upside down characters. While this is a relatively uncommon error, multi-volume copies of texts usually have some examples. Even if we can find only one example, this indicates that the entire book was produced using the same technology.\(^{553}\) Interestingly, in Tangut texts printed this way upside down characters may appear not only in the main text but also in the Chinese page numbers on the margins of the page. Since this type of error is a mistake on the part of the typesetters, in many cases the characters susceptible to this are the ones that are nearly symmetrical, making it easy for the typesetters to accidentally insert them upside down. For example, Niu Dasheng shows several examples of reversed Chinese page numbers in Tangut books printed with movable type.

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\(^{552}\) The rest of this paragraph relies on the criteria and observations detailed in Shi 2004, 77–78.

\(^{553}\) To be sure, this is not entirely true because we know cases where faulty woodblock prints are corrected by inserting individual characters into the wood. But these cases are exceptional and, being corrections themselves, are unlikely to result in upside down characters.
The characters that appear upside down are 二 (er; two), 卅 (nian [卅]; twenty) and 四 (si; four), all of which are more or less symmetrical in the typeface used on the pages. In the case of the character 二, the only deviation from a perfect symmetry is that the top stroke is supposed to be slightly shorter, while in the character 卅, the first vertical stroke should be slightly bent. The character 四 is the most asymmetrical of these three but even there there was enough symmetry to trick the typesetter.

Besides upside down characters, the most common method of determining whether a book was printed with movable type is to look whether the ink seeps through on the verso stronger for particular characters but not for others. If it does, it is a strong indication that the book was produced with typography. Unfortunately, this presupposes a personal examination of the book which is not always possible and even if it is, the verso of the pages is often not exposed and may not be inspected without potentially damaging the book.

An example of a book produced by movable type is a Tangut translation of a Tibetan Tantric text printed with movable type in six volumes found, among other texts, in 1991 in the Baisigou square pagoda in Helan county. Some believe this to be the earliest extant text produced with wooden movable type and date it to the early 12th century. The criteria used for determining that it was printed with movable type were: (i) the corners of the printed frames around the page do not connect seamlessly; (ii) the ink is uneven across the page; (iii) occasional characters are printed upside down; (iv) there are traces of lines separating columns of characters. The book itself is undated but the date 1103 is suggested by other dated texts found at the same location, which in itself is of course only indirect evidence. But regardless of its precise date, the volumes corroborate the use of the technology in the Tangut empire around the early 12th century. Another well-known example of a book created with wooden movable type is an edition of the Avatamsaka sūtra, volumes of which are now held at various institutions around the world. Two volumes, probably acquired by Irvin V. Gillis (1875–1948) on behalf of Guion Moore Gest (1864–1948) in Beijing around 1929, are currently

555 This bend cannot be seen in the font used here but it is discernible in the page numbers shown by Niu Dasheng.
556 Shen Weirong (2007, 93) reconstructs the original Tibetan title of this work as Dpal kun tu kha shyor zhes bya ba’i rgyud (Ch. Jixiang bianzhi kouhe benxu 吉祥遍至口和本續). For the Tangut books found in the Baisigou square pagoda, as well as a detailed description of other items, see Ningxia wenwu kaogu yanjiusuo 2005.
558 Zhang 2006, 542.
kept at the Gest Library at Princeton University. Martin Heijdra and Cao Shuwen analysed these two volumes and hypothesised that they had been printed sometime during the mid-Yuan period (1271–1368).

Another important discovery was a copy of *juan 3* of the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa sūtra* found at the Haimudong 亥母洞 site near the city of Wuwei. This was a book in a concertina form, with 54 pages amounting to over 6,400 characters. Upon examination, the book turned out to have been printed with clay movable type, a technology known from sporadic references in transmitted Chinese sources. Another concertina volume of the same sutra produced with the same technique was found in 1909 at Khara-khoto by Kozlov’s expedition. Although initially there have been some doubts whether these books were indeed printed with clay type, or whether this technique ever existed or was even possible, by now most scholars accept this. One of the key characteristics of text printed with clay type is the traces of air bubbles formed during the process of firing the types. As for the practical feasibility of this technique, Sun Shouling 孫壽岭 of the Wuwei Museum proved this by personally producing over 3,000 clay types and printing the last part of the *Vimalakīrti-nirdeśa sūtra*. But even before Sun’s experiments, there have been cases of Qing scholars using clay types to print books.

In 2005, additional books printed with movable type were found among the materials excavated from the Tangut cave site at Shanzuigou 山嘴溝 in Helan county, including ones made with wooden and clay type. According to Niu Dasheng’s count, we currently know about twelve Tangut books printed with movable type, coming from various sites in Ningxia, Inner Mongolia and Gansu. It is only to be expected that this number will continue to increase as new discoveries come to light. It is also possible that as a result of heightened academic interest in the history of typographic printing, additional volumes or fragments will be identified among existing collections of Tangut materials.

But typography is merely one aspect of the history of printing, even if it is one of the most fascinating ones. The surviving Chinese and Tangut books from sites

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559 Heijdra and Cao 1992. For the history of how the books of the Gest collection were purchased in China, see Chen and Zhao 2004, 41–53.
560 Sun 1994 and 2007. This text is considered to have been printed during the reign of Emperor Renzong (1139–1193) so it is technically later than the Tantric text from the Baisigou pagoda.
561 Sun 2007. Apparently, Sun used a rice cooker(!) to experiment with firing clay types; see Niu 2008, 32.
562 E.g. Li Yao 李瑤 (fl. 1829) from Suzhou 蘇州 (Jiangsu 江蘇) and Zhai Jinsheng 翟金生 (1774–1882) of Jing county 涇縣 (Anhui 安徽) both used clay type for printing purposes; see Niu 2008, 34.
563 For a list of these 12 items, including their provenance, see the table in *ibid.*, 32.
across the ancient territory of the Tangut empire likewise attest to the widespread use of woodblock printing among the Tanguts. Although printing quality varies, there are a number of officially sponsored volumes of Buddhist and secular texts which give evidence to the technological maturity and advanced artistic level of Tangut woodblock carvers and printers.

The recent publication of the 20-volume set of facsimile reproductions of Tangut materials kept in China attests to the quantity and quality of books printed in the Tangut state. Even a cursory look at these volumes allows one to appreciate the stunning array of publications, as well as the high level of craftsmanship that went into producing those. Unquestionably, book printing in the Tangut state was well advanced and at the same time extremely common. All this points to the significance of the Tanguts, and especially Tangut Buddhism, in the development and spread of printing in Central and East Asia.

5.2 The Tangut Sunzi

Of special interest for the study of the relationship between scribal and print cultures are the cases when we have parallel copies of the same text in printed and manuscript form. Because the majority of the Khara-khoto material is Buddhist in nature, there are multiple instances of many Buddhist texts, and some of them survive as both manuscript and printed copies. Apart from the most popular Mahayana sutras, such as the Lotus sutra, there are also a number of less known scriptures that exist in such parallel versions. For example, fragments of a Buddhist preface discussing Emperor Wu of Liang (r. 502–549) survive as a block print and a pothi manuscript leaf.

In addition to Buddhist scriptures, there are also secular texts in such combination, including the Tangut translation of the Sunzi. In general, the Sunzi enjoyed enormous popularity both in China and the rest of East Asia. Early copies of the Chinese text survive in Japan and Korea but it was also translated into other

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564 Ningxia daxue Xixiaxue yanjiu zhongxin et al. 2005–2007. Vols. 1–12 contain books and fragments kept in Beijing, vols. 13–17 those in Ningxia, Shaanxi, Gansu and Inner Mongolia, whereas the final three volumes (18–20) are devoted to epigraphic material and seals.

565 Unlike it is the case with collections in St. Petersburg and London, almost all of this material is Buddhist in content—there are very few items of secular nature. There also seems to be a higher ratio of printed texts than in European collections. Whether this is due to the way this material was collected or reflects regional or even temporal aspects, remains to be determined.

languages. Thus besides the Tangut rendition, there are, for example, several extant Manchu translations.\textsuperscript{567} As to the Tanguts, it is clear that as part of their general enthusiasm for translating a wide variety of Chinese texts (e.g. Buddhist sutras and commentaries, Confucian canonical works, legal codes, Daoist texts, medical literature, encyclopaedias, non-official historical compilations, primers), they were also very interested in military treatises. Among the surviving corpus of Tangut material there are fragments of translations of several Chinese military texts, including the 
\textit{Sunzi}, the \textit{Biography of Sunzi} (\textit{Sunzi zhuan} 孫子傳), the \textit{Liutao 六韜}, the \textit{Huangshi gong sanliue 黃石公三略}, and the \textit{Jiangyuan 將苑}.

Of these works, the \textit{Liutao} and \textit{Huangshi gong sanliue} are woodblock prints but the \textit{Jiangyuan} is a manuscript. The \textit{Sunzi} with the \textit{Biography of Sunzi} appended to it survives in both printed and manuscript copies, though they only partially overlap and neither of them is complete. Nevertheless, the overlapping portions provide a rare opportunity for comparison. Although there are many more cases of such matching pairs among the Buddhist texts in Tangut, secular texts are in a way more interesting because their translations are understood by modern scholars to be less rigid in adhering to the source text than Buddhist scriptures and are therefore considered more “natural” in their wording.\textsuperscript{568} It would be interesting to examine whether this propensity towards creating a “user-friendly” translation is reflected in multiple copies of the same text. In other words, can we see an effort to improve the translation or did the process of creating a new copy—printed or handwritten—invariably meant a faithful duplication of the original it was created from? Did a translation evolve or were the changes in new copies of the text unintentional?

In addition to the main text, the Tangut \textit{Sunzi} comes with three commentaries, in an unattested combination that does not match any known Chinese edition. In the Chinese tradition only editions with ten or eleven commentaries are known, depending on whether the commentary of Du You 杜佑 (735–812) is included or not. In the Tangut version, the three commentaries are those of Cao Cao 曹操 (155–220), Li Quan 李荃 (8th c.) and Du Mu, all of which are part of the multi-commentary Chinese editions. While in most cases the commentaries clarify the meaning of the main text or supply additional information, at times they provide word-level explications, glossing obscure words and phrases. Such linguistic clarifications are generally not needed in a foreign language version of the text because the translator would have already disambiguated obscure words and phrases as part of the translation process; an additional round of explication

\textsuperscript{567} For an English study of a Manchu translation of the \textit{Sunzi}, see Mair 2008.
\textsuperscript{568} Keping 1985, 15–17, Keping and Gong 2003, 14–16.
would be unnecessary. Yet for the sake of consistency, the Tangut translator did his best to translate such comments, even when this proved to be challenging. For example, in Chapter 7 of the *Sunzi* we read the following statement:

五里而爭利，則蹶上將軍，其法半至
Were it (i.e. the army) to travel fifty li at such a pace to contend for some advantage, the commander of the advance force would be lost, and as a rule only half of its strength would reach the target.\(^{569}\)

The word *jue* 蹶 (“fall, suffer a setback”), translated here by Roger T. Ames as “to be lost,” is explained in Cao Cao’s commentary the following way:

曹操曰：蹶，猶挫也。
Cao Cao says: “[The word] *jue* 蹶 is used like ‘to be defeated.’”

Obviously, translating this comment presents a difficulty for a translator because he would not have used an obscure word in the main text in the first place. Since translating in itself inevitably involves an interpretation, there is hardly any need for a word-level commentary. The Tangut translation renders the phrase “the commander of the advance force would be lost” 蹶上將軍 in the main text with the words *gba bju wer lhjo* 朝嘸講播 (軍將威失 “the general will lose authority”), in which the Chinese word *jue* 蹶 (“to be lost”) is interpreted as “to lose authority.”\(^{570}\) Accordingly, Cao Cao’s explanation appears in the Tangut translation the following way:


\(^{570}\) Nevksy (1960, v. 2, 523) translated the word *wer* 謀 as “power” (*shi* 勢) primarily on the basis of its use in the *Sunzi*, even though it usually translates the Chinese word *feng* 豐 (“rich, plentiful”). I am following Lin Ying-chin (1994, 4–19) who suggests that the character *wer* 謀 stands for the homophonous *wer* 謀 (“authority, power, etiquette”). This reading fits the context and the use of *wer* 謀 may simply be a case of phonetic substitution, regardless of whether this fell within the possibilities of Tangut writing or was an actual mistake.
Wei Cao say authority TOP battle diminish military authority lose COP

Cao [Cao] of the state of Wei says: “[The word] wer 威 (威 “authority”) means being defeated in battle and losing military authority.”

Noticeably, the translator resolved the challenge by a compromise, singling out the word wer 威 (威 “authority”) and clarifying its meaning in context with an entire sentence. This is in contrast with the Chinese version where the Cao commentary essentially uses another word as an explanation for the one in question. The Tangut translator instead specifies the context, as he already disambiguated the obscure Chinese word jue 蹴 in the main text by translating it as wer lhjo 威播 (威失 “to lose authority”).

Another solution to the challenge of translating lexical glosses into Tangut can be seen in a manuscript scroll containing a translation of Zhao Qi’s 趙岐 (108–201) commentary to the Mencius, known in the Chinese tradition under the title Mengzi zhangju 孟子章句. This scroll, written in a cursive hand, is kept at the Kozlov collection in St. Petersburg (Inv. No. 6738) and contains both the main text and the commentary. Initially, Nevsky and later Russian scholars believed that the commentaries may have been prepared by Tangut scholars.571 Since then, however, the commentary was unambiguously identified as that of Zhao Qi and the text as the Mengzi zhangju. Nevertheless, the translation often omits lexical glosses present in the Chinese commentary and incorporates those into the main text, substituting obscure words with the meaning supplied in the commentary.572

Going back to the Tangut Sunzi with the three commentaries, it is possible that we are dealing with an abridged version which ultimately derives from one of the known Chinese editions. While it is theoretically possible that such an abridgment was carried out by a Tangut editor, I suspect that the translation was done directly from an existing (but subsequently lost) Chinese edition with three commentaries. This is indirectly corroborated by the fact that quite a few hitherto unknown Chinese texts were discovered among the materials from Khara-

572 Nie 2012b, 4.
khoto. As for Tangut translations of unidentified or known but lost Chinese texts, their number is even higher, even if this may partly be due to our inability to match the translations to the vast corpus of extant Chinese texts. Having said that, it is quite clear that a three-commentary edition of the Sunzi is not among the currently known body of Chinese literature.

Another significant difference of the Tangut Sunzi with Chinese editions is that, as already mentioned above, both the printed and manuscript versions come with the Biography of Sunzi appended to the end, which is a combination that is completely unattested in Chinese language versions. The Biography of Sunzi itself is a known text as it is one of the biographies featured in the Shiji 史記, China's first history completed around 100 BC by the historian Sima Qian 司馬遷 (ca. 145–90 BC). The Tangut text at the end of the Sunzi is unmistakably a translation of the biography in the Shiji, yet we do not know of any Chinese edition where it would appear appended to the Sunzi. Once again, while it is possible that the two texts were linked for the first time in Tangut, it is just as likely that the translator was working with a now lost Chinese source, rather than compiling a new combination of texts with no Chinese precedent. The relevance of the biography to the main text requires no justification and it is quite possible that such an edition indeed existed in the Song empire prior to reaching the Tanguts. Moreover, as Nie Hongyin pointed out, the Tanguts for some reason did not translate Chinese official histories and the Sunzi zhuan is the sole example of such a text, which makes it unlikely that it would have been extracted from the Shiji by a Tangut translator. Furthermore, the fact that both printed and manuscript copies of such an unconventional combination survived in Tangut translation suggests that this was not an ad hoc arrangement but a relatively stable edition. It is also an evidence to the popularity of the translation.

A comparison of the printed and manuscript versions reveals that they are ultimately two copies of the same translation, going back to the same source. Both versions are part of the Kozlov collection in St. Petersburg. The printed version consists of several fragments of a book bound in butterfly form (Inv. No 943, 579, 772, 773, 771). Eric Grinstead identified two additional leaves in London (Or.12380/3841–3842) and these are likely to belong to the same edition, perhaps even the same print run as the book in St. Petersburg. In his unpublished draft

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573 E.g. the Song edition of the Zhuangzi with Lü Huiqing’s commentary; see Chen 2009 and Tang 2009.
574 Nie 1991, 267. There are, however, other types of historical works of more popular nature; see, for example, Solonin 1995.
575 Grinstead 1961.
catalogue of the British collection, Nishida Tatsuo identified another fragment (Or.12380/872), although the text on it is rather unclear and it remains to be seen whether it really belongs to the Sunzi.\(^{576}\) In the facsimile reproductions of the collection published in Shanghai, this fragment is labelled as a Buddhist sutra (fojing 佛經), which is almost certainly wrong.\(^{577}\) But the same volume identifies further fragments in London (Or.12380/660–664) as belonging to the Sunzi. They are printed on both sides of the paper, unlike the fragment identified by Nishida; the ruled lines are also significantly wider, making the layout more spacious (Fig. 14). Comparing these small fragments with the two complete leaves (Or.12380/3841–3842) at the British Library, one can see that the paper of the fragments is much browner and thicker. Once again, the paper of the leaves is lighter and thinner and printed only on one side.

Therefore the British Library fragments represent at least three different printed editions. So far all studies involving the printed Tangut Sunzi were done on the edition in St. Petersburg and disregarded the other fragments because of their small size. At the same time, even though the few characters that survive on them have a limited value for the textual study of the Tangut Sunzi, the fragments themselves are of value for evaluating the history of editions of the treatise, as well as for any other research that involves the physical examination of books. The mere existence of these minor fragments confirms the popularity of the Sunzi in Tangut translation, which in turn means that, as more of the St. Petersburg collection becomes accessible in digital or facsimile reproductions, new fragments may be identified.

\(^{576}\) Nishida’s draft catalogue was never finished but a copy was deposited at the British Library by the author.

\(^{577}\) Xibei di’er minzu xueyuan et al. 2005, v. 1, 296.
Writing about a group of printed fragments with a text called *Jade Mirror from the Zhengan Reign concerning the Commanding of Troops*, Kychanov mentioned an allegedly common phenomenon in Tangut printed text, namely, that the text printed from the same woodblocks may have been printed on paper of different
size.\textsuperscript{578} Apparently, the leaves could differ in size by as much as 5 cm. As an explanation to this puzzle, Kychanov proposed that these leaves of different size could belong to different print runs made on large and small paper, or that they could have been printed from the same blocks on completely different occasions. Unfortunately, many of the “minor” fragments of the \textit{Sunzi} do not make up a complete page and thus it is not possible to measure the size of the paper. Even so, just determining whether they were part of the same edition would already be useful for working out the history of the Tangut translations of the \textit{Sunzi}, including their editions.

Keping pointed out that the title at the end of the \textit{Sunzi} in the printed version was slightly different from how it appeared in the manuscript.\textsuperscript{579} In the manuscript we read \textit{Swē tsə gja jwɨr ·jij ʂo bjjj 蟄體ジャン克參敘} (The Art of War of Sunzi with Three Commentaries), whereas in the printed text the possessive marker ·jij 参 is absent. This, naturally, does not change the meaning of the title and does not violate Tangut grammar. We should also note that in both versions only the titles at the end of the text survive. Known in the Chinese tradition as end titles (\textit{weiti 尾題}), these often appear in an abbreviated form, in contrast with the head titles (\textit{shouti 首題}) that give the text’s proper designation. In surviving medieval manuscripts the two titles at times can be quite different, even when they appear at the beginning and end of the same book.\textsuperscript{580} In our two versions of the \textit{Sunzi}, the titles are end titles and as such they are less rigid than head titles would be, which may be the reason why they differ slightly. The printed \textit{Sunzi} has two such end titles, one at the end of the second (i.e. middle) \textit{juan} and one at the end of the third \textit{juan}. Interestingly, the earlier occurrence of the title is followed by a note giving a total count of characters in the main text (2,148) and the commentary (15,844).\textsuperscript{581} It is easy to see how in the manuscript version, which omits the commentary, these numbers would not have worked, since the number was not calculated anew each time a new copy was made but was transmitted together with

\textsuperscript{578} Kychanov 2005, 5.
\textsuperscript{579} Keping 1977, 161–162.
\textsuperscript{580} For example, the Dunhuang manuscript Or.8210/S.5438 is a notebook from the 10\textsuperscript{th} century containing Chapter 25 of the \textit{Lotus sutra}. At the beginning of the manuscript, we find the title \textit{Miaofa lianhua jing Guanshiyin pusa pumen pin di ershiwu 妙法蓮華經觀世音菩薩普門品第二十五} (\textit{Lotus sutra}, Chapter 25, The universal gateway of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara), whereas at the end, \textit{Foshuo Guanyin jing yi juan 佛説觀音經一卷} (The sutra of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, as preached by the Buddha, in one \textit{juan}). Thus the head and end titles do not match at all, which is partly due to the fact that this chapter of the \textit{Lotus sutra} also commonly circulated separately as a stand-alone sutra.
\textsuperscript{581} Keping 1979, 128.
the text as a measure to ensure the accuracy of subsequent copies. Unfortunately the surviving part of the text is incomplete so we cannot ascertain whether the numbers are accurate.

The manuscript version of the Tangut Sunzi with biography (Inv. No. 775) is a scroll with 90 lines of text, 17–20 characters per line. Except for the last eight lines, the text is written in the cursive script, which would be difficult to read if we did not have a printed version of part of the same text available. From the text of the Sunzi only the last 17 lines survive and the bigger part of the scroll is taken up by the Biography of Sunzi, which is complete in this version (but not in the printed one). In line 17, the text of the Sunzi ends with a title which asserts that this is the Sunzi with three commentaries. Yet the surviving 17 lines of the Sunzi reveal that none of the commentaries have been copied and the scroll only has the main text. In other words, the title does not correspond to the text. It matches, however, the way the Sunzi appears in the printed edition, which includes the text of the three commentaries.

Recently, the existence of an additional manuscript fragment (Inv. No. 3788) in the Kozlov collection has been revealed. Photographs were taken by staff members of a Chinese publisher while working at the IOM in St. Petersburg and these were later on made accessible to some Chinese scholars. Unfortunately, I have not been able to see images of this fragment and can only rely on its description in academic publications. According to these sources, this is a scroll that contains Chapters 7–9 of the Sunzi, without the commentaries. There are a total of 65 lines, with 17–21 characters per line. The cursive hand in the scroll makes it likely that it once belonged to the Sunzi + biography manuscript introduced

582 Paradoxically the number that claimed to record the count of characters in the text it followed had to match not the number of characters in the copy where it appeared but the number recorded in the previous copy, which in turn was based on the one before it. Hence the number in reality recorded the number of characters not in the book but in the very first copy from which all later ones were made. Once an initial count of character was made, in all subsequent copies it was the text that had to match the number, rather than the other way around.

583 A detailed physical description of the manuscript is available in Keping 1977.

584 Although ordinary Tangut script itself does not present particular difficulties for reading, the cursive writing is still very hard to decipher. In their work on Chinese classics in Tangut translation, Kolokolov and Kychanov (1966, 128–133) provide a table of common elements in Tangut cursive script, which among other things shows how the same element can be written in a number of different ways.

585 Keping 1977, 161.

586 Sun 2012. This publication contains a full transcription of the text.
above. This “new” manuscript has even more discrepancies with the printed edition, amounting to more than 60 instances. Many of these consist of omitting characters that are present in the printed version and some can be explained only as copying mistakes. With this fragment, we now possess a significantly larger portion of the original Sunzi scroll (155 lines vs. the 90 we knew about), enabling us to do a more reliable comparison of the printed and manuscript versions. As currently we only have a transcription of the text of this fragment, we will have to wait for the images to be able to ascertain whether it is indeed part of the same manuscript.

The above discussion shows that in contrast with Kepping’s 1979 publication of the Tangut Sunzi, which is still the standard reference for this text, we now have a much larger group of Tangut fragments related to the Sunzi. Some of these were already known when Kepping’s monograph came out but she based her translation on the printed edition kept in St. Petersburg. She also consulted the manuscript and even published a short notice on it while working on the translation, yet she seemed to have studied this text exclusively from the perspective of the printed version. Today, in addition to the printed version published in facsimile as an appendix to Kepping’s monograph, we know of the following fragments:

(i) the two printed pages at the British Library (Or.12380/3841–3842) identified by Grinstead, probably from the same edition as the St. Petersburg book;
(ii) the fragment identified by Nishida at the British Library (Or.12380/872);
(iii) the “minor” fragments at the British Library (Or.12380/660–664);
(iv) the manuscript version with 90 lines at the IOM in St. Petersburg (Inv. No. 775);
(v) the newly identified manuscript fragment with 65 lines at the IOM (Inv. No. 3788).

It is hard to give an exact character count but it seems that the items listed here contain almost as much text as the butterfly book published by Kepping. A careful analysis of this additional material will no doubt enrich our knowledge of the textual issues surrounding the Tangut translation of the Sunzi, not to speak of the problems related to codicology and the history of the book.

587 Ibid., 79.
588 Kepping 1977.
5.3 Draft or personal copy made from a printed edition?

In the printed version, unlike in the manuscript, the text conforms to the title because the *Sunzi* part contains not only the main text but also the commentaries of Cao Cao, Li Quan and Du Mu. In contrast with the manuscript scroll, the surviving part of the printed version retains a much larger portion of the *Sunzi*, although a big part of the biography is missing. Thus the portion that overlaps with the manuscript includes the last few lines of the *Sunzi* and part of the biography. Apart from the fact that the handwritten version omits the text of the commentaries, the text of the *Sunzi* more or less matches in the two versions. The only difference is two cases where the manuscript copyist had accidentally reversed adjacent characters but in both cases he corrected this by a reversal mark commonly seen in medieval manuscripts. The biography part, however, shows a number of minor discrepancies, which partly must be due to the fact that the overlapping section between the printed and manuscript versions is significantly longer—as opposed to the mere 17 lines of the *Sunzi*. Kepping listed 39 differences, stating that the nature of the discrepancies suggested that the two versions were in fact copies of the same translation. She argued that the printed text in most cases clarified and corrected the manuscript, which in turn lead her to conclude that the printed book was an improved version of the manuscript. She speculated that the manuscript may have been the draft for the printed edition. The same conclusion was confirmed by Sun Yingxin who also studied the manuscript and marked its discrepancies against the printed version, identifying a few more cases in addition to the ones listed by Kepping.

To take a closer look at a couple of concrete examples, #2 in Kepping’s list is a word which appears in the manuscript as *rjir* 饒 (善 “skilful, good at”; 能 “can”) but reads *njwi* 饒 (能 “can”) in the corresponding part of the printed edition. As their pronunciation shows, they are completely different words, even if there is overlap between their meanings. They appear in the following sentence:

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589 Kepping 1977, 162. Taking into consideration the corrections, these instances do not constitute discrepancies with the printed edition of the text. On the reversal mark in the medieval Chinese manuscript culture, as well as other correction marks and punctuation, see Galambos 2013 and 2014a.

590 Ibid., 163–165.

591 Ibid.

592 Sun 2010, 70.

593 Kepping (1977, 163) seems to misread the right hand side of the character in the manuscript and ends up with a non-existent character. I am following Sun Yingxin’s (2010, 71) reading, which also matches the structure of the character in the manuscript.
In the Chinese original of Sunzi’s biography in the *Shiji*, this is expressed as “I already know that the general is capable of using the troops” 寡人已知將軍能用兵矣, which for all practical reasons matches the translations. The discrepancy between the manuscript and the printed edition does not change the meaning at all, the alternate words are synonymous. In fact, these two words are also attested together as the compound word *nwi ri̭ẹ* 瞄吮 with the meaning “able, clever.”

In light of the above, we can see that use of one word instead of the other is motivated on the one hand by the existence of a binom in which they appear together and, on the other hand, by the fact that they are synonymous.

Example #5 in Kepping’s list is a word that is written in the manuscript as *ndạ* 譬 (言 words, speech) but appears in the printed edition as *źụ ndạ* 譬言 (敕言 words of an imperial order), a discrepancy which Kepping explains in terms of the printed text clarifying the manuscript. This is, however, only part of the difference, as the entire sentence is quite different in the two versions. The manuscript reads as follows:

They say that there are cases when the words of the ruler are not obeyed.

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595 Kepping (*ibid.*, 164) lists these differences under separate numbers as word-level discrepancies, rather than looking at the whole sentence. This is not ideal because both sentences are grammatically correct even if different, that is, the difference does not stem from the omission or inclusion of individual words but is at the level of the sentence.
In the corresponding place, the printed edition has a slightly more elaborate version of the same sentence:

They say that there can also be cases when the orders of the ruler are not obeyed.

The same expression appears in the Chinese original as “there are cases when the ruler’s orders are not accepted [=abided by]”君命有所不受, referring to the idea that once the general has been appointed and military operations are in process, he does not have to follow the commands of the ruler because he is in charge of all operations. It is clear from the differences that they do not significantly change the meaning of the sentence; the manuscript version simply uses a more condensed form to say the same thing.

There is no need to go through all of the discrepancies between the manuscript and the printed version to see that the differences do not actually tell us which version is based on which. What seems a clarification by adding an extra word from one perspective, can be simply explained as an accidental omission from the other. After all, it is only natural that people make mistakes when copying texts, as it is amply demonstrated by several correction marks in this very manuscript.596 In fact, considering a number of other circumstances in connection with these two versions, I am of the opinion that it is more likely that the manuscript version was copied from a printed edition, rather than having been written in preparation for producing the printed book.

One of the major problems with the scenario that the manuscript version served as a draft is that it does not have the commentaries which are indicated in its title and are in fact present in the printed edition. Kepping acknowledges this difficulty herself, suggesting that a possible reason for this may have been that the copyist was only interested in the main text of the Sunzi and thus omitted the commentaries, at the same time keeping the original title of the work.597 This is a

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596 The few cases of corrections I can detect on the facsimile images involve the reversal of adjacent characters written in the wrong order and the deletion of mistaken or superfluous characters.

597 Ibid.
reasonable explanation but it somewhat contradicts the point about the manuscript being a draft for the printed text. The logical thing would be that a draft of a printed edition included the commentaries the way they were going to appear in the final print. Yet in this case we have a manuscript version that was obviously copied from an earlier commentated edition (be it a manuscript or printed copy) that included the three commentaries referred to in the title. Nevertheless, the copyist left out the commentaries, revealing, as Kepping correctly observed, that he was only interested in the main text. In my view, this is an indication that instead of working on a new edition of the text, especially one that was going to appear with the three commentaries, the person responsible for the creation of the manuscript made the copy for his own purposes, perhaps for the sake of studying it privately or for keeping it with him as a reference work he could consult when needed.

A parallel case of copying an annotated version of a text without the commentaries is the Tangut version of the annotated Mencius mentioned above. This is a manuscript written in a semi-cursive hand and, just like our Sunzi manuscript, is believed to have been a draft for a printed edition. Peng Xiangqian, who studied the manuscript at length, is of the opinion that the commentaries were deleted by the translator without translating those. Yet it may be the case that the translator was using a Chinese version which did not have the commentaries or, as it probably happened with the Tangut Sunzi manuscript, the commentary was left out while making an abridged copy from a Tangut edition that contained it. The latter scenario is also supported by the fact that such a complete edition of the Mengzi zhangju was recently identified in the St. Petersburg collection. This is manuscript Inv. No. 6850, a scroll written in a fully cursive hand, with 48 surviving lines. The scroll contains both the main text and the commentary, confirming that such an edition indeed existed in Tangut translation.

Going back to our Sunzi manuscript, additional details can be cited to support the theory that the scroll was intended for personal use. One is that the manuscript is written in a cursive hand, which is more likely in the case of a private copy, as opposed to a version prepared for others to read and use. After all, the process of printing would have still necessitated additional stages, such as writing out a clean copy of the text together with the commentaries, arranging the final layout, and then carving the “camera ready copy” onto woodblocks, and for

598 Peng 2012, Nie 2012b, 3.
599 Peng 2012.
600 Nie 2012b.
all of these steps a non-cursive hand would have been necessary. When producing a copy for one’s own use, however, a hasty hand would have posed no obstacles whatsoever, as the copyist would have had little difficulty reading his own handwriting, and would have been less concerned about the aesthetic qualities of the copy. Similarly, the lack of any kind of formatting that would anticipate the final layout of the printed text is an argument against the “draft” theory. Conversely, a personal copy made from an existing book would not necessarily retain the layout of the book pages, since the point of the exercise would have been the duplication of the content.

Moreover, the Sunzi manuscript is in the form of a scroll. Although the scroll had been the main book form in China and the rest of East Asia up to the latter part of the Tang dynasty, from the second half of the 9th and early 10th centuries other forms became increasingly common. The Dunhuang manuscripts provide abundant evidence for this shift in book form, as around this period we see the appearance of non-orthodox forms such as the butterfly, whirlwind, concertina, pothi and notebook, many of which betray a Central Asian influence. Yet the scroll never disappeared but continued to be used alongside other forms. The Khara-khoto texts are significantly later than the Dunhuang manuscripts and likewise come from the periphery of the Chinese domain, where the influence of Central Asian book cultures would have been presumably more pronounced. Consequently, among the surviving body of Tangut texts the scroll is relatively uncommon and most books which are complete enough to betray their original form are bound in butterfly, concertina or notebook form. The fact that our cursive Sunzi manuscript survived as a scroll may be a sign that binding it properly was not necessary. It was simply jotted down on a piece of paper and then rolled up, never going through the more elaborate process of binding.

A point worth noting in this context is that concertina books were among the most common ones in Khara-khoto. A concertina is essentially a scroll that is not rolled up but folded into an accordion-like shape. Therefore there is a fine distinction between scroll and concertina and without the outside covers commonly attached to properly bound concertina books, it is sometimes hard to tell them apart. Fortunately, many of the books were found folded as concertina books and thus we know their original form. But it is also possible that some of the deformed fragments came from concertina books but modern conservators flattened them out believing that they used to be scrolls. For this reason we cannot

601 For codicological evidence for a move to new books forms among the Dunhuang manuscripts, see Galambos 2014b.
602 Terent’ev-Katanskij 1981, 27.
rule out the possibility that our manuscript scroll was at one point also in the form of a concertina, which would still not resolve the issue whether it was a temporary draft of a printed edition.

The draft theory also raises some questions with regard to the nature of the entire corpus of texts found in Khara-khoto. First of all, why would an earlier version of a printed edition, a copy that already served its purpose, be deposited in a funerary stupa? We know that the Kozlov expedition found a skeleton in a sitting position inside the so-called library stupa and it seems reasonable to assume that the stupa was dedicated to this person. As mentioned above, this parallels the situation of the Dunhuang cave library which initially also held the statue with the ashes of Hongbian. Thus both libraries were somehow connected with a burial, probably that of a prominent person in the region.

The nature of the Dunhuang collection and the reason for its interment have long perplexed scholars.603 Aurel Stein, who was the first Westerner to examine the cave, advanced the theory of “sacred waste,” drawing attention to the existence of a tradition that prohibits the destruction of any writing with the word of the Buddha, no matter how small or fragmentary it was. Naturally, this was only one of the possible explanations and there were other views. Most notably Pelliot was a proponent of the theory that the manuscripts were hidden in the cave in order to protect them from an invading force, which he believed to be the Tanguts.604 Later on, building on Stein’s initial hypothesis, Fujieda Akira suggested that the Dunhuang manuscripts were deposited in the library cave because with the spread of printing in the 10th century the printed volumes of the Buddhist Canon displaced manuscripts, which were thus placed in the cave as sacred waste.605 Regardless of which theory is correct, in the case of Khara-khoto neither of these explanations is likely because it is improbable that a stupa would be used either to deposit unwanted scriptures or to hide texts in order to protect them from a hostile invasion, especially since it was in such a highly visible place. It is evident that Buddhist texts interred in a stupa must have had a function related to the consecration of the site. Yet even though the bigger part of the material found there comprised Buddhist texts, there were also secular ones, including the Sunzi. These must have been connected to the person buried there, having been part of either a personal library or a larger collection under her or his control. In either case, it is hard to explain why a draft copy of the Sunzi would have

603 See, for example, Rong 1999 and Imaeda 2008.
604 For an overview of the various theories proposed to explain the nature of the Dunhuang cave library, see van Schaik and Galambos 2012, 19–28.
605 Fujieda 1973, 128.
been preserved in the stupa. In contrast, it is not inconceivable that a personal copy of a text that belonged to someone would be deposited in that person’s tomb.

5.4 Co-existence of manuscript and print

While none of the above points provide conclusive evidence for establishing the temporal priority between the two versions of Sunzi, when taken together they suggest that the manuscript was not a draft for the printed edition but, quite to the contrary, was itself abridged from a three-commentary edition. Indeed, one cannot avoid noticing that the conjecture that the manuscript version preceded the printed one reflects a commonly held assumption that manuscripts generally precede printed texts, which is in turn largely based on a modern understanding of the course of the evolution of book culture. According to this understanding, printing technology represented a more advanced stage of evolution, which provided a definite solution for the tedious task of copying texts by hand. Consequently, as a general principle, manuscripts predate printed books, and if they are from the same period, the manuscript must have served as a temporary means to arrive at the technologically more advanced printed version. A classic example of this view is Fujieda’s above-mentioned explanation for the sealing of the Dunhuang cave library, a theory that is easily refuted by the coexistence of large quantities of manuscripts and printed books found at Khara-khoto.

Yet there is undeniably some truth to this model because before the spread of printing manuscript culture was the main setting in which texts were reproduced and circulated. The appearance and spread of printing modified this by adding an alternative mode of book production. Still, in many cases manuscript and print were conceived not as opposites in a binary split between old and new technologies but as complementary modes of production. By virtue of their very nature, woodblocks faithfully reproduced handwritten originals, consequently printed texts and manuscripts did not significantly differ visually. For this reason it is perhaps better to understand early woodblock printing as an ex-

606 For a useful account of the changes associated with the advent of printing, see Cherniack 1994, 32–57.
tension of scribal culture, rather than a brand new technology that brought radical changes to the lives of literate communities.\textsuperscript{608} If it represented an advancement, it would not have been as obvious to contemporary people as we tend to imagine today. In fact, even though woodblock printing technology was already known in the late 7\textsuperscript{th} century, it subsequently fell into disuse and remained largely ignored until after the Tang period.\textsuperscript{609} Hence there is certainly a diachronic dimension to the spread of printing, which is also demonstrated by the differences in the composition of the Dunhuang and Khara-khoto corpora, as already discussed above.

Yet prints never completely replaced manuscripts which continued to be used until modern times throughout East Asia, especially in a Buddhist context. Sutra copying for the sake of accruing karmic merits, by either copying them personally or paying someone else to do so, was an essential part of Buddhist practice since the early medieval period. But even secular texts continued to be handcopied for various reasons. Discussing the survival of scribal culture in Japan during the Edo period (1603–1867), Peter Kornicki argues that manuscripts were used alongside printed editions and that copying printed books by hand was a widespread practice attributable to a range of factors.\textsuperscript{610} People filled notebooks with extracts from books they read, copied religious texts as an act of devotion, created artistic calligraphies of secular texts, or simply copied printed books because those were more expensive, not easily available or at times even banned.\textsuperscript{611} It is only natural that all of these reasons also played a role in the production of manuscripts in Khara-khoto and other regions of China’s north-western peripheries.

The Khara-khoto corpus dates to the 11\textsuperscript{th}–13\textsuperscript{th} centuries and comprises both printed and manuscript books. Nevertheless, the majority of the textual material is undated and without dated colophons or other clues to their date, it is not easy to determine the temporal sequence of the items. The Dunhuang manuscripts contain very few printed texts and this indicates the rarity of printing at the time. At the same time, there are manuscripts with colophons and notes that assert that they had been copied from printed editions. For example, several manuscript

\textsuperscript{608} I am grateful to Michael Friedrich of Hamburg University for pointing this out to me.
\textsuperscript{609} Timothy Barrett (2008) argues that the reason why printing technology did not achieve widespread application during the Tang was that it was too closely associated with the “usurper” Empress Wu Zetian 武則天 (r. 690–705) who had used it for the dissemination of Buddhist texts as part of her quest for legitimacy. Therefore it was only after the end of the dynasty that printing was once again considered a viable option for state-sponsored projects. For additional points and references concerning this topic, see also Barrett 2012.
\textsuperscript{610} Kornicki 2006.
\textsuperscript{611} Ibid., 30–38.
notebooks of the *Diamond sutra* (Pelliot chinois 2094, 2876, 3398, 3493; Or.8210/S.5451, Or.8210/S.5534, Or.8210/S.6762) contain a note that states that the text was copied “from the true printed text of the Guo family of Xichuan” 西川過家真印本. The wording slightly differs across the available examples but they all claim to have been copied from the same printed edition of the *Diamond sutra*. One of the manuscripts is dated to 905 and presumably the other ones also date to around the same period. It is clear that the source of the “true printed text” 真印本 is in each case recorded as a means of ascribing authority to the version through establishing a textual lineage, even if the text itself was not different from manuscript copies circulating in Dunhuang locally. The handwritten copies of the *Diamond sutra* made from an edition printed in western Sichuan testify that printed editions did not always represent the next stage in the chain of textual transmission and that they were often copied by hand, thereby re-entering the realm of manuscript culture. Not only that, but whatever advantages the Sichuanese edition of the *Diamond sutra* was thought to have had in comparison with contemporaneous manuscript versions, the new handwritten copies made from that edition obviously also claimed to possess those. Therefore not only the text but also the function and authority associated with its printed or manuscript versions could be transferred from one medium to the other.

A telling example of the symbiotic relationship between manuscript and print is found on one of the folios of the printed edition of the Tangut Biography of Sunzi, which takes up two pages in the book. On both pages the top of the page is missing, along with the first two characters in each row. Accordingly, the lines only have 11 characters instead of the 13 seen on adjacent pages. As a means of solving the problem of missing characters, someone added those by hand, thereby completing the pages and restoring the text. Although it is not entirely visible on the available reproductions, it seems that the paper itself is intact which would mean that the missing part of the text is a printing error; perhaps the top part of the printing block broke off or became deformed and slightly bent, as a result of which all impressions made from this block were defective. The restoration of missing parts of a printed text in this manner is a phenomenon well attested in later print culture in both East Asia and the West. For example, the sole extant Zhixiutang 芝秀堂 edition of Cui Bao’s 崔豹 (fl. 290–306) *Gujin zhu* 古今注 has four missing pages which have been supplemented at a later time by copying the text from another edition by hand. Doing this, the copyist emulated the layout and visual appearance of the original. To cite an example from the

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612 Li 2006, 10.
613 Kong 2008.
print culture of premodern England, the library of Worcester College, Oxford owns a damaged copy of George Chapman’s play *May-day* (1611), in which the title-page and the first leaf of text was replaced by a handwritten copy; it is possible that the manuscript copy used in place of the missing text might be dating from as early as the 1620s.\(^\text{614}\)

Such cases were almost always the result of a conservation effort carried out by subsequent owners or users of the book much later, often centuries after its initial printing. Yet in our case the handwritten characters must have been added before the stupa in Khara-khoto was closed, most likely soon after the printing of the book. In fact, this probably happened as part of the production process and all copies printed from this set of blocks were supplemented in a similar manner. Considering that this post-production patch-up work was carried out sometime in the 12th century, that is, relatively early in the history of printing in East Asia, this may be the earliest extant example of such a hybrid correction in the world.

Although in the case of the Tangut *Sunzi* the handwritten correction was not part of the original design of the book, in many cases printed books and shorter texts such as almanacs or forms were intended to be filled in by users in handwriting.\(^\text{615}\) Neither was the technique of supplementing missing text by hand an invention of the age of print, as there are numerous mutilated or damaged medieval manuscripts that have been repaired in this manner. It is not uncommon to find among the Dunhuang manuscripts composite scrolls in which separate sheets of paper had been physically inserted between existing ones subsequently in order to replenish missing portions of the text. In fact, the 10th century monk Daozhen 道真, who is credited with initiating the project of assembling the monastic library which later grew into the vast manuscript collection known to us as the Dunhuang manuscripts, was also actively involved in such conservation work, as he records this in a colophon attached to a list of manuscripts:

On the 15th day of the 6th month of *jiawu* 甲午, the 5th year of the Changxing 長興 reign (934), Daozhen, a monk of the Sanjie monastery 三界寺, having observed that the monastery’s collection of sutras and shastras was incomplete, bowed in devotion and made a great vow. He respectfully requested old and damaged sutras from various collections, and deposited


\(^{615}\) See this point made in Chartier 2007, 398–399.
these in his monastery. He repaired their beginnings and ends so that they could be dissemi-
inated to the world and bring glory to Buddhism for ten thousand generations, as eternal
offerings...616

Daozhen’s efforts to collect Buddhist manuscripts and the conservation carried
out as part of this project lay at the foundation of the forming of the enormous
collection of the Dunhuang cave library. In some cases Daozhen supplied the
missing text by recycling sheets from older fragments but there were no doubt
also cases when he or his associates copied parts of texts specifically for the pur-
pose of supplementing missing portions of incomplete manuscripts. Although in
the case of the Khara-khoto materials we cannot name any particular person who
worked on restoring the manuscripts and books, the need to repair damaged
items and replenish missing text was certainly a routine part of book culture, re-
gardless of whether the books themselves were printed or written by hand.

But print and manuscript could also intermix in a number of other ways. Among the Khara-khoto materials, there are examples of printed images being
attached to the beginning of concertina manuscripts of Buddhist sutras. Manu-
script Inv. No. 2208 from the IOM collection, for instance, contains juan 1 of the
Tangut translation of the Mahāprajñāpāramitā sūtra, which is by far the most
common Tangut text in the Khara-khoto corpus. At the beginning of the volume
is a woodblock print image of the Buddha preaching to his disciples, glued to the
manuscript that follows it.617 The exact same illustration, probably printed from
the same woodblock, also appears at the beginning of juan 160 of the Mahā-
prajñāpāramitā sūtra (Inv. No. 1763), which suggests that each juan of this sutra
may have begun with the same frontispiece. In turn, this also demonstrates that
the image was not arbitrary but had a significance for this particular sutra. To cite
another example, the concertina manuscript Inv. No. 150 (IOM) of the Tangut
translation of the Dirghāgama sūtra also has a printed frontispiece, likewise
showing the Buddha preaching to his disciples.618

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616 Rong 2013, 120.
617 Jean-Pierre Drège (2006, 348) points out that illustrations in books from Khara-khoto are
almost always in the form of frontispieces at the beginning of a book. In fact, this phenomenon
may not be limited to Tangut books because we can observe a similar pattern in Chinese books
with Buddhist texts.
618 Colour photographs of these manuscripts appear at the beginning of the facsimile edition
of Khara-khoto materials in Russian collections, published in Shanghai (Eluosi kexueyuan dong-
fang yanjiusuo Shengbidebao fensuo et al. 1996–, vols. 15 and 17).
An additional way of mixing manuscript and print within the same physical book was to use recycled paper on the cover of concertinas. One such case is manuscript Inv. No. 1786 (IOM), a manuscript copy of *juan 195* of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā sūtra*, in which the cover is reinforced with recycled paper, the pages of which are turned inwards. Even so, part of the text on the paper used for the binding shows through and it is possible to discern that these used to be pages of a printed dictionary.

The above examples show that even after the spread of print technology, printed books did not supersede manuscripts but complemented those. We can find little evidence of any conflict between the two technologies and in most cases it is discernible that manuscript production had a different function from printing. Printed books often included text written by hand for a variety of reasons, either to correct printing errors and replenish missing text, or as part of the daily use of the book (e.g. punctuation, reading marks, notes, comments, dedications or colophons). Similarly, manuscripts could be supplemented by printed material, such as the illustrations seen at the beginning of the manuscript copies of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā sūtra* and *Dirghāgama sūtra* in the Kozlov collection. Accordingly, printing was not seen as a more advanced technology that cut costs and maximised efficiency and the clear line that separates it from manuscript production is to a great extent a modern construct.619

### 5.5 Editions and print runs

The two pages of the printed edition of the Tangut *Sunzi* where the missing text was replaced by hand (Fig. 15) merit an additional observation, namely, that the damaged woodblock used for the printing was probably not new. Otherwise the block causing the problem would have almost certainly been carved anew while the whole project was still in process and the original carvers were available. In our case, however, the woodblock was used in its defective form, suggesting that the printing was done at a later time, possibly long after the blocks had been carved. This point brings up an important question regarding the date of the book, since there could have been a significant stretch of time between the initial

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619 Discussing reading in early modern England, Heidi Brayman Hackel (2005, 33) emphasizes that “[t]he material differences between print and manuscript, important though they are, are exaggerated and institutionalized by modern research tools and methods: with separate stacks, curatorial staffs, and reference guides, printed books and manuscript volumes are too neatly segregated in modern research and scholarship.”
print run done shortly after the blocks were carved and the one we have today. It is also true that older blocks are more likely to be damaged, whether on account of being stored improperly or due to repeated use. Even though the Tangut *Sunzi* is undated, the possibility that there is a gap of several decades between the time the text was translated and first printed and the time the St. Petersburg copy was produced raises the possibility that this copy may have been printed after the Mongol conquest of Khara-khoto in 1227.

![Image: The two damaged pages (one folio) from the printed *Sunzi* in which the missing characters on the top were replaced by hand. (Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Inv. No. 773. Image used with permission.)](image)

Modern scholars generally believe that Tangut translations of Chinese military texts were produced in the second half of the 12th century but this is merely a hypothesis that is based on the fact that the Chinese classics, which are likewise

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620 This item is accidentally marked in earlier publications as Inv. No. 771. I am grateful for Viacheslav Zaytsev of the IOM for pointing out this to me.
Manuscript and print

secular in nature, were also translated at that time.\(^{621}\) An additional evidence is an opinion expressed in oral form by Menshikov regarding the type of paper.\(^{622}\) At the moment we have no reasons to doubt this conclusion but its conjectural nature is worth keeping in mind. Yet to further assume that the excavated copies of military works are also from this time would only be possible if they had all been printed shortly after being translated. The damaged woodblock of the Tangut *Sunzi* points to a different scenario in which multiple print runs may have been produced from the same set of blocks, possibly decades apart. Such cases are well documented in the rich scholarship on Song print culture and there is no reason to suppose that contemporaneous Tangut publishing, which admittedly owed a great deal to Song print culture, functioned in a dissimilar manner. Considering the volume and relatively early date of printed books discovered at Khara-khoto, it would be important to include all this material in traditional research on Chinese editions (i.e. the field of *banbenxue* 版本學) and, conversely, to apply the extensive expertise of scholars working in that field for studying the Tangut books from Khara-khoto.

Whether the Tangut edition of the *Sunzi* postdates the Mongol conquest or not, it has no implications for the date of the manuscript copy. This is clearly the case even if I am correct in assuming that it was copied from the printed edition, rather than the other way around, because nothing suggests that it was copied from this particular print run. Indeed, it could have easily been copied from the first print, not long after the translation of the Chinese original was accomplished. Therefore, in a paradoxical way it is also possible that even though the manuscript was based on the printed edition, it predates our copy of that edition by several decades on account of having been produced from an earlier print run made with the same printing blocks.

In the previous pages we have examined the relationship between two surviving versions of the Tangut translation of the *Sunzi* followed by the *Biography of Sunzi*. The combination of these two otherwise distinct texts was probably part of a lost Chinese edition which was available in the Tangut state. The two Tangut versions clearly represent the same translation as the discrepancies between them are minor and for the most part inconsequential. Having compared the printed version against the manuscript, modern scholars came to the conclusion that the printed version postdated the manuscript, correcting and supplementing it in a number of instances. Accordingly, the manuscript copy was assumed to have served as a draft copy in the process of producing the printed edition. I take

\(^{621}\) Keping 1979, 10.  
\(^{622}\) Ibid.
issue with this assumption and argue that the manuscript copy was made from the printed edition, even though not necessarily from the one we have today.

In itself, trying to determine which version was the earlier one is of minor import and may seem like a trivial pursuit. It does not fundamentally change our understanding of the Tangut translation. Yet this particular case helps to reconsider some long-held assumptions concerning the relationship between manuscript and print in the medieval period. It goes against the common, typically un-stated, belief that manuscripts predate printed texts, which ultimately stems from a linear view of the history of the book. By examining the two versions of the Tangut Sunzi and drawing on evidence from other texts found at Dunhuang and Khara-khoto, I attempted to expose the faults of this assumption and demonstrate that manuscripts not only continued to be used after the introduction of print technology but the two modes of book production complemented each other in a symbiotic way. Woodblock printing was not considered a radically new technology that rendered older modes of production obsolete. Quite the opposite, scribal and printed cultures coexisted for centuries, as is evidenced by the corpus of Chinese, Tangut and Tibetan texts found in Khara-khoto. Even the much earlier Dunhuang corpus includes manuscripts made from printed editions, yet another indication that without other supportive evidence manuscripts should not automatically be judged to be earlier than printed texts.

Finally, the case presented here attests to the significance of the materiality of excavated texts. Former research has given little attention to this aspect of the Tangut Sunzi (and other Tangut books and fragments) and primarily focused on textual and linguistic issues, even though the physical form of these manuscripts and printed books affords important clues to the circumstances of their production and use, not to speak of the relationship between different versions. Including these parameters in our enquiry enables us to uncover a wealth of additional information which in turn has implications for interpreting the social and cultural conditions of the texts in their original social setting. This chapter tries to call attention to the inherent potential of such an approach for enhancing our understanding of the Tangut book, be it printed or written by hand.