

---

# 5-005 - New Developments in Tangut Studies: Reinvigorating an Inner Asian Epitome

 Friday, March 14, 2025

 3:30 PM - 5:00 PM

 Room B242/B243 (Level 2, Convention Center)

---

Tangut studies, despite their vital contribution to understanding the history of China and Inner Asia, emerged relatively late in academia. Although initial attention to this field was sparked by the early 20th-century discovery of materials at Khara-Khoto, an abandoned city in present-day Inner Mongolia, it was not until the late 1990s that significant advancements occurred, marked by the publication of facsimiles of Khara-Khoto texts and crucial breakthroughs in deciphering the Tangut language.

These advancements have not only expanded our ability to access and interpret Tangut materials, but also prompted important questions regarding their broader implications across various scholarly disciplines. This panel aims to explore new directions in Tangut studies by integrating insights from linguistics, Chinese history, religion, and art history. It also investigates how a deeper engagement with Tangut studies can open new theoretical and methodological avenues and, concurrently, offer innovative perspectives to other academic fields.

In this panel, Mathieu Beaudouin introduces recent findings in Tangut linguistics and discusses how these new insights can enhance the philological engagement with Tangut texts. Zhouyang Ma reinvestigates the two Tangut *dhāraṇī* pillars in Hebei, demonstrating how they offer a new perspective on northern China's local history. Alla Sizova examines the ritual aspects of Tibetan Buddhism in the Tangut State through primary materials from Khara-Khoto and secondary historiographical narratives. Xiaotian Yin, from an art history perspective, explores the "Dance of the Sixteen Heavenly Devils" in the Yuan Empire, tracing its origins to the Tangut State and highlighting its intermediary role between Tibetans and Mongols.

---

## Organizer



Xiaotian Yin  
Harvard University

## Chair



Ruth Dunnell  
Kenyon College

## Discussant



Ruth Dunnell  
Kenyon College

---

## Presentations

What Can the Modern Linguistic Study of Tangut Bring to Our Understanding of Tangut Texts?

**Mathieu Beaudouin**, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

 Room B242/B243 (Level 2, Convention Center)

The 1502 Tangut Dhāraṇī Pillars Revisited: An Alternative Perspective on the Local History of Post-Jin Northern China

**Zhouyang Ma**, *Austrian Academy of Sciences*

 Room B242/B243 (Level 2, Convention Center)

The Ritual Aspect of Tibetan Buddhism in the Tangut State: Manuscript Collections and Historical Sources

**Alla Sizova**, *Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich*

 Room B242/B243 (Level 2, Convention Center)

The Divine Companions: Visual Representations of the “Dance of the Sixteen Heavenly Devils” in Inner Asia, 12th to 15th Century

**Xiaotian Yin**, *Harvard University*

 Room B242/B243 (Level 2, Convention Center)

---

**View Related**

---