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Guillaume Jacques

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## THE STRUCTURE OF THE TANGUT VERB<sup>1</sup>

**Guillaume Jacques**

*CNRS (CRLAO), Paris*

### ABSTRACT

Abstract: The present paper is an attempt at analyzing the verbal morphology of Tangut from the point of view of both Tangut texts and modern Qiangic languages, its closest living relatives.

Modern Qiangic languages, especially Rgyalrong, have a very strict verbal template. In this article, we propose that Tangut also had a verbal template, which was probably the result of independent grammaticalization rather than a shared inheritance with Rgyalrong. Then, we discuss apparent counterexamples to the proposed template and argue that other explanations are possible to account for them. Finally, we demonstrate the (previously unnoticed) existence of verbal incorporation in Tangut.

### SUBJECT KEYWORDS

Tangut, Rgyalrong, Japhug, incorporation, directional prefixes, templatic morphology

As in Middle and Modern Chinese, in the Tangut script, there is a one-to-one relation between syllables and characters. No word boundaries are represented in any way, giving the misleading impression that verbal prefixes and suffixes were just clitics or independent particles.

In this paper, drawing on comparative data from modern Qiangic languages and Tangut texts, we will try to answer an important question regarding the degree of grammaticalization of directional prefixes in Tangut: are they fully grammaticalized affixes as in Rgyalrong, or do they preserve some degree of freedom, like the directional prefixes of German or Vedic?

In order to solve this problem, we will try to establish the structure of the Tangut verb template, and then analyze in detail all the examples that seem to deviate from it and are not attested in modern Qiangic languages.

#### 1. THE VERBAL TEMPLATE IN RGYALRONG

Tangut belongs to the Qiangic subgroup of Sino-Tibetan. Some languages among the Qiangic group have a remarkably complex verbal morphology, especially Rgyalrong languages (Japhug, Situ, Tshobdun and Showu, see Sun 2000 and Jacques 2008a).

Rgyalrong languages have a very strict verbal template, mostly prefixing.<sup>2</sup> A verb can have up to five or six different prefixes, and at most three suffixes. The order of the prefixes in the template never changes in a given language variety, but can differ across dialects of the same language (see for instance Jacques 2008a:249). The basic structure is the same in all Rgyalrong languages. Here is a simplified representation of the Japhug verbal template (Jacques 2008a:197-198):

flexional prefixes						derivational prefixes				V	flexional suffixes	
a-	mu- my-	ɕu- yu-		tu-	wɣ-	ʒɣɣ-	su-	-a -ɣ	nu-		-t	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

Table 1: The Japhug verbal template.

- (1) Irrealis
- (2) negation

- (3) Translocative/Cislocative
- (4) Directional prefixes
- (5) Second person
- (6) Inverse
- (7) Reflexive
- (8) Causative
- (9) Passive
- (10) Autobenefactive
- (11) Verb root
- (12) Aorist 1sg/2sg transitive
- (13) Personal agreement suffixes

The most noteworthy feature of this template is that negative prefixes always appear before directional prefixes, which themselves occur before the reflexive prefix. In the following sections, we will argue that Tangut data can also be accounted for by assuming the existence of a verbal template.

## 2. TANGUT DIRECTIONAL AND NEGATIVE MORPHEMES

The Tangut verb presents some similarity to the Japhug one, although it has fewer distinct affixes. As in Japhug, we find several series of directional morphemes, first described by Kepping (1985:190):

	up	down	closer	farther	transloc.	cisloc.	neutral
series	𐰇	𐰈	𐰉	𐰊	𐰋	𐰌	𐰍
1	.ja <sup>0</sup>	nja <sup>1</sup>	kji <sup>1</sup>	wji <sup>2</sup>	dja <sup>2</sup>	dji <sup>2</sup>	rji <sup>2</sup>
series	𐰎	𐰏	𐰐	𐰑	𐰒	𐰓	𐰔
2	jij <sup>1</sup>	njij <sup>2</sup>	kjij <sup>1</sup>	wjij <sup>2</sup>	djij <sup>2</sup>	djij <sup>2</sup>	rjij <sup>2</sup>

Table 2: Tangut directional prefixes.

The character 𐰇 .ja is also used to transcribe an interrogative verbal prefix (Kepping 1985:199), which will be discussed in section 5 of this paper.

Several distinct negation morphemes are also found:

𐰕 mji <sup>1</sup>	basic negation
𐰖 mjij <sup>2</sup>	past negation
𐰗 mji <sup>1</sup>	negation of modal verbs
𐰘 tji <sup>1</sup>	prohibitive

Table 3: Tangut negations.

For movement and concrete action verbs, the directionals indicate the direction of the action, but for most verbs, they seem to have been already grammaticalized and are used to indicate TAM parameters.

Negative and directional morphemes rarely co-occur, but when they do, the order is very strict: unlike Japhug, the negative morphemes appear after, not before, the directional prefix (Kepping 1985:188). This order, however, is also found in modern languages, for instance in Shixing (Chirkova 2009:63).

Here are some examples illustrating this order:<sup>3</sup>

- 1) 𠵹      𠵺      𠵻      𠵼      𠵽  
 1567    1906    4507    4521    5258  
 gj<sup>i2</sup>    nioow<sup>1</sup>    cio<sup>1</sup>    jaar<sup>2</sup>    io<sup>1</sup>  
 boy    after    follow    cry    CONJ

𠵾      𠵿      𠶀  
 1452    1918    0134

nja<sup>1</sup>-mji<sup>1</sup>-ju<sup>1</sup>  
 DIR1-NEG-look

The boy followed (her) crying, but she wouldn't even look at him (Cixiao 11.8-12.1, Jacques 2007:39)<sup>4</sup>

- 2) 𠶁      𠶂      𠶃      𠶄      𠶅      𠶆  
 4342    1734    0509    4174    4868    0433  
 dja<sup>2</sup>-tji<sup>1</sup>-thjowr<sup>2</sup>mju<sup>2</sup>                      gjii<sup>2</sup>    bju<sup>1</sup>  
 DIR1-PROHIB-move                              want    INSTR

As he did not want her to have to move (by herself), (Leilin 03.29A.1)

- 3) 𠶇      𠶈      𠶉      𠶊      𠶋      𠶌  
 2628    0243    1139    2590    1918    0134  
 goor<sup>1</sup>    sji<sup>2</sup>    .jij<sup>1</sup>    .wji<sup>2</sup>-mji<sup>1</sup>-.ju<sup>1</sup>  
 boy    girl    GEN    DIR1-NEG-look

He wouldn't look at these boys and girls. (Leilin 03.32B.6-7)

- 4) 𠶍      𠶎      𠶏      𠶐      𠶑      𠶒      𠶓  
 3926    1526    3818    0497    5354    2590    0290  
 nja<sup>2</sup>    tshji<sup>2</sup>-mjijr<sup>2</sup>    ŋewr<sup>2</sup>    thji<sup>2</sup>    .wji<sup>2</sup>-sju<sup>2</sup>  
 you    serve-NMLZ:A    many    this    DIR1-be\_like

循	𠵼	𠵼	𠵼	𠵼
2341	4568	4601	3092	3583
tɕier <sup>1</sup>	phjo <sup>2</sup> -nja <sup>2</sup>		dji <sup>2</sup>	tja <sup>1</sup>
interest	send[2]-2SG		CONCSV	TOP
𠵼	𠵼	𠵼	𠵼	
4342	1918	2893	734	
dja <sup>1</sup> -mji <sup>1</sup> -khwej <sup>2</sup> -mo <sup>2</sup>				
DIR1-NEG-big-IRR				

You use so many servants, aren't they too much (for you to handle)? (Leilin 03.18A.5-6)

The examples above show that directional and negation morphemes appear in a fixed order, but do not prove that they are real prefixes in the same way as the prefixes of the Rgyalrong verbal system: they could be clitics, or even independent morphemes that just happen to follow an ordering constraint.

In order to determine whether the hypothesis that directional and negation morphemes are real prefixes is tenable, we will have to provide an account for all examples in which the plain order [directional+negation+verb root] is breached by having a directional morpheme appear without a verb or is separated from the verb root by another element. We found four such situations.<sup>5</sup> First, the character 𠵼 kjɿ<sup>1</sup> when not followed by a verb. Second, 'double' directional prefixes. Third, a grammatical element 𠵼 ljɿ<sup>1</sup>, 𠵼 tɕhɿ<sup>1</sup> or 𠵼 tsjɿ<sup>1</sup> inserted between the directional or negation morpheme and the verb. Fourth, a noun between the directional morpheme and the verb root.

After having accounted for all these cases, we will propose a series of phonological arguments to support the hypothesis that directional morphemes were real prefixes.

### 3. THE CHARACTER KJɿ<sup>1</sup>

Nishida (2002:8) and Lin (2006, 2007:177-181) have noticed numerous examples of the character 𠵼 kjɿ<sup>1</sup> appearing in three contexts where directional morphemes do not usually occur.

First, it is found before various postpositions together with the interrogative 𠵼 ljɿ<sup>1</sup> (Lin 2007:180):

5)	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗
	4435	1326	3583	0206	4435	1326
	lji <sup>1</sup>	kji <sup>1</sup>	tja <sup>1</sup>	buu <sup>2</sup>	lji <sup>1</sup>	kji <sup>1</sup>
	what	???	TOP	victorious	what	???
	𣪗	𣪗				

3583      3570  
tja<sup>1</sup>      dzju<sup>2</sup>  
TOP      weak

What is victory, and what is weakness? (*dirghāgasūtra*)

6)	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗
	4435	1326	3349	795	2373
	lji <sup>1</sup>	kji <sup>1</sup>	rjijr <sup>2</sup>	rji <sup>2</sup> -lji <sup>2</sup>	
	what	???	LOC	DIR1-come	

Where is he from? (*puṇḍarīkasūtra*)

Second, it can appear before another verbal prefix:

7)	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗
	1999	1084	4740	3798	1326	2590 2474
	ŋwə <sup>1</sup> ɣa <sup>2</sup>		kja <sup>2</sup>	tsəj <sup>1</sup>	kji <sup>1</sup>	.wji <sup>2</sup> -rar <sup>2</sup>
	fifty		kalpa	small	???	DIR1-pass
	𣪗					

3092  
dji<sup>2</sup>  
although

Although fifty kalpa have passed (*puṇḍarīkasūtra*)

Other instances of alleged “double” directional prefixes will be treated in section 4.

Third, it is found at the end of sentences (Lin 2007:181):

8)	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗	𣪗
	2467	4751	3575	4481	1326
	.wja <sup>1</sup>	sej <sup>1</sup>	nji <sup>2</sup>	ɕji <sup>1</sup>	kji <sup>1</sup>
	flower	pure	listen[2]	go[2]	???

Go to listen to the Lotus (*puṇḍarīkasūtra*)

The versatility of use of the character 𑖇 *kji*<sup>1</sup> strongly suggests that it is used to transcribe at least three distinct morphemes: first, the well-known directional prefix; second, an adverbial element that can appear at the end of a noun phrase (examples (5) to (7)); third, a sentence-final particle or a verbal suffix.

Given the limited number of available examples and the fact that they all come from Buddhist texts, it is too early to propose a reliable analysis of their grammatical function. A possibility is that the noun-phrase final 𑖇 *kji*<sup>1</sup> in (5) to (7) is a variant of the numeral 𑖇 *gji*<sup>2</sup> ‘one’, and is thus cognate to the Japhug Rgyalrong indefinite *ci* ‘one, a little’. As 𑖇 *kji*<sup>1</sup> in examples (5) and (6), Japhug *ci* can also occur after an interrogative:

- 9) *nur*      *cu*      *ci*      *ku-nur-ŋu*      *ku*  
 DEM      who      INDEF      GENR:S-auto-be      Q  
 “Who is it (who does all that) ?” (Kunbzang, 333).

This indefinite *ci* also occurs after noun phrases containing a numeral, and has the meaning of ‘approximately’:

- 10) *ɛnur-tyxur*      *ur-ro*      *ci*      *ko-ɕe*  
 two-turn      3SG.POSS-rest      INDEF      EVD:EAST-go  
*pjɣ-cha*      *ɲu-ŋu*  
 EVD-can      CONST-be

He could run a little more than two turns. (The Prince, 108).

We know too little about both Tangut and Rgyalrong historical phonology to have any certainty regarding any possible relationship between 𑖇 *kji*<sup>1</sup> and *ci*, but this seems a possibility, which will be testable when more examples from Tangut texts such as (5) or (7) come to light. This hypothesis, in any case, does not apply to sentence-final 𑖇 *kji*<sup>1</sup>, for which a distinct explanation will be necessary.

#### 4. DOUBLE DIRECTIONAL PREFIXES?

In Rgyalrong languages, as well as in most modern languages of Western Sichuan,<sup>6</sup> no verb can have two directional prefixes at the same time: there is only one prefixal slot. However, in Tangut, some examples appear to contradict this

general principle. In the previous section, we have already discussed the case of 𪔐  $kj^1$ , which occurs before other directional prefixes in examples such as (7). We have argued that in these cases it was better to consider 𪔐  $kj^1$  not as a directional prefix, but as an indefinite.

However, other cases of “double” directional prefixes have been mentioned. Kepping (1979:306) noticed the following example:

- 11) 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐  
 3045 5964 1139 1793 4797 795 2590 5113  
 tshew<sup>1</sup>tsha<sup>1</sup> .jij<sup>1</sup> lhji.jwir<sup>2</sup> rjir<sup>2</sup>-.wji<sup>2</sup>-.wji<sup>1</sup>  
 Cao Cao GEN declaration of war DIR1-???- make [1]  
 𪔐  
 2503  
 ku<sup>1</sup>  
 after

(Yuan Shao had Chen Lin) write the declaration of war against Cao Cao. (Leilin 05.18A.6)

Lin (2007:178) discovered two other such examples in Leilin. Here is one of them:

- 12) 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐  
 1245 1543 2019 0724 1139 3099 5645  
 .jij<sup>1</sup>mjor<sup>1</sup> thja<sup>1</sup> nji<sup>2</sup> .jij<sup>1</sup> dzjiij<sup>1</sup> tji<sup>2</sup>  
 oneself this PL GEN live place  
 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐  
 3622 2560 795 2590 5113  
 kjir<sup>2</sup>.jij<sup>2</sup> rjir<sup>2</sup>-.wji<sup>2</sup>-.wji<sup>1</sup>  
 house DIR1-???- make[1]

(Zhang Gang) himself had houses (prepared) for them to live in. (Leilin 03.10A.3-4)

All three examples involve the same verb 𪔐.wji<sup>1</sup> “to do, to make, to become” with the same set of directional prefixes 𪔐 𪔐 rjir<sup>2</sup> .wji<sup>2</sup>. 𪔐.wji<sup>1</sup> is normally only used with 𪔐 rjir<sup>2</sup>, as in the following example:

- 13) 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐 𪔐  
 2592 1778 567 3622 448 795 5113  
 la<sup>2</sup> .ju<sup>2</sup>rjir<sup>2</sup> kjir<sup>2</sup> gjir<sup>2</sup> rjir<sup>2</sup>-.wji<sup>2</sup>  
 tomb before house one DIR1-make[1]

He made a house in front of his tomb. (Leilin 03.30A.4-5)

The main problem here is therefore the presence of the prefix 𪚩 .wji<sup>2</sup>. A possible explanation for this phenomenon is to assume that the character 𪚩 .wji<sup>2</sup> here, like 𪚩 kji<sup>1</sup> in the previous section, does not transcribe a directional prefix. However, treating it as an adverb is not satisfactory, since 𪚩 .wji<sup>2</sup> appears between the directional prefix and the verb root, and therefore belongs to the verbal word. A better hypothesis is to assume that 𪚩 .wji<sup>2</sup> is used to represent in the writing system the partially reduplicated form of the verb root 𪚩 .wji<sup>1</sup>. The -ji / -jɨ vowel alternation in the reduplicated form would be expected (see Gong 2003 :612-3). Since no character had been specially devised to write the reduplicated form of ‘to do’, the only option would have been to use a *jiajie* character, and 𪚩 .wji<sup>2</sup> was probably chosen instead of other homophonous characters read .wji because it is one of the most common characters in the Tangut language.

The analysis proposed in section 3 and 4 suggests that all cases of ‘double’ directional prefixes in Tangut deserve an alternative analysis, and that no certain examples of double directional prefix have been found in Tangut texts up to now. In future investigations of Tangut texts, the following type of examples could be taken as evidence for genuine cases of double directional prefixes: a verb with two directional prefixes, the first of which is not 𪚩 kji<sup>1</sup>, and the second of which cannot be interpreted as the reduplicated form of the verb root.

## 5. MODAL PREFIXES

Three distinct grammatical elements can appear between the directional or negative morphemes and the verb root: 𪚩 lji<sup>1</sup>, 𪚩 tɕhji<sup>1</sup> and 𪚩 tsji<sup>1</sup>. Since all three are used to transcribe a variety of entirely distinct morphemes, the situation is quite confusing. In this section, we will present an account of the various uses of each of these characters, and then concentrate on their function when they are inserted between the directional morpheme and the verb root.

Outside of the verbal system, the character 𪚩 tɕhji<sup>1</sup> is used to transcribe a demonstrative, whose distribution is quite limited: it almost only occurs in the collocation 𪚩 tɕhji<sup>1</sup>zjo<sup>2</sup> ‘that time’. It can never be used alone as an independent pronoun.

𪚩 tɕhji<sup>1</sup> can also appear between the verb stem and the interrogative prefix 𪚩 .ja or a directional morpheme of the second series (optative), as illustrated by the following examples:

14) 𪚩 𪚩 𪚩 𪚩 𪚩 𪚩

3513	1139	2750	5981	<b>1374</b>	930
mə <sup>1</sup>	.jij <sup>1</sup>	yu <sup>1</sup>	.ja- <b>tchji<sup>1</sup></b> -dju <sup>1</sup>		
sky	GEN	head	Q-???-have[1]		

Does the sky have a head? (Leilin 05.14A.1)

15) 甞 𠵹 𠵺 𠵻 𠵼

4028	2219	<b>1374</b>	330	4601
nji <sup>2</sup>	kjij <sup>1</sup> - <b>tchji<sup>1</sup></b> -mjij <sup>1</sup> -nja <sup>2</sup>			
you	DIR2-???-dream-2SG			

Did you have a dream? (Leilin 06.16B.4)

Besides, this element 𠵺 tchji<sup>1</sup> appears with the negation 𠵻 mji<sup>1</sup> prefixed to the verb root. The compound 𠵻 𠵺 mji<sup>1</sup>tchji<sup>1</sup> means “impossible to”; this special phenomenon is discussed in detail in Kepping (1985:292-4).

16) 𠵽 𠵾 𠵿 𠶀 𠶁 𠶂 𠶃

3133	0261	1531	1139	0795	0676	0046
sjij <sup>1</sup>	mjo <sup>2</sup>	gja <sup>1</sup>	jij <sup>1</sup>	rjir <sup>2</sup>	wjij <sup>1</sup>	ljij <sup>1</sup>
today	I	army	GEN	DIR1-depart		see[1]
𠵻 𠵼	𠵽 𠵾	𠵿 𠶀	𠶁 𠶂			
5643	3092	2912	3092			
mji <sup>2</sup> dji <sup>2</sup>		lhjwo <sup>1</sup> -dji <sup>2</sup>				
CONCSV		come_back-DUR				
𠵻 𠵼	𠵽 𠵾	𠵿 𠶀	𠶁 𠶂			
5643	1374	4803	2098			
mji <sup>1</sup> - <b>tchji<sup>1</sup></b> -lji <sup>2</sup> -ŋa <sup>2</sup>						
NEG-???	-see[2]	-1SG				

Today I see the army leaving, but I will not see it come back (Leilin 03.16B.6-7)

Kepping (1985:294) cites an example where the directional prefix 𠵽 .wji<sup>2</sup> appears before 𠵻 𠵺 mji<sup>1</sup>tchji<sup>1</sup>, showing that there is no constraint against having a verb prefixed with these three elements.

An anonymous reviewer of this article thought that the element 𠵺 tchji<sup>1</sup> was to be interpreted as an infixed pronoun coreferent with the patient (or with the only argument for intransitive verb). However, there are three reasons why this cannot be the case. First, as we mentioned above, 𠵺 tchji<sup>1</sup> only a demonstrative, is never used as a pronoun in Tangut, and even in this function as a demonstrative is

restricted to a few lexical items. Second, 𠵹 tɕhji<sup>1</sup> also appears in sentences where both agent and patient are overt:

17)	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	
	0803	1195	3126	0214	4508	5643	1374	4658
	rjar <sup>2</sup>	khie <sup>2</sup>	dʒij <sup>2</sup>	lu <sup>2</sup>	tji <sup>1</sup>	mji <sup>1</sup> -tɕhji <sup>1</sup> -thji <sup>1</sup>		
	horse	yak	have[1]	poor	meal	NEG- ???-drink		

The one who is poor in horses and yaks will not eat to satiety. (Tangut Proverbs 11b.1, Kychanov 1974:172).

Third, if 𠵹 tɕhji<sup>1</sup> truly were a pronoun, one would not be able to explain why the negative prefix 𠵹 mji<sup>1</sup> is used, as it normally appears only with modal verbs. For these three reasons, it seems more reasonable to treat 𠵹 tɕhji<sup>1</sup> as a verbal prefix unrelated to the demonstrative as Kepping did. It is not entirely clear which gloss would be most appropriate to describe the functions of the verbal prefix 𠵹 tɕhji<sup>1</sup>, but we can tentatively describe it as a marker of *potential* modality.

𠵹 lji<sup>1</sup> is used as a conjunction linking two nouns inside a noun phrase (Kepping 1985:318):

18)	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	
	1030	1234	2456	4444	2259	5045	0201	0724
	tɕjow <sup>1</sup> thji <sup>1</sup> se <sup>1</sup>			lji <sup>1</sup>	miej <sup>2</sup> kjwī <sup>1</sup> mji <sup>1</sup>			nji <sup>2</sup>
	Zhang Tianxi			and	Meng Junming			PL
	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹				
	5604	5113	0804	3600				
	dʒi.wji <sup>1</sup>		dji <sup>2</sup> -ɣju <sup>1</sup>					
	ERG		DIR1-call					

Zhang Tianxi (張天錫) and Meng Junming (孟君明) invited him. (Leilin 03.36B.2-3)

However, Kepping also points out that this morpheme is used as a concessive particle; it normally appears before directional and negative morphemes:

19)	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	𠵹	
	2872	1685	4444	1918	2797	1567	5087
	.wɛ <sup>1</sup> khjī <sup>1</sup>		lji <sup>1</sup>	mji <sup>1</sup> -lho		gji <sup>2</sup>	.jow <sup>1</sup>
	Wen Qin		CONCSV	NEG-go_out		son	Yang
	𠵹	𠵹					

2590 2912

.wji<sup>2</sup>-lhjwo<sup>1</sup>

DIR1-come\_back

Since Wen Qin (文欽) did not show up, his son Yang (楊) retreated.

(Sunzi, 9A-7b)

Lin (1995: 4.28-29#85) found an example where the concessive 黻 lji<sup>1</sup> is placed between the directional and the verb:

20)	𪛗	徧	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗
	2541	1139	2627	5258	2975	3744
	dzjwo <sup>2</sup>	.jij <sup>1</sup>	lji <sup>2</sup> .io <sup>1</sup>		tsjiir <sup>1</sup> dziej <sup>2</sup>	

man	DAT	place		title
𪛗	黻	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗
5981	<b>4444</b>	<b>2639</b>	5113	3092
	.ja-lji <sup>1</sup> -mjiij <sup>2</sup> -	wji <sup>1</sup>	djiij <sup>2</sup>	khjow <sup>1</sup> -lew <sup>2</sup>

DIR1-CONCSV-name-make[1]	CONCS	offer[1]-
	V	NOM

𪛗	𪛗
1918	0930
mji <sup>1</sup> -dju <sup>1</sup>	

NEG-have[1]

Although he granted land titles to these people, he had no (land) to give them. (Sunzi, 7A.4b).

This extremely interesting example also presents a noun between 黻 lji<sup>1</sup> and the verb root. This will be examined as an example of noun incorporation in the next section.

Lin's example is by no means isolated in the corpus of Tangut texts. We found two other sentences of the same type. In the first one, 黻 lji<sup>1</sup> occurs after the directional 𪛗 kji<sup>1</sup>:

21)	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	黻	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗
	1183	2893	1326	<b>4444</b>	0508	3092	3133
	da <sup>2</sup>	khwej <sup>2</sup>	kji <sup>1</sup> -lji <sup>1</sup> -ŋwu <sup>2</sup>		djiij <sup>2</sup>	sjiij <sup>1</sup>	
	affair	big	DIR1-CONCSV-be		CONCSV	today	
	𪛗	徧	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗
	5354	1139	5791	1796	2937	2536	2912
	thji <sup>2</sup>	.jij <sup>1</sup>	.wja <sup>2</sup>	tchju <sup>1</sup>	lhjiij	.wjiij <sup>2</sup> -lhjwo <sup>1</sup>	

him GEN send Chu country DIR2-come\_back

Even in important matters, (he will succeed). If we send him today back to Chu, (our country will make peace with Chu). (Twelve kingdoms 2.52.1-2, Solonin 1995:60;113, Nie 2002:202).

Of course, one could argue here that 𪛗 *kji*<sup>1</sup> should not be analyzed as a directional in this example. However, this argument cannot be used in the following sentence:

22)	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗
	0795	4444	5113	5643	4444	5176
	rjɿ <sup>2</sup> -ljɿ <sup>1</sup> -.wji <sup>1</sup>		mji <sup>1</sup> -ljɿ <sup>1</sup> -dzioow <sup>2</sup>			
	DIR1-CONCSV-do			NEG-CONCSV-may		
	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗
	5981	4444	4859	5643	4444	0139
	.ja-ljɿ <sup>1</sup> -to <sup>2</sup>		mji <sup>1</sup> -ljɿ <sup>1</sup> -nej <sup>2</sup>			
	DIR1-CONCSV-end			NEG-CONCSV-profitable		

Although it is done, it is not satisfying; although it is completed, it is not profitable. (Tangut Proverbs 29a.3, Kychanov 1974:122,209)<sup>7</sup>

Here 𪛗 *ljɿ*<sup>1</sup> appears with the modal negation 𪛗 *nji*<sup>1</sup> and derivational morphemes of the first series. Although the meaning of the sentence cannot be ascertained for sure, it confirms the fact that the concessive 𪛗 *ljɿ*<sup>1</sup> can appear between a directional or a negation and the verb root as in example (20). The concessive prefix 𪛗 *ljɿ*<sup>1</sup>, like 𪛗 *tɕji*<sup>1</sup>, occurs between the negation and the verb, but before incorporated nouns.

Examples such as (19) show that the concessive 𪛗 *ljɿ*<sup>1</sup> can appear in two distinct positions within the verbal complex; this variability suggests that the process of incorporation of this element into the verb complex was not yet entirely completed at the time Tangut texts were written.

Another grammatical element that can be used between directional morphemes and the verb root is 𪛗 *tsji*<sup>1</sup>. The character 𪛗 *tsji*<sup>1</sup> normally transcribes an adverb meaning ‘also’ (Kepping 1985:318-9):

23)	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗
	0824	5417	1245	1139	4342	4225	5916 2885
	tɕji <sup>2</sup> rjar <sup>2</sup>		.jij <sup>1</sup>	.jij <sup>1</sup>	dja <sup>2</sup> -sja <sup>1</sup>	xā <sup>1</sup> phow <sup>1</sup>	
	immediately	oneself	GEN	DIR1-kill	Han Ping		
	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗	𪛗
	5026	1906	1245	5815	1245	1139	4342 4225

mji<sup>1</sup> nioow<sup>1</sup> .jij<sup>1</sup> tsji<sup>1</sup> .jij<sup>1</sup> .jij<sup>1</sup> dja<sup>2</sup>-sja<sup>1</sup>

hear[1] after oneself also oneself GEN DIR1-kill

He immediately killed himself. Han Ping 韓憑, when he heard this, committed suicide too. (Leilin 06.04B.3-4)

泚 tsji<sup>1</sup> is also used to transcribe an adjective meaning ‘small’, and appears in the reduplicated form 覈泚 tsja'tsji<sup>1</sup> ‘elder sister’:

24)	覈	泚	覈	覈	覈	覈
	416	5815	4601	2098	4543	2600
	tsja <sup>1</sup> tsji <sup>1</sup> -nja <sup>2</sup>		ŋa <sup>2</sup>	mər <sup>1</sup> mjar <sup>1</sup>		
	elder_sister-2SG		me	moustache		
	覈	泚	覈	泚	覈	覈
	4342	5670	4601	3425	3391	4601
	dja <sup>2</sup> -o <sup>1</sup> -nja <sup>2</sup>		pja <sup>2</sup> pji <sup>1</sup> -nja <sup>2</sup>			
	DIR1-have-2SG		grandfather-2SG			
	覈	泚	覈	泚	覈	覈
	2098	3371	1144	4342	5449	4601
	ŋa <sup>2</sup>	dzja <sup>1</sup> dji <sup>1</sup>		dja <sup>2</sup> -tji <sup>1</sup> -nja <sup>2</sup>		
	me	topknot		DIR1-put[1]-2SG		

You are my elder sister;<sup>8</sup> my moustache is here for you. You are my grandfather; my topknot was put for you. (Tangut proverbs 14b.5, Kychanov 1974:106;179).<sup>9</sup>

However, we find one example where 泚 tsji<sup>1</sup> is inserted between a directional from the first series and the verb root:

25)	覈	覈	覈	泚	泚	覈
	0551	0551	4889	1139	2518	1045
	.jow <sup>2</sup> .jow <sup>2</sup>		dzjwi <sup>1</sup>	.jij <sup>1</sup>	njiij <sup>1</sup>	da <sup>2</sup>
	relative		reciprocal	GEN	heart	word
	覈	泚	覈	泚	覈	泚
	1734	5612	5444	2763	3696	5124
	tji <sup>1</sup> -tshjiij <sup>1</sup>		lej <sup>2</sup> yu <sup>1</sup>	na <sup>1</sup> rar <sup>2</sup>		
	PROHIB-say[1]		night	tomorrow		
	覈	泚	覈			
	4342	5815	4041			

dja<sup>2</sup>-tsji<sup>1</sup>-kie<sup>2</sup>

DIR1-???-hate[1]

𢇛	𢇛	𢇛	𢇛	𢇛		
4092	4092	2541	1139	1014		
khie <sup>1</sup> ~khie <sup>1</sup>		dzjwo <sup>2</sup>	.jjj <sup>1</sup>	ɲwu <sup>1</sup>		
reciprocal~hate[1]		man	GEN	word		
𢇛	𢇛	𢇛	𢇛	𢇛	𢇛	𢇛
1734	3551	4884	1906	2503	3513	2627
tji <sup>1</sup> -niow <sup>2</sup> -nji <sup>2</sup>			niow <sup>1</sup> ku <sup>1</sup>		mə <sup>1</sup>	ljǐ <sup>1</sup>
PROHIB-evil-2PL			after		sky	earth
𢇛	𢇛	𢇛				
5981	5815	0756				

.ja-tsjǐ<sup>1</sup>-dzju<sup>2</sup>

DIR1-???-meet

If one does not say words from the heart to one's relatives – the next day, one will hate them. If one does not speak evil to the men one hates, afterwards sky and earth will meet. (Tangut proverbs 23a.1-2, Kychanov 1974:197).

Although, as with many Tangut proverbs, the exact meaning of this sentence is not entirely clear, the element written as 𢇛 tsji<sup>1</sup> must be a modal prefix whose place in the structure of the verb is the same as 𢇛 ljǐ<sup>1</sup> and 𢇛 tǎhji<sup>1</sup>. Additional examples are needed before one can determine its exact meaning.

Apart from these three prefixes, we find another prefixal element which can appear in the same position inside the verbal complex: 𢇛 mja<sup>1</sup>-, which occurs together with the enclitic 𢇛 mo<sup>2</sup> as a circumfix marking irrealis modality (Kepping 1985:317). Zhang (2009:23) presents an example showing that 𢇛 mja<sup>1</sup>- can be preceded by a directional prefix too.

## 6. INCORPORATION

In Tangut texts, in some very rare instances, we find a noun between the directional prefix and the main verb, as in example (20).<sup>10</sup> This could seem to be a very clear example of tmesis, where the prefix, in fact an independent adverb, can be

separated from the verb by another syntactic element. Apart from (20), we have found only three such examples:

- 26) 𠵹      𠵹      𠵹      𠵹      𠵹      𠵹  
 1567      1139      1326      **3266**      3852      4601  
 gji<sup>2</sup>      .jij<sup>1</sup>      kji<sup>1</sup>-**dzju**<sup>2</sup>-phjo<sup>2</sup>-nja<sup>2</sup>  
 son      GEN      DIR1-**lord**-cause[2]-2SG  
 You made your son lord (of Zhongshan) (Leilin 03.10B.4)

In this example, we could analyze 𠵹 kji<sup>1</sup> not as a directional prefix, but as an adverb as in examples (5) to (7). However, such an analysis is not an option with the two following sentences, when the directional prefix not 𠵹 kji<sup>1</sup>:

- 27) 𠵹      𠵹      𠵹      𠵹      𠵹      𠵹      𠵹  
 3798      4861      4962      3830      3045      5964      1139  
 tsəj<sup>1</sup>      zjo<sup>2</sup>      .we<sup>2</sup>      njij<sup>2</sup>      tshew<sup>1</sup>tsha<sup>2</sup>      .jij<sup>1</sup>  
 small      time      Wei      king      Cao Cao      GEN  
 𠵹      𠵹      𠵹  
 795      **524**      5522  
 rji<sup>2</sup>-**dzju**<sup>1</sup>-ljij<sup>2</sup>  
 DIR1-**order**-wait[2]  
 When he was young, he served Cao Cao, the king of Wei. (Leilin 06.21B.5-6)

- 28) 𠵹      𠵹      𠵹      𠵹      𠵹  
 0685      0685      0685      4342      **2518**  
 ŋa<sup>2</sup>      ŋa<sup>2</sup>      dja<sup>2</sup>-**njiij**<sup>1</sup>-ljij<sup>2</sup>  
 good      good      DIR1-**heart**-happy  
 He became very happy. (Leilin 06.29A.1)

In examples (26) and (27), the noun appearing between the directional prefix and the verb root is the O (the verb being transitive), whereas in the last one, an intransitive stative verb, the noun corresponds to the S.

However, the tmesis analysis is not the only possible one. In other Qiangic languages such as Rgyalrong, we find extremely grammaticalized cases of verbal incorporation (Jacques 2008a:89-91). As the following examples will show, the incorporated noun is sandwiched between a derivational prefix and the verb stem,

and sometimes undergoes vowel alternation.

noun	verb	incorporation	meaning
<i>qhu</i>	<i>ru</i>	<i>ny-qha-ru</i>	to turn around, 'back'
	'to look' it.		to look back
<i>si</i>	<i>phut</i>	<i>yw-su-phut</i>	to fell trees 'timber'
	'to chop' tr.		
<i>pcotsu</i>	<i>fsok</i>	<i>yw-pcotsu-fsok</i>	to earn money 'money' <sup>11</sup>
	'to earn' tr.		

Table 4: Examples of incorporation in Japhug.

Flexional prefixes such as directionals will of course appear before the noun, as in example (29), where the incorporated noun *-qha-* (*status constructus* of *qhu*) appears between the directional prefix *lu-* and the verb root *-ru*:

29) *tha-nutsum* *jamar* *ri* *ny*,  
 AOR:DOWNSTREAM.3 > 3-bring.back about CONJ CONJ  
*lu-nyqharu*

IPFV:UPSTREAM-look.back

As he was about to bring it back, he looked back inside (The Fox, 34)

Examples (26), (27), (28) and (20) are most probably instances of the same phenomenon. Ancient derivational prefixes have fused with the verb in Tangut, leaving at best only indirect traces (Gong 1999), so we should not expect a syllable corresponding to Japhug *yw-* or *ny-/nu-* to be present in Tangut.

The four examples presented above are probably not the only cases of noun incorporation in Tangut. However, in verb forms without a directional prefix, it is difficult to tell whether an object is incorporated or not. In the Tangut spoken language, a distinction might have existed between free noun and incorporated noun (tone sandhi might have occurred, for instance), but from the written sources, we have no way to decide.

## 7. PHONOLOGY

In sections 3-6 above, we have shown that all apparent counterexamples to the

basic order [directional+negation+verb] could be accounted for in various ways, and that directional and negation morphemes could be in all cases interpreted as prefixes; However, we have not yet definitely proven that they cannot be analyzed as clitics.

When studying a dead language such as Tangut, it is quite difficult to distinguish between affixes and clitics. However, as far as directional prefixes, negations and the three modal prefixes 𪛗 *ljɿ<sup>1</sup>*, 𪛘 *tɕhɿ<sup>1</sup>* and 𪛙 *tsjɿ<sup>1</sup>* are concerned, we do have an additional argument coming from phonology.

Going back to Table 2, one can observe that directional prefixes of series 1 only have two distinct rimes: *-ji* and *-ja* (rhyme *-jɿ* is a variant of *-ji* with a rhotic initial). The rhyme *-ji* is a reduced rhyme that appears in reduplicated forms, either in the first member (see section 4) or in the second member (in nouns such as 𪛗 𪛙 *tsja<sup>1</sup>tsjɿ<sup>1</sup>* ‘elder sister’ as we have seen in section 5). It can hardly be a coincidence that one of the negation prefixes, 𪛚 *mjɿ<sup>1</sup>*, as well as all three modal prefixes 𪛗 *ljɿ<sup>1</sup>*, 𪛘 *tɕhɿ<sup>1</sup>* and 𪛙 *tsjɿ<sup>1</sup>* also have the same rhyme. This can be explained as a case of phonological attrition caused after grammaticalisation. The same phenomenon is observed in other Qiangic languages where directional prefixes also tend to have a limited set of central or back unrounded vowels (in Japhug *-u* and *-ɤ*, Jacques 2008a:244-5). Data from Pumi<sup>12</sup> show a good correlation between the *-ja* in Tangut and *-ɜ* in Pumi and between *-ji* in Tangut and *-ə* in Pumi:

	Tangut	Pumi	Meaning
		tɔ-	up
𪛗	nja <sup>1</sup>	nɜ-	down
		khə-	in
		hɜ-	out
𪛘	djɿ <sup>2</sup>	də-	cislocative
𪛙	dja <sup>2</sup>	thɜ-	translocative

Table 5: Comparison of Tangut and Pumi directional prefixes.

These data are not compelling enough to prove that the directional system of Pumi and Tangut share the same origin (though this possibility should still be considered), but show that the process of phonological attrition took place in a similar manner in these two languages. Phonological attrition is more easily explained as a consequence of grammaticalization and agglutination to the verb stem.

Another piece of evidence comes from series 2 directional prefixes, which all have the rime *-jij*. This fact can be explained as the result of the fusion of the directional morpheme with a modal element which, unlike the three others 𪛗 *ljɿ<sup>1</sup>*, 𪛘 *tɕhɿ<sup>1</sup>* and 𪛙 *tsjɿ<sup>1</sup>*, was not maintained as a distinct syllable.<sup>13</sup> This fusion would

not be expected if both directional and modal morphemes were just clitics.

Vowel attrition and morpheme fusion are strong arguments in favor of analyzing directional and modal morphemes as prefixes.

## 8. CONCLUSION

In this paper, I have proposed that in the Tangut verb, prefixes occur in a fixed prefixal chain which can be aptly described as a template, typologically similar in structure to the Rgyalrong verb. Apparent deviations from this template were shown to be either caused by object incorporation, insertion of a different verbal prefix or simply a case of *jiajie* whereby a character normally used to transcribe a directional prefix is used to transcribe an unrelated syllable. I also suggest the need of a special slot for modal prefixes. The complete verbal template (without detailing all suffixes and vowel alternation) is the following:

Directional/ Interrogative	Negation	modal 𐰇 lji <sup>1</sup> 𐰇 tchji <sup>1</sup> 𐰇 tsji <sup>1</sup> 𐰇 mja <sup>1</sup>	Incorporated noun	verb root	suffixes
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Directional prefixes were already fully attached to the verb root in Tangut, and could not appear outside of this template. Nouns could be incorporated into the verb complex, as in Rgyalrong, and example (20) shows that incorporated nouns were placed between modal prefixes and the verb root. The only prefix that can appear in two distinct positions in the concessive 𐰇 lji<sup>1</sup>, which in some examples such as (19) appears before all other prefixes, and in other examples appears inside the verbal template. Further research will be needed to account for this phenomenon.

## NOTES

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(France), headed by Ekaterina Chirkova.

<sup>2</sup> Some languages with complex verbal morphology have a morphological structure that does not allow an analysis in terms of a template (for instance Siouan, see Rankin et. al. 2002:186,190). Nevertheless, as far as Qiangic languages are concerned, we found no counterevidence up to now that such an analysis is possible.

<sup>3</sup> All Tangut examples in this paper contain Tangut characters, the reference number of each character from Li (1997)'s dictionary, Gong (2002)'s reconstruction and a gloss in English. Numbers in square brackets [1] and [2] respectively indicate the first or second stem in verbs with vowel alternation (see Gong 2001 and Jacques 2009).

<sup>4</sup> The main Tangut texts used in the present article are the 'Newly gathered notes on Maternal Love and Filial Piety', abbreviated as Cixiao (Jacques 2007) and the 'Grove of categories' abbreviated as 'Leilin' (Shi et al. 1990).

<sup>5</sup> Other functions of the characters used to transcribe directional morphemes unrelated to the verbal system are not discussed here, such as 𐞑 a- as a numeral prefix and 𐞑𐞑 .wji<sup>2</sup>tji<sup>1</sup> as a conjunction.

<sup>6</sup> Shixing is perhaps an exception, see Chirkova (2009).

<sup>7</sup> The meaning of this sentence is not entirely clear. The translation given here is only provisional.

<sup>8</sup> This example shows agreement suffixes on noun directly without a copula. This phenomenon was first mentioned in Jacques (2008b).

<sup>9</sup> The translation of this sentence is provisional. In any case, the second person singular cannot be the agent of the second verb ('you put my topknot'), otherwise the verb should be 𐞑𐞑 tjo<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> The existence of this phenomenon was first mentioned by Ma (1987), though he did not analyze it as incorporation. Unfortunately, this reference was not accessible to me.

<sup>11</sup> The word *peotsu* 'paper money' comes from the colloquial Chinese *piaozi* 票子.

<sup>12</sup> Data from our fieldnotes on the Pumi dialect of Shuiluo, Muli, Sichuan.

<sup>13</sup> The origin of this modal element is unknown. The rhyme -jij can be either from proto-Tangut \*-jaŋ or from \*-jej.

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#### 西夏语动词的结构

向柏霖

法国科学研究中心, 东亚语言学研究所

提要: 本文从两个方面探讨西夏语动词的结构: 西夏文文献和现代羌语支语言。所有的羌语支语言都有着非常严谨的动词模板, 特别是嘉绒语。笔者认为, 西夏语也有类似的动词模板。然而, 与嘉绒语的动词结构相比, 西夏的动词结构比较简单, 而且前缀的顺序不相同。因此, 西夏语的动词模板可能不是原始羌语支的特征, 而是后起平行发展的结果。另外, 在西夏文文献当中发现一些表面上违反动词模板的例子, 本文将这些反例举出来并逐一加以解释。最后, 本文证明西夏语有动词编插法的构词手段, 这一现象在以前的研究中未见报导。

关键词: 西夏语、嘉绒语、茶堡话、编插法、趋向前缀、动词模板