МОНГОЛ УЛСЫН ИХ СУРГУУЛЬ
ШИНЖЛЭХ УХААНЫ СУРГУУЛЬ
“МОНГОЛ СУДЛАЛ”
Эрдэм шинжилгээний сэтгүүл

Боть XLIX (622) **DOI: 10.22353/ms20254911**

DIFFERENTIATION OF SEVERAL GLYPH FORMS IN KHITAN SMALL SCRIPT AND RELATED STUDIES[1]

Qiu Qinglian[2]

Abstract: The study of Khitan large and small scripts primarily encompasses research on glyph shapes, pronunciations, meanings, and etymologies. Discriminating between glyph shapes is the foundation for interpreting Khitan large and small script documents and reconstructing their pronunciations and meanings. There are some glyphs in Khitan inscribed stone monument documents that are similar in shape, and confusing these similar glyphs can sometimes lead to misreadings or misunderstandings of the meanings of words. In view of this, based on the research achievements of predecessors, this paper, employing the methods of textual criticism, data statistics, philology, and lexicology, conducts an in-depth analysis of the shapes of several similar Khitan small script glyph and puts forward suggestions for further standardizing these glyphs. In addition, the paper also offers its own perspectives on the identification of the parts of speech for several words in Khitan small script. It is presented here to seek the opinions of learned scholars.

Key words: Khitan small script; Glyph script; Glyph shapes; Part of speech

In the early 10th century, the Khitan people created two scripts to record the Khitan language, namely the Khitan Large Script (KLS) and the Khitan Small Script (KSS)[3]. The KLS was devised by Emperor Taizu of the Liao Dynasty, Yelü Abaoji, in the fifth year of the Shence era (920 AD) with the assistance of Yelü Tulübu and Yelü Lubugu. The KSS, on the other hand, was another phonetic script created by Emperor Taizu’s younger brother, Yelü Diela, who drew inspiration from the language and writings of Uighur envoys and modeled it after the glyph shapes of Chinese characters.

[1] This paper is supported by Project of National Social Science Foundation: “Interpretation of Literature of Royal Family of Liao Dynasty in Khitan Small Script and Research on the Inheritance of National Culture” (No. 20BYY189) and “Program for Supporting Young Science and Technology Talents” in Colleges and Universities of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (No. NJYT22100) and Ministry of Education Humanities and Social Science Research Youth Fund Project “Inheritance and Innovation: Interpretation of Newly Discovered Materials in Khitan Small Script and Exploration of Original Spelling Rule of Glyphs of Khitan Small Script” (No. 19YJC740054).

[2] Qiu Qinglian, female, is a postgraduate student majoring in Chinese Ethnic Minority Language and Literature at the School of Mongolian Studies, Inner Mongolia University, admitted in 2024.

[3] Khitan Large Script is abbreviated as KLS in this paper, while Khitan Small Script as KSS.

The study of the Khitan Large and Small Scripts primarily encompasses research on their glyph shapes,pronunciations, meanings, and etymologies. Research on glyph shapes contributes to enhancing the accuracy of our interpretation of Khitan inscribed stone monument documents, thereby minimizing research errors caused by glyph confusion. In particular, it provides reliable glyph shapes for differentiating between similar-looking glyph in the KSS, reducing errors in the process of document transcription and interpretation. This has a positive impact on further advancing in-depth interpretations of KLSand KSS documents and the study of Khitan writing systems.

The study of Khitan scripts began in the 1920s and has since evolved into a century-long research endeavor. Among the various aspects of Khitan script research, the differentiation of similar-looking glyph in the KSS has consistently garnered widespread attention from the academic community, serving as a crucial component of Khitan script studies. Since 1951, when the Japanese scholar Osada Natsuki listed the KSS character 𘬱aju as a distinct primitive glyph in his article titled "The Possibility of Deciphering Khitan Characters"arguing that 𘬰 month and 𘬱 aju are two primitive glyph with similar glyph shapes, subsequent scholars have continued this line of inquiry. Later, Jishi (1994, 70) further distinguished the glyph differences between 𘬰 month and 𘬱 aju in the KSSand proposed phonetic reconstructions for each.

As the study of Khitan scripts continues to advance, research on glyph shapes, as a fundamental aspect, has consistently made new progress. Drawing on the research achievements of predecessors, this paper conducts a further analysis of the shapes of several similar-looking KSS characters, namely 𘮞55, 𘮟110, and 𘮠350.

I. Differentiation of the Glyph Shapes of Several Primitive Glyph in the KSS

There exist several primitive glyph in the KSS with similar glyph shapes, such as 𘮞55, 𘮟110, and 𘮠350. Chinggeltei et al. (1985, 155) and Chinggeltei et al. (2017, 93) have included these three primitive glyph in the "Comprehensive Table of Glyph Shapes of Primitive glyph in the Khitan Small Script." However, occasional misentries of these three primitive glyph have been observed in the "Comprehensive Collection of Materials on the KSS" In light of this, the author has conducted an investigation into the sources of the aforementioned primitive glyph and proposed some discriminating opinions.

(I) Differentiation of the Glyph Shapes of KSS Glyph 𘮞 55 and 𘮟 110

In the excavated documents of the KSS, there are two easily confused glyph with similar glyph shapes, namely 𘮞55 and 𘮟110. Their pronunciations remain uncertain.

Given the similarity in their shapes, it is easy to confuse these two primitive glyph during the transcription process of epitaphs. For instance, the character 𘮞55 only appears in Line 19 of *Dao*. Chinggeltei et al. (2017, 908) transcribed the character in Dao as a small character 𘮟 110, which is composed of the Chinese character "

大” (dà, meaning “big”) with an additional “vertical stroke followed by a horizontal stroke”underneath. However, the rubbing shows that the character is actually 𠂤𠂇55-i  , composed of the Chinese character “木”(mù, meaning “wood”) with an additional “horizontal stroke”underneath. It is evident that there is a difference between the rubbing photograph and the transcribed glyph shape. Additionally, one can further judge the accuracy of the transcribed glyph shape in Dao based on the combination forms of 𠂤55 with other primitive characters. In the published documents of the KSS, the character 𠂤55 has been paired with the primitive character 𠂇i, twice. Apart from appearing in line 19 of Dao mentioned above, it also appears in line 17 of Hu such as:  . The combination form of 𠂤𠂇55-i has not yet been observed. Based on this, the author believes that the correct glyph shape of the character in Dao is 𠂤55.

In terms of structure, both the small characters 𠂤55and 𠆢110share the same upper-lower structure and have the same number of strokes (five strokes). The difference between them lies in that the former is composed of the Chinese character “木” (mù, meaning “wood”) with an additional horizontal stroke beneath it, while the latter is composed of the Chinese character “大” (dà, meaning “big”) with an additional vertical stroke followed by a horizontal stroke beneath it. When the vertical stroke is connected with the upper part to form the character “木”, it becomes the small character 𠂤55. If they are not connected, it becomes the small character 𠆢 110.

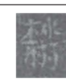
Let us first delve into the glyph shapes of the KSS characters 𠂤55 and 𠆢110. Upon verification with rubbings, it has been confirmed that the character 𠂤55 indeed appears in the published literature, with a total of 12 occurrences. It is never used independently but only appears at the beginning of words. For example:

Table 1: Forms of Occurrence for the KSS Character 𠂤55

Serial Number	KSS	Frequency of Occurrence	Source	Rubbing Photograph
1	𠂤𠂇55-i	2	Dao 19-34[4]	
			Hu 17-30	
2	𠂤𠃌55-én$_2$	1	Hu 21-28	
3	𠂤𠂆55-ir$_2$[5]	1	Yu 57-42	

[4] To conserve space, this paper uses numbers and symbols to indicate line numbers and the position of a character within a line. For instance, “Dao 19-34”refers to the 34th character in the 19th line of “Dao”.

[5] Jishi (2012, 538) proposed that its second primitive character is 𠂆u, but no instances of the usage 𠂤𠂆55-u have yet been found.

4	[KSS][KSS][KSS]55-s-er[6]	1	Yu 43-41	
5	[KSS][KSS][KSS][KSS][KSS]55-l-ha-a-ar	4	Wu 5-17	
			Hu 28-36	
			Jue 11-55	
			Jue 38-3	
6	[KSS][KSS][KSS][KSS][KSS]55-l-ha-a-án	1	Jue 11-34	
7	[KSS][KSS][KSS][KSS]55-l-ha-án	1	Wu 27-7	
8	[KSS][KSS][KSS][KSS]55-l-ó-ji	1	Jue 9-13	

Let's now examine the KSS character [KSS]110. No independent usage cases of this character have been discovered thus far. In the published literature, it appears a total of 20 times. It is frequently found within words or at the end of words, but no instances of its occurrence at the beginning of words have been identified. The following table presents the combined forms of [KSS]110 with other primitive characters, their frequency of occurrence, the sources, and the rubbing photographs.

[6] The rubbing shows that the first primitive character [KSS]55 has not yet extended its stroke beyond the main body, and whether it is a miscarving or a variant form of the KSS character [KSS]55 still remains inconclusive.

Table 2: Forms of Occurrence for the KSS Character 𠂤110

Serial Number	KSS	Frequency of Occurrence	Source	Rubbing Photograph
1	𠂢𠂤em-110[7]	10	Xuan 19-24	
			Zhong 6-6	
			Zhong 13-27	
			Zhong 41-27	
			Zhong 46-4	
			Yu 63-64	
			Yu 66-46	
			Zhen 38-6	
			Zhen 47-7	
			Zhen 47-19	

[7] For the first combined form 𠂢𠂤em-110 and the fourth combined form 𠂢𠂤𠂉em-110-de, the rubbings display them as  .On the rubbings, the "vertical and horizontal"stroke beneath the second primitive character of these two forms is irregular, not straight and uniform, yet still clear and recognizable. The rubbing photographs of the primitive characters 𠂤ém and 𠂤d in the KSS characters 今𠂤𠂉t-ém-is from line 22 and 公𠓛𠂤n-em$_2$-d from line 8 of "Xuan"show that the "vertical and horizontal"strokes are identical to those of 𠂤110 in the table, all representing the "vertical and horizontal"stroke. The differences observed might be attributed to variations in writing styles, as seen in  from line 22 of Xuan and  from line 8 of Xuan. Therefore, the correct glyph shapes of the second primitive glyph in the KSS characters are 𠂤110.

2	丙夲朷em-110-en	6	Zhong 41-13	
			Zhong44-44	
			Yu 44-61	
			Zhen 26-16	
			Zhen 27-22	
			Zhen 32-8	
3	丙夲矢em-110-de	1	Dao 27-25	
4	可夲业亏刘 bai-110-ha-al-hu	1	Yu 68-33	
5	又火夲屮几矢 m-ui-110-l-g-de	1	Yu 56-3	
6	仝各火夲 s-eng-un-110	1	Ni 22-38	

In terms of glyph shapes, based on the comparison between the rubbings and the original stone inscriptions as presented in the two preceding tables, it is evident that although the KSS characters 夲55 and 夲110 share similar glyph shapes, they are still distinguishable.

Now, let's delve deeper into the differences between 夲55 and 夲110. In differentiating between two morphologically similar characters, besides verifying their original rubbings, glyph studies cannot be separated from phonological and semantic analyses. Therefore, we will also conduct a brief analysis based on their positions within words and their combinations with other words.

In terms of usage, in the published literature, the character 夲55 only appears at the beginning of words and is frequently combined with the verbal stem suffix 屮业l-ha, such as in 夲屮业为朩55-l-ha-a-ar、夲屮业为朩55-l-ha-a-ar、夲屮业出55-l-ha-án. On the other hand, the character 夲110 has been observed both within words and at the end of words, but never at the beginning, such as in 丙夲 em-110, 可夲业亏刘 bai-110-

ha-al-hu, and 𐎐𐎠𐎼𐏁 s-eng-un-110.

From the preceding analysis, it can be deduced that regardless of whether considering the glyph shapes of the KSS characters 𐏁55 and 𐏁110, their combined forms with other primitive characters, or their positions of occurrence at the beginning, middle, or end of words, it is certain that these two glyph are not variant forms or miswritings of each other.

Based on the author's observations of the specific usages of these two characters, 𐏁55 and 𐏁110, within their contexts, a thorough in-depth study is currently hindered by the incomplete interpretation of their surrounding contexts. Therefore, further investigation and verification remain necessary.

(II) Glyph Analysis of the KSS Characters 𐏁110 and 𐎼350

In the inscribed documents of the KSS, there exist two morphologically similar and easily confusable characters, namely 𐏁110 and 𐎼350. These two glyph share identical structural configurations and stroke counts. Upon examination, it has been noted that some transcriptions by scholars such as Chinggeltei et al. (2017) have inadvertently confused 𐏁110 with 𐎼350. For instance:

1. In the inscription Nan (lines 15-30), the character sequence 𐎢𐎼𐎺 em-350-en appears,  with the second primitive character clearly depicted as 𐎼350 on the original stone, rather thanm110. However, Lu Yinghong et al. (2000, 49) and Chinggeltei et al. (2017, 1173) have mistakenly transcribed it as 𐎢𐏁𐎺 em-110-en.

2.In the rubbing from Guang (line 4-29), showing the KSS character sequence 𐎢𐏁 em-110  , Chinggeltei et al. (2017, P1101) have recorded it as 𐎢𐎼 em-350.

3.In the text Xiang (line 39-26), the KSS character sequence 𐎢𐏁𐎺 em-110-e appears, with the rubbing clearly indicating  . Nevertheless, Chinggeltei et al. (2017, 1489) have transcribed it as 𐎢𐎼𐎺 em-350-en.

Therefore, it is necessary to differentiate between the glyph shapes of the KSS characters 𐏁110 and 𐎼350. The distinguishing feature between these two glyph lies in the components above, which resemble the Chinese glyph "大" (dà, meaning "big") and "火"(huǒ, meaning "fire"). The usage and combined forms of the character 𐏁110 have already been discussed in the preceding text and will not be repeated here. As for the character 𐎼350, it indeed exists in the KSS literature, as illustrated in the following figure:

Table 3: Forms of Occurrence for the KSS Character 𰀀350

Serial Number	KSS	Frequency of Occurrence	Source	Rubbing Photograph
1	𰀀𰀁𰀂350-u-ji	1	Guang 8-30	
2	𰀀𰀃350-bir	2	Hui 24-12	
			Chao 25-21	
3	𰀀𰀄𰀅350-b-ir$_2$	2	Hong 30-6	
			Ni 28-9	
4	𰀆𰀀em-350	21	Dao 19-36	
			Xuan 11-15	
			Yu 16-11	
			Yu 40-22	
			Yu 58-59	
			Gu 11-25	
			Zhi 20-5	
			Tu 15-10	
			Tai 15-7	
			Tai 24-27	
			Tai 25-4	
			Wu 30-19	
			Wu 41-1	
			Xiang 8-9	
			Xiang 14-15	
			Xiang 35-37	

			Hu 31-21	
			Hu 38-20	
			Jue 9-14	
			Cha 25-18	
			Ni 2-40	
5	丙坐木em-350-en	6	Ling 18-24	
			Xu 17-27	
			Zhi 23-8	
			Zhi 25-18	
			Hu 17-33	
			Di 40-1	
6	丙坐公em-350-er	4	Xuan 22-12	
			Yu 70-27	
			Nan 4-16	
			Ni 6-3	
7	丙坐矢em-350-de	2	Jue 40-5	
			Jue 45-38	
8	戊坐公sh-350-d	2	Yu 34-63	
			Chao 15-22	

9	𠂤sh-350	1	Tai 25-14	
10	𠂤g-350	3	Di 20-16	
			Zhi 20-11	
			Tai 24-20	
11	𠂤𠂢g-350-er	2	Ni 17-40	
			Zhi 25-18	
12	𠂤木129.1-350-en	1	Xu 40-35	
13	𠂤eternal-350	1	Han 23-18	
14	𠂤平𠂤eu-ul-350-y	1	Hong 11-4	
15	𠂤t-dú-350	1	Xing 13-1	
16	𠂤k-em$_2$-350	1	Ren 8-24	

After cross-referencing with rubbing photographs, the author has identified the following observations:

1.In the text Zhi (Line 25), as recorded by Chinggeltei et al. (2017, 1221), the KSS character sequence is presented as 𠂤 [𠂢] g-350-oi$_2$. However, through this study, the author contends that the third primitive character in this sequence should be 𠂢er, rather than 𠂢oi$_2$. For instance:

Serial Number	KSS	Frequency of Occurrence	Source	Rubbing Photograph
1	𐰀𐰴𐰃 g-350-er	1	Ni 17-40	
2	𐰀𐰴𐰆 g-350-oi$_2$	1	Zhi 25-18	

2. The author contends that the correct form of the fourth primitive character in the KSS sequence 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰴 s-ó-ul-350 from line 19 of Tai is 𐰃d. Upon observation, the epitaph photograph of line 19 in Tai as recorded in *A Re-examination of the Small Khitan Script* (2017, 1293) reveals  , and this particular sequence appears only once. It remains inconclusive whether the fourth primitive character is 𐰃d or 𐰴350. The first three primitive glyph in this sequence are identical to those in the sequences 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰃 s-ó-ul-d (denoting "illness") and 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰚 s-ó-ul-ir$_2$. Consequently, two possibilities arise for reference:

① If the correct form is 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰃 s-ó-ul-d, it suggests that this sequence denotes "illness", and the form 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰴 s-ó-ul-350 does not exist in the KSS literature.

② If the correct form is 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰴 s-ó-ul-350, it implies a phonological complementarity or semantic proximity between the fourth primitive glyph of 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰴 s-ó-ul-350 and 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰃 s-ó-ul-d.

The distinction between these two possibilities lies in their grammatical implications. However, the author leans more towards the first possibility, that is, the form 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰴 s-ó-ul-350 does not exist in the KSS literature, and only 𐰋𐰇𐰉𐰃 s-ó-ul-d does.

3. In Table 3, the 14th group of KSS glyph is 𐰢𐰉𐰴𐰍 eu-ul-350-y  , which appears in line 11 of 'Hong'. The rubbing photograph confirms that the transcription is accurate. However, it is a known phenomenon in Khitan epigraphic literature that miscarvings or alterations can occur, as evidenced in texts such as Dao, Zhong, and Yong. Given that this particular character sequence only appears once in the available Khitan Small Script materials, the author suspects that the third primitive character in 𐰢𐰉𐰴𐰍 eu-ul-350-y might be a miscarving of the character 𐰴 ge.

In the KSS literature, there exists another character sequence, 𐰢𐰉𐰴𐰍 eu-ul-ge-y, which differs from the aforementioned sequence by only one primitive character. This sequence denotes the meaning"none"or "without"and appears a total of 27 times, as recorded in documents such as Dao (Line 19-33), Ling (Line 19-18), Xu (Line 21-29 and 40-26), and Zhen (Line 9-19). The author has observed instances where the usage of 𐰢𐰉𐰴𐰍 eu-ul-ge-y closely resembles the contextual usage of 𐰢𐰉𐰴𐰍 eu-ul-350-y, such as in the following examples:

1. [KSS]

31.1-g-s p-u e_4-l-ge-l-ñ eu-ul-350-y 316.1-y n-em_2-d n-em_2-d ci-i-is

Yes relative Hong 11-4

2. [KSS]

s_2-d-u-ji_3 317-ú i_2-ge-l-ñ eu-ul-ge-y b-qó ung-su □-hu ci-er

inscription Nu 44-12

3. [KSS]

219- l-ge-l-ñ nem-i eu-ul-ge-y 232-l-ñ ci- as- a

politics Jue35-22

In Examples 1 and 2, the contextual usage of the KSS character sequence [KSS] eu-ul-ge-y closely resembles that of [KSS] eu-ul-350-y, both appearing after words containing the component [KSS] ge-l-ñ. This provides supporting evidence for the aforementioned hypothesis, thereby not ruling out the possibility of miscarving.

The character [KSS] 350 appears 51 times in the excavated literature, indicating a relatively high frequency of occurrence. It is found at the beginning, middle, and end of words. The academic community has confirmed its correct glyph form as [KSS] 350. Sulongga (2021, 175) proposed that the glyph [KSS] 110 and [KSS] 350 are variant forms of each other, and also pointed out that their corresponding large script glyph are [KSS] as_2. Variant forms are alternative writings of a character other than its standard form, sharing the same pronunciation and meaning but differing in glyph shape. Variant forms do appear in the KSS, such as [KSS] lu_2 and [KSS] lu, [KSS] us and [KSS] us_2, [KSS] dz_2 and [KSS] s_2, as well as [KSS] e_2 and [KSS] e_3.

While endorsing the viewpoint proposed by Su Longga that the KSS characters [KSS] 110 and [KSS] 350 are variant forms of each other, this paper supplements this argument with newly discovered evidence. The specifics are as follows:

1. From a glyph structural perspective, the character [KSS] 350 exhibits a top-down configuration, composed of [KSS] ud and [KSS] 284. The following table lists KSS glyph that all share a top-down structure, with their upper portions being composed of either [KSS] ud_2 or [KSS] ud. These glyph share identical pronunciations and are recognized as variant forms that can be used interchangeably.

Table 4: A List of Variant Forms in the KSS

Pronunciation	t		uŋ		uei		ə	
The KSS	[KSS] ud_2	[KSS] ud	[KSS] ung_2	[KSS] ung	[KSS] oi_2	[KSS] oi	[KSS] e_2	[KSS] e

Pronunciation	gə~ɣə		ï		i	
The KSS	[KSS] ge_2	[KSS] ge	[KSS] $ï_2$	[KSS] ï	[KSS] $î_2$	[KSS] í

2. Through systematic review, the author has observed that the primitive characters [Khitan]110 and [Khitan]350 co-occur within specific linguistic structures, appearing in identical combined forms within certain phrases. For instance:

1. The sequences [Khitan]em-110-en and [Khitan]em-350-en.
2. The sequences [Khitan]em-110 and [Khitan]em-350.

1. [Khitan]

great em-110-en record-g-ir$_2$ n-er-y-én$_2$ ui-il eu-ñ-ir$_2$ 390-én$_2$ bir-u-ud$_2$-ir$_2$ es

great record not yet

Zhong 44-44

2. [Khitan]

great em-350-en hul-l-hu Mr-ar û-ul-g-en mú-1$_2$-ir$_2$ t-ia-rɑ-ó-ul-hu

great Zhi23-19

In Examples 1 and 2, the contextual usage of the character sequences [Khitan]em-110-en and [Khitan]em-350-en closely resembles each other, as both are employed in conjunction with the KSS character [Khitan]great (denoting “great”or“big”). This parallel contextual and syntactic usage provides supporting evidence for the aforementioned hypothesis.

3. [Khitan]

77-po$_2$-small em-110 tou sh-58-e sh-iá-ai$_2$

virtue good Xuan19-24

4. [Khitan]

t-ge-er em-350 sh-iá-ai$_2$ record-ge-d ia-ñ-ir$_2$-de-i

deceased good illustrious elder brothers Tie 6-3

In Examples 3 and 4, although the contextual usage of [Khitan]em-110 and [Khitan]em-350 is not entirely identical, it exhibits a notable similarity. Both sequences appear preceding the term denoting “virtue”or “good”, thereby serving as corroborative evidence.

In summary, through comparative analysis of the KSS glyph [Khitan]55, [Khitan]110, and [Khitan]350, the author contends that [Khitan]55 and [Khitan]110 are not variant forms or erroneous writings of the same character but rather primitive glyph with distinct glyph shapes. Furthermore, by integrating considerations of the glyph structures and contextual usage of [Khitan]110 and [Khitan]350, the author supplements the argument that these two glyph are indeed variant forms of each other.

II. An Analysis of the Grammatical Categories of Several Khitan Words

On the basis of the aforementioned glyph analysis, this paper also conducts a beneficial exploration into the grammatical categories of words containing the

KSS character [Khitan script]350, specifically in the forms of [Khitan script]350-u-ji, [Khitan script]350-bir, and [Khitan script]350-b-ir$_2$.

The character [Khitan script]350 appears in the forms of [Khitan script]350-u-ji, [Khitan script]350-bir, and [Khitan script]350-b-ir$_2$ within the texts Guang (line 8), Hui (line 24), Chao (line 25), Hong (line 30), and Ni(line28).

Firstly, the author analyzed the suffixes following the KSS character [Khitan script]350. The suffix [Khitan script]b-ir$_2$ is identified as a separated form of [Khitan script]bir. Chinggeltei (2007, 17) proposed that the suffix [Khitan script]ji functions as an attributive verbal suffix. The suffix [Khitan script]b-ñ serves as a feminine attributive verbal suffix, whereas [Khitan script]b-ir$_2$ and [Khitan script]bir function as masculine attributive verbal suffixes.[8] Consequently, it can be inferred that the character [Khitan script]350can serve as a verbal root, leading to the preliminary hypothesis that the sequences [Khitan script]350-u-ji, [Khitan script]350-bir, and [Khitan script]350-b-ir$_2$ may function as attributive verbs.

Secondly, the author proceeded to analyze the contextual occurrences of these three sequences. It was observed that all three are preceded by the KSS character [Khitan script]es, which denotes "not yet" or "unfulfilled". For instance:

1. [Khitan script]

   es □-g sh-iá-ai$_2$ compose-ir$_2$ es 350-u-ji 194 hor-a-án-ir$_2$-i nem-ó-ul-ir$_2$ t-iu-ud$_2$-ge-u

   not yet good make not yet — Guang8-30

2. [Khitan script]

   es 350-bir ém-rɑ m-u-ón-de li$_2$-û-ul-g

   not yet reach — Hui24-12

3. [Khitan script]

   es ci- er h-d$_3$-ge-én ñ- l- u-úr es □- bir

   not yet in not yet — Chao25-21

4. [Khitan script]

   es h-i-ir$_2$-bir úr-l □-tu-□-û-□-dú es 350-b-ir$_2$ co-do-én ci-er

   not yet reach not yet — Hong30-6

5. [Khitan script]

   es 350-b-ir$_2$ eu-ul-g-en dai-ri$_5$ m-ha-aju

   not yet deceased Receive — Ni 28-9

[8] In Sun Bule's master's thesis titled *"A Study on Attributive Verbs in the Khitan Language*"and the forthcoming paper by JiRuhe and colleagues (2025, to be published) titled *"Further Readings of Khitan Words (Part I)"*, it is argued that attributive verbs ending with the suffix [Khitan script]b-ñ are typically used with feminine subjects, whereas those ending with the suffixes [Khitan script]b-ir$_2$ and [Khitan script]bir are used with masculine subjects.

The phenomenon of attributive verbs appearing after the KSS character es is also observed in other Khitan epigraphic texts. For instance:

In Line 11 of "Hu" , we find es manage-u-ji-en es ci-er, translating to "not yet known, not yet present".In Line 11 of "Cha", there is es od$_2$-i ul$_2$ or-u-ji, meaning "not going is not permissible". In Line 15 of Jue, we encounter es h-ui-d-l-g, which translates to "not yet arrived". In Line 14 of Cha, again, es ci-ge-li$_2$ go-er appears, conveying "not yet united as a family".

The Middle Mongolian word"ᠡᠰᠡ ese" is used before tense verbs and participial verbs to express a negative meaning. For example: 額薛篾迭克迭ese medekde=be(Kuribayashi Hitoshi, et al, 2001, P308) means "had not been taught to know"; 額薛莎那思中哈阿速ese sonosqa=asuin (Kuribayashi Hitoshi, et al, 2001, P453) means "had not been taught to listen to"; and 額薛中哈舌魯阿速ese qar=u=asu (Kuribayashi Hitoshi, et al, 2001, 597) means "had not come out" etc.

Drawing upon this characteristic an in conjunction with the sequences 350-u-ji, 350-bir, and 350-b-ir$_2$, the author further deduces that the grammatical category of this term may likely be that of an attributive verb.

III. Conclusion

Firstly, this paper, through comparative analysis of the KSS characters 55, 110, and 350, concludes that 55 and 110 are not variant forms or erroneous writings of the same character but rather primitive glyph with distinct glyph shapes.

Secondly, by integrating considerations of the glyph structures and contextual usage of 110 and 350, the paper supplements the argument that these two glyph are indeed variant forms of each other.

Finally, drawing parallels with the usage of the Middle Mongolian word "ᠡᠰᠡ" (ese), the paper infers that the grammatical category of the sequences 350-u-ji, 350-bir, and 350-b-ir$_2$ may be that of attributive verbs.

Full names and abbreviations of the KSS inscriptions on steles used in this paper

1. Xing: Epitaph for Emperor Xingzong
2. Ren: Epitaph for Empress Renyi
3. Dao: Epitaph for Emperor Daozong
4. Xuan: Epitaph for Empress Xuanyi
5. Zhong: Epitaph for Xiao Zhonggong, Prince of Yue
6. Gu: Inscription for the Late Yelu Clan
7. Tai: Epitaph for the Late Great Uncle (Taishuzu)
8. Chao: Epitaph for Yelu Chaozhi, Langjun (Nobleman)
9. Wu: Epitaph for Yelu Wumo, Fushu (Deputy Official)

10. Hu: Epitaph for Xiao Hudujin, Grand Master
11. Jue: Epitaph for Yelu Jue, Changwen (Official)
12. Ni: Epitaph for Yelu Tiannitai, Grand Master
13. Tie: Epitaph for Yelu Tiebutai, Grand Master
14. Lin: Epitaph for Yelu Yugulin, Grand Master
15. Yu: Epitaph for Grand Father Yu Yue, King Song of the Great Liao State
16. Ling: Epitaph for Xiao Linggong (Fragmentary)
17. Cha: Epitaph for Xiao Chala, Xianggong (Vice Minister)
18. Nu: Epitaph for Yelu Nu, Xiangwen (General)
19. Di: Epitaph for Xiao Dilü, Deputy Envoy
20. Han: Epitaph for Madam Han
21. Yong: Epitaph for Yelu Yongning, Langjun (Nobleman)
22. Xu: Epitaph for Prince Xu of the Liao State
23. Zhen: Epitaph for the Grand General of the State-Protecting Army
24. Guang: Epitaph for the Prince of Guangling, Great Khitan State
25. Xiang: Epitaph for Yelu Xiangwen (General)
26. Hui: Epitaph for Xiao Huilian, Langjun (Nobleman)
27. Hong: Epitaph for Yelu Hongyong, General
28. Zhi: Epitaph for Yelu Zhixian, Grand Marshal
29. Tu: Epitaph for Xiao Tuguci, Shangshu (Minister)
30. Nan: Epitaph for Princess Gudilie of the Southern Continent, Great Liao State

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