

Karlgren's Transcriptional Conventions

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Elements of 高本漢 Bernhard Karlgren's (1889-1978) *Archaic* and *Ancient Chinese* transcriptions are compared to [IPA] in the following tables. (Archaic = 上古 = Old Chinese = OC; Ancient = 中古 = Middle Chinese = MC.)

TABLE 1. Full vowels

i	[i]			u	[u]
e	[e]	ö	[ø]	ô	[o]
ä	[ɛ]	ə	[ə]	o	[ɔ]
ɛ	[æ]	ɐ	[ɐ]	â	[ɔ]
a	[a]			â	[ɑ]

TABLE 2. Short [ɿ] [ʅ] and non-syllabic [ɿ] vowels

ɿ	[ɿ]	ě	[ě]	ɛ	[ɛ]	ě	[ě]	ɛ	[ɛ]
ũ	[ũ]	ö	[ö]	ô	[ô]	ă	[ă]	â	[ă]

TABLE 3. Consonant symbols

·	[ʔ]	γ	[ɣ]	ń	[ɲ]	ɖ	[ɖ]
'	[h]	j	[j]	ś	[ç]	ş	[ʃ]
ng	[ŋ]	ṭ	[t̪]	ź	[ʒ]	ẓ	[ẓ]
χ	[x]	ḍ	[ɖ̪]	ṭ	[t̪]	O	[Ø]

TABLE 4. Tone marks (following MC syllable “x”)

x	平聲	“even tone”	x:	上聲	“rising tone”	x-	去聲	“falling tone”
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NOTES: Karlgren made use of Johan August Lundell's (1879) Swedish dialect alphabet (1915:227-228) • “j-” (initial) and “-j̣-” (rhyme onglide “yod”) are distinct in MC “j̣j-” • *over-breve* and *under-dot* are both used to indicate short *syllabic* vowels • *under-breve* indicates a short *non-syllabic* vowel (as in IPA) • both “a” and “a” in *GSR* are [a] (“a” is *italic* “a”) • likewise, both “v” and “ṿ” are [v] • on “ô” vs. “o”: “something like French *tôt* as against *tonne*, Germ. *so* as against *Sonne*” (K. 1954: 346[136]; cf. 1940:38); “o as in Germ. *Sommer*; ô as in French *beau*” (1957:4) • “v as in Engl. *but*” ([ṿ], more central than cardinal [ʌ]) • “ä as in Germ. *bär*” • “ε” is “a still more open, slack ä sound (Engl. *man*)” (1957:4) • “palatals” (“predorsum against the alveoli”, 1957:3) are pre-palatals, i.e. *alveolo-palatals* (“curly-tails”) • *under-dot* marks both components of the *affricate* (stop and fricative) as *retroflex* in *AD* • *GSR*'s *italic Greek gamma* is IPA *gamma* • K's diacritic for aspiration is “'” (not “ˈ”) • the diacritic for *glottal stop* is a full-width superscript dot (above x-height) • *zero initial* (“smooth vocalic ingress”) written “O” (1957:3), is unmarked in reconstructions • “ö” [ø] ≈ [ö] occurs only in transitional (OC > MC) forms, for *centralized* “o” and “ô” (cf. 1940:38) • Mandarin: “ü” [y]; “ê” [ɤ]; “î” for *apical vowels* [ɿ, ʅ] ≈ [ʒ̣, ʐ̣] • other symbols (for tones, Cantonese, Japanese) appear in *AD*.

SELECTED SOURCES: Lundell (1879), Karlgren (1915 *Études*, 1923 *AD*, 1940 *GS*, 1954 *Compendium*, 1957 *GSR*), Li Fang-Kuei (1971), Norman (1988), CHOU Fa-kao (1984), YU Nae-wing (1985, 2000), Baxter (1992), Pullum & Ladusaw (1996), Ulving (1997), Pan (2000).