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"Guanyin. Moon in Water", scroll on silk (fragment), call number X 2439, Khara Khoto, 12th century, the State Hermitage Museum. Courtesy of the State Hermitage Museum.

Back cover:

Plate 1. Portrait of Nawwāb Mīr Qamar al-Dīn Niẓām al-Mulk Āṣaf Jāh I, watercolour, gouache and gold on paper. Hyderabad, mid-18th century. Album (*Muraqqa'*) X 3 in the Fabergé collection at the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, fol. 4b, 15.1 × 24.0 cm. Inner frame dimensions: 15.1 × 24.0 cm; outer frame dimensions: 22.0 × 30.5 cm

Plate 2. Portrait of Nawwāb Mīr Aḥmad Khān Nāṣir Jang, watercolour, gouache and gold on paper. Hyderabad, mid-18th century. The same Album, fol. 3b, 11.5 × 21.3 cm. Inner frame dimensions: 11.5 × 21.3 cm; outer frame dimensions: 21.0 × 31.2 cm.

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TEXT AND ITS CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

K. B. Kepping

MI-NIA (TANGUT) SELF-APPELLATION AND SELF-PORTRAITURE IN KHARA KHOTO MATERIALS

Nowadays the terms "Tangut" and "Xia" ("Xi Xia") [1] are commonly used in scholarly literature to designate both the Tangut state (982—1227) and the people who have founded it. However, it is well known that these terms, foreign to the Tanguts, belong to those who contributed to the fall of the Tangut state and to the scattering of the people: the term "Tangut" was used by the Mongols (in 1227 the Tangut state fell victim to the Mongolian invasion), while "Xia" ("Xi Xia") — by the Chinese (later, in the last decades of the fourteenth century, when Yuan dynasty was giving its place to Ming, the process of extermination of the Tangut people was seemingly completed; at least such was the situation in Khara Khoto — being destroyed it was abandoned by its inhabitants just at that time) [2]. However, in Tangut texts there do exist Tangut indigenous names for the Tangut state, {1} [3] *phon mbin lhi̤ə li̤ẹ* "The Great State of the White and Lofty" [4], and for its people — {2} *mi* and {3} *mi-niaw*. But the tradition of using the foreign designations is so stable that, despite the fact that today these indigenous terms are quite familiar to the scholars, the foreign designations are still preferred [5].

For more than half a century lasted a scholarly polemic on the interpretation (translation) of the name of the Tangut Empire [6]. The translation "The Great State of the White and Lofty (=High)", suggested by me, was accepted by some scholars, for example, Ruth W. Dunnell [7]. As for Tangut self-appellations [8], two words, {2} *mi* and {3} *mi-niaw*, are generally used in the scholarly literature. However, my study of Tangut self-appellations has shown that there are two more Tangut words with the same meaning, {4} *lhi̤we* and {5} *lhi̤we-ndżei*, which in Tangut poetry written in a specific language (the ritual language, see below) correspond to {2} *mi* and {3} *mi-niaw* respectively.

Quite unexpectedly, the analysis of the Tangut self-appellations from the ritual language has shed new light on the depiction of the people in Tangut paintings, providing indications that some may be identified as representatives of the two Tangut tribes (see below). Accordingly, the first part of this article focuses on the Tangut self-appellations, whereas the second — on the images of the Tanguts in paintings and engravings from Khara Khoto. It is to be noted that in the second part of the article I have made an attempt to use, instead of foreign designations, one of the Tangut self-appellations, namely, {3} *mi-niaw*. I hope that other scholars will do justice to the Tanguts returning them the name the Tanguts used themselves.

As was said above, there are four words meaning "Tangut" which occur in texts: {2} *mi*, {3} *mi-niaw*, {4} *lhi̤we* and {5} *lhi̤we-ndżei*. The difference between them has not been determined yet. E. I. Kychanov translates {2} *mi* as "Tangut-*mi*" and {4} *lhi̤we* as "Tangut-*lhi*" [9], thus revealing his opinion that these Tangut terms are not identical, standing for different groups of the Tanguts. In the respective commentary to his translation, Kychanov admits that for the time being it is difficult to determine the difference between the two terms. However, he supposes that {2} *mi* may be compared with the Tibetan word *mi* "man", while {4} *lhi̤we* — with the Tibetan word *lha* "sacred" [10].

My study of the four Tangut self-appellations has shown that the choice of the term depends on the character of the Tangut text: {2} *mi* and {3} *mi-niaw* are used in the texts written in the common language, while {4} *lhi̤we* and {5} *lhi̤we-ndżei* — in the ritual language. Note that the Tangut self-appellations differ in class they belong to: one-syllable self-appellations are adjectives, while two-syllable self-appellations are nouns.

It is important to explain here what I mean by "common language" and "ritual language". It was Nishida Tatsuo who was the first to discover two different vocabulary layers in Tangut odes {6} *ndzi̤o*; he named them "vocabulary I" and "vocabulary II" [11]. Ten years later, having found that the grammar of the texts of the odes written in the "vocabulary I" differs from that of the texts written in the "vocabulary II", I put into scholarly circulation the terms "ritual language" (Nishida's "vocabulary I") [12] and "common language" (Nishida's "vocabulary II") [13].

The majority of Tangut texts, both indigenous and translations, is written in the common language. These texts may be divided into three groups:

1. **Tangut official texts** which include Tangut Law Code [14], documents, colophons, etc.;

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2. **narration**, including the encyclopaedia "The Sea of Meanings Established by the Saints" [15], prefaces and epilogues to various Tangut writings, explanations in Tangut dictionaries, Tangut translations of Buddhist texts and Chinese secular writings [16], as well as narrative passages in Buddhist texts;

3. **Tangut poetry** — {6} *ndzi̤o* "odes" (only the parts written in the common language), {7} *ki̤ạ* "ritual songs", {8} *ndeɯ li̤e* "sayings" (sometimes named as proverbs) [17].

Tangut ritual language is used only in the Tangut odes (so far I have come across only one ritual song which similarly is written partly in the ritual language). It seems that the Tangut odes are the most ancient layer in Tangut poetry compiled in pre-Buddhist times (one finds here neither Buddha's name nor Buddhist vocabulary). This was the time when the Tanguts had their own religion, the so-called "Root West". The ideas of this Tangut indigenous religion have been mirrored in the odes [18]. The ancient provenance of the odes is also proved by the lack of such ethnonyms as Khitans, Jurchens, Mongols, Uighurs, attested in the ritual songs. In contrast with the odes, the content of ritual songs is permeated with Buddhist ideas, betraying their far later provenance.

Table 1

Common language			Ritual language
Official texts	Narration	Poetry	Poetry
Law Code, documents, colophons	Encyclopaedia "The Sea of Meanings Established by the Saints", prefaces, epilogues, explanations in dictionaries, Tangut translations of Chinese secular writings and narrative passages in Buddhist texts	odes (partly), ritual songs, sayings	odes (partly)

One and the same passage in the odes is first written in the ritual language and then in the common language. A comparison of such passages has shown that: (i) the text in the ritual language is not translated *verbatim* into the common language, it is rather a rendition of certain ideas expressed in the ritual language; (ii) the words with the same meaning (synonyms) in the ritual language and common language *as a rule* are completely different both in their appearance and phonetic value, i.e. neither the graphic nor the reading of a character points to the semantic closeness of the synonyms in the two languages [19]; (iii) one-syllable words in the common language, irrespective of the class they belong to (except verbs), correspond to two-syllable words in the ritual language; (iv) the ritual language lacks grammatical morphemes. There are no postpositions, almost no verbal prefixes, even the interrogation is expressed by the word "to ask". The relations between the words in a sentence are ruled by the word order.

On the whole, the ritual language gives an impression of an artificial language.

However, the ritual language is of great importance to the Tangut studies, for it represents the only written source where Tangut mythology is encoded. The meticulous labour undertaken by the Tangut scholars is really unbelievable: each character they had invented for a word in the common language was supplied with its correlate (synonym) in the ritual language. At the same time, the Tangut scholars had worked out a complicated system of homophones which could serve as a key for decoding text.

Let us now turn to the terms {2} *mi* and {3} *mi-niaɯ* used in the common language. Each has its own domain of usage; the word {2} *mi* prevails in all kinds of Tangut texts. No doubt, it is the most common Tangut self-designation and the only one used in official texts (e.g. Tangut Law Code). One can even name it "an universal self-appellation". Although we find no explanation of the word {2} *mi* in the dictionary "The Sea of Characters", this word is preserved in the list of Tangut characters compiled by N. A. Nevsky in the 1930s [20]. This list renders {2} *mi* as "Tangut". But what is more important, it provides its homophone, {9} *mi* [21], which is the second syllable in both first-person plural pronouns — {10} *nga mi* "we" (inclusive) and {11} *ngiɯ mi* "we" (exclusive) [22]. For this reason, we have all grounds to suppose that the listeners might perceive {2} *mi* "Tangut" as "we". Being an adjective, {2} *mi* is mainly used as an attribute (it often stands before such nouns as "state", "men", "son") and, as a rule, without the postposition {12} *'in*. To cite some examples: {13} *mi lhi̤ə* "Tangut state" [23], {14} *mi ndzi̤wo* "Tangut men" [24], {15} *mi 'iwə ndi* "Tangut script" [25], {16} *mi li̤ẹ su* (?) [26] *rại* "Tangut Great *Tripiṭaka*" [27], {17} *mi li̤ẹ xeɯ 'iwan* "Tangut Great School" [28], {18} *mi ngwu* "Tangut word" (contrasted, for example, with {19} *źạ ngwo* "Chinese word") [29], etc.

The word {2} *mi* occurs in Tangut poetry as well; the inventor of the Tangut script in one of the Tangut ritual songs {7} *ki̤ạ* is named {20} *mi ngọ no* "Tangut teacher". It also occurs in odes, e.g. {21} *mi ndzi̤o* "Tangut rituals". In the ode "The Monthly Pleasures" [30], it is used as an attribute of the noun {22} *zi* "son" (Chin. *zi*) — {23} *mi zi* "Tangut sons" (= Tangut people).

In all examples cited above the word {2} *mi* is used as an attribute (adjective). But it also may be used as a noun. In this case, it goes usually with other ethnonyms. Such is the usage in official documents (e.g. in Tangut Law Code), as well as in poetry. We read in Tangut Law Code: {24} *li̤ə tśi̤u źwon ndzi̤wo mi źạ phə 'wei 'we ni tśi̤u ngu zi̤e lu mbi mbin mi̤ẹ nda mi* (?) [31] *ta 'in twụ mbi mbin na ndi̤e mbu vi̤ẹi ndzu mi vi̤ẹi mi̤ẹ nda* (?) [32] *lu ngwẹ ta tśi̤ə mbi mbin ti sei mi ndzi̤wo ndin khwei* [33] ("When a Tangut, a Chinese, a Tibetan or an Uighur are doing one and the same work but their ranks are not equal, let each be sitting according to his rank. If they do one and the same work and their ranks are equal, do not take the services (merits) of other people into account and let the Tangut be superior" — the translation is mine).

One more example from a ritual song: {25} *phə źạ mi sọ a ma we* ("Tibetans, Chinese and Tanguts, [all] three have originated from one and the same place (lit. 'have one mother-place')").

The last two examples clearly show that in conjunction with other ethnonyms the word {2} *mi* stands without the word {26} *ndzi̤wo* "man" or {22} *zi* "son", but if alone, the words {26} *ndzi̤wo* or {22} *zi* are obligatory. This rule is clearly seen in the example from the Law Code {24}: the word {26} *ndzi̤wo* appears after {2} *mi* only when it is used the second time, i.e. when it stands alone without other ethnonyms. In poetry, where the number of characters in a line is strictly regulated, {2} *mi* may occur without the word {26} *ndzi̤wo* or {22} *zi* in the meaning "Tangut" [34] or even may have the postposition {12} *'in*, when used as an attribute — {27} *mi 'in ndeɯ li̤e* "Tangut sayings" [35]. In bilingual Tangut-Chinese texts, the term {2} *mi* is rendered into Chinese as *fan* (e.g. in the title of a preface to the famous Tangut-Chinese dictionary "The Pearl in the Palm"). In the preface itself, the Chinese collocation *fan-han* "Tangut-Chinese" stands for the Tangut {28} *mi-źạ* [36].

Let us now turn to another Tangut self-appellation which also belongs to the common language — {3} *mi-niaɯ*. This word is well known to scholars, since the ethnonym *mi-nyag* designates the Tanguts in Tibetan texts. It is to be kept in mind that the first syllable {29} *mi* from the collocation {3} *mi-niaɯ* is **not** homophonous with {2} *mi* [37]. But, importantly, {29} *mi* in {3} *mi-niaɯ* is homophonous with {30} *mi* "mother" in the collocation {31} *ma mi* "mother-ancestor", the difference between them is only tonal: {29} *mi* in {3} *mi-niaɯ* is read in the second tone, while {30} *mi* in {31} *ma mi* — in the first tone [38]. This, one may suppose, means that this Tangut self-appellation is somehow connected with the Mother, {31} *ma mi*, the ancestor of the Tanguts, mentioned in the ritual song "Tangut Sacred Origins Eulogy" [39].

In contrast with {2} *mi*, {3} *mi-niaɯ* is found neither in official documents nor in narration; it is attested only in poetry. The difference between the usage of the words {2} *mi* and {3} *mi-niaɯ* is clearly visible in the combination of these words with the noun "scholar" {32} *rin ngwu*: in the preface to the Tangut proverbs, i.e. in narration, the word {2} *mi* is used as an attribute to the word "scholar" [40], whereas in a ritual song in place of {2} *mi* we find the word {3} *mi-niaɯ* — {33} *mi rin ngwu* "Tangut scholar" (narration) and {34} *mi-niaɯ rin ngwu* "Tangut scholar" (poetry).

That {3} *mi-niaɯ* is a noun, may be seen in the next sentence from a ritual song:

{35} *'u ni̤a ldu we tshon źi̤e mbi̤u*
ni nin vi̤a lhi̤ṳo ma phôn mbin
mi-niaɯ ndźi̤o 'in lhiə tha vi̤ei

"The stone cities of the black-headed ones on the banks of the desert waters,
The paternal burial mounds of the red-faced ones [at the foot of the mountain] White and Lofty Mother.
Here is to be found the land of the tall *mi-niaɯ*".

Being an attribute, {3} *mi-niaɯ* does not need the postposition {12} *'in*, e.g. {34} *mi-niaɯ rin ngwu* "Tangut scholar".

I now move to the Tangut self-appellations, namely, {4} *lhi̤we* and {5} *lhi̤we-ndźei*, used in the ritual language. Out of four known, {4} *lhi̤we* is the only one which is explained in the dictionary "The Sea of Characters" (explanations for the other three Tangut self-appellations are missing) [41]: {36} *lhi̤we ta lhi̤we-ndźei li̤ə mi-niaɯ li̤ə mi ndzi̤wo 'in 'i* [42] ("*lhi̤we* means {5} *lhi̤we-ndźei*, {3} *mi-niaɯ*, {2} *mi* man").

In explaining the word {4} *lhi̤we*, the dictionary lists three other Tangut self-appellations. It seems that in the eyes of the Tanguts all four Tangut self-appellations had one and the same meaning [43].

In the text of the odes, it was not so easy to distinguish a passage written in the ritual language from a passage written in the common language. Sometimes the text in the ritual language is not rendered into the common language at all, as if it were a well-known quotation which needs no explanation. Only in "The Ode on Monthly Pleasures" the boundary between the description of the lunar months, given first in the ritual language and then in the common language, is clearly set by the titles (the name of the month), since each passage begins with the title given in the respective language. Judging from their usage in the description of the eleventh lunar month in "The Ode on Monthly Pleasures", {4} *lhi̤we* of the ritual language corresponds to {2} *mi* of the common language: the collocation {23} *mi zi* "Tanguts" (lit. "Tangut sons") is rendered as {37} *lhi̤we no* "Tanguts" (lit. "Tangut sons") in the ritual language.

I believe that {2} *mi* and {4} *lhi̤we*, both being adjectives, share one meaning and differ only in that they are used respectively in the common and ritual languages. That the word {4} *lhi̤we* (ritual language) corresponds to {2} *mi* (common language) may also be seen in the fact that both ethnonyms occur as an attribute of the noun "state" — {38} *lhi̤we lhi̤ə* ("The Ode on Ritual Verses"(?)) and {13} *mi lhi̤ə* [44]. Similarly, {4} *lhi̤we* is used in texts only as an attribute and does not need the postposition {12} *'in*.

The word {4} *lhi̤we* is also found in the ritual songs. It may be included into their titles: {39} *lhi̤we śi̤e mə 'on ki̤ạ* — the song "Tangut Sacred Origins Eulogy" and {40} *lhi̤ə ndźwi su lhi̤we tśhi̤a so ki̤ạ* — the song "Tangut Virtue is Higher than that of the Other States". Mind that it is {4} *lhi̤we* (not {2} *mi*!) included into the songs' titles. It is also attested in the text of "The Sea of Meanings Established by Saints" ({41} and {42} are given in my translation): {41} *lhi̤we 'iwan ngə̣ thi̤oɯ* [45] ("There are beautiful mountains in the Tangut (*lhi̤we*) land"). The Tangut commentary on this statement runs as follows: {42} *mi lhi̤ə ngə̣ tsai li̤ẹ ton* ("There are (lit. 'grow') big and small mountains in the Tangut (*mi*) state"). The two citations once more corroborate the idea that both *lhi̤we* and *mi* have one meaning — "Tangut" (in the main body of the text of the encyclopaedia the word {2} *lhi̤we* is used, whereas in the commentary — the word {4} *mi*).

Finally, let us turn to the second Tangut self-appellation used in the ritual language — {5} *lhi̤we-ndźei*. So far I have come across it only in the parts of the odes written in the ritual language. The next example proves it to be a noun: the four-syllable collocation {43} *lhi̤we-ndźei mai ndzu* "Tangut horses" (ritual language) is rendered in the common language as {44} *mi zi ri̤ạ ti̤e* "Tangut sons' horses", i.e. in the common language where stands the adjective {2} *mi*, it was necessary to add the noun "son". The usage of the four Tangut self-appellations in various kinds of Tangut texts is shown in *Table 2*.

Table 2

	Common language			Ritual language
Tangut self- appellations	Official texts	Narration	Poetry	Poetry (parts of odes)
mi (adj.)	+	+	+	–
mi-niaɯ (noun)	–	–	+	–
lhi̤we (adj.)	–	+	+	+
lhi̤we ndźrei (noun)	–	–	–	+

In the preceding pages, I have examined the Tangut self-appellations. In what follows I will touch upon the images of the *mi* people in Tangut paintings, which have been brought to light in connection with their self-appellations. I would like to remind that in this part of the study I use exclusively Tangut self-appellations. For this purpose, I have chosen the self-appellation {3} *mi-niaɯ*, since (i) *mi-niaɯ* is a noun and one does not have to add nouns with the meaning "man", "son" or "people" as in case of {2} *mi*; (ii) {3} *mi-niaɯ* is very close to the well-known ethnonym *mi-nyag* used in Tibetan texts, thus there will be no bewilderment about the meaning of the term. However, because of the difficulties connected with the rendering of the symbol *ɯ* (sounds like Russian *ы*) in the publications, it seems more convenient to drop it and use the Tangut self-appellation in the simplified form *mi-nia*.

There is also one more problem which needs discussing beforehand: it is the problem of the two terms "black-headed" and "red-faced" used in *mi-nia* indigenous texts. These terms, as is widely believed, stand for two groups of *mi-nia* people. But the specific characteristics distinguishing the black-headed from the red-faced have not been defined so far, and the meaning of the terms remains obscure. First, I will recount in brief my observations about these two terms [46].

The terms "black-headed" and "red-faced", constantly used in *mi-nia* texts, stand for two different groups (=tribes): the black-headed, being descended from the priests of the indigenous religion, Root West, represent the *mi-nia* elite, while the red-faced constitute the *mi-nia* common people. In *mi-nia* mythology, these terms can be traced back to the pair of totem animals {45} *ndźi̤u* "crane" ("black-headed") and "monkey" ("red-faced"). In the passages written in the ritual language, the word {45} *ndźi̤u* "crane" often stands for the collocation "black-headed". I suppose that "crane" and "monkey" originally were the names of the two tribes which formed the *mi-nia* people.

In the odes one may pick up some fragments of a *mi-nia* myth explaining the origin of the red-faced. According to this myth, somewhere in an upland dwelt ten thousand people. (Since in the texts the number "ten thousand" is usually associated with the red-faced, contrasted with one thousand of the black-headed, one may suppose that those dwelling in the upland were only the red-faced.) First there was no difference between men and animals (supposedly the monkeys). But in course of time the faces of some had become red and they turned into cross-eyed men, while those with hair on their faces remained animals. (Perhaps this is the reason why in the painting discussed below the faces of the *mi-nia* — the red-faced as well as the black-headed — are clearly shaven.)

I believe that only the red-faced were regarded as the *mi-nia*; in the painting discussed below, the black-headed in their appearance differ from the red-faced, seemingly representing another anthropological type. A passage from "The Ode on Sayings" seems to confirm my assumption. As is usual in the odes, this passage is first rendered in the ritual language ({46}) and then in the common language ({47}): {46} *mi mbi ma so ndźi̯wu kaɯ xwai lhiwe śi̯we ndźi̯wu niəməźa ngi̯ę lhiwe śi̯we ti̯e we tśhi̯əɯ* ("In an upland [dwelt] ten thousand people. They were cross-eyed. There were two kinds of red-faced (*lhi̤we śi̤we*): red-faced (*źa ngi̤ę*) and red-faced (*lhi̤we śi̤we*). [The latter] were wise [and could] speak" (ritual language)). {47} *phi̤o 'i̤wan mbin khi ndzi̤wo ndźi̤e mei ndon ni* (?) *źi mi ndzi̤wo mi̤ə ni tha nin si̤ę śi̤e ndą* ("In an upland dwelt ten thousand people. [They were] cross-eyed. [Those who had] hair [on their] faces were not men. Men were those whose faces had become red. They were wise and were first to speak" (common language)).

Taken separately the passages are obscure, but since the content of the passage in the ritual language is repeated in the common language and, what is important, not in a word-for-word rendition, we may grasp the idea more adequately. We may conclude that: (i) judging from their number (ten thousand), all the people who dwelt in the upland certainly were the red-faced; (ii) out of the two names for the red-faced which are used in the ritual language — {48} *lhi̤we śi̤we* and {49} *źa ngi̤ę* — only {48} *lhi̤we śi̤we* stands for the people. Seemingly, {49} *źa ngi̯ę* designates a group of men and animals before their differentiation. In turn, the red-faced {48} *lhi̤we śi̯we* are characterised by (a) red colour of the face, (b) lack of facial hair, and (c) crossed eyes [47].

When I looked in the dictionaries for the homophones for {48} *lhi̤we śi̤we* "red-faced", it turned out that the first syllable in this collocation {50} *lhi̤we* "face" is homophonous with the *mi-nia* self-appellation used in the ritual language, namely, {4} *lhi̤we* [48]. Thus, we may state that the meaning of the term "red-faced" coincides with that of the term *mi-nia*. Such understanding of the term "red-faced" as an equivalent of the term *mi-nia* is supported by another ode, "The Ode on Monthly Pleasures". In the description of the eleventh lunar moon, we find the same characteristic of the *mi-nia* as "cross-eyed": {51} *lhi̤we no kąɯ xwai* ("*lhi̤we* sons (=*mi-nia*) [with] crossed eyes" — in ritual language) and {52} *mi zi mei ndon* ("*mi* sons [with] crossed eyes" — in common language). In this example, {4} *lhi̤we* from the ritual language is rendered as *mi* in the common language. Thus, we may conclude that the term *mi-nia* (=*mi*, *lhi̤we*, *lhi̤we śi̤we*) implies only the red-faced, whereas the black-headed, *by their origin*, did not belong to the *mi-nia*.

Concluding the first part of the article, I would like to add one more observation. The second syllable in the name of the *mi-nia* imperial clan Weiming {53} *ngwe mi* — {54} *mi* — is a homophone of {2} *mi*, which, as was shown above, is the only *mi-nia* self-appellation common to all types of *mi-nia* texts (I name it "an universal self-appellation"). The only difference between the two homophones lies in the tone: {54} *mi* is read in the first tone, whereas {2} *mi* — in the second tone [49]. Obviously, this fact was to demonstrate the indigenous (*mi-nia*) origin of the ruling family, and this means that the Weimings belonged to the red-faced. The same may be said about the Simings {55} *si mi*, who were the conjugal partners of the Weimings: the second syllable in the name {55} *si mi* coincides with that of the name Weiming {53} *ngwe mi*. Thus, the Simings were looked upon as the red-faced as well. It means that the *mi-nia* rulers were regarded as descendants of the red-faced (not black-headed!) by both maternal and paternal lineages.

To support my observation, I would like to draw the reader's attention to one of the paintings on silk from Khara Khoto (now in the State Hermitage Museum). Here, in my view, we find the portraits of the representatives of the *mi-nia* (see the front cover of the present issue). The depiction is in the lowest register of the painting "Guanyin, Moon in Water" [50]. Close to a fresh-dug grave stand four persons dancing and playing musical instruments. To their left are two horses — a dark stallion and a light-coloured mare. We see the faces only of two persons out of four. One of them, dressed in red, is clapping his hands, the other (in green) is playing the harp; both are bareheaded. Two other figures are shown from the back. They are dressed in green, with caps (different in shape) on their heads. One of them is dancing, the other playing the flute [51]. My assumption is that the two persons with visible faces personify the red-faced (the figure dressed in red) and the black-headed (dressed in green).

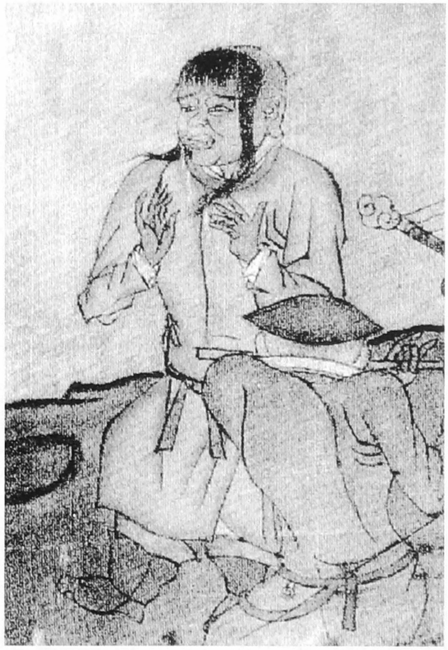


Fig. 1

The assumption is based on the description of the *mi-nia* appearance made by two great travellers, Marco Polo (mid-13th century) and N. M. Przewalski (last decades of the 19th century), since the faces of the two people in the lowest register of the painting "Guanyin, Moon in Water" can serve as an illustration to the description of the *mi-nia* made by both travellers.

According to Marco Polo, Tangut people are "fat, snub-nosed, [their] hair are black; they have neither beard nor moustache"[52]. Przewalski gives a similar, and more detailed, description of the *mi-nia*, stating that in their appearance the *mi-nia* stand in sharp contrast with both the Chinese and the Mongols: "In general, they are of average height, sometimes even tall, thickset, broad-shouldered. Their hair, eyebrows, moustache and beard without exception are black; they have black eyes, usually large or of medium size, but not narrow-cut as the Mongols have, straight, sometimes (not very seldom) aquiline or snub nose, thick lips, rather often turned outside out. Their cheek-bones are slightly high, but not so sharp as the Mongols' cheek-bones. Their faces on the whole are oblong, but not flat; their skull is round..." [53]. The traveller also mentions that the *mi-nia* always shave their moustache and beard.

In the 1970s, Dr A. P. Terentyev-Katansky singled out two major types of the *mi-nia* on the grounds of descriptions in various sources, including those by Marco Polo and Przewalski: (i) with very broad cheek-bones, blunt, fleshy nose, sometimes turned up, often snub, dark or reddish complexion; (ii) with slightly elongated face and protruding, fairly large nose sometimes hooked, almost aquiline, with a heavy lower part of the face, sometimes puffy, large eyes without the well pronounced Mongolian eye-lids, with full scarlet lips. A characteristic feature of this type is a massive long nose, with a lump, a fleshy tip and large nostrils [54].

The two major types of the *mi-nia* picked out by Terentyev-Katansky coincide with the red-faced and the black-headed respectively as they are shown in the painting "Guanyin, Moon in Water". The bareheaded person in red who stands clapping his hands in the middle of the four-people group represents the first type, or the red-faced (see *fig. 1*). The figure is placed in the centre of the four-people group, which underscores his significance among the depicted. In addition, the man is tall (if we measure the height of his figure and compare it with that of the stallion, we will see that he nearly reaches the stallion's nose-bridge) and broad-shouldered. He has a round skull (=broad cheek-bones) and large eyes; he is snub-nosed, his lips are thick and turned outside out. He is cleanly shaven. Especially significant is his reddish complexion — not only his face, but also his hands are reddish, in contrast with the person who stands to his left. All indicates his being a red-faced, that is, a *mi-nia*. His *tufa* hairstyle also confirms his *mi-nia* ethnicity: it is known that by one of his first edicts (1033) the first *mi-nia* Emperor, Yuan-hao, ordered the *mi-nia* to have a special hairdo named *tufa* [55].

In Khara Khoto collection housed in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, there is one more depiction of the red-faced (see *fig. 2*). One of the scenes in

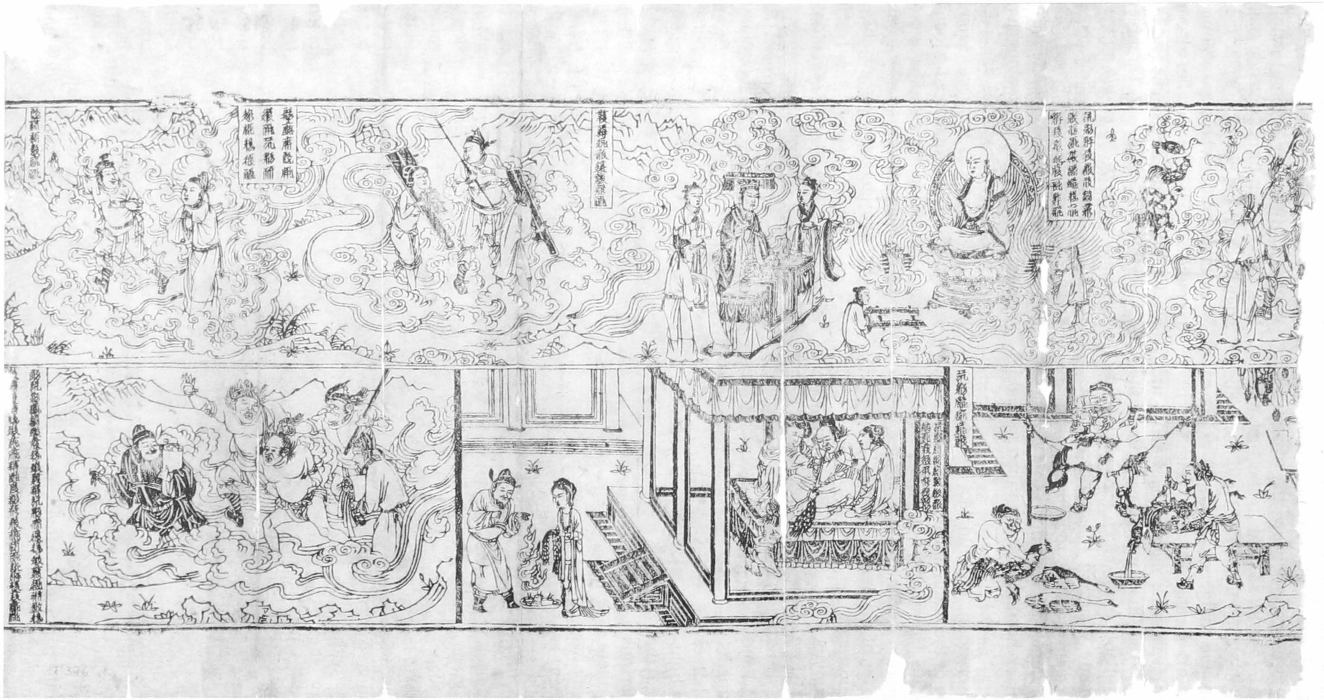


Fig. 2

the engraving, illustrating the preface to the "*Sūtra* of the Golden Light", shows three people slaughtering animals [56] (see *fig. 3*). An inscription to the depiction, in *mi-nia* script, runs as follows: "[Zhang] Ju-dao slaughters animals" [57]. The appearance of all of the three persons in the engraving coincides with the red-faced type (broad cheek-bones and turned-up noses), betraying their *mi-nia* ethnicity.

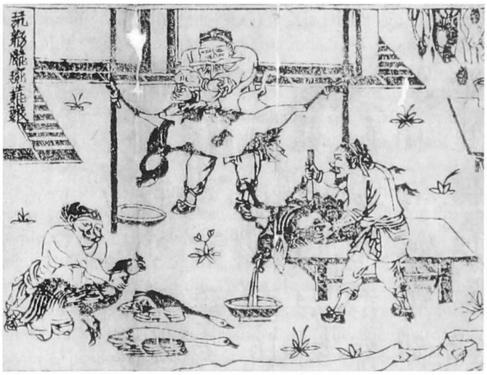


Fig. 3

The embodiment of the second type, or the black-headed, in the painting "Guanyin, Moon in Water" is the figure shown in profile, standing in the same group of four (see *fig. 4*). Dressed in green, the man is playing a seven-stringed harp held between his left shoulder and cheek. The frame of the harp almost conceals his face. The man, the fingers of both his hands on the harp strings, is cleanly shaven. He is shown even taller than the one in red and the broadness of his shoulders is especially noticeable. His nose is aquiline, lips are thick, and his low jaw is heavy; however, the skull does not seem round. His lips are scarlet and complexion is pale, in contrast with the reddish complexion of the red-faced figure. One may say that the appearance of the man with the harp is much in keeping with the characteristic features ascribed by Terentyev-Katansky to the second type.

His haircut is seemingly not in the *tufa* style [58]; the lack of a long strand of hair characteristic of *tufa* is significant, but it may be that it is merely not seen being concealed by the frame of the harp. Still, his hairstyle differs from that of the red-faced: on the left side of his head, seen to us, the hair reaches his ear, whereas there is no hair near the left ear of the red-faced. It seems that only the back of his head is shaven.

But the most distinctive feature definitely labelling the character as a black-headed is the harp in his hands. The point needs some explanation. As was said above, in the ritual language the word {45} *ndźi̤u* "crane" often stands for the collocation "black-headed". The harp held by the person whom I identify as a black-headed, is most likely named {56} *ndźi̤u ki̤ạ* (lit. "crane harp"). Among *mi-nia* musical instruments listed in the dictionary "The Pearl in the Palm" [59], there are two kinds of harps: (i) {62} *lho ki̤ạ* (Chin. *zheng*), with thirteen or sixteen strings, translated by Nishida Tatsuo as "Chinese harp" and (ii) {56} *ndźi̤u ki̤ạ* (Chin. *konghou*) translated by Nishida as "kind of harp". It seems that of these two harps {56} *ndźi̤u ki̤ạ* more fits to the type of the harp shown in the picture. It looks as if the painter, to avoid misinterpretation of the figure in green and to show that the man represents a black-headed, depicted him with a crane harp in his hands. Moreover, the harp is drawn in such a manner that it nearly conceals the face of the black-headed, which, I believe, was made intentionally to stress the enigmatic nature (=heavenly origin) of the black-headed [60].

As to the colour of the clothing of the red-faced and black-headed in the painting "Guanyin, Moon in Water", it is also symbolic. If the green colour of the garment of the black-headed figure may point to his nobility [61], the red colour of the dress of the red-faced certainly has a special meaning. As a representative of the common people, he should wear black-coloured clothes [62], but his garment is red, the colour forbidden for the commoners. However, one can notice that the red colour of his dress is not so bright as that of the stallion's harness or Guanyin's shawl [63]; it is pink rather than red (during the centuries the colour may have lost its original colour). Be this as it may, the colour of his dress stands in sharp contrast with that of all other people standing near the grave — all of them have green clothes. His position in the centre of the group, the red colour of his dress and that he is the only person seen full-faced and full-length, all indicates that he is the main figure in the group of the four characters.

Thus, I believe that in the picture, near the fresh-dug grave, are depicted representatives of the two tribes which formed the *mi-nia* people — the red-faced and the black-headed. Seemingly, when these two tribes ("monkeys" and "cranes") had jointly founded "The Great State of the White and Lofty", the self-appellation of the much more numerous tribe, the red-faced, whose special position is stressed in the depiction by means of colour and composition [64], was adopted to designate the people of the newly founded state [65].

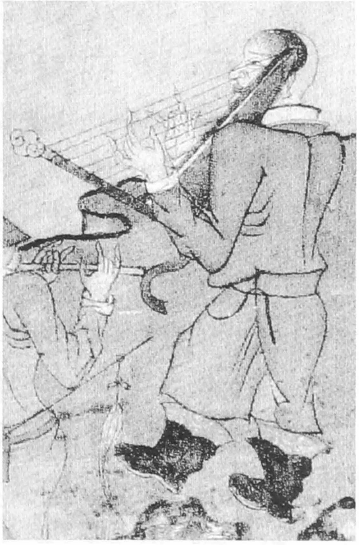
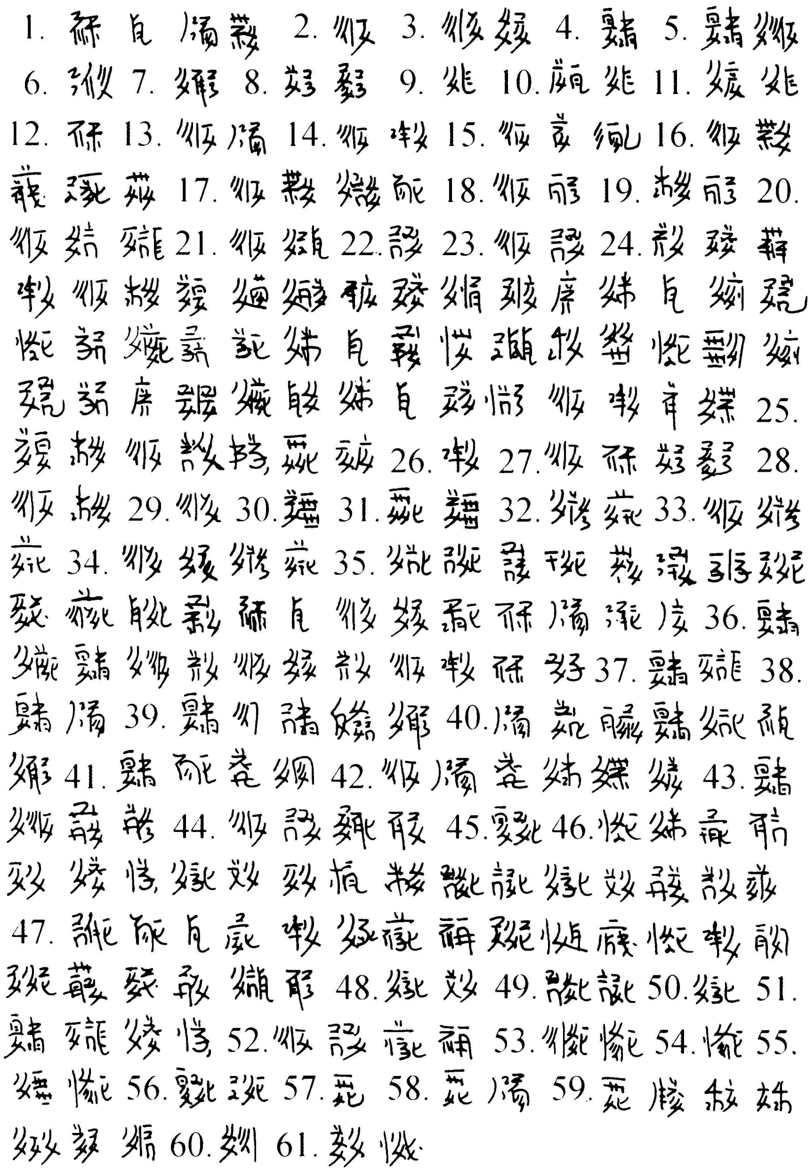


Fig. 4

This study which grew out of the analysis of the *mi-nia* self-appellations proves that the written and artistic parts of *mi-nia* treasure from Khara Khoto, or, as R. Linrothe puts it, textual and visual evidence [66], should be studied in their unity, since they represent a single source of information both on the *mi-nia* people and the exquisitely sophisticated culture created by them.

List of Tangut Characters



Notes

1. The term "Tangut" is generally used in Russia, whereas "Xi" ("Xi Xia") — in China and Japan. Scholars in the West use both terms seemingly preferring "Xi" ("Xi Xia") when the state is concerned and "Tangut" when the people is touched upon. In keeping with Russian tradition in this essay (as in all my works) I use the term "Tangut".

2. In scholarly literature one comes across a combination of both terms, which looks rather strange —Tangut Xia. This combination is used mainly as an attribute: Tangut Xia Buddhism, Tangut Xia capital, Tangut Xia contexts, Tangut Xia Ushnishavijaya images, as in R. Linrothe, "Xia Renzong and the patronage of Tangut Buddhist art: the stūpa and Ushnīshavijayā cult", *Journal of Sung-Yuan Studies*, 28, (1998), pp. 93, 95, 99, 103.

3. The number in { } brackets corresponds to the number in the "List of Tangut Characters" present in this essay.

4. For my interpretation of this name, see K. B. Kepping, "The name of the Tangut Empire", *T'oung Pao*, LXXX, fasc. 4—5 (1994), pp. 357—76; also *idem*, "The official name of the Tangut Empire as reflected in the native Tangut texts", *Manuscripta Orientalia*, I/3 (1995), pp. 22—32.

5. My observations show that during the time of existence of the Tangut state, the word {57} *ndźi̯we* "summer" (Chin. *xia*) was never used in Tangut texts as the name of the state or the people. See Kepping, "The name of the Tangut Empire", p. 359. The only example known to me, when the collocation {58} *ndźi̯we lhi̯ə* means "Tangut state", dates to 1312 (see Shi Jinbo, *Xi Xia fojiao shilue* (Tangut Buddhism) (Yinchuan, 1988), p. 317), i.e. nearly a century after the fall of the Tangut state. But the magic of the Chinese word "Xia" in connection with the Tanguts is so strong that even when {57} *ndźi̯we* is used in its direct meaning as "summer [season]", some scholars interpret it as "Tangut". For example, the sentence {59} *ndźi̯we məvi̯ei źi̯əndza ti̯ei min* — "In summer it is impossible to estimate the enemy" — is translated as "The enemies of the rulers of Xia [state] are innumerable" (*More znachenii̐, ustanovlennykh sviatymi* (The Sea of Meanings Established by the Saints), facsimile of the xylograph, publication of the text, introduction, translation from Tangut, commentaries and appendices by E. I. Kychanov (Moscow, 1997), p. 219, Tangut text p. 234, l. 5).

6. For details of the polemic, see Kepping "The name of the Tangut Empire", pp. 361—4.

7. R. W. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High. Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia* (Honolulu, 1996), p. XI.

8. Tangut ethnonyms for other peoples also have not been studied yet. As a result, even the list of these ethnonyms lacks clarity, not to mention their precise definition. Cf., for example, *idem*, *op. cit.*, pp. XIII—XV, and pp. 36, 98, 99, 147, 159; K. B. Kepping, "The famous Liangzhou bilingual stele: a new study", *T'oung Pao*, LXXXIV (1998), pp. 371—3. However, within the limits of this essay it is impossible to examine all the ethnonyms used in Tangut texts; it is to be done separately. See *idem*, "Ethnonyms in Tangut indigenous texts" (forthcoming).

9. Kychanov, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 179, notes 108 and 107.

11. Nishida Tatsuo, "A study of 'The Ode on Monthly Pleasures' in Tangut language" (in Japanese), in *Gengogaku daijiten*, No. 25 (1986), pp. 39—73.

12. Ritual languages are known to exist in other Tibeto-Burman languages as well, for example, in Belhare (personal communication of B. Bickel, St. Petersburg, March 1996). However, Tangut ritual language is really something special, for we have at our disposal *written* form of the ritual language.

13. Kepping, "Tangut ritual language", paper presented at the XXIX International Conference on Sino-Tibetan Languages and Linguistics, October 10—13, 1996, Leiden, the Netherlands.

14. *Izmenënnyĭ i zanovo utverzhdënnyĭ kodeks deviza tsarstvovaniia Nebesnoe Protsvetanie* (*1149—1169*) (The Revised and Newly Endorsed Code for the Designation of the Reign "Celestial Prosperity" (1149—1169)), publication of the text, translation from Tangut, investigations and commentaries in four books, facsimile and notes by E. I. Kychanov (Moscow, 1987—1989), i—iv.

15. Kychanov, *More znacheniĭ*.

16. K. B. Kepping, *Sun zi v tangutskom perevode* (*Sun zi* in the Tangut translation). Facsimile of the xylograph, publication of the text, translation from Tangut, introduction, commentaries, essay on grammar, vocabulary and indices (Moscow, 1979). K. B. Kepping, *Les kategoriĭ — utrachennaia kitaĭskaia leishu v tangutskom perevode* (*Lei Lin* — a Lost Chinese *Leishu* in Tangut Translation), Facsimile of the xylograph, publication of the text, introduction, translations from Tangut, commentaries and indices (Moscow, 1983).

17. *Vnov' sobrannye dragotsennye parnye izrecheniia* (The Newly Assembled Precious Dual Maxims), facsimile of the xylograph, publication of the text, translation from Tangut, introduction and commentaries by E. I. Kychanov (Moscow, 1974).

18. Kepping, "Tangut ritual language", and *idem*, "The 'black-headed' and the 'red-faced' in Tangut indigenous texts" (forthcoming).

19. For example, common language {60} *mbe* "sun" corresponds to {61} *tie li̯e* "sun" in the ritual language. However, the only (?) exception seems to be the ethnonyms — graphically some of them are composed by means of identical parts. For details, see Kepping, "Ethnonyms in Tangut indigenous texts".

20. K. B. Kepping, E. I. Kychanov, V. S. Kolokolov, A. P. Terent'ev-Katanskiĭ, *More pis'men* (The Sea of Characters) (Moscow, 1969), ii, p. 38, No. 3389.

21. *Ibid.*, No. 3390.

22. Description of these two pronouns see in K. B. Kepping, *Tangutskiĭ iazyk. Morfologiia* (Tangut Language. Morphology) (Moscow, 1985), pp. 41—9.

23. *Izmenënnyĭ i zanovo utverzhdënnyĭ kodeks*, *passim*.

24. *Ibid.*, *passim*.

25. Li Fanwen, *Tongyin yanjiu* (Yinchuan, 1986), p. 767.

26. M. V. Sofronov, in his *Grammatika tangutskogo iazyka* (Grammar of the Tangut Language) (Moscow, 1968), ii, p. 376, No. 4600, did not supply this character with its reading.

27. *Katalog tangutskikh buddiĭskikh pamiatnikov Instituta vostokovedeniia Rossiĭskoĭ Akademii Nauk* (Catalogue of Tangut Buddhist Texts Kept in the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies), comp. by E. I. Kychanov, introduction by Nishida Tatsuo. The publication prepared by S. Arakawa (Kyoto, 1999), p. 773.

28. N. A. Nevskiĭ, *Tangutskaia filologiia* (Tangut Philology) (Moscow, 1960), ii, p. 133.

29. Kepping, Kychanov, Kolokolov, Terent'ev-Katanskiĭ, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

30. Gong Hwang-cherng and K. B. Kepping, "The Tangut ode 'The Monthly Pleasures'" (forthcoming).

31. Sofronov (*op. cit.*, ii, p. 340, No. 2834) did not supply this character with its reading.

32. See n. 31.

33. *Izmenënnyĭ i zanovo utverzhdënnyĭ kodeks*, iii, p. 124, Tangut text p. 445, ll. 5—7.

34. *Vnov' sobrannye dragotsennye parnye izrecheniia*, Tangut text p. 155, l. 5.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 90, No. 1, Tangut text p. 155, l. 2.

36. Kwanten Luc, *The Timely Pearl. A 12th Century Tangut Chinese Glossary*. Vol. I: *The Chinese Glosses* (Bloomington, 1982), pp. 190—1.

37. According to M. V. Sofronov's reconstruction, the vowels in {2} *mi* and {29} *mi* from {3} *mi-niaɯ* are different. See Sofronov, *op. cit.*, ii, p. 351, No. 3316 and p. 355, No. 3536.

38. Li Fanwen, *op. cit.*, p. 216, 3B26 and 3B28. Professor S. E. Yakhontov (St. Petersburg State University, personal communication, 1984, summer) has discovered semantic affinity between Tangut homophones read in different tones. See Kepping, *Tangutskiĭ iazyk. Morfologiia*, p. 334, n. 1.

39. E. I. Kychanov, "Gimn Sviashchennym predkam tangutov" ("Hymn to the sacred Tangut ancestors"), in *Pis'mennye Pamiatniki Vostoka. Istoriko-filologicheskie issledovaniia*, ed. A. P. Terentyev-Katansky, Ju. E. Bregel and V. M. Konstantinov (Moscow, 1970).

40. *Vnov' sobrannye dragotsennye parnye izrecheniia*, p. 125, Tangut text p. 213, l. 6.

41. The word {4} *lhịwe* is pronounced in the first tone, whereas all other Tangut self-appellations — in the second tone. And, as is known, the part of "The Sea of Characters", which includes Tangut characters read in the second tone, is missing.

42. Kepping, Kychanov, Kolokolov, Terent'ev-Katanskiĭ, *op. cit.*, i, p. 452, No. 2787, text p. 594.

43. Mind that in the dictionary only after the word {2} *mi* stands the word {26} *ndzịwo* "man", which seemingly means that {2} *mi*, as I have noted above, is an adjective.

44. *More znacheniĭ*, p. 307, two times.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 114, Tangut text p. 307.

46. For details, see Kepping, "The 'black-headed' and the 'red-faced'".

47. For the time being, I leave aside the definition of the red-faced as "cross-eyed", since I have not got its explanation yet.

48. Li Fanwen, *op. cit.*, p. 440, No. 4813 and No. 4812.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 215, 4B31 and 4B33, see also n. 38.

50. Since here I am interested only in the portraits of the *mi-nia* in the lowest register of the painting, I do not touch upon the content of the painting itself. Its colour reproduction and description see in *Lost Empire of the Silk Road. Buddhist Art from Khara Khoto*, ed. M. Piotrovsky (Milan, 1993), p. 198 and also in K. F. Samosyuk, "The Guanyin icon from Khara-Khoto", *Manuscripta Orientalia*, III/1 (1997), pp. 53—61 (see also the front cover of the present issue of *Manuscripta Orientalia*). Also cf. *idem*, "Eshchë raz ob ikone 'Guan'in' iz Khara-Khoto (tibetskie dokumenty iz Dun'khuana)" ("More on the Guanyin icon from Khara Khoto (Tibetan documents from Dunhuang)"), in *Ėrmitazhnye chteniia pamiati V. G. Lukonina. 1995—1999* (St. Petersburg, 2000), pp. 130—45; the painting is also discussed in K. B. Kepping with F. Wood, "The Guanyin icon (Chinghis Khan's last campaign)" (forthcoming).

51. These two persons shown from the back are not relevant to this study.

52. *The Book of Marco Polo*, in *Dzhovanni del' Plano Karpini. Istoriia Mongolov. Gil'om de Rubruk. Puteshestvie v vostochnye strany. Kniga Marko Polo* (Moscow, 1997), chapter LXXII, p. 240.

53. N. M. Przheval'skiĭ (Przewalski), *Mongoliia i strana tangutov* (Mongolia and the Tangut Land) (Moscow, 1946), p. 221.

54. A. P. Terentyev-Katansky, "The appearance, clothes and utensils of the Tanguts", in *The Countries and Peoples of the East* (Moscow, 1974), p. 215.

55. The head-shaving decree was, as R. Dunnell puts it (see her *op. cit.*, p. 181), "the most renowned of Wei-ming Yuan-hao's nativistic innovations".

56. The engraving was published in *Lost Empire of the Silk Road*, p. 264, pl. 77.

57. This engraving representing an illustration to the Tangut translation of an apocryphal preface to the "*Sūtra* of the Golden Light" was originally written in Chinese (the names of the characters in the apocrypha obviously reveal their Chinese origin). However, the *mi-nia* appearance of the people in the engraving is beyond doubt a sound evidence proving the *mi-nia* origin of the engraving.

58. However, Samosyuk in her "Eshchë raz ob ikone 'Guan'in' iz Khara-Khoto", p. 138, thinks that he has a *tufa* hair-style.

59. Nishida Tatsuo, *The Study of the Tangut Language* (in Japanese) (Tokyo, 1964), i, p. 218.

60. See the list of specific features of the black-headed in Kepping, "The 'black-headed' and the 'red-faced'".

61. *Izmenënnyĭ i zanovo utverzhdënnyĭ kodeks*, i, p. 360.

62. *Ibid.*

63. The whole painting see in *Lost Empire of the Silk Road*, p. 199 and Samosyuk, "The Guanyin icon from Khara-Khoto", *Manuscripta Orientalia*, III/1 (1997), p. 52, plate 1.

64. The correlation between the red-faced and the black-headed, as it was said above, was ten to one.

65. It would be very interesting indeed to find out the origins of the black-headed, the people who in their appearance were so different from the red-faced. Seemingly, fascinating discoveries are still to be awaited.

66. Linrothe, "Xia Renzong and the patronage of Tangut Buddhist art: the stūpa and Ushnīshavijayā cult", p. 98.

Illustrations

Front cover:

"Guanyin, Moon in Water", scroll on silk (fragment), call number X 2439, Khara Khoto, 12th century, in the holdings of the State Hermitage Museum. Courtesy of the State Hermitage Museum.

Inside the text:

Fig. 1. "Figure of a 'red-faced' ", fragment of the same scroll on silk.

Fig. 2. Illustration to the preface to the *sūtra Jin guang ming zui sheng wang jing* (*Suvarṇaprabhāsottamarajasūtra*), xylograph, accordion format, 31.2 × 59.5 cm, call number TANG 376, inventory No. 95, Khara Khoto, 12th century, in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies.

Fig. 3. "Zhang Ju-dao slaughtering animals", fragment of the same illustration.

Fig. 4. "Figure of a 'black-headed' ", fragment of the picture "Guanyin, Moon in Water".