

## The Famous Liangzhou Bilingual Stele: a new study\*

*RUTH. W. DUNNELL, The Great State of White and High. Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia. University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu, 1996, XXV + 278 pp. Map, Illustrations, Notes, Glossary, Bibliography, Index. ISBN 0-8248-1719-2.*

This book was long awaited. Being the first volume on Tangut matters written in English by an experienced scholar<sup>1</sup>, not an outsider drawn to an exotic object (cf. Miller 1983), it not only shapes our notions about the mysterious Tangut Empire, but, due to the author's passion for her subject and vivid style, it will be attractive both to the general reader and to the specialist. There is no doubt that all those involved in Tangut studies — recent publications show that their numbers have significantly increased — will be truly excited by the appearance of Dunnell's book.

The book grew, Dunnell states (p. IX), out of an appendix to her doctoral dissertation, «Tanguts and the Tangut State of Ta Hsia» (1983). This appendix contained her translation of the Chinese part of the famous Liangzhou 涼州 bilingual (Tangut-Chinese) stele erected in 1094 in Wuwei 武威, Gansu, to celebrate the completion of repairs on the Gantong stupa 感通塔 at the Huguo (Dayun 大雲) Temple 護國寺. In the present case the Liangzhou stele, the principal Xia source for the eleventh century, is, says the author, «the piece around which this book is organized» (p. 5).

Dunnell has done a tremendous work piecing together all the available materials, among which the Tangut prefaces and epilogues to Tangut translations of Buddhist and other works assembled by Shi Jinbo 史金波 in his *Xi Xia fojiao shilue* 西夏佛教史略 (1988), and supplied by him with Chinese translations (see pp. 230-333 of his book), are her main source<sup>2</sup>. But she does not confine herself to such native sources: she makes amazing use of what she calls (p. 4) «secondary» (that is, contemporary Song, Liao and Jin records) and «tertiary» (that is, later Chinese chronicles) sources.

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It should be remembered that, so far, all our knowledge about the Tangut state was restricted to Chinese dynastic histories compiled during the reign of the last Yuan emperor in the fourteenth century. As a result, we had at our disposal only the facts preserved in those histories compiled by the people who destroyed the Tangut state. This is why Tangut written materials such as the Liangzhou stele are invaluable, providing as they do information on many otherwise obscure aspects of Tangut history and culture. A good example is the indigenous name of the Tangut state, viz. «The Great State of White and Lofty»<sup>3</sup>, which never occurs in the Chinese dynastic histories. Studying the indigenous Tangut name for the state has revealed new data concerning Tangut culture (see Kepping 1994).

The book under review consists of two parts, on «Buddhism in Eleventh-Century Xia» (pp. 1-83), and «The 1094 Stele Inscription from Liangzhou» (pp. 85-156), respectively. It also includes two appendices: A. Photoreproductions of Rubbings of the 1094 Gantong Stupa Stele Inscriptions, and B. Chronology of Sources Recording or Discussing the Inscriptions on the Gantong Stupa Stele (pp. 161-178); to which are added the Notes (pp. 181-241), Select Glossary of Chinese Names and Terms (pp. 243-252), Bibliography (pp. 253-270), and Index (pp. 271-278)<sup>4</sup>.

Part One (chapters 1-3), which begins with theoretical speculations on state formation and rulership, establishes the background for understanding the 1094 stele inscription in connection with Tangut state formation and Buddhism. The newly-born Tangut state is shown in its relations with its neighbours—Song China, the Khitans, Jurchens, and Tibetans—and we are informed about the power struggle at the Tangut court in the eleventh century.

Part Two (chapters 4-6) focuses on the Liangzhou stele inscription. Dunnell starts with a detailed reconstruction of the history of the Dayun Temple where the stele was erected, and of its relations with other temples and with the town of Liangzhou. Here she has done considerable first-hand research, assembling important materials which shed light on the history of the Temple from the Tang dynasty to the twentieth century. Her meticulous description of the history of the Temple, including that of its five stele inscriptions, undoubtedly deserves the highest praise.

Dunnell states that her book's central thesis is the inseparability of Xia Buddhism and state formation, their shared characteristics, fate, and ultimately significance for Chinese and Inner Asian history (p. 7). I do agree with this notion. It is, importantly, corroborated by the fact that the Tangut translation of the entire Buddhist Canon began immediately after the Tangut state's foundation (was the state planned to be a Buddhist state from the beginning?<sup>5</sup>). Of the three non-Han states of the time (the two others being the Khitan Liao and the Jurchen Jin), which had all created their own script, only the Tangut felt strong enough to undertake such a translation and publish it in Tangut script<sup>6</sup>. The grandiose enterprise was started in 1038, during the reign of Weiming Yuanhao 嵬名元昊

(the first Tangut emperor, 1032—1048), and was completed in 1090, a fifty-two year period during which thirty-two Buddhist high-ranked monks translated 3,579 chapters of the Canon. If we bear in mind that the Tangut state was born in 1032, that the indigenous Tangut script was put in use in 1036, and that 1038 was the year when the translation of the Buddhist Canon was begun and Weiming Yuanhao claimed to be the equal of the Chinese emperor, then we have all grounds to assume that the principal purpose of the invention of the Tangut script was to translate the Buddhist Canon, which was certainly supposed to form the foundation of the new state. The appearance of such an ambitious state on Chinese borders was a ground-shaking event, since it manifestly violated the Far Eastern traditional notion according to which China was the centre of civilization, whereas all other peoples were perceived as barbarians.

Beyond doubt the translation of the Buddhist Canon was the main event in the spiritual life of the eleventh-century Tangut Empire, and it certainly would deserve a special chapter (see Shi 1988, pp. 64-72). And yet, Dunnell mentions it only in passing (e.g. pp. 37, 46, 47, 63). She even fails to include it in the «Brief Chronology of the Main Events in Xia History» (pp. XXI-XXV), where for 1038 only less significant events are mentioned<sup>7</sup>; similarly, 1094 comes immediately after 1086, thus leaving the completion of the translation in 1090 out of consideration<sup>8</sup>. This reveals a certain inclination on the part of Dunnell for reserving her attention to detail, at the cost of leaving out problems of great importance for the Tangut Empire.

The same propensity again manifests itself in Dunnell's description of an excellent Tangut engraving set as the frontispiece of her book, representing the team of translators of the Buddhist Canon (pp. 65-67), with the State Preceptor {1}<sup>9</sup> *pne s<sub>1</sub>e m<sub>1</sub>*, or «Bai Light of Wisdom», (Dunnell renders the name as Bai Zhi-guang 白智光) occupying the centre of the composition, his figure being the largest in the engraving. The empress and emperor are depicted at the bottom. One is struck in Dunnell's description by the discrepancy between the detailed account of the scenery (the reader learns about pens, paper and texts on the benches, the collars of the monks' robes, the floral print of the drapery, which is repeated on the short-sleeve robe of one of the monks, etc.), and the absence of a simple enumeration of the Tangut captions in cartouches. Neglecting the captions results in erroneous identification of the figures and in misinterpreting the whole engraving.

Since this engraving is of great importance for the book under review, let me try to fill some gaps in its description, without however pretending to provide a thorough study of it.

Now held in Beijing Library, the engraving survives in a Yuan edition of the Tangut translation of the sutra *Xianzai xian jie qian faming jing* 現在賢劫千佛名經. There are altogether thirteen Tangut captions, some of them

partly translated by Dunnell, some not even mentioned<sup>10</sup>. The caption at the top of the engraving, above the main figure (let us call it no. 1) consists of the fourteen characters {2} *a 'won lhei 'u ts iu vie m̄e rai nguo lhiḍ ndz̄e phê s̄e m̄e*. I translate it «The one in charge of the translation of the whole [Buddhist Canon, who has] Calmly Completed [the translation], State Preceptor Bai Light of Wisdom»<sup>11</sup>. It seems entirely justified to assume that the collocation {3} *rai nguo*, «Calmly Completed», is the title Bai Light of Wisdom received in addition to his previous title, State Preceptor — it is known that Bai Light of Wisdom held the latter post in the reign of Huizong (1068-1086) (see Shi 1988, p. 143). In all likelihood, the title «Calmly Completed» was added in 1090 (under Huizong's son, Chong-zong), when the translation of the Canon was completed.

The caption near Bai Light of Wisdom's left hand (no. 2) and the one near his right hand (no. 3)<sup>12</sup>, each having five characters, are bound together, characterizing the team of translators depicted in the picture: no. 2{4} *lhei m̄e 'wu mb̄e ndz̄w̄e*, «The assistants of the Translator», and no. 3{5} *ngwei mü 'a tshieui ndz̄wo*, «Monks and laymen [altogether] sixteen persons». Above each of the eight monks, on his left or right side, is a caption giving his name (nos. 4-11). Dunnell supplies the reader only with the romanization of the Chinese equivalents of the surnames (the first character, sometimes the first two) given in the captions, leaving the given names out of consideration. I am unable to identify some of the Tangut names in the respective captions since they are not clearly visible in the reproduction. I have therefore to refer the reader to the Chinese equivalents of the names (surnames and given names) in Shi Jinbo's publication (1988, p. 76).

There are two more Tangut captions in the engraving: to the left of the figure of the Tangut Emperor (no. 12), and to the right of the figure of the Tangut empress (no. 13). (It would seem that out of thirteen captions, only these two were translated by the author.) They inform us that these figures represent respectively the emperor and his mother, the empress dowager. Caption no. 12 (five characters) reads {6} *ngi sweui 'l̄en ngwḍ ndz̄w̄e*, «The Son, Emperor, [whose] enlightenment is growing» (Chinese *zi ming sheng huangdi* 子明盛皇帝) *huangdi* 大明皇帝, «Emperor of great enlightenment (p. 67). If the Tangut verb {7} 'l̄en, «to grow up», «to rise», could stand for the character {8} *tha*, «great», as was suggested by Shi Jinbo (1988, p. 74 n. 2), followed by Dunnell (see below for details), but which I doubt very much, this Tangut verb as an attribute would precede the noun it modifies, whereas in the collocation *ming sheng* it follows it.

The cartouche no. 13 (six characters) accompanying the figure of the Tangut empress bears the following inscription: {9} *ma lion z̄ l̄ḍ ngwḍ liḗ ndz̄won*, «The Mother, Empress dowager Madame Liang». During the eleventh century

there were two mothers of Tangut emperors who were dowagers and were named Madame Liang: the mother of Huizong and the mother of Chongzong (r.1086–1139).

Dunnell identifies the one in the engraving with the first Madame Liang, the mother of Huizong, and consequently the emperor as Huizong himself. Here again she follows Shi Jinbo, who suggested that the title in the cartouche alongside the figure of the emperor, sheng ming huangdi 盛明皇帝 (I render this collocation as ming sheng huandi 明盛皇帝) stands for da ming huangdi (Shi 1988, p. 74). Since the title of Huizong includes the collocation darning 大明 (p. XVIII), it means, in Shi's opinion, that the emperor in the engraving must be Huizong. It seems that Shi Jinbo equalled the verb sheng with the adjective da 大, as we saw, in his desire to accomodate the collocation ming sheng to the collocation ming da 明大 (Tangut word order) found in Huizong's title.

I believe that the title given to Bai Light of Wisdom, who was known to be a guoshi (State Preceptor), is the key for dating, and consequently for interpreting, the scene depicted in the engraving. Since Bai Light of Wisdom's title guoshi is preceded here by the collocation «Calmly Completed [the translation of the whole Buddhist Canon]», we have the best reasons to assume that the scene took place in 1090, the year when the translation of the Canon was completed. By that time Huizong had already passed away and the infant Chongzong (b. 1084) had ascended the throne. The emperor's title in cartouche no. 12, «The Son, Emperor, [whose] enlightenment is growing», clearly points to the fact that he is a child still growing up, and whose enlightenment (in Buddhist teaching) is growing up as well. At the moment he is inferior to his father, Huizong, whose enlightenment was great (cf. collocation ming da in Huizong's title). The emperor's young appearance (which obviously puzzles Dunnell in connection with Huizong, see p. 67) supports my supposition that here we have Chongzong in 1090.

In short, we can claim that the Empress Dowager and her Son as depicted in the engraving are just those who are mentioned in the Liangzhou stele (lines 10 and 13 of the Tangut text), to wit, Madame Liang and her son Chongzong.

In all probability, the engraving, no doubt considered as an icon (or a sacred picture) in the Tangut Empire—note the haloes surrounding the heads of eleven personages—was made to commemorate the great event that was the completion of the Tangut translation of the entire Buddhist Canon in 1090, all those involved being shown in the picture. The exact date of execution is unclear. Being found in a Yuan edition, it could be a reprint from an earlier woodblock; but one cannot exclude the possibility that the engraving was indeed cut in Yuan times. However, I am more inclined to believe that it was executed shortly (?) after 1090, and repeated in the Yuan edition. This is because the images of the monks are not conventional: as Dunnell puts it, «The eight monks are all highly individualized in features» (p. 65), and we can even distinguish them by their nationality.

Thus, rather miraculously — in spite of Dunnell's ignorance — the engraving that commemorated the completion of the translation of the Buddhist Canon in the Tangut Empire in 1090 has found its right place on the frontispiece of a book devoted to Tangut Buddhism in the eleventh century<sup>13</sup>.

This having been said, as a philologist I will rather concentrate on the Tangut written materials and on their interpretation in the book, leaving a more profound and professional estimation of its historical aspects to more competent scholars.

Let me start with a general remark. Regrettably, despite the fact that nowadays one cannot imagine a Chinese, Russian or Japanese publication on Tangut subjects without Tangut characters, Dunnell does not include them in her book. Obviously this was in keeping with the publisher's demand. Instead of Tangut characters, Dunnell gives romanizations of their Chinese equivalents. But such an approach to Tangut texts raises the question whether she takes into account the grammatical differences between Tangut and Chinese. Since Dunnell herself does not inform the reader about her solution to this important problem, I have looked through the «Select Glossary of Chinese Names and Terms» (pp. 243-252). Strange as it may appear, Dunnell has not worked out a unified approach: the book includes Chinese romanizations of Tangut collocations which follow either the Tangut word order, or the Chinese word order. Thus, on p. 244 of the Glossary, the honorary title of Huizong is first given in Chinese word order (*Chengde guozhu shengfu zhengmin darning* 成德國主盛福正民大明), and later on the same page appears in Tangut word order (*decheng guozhu [zhiguang] fusheng minzheng [shouyi] mingda huangdi Weiming* 德成國主[智光]福盛民正[壽益]明大皇帝嵬名). The honorary title of Chongzong on p. XVIII follows the Chinese word order (*Shengong shenglu dejiao zhimin renjing* 神功勝祿德教治民仁淨), but in the Glossary (p. 248) the Tangut word order is preserved (*shengong shenglu dejiao minzhi renjing huangdi* 神功勝祿德教民治仁淨皇帝). The title of the preface to the Tripitaka in Tangut translation is given in Chinese word order («*Da Bai Gao Guo xinyi sanzang shengjiao xu*» 大白高國新譯三藏聖教序, p. 244—the Tangut word order would be «*Bai Gao Guo Da xinyi sanzang shengjiao xu*» 白高國大新譯三藏聖教序, cf. Shi 1988, p. 283), whereas the honorary title of Chongzong's mother, Empress Liang, retains the Tangut word order (*zhisheng luguang minzhi liji desheng huang taihou* 智勝祿廣民治禮集德盛皇太后, p. 252); and so on.

Let us turn to the Liangzhou stele inscription itself. The stele has been an object of scholarly research for about 170 years (a concise history of its study is given in the «Chronology of Sources Recording or Discussing the Inscription of the Gangtong Stupa», pp. 173-178). While most of the literature deals only

with the Chinese inscription, the publications of the last decades include several studies of the Tangut inscription as well<sup>14</sup>.

Out of the studies listed in the «Chronology» I will use in this essay three publications dealing with the Tangut text of the inscription (henceforth leaving the Chinese part of the stele out of consideration), namely, those by Nishida Tatsuo (1964), Chen Bingying (1985), and Shi Jinbo (1988). In all three the Tangut inscription is supplied with a reconstruction of the Tangut text and a translation (Nishida translates it into Japanese and English, whereas both Chinese authors translate it into Chinese). Nishida also provides a transliteration of the Tangut text.

Dunnell does not provide a reconstruction of the Tangut text, referring the reader to Shi Jinbo's work instead (see p. 120, where she uses the word «transcription» instead of «reconstruction»). Had she done so, the book's usefulness would have been doubled since it would have saved the reader the inconveniency (even for the specialist hardly a small one) of having to look for the Chinese book and check the translation of the text. On the other hand, the author (instead of doing the reconstruction?) has attached the rubbings of the Tangut text (pp. 163–167). Regrettably, however, they are rather difficult to use since the stele's 28 columns of Tangut text, running from top to bottom, have been cut into five horizontal (!) portions: as a result, in the first portion (p. 163) the reader gets the first eight characters of each of the 28 columns, in the second portion (p. 164) he gets the characters nine to twenty-three, and so on, but the complete text of a single column never appears.

Dunnell states that she used the Tangut rubbings of the stele from Beijing, which Shi Jinbo made available for her inspection (pp. 120 and 218 n. 7), whereas Nishida Tatsuo «used rubbings found in the collection of Professor Naito Konan, the great Japanese sinologist of the early twentieth century, in the archives of Kyoto University's Jinbun kagaku kenkyu so [sic]» (p. 177 n. 16). But we are not informed of what the differences between these two rubbings could possibly be, and the author's claim that she uses «the best available transcription of the Tangut text» (p. 178) suggests that there might be some misunderstanding concerning these two terms—the «rubbings» and the «reconstruction of the text» (or, in Dunnell's terms, its «transcription»). It would seem that rubbings made from the same stele should have to be more or less identical, while the reconstruction of the text of the same rubbing by different scholars may differ. Comparing the reconstruction of the Tangut text in Nishida's and in Shi Jinbo's books shows that the latter managed to fill some gaps (sometimes rather doubtfully, see note 17) in the former's reconstruction.

In my opinion, the problem of reconstructing the Tangut text still exists, since even a cursory reading of it has revealed some characters obviously misread by previous scholars. As an example I will cite a passage from line 21 (T21 in the author's designation): {10} *ndzī wo khq mi ' iu mei su tsə zə̃ ndzīwe vja?*<sup>15</sup>. This is

translated by the author as: «... human destiny lacks constancy, like autumn dew or summer blossoms to the eye» (p. 124), to which the following note is appended: «I have not yet identified the source of this metaphor» (p. 226 n. 59). What happens is that Shi Jinbo (whose reconstruction Dunnell is using) has mistakenly taken the collocation {11} *kâ we*, «mirage», for {12} *mei su*, «like an eye», this being due to the fact that in their appearance these characters are partly alike<sup>16</sup>. The whole sentence should therefore be translated as: «... human destiny lacks constancy, like mirages, autumn dew and summer flowers.» This suggests that the first part of this sentence—in the author's translation, «Human bodies have no substance and resemble bubbles in the tide or in the plantain»—is to be reconsidered as well, since the two passages are identical in construction: 11 characters divided into 4 characters (noun + noun + negation + verb) + 7 characters (two-syllable collocation + two-syllable collocation + two-syllable collocation + verb «to be alike»). Thus it seems that Dunnell's translation of the sentence misses at least one comparison.

I have to admit that Dunnell's translation of the Tangut text of the stele has been a disappointment to me, not because of occasional mistakes—dealing with an extinct and poorly studied language they are inevitable—but because it reveals her erroneous notions about Tangut grammar (and I do wonder where she got such strange ideas about it). Since there is a risk that readers of this book—the first in English on the subject—may rely on Dunnell's grammatical claims, it seems to me necessary to point out some of the wrong notions.

In Dunnell's opinion, the attribute in Tangut stands after the word it modifies («... a noun followed by its modifier, as Tangut grammar dictates...», p. 218 n. 10). In reality, the attributes in Tangut stand in front of the nouns they modify, except for adjectives, which follow them. Thus, the collocation in T23 (p. 125), «grain» + «treasure», is translated by Dunnell as «precious grains», when it conveys the idea that «our Tangut treasure is grain» (cf. Nishida's correct rendering of the same collocation as «treasure grain», 1964, p. 173). Dunnell's translation of the collocation {22} *ndzī wo šion*, «man» + «iron», as «iron image» (p. 123, T15), does not agree with the rules of Tangut grammar either<sup>17</sup>. Proceeding with her idea that any modifier stands after the word it modifies, she argues that Tangut personal names consisting of a name of animal + the noun «gold», e.g. «dog gold» (p. 225 n. 53) and «horse gold» (p. 227 n. 66), mean, in these two examples, «golden dog» and «golden horse» respectively<sup>18</sup>. At the same time she correctly translates such collocations as *jin kou* 金口, «gold» + «mouth», and *jin tou* 金頭, «gold» + «head», as «Golden Mouth» (i.e. Buddha) (p. 121, T5) and «golden crown» (p. 123, T14) respectively, when we would have expected her to translate «the mouth's gold» and «the crown's gold».

Dunnell's strange notions of Tangut grammar suggest that, indeed, she is



not even familiar with Nishida Tatsuo's «Outline of the grammar of the Hsi-Hsia language» published in English in 1966. In this work, Nishida has clearly formulated the main rules of Tangut word order<sup>19</sup>. Taking this into consideration, I do not understand, to tell the truth, what Dunnell means when she says: «I try to stay as close as possible to the original grammatical structure [of the Tangut text] and literal meaning» (p. 120) — if she means her own erroneous ideas about Tangut language structure, then the translation of the text at least is not reliable.

Turning from grammatical correctness to the contents of the translation (which actually is just the same), I would like to stress the fact that, since Dunnell's translation of the Tangut text is nearly devoid of question-marks, an inexperienced reader will certainly get an impression that everything in the text is clear for the translator and that nowhere does she feel dubious about her translation. This is definitely a misleading impression.

The Liangzhou stele inscription abounds in Buddhist expressions. However, as we have already observed («mirage» in T21), even standard Buddhist collocations are not always understood by the author. I doubt very much the translation «In one kalpa all was completed» (p. 124, T19), since the standard Tangut translation for «kalpa» is {23} ka, whereas in the inscription we have another character, viz. {24} tseui (Chen 1985, p. 171 line 19; Shi 1988, p. 244 line 19), meaning «storey». The sentence «In one kalpa all was completed» would indicate a rather long period of time, and those who were repairing the stupa would hardly say that they had done the restoration in one kalpa. I believe that the character {24} tseui means here «storey of the stupa», whereas the verb {25} a to, which Dunnell translates as «to be completed», actually means «to ascend», «to go up»<sup>20</sup>. Thus, the whole sentence is to be translated: «If one ascends the first storey of the stupa, [one] first of all gets (finds?) the paths on the earth [and one's] heart rejoices.» The next sentence in the same line is obviously a continuation of the one just translated: «If one inspects all the seven storeys of the stupa, [one] receives equally grace and wisdom and reaches Buddha's dwelling<sup>21</sup>».

If such is the situation with Buddhist contents, I strongly suspect that the hints connected with Tangut indigenous notions, most of which are yet not known to scholars, are not revealed in the book either (e.g. T22). Out of many picturesque comparisons in the text, I myself can explain only one passage from T22 (pp. 124–125): «/We/ pray ... luxuriant intelligence of the divine mind swell endlessly, like the silver crests on the golden sea...». The collocation {32} *leui sɔ kɛ i ngon*, translated by Dunnell as «the silver crests on the golden sea», actually is a purely Tangut expression consisting of two parts: (1) {33} *leui sɔ*, «White and Lofty», and (2) {34} *kɛ i ngon*, «Golden Sea». «White and Lofty» stands for a mountain, whereas the «Golden Sea» stands for the Yellow River. The collocation «White and Lofty», here expressed in Tangut ritual language (Kepping 1996), corresponds to the collocation {35} *phõn mbin*, «White and Lofty» in common language. This

collocation being a metaphor for the Tangut state is included into the indigenous name of the Tangut state <sup>22</sup>, and the Liangzhou stele inscription begins with this name (p. 120, T1). Thus, the passage translated in the book as «the silver crests on the golden sea» is a metaphor for the Tangut state expressed in Tangut ritual language. The whole sentence is to be translated: «Let the splendour and the breadth of the divine mind be constantly increasing like the [inseparable union of] the White and Lofty /Mountain/ and the Yellow River (i.e., like the Tangut State itself)!» One should stress that in this sentence the authors of the inscription used ritual language in naming the Tangut state: thus it seems that they wanted the inscription to be more in keeping with Tangut indigenous notions than they could afford to admit openly. It would seem that Dunnell should have singled out such obscure passages admitting openly the fact that we are still far from understanding many Tangut indigenous notions, or at least supplying the translation of such passages with a question mark.

The source of Dunnell's language problems lies in the first place, I believe, in her indirect (that is, via Chinese) approach to Tangut. As she asserts:

Translating from Tangut requires several stages. For better or for worse, in the first stage I find it natural to produce a literal Chinese rendering of the Tangut passage. Many Tangut words have Chinese equivalents, especially if they are loanwords or caiques; many do not. This intermediate stage is not yet a translation, properly speaking; it is a tool for identifying and establishing any relationship between the Tangut text and a hypothetical or real Chinese analog. In the second stage I try to establish the meaning of the passage through an English translation. If, to cite a simple example, a Tangut text is a translation of a Buddhist sutra from a known Chinese version, then the latter will help immensely in arriving at a meaningful translation. The 1094 stele inscription, in contrast, presents bilingual texts that are not translations of each other or of a hypothetical original (p. XIV).

While three grammars of the Tangut language are available today (Nishida 1966; Sofronov 1968, vol. 1; Kepping 1985), not to mention dozens of articles on Tangut grammar, it seems strange, to say the least, that a scholar should still work on a Tangut text the way the pioneers of Tangut studies did in the 1930s. As a result of her «multistaged» approach to the Tangut language, the author allows herself to be led with excessive confidence by the Chinese text of the inscription when it comes to understanding the Tangut part of it.

Having announced the principles followed in her translation of the Tangut text, the author then makes the following statement:

In this book, I often give a literal Chinese rendering of a Tangut term rather than romanize it. Tangut romanization would be meaningless to 99 percent of my readers, whereas many of them will recognize the Chinese. If I say that Tangut term X translates literally into Chinese term Y, I am referring to stage one in the translation process; meaning has not yet been

established. It gets even more complicated, however. Xia documents in Chinese and Tangut teem with multiple transliterations and translations of terms from both languages. Chapter 6 attempts to sort out the hybrid language of the stele inscription and to establish its possible meanings (pp. XFV-XV).

Regrettably, such «literal Chinese rendering» of Tangut terms have mixed up everything, so that the confused reader cannot tell the Tangut term from the Chinese. I suspect that the author confused herself as well. An example of such muddle is the term fan 番 discussed in chapter 6. Not informing the reader to which language (Tangut or Chinese) it belongs, Dunnell states: «... «Fan» usually means Tangut, but as I explain in Chapter 6, it can have other meanings depending on context» (p. XV). Dunnell gives the following definitions for the term fan: (1) Mi (=Tangut) (p. XIII); (2) Tangut (p. XV); (3) Tangut? Tibetan? Tangut and Tibetan? (p. 98); (4) Tangut and Tibetans (p. 99); (5) Tibetan (p. 36); (6) A mixed array of Inner Asians (p. 159). However, I suppose that while Dunnell thinks that she discusses the Tangut self-designation, in fact, she gives all the definitions of the Chinese term fan which are well-known and can be easily found, for example, in Cihai (p. 914). My supposition is corroborated by the following statement made by Dunnell on p. 98: «The Tanguts commonly used the Chinese word fan to translate their own ethnonyms...» It seems that such a statement needs no comment.

I strongly suspect that while writing her book Dunnell had no idea about the Tangut correspondences for such ethnonyms as Tangut, Chinese and Tibetan which are to be found in the Liang-zhou stele.

In any attempt to establish the meaning of ethnonyms in the Liangzhou stele, it would seem natural to begin with an examination of their usage in other Tangut texts. Since the 1094 stele is one of the earliest Tangut texts, all the other texts used for checking belong necessarily to a later period—the twelfth century. In the Tangut Codex often referred to in the book (e.g. p. 149), one finds a collocation of considerable importance for our purpose: {36} *mi za phd ž̄.ǝ lje*, «Tangut, Chinese and Tibetan young people» (Kychanov 1989, p. 159; text p. 514). Thus, {37} *mi* means Tangut, {38} *za* means «Chinese», and {39} *phd* means «Tibetan» (the ethnonym «Chinese» is of no relevance for us here). The Tangut self-designation {37} *mi* is rendered in Chinese as fan. This is supported by the title of the well-known Tangut-Chinese dictionary, «The Pearl in the Palm», which begins in the Tangut version with the collocation {40} *mi za*, «Tangut-Chinese», and in the Chinese version with fan-han, «Tangut-Chinese» (Nishida 1964, p. 186, line 1).

Another Tangut character with the meaning «Tangut» mentioned by Dunnell is {41} *ndžê i*. This term, included in the title of the empress dowager (pp. 68-69), is the word meaning «Tan-gut» in Tangut ritual language (Kepping 1996)<sup>23</sup>.

As for the term {39} *phd*, its meaning as «Tibetan» is supported by its usage

in Tangut ritual songs (cf. Tang. 25 in the St. Petersburg Tangut collection): in a description of the surroundings of the Tangut state given in one of these songs, it is said that to the west of the Tangut state one finds the state of {42} phd ni (ni represents a collective plural suffix), that is, the Tibetans.

Let us now turn to the ethnonyms used in the Liangzhou stele inscription, bearing in mind that the Tangut and Chinese parts of the stele «are not translations of each other» (p. XIV). In what follows all the passages from the Liangzhou stele are given in Dunnell's translation. The ethnonym {37} mi, «Tangut», occurs in T7-8: «[the precious stupa or Liangzhou] became Tangut territory...» (p. 122)<sup>24</sup>. In the Chinese text the corresponding passage is apparently: «Moreover, it is now a hundred years since the state of Da Xia was founded, and possessed all the western lands...» (p. 127, H5). Thus, {37} mi is rendered into Chinese as «Da Xia», and not as fan. It is the only occurrence of the ethnonym {37} mi in the text.

The term {39} phd, «Tibetan», is found twice in the text:

1) «At the time when the Qiang troops reached Liangzhou...» (p. 122, T10).

It seems that this passage is rendered twice in the Chinese text:

a) «... the Western Qiang invaded our borders and encroached on the territory of Liang» (p. 127, H6), and

b) «the Qiang invaded the border of Liang» (p. 130, H17);

2) «Supervisor of both Fan (Tibetan?) and Han monks at the Gantong Stupa» (p. 125, T25), or, in the Chinese text: «The supervisor of both Fan and Han monks at the Hugu Temple...» (p. 131, H24).

So, in keeping with the Chinese text, Dunnell translates the same Tangut term {39} phd, «Tibetan», as «Qiang» in the first case and «Fan (Tibetan?)» in the second. It seems to me that in both cases it should be translated «Tibetan». Indeed, here we might well see the origin of Dunnell's confusion: using the Chinese corresponding word instead of the Tangut term, she has mixed up the Chinese fan, meaning «Tangut», and the Tangut {39} phd, meaning «Tibetan»<sup>25</sup>.

Dunnell sometimes makes very strange statements on problems which lay beyond the scope of pure history. While discussing the problem of the «sinicization» of non-Han states and border dynasties in East Asia, of which the Tanguts are a good example, she states:

In particular, the ideological requirements of defining «Chineseness» and the Chinese polity, whether the imperial state or its modern successors, have imposed unities and uniformities over the most diverse phenomena. Linguistics provides a good example. In the same way that the group of related «Chinese» spoken languages have for political reasons been considered dialects of one language, so too the Sino-Tibetan language family is considered by some scholars an arbitrary hypothesis kept alive for largely political purposes<sup>26</sup>. The proposed affiliation of Tangut with this language family, as an ancient member of its Tibeto-Burman branch<sup>27</sup>, along with other factors, has meant that

«Tangut» (Xi Xia or Dangxiang, in Chinese) has become a subset of the politicized category «Tibet» in contemporary Chinese discourse (pp. 10-11).

The affiliation of languages to a certain language family means only that these languages are regarded as going back to a common parent-language. The difference between modern Chinese and modern Tibetan that strikes the author so much has nothing to do with their respective shapes in prehistoric times. As a matter of fact, I have not heard of linguists dismissing the «Sino-Tibetan» (Dunnell's quotes) theory: on the contrary, international conferences on Sino-Tibetan languages and linguistics have been quite successfully organized by the University of California, Berkeley, for about thirty years.

Dunnell's approach to the romanization of Tangut names is unsystematic, even though she states that she uses Sofronov's system (p. XVI). Thus, for the first syllable in the first name appearing in the Tangut text of the Liangzhou stele—Mingwang Qi'e (p. 121 T2) — she surprisingly gives a fanqie reading from the dictionary «The Sea of Characters» (Wenhai): ming. As she explains:

Nevskii has registered this name in his dictionary, but does not cite the source (Tangutskaia filologiya [Moscow, 1960] 1: 195) or give a reading. The first graph [of the name Mingwang Qi'e] occurs in another name in T24, rendered mai in the corresponding name H22. In Wenhai 44.212, it has a fanqie reading of «ming» (p. 220, n. 15).

Here Dunnell neglects Sofronov's reading *mbêi* (Sofronov 1968: 2, p. 364, no. 3913), which she has correctly used in the name Mai Horse-Gold (T24) (p. 227 n.66). It would seem that for her there is something mysterious in the name of Mingwang Qi'e: having stated that it has no equivalent in the Chinese text (p. 145), she nevertheless gives the Chinese characters for this name in the «Select Glossary...» (p. 247), without telling us where they came from.

Another example of Dunnell's inconsistency concerns the name Mai Horse-Gold (Mai Majie in the Chinese text). In her opinion, the second character in the name is «rei (Tongyin 同音 47B47), which means «horse», or *mbaw* (Tongyin 8A48) which transliterates the sound «ma» in names and terms...» (p. 227 n. 66). Citing the Tongyin, i.e. using Li Fanwen's system of romanization, she makes some more mistakes: according to the Tongyin the reading of the second character is *zê* (47B47) (Li 1986: 439), and that of 8A48 is *mlar* (Li 1986: 234). Thus it would seem that the speculations on Tangut names which, let us note, occupy more than ten pages («Names and Titles: Chancellery Practice in a Multiethnic Empire», pp. 145-156) are to be read with certain caution at least.

This nicely and neatly printed book abounds in inaccuracies and slips resulting from carelessness. For the same Tangut character we may get three different readings. One finds at least four variants of romanization for the indigenous name of the Tangut Empire — that is to say, «The Great State of White and Lofty»: (1) *Gao Bai Da [Xia] Guo* 高白大〔夏〕國 (p. XIV); (2) *Bai Gao Da [Xia] Guo* 白高大〔夏〕國 (p.

140); (3) *Bai Gao Da Guo* 白高大國 (p. 27); and (4) *bai gao guo da* 白高國大 (p. 218 n. 8)<sup>28</sup>. The romanizations of Chinese (as well as Tangut via Chinese) collocations in the indexes do not coincide with those in the text: there are inconsistencies in writing syllables together (or not), in the order of syllables, in capitalizing, etc. In general, the translation of the Tangut part of the Liangzhou stele also shows traces of haste (see for example note 24).

Resulting from this carelessness, Dunnell's ideas are not always well enough expressed. See for an example p. 235 n. 147: ««Overseer» translates wugu, a Chinese spelling [sic] of the Tangut u kha, normally rendered in this text asjian, and generally in Chinese as toujian» Chinese, as well as Tangut, characters (ideograms) cannot transliterate a foreign word (cf. p. 235 n.145, p. 240 no.42, etc.). Likewise, the lack of clearness in Dunnell's writing is evident in her statement on p. 145: «Excluding the two shorter and earlier Buddhist inscriptions discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, for which no original steles or Tangut versions survive, [the Liangzhou stele inscription] is the only such document extant for the eleventh century ...». It would seem that Dunnell wants to say that the Liangzhou stele inscription is the only Tangut inscription extant for the eleventh century, while from the same century we have only two more texts (not inscriptions!) representing Tangut prefaces to the Tangut translations of Buddhist sutras (Shi 1988, pp. 234, 239) — she discusses these two prefaces on pp. 46 and 64 respectively.

The carelessness becomes especially noticeable in the scholarly apparatus. As we have seen, it is difficult to use the photoreproduction of rubbings (pp. 163-172). The title of the first index, «A Select Glossary of Chinese Names and Terms» (pp. 243-252), is puzzling: why Chinese, and not Tangut names and terms, as it would have been natural to expect? The «Index» (pp. 271-278) seems to be incomplete<sup>29</sup>. The indexes do not supply the reader with all the names of certain persons, e.g. the founder of the Tangut Empire Weiming Yuanhao, who is mentioned in the book as Jingzong (p. 36), Nangxiao (p. 37), Fengjiao cheng emperor (p. 46), and Feng emperor (ibid.), is listed in the «Index» only as Weiming Yuanhao (Jingzong). He is, incidentally, absent from «A Select Glossary...», when apparently all the other Tangut emperors bearing the surname Weiming are included (see p. 250). Though listing more than 250 items, the «Bibliography» (pp. 253-270) lacks some significant works, which no doubt were used by the author, such as the first history of the Tangut state published outside China (defined earlier by Dunnell as «the first modern Western summary of Tangut history», see Dunnell 1994, p. 676), viz. the work of E.I. Kychanov (1968) — but its review by Nishida Tatsuo is included in the «Bibliography» (p. 263); the Russian translation of the Liangzhou stele by the same author (Gromkovskaja et al. 1978); the first biography of the founder of the Tangut state (Bai Bin, 1988); and more.

This book, as I said at the beginning, was long awaited. Being the first volume written in English on Tangut matters it certainly will, despite all its shortcomings, serve as a manual of Tangut history for more than a generation of scholars. I was deeply impressed by the scale of the work accomplished by Dunnell inasmuch as

she has gathered all the data on the eleventh-century Tangut state available to her. But the style of this work is much in keeping with the genre of popular science: it is fascinating to read, but not meant to be cited. As for the Tangut written materials, it is with deep chagrin that I have to admit that they have been arranged here in such a way that one has no real access to them.

### List of Tangut characters

1. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 2. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢
3. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 4. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢
5. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 6. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 7. 𐰇𐰏𐰢
8. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 9. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 10. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢 𐰇𐰏𐰢
11. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 12. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 13. 𐰇𐰏𐰢
14. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 15. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 16. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 17. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 18. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 19. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 20. 𐰇𐰏𐰢
21. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 22. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 23. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 24. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 25. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 26. 𐰇𐰏𐰢
27. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 28. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 29. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 30. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 31. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 32. 𐰇𐰏𐰢
33. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 34. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 35. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 36. 𐰇𐰏𐰢
37. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 38. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 39. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 40. 𐰇𐰏𐰢
41. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 42. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 43. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 44. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 45. 𐰇𐰏𐰢
46. 𐰇𐰏𐰢 47. 𐰇𐰏𐰢

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Dunnell is the author of the *Cambridge history of China* section on the Tangut state (1994); for a bibliography of her works see p. 255 in the book under review.

<sup>2</sup> Dunnell claims that Shi Jinbo's «vast corpus of published works forms a critical foundation for my own research» (p. X). It would seem, however, that she tends to follow too faithfully Shi's translations and interpretations of Tangut written

materials. As a result, she repeats his errors and, as she sometimes reproduces Tangut collocations in the Chinese word order (which in Shi's translations intended for Chinese readers is quite natural), she confuses her Western readers supplying them with an irritating mixture of Tangut-Chinese «hybrid» language. I will come back to this problem below.

<sup>3</sup> Dunnell uses my initial translation of the name of the Tangut state: «The Great State of White and High». As it happens, I now prefer the name suggested by G. van Driem of Leiden University: «The Great State of White and Lofty».

<sup>4</sup> One may regret that this pioneering book, which presents a quantity of new data of interest not only to Tangut specialists but also to specialists of Inner Asia in general, should not have a more analytical table of contents, which would have helped the reader to orient him/herself in this mass of valuable information. Let me provide here a list of the chapter and subchapter headings, which will show both the breadth and the detailed character of Dunnell's research:

Chapter 1: Introduction: [Introduction], pp. 3-7; State Formation and Rulership: Some Theoretical Considerations, pp. 7-12; Xia State Formation: Some Historical Considerations, pp. 12-18; Buddhism and Monarchy in Chinese History, pp. 18-26.

Chapter 2: Buddhism and Monarchy in the Early Tangut State: [Introduction], pp. 27-29; Inner Asian Buddhism in the Late Tenth and Early Eleventh Centuries, pp. 29-34; Buddhism and the Emerging Xia State, 1007-1032, pp. 34-36; Buddhism and Imperial Ideology under Weiming Yuanhao, pp. 36-49.

Chapter 3: Buddhism under the Regencies (1049-1099): [Introduction], pp. 50-52; From the Mocang Clan to the Liang, pp. 52-63; The Sangha under the Regency, pp. 63-71; The Monarchy in Political and Spiritual Crisis, pp. 71-75; The Qingtang Nexus, pp. 75-77; End of an Era, pp. 78-83.

Chapter 4: A History of the Dayun (Huguo) Temple at Liangzhou: [Introduction], pp. 87-88; The Early History of the Temple, pp. 88-90; The Liangzhou Temple in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries, pp. 90-91; Development of a Stupa Cult, pp. 91-94; On the names Huguo Si and Gantong Ta, pp. 94-99; The Economy of Temple Restoration, pp. 99-101; Reading the Restored Stupa, pp. 101-104; The Dayun Temple in the Ming and Qing Periods, pp. 104-109; The Qing-ying Si 慶應寺 and Its Relationship to the Dayun Si, pp. 109-113; The Qingying Si: Stupa Worship in the Qing, pp. 113-116; Conclusion, pp. 116-117.

Chapter 5: Annotated Translation of the 1094 Stele Inscriptions: [Introduction], pp. 118-120; Translation of the Tangut Text, pp. 120-126; Translation of the Han Text, pp. 126-132.

Chapter 6: Reading Between the Lines: A Comparison and Analysis of the Tangut and Han Texts: [Introduction], p. 133; Structure, Style, and Authorship, pp. 133-137; The Buddhist Vision of State, the State Vision of Buddhism, pp. 137-139; The Rhetoric of Politics and Ethnicity, pp. 139-145; Names and Titles: Chancellery Practice in a Multiethnic Empire, pp. 145-156.

Chapter 7: Conclusion, pp. 157-160.

<sup>5</sup> My assumption that the Tangut state represented a Tantric Buddhist Kingdom (Kepping 1994, p. 373)—a comparable modern example being Bhutan— certainly requires more basis than what I have been (and still am) able to propose. In any



case, I agree with Dunnell's objection to the tendency among many modern scholars (such as E.I. Kychanov or Shi Jinbo) to characterize the twelfth century Tangut state as basically «Confucian», in both spirit and practice (pp. 24-26). I, too, see no grounds for such a claim, and the fact that the Tangut part of the Liangzhou stele fails to mention the Confucian teachings, whereas the Chinese part does, should be considered quite significant.

<sup>6</sup> One will appreciate the full scale of this endeavor when remembering that neither Japan, Korea or Vietnam had any intention in the eleventh century to translate the Buddhist Canon: they were quite content with the Chinese text of the Tripitaka (in Japan and Korea the Buddhist Canon was translated only in the twentieth century).

<sup>7</sup> Under 1038 Dunnell gives the following information: «(Xia 夏, Daqing 大慶 3/Tianshou Ufa yanzuo 天授禮法延祚 1; Song 宋, Baoyuan 寶元 1; Liao 遼 Chongxi 重熙 7) Liao envoy protests death of Yuanhao's royal Khitan wife. Yuanhao suppresses dissent in royal clan, carries out enthronement as first emperor of Great Xia, sends envoys to Song court» (p. XXII).

<sup>8</sup> In contrast, Appendix 2 in Shi Jinbo's book (1988: 334-342), which Dunnell claims she used while compiling her «Brief Chronology...», does not fail to mention the years 1038 and 1090, respectively, as the beginning and completion of the translation of the Buddhist Canon.

<sup>9</sup> The numbers in {} brackets correspond to those in the «List of Tangut characters» at the end of this essay.

<sup>10</sup> The picture on the frontispiece of the book lacks one figure with its caption (the one on the extreme right); it is therefore better to use the reproduction on the paper cover, where all the captions are visible.

<sup>11</sup> Dunnell «tears» caption no. 1 in two. The first part is given at the top of p. 66 as «Anquan 安全 («Calm and Complete»?) State Preceptor (guoshi 國師) Bai Zhiguang» (note the Chinese equivalent for the Tangut name — Zhiguang — which means that the reader, unless he looks into «A Select Glossary...» (p. 243), gets no idea of its meaning). The second part appears at the bottom of the same page as «Chief translator officer». It seems that, even following the translation given by Shi Jinbo, Dunnell was not able to cope with the Tangut text in this caption.

<sup>12</sup> Captions nos. 2 and 3 are not mentioned by Dunnell.

<sup>13</sup> Dunnell mentions one more Tangut engraving (in her words, a «block-print»), which accompanied the sutra Cibei daochang chanfa (pp. 70-71). Regrettably she knows only the publication of this engraving made in Japan in the 1930's. This Tangut engraving, representing an illustration to a preface named *Cibei daochang chanfa zhuan* 慈悲道場懺法傳 preceding the sutra Cibei daochang chanfa, has been published in Russia (Kepping et al., 1987). The preface, translated into Tangut, relates the story of Liang Wudi and empress Xi. It would seem that the

story in Tangut differs from that related by Dunnell (p. 71).

<sup>14</sup> Regrettably, Dunnell has missed in her «Chronology» the Russian translation of the Tangut inscription of the stele (Gromkovskaja et al. 1978), but she does know it since the relevant information can be found in the notes (pp. 218 n. 9, 235 n. 149).

<sup>15</sup> Sofronov (1968, 2, p. 340, no. 2834) gives no reading for this character.

<sup>16</sup> The first character in the collocation {11} *kd we*, «mirage», is to be reconstructed as {13} *kā*, not as {14} *mei*, «eye». These two characters differ only in their bottom right part: in {13} *kā* it is {15}, whereas in {14} *mei* it is {16}. As to the characters {17} *su*, «to be alike», and {18} *we*, «city», «wall» (Chinese equivalent *cheng*), they share the left part {19}, while the rest of the character for {17} is {20}, and for {18}, {21}.

<sup>17</sup> Here Dunnell follows Shi Jinbo's translation of this collocation as *ren* 鐵人 (Shi 1988, p. 248, line 6 from bottom). This collocation lacking in the reconstructions of the Tangut text by Nishida and Chen, is an example of the «filling the gaps» I have mentioned earlier. I am not sure however that Shi Jinbo is correct in his reconstruction.

<sup>18</sup> However, it should be kept in mind that the formation of personal names may differ from that of common names. S.E. Yakhontov (St. Petersburg University, personal communication, January 1997) has suggested that Tangut personal names including a name of animal + «gold» may indicate the person's birth year. Thus, Mai Majie is supposed to have been born in 1030 (horse + gold), so that by the time of restoring the stupa he was in his sixties, while Wo Qujie was born in 1010 (dog + gold), and was more than eighty at the time (incidentally, it was he who composed the laudatory ode, p. 124, T17). Such an explanation seems quite probable, even though more evidence is required.

<sup>19</sup> Nishida Tatsuo (1966, p. 568) has singled out «three representative types» of Tangut word order: «dharma + drum» = «drum of the Dharma», «drum + large» = «a large drum», and «drum + beat» = «to beat a drum». The «Bibliography» in the book under review (p. 263) does not list the second volume of Nishida's work, which includes the «Outline...»: only the first volume, with the study of the Liangzhou stele, is found here.

<sup>20</sup> The meaning «to ascend», «to go up» for the verb {25} *a to* is attested in Kepping 1979, p. 424, no. 632.

<sup>21</sup> This is my tentative translation for these two similarly-built sentences, each made of eleven characters. Since in Tangut indigenous texts we find an expression {26} *t šja 'ju*, «to look for a path», I suppose that the collocation in the first sentence {27} *ld̄e t̄šja*, «earth + path», is to be translated as «path on the earth». In the second sentence, instead of the character {28} *ndz̄wu*, «man», I reconstruct {29} *ka*, «equal». The words {30} *l̄o*, «grace», and {31} *s̄e* «wisdom», in Tangut texts are

applied respectively to the «black-headed» and «red-faced» which appear in the next sentence (the last sentence in T19 on p. 124). Here, I believe, we are faced with an example of the intertwining of Tangut indigenous notions with Buddhism.

<sup>22</sup> Dunnell repeats several times (pp. XI, XIV, 181 n. 1) that she is using my translation of the indigenous Tangut name for the Tangut State, viz. «The Great State of White and Lofty (=High)», which she has even included into the title of her book. But strangely enough, she does not introduce my interpretation of this translation: had she seized the idea, she probably would not have overlooked the metaphor «White and Lofty + Yellow River = Tangut State».

<sup>23</sup> According to Dunnell the term *fan* (which one is not clear) is used in Tangut myths (pp. 13-15, 159). She states that Tangut «legitimizing myths were both exclusive (we the Mi people) and inclusive (we are recognized leaders of the Fan)» (p. 159). Since she does not specify where in Tangut texts she has found such ideas, one cannot be sure that she is correct (mind her belief that any attribute in Tangut stands after the noun it modifies). If she has indeed understood the Tangut texts correctly, then we have to admit — in keeping with her understanding of the term *pur* — that the Tanguts regarded themselves as recognized leaders of a «mixed array of Inner Asians» (p. 159), which would certainly be an exciting piece of information.

<sup>24</sup> Dunnell's translation of this sentence represents a regrettable example of her carelessness. Obviously she has not chosen between the reconstruction of the Tangut text made by Shi Jinbo and the one by Nishida Tatsuo, enclosing both reconstructions between brackets—[the precious stupa or Liangzhou]». At the same time, she has not put in brackets the word «territory», which is not in the Tangut text. In keeping with Shi Jinbo's reconstruction this sentence should be translated «After that the stupa became Tangut...» (that, after, stupa, Tangut, possessive particle, become).

<sup>25</sup> This is corroborated by Dunnell's speculations concerning two Tangut names: {43} *kwān khwā kēi* (T17), and {44} *mbēi rjē kēi* (T24). The Tangut personal names in both cases are etymologically transparent and share the same structure: a noun denoting an animal + {45} *kēi* «gold». Thus, in the Tangut text we have respectively Wo Dog-Gold and Mai Horse-Gold. In the Chinese text these names correspond to Wo Qujie and Mai Majie (both in H22). Obviously, the etymology of these personal names was left out of consideration in the Chinese text and they were rendered in keeping with their reading (*qu* seems to be the reading of the Tangut word {46} *khwā*, «dog»); the situation with *ma* is less simple — there are different opinions regarding the shape of the character: Shi Jinbo reads it as *ma*, Cheng Bingying as *du*). The only thing we can say for sure concerns the Chinese character *jie*: it is attested throughout the «Pearl in the Palm» dictionary as the Chinese reading for the Tangut word {45} *kēi*, «gold» (see, for example, the collocation {47} *kēi ngī e*, «Gold Star» (Venus), Nishida 1964, p. 191). But Dunnell puts it just the other way round, stating that {45} *kēi* «means metal, gold, and appears to be the «Tangut» reading of Chinese character *jin*» (p. 227 n. 66).

<sup>26</sup> Christopher Beckwith has dismissed the «Sino-Tibetan» theory, commenting that «contemporary political-racial considerations (rather than linguistic ones)

seem to be keeping Tibetan bound to Chinese» (The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia: A History of the Struggle for Great Power among Tibetans, Turks, Arabs and Chinese during the Early Middle Ages [Princeton, 1987], 4, n. 2). Nonlinguists who study both Chinese and Tibetan may indeed wonder how any two languages could be more different. [Dunnell's note, p. 183-184 n. 25].

<sup>27</sup> K.B. Kepping «Elements of Ergativity and Nominativity in Tangut» in *Ergativity, Towards a Theory of Grammatical Relations*, ed. Frans. Plank (London and New York, 1979), 263. [Dunnell's note, p. 184, n. 26].

<sup>28</sup> Only the fourth is correct, whereas the first is really irritating, since the components of the fixed collocation «bai gao» are given in the impossible reverse order.

<sup>29</sup> Thus, Nishida Tatsuo, the author of the first English translation of the Liangzhou stele inscription, for some reasons is absent in the «Index», though many times mentioned in the book under review (e.g. X; 119; 196 n. 96, 99, 100; 197 n. 103; 202 n. 57, 58, 64; 203 n. 69, 70, 72, 73; 215 n. 68; 221 n. 28, 29; 226 n. 57; 229 n. 91; 231 n. 108; 232 n. 117; 234 n. 137; 235 n. 149; 236 n. 7). Nearly all the scholars of the Tangut field, some of whom have personally contributed to the study of Liangzhou stele, are absent from the «Index» (though present in the text of the book): Bai Bin (X; 197 n. 110; 241 n. 42), È. Chavannes (215 n. 69; 216 n. 84, 91; 225 n. 55), Chen Bingying (X; 199 n. 17), Gong Hwang-cherng (194 n. 66; 233 n. 130), Z. I. Gorbacheva (181 n. 3, 203 n. 69), E. Grinstead (181 n. 4; 196 n. 100; 203 n. 70), Huang Zhenhua (X; 187 n. 68), A.I. Ivanov (225 n. 55), B. Laufer (199 n. 24), R. Linrothe (XI, 182 n. 7; 203 n. 73), Li Wei (X; 241 n. 42), Luo Fucheng (232 n. 118; 233 n. 122), L.N. Men'shikov (225 n. 55; 236 n. 12; 237 n. 16), N.A. Nevskii (220 n. 15), Nie Hongyin (X; 182 n. 4; 187 n. 68; 233 n. 125; 235 n. 152), Niu Dasheng (X; 194 n. 69; 198 n. 7, 9), E. Sperling (182 n. 6), R.A. Stein (214 n. 59; 215 n. 67, 232 n. 115), Wangjingru (199 n. 15; 201 n. 54), E. Zürcher (203 n. 72; 233 n. 124), etc. For the names of those scholars who are included into the Index, often only part of the occurrences in the book is given. Shijinbo who according to the «Index» (p. 275) is mentioned only twice (24, 28), in fact is met many more times (e.g. X; 186 n. 62; 187 n. 65; 197 n. 110; 200 n. 36; 201 n. 55; 202 n. 56, 57, 60-64; 203 n. 67, 68; 204 n. 74; 205 n. 89, etc.); G. Deveria (according to the Index, p. 272, one occurrence on p. 119) is to be found much more than once (232 n. 116, 117, 118; 233 n. 122; 234 n. 135; 235 n. 157), etc.