

"The autumn wind" by HAN WU-DI in the MI-NIA (tangut)* translation**

*In memory of my colleague and close friend
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The love this woman had inspired in the sixth emperor of the Han dynasty, Wu-di (r. 140-87 B.C.), made her immortal as a symbol of passion that does not cease with death. According to Chinese sources ¹, Li furen was a beauty and a perfect dancer. Her elder brother ² Li Yuan-nian, a skilful singer and dancer, was Wu-di's fa-vourite whose song about his sister's beauty, containing the lines –

"One glance would overthrow a city (Chin. qing cheng),
Two glances would overthrow a state (Chin. qing guo)"

– had the result that Wu-di took Li furen to his palace. She bore Wu-di a son, but passed away very young. Wu-di's grief over Li furen's death was so great that he had her por-trait be hung in the palace and even asked magicians to raise her spirit which appeared before him on a curtain as some vague shape of a beautiful woman resembling Li furen. Alas, this brought him no relief, and the tradition ascribes to him the following lines:

"Is it or isn't it?
I stand and look.
The swish, swish of a silk skirt.
How slow she comes!" ³

After Li furen's death Wu-di compiled a song (Chin. qu) "The Fallen Leaves and the Wailing Cicada". In terms of poetical images "the fallen leaves" stand for Li furen, while "the wailing cicada" – for Wu-di (see n. 50):

* I have proposed elsewhere (see K.B. Kepping, "Mi-nia (Tangut) self-appellation and self-portraiture in Khara Khoto materials", *Manuscripta Orientalia*, VII/4, 2001, P. 37-47) to use for the people who founded "The Great State of the White and Lofty" (982–1227) their self-designation, namely, Mi-nia, instead of foreign ethnonyms, Tangut and Xi Xia.

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"The sound of her silk skirt has stopped.
 On the marble pavement dust grows.
 Her empty room is cold and still.
 Fallen leaves are piled against the doors.
 Longing for that lovely lady
 How can I bring my aching heart to rest?"⁴

The whole story drew my attention when I worked on the Mi-nia translation of the Chinese leishu "The Forest of Classes"⁵. I then came across a poem which was indicated in an introductory note as a mourning song compiled by Wu-di for Li furen. The content of this poem in the Mi-nia translation in general coincided with the well-known poem "The Autumn Wind" ascribed to Wu-di. But this Wu-di's poem, a famous Chinese verse well known to western readers⁶, in its present (traditional) version, actually has nothing to do with Li furen: as Chinese commentators state, Wu-di compiled "The Autumn Wind" being inspired by his journey to the east of the Huanghe, where he had made offerings to the earth goddess (see the text of "The Autumn Wind" in the Appendix).

The Mi-nia text of Wu-di's mourning song for Li furen deeply impressed me: even a cursory acquaintance with it revealed its being a real masterpiece, and it seemed to me that the traditional Chinese text of the verse evidently yielded to the Mi-nia translation both in its perfection and overall completeness⁷. But what puzzled me was why the interpretation of the poem in the Mi-nia translation differed from that of the Chinese original. It seemed interesting to solve this problem. The aim of this essay is, therefore, to put into scholarly circulation the Mi-nia translation of Wu-di's mourning song for Li furen and to try to find out what stands behind the change of the interpretation of the poem, and which of the two interpretations (traditional Chinese or the one in the Mi-nia translation) is the original one.

The leishu «The Forest of Classes» in the Mi-nia translation

As is well known, the main bulk of Khara Khoto material housed in the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies is represented by Buddhist texts. At the same time, this material also includes numerous Mi-nia translations of Chinese secular writings⁸. Among them we find the Mi-nia translation of the leishu "The Forest of Classes"⁹ which is of special interest because the Chinese original has not come down to us: the Mi-nia translation of "The Forest of Classes" is thus the only source for reconstructing the vanished Chinese text¹⁰.

Not a single fragment of this leishu is known to be held in any other Mi-nia collection in the world¹¹, so we may state that the St. Petersburg text of "The Forest of Classes" (Tang. 11, Nos. 125-131, 2625, 6444, 6686) is a unique block-print. The block-print is of a "butterfly" format. Each page (side) of the "butterfly" sheet – the right one (a) and the left one (b) – measures 25,5x19,5 cm; seven lines per page, each line containing 15-16 characters. Between the pages of the "butterfly"

sheet, on the bai-kou (hei-kou), the title – {1} ¹² *ndl@ mbo* «The Forest of Classes» and the number of the respective juan are indicated. (The title is given in Mi-nia characters, while the number of juan – in Chinese characters.) Then come two (sometimes three) Mi-nia characters indicating, in my opinion, the names of those who carved the wood-block ¹³. The pagination is given in Chinese characters ¹⁴. The extant Mi-nia text of «The Forest of Classes» consists of 212 «butterfly» sheets, plus two additional «butterfly» pages: the left parts of the last «butterfly» sheets – page b (in both juans 7 and 8) – are not extant ¹⁵.

Originally the Mi-nia translation consisted of 10 juans, but the first two juans are missing in our block-print ¹⁶: the first juan we have at our disposal is in fact the third one. The last, tenth juan, is present. Each juan includes four to six pian (sections). Extant are pian from the tenth up to the fiftieth. Some juans (e.g. the fourth and the tenth) have a colophon stating that the wood-block was cut in 1181–1182. The surviving parts of «The Forest of Classes» lack any reference to the author (compiler) of the leishu ¹⁷.

The text of the leishu «The Forest of Classes» includes a great many short stories: in the surviving parts of the leishu there are more than four hundred of them. The stories are grouped in pian according to the subject. The number of stories in a pian varies from two to twenty-seven. The following headings of pian may be cited as examples: «Just Officials», «Cruel Officials», «Wise Men», «Hermits», «Magicians», «Literary Writings», «Drunkards», «Very Poor People», «Perfect Archers», «Good Omens», etc. After the heading of a respective pian comes the table of contents – the names of the heroes (heroines) of the stories ¹⁸.

The Japanese scholar Kawaguchi Hisao, who stressed the significance of «The Forest of Classes» for the history of Chinese literature, as well as for Japanese kambun literature, remarked that for both this leishu served as the source of plots ¹⁹. That is why the Mi-nia translation of «The Forest of Classes», one of the earliest leishus now not existing in Chinese, is of great importance for the investigation of the history of Chinese literature. However, being not an expert in Chinese literature, I do not step into this domain, limiting myself to the examination of the Mi-nia translation.

In the Mi-nia translation of «The Forest of Classes» to Li furen is dedicated a special story registered under her name in the forty-fifth pian entitled "Beautiful Persons" (juan 9) ²⁰. It is a touching story (regrettably, the Mi-nia text has lacunae) which runs that when Li furen was lying in her deathbed, Wu-di visited her ²¹, but the young woman concealed her face with the blanket: being terribly emaciated, she wanted Wu-di to remember her a beautiful woman. When her brothers and sisters asked why she did so, Li furen answered that if Wu-di saw her in her present state, he would inevitably feel hatred to her and, as a result, would subsequently not give his respect and promotion to her brothers and sisters. The story goes on that Li furen's elder sister judged her explanation reasonable. After Li furen's death Wu-di recollected her beauty and missed her so much that he invited a magician to arouse her spirit; the spirit appeared in some distance from him in his chamber, but Wu-di was unable to come nearer to his beloved.

Li furen's brother, Li Yuan-nian, is also one of the heroes to whom a special story is dedicated in the Mi-nia translation of «The Forest of Classes» (juan 9, pian 43 entitled «Dancers, Singers and Musicians») ²². As was already said (see n. 2), contrary to Chinese sources, the Mi-nia translation indicates Li Yuan-nian as Li furen's younger brother, who was a skilled singer and dancer. The same story cites a popular folk song about a pair of birds (female and male, i.e. Li furen and Li Yuan-nian) flying into Wu-di's palace. This story also mentions another Li furen's brother, military commander Li Guang-li. According to Chinese sources, he was Li furen's elder brother, but the Mi-nia text indicates him her younger half-brother (by father). The story tells that he was the author of the song dedicated to the Heavenly Horse.

Wu-di's mourning song for Li furen in the Mi-nia translation

In the Mi-nia translation of the leishu «The Forest of Classes» Wu-di's mourning song ²³ appears twice: in the pian «Literary Writings» (juan 7) ²⁴, and in the pian «Dancers, Singers and Musicians» (juan 9) ²⁵. In the table of contents of both pians the story is registered under Wu-di's name ²⁶. In both cases the text of the poem is pre-ceded by an introductory note qualifying the verse as a mourning song by Wu-di, dedicated to Li furen. Both variants consist of two quatrains (the poem has eight lines in all), seven characters in a line. The caesura is after the fourth character.

Below are given both Mi-nia translations of the mourning song as they appear in the leishu «The Forest of Classes».

Wu-di's mourning song I

TEXT

蕭 歎 翔 翥 鸞 鳳 舞 鸞 舞 所 到 到 舞 散
 女 妃 妾 妾 妾 妃 妃 妾 妾 妾 妃 舞 散 舞 散

1. 蕭 歎 翔 翥 鸞 鳳 舞 鸞 舞
2. 蕭 歎 翔 翥 鸞 鳳 舞 鸞 舞
3. 蕭 歎 翔 翥 鸞 鳳 舞 鸞 舞
4. 蕭 歎 翔 翥 鸞 鳳 舞 鸞 舞

5. 湖 蕤 滋 耕 泽 能 兮
 6. 蔚 解 霸 列 岫 羽 汝
 7. 兹 仔 汝 列 泽 解 汝
 8. 易 霸 滋 列 岫 汝 兮

*xan 'u ndzwi 'in ngi mbin lje zje xu zen 'in ngə ngə ndzu wə ku xu zen
 ljuw lin njuo rje 'u ndzwi lhi kja rje vje kja ngwu*

1. *tsə lje mu zje niphon ngu*
2. *si siə ne zje ndze zə lhjo*
3. *sia sje nwi zje nia via mbə*
4. *si ldiu sin zje? [27] tjei ndzjo*
5. *tsi xwen zje kha ndzje ndu ndziwon*
6. *ldjuw ngu raj zje mbu pa souw*
7. *ljwu mba ngəu zje ndziə kja tsjuw*
8. *ne raj si zje 'a nje sjo*

TRANSLATION

«Han Wu-di loved very much his wife, lady Li (Chin. Li shi) furen. Later, when [Li] furen passed away, Han Wu-di compiled the [following] mourning song:

1. The autumn wind is blowing, and white clouds are going away.
2. Grass and trees have withered, and geese are returning south.
3. Fragrant grass is blossoming, and flowers of the frost [season] are opening.
4. The beautiful woman [I] love — ... [she] left ²⁸.
5. On the [Ji]fen ²⁹ River a tower-boat has emerged.
6. It is serene amidst the river current, and heavy waves are thundering [around].
7. Flutes and drums are sounding, and the rowers' song is heard.
8. Joy and happiness have gone away, and anguish grows [in my heart]».

TRANSLATION

«When Han Wu-di's wife, lady Li, died, [he] compiled a mourning song.

The song runs as follows:

1. The autumn wind is blowing, and white clouds are going away.
2. After grass and trees have withered, geese are leaving for the south.
3. When fragrant grass is blossoming, flowers of the frost [season] are opening.
4. The beautiful woman [I always] think about [I] am unable to forget.

5. Upon the [Ji]fen River a tower-boat is sailing.
6. It wants to cross the current, [but] heavy waves start to rise.
7. Flutes and drums are sounding, and the rowers' song is heard.
8. Joy and happiness have gone away, and great sorrow grows [in my heart].

This story is told in Qian Han shu».

Table 1

List of differences between the two Mi-nia translations

Number of line and character	Mourning song I	Mourning song II
line 2, character 1	{2} <i>si</i> [30]	{3} <i>si</i>
line 2, character 4	{4} <i>zje</i>	{5} <i>njuo</i>
line 2, character 7	{6} <i>lhjo</i>	{7} <i>mbe</i>
line 3, character 4	{4} <i>zje</i>	{8} <i>nwi</i>
line 4, character 4	{4} <i>zje</i>	{9} <i>lə</i>
line 4, character 5	{10} ? [31]	{11} ? [32]
line 4, character 7	{12} <i>ndzjo</i>	{13} <i>min</i>
line 5, character 4	{14} <i>kha</i>	{15} <i>ngu</i>
line 5, character 7	{16} <i>ndzjwon</i>	{17} <i>ndzje</i>
line 6, characters 2, 3, 4	{18} <i>ngu rai zje</i>	{19} <i>ndzje ra kai</i>
line 6, character 7	{20} <i>sou</i>	{16} <i>ndzjwon</i>
line 8, character 5, 6	{21} <i>'a nje</i>	{22} <i>siwə rai</i>

Judging by the divergences found in the two translations cited above (see Table 1), it was not one and the same Chinese text which served as the original for these two variants of the mourning song. Importantly, a different imagery is used in line 6: the tower-boat is not moving (not sailing), it is «serene»³³ amidst the current while heavy waves «are thundering» around (Wu-di's mourning song I); in the second variant the tower-boat is moving {17} *ndzjwə*, wishing to sail across the current, but heavy waves «start to rise» (Wu-di's mourning song II). All leads

me to conclude that the two Mi-nia translations of the poem were made from two different Chinese variants of the mourning song. Moreover, these two variants, in my opinion, were not translated into the Mi-nia language by one person. It is clear from the different approach to the translation of the character *xi* (a meaningless character indicating the caesura, which stands as the fourth character in each line): in all the lines of Wu-di's mourning song I instead of *xi* we find the subordinating conjunction {4} *z* "when", with one exception, in line 5 stands the postposition {14} *kha* "in", "on", "upon", whereas in Wu-di's mourning song II the fourth character in lines 1, 2, 7, and 8 is expressed by subordinating conjunctions {4} *z* "when", {5} *n?uo* "after", {4} *z*, "when", {4} *z* "when" respectively, and in lines 3, 4, and 6 – by the verbs {8} *nwi* "to blossom", {9} *□* "to miss" ("longing for") and {24} *ka, i* "to want" respectively; in line 5 we have the postposition {15} *ngu*.

The different rendering of the name – Li furen – corroborates my idea that it was not one and the same person who translated both variants of the verse. Actually "furen" means "wife". One of the translators knew it and his translation is quite correct – "Han Wu-di's wife, lady Li" (Wu-di's mourning song II). The other one, seemingly ignorant of such meaning of the word furen, translated the same collocation as "Han Wu-di's wife, lady Li furen", i.e. as "Han Wu-di's wife, lady Li wife" (Wu-di's mourning song I).

Thus, my supposition is that there existed two Chinese variants of the mourning song represented by the two Mi-nia translations treated in the present article as mourning song I and mourning song II. Seemingly, these translations of the two variants were made by different persons.

The Chinese original of Wu-di's mourning song

As to the Chinese original of the mourning song, the Mi-nia translation indicates the Qian Han shu as the source where the verse is to be found. However, as we already know, the "History of the Han Dynasty" does not contain Wu-di's wange (mourning song) dedicated to Li furen³⁴. The Chinese text is included in Ding Fu-bao's anthology of Chinese poetry³⁵, and what is striking about the anthology variant of the verse is that it is shown not as a mourning song dedicated to a beloved woman: the commentary in the anthology states that Wu-di wrote the poem (ci) "The Autumn Wind" being inspired by his journey to the east of the Huanghe, where he made offerings to the earth goddess. Describing Wu-di's feelings, the commentators even use the word huan "happy"³⁶, and one immediately feels a certain discrepancy between this word and the feeling of sorrow which permeates the whole of the poem in Chinese.

The Chinese text of "The Autumn Wind" in Ding Fu-bao's anthology does not fully coincide with the Mi-nia translation: the Chinese verse has (i) an

extra character, namely, *luo* "to fall off", which stands in the middle of the second line before the meaningless character *xi*, and (ii) an extra line (line 9).

It is to be noted that in the Chinese text this extra line consists of eight characters. Line 2, too, after inserting the additional character, has eight characters (mind that all other lines have seven characters), and in both line 2 and line 9, there are four characters before the meaningless character *xi* (not three as in all other lines of the Chinese text). This extra line runs as follows: *shao zhuang ji shi xi, nai lao he*. Waley translates it as

"Youth's years how few! Age how sure!"

Owen's translation is

"how long does youth's prime last? —
no hope against old age".

Both English translators of the poem are quite correct in perceiving this extra line as *Wu-di*'s laments on the brevity of life, which tally well with Chinese commentators' assessment that the idea of the poem is to show *Wu-di*'s sorrow because of the brevity of life, the feeling inspired by the special charm of the moribund nature of autumn.

One can only regret that the completeness of the text as presented in the *Mi-nia* translation is broken by this additional line present in the Chinese text. Seemingly, when the text was reinterpreted by Chinese commentators, they felt the necessity to put in some corrections in keeping with its new interpretation. And, in contrast with the other lines of the poem, each of which consists of seven characters, both "corrupted" lines (lines 2 and 9) got eight characters. Was it possibly a special invention to mark the innovations made?

It seems that Waley while translating "The Autumn Wind" also got an impression that the text of the poem is somewhat inconsistent with its commentary. In the introductory note to his translation he writes: "[*Wu-ti*] regrets that he is obliged to go on official journey, leaving his mis-tress behind in the capital. He is seated in his state barge surrounded by his ministers"³⁷. Waley does not mention *Li furen*'s name, but, in any case, he feels the special mood of the verse. However, it is difficult to say whether he knew the story or it was just his guess (it is also possible that he had at his disposal another text of the poem which I failed to find).

As is known, all Chinese early writings have come down to us in the editions made in the times of the Song dynasty (960-1279), and I thought it natural to try to look for the Chinese original of the *Mi-nia* translation in the pre-Song anthologies. The Chinese original of the mourning song for *Li furen* was found

by me in the leishu "The Forest of Classes. Mixed Stories" (Lei lin za shuo)³⁸. The work was compiled under the Jin (Jurchen) dynasty (1115-1234)³⁹. The poem is included in juan 7 in the section "Literary Writings". Similarly to the Mi-nia translation, the original consists of eight lines and it is preceded by an introductory note which is in full accord with the text of the Mi-nia translation.

CHINESE TEXT

- 漢武帝愛李夫人。夫人亡。帝自作挽歌曰。
1. 秋風起兮白雲飛。
 2. 草木黃兮雁南歸。
 3. 蘭有芳兮菊有菲。
 4. 思佳人兮不可依。
 5. 泛樓船兮濟汾河。
 6. 橫中流兮揚素波。
 7. 簫鼓鳴兮發棹歌。
 8. 歡樂盡兮哀情多。

TRANSLATION

«Han Wu-di loved Li furen. [Li] furen died. The emperor himself compiled a mourning song.

1. The autumn wind is blowing, white clouds are flying.
2. Grass and trees are yellow, geese are returning south.
3. Orchids are fragrant, chrysanthemums are opulent.
4. [I am] longing for the beautiful woman, being unable to accept [her death].
5. A tower-boat has emerged and is crossing the Fen River⁴⁰.
6. [It] is moving across the middle of the current, raising white waves.
7. Flutes and drums are sounding, and the rowers' song is heard.
8. Joy has gone away, and great sorrow grows [in my heart].».

Having at our disposal the Chinese text of the mourning song, which served as the original for the Mi-nia translation, we may now turn to the Mi-nia translation itself in order to analyse its content more attentively.

Poetic images in the Mi-nia text of the mourning song

First some general remarks on the Mi-nia translation of the mourning song should be made. It appears that the Mi-nia seemingly had no idea of such flowers as orchids (Chin. lan) and chrysanthemums (Chin. ju). (The names of both flowers are missing among the flowers listed in the Mi-nia-Chinese dictionary entitled «The Pearl in the Palm»⁴¹.) Both extant Mi-nia translations (Wu-di's mourning song I and II) render the names of these flowers as «fragrant grass» (=orchids) and «flowers of the frost [season]» (=chrysanthemums). This translation was not casual: orchids belong to the class of grasses, and the Chinese character lan has also the meaning «fragrant grass»⁴², whereas the collocation «flowers of the frost [season]» usually stands for chrysanthemums in Chinese poetry. This means that tropes and metaphors used in Chinese poetry were familiar to the translators of the mourning song. The names of the flowers are translated in the same way in both Mi-nia translations. This may mean that when the Mi-nia translators were working on the translation of the mourning song (early or mid-12th century, see below), some of the images common in Chinese poetry had already been fixed in Mi-nia translations as conventional.

If we now turn to the textual difference between the Chinese original and the Mi-nia translation, we will notice at once that the pre-caesura and post-caesura parts of line 5 in both Mi-nia translations are given in reverse order: the river is mentioned here in the first part of the line, whereas in the Chinese original the name of the river stands after the caesura. In the mourning song I it is: {25} *tsi xwen* 河 上 出 塔 舟 (*«On the [Ji]fen River a tower-boat has emerged»* – line 5), while in the mourning song II we find {26} *tsi xwen* 舟 行 上 河 (*«Upon the [Ji]fen River a tower-boat is sailing»* – line 5). The Chinese original (Leilin za shuo) runs: *fan louchuan xi, ji fen he* («A tower-boat has emerged and is crossing the Fen River» – line 5). It seems rather doubtful that the Mi-nia translators have put in reverse order the pre-caesura and post-caesura parts of line 5 of the Chinese original. It is more likely that that was the order in the Chinese original they had.

Besides the difference in the sequence of the pre- and post-caesura parts of line 5, there is even a more striking divergence between the original and the translation: the Fen River is rendered in the Mi-nia translation as the [Ji]fen River. One may regard it as a mere mistake of the Mi-nia translators (I have encountered a number of similar mistakes among Mi-nia renderings of Chinese names, topo-nyms, etc.). If so, it would mean that the Mi-nia translators have rendered the reading, not the meaning of the Chinese verb *ji* "to cross the river", since the Mi-nia character {27} *tsi* "wet" could render the reading of this very Chinese character⁴³. And, therefore, they translated this Chinese collocation as the "[Ji]fen River".

But what if it was not a mistake? A closer examination of the line shows that, faithfully following the sequence of Chinese words in the collocation *ji fen he* "to

cross the Fen River", the Mi-nia translators render it as {28} *tsi xwen* 𠄎. However, according to the Mi-nia grammar, the Mi-nia collocation *tsi xwen* 𠄎, standing at the beginning of a line, is to be translated only as the river's name (mind the SOV order in the Mi-nia language – if {27} *tsi* were the predicate, it would necessarily stand at the end of the collocation). Moreover, after the collocation {28} *tsi xwen* 𠄎 one finds the postposition with the meaning "on", "upon" (in the mourning song I it is {14} *kha*; in the mourning song II stands another postposition – {15} *ngu*). This means that what stands before the postposition is undoubtedly a noun phrase.

It is also to be stressed that line 5 in the mourning song I is the only one where a postposition stands instead of the subordinating conjunction {4} 𠄎 – in the other lines 𠄎 stands for the caesura marker. One may suggest that such a change in the rendering of the caesura marker was made for the sake of the correct understanding of the collocations {29} *tsi xwen* 𠄎 *kha* "on the [Ji]fen River" (the mourning song I) and {30} *tsi xwen* 𠄎 *ngu* "upon the [Ji]fen River" (the mourning song II). The presence of a postposition excludes other explanations of these collocations. Be that as it may, it seems that the translation "the [Ji]fen River" was made quite consciously. I must confess, however, that at present I have no explanation of the river's name (the [Ji]fen River) in the Mi-nia translation.

As was mentioned above, the Mi-nia translation of the mourning song is in full accord with an explanatory note it is provided with. The poem admits no other interpretation than an expression of love and longing for a beloved woman who died. The key-image of the poem is the tower-boat on the [Ji]fen River in line 5 (line 1 of the second quatrain), which, I believe, symbolizes the author, Wu-di. The masculine origin of the boat is seen in its characteristic as a tower⁴⁴. This idea is supported by the choice of the Mi-nia character which stands for "tower" – {31} *ndu*: the dictionary "The Sea of Characters" explains that the character {31} *ndu* consists of the entire character {32} *mbin* "high", "lofty" and the right part of the character {33} *ndu* "quiet", "calm"⁴⁵. On the other hand, we know⁴⁶ that the character {32} *mbin* "high", "lofty" often stands for its homophone, {34} *mbin*, which means *membrum virile*.

To continue, there is an interesting observation concerning the meaning of the collocation "crossing a river" (if a boat, bridge, etc., i.e. any means of ferry, used for that purpose), made by the distinguished Russian scholar, Professor M. I. Nikitina. Among her fascinating discoveries concerning Far Eastern imagery is her finding that "crossing a river" implies⁴⁷ conjugal union, the connotation shared by all agrarian cultures⁴⁸. In our case, line 5 of the mourning song states that the boat with a protruding tower is unable to cross the river because of the heavy thundering waves. I believe that here we have, in terms of metaphor, the idea of impossibility of conjugal union with the deceased beloved.

From the outset the Mi-nia text of the mourning song creates an impression of overall sorrow: (line 1) autumn has come, cold wind is blowing, the white (mourning colour) clouds are flying away (sic!)⁴⁹. In line 2, we are told that grass

and trees have already withered, and geese are flying away. At first glance, line 3 stands somewhat apart: it runs that fragrant grass (orchids) is in blossom and flowers of the frost season (chrysanthemums) are opening, which is seemingly not in keeping with the mood of sorrow. But orchids and chrysanthemums are known to be autumn flowers. The coldness of the season is also expressed by means of the collocation «flowers of the frost season». (Mind the white, or mourning, colour of frost.)

Line 4 (the poem turns here from nature to man) openly states that the beloved woman has left the hero (the mourn-ing song I) and that it is impossible to forget her (the mourning song II).

In the Mi-nia translation of the first quatrain, the last word in lines 1, 2, and 4, renders the idea of «a loss» – «flying away» (line 1), «leaving» («returning home») (line 2) and in line 4 – «leaving», «parting» (the mourning song I); we have also a negation {13} *min* «not to have» (Chin. equivalent *wu*) (the mourning song II). Such choice of words was obviously intended to express the state of loneli-ness of the author (mind that the Chinese original lacks such illustrative syntax).

The second quatrain of the mourning song (lines 5–8) depicts Wu-di and his loneliness, thus continuing the theme which was touched upon in the last line of the first quatrain:

- line 1 (5) – a tower-boat emerges on the [Ji]fen River;
- line 2 (6) – the tower-boat wants to cross the river, but heavy waves hinder its sailing (the line, in terms of meta-phor, shows the impossibility of the conjugal union with the beloved woman);
- line 3 (7) – flutes and drums are sounding, the rowers are singing (it may seem that the mentioning of music in this line, like the mentioning of flowers in blossom in line 3 of the first quatrain, contrasts with sorrow. However, it may hint at a mourning ritual accompanied by the sound of flutes and drums);
- line 4 (8) – sorrow grows in the heart of the author; there is no more happiness.

The analysis of the mourning song shows that its two quatrains are written in a parallel fashion being connected with Li furen and Wu-di respectively. The first two lines of the first quatrain have to do with the beloved woman, to be more precise, with her absence, which is stressed by the usage of the words expressing "a loss". The first two lines of the second quatrain metaphorically depict Wu-di, show-ing his loneliness. The third line in the first quatrain points to the woman (fragrance) and the respective line in the second quatrain – to the man (sound)⁵⁰: the correlation between fragrance as manifestation of the female principle and sound – as manifestation of the male principle was established by Professor Nikitina⁵¹. In line 4 of the first quatrain the noun "woman" is used, while line 4 in the second quatrain turns openly to Wu-di, precisely, to his feelings.

An interesting question is whether the Mi-nia transla-tion of the mourning

song can be ascribed to the rhymed poetry. The rhyme occurs here not between the finals (end of the syllables), as in Chinese; in keeping with the Mi-nia tradition ⁵², the rhymed characters stand at the beginning of the lines and rhymed are the initials (beginning of the syllables).

In *Table 2* are given the readings of both the first character in a line and the first character after the caesura (the mourning song I).

Table 2

Line	First character in a line	First character after the caesura
1	<i>tsə</i> tone 1, rhyme 68	<i>ni</i> tone 2, rhyme 55
2	<i>si</i> tone 1, rhyme 30	<i>ndze</i> tone 1, rhyme 8
3	<i>śia</i> tone 1, rhyme 19	<i>nia</i> tone ?, rhyme ?
4	<i>si</i> tone 2, rhyme 10	?
5	<i>tsi</i> tone 2, rhyme 10	<i>ndźjə</i> tone 1, rhyme 69
6	<i>ldjwu</i> tone 1, rhyme 59	<i>mbu</i> tone 1, rhyme 3
7	<i>ljwu</i> tone 1, rhyme 2	<i>ndźjə</i> tone 1, rhyme 69
8	<i>ne</i> tone 2, rhyme 7	<i>'a</i> tone 1, rhyme 17

If we turn to the mourning song II, we, however, will find that a different character stands in the second line (first character), it is {3} *si* "tree" (tone 1, rhyme 11); however, it does not violate the rhyme. Regrettably, the reading of the character {11}? "to forget" is not known (cf. n. 32), therefore, I have no idea of the reading of the first post-caesura word in line 4.

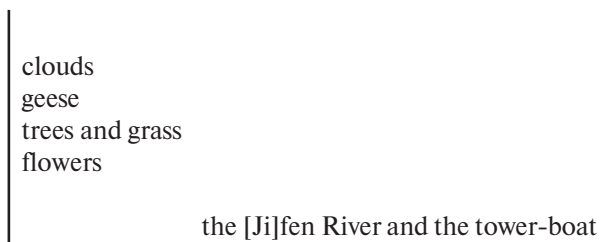
From *Table 2* it is quite evident that in the Mi-nia translation there is a certain similarity between the initials of the words standing at (i) the beginning of a line, and (ii) the beginning of the post-caesura part of a line, which proves that the mourning song represents a rhymed verse wholly in keeping with Mi-nia poetical rules.

The possible reason for the re-interpretation of the mourning song

Trying to understand the reason for the re-interpretation of the mourning song, I have turned again to the works of Professor Nikitina, in particular, to her idea concerning the representation of space in Korean poetry (*sijo*) ⁵³. My supposition was that this idea would work on Chinese material as well, since images of Chinese origin are common in Korean poetry. In brief, Nikitina's idea is as follows: space in the verse may be represented by means of two sets of poetical images, which stand for "the horizontal" (the bottom) and "the vertical" (the top) respectively. The spatial "framework" of the verse is represented by juxtaposing "the horizontal" and "the vertical". Nikitina defines water as the bottom, as contrasted with all other poetical images belonging to the top. Water is "the horizontal", and what is important, it is the main horizontal in the verse.

It is in cor-relation with the top – heaven (moon, clouds, sun), a pine-tree or a mountain, all representing "the vertical". This is, so to say, the "spatial hierarchy" of poetical images.

In the mourning song, the first two lines in both quat-rains point to the spatial framework of the poem repre-senting "the vertical" and "the horizontal" respectively: in the first quatrain the top of the vertical is shown by "clouds" and "geese", whereas in the second quatrain the horizontal (the bottom) is indicated by means of "the [Ji]fen River" and the "tower-boat". Trees, grass and flowers extend "the vertical" down to the bottom, where "the vertical" and "the horizontal" meet. The "spatial hierarchy" in the mourning song may be, therefore, represented as follows:



As was said above, the tower-boat personifies Wu-di, who, recalling his beloved deceased woman, raises his head, looks upward and watches the disappearing clouds and geese (both evidently associated with the woman). In effect, the emperor Wu-di is at the bottom, looking upward at the top and longing for his mistress, a common woman. But the whole situation contradicts to Chinese traditional notions: one looks upward only at those whose rank is higher than one's (those may be gods and goddesses, emperors, fathers, teachers, etc.).

Thus, the image of the emperor raising his head and looking upwards at the personification of his mistress was absolutely unacceptable for the Chinese world-view. How-ever, the artistic value of the mourning song was so great that the commentators in their attempt to preserve the poem made corrections in the text in order to bring it to a "norm" the Chinese reader was accustomed to. Since it was quite clear that the mourning song implied a woman (the first quatrain is completely devoted to a woman – remember flowers and their aroma), the mourning song was re-interpreted by the Chinese commentators as a sacrificial song dedicated to the earth goddess. Still some inconsis-tency remained – it was a mourning song which hardly fitted to be perceived as a sacrificial song. This point was "improved" by means of adding an extra line – the laments it contained were "shifted" to the brevity of life. And, fi-nally, in keeping with the new idea, the mourning song was given the title "The Autumn Wind".

Regrettably, as a result of the re-interpretation of the main idea of the poem and respective corrections, the Chinese text of "The Autumn Wind" had lost its completeness and perfection, while the Mi-nia translation, fortunately, retained both.

However, the speculations on the re-interpretation of the mourning song I offer here do not pretend to be final: other explanations are not excluded, and the whole problem, no doubt, deserves a special study.

Translations from the Chinese in the Mi-nia state

The Mi-nia translation of Wu-di's mourning song is one among numerous poetical translations from the Chinese into the Mi-nia language. Today almost nothing is known about the translations of Chinese writings in the Mi-nia state. Therefore, it seems necessary to give some general remarks on the subject.

The analysis of Mi-nia translations from the Chinese shows that during all the time of the existence of the Mi-nia state the work on translation from Chinese was unceasingly going on. Since Buddhism formed the ideological foundation of the Mi-nia state, there was nothing strange in the fact that the Mi-nia started their translation activities with the translation of the Buddhist Canon. This work began in 1038, to wit, immediately after the invention of the Mi-nia indigenous script (1036). The translation of the whole Buddhist Canon into the Mi-nia language was completed, as the Mi-nia themselves claimed, in 1090⁵⁴: the translation was consequently done in a record short time of fifty-three years⁵⁵. (To compare, in China the work on translation of the Buddhist Canon took almost a millennium.)

That the Mi-nia had the Buddhist Canon in their own script testifies to their highly developed culture. Of the three non-Han states of the time (the two others are the Khitan Liao and Jurchen Jin), which created their own script, only the Mi-nia state felt cultural necessity to undertake such a translation and to publish the Buddhist Canon in their own script⁵⁶. Obviously, Buddhist texts were considered as sacred and, consequently, the Mi-nia translation of these texts from the Chinese⁵⁷ was made especially careful. As a rule, these texts were translated *verbatim* (i.e. a corresponding Mi-nia character was put instead of a Chinese character). Seemingly, Mi-nia translators followed the Chinese text too faithfully: the Mi-nia grammar in translations of Buddhist texts in some cases turns to be "sinicized"⁵⁸. However, Nishida Tatsuo holds that the Mi-nia language "has not been so thoroughly sinicized as to distort basically the original characteristics of the Hsi-Hsia language"⁵⁹. The preparations done by the Mi-nia for the translation of the Buddhist Canon were really impressive. First of all, the Mi-nia compiled two lists of special Mi-nia characters, one for rendering the reading of Sanskrit syllables (we may name these Mi-nia characters as transcription characters), the other – for Sanskrit words (terms). This is proved by the material of the famous Mi-nia dictionary "The Sea of Characters", where some characters



Fig. 1

are defined as "Sanskrit letters"⁶⁰, while the others are explained as "a Sanskrit word used in *sutra*"⁶¹. The two lists were compiled because of the necessity to render (as it had been earlier done by Chinese translators of the Buddhist Canon) Sanskrit names and terms according to both their meaning and their reading (i.e. phonetically). As in Chinese translations of the Canon, there are sometimes more than one phonetic rendering of a Sanskrit word (e.g. *vajra*). Some examples are given in *Table 3*:

Table 3

Sanskrit name/term	Translation	Phonetic rendering
Vairocana	{35} <i>mə swew ndzu</i> Chin. <i>guangming</i> <i>bian zhao</i>	{36} <i>phi lu tśja no</i>
<i>samadhi</i>	{37} <i>lə ndie</i> Chin. <i>deng chi</i>	{38} <i>san mwei</i>
<i>sūtra</i>	{39} ? [62] <i>raḥi</i> Chin. <i>jing</i>	{40} <i>su ti rja</i>
<i>vajra</i>	{41} <i>keḥ ndźja</i> Chin. <i>jingang</i>	{42} <i>mba ndzi rja</i>
		{43} <i>mba ndzi rje</i>
		{44} <i>mba ndzi ra</i>

It goes without saying that such work could be performed only by very learned and experienced monks (experts in Sanskrit), but such people were hardly to be found in the newly born Mi-nia state. In this connection it seems quite probable⁶³ that Yuan-hao, the first Mi-nia emperor (1032–1048), in 1036 (sic!), the year when the indigenous Mi-nia script was created, detained (Shi Jin-bo even writes "arrested"⁶⁴) a group of nine Indian monks who, on their way home from China, had been passing through Mi-nia lands⁶⁵. One may suppose that the aim of such detention of Indian monks was the urgent need of experts in the Sanskrit text of the Buddhist Canon for translating the Canon and, first and foremost, for com-piling the two above-mentioned lists of Mi-nia–Sanskrit equivalents.

It seems that after the completion of the translation of the Buddhist Canon, the Mi-nia turned to the Chinese secular writings since the colophons in the wood-block prints containing these translations, as a rule, indicate the end of the eleventh century⁶⁶ or (more often) the twelfth century⁶⁷. The list of these translations includes Chinese classics⁶⁸, Chinese treatises on the art of war, such as *Sun zi bingfa*⁶⁹, *San lue*⁷⁰ and *Liu tao*⁷¹, *Lei Lin* ("The Forest of Classes"), etc.

In the text of the *leishu* "The Forest of Classes" one finds Chinese verses in Mi-nia translation scattered in vari-ous sections of the *leishu*. What is really fascinating is that despite the fact that Mi-nia indigenous poetry is quite a spe-cial phenomenon not similar to Chinese in shape, images, rhyme, etc.⁷², the Mi-nia translators managed to reach such high level that some Chinese verses in the Mi-nia lan-guage represent

real pieces of art.

While translating Chinese secular writings, Mi-nia translators were not so much bounded by the text of the original as in the case of the Buddhist Canon. It does not mean, however, that these translations lack exactness or clarity. In general, the Chinese text was rendered into the Mi-nia language quite correctly: only sometimes one notices that the translation was made by a person not quite familiar with some minor features of the Chinese language, e.g. two-syllable family names, such as Zhuge, were often "split" in Mi-nia translations. Some Chinese characters were mistak-enly read⁷³, etc. One may suppose that such kind of mistakes reveal the Mi-nia ethnicity of the translators.

But on the whole the Mi-nia translations of Chinese secular writings were made very skilfully (it is especially obvious in case of poetry). It is interesting that sometimes a passage is more transparent in the Mi-nia translation than in the original. (The reason is probably that the Chinese text in the course of time was sometimes re-interpreted or simply corrupted.)

The work on the translation of Chinese secular writings also demanded special preparations. Thus, there was compiled a special list of the Mi-nia correspondences of Chinese family names (84 Chinese family names in all)⁷⁴. For Chinese names, toponyms and other words, which were to be rendered according to their reading, special transcription characters were created. These characters lack lexical meaning⁷⁵. However, as the list shows, sometimes meaningful characters were also used for rendering the reading of a Chinese character, e.g. the adjective {27} "wet" *tsi*⁷⁶ renders the second syllable of the name Wang Ji, {45} '*ion tsi* ({27} *tsi* is the character used in the name of the [Ji]fen River⁷⁷), etc.

It is to be noted that the list of Mi-nia transcription characters compiled for rendering the reading of Chinese words does not coincide with the list of Mi-nia transcription characters which render Sanskrit syllables. So far I can make only one observation: the reading of Sanskrit syllables are often rendered by means of Mi-nia grammatical mor-phemes, such as, for example, perfective aspect markers {46} *a*, {47} *ki*, {48} *tha*, {49} *ndi*, {50} *r□□* agree-ment marker {51} *ni*, etc., while grammatical morphemes seemingly were not used for rendering the reading of Chinese words (at least they are lacking in the "List of Tangut-Chinese phonetic equivalents"⁷⁸).

Conclusion

The Mi-nia translation of Wu-di's mourning song is a literary brilliance. Not a single superfluous word is to be found here, and the poem flows from image to image, leaving an impression of overall completeness. Importantly, the translation not only renders adequately the content of the Chinese verse as a mourning song, but, by means of a set of expressive images, fully conveys the emotions – love and sorrow for the beloved woman who has passed away.

It is necessary to stress that in conveying the idea of mourning, the Mi-nia translators use a set of Chinese poetic images, though following the Mi-nia

pattern of a rhymed poetry, so that the Mi-nia reader could enjoy a Chinese verse shaped according to Mi-nia poetic rules.

The extant Chinese traditional text lacks both the beauty and the completeness of the Mi-nia translation. In my opinion, the Mi-nia translation is of higher artistic value than the Chinese text, perhaps, because the Chinese text of the verse known to us today, in the course of the two millennium, had been pondered over and re-interpreted as Wu-di's laments on the brevity of life, whereas the Mi-nia text of the verse has preserved its original vein. The reason for the re-interpretation of the mourning song seems to be connected with the abnormal for Chinese world-view arrangement of the "spatial hierarchy" of the verse where the emperor, at the "bottom", is looking at the heavens (i.e. the "top"), recalling his mistress, who was a common woman.

It is also important that in the case of "The Autumn Wind" we have one more example of the phenomenon I have discussed elsewhere ⁷⁹: sometimes Mi-nia translations from the Chinese may serve as a source for reconstructing the original Chinese text.

Obviously, such a piece of art as the Mi-nia translation of the mourning song could be produced by those who possessed not only considerable poetic mastery and creativity, but had great experience in doing such work. It means that by the second half of the twelfth century the Mi-nia had already worked out a stable tradition of translating Chinese writings, in particular, Chinese poetry, and we may assert that the art of translation from the Chinese became an integral part of the Mi-nia culture.

Appendix

«THE AUTUMN WIND» ⁸⁰

CHINESE TEXT

秋風辭

漢武帝

漢武帝故事曰。帝行幸河東。祠后土。顧視帝京。
忻然中流。與羣臣飲讌。帝歡甚。乃自作秋風辭。

1. 秋風起兮白雲飛。
2. 草木黃落兮鴈南歸。
3. 蘭有秀兮菊有芳。
4. 懷佳人兮不能忘。
6. 汎樓船兮濟汾河。
6. 橫中流兮揚素波。
7. 蕭鼓鳴兮發櫂歌。
8. 歡樂極兮哀情多。
9. 少壯幾時兮奈老何。

List of Mi-nia Characters

1. 葦 2. 籊 3. 蕤 4. 菱 5. 悅 6. 悅 7. 籊
 8. 籊 9. 悵 10. 籊 11. 悵 12. 蕤 13. 籊 14. 籊
 15. 籊 16. 籊 17. 籊 18. 籊 19. 籊 20. 籊 21. 籊 22. 籊 23. 籊 24. 籊 25. 籊
 26. 籊 27. 籊 28. 籊 29. 籊 30. 籊 31. 籊 32. 籊 33. 籊 34. 籊 35. 籊
 36. 籊 37. 籊 38. 籊 39. 籊 40. 籊 41. 籊 42. 籊 43. 籊 44. 籊 45. 籊 46. 籊 47. 籊 48. 籊
 49. 籊 50. 籊 51. 籊 52. 籊 53. 籊 54. 籊 55. 籊 56. 籊 57. 籊 58. 籊 59. 籊

VARIANTS OF ENGLISH TRANSLATION
OF WU-DI'S "THE AUTUMN WIND"A. Waley variant ⁸¹**The Autumn Wind**

«By Wu-ti (157–87 B.C.), sixth emperor of the Han dynasty. He came to the throne when he was only sixteen. In this poem he regrets that he is obliged to go on an official journey, leaving his mistress behind in the capital. He is seated in his state barge surrounded by his ministers.

Autumn wind rises: white clouds fly.

Grass and trees wither: geese go south.

Orchids all in bloom: chrysanthemums smell sweet.

I think of my lovely lady: I never can forget.

Floating-pagoda boat crosses Fen River.

Across the mid-stream white waves rise;

Flute and drum keep time to sound of the rowers' song;

Amidst revel and feasting, sad thoughts come;

Youth's years how few! Age how sure!»

S. Owen variant ⁸²

Song of the Autumn Wind

«Autumn winds rise, white clouds fly,
plants turn brown and fall, wild geese go south,
the orchid has its bloom, chrysanthemum its scent,
my thoughts are on the fairest, her I can't forget.
I sail in a great galley ⁸³ across the River Fen,
we breast the midstream current, raising white waves;
drums and fifes sing out, a rowing song begins,
at pleasure's height, many a sad thought comes:
how long does youth's prime last? -
no hope against old age».

Notes

¹ *Han shu bu zhu*, Wang Xian-qian *bu zhu* (Peking, 1959), viii, pp. 5571—7.

² In Chinese sources Li Yuan-nian is shown as Li *furen's* elder brother (Chin. *xiong*), but in the Mi-nia translation he appears as her younger brother. See K.B. Kepping, *Les kategoriy — utrachennaia kitayskaia leishu v tangutskom perevode* (The Forest of Classes — the Lost Chinese *Leishu* in Tangut Translation) (Moscow, 1983), p. 514.

³ A. Waley, *Translations from the Chinese* (New York, 1941), p. 49.

⁴ *Ibid.* In his translation, Waley does not mention the title «The Fallen Leaves and the Wailing Cicada».

⁵ See Kepping, *op. cit.*

⁶ There are at least two English translations of the «Autumn Wind», one made by A. Waley, *op. cit.*, p. 36, and the other by S. Owen (see *An Anthology of Chinese Literature: Beginnings to 1911*, New York—London, 1996, pp. 277—8). There is also a Russian translation of the verse: see V. M. Alekseev, *Kitayskaia literatura* (Chinese Literature) (Moscow, 1978), p. 163.

⁷ Regrettably, while preparing for publication the text of «The Forest of Classes» I could not pay much attention to a particular story in the *leishu*: my workschedule gave me only one year to complete the list of contents of the whole *leishu* (the Mi-nia text of the *leishu* contains several hundreds of pages and more than four hundred stories). As a result, I had to postpone a detailed study of some interesting stories, among which was «The Autumn Wind». For a brief description of the Mi-nia translation of «The Autumn Wind», see K. B. Kepping, «Tangutskiy perevod 'Pesni ob osennem vetre'» («The Tangut translation of 'The Autumn Wind'»), in *Pis'mennye pamiatniki i problemy istorii kul'tury narodov Vostoka. XXII godichnaya nauchnaya sessiya LO IVAN SSSR (doklady i soobshcheniya)*, pt. 2 (Moscow, 1989), pp. 36—41.

⁸ See, for example, V. S. Kolokolov and E. I. Kychanov, *Kitayskaia klassika v tangutskom perevode* (Chinese Classics in Tangut Translation) (Moscow, 1966); K. B. Kepping, *Sun' tsi v tangutskom perevode* (Sun zi in Tangut Translation) (Moscow, 1979) and *idem*, *Les kategoriy*.

⁹ See Kepping, *Les kategoriy*.

¹⁰ According to Professor Kawaguchi Hisao (for details, see Kepping, *Les kategoriy*, pp. 10—2), some Chinese fragments of «The Forest of Classes» were found among Dunhuang material (now they are held in St. Petersburg, Paris, and London).

¹¹ One may hope that the missing parts of «The Forest of Classes» will be found among the thousands of so far not identified Mi-nia fragments housed in the Stein Collection in London, since both collections — in St. Petersburg and in London — have originated from one and the same source — the famous Khara Khoto *suburgan* (see K. B. Kepping, «The Khara Khoto suburgan», in *Preservation of Dunhuang and Central Asian Collections*. Fourth Conference. St. Petersburg, 7—12 September, pp. 8—10). Such precedents are already known: for example, a single Mi-nia Buddhist text with interlinear Tibetan transcriptions is held partly in St. Petersburg, partly in London (G. van Driem and K.B. Kepping, «The Tibetan transcriptions of Tangut (Hsi-hsia) ideograms», *Linguistics of the Tibeto-Burman Area*, 14/1 (1991), pp. 119—22); a missing page from the St. Petersburg block-print *Sun zi bing fa* is housed in London, see Kepping, *Sun' tszi v tangutskom perevode*, p. 11.

¹² The number in {} brackets corresponds to the number in the «List of Mi-nia Characters» at the end of this essay.

¹³ See K. B. Kepping, «Rezchiki tangutskikh ksilografov» («The carvers of Tangut wood-blocks»), in *Pis'mennye pamiatniki Vostoka. Istoriko-filologicheskie issledovaniia. Ezhegodnik. 1975* (Moscow, 1982).

¹⁴ That both the number of the *juan* and the pagination are in Chinese seemingly implies the Chinese origin of those who carved the wood-block sheets and later bound them.

¹⁵ For the Mi-nia translation of «The Forest of Classes», see Kepping, *Les kategoriy*, pp. 147—572.

¹⁶ There is only one «butterfly» sheet preserved from the second *juan* (*ibid.*, pp. 147—8).

¹⁷ Three different texts of the *leishu* «The Forest of Classes» ascribed to different authors are registered in bibliographical sections of some Chinese dynastic histories. So far it is not clear which one of them served as the original for the Mi-nia translation (for details, see *ibid.*, pp. 9—10).

¹⁸ For a complete list of these names, see *ibid.*, pp. 106—20.

¹⁹ For the bibliography of his works concerning «The Forest of Classes», see *ibid.*, p. 10, n. 14.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 118, No. 358, Mi-nia text on pp. 537—9.

²¹ The story about Li *furen*'s refusal to meet Wu-di, when she was ill, is contained in *Han shu bu zhu*, pp. 5572—3.

²² Kepping, *Les kategoriy*, p. 117, No. 329, Mi-nia text on p. 514.

²³ Mind that the title «The Autumn Wind» does not occur in the Mi-nia translation.

²⁴ Kepping, *Les kategoriy*, No. 216, Mi-nia text on pp. 244—5; henceforth cited as mourning song I.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 334, Mi-nia text on p. 519; henceforth cited as mourning song II.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Mi-nia text on pp. 243 and 504.

²⁷ Here stands the character {10}, which I have not found in the Mi-nia dictionaries known to me.

²⁸ The translation «... [she] left» is tentative, since one of the characters in this line is not translated (see n. 27).

²⁹ A Chinese toponym in [] brackets indicates that, being unable to identify it, I give its supposed reading.

³⁰ The characters {2} *si* and {3} *si* are not homophones: see M. V. Sofronov, *Grammatika tangutskogo iazyka* (Grammar of the Tangut Language) (Moscow, 1968), ii, p. 297, No. 0849 and p. 298, No. 0881.

³¹ See n. 27.

³² Sofronov, in his *Grammatika tangutskogo iazyka*, p. 367, No. 4094, does not give its reading.

³³ Here in the Mi-nia text is used the word {23} *ri* «calm», «serene». This word is to be found in the title given to Bai Light of Wisdom, who, as the head of the translators' team, completed the translation of the whole Buddhist Canon — {59} *ri nguo* «Calmly completed [the translation of the whole Buddhist Canon]». For details, see K. B. Kepping, «The famous Liangzhou bilingual stele: a new study», *T'oung Pao*, LXXXIV (1998), pp. 361 and 363.

³⁴ *Han shu bu zhu*, p. 5574.

³⁵ Ding Fu-bao (bian), *Quan Han San guo Nan Bei chao shi, shang ce* (Peking, 1959), p. 2. For the Chinese text of Wu-di's «The Autumn Wind» from Ding Fu-bao's anthology and its two English translations, one by Waley and the other by Owen, see Appendix of the present article.

³⁶ The last sentence in the commentary runs as follows: *di huan shen, nai zi zuo qiu feng ci* («The emperor was very happy and himself compiled the poem 'The Autumn Wind'»).

³⁷ Waley, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

³⁸ This book is registered in *Leishu liu bie* (Zhang Di-hua, *Leishu liu bie* (Shanghai, 1958), p. 53) as the only *leishu* survived from the Jin dynasty.

³⁹ Microfiches of the block-print *Lei lin za shuo* were kindly sent by Professor Kawaguchi Hisao to me in the late 1970s.

⁴⁰ The Fen River is situated on the territory of modern Shansi province.

⁴¹ See Nishida Tatsuo, *A Study of the Hsi-Hsia Language* (in Japanese) (Tokyo, 1964), i, p. 200.

⁴² See, for example, *Kang-xi zidian*, (Peking, 1958), p. 998.

⁴³ Cf. Wang Ji, see p. 46 of the present article.

⁴⁴ The corresponding word in Chinese is *louchuan* «boat with a watch-tower» (sometimes up to thirty meters high).

⁴⁵ K. B. Kepping, V. S. Kolokolov, E. I. Kychanov, A. P. Terent'ev-Katanskiy, *More pis'men* (The Sea of Characters). Facsimile of Tangut xylographs, translation from the Tangut, introductory articles and appendices (Moscow, 1969), i, p. 57, No. 173.

⁴⁶ See, for example, K. B. Kepping, «The name of the Tangut Empire», *T'oung Pao*, LXXX, fasc. 4—5 (1994), p. 368.

⁴⁷ There are also other interpretations of «crossing a river» — for example, in terms of Buddhist teaching it means «reaching *nirvāṇa*».

⁴⁸ M. I. Nikitina, *Drevniaia koreyskaia poeziiia v sviazi s ritualom i mifom* (Ancient Korean Poetry: Myth and Ritual) (Moscow, 1982), p. 71.

⁴⁹ Instead of Chinese word *fei* «to fly», which does not specify the direction, the Mi-nia word {52} *ngu* is explained in the dictionary «The Sea of Characters» as {53} *r* (see Kepping *et alii*, *More pis'men*, i, p. 221), which stands for the Chinese *qu* «go», «leave».

⁵⁰ We may remember here that the name of the great conqueror Genghis Khan — Temujin — in the Mi-nia language means «Blacksmith Thunder-clap» (K. B. Kepping, «Secrets of the Tangut manuscripts», *Newsletter of the International Dunhuang Project*, No. 19 (2001), to wit, his name implies a very loud sound. The same manifestation of the male principle is to be observed in the title of Wu-di's verse «The Fallen Leaves and the Wailing Cicada»: cicada (Wu-di's personification) is an insect which makes long, loud, shrill noise.

⁵¹ Personal communication of Professor M.I. Nikitina, spring, 1999; see also her *Mifo zhenshchine-solntse i ee roditeliakh i ego «sputniki» v ritual'noy traditsii drevney Korei i sosednikh stranakh* (The Myth of the Sun-woman and Her Parents and Its 'Companions' in the Ritual Tradition of Ancient Korea and of Neighbouring States) (St. Petersburg, 2001), pp. 24 and 65.

⁵² E.I. Kychanov, «Krupinki zolota na ladoni — posobie dlia izucheniia tangutskoy pis'mennosti» («Grains of gold in the palm — a manual for studying the Tangut script), in *Zhanry i stili literatur Kitaia i Korei* (Moscow, 1969), p. 221.

⁵³ M. I. Nikitina, *Koreyskaia poeziiia XVI—XIX vv. v zhanre sidzho* (*Sijo* Genre in the Korean Poetry of XVI—XIX Centuries) (St. Peterburg, 1994), pp. 177—98.

⁵⁴ Shi Jin-bo, *Xi Xia fo jiao shilue* (Inchuan, 1988), pp. 317 and 336.

⁵⁵ For some details see Kepping, «The famous Liangzhou bilingual stele», p. 359.

⁵⁶ One can appreciate the full scale of this endeavour if one remembers that in the eleventh century neither Japan, nor Korea or Vietnam revealed any intention to translate the Buddhist Canon, being quite content with its Chinese version. (In Japan and Korea the Buddhist Canon was translated only in the twentieth century.)

⁵⁷ There were also Mi-nia translations of Buddhist texts made from other languages, at least from Sanskrit and Tibetan, but these translations go beyond the limits of the present essay.

⁵⁸ Nishida Tatsuo, «Outline of the grammar of the Hsi-Hsia language», in *A Study of the Hsi-Hsia Language* (Tokyo, 1966), ii, pp. 562—5. Nishida Tatsuo cites some examples of such «sinicization» of the Mi-nia grammar. Thus, the Chinese collocation *you ren* «a man» (lit. to have + man) is translated as {54} *ndz* *wo* *ng* «man + to have», whereas in keeping with the Mi-nia grammar it should be translated as {55} *ndz* *wo* *ngi* «a man» ({56} *ngi* corresponds to the indefinite article of European languages).

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 563.

⁶⁰ See, for example, Kepping *et alii*, *More pis'men*, i, p. 421, No. 2583; p. 451, No. 2783, etc.

⁶¹ See *ibid.*, p. 419, No. 2575; p. 450, No. 2777, etc.

⁶² Sofronov in his *Grammatika tangutskogo iazyka*, p. 378, No. 4600, does not give the reading of this character.

⁶³ However, some scholars doubt the historicity of this story: see, for example, R. Dunnell, *The Great State of White and High. Buddhism and State Formation in Eleventh-Century Xia* (Honolulu, 1996), p. 34.

⁶⁴ Shi, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 334.

⁶⁶ The preface to the Mi-nia translation of *Xiao jing* dates from 1095 (see Kolokolov and Kychanov, *op. cit.*, p. 10), to wit, five years later the officially announced completion of the translation of the Buddhist Canon.

⁶⁷ For example, the colophon in the block-print «The Forest of Classes» states that the wood-block was cut in 1181—1182 (see Kepping, *Les kategoriy*, p. 24). Seemingly the text of *Sun zi bing fa* was cut in the twelfth century as well (Kepping, *Sun' tsi v tangutskom perevode*, p. 10).

⁶⁸ Kolokolov and Kychanov, *op. cit.*

⁶⁹ Kepping, *Sun' tsi v tangutskom perevode*.

⁷⁰ Tang. 9, Nos. 578, 715, 716.

⁷¹ Tang. 8, Nos. 139—142, 768—770.

⁷² I have already touched upon Mi-nia indigenous poetry, {57} *ndzwo* «ode» and {58} *kla* «ritual song» (see K. B. Kepping, «The 'Black-Headed' and 'Red-Faced' in Tangut Indigenous Texts», forthcoming), but this subject obviously needs a special and detailed study.

⁷³ For details, see Kepping *Les kategoriy*, pp. 33—4.

⁷⁴ See the section «Chinese family names» in A. P. Terent'ev-Katanskiy, *Tangutskiy slovar' Ideologicheskaya smes'* (Tangut Dictionary «Ideographic Miscellany»), forthcoming.

⁷⁵ The great majority of them are included into the «List of Tangut-Chinese phonetic equivalents» in Kepping, *Les kategoriy*, pp. 131—9.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 358—9.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 318, Mi-nia text on p. 357.

⁷⁸ See *ibid.*, pp. 131—9.

⁷⁹ Kepping, *Sun' tsi v tangutskom perevode*, p. 17.

⁸⁰ Ding Fu-bao (bian), *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁸¹ Waley, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁸² Owen, *op. cit.*, pp. 277—8. I would like to thank Professor G. Dudbridge for sending me by e-mail S. Owen's translation of «The Autumn Wind».

⁸³ Regrettably, this translation lacks the expressive image of the boat with a protruding tower: *louchuan* is rendered here as «a great galley», i.e. a flat ship.

Illustrations

Fig. 1. Engraving from Khara Khoto, X 2520, 79,0 x 34,0 cm, 13th—14th century, the State Hermitage Museum. All inscriptions are in Chinese. The engraving has the title (at the top): «Models (Chin. *biaozhun*) of attractiveness for all dynasties. Fragrance (lit. ‘fragrant appearance’) [that can] overthrow states». (I would like to thank Professor S.E. Yakhontov, St. Petersburg University, for his generous help in translating this inscription). Vertical inscription: «[Master] from Ji workshop [in] Pingyang has cut and printed [this]». The figure of each woman is accompanied by her name in a cartouche. From right to left: «Lь-zhu (Jin dynasty), Wang Zhao-jun, Zhao Fei-yan (both Early Han dynasty), Ban Ji (Late Han dynasty)». Courtesy of the State Hermitage Museum.