Notes et Documents

The northern neighbors of the Tangut*

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From the 11th century onwards, the Xixia state grew into a major power along the northwestern frontier of Song China. This article examines the Tangut perspective of their geo-political environment as it is reflected in a translation of a Chinese military treatise called *Jiangyuan*, a work attributed to Zhuge Liang. The concluding part of the original text presents the traditional Sino-centric worldview with the four barbarian tribes (Yi, Man, Rong and Di) around the empire. The Tangut translation, however, omits three of the four tribes and discusses only the Northern Di, thus adapting the Chinese viewpoint to fit their own situation.

Keywords : Tangut, manuscript, *Jiangyuan*, Zhuge Liang.

A partir du 11ème siècle, l'état Xixia devient à la frontière nord de la Chine de Song une puissance régionale importante. Nous examinons ici le point de vue des Tanguts sur leur environnement géopolitique, tel que le reflète la traduction d'un traité militaire chinois appelé *Jiangyuan*, attribué à Zhuge Liang. La fin du texte chinois présente le point de vue sinocentrique traditionnel, où l'empire est entouré des quatre tribus barbares des Yi, des Man, des Rong et des Di. La traduction tangute, elle, omet les trois premières, et traite seulement des Di du nord, adaptant ainsi le point de vue chinois aux besoins et à la situation des Tanguts.

Mots-clés : le tangut, manuscrit, *Jiangyuan*, Zhuge Liang.

From the 11th century onwards, the Western Xia state grew into a major power along the northwestern frontier of Song China. Surrounded by powerful neighbors on all sides, establishing national identity was one of the chief priorities for the new state. Nation building efforts involved ambitious cultural projects, such as the invention of a native script and the translation of Chinese religious, philosophical and literary works. The majority of surviving Tangut writings[1] consists of Buddhist scriptures, reflecting the importance of Buddhism in the Xia state. At the same time, there are also many translations of secular works, including some of the Confucian classics and a number of historical and literary writings. While canonical works were rendered into Tangut almost verbatim, translations of other writings tended to adhere less strictly to the word order and grammatical structure of the original, thus managing to provide a more readable text for native Tangut readers.

A particularly interesting example in this respect is a manuscript kept at the British Library, originally discovered by Sir Marc Aurel Stein (1862-1943) at the site of the dead city of Khara-Khoto in 1914. This is a military treatise called *Jiangyuan* 將苑 [The General's Garden], a work ostensibly attributed to the celebrated 3rd-century strategist and statesman Zhuge Liang 諸葛亮 (181-234). Scholars of the modern period believed this work to be a

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[1] Tangut phonetic transcriptions in this paper appear according to Li Fanwen's (1997) dictionary. Beside the pronunciation, in most cases the Tangut words are also glossed using Chinese characters, although these are neither translations or transcriptions but correspondences documented in parallel texts; for this reason, the pronunciation and the meaning of the Chinese glosses is omitted. The following abbreviations and conventions are used: C=the Chinese original of the text, T=the Tangut translation of the text. Square brackets around characters in the transcription indicate that the characters are not visible in the manuscript, but can be reliably reconstructed on the basis of their context. Square boxes indicate missing characters. Triangles (△) in the Chinese rendition of the Tangut text are used to mark grammatical words that do not have a direct Chinese equivalent. Compound words consisting of more than one character are underlined in both the Tangut and Chinese to indicate their belonging together.

later forgery that became only attributed to Zhuge Liang as a means of gaining authority for its contents.[2] Today, the earliest surviving editions date to the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), thus the Tangut translation represents the earliest known version, and a surprisingly early one at that. Unfortunately, the manuscript is incomplete and its first half is missing. But the sections are numbered, as is the case with some of the Chinese editions, thus we can see that the order of sections is quite different. Beside this dissimilarity in the arrangement of the sections, however, most of the surviving part of the manuscript is fairly consistent with the content of extant Chinese editions. The only section where the Tangut version significantly deviates from the Chinese is in the last four sections describing the foreign peoples living around the Central Kingdom, that is Eastern Yi 東夷, Southern Man 南蠻, Western Rong 西戎, and Northern Di 北狄. Since the Chinese text reflects a clearly Sinocentric view of frontier tribes, it is worth examining whether an attempt has been made to adapt this model to fit the Western Xia worldview. A comparison of the Tangut and Chinese versions reveals that the translation indeed omits the description of these tribes, except for the Northern Di, who are referred to under the name "Lords of the Steppes." The description depicts a horse-riding militant people who were superior to the Han Chinese in open combat. Considering the geopolitical conditions of the late 12th and early 13th centuries, it is not impossible that for the Tangut readers,

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[2] Just to name a few examples, Yao Jiheng 姚際恆 (1647-1715) in his *Gujin Weishu Tongkao* 古今偽書考 [Study of Forged Books, Ancient and Modern] makes a brief statement that although the book has been attributed to Zhuge Liang, it is a forgery (Yao 1933:43). The *Siku Quanshu Zongmu Tiyao* 四庫全書總目提要 [General Catalogue with Abstracts to the Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries] (*juan* 100, *zibu* 子部 10) notes that military books forged starting with the Song period are customarily attributed to Zhuge Liang, whereas those forged during the Ming and later, are ascribed to Liu Ji 劉基 (1311-1375), a 14th- century military strategist. The Qing scholar Tan Xian 譚獻 (1832-1901) claims that it is a collection of sayings plagiarized from other sources (quoted in Zhang 1954:809).

the 'Lords of the Steppes' referred to the Mongols, who were rapidly accumulating power on the grasslands north of the Tangut (Western Xia) and Jurchen (Jin) empires. We know today what the translator at the time could not have known, namely, that in a few decades this northern neighbor, in a particularly brutal military campaign, was to wipe out the entire Western Xia kingdom and to conquer large portions of the Eurasian continent. In the translation, the omission of the other three neighbors (*i.e.* Eastern Yi, Southern Man and Western Rong) suggests a conscious decision to depart from the Chinese original to create a version of the text that was both relevant and geographically accurate from the Tangut perspective.

1. THE WESTERN XIA

Historical sources on the Western Xia 西夏 or the Tangut Empire (1038-1227) are scarce. While official histories for the Jin or Jurchen 金朝 (1115-1234), Liao 遼朝 (907-1125) and Song 宋朝 (960-1279) dynasties were created during the Yuan period 元朝 (1271-1368), the recognition of the Tangut Empire as a legitimate dynasty was brought into question and thus a dynastic history was never completed. The majority of what we know about the Western Xia comes from the histories of the other three dynasties and a handful of other historiographic works.[3] Needless to say, this unilateral dominance of Chinese language sources on the history of a former enemy state unavoidably presents a skewed picture and should be counterbalanced with other types of material. Native Tangut documents, however, are even more meager, as the majority of them were lost during the Mongol conquest. Although the script itself continued to be used in liturgical context well into the Ming dynasty, it stopped to be used in daily context and eventually fell

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[3] For an overview of the historiographical sources on Western Xia, see Kychanov (1968:5-10).

into oblivion. It is only following the discovery of a large corpus of Tangut texts at the beginning of the 20th century, and their subsequent decipherment, that researchers gradually could gain access to first-hand sources written in Tangut.

In the second half of the 12th century, the Western Xia was one of the major powers in Northern China. It had grown during the previous century and a half from being a small kingdom within the northern bend of the Yellow River into an important political entity that occupied a large region to the north of Lake Kokonor (Qinghai), some twenty times its original territory. By 1036, four years after Li Yuanhao 李元昊 succeeded his father on the throne, the empire already included the prefectures of Xiazhou 夏州, Yinzhou 銀州, Shengzhou 勝州, Liangzhou 涼州, Ganzhou 甘州, Suzhou 肅州 and Guazhou 瓜州 (see Kychanov 1968:58, Dunnell 1994:179-180, *Songshi* 宋史 [Standard History of the Song] *juan* 485:13994). At this time, as a young and dynamically expanding empire, the Western Xia was a multiethnic state in which the core Tangut population lived alongside with Chinese, Tibetans, Uighurs, Khitans and other ethnicities.[4] Most of these foreign groups became part of the empire as it grew larger and incorporated the regions inhabited by these peoples. Thus as a result of military expansion, it was quite common that people of the same ethnicity ended up living on both sides of the Xia border, blurring the division between foreign and domestic population. We must assume that "foreign" often must have been seen not so much as a matter of ethnicity but as an allegiance to a particular state or regime. Non-Tangut ethnicities living within the borders enjoyed relative equality under Xia law. Social status or position within a clan was more important with regard to people's legal responsibilities than their ethnic or

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[4] In addition to this, the Tangut themselves were not ethnically unified but consisted of a variety of tribes probably speaking different dialects of the Tangut language. See Nishida (2010:246, n. 2).

tribal affiliation, and only in cases of equal rank were the Tangut granted priority (Dunnell 1996:147, Kychanov 2008:200).

During the nearly two centuries from the reign of Yuanhao until the Mongol conquest, the Tangut Empire had a number of neighbors with most of whom, for shorter or longer periods of time, it had conducted war. In the southwest, there were the Tibetans, in the west, the Uighurs. In the northeast, until 1115 the Xia shared the border with the Khitans and after that with the Jurchen. In the east, southeast and south, during the 11th century the border was with the Song Empire and, in the 12th century, with the Jin. Finally, the north was occupied by Turco-Mongolian tribes (Kychanov 1968:61). These latter ones by the early 13th century had agglomerated into an irresistible force under the leadership of Genghis Khan. The Western Xia was the first significant state in the way of the Mongol expansion. The first raids began in 1205, and from that time on the threat from the north became an everyday reality in the Tangut state.[5] Although initially they were able to resist and even win some battles, they were also simultaneously at war with the Jurchens in the east, and this double warfare drained their resources. Attempts had been made to establish an alliance with the Jin, in order to create a unified front capable of resisting the Mongols, but in the end none of these materialized. It was, of course, in the Mongols' best interests that the Jurchen-Tangut conflict was kept alive and no such alliance was achieved. After two decades of intermittent fighting, at the end of 1225 Genghis Khan personally led a decisive military campaign against the Western Xia, as a result of which the Tangut state ceased to exist in 1227.

Among the major contributions of the Western Xia to the history of human civilization, at least from our modern perspective,

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[5] For the history of the demise of the Western Xia, see Kychanov (1968:298-330) and Dunnell (1994:205-214).

were their script and writings. The Tangut script was created in 1036 as part of Li Yuanhao's nation-building efforts to create a state identity that would set the young state apart from its powerful neighbor, the Song Empire. Almost immediately after its introduction, the script was used for an ambitious translation project aimed at creating a Tangut version of the Tripitaka. Beside Buddhist scriptures, Chinese secular writings were also commonly translated, including some of the Confucian classics and a number of historical, military and literary works. The majority of these translations seem to have been done during the 12th century when the Western Xia, after an extended period of intense warfare with their neighbors, entered into a period of relatively peaceful existence.

Considering the fidelity of the translations in comparison with their Chinese originals, Kolokolov and Kychanov (1966:11) note with reference to the Confucian classics that "[t]he Tangut translations are done exceptionally accurately, almost word for word, and the Tangut translation often only differs from the contemporary Chinese text in word order, plus a series of additional function words required by Tangut grammar". Non-canonical writings, on the other hand, tended to follow the word order and grammatical structure of the original less rigidly, trying to produce a more readable text for native Tangut readers. Occasionally not only the grammar but also the content itself could be modified as a means of adapting the text to the worldview of the Western Xia. The Japanese scholar Nishida Tatsuo referred to the results of this approach as "nonliteral and free translations" and observed that the Tangut translation was at times easier to understand than the Chinese (Nishida 2010:233-234). [6] In her work on the Tangut

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[6] Incidentally, to illustrate this notion, Nishida cites two translations of Chinese texts on military strategy: the *Liu Tao* 六韜 [Six Scabbards] and the *Huangshi Gong San Lüe* 黃石公三略 [Three Strategies of Duke Huangshi], both from the collection of the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, St. Petersburg.

version of the *Sunzi* 孫子 [The Book of Master Sun], Ksenia Kepping (1979:20-21) went a step further, suggesting that sometimes the translators paraphrased the text to make it more comprehensible for native readers.[7] Especially literary metaphors, allegories and literary allusions were treated with great flexibility: they were either omitted altogether or retold in ordinary language (Kepping and Gong 2003:19-20).

2. THE CHINESE *JIANGYUAN*

The text called *Jiangyuan* [General's Garden] is a work traditionally attributed to Zhuge Liang, a statesman and strategist of the 3rd century, whose name has been immortalized for the general public in the 14th-century novel *Sanguo Yanyi* 三國演義 [Romance of the Three Kingdoms].[8] Zhuge Liang is particularly known for his uncommon intelligence and strategic abilities, which he used to outmaneuver his enemies and achieve victory. Although historically he was not always successful in battle, he has become an iconic figure symbolizing military wisdom.[9] His literary skills were also important to developing the romantic notion of him as someone who has equal facility with the pen and the sword. While the biography of Zhuge Liang in the 3rd-century official history *Sanguo Zhi* 三國志 [Record of the Three Kingdoms] includes a list of the works he authored, the *Jiangyuan* is not among them.

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[7] Kepping (Kepping and Gong 2003:19-20) makes an even stronger point with regard to the *Jiangyuan* discussed in this paper, claiming that it was an "adaptation" for Tangut readers.

[8] In a scenario not unlike that of the *Jiangyuan*, one of the most important early editions of the novel *Sanguo Yanyi* that survive today is also a translation. This is the Manchu version of the novel, which was printed in 1650, earlier than Manchu translations of the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics* (West 1993:87-90). On Manchu translations of novels and other literary texts, see also Durrant (1979) and Gimm (1987).

[9] For details of his life, see de Crespigny (2007:1172-1173).

These circumstances have led scholars to the conclusion that the *Jiangyuan* was a relatively late forgery. The ostensibly large number of borrowings from other texts on military strategy that appear in this work have also been taken as an indication that the work was collated from other texts with the intent to create a text that could be attributed to Zhuge Liang. The label of forgery in itself was enough to diminish the book's value and to exclude it from serious scholarly inquiry. Partly as a result of this scholarly indifference towards the text, no serious studies have been done towards determining its real date and authorship. The book only survived in the popular lore of military strategy and is generally referred to as an authority on warfare in works that are on the whole unconcerned with issues of authenticity or critical scholarship.

The earliest extant editions of the *Jiangyuan* date to the Ming dynasty. Of the Ming editions we know of printed copies from the 13th year of the Zhengde 正德 reign (1517); the 43rd year of the Jiajing 嘉靖 reign (1522-1566), that is, 1564; the Wanli 萬歷 reign (1573-1620); and the 11th year of the Chongzhen 崇禎 reign (1628-1644), that is, 1637. The 1564 copy has a Preface written in the 3rd year of the Hongzhi 弘治 reign (1488-1505), and the 1637 copy a colophon dated to the *yisi* 乙巳 year of the Chenghua 成化 reign (1465-1487), that is, 1485. These dates enable us to trace these editions significantly further back in time. In addition, the text was also included in Tao Zongyi's 陶宗儀 (fl. 1360) *Shuofu* 說郛 [The Domain of Explanations], a large collection of texts with a preface dating to 1370.[10] The text is known in Chinese sources at least under three different names. Beside *Jiangyuan*, some editions use the titles *Xinshu* 心書 [Book of the Heart] and *Xinshu* 新書 [New Book]. This is as far as we can trace the history of the *Jiangyuan*

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[10] Unfortunately, the date of the preface does not allow us to trace back the text of the *Jiangyuan* to this period because surviving copies of the *Shuofu* date from the 16th century. Because of its immense size and complex textual history, we cannot be sure that the *Jiangyuan* was part of it at all.

based on Chinese sources. The discovery of the Tangut manuscript helps us extend this history for an additional two centuries, which is completely missing from the Chinese tradition.

   In terms of its structure, the text consists of 50 short sections, each headed by a two-character title.[11] In most editions the titles also include the section number, although this is not always the case. Each section talks about a specific strategic principle, such as employing the right people, taking into consideration the features of the terrain, awarding or punishing those who deserve it, etc. In general, the *Jiangyuan* is written from the point of view of the general, giving advice on different aspects of leadership. The last four sections (C47-C50) deal with the four types of barbarians, describing their characteristics and the way to fight them. It is this last part of the text and its Tangut translation that is addressed in this paper. A full translation of the Chinese version is given below:[12]

> 東夷第四十七
> 東夷之性，薄禮少義，捍急能鬪，依山塹海，憑
> 險自固。上下和睦，百姓安樂，未可圖也。若上
> 亂下離，則可以行間，間起則隙生，隙生則修德
> 以來之，固甲兵而擊之，其勢必克也。

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[11] The only exception is Section C3, the title of which consists of three characters in most edition: "Knowing human nature" 知人性 *zhi ren xing*.

[12] The Chinese text is that of the *Zhuge Liang Ji* 諸葛亮集 (1960), which is a punctuated version of the edition created by Zhang Shu 張澍 (1781-1847) under the title *Zhuge Zhongwu Hou Wenji* 諸葛忠武侯文集 [Collected Writings of the Loyal and Martial Lord Zhuge]. Since this edition does not have section numbers, for the sake of convenience I added those — the way they appear in earlier Ming editions — to both the Chinese and English versions (*e.g.* Dong Yi 東夷 [The Eastern Yi] → *Dong Yi di sishiqi* 東夷第四十七 [No. 47, The Eastern Yi]).

C47. The Eastern Yi

The nature of Eastern Yi is such that they hold little esteem for etiquette (*li*) and righteousness (*yi*) but are fierce and good at fighting. They use the mountains or the trenches and the sea as difficulties of the terrain in order to secure themselves. When those above and those below are in harmony, the ordinary people are content and happy, and then any plans against [the barbarians] are futile. But if those above are disordered and those below turn away from them, then they become separated, and when such separations come up, a chasm develops between them. Wherever a chasm appears, then [the enemy] can be attracted through a policy of cultivated generosity, can be attacked with troops in armor, and its might can surely be overcome.

南蠻第四十八

南蠻多種，性不能教，連合朋黨，失意則相攻。居洞依山，或聚或散，西至崑崙，東至洋海，海產奇貨，故人貪而勇戰。春夏多疾疫，利在疾戰，不可久師也。

C48. The Southern Man

There are many types of Southern Man. Their nature is such that they cannot be educated; they join into cliques but having lost interest attack each other. They dwell in caves in the mountains, they sometimes gather, sometimes disperse. In the west, they reach the Kunlun Mountain; in the east they reach the ocean. The sea brings forth rare and exotic commodities; therefore the people become greedy and fight boldly [over them]. In the spring and summer they often have epidemics. It is

advantageous to fight a quick war against them; a long campaign cannot be sustained.

西戎第四十九
西戎之性，勇悍好利，或城居，或野處，米糧
少，金貝多，故人勇戰鬭，難敗。自磧石以西，
諸戎種繁，地廣形險，俗負彊很，故人多不臣。
當候之以外釁，伺之以內亂，則可破矣。

C49. The Western Rong
The nature of the Western Rong is such that they are brave and fierce but love profit. Some of them live in cities, others dwell in the open; they produce little rice and grains but have metal and cowries in abundance. Therefore, the people fight bravely and it is hard to defeat them. West of the stone deserts there are many different varieties of Western Barbarians. Their land is wide with a perilous terrain; their customs are based on strength and violence: thus most of them do not serve anyone. They should be closely observed while they encounter external intrusion or suffer internal wars — at these moments they can be crushed.

北狄第五十
北狄居無城郭，隨逐水草，勢利則南侵，勢失則
北遁，長山廣磧，足以自衛，饑則捕獸飲乳，寒
則寢皮服裘，奔走射獵，以殺為務，未可以道德
懷之，未可以兵戎服之。漢不與戰，其略有三。
漢卒且耕且戰，故疲而怯；虜但牧獵，故逸而
勇。以疲敵逸，以怯敵勇，不相當也，此不可戰
一也。漢長於步，日馳百里；虜長於騎，日乃倍
之，漢逐虜則齎糧負甲而隨之，虜逐漢則驅疾騎
而運之，運負之勢已殊，走逐之形不等，此不可

戰二也。漢戰多步，虜戰多騎，爭地形之勢，則
騎疾於步，遲疾勢懸，此不可戰三也。不得已，
則莫若守邊。守邊之道，揀良將而任之，訓銳士
而禦之，廣營田而實之，設烽堠而待之，候其虛
而乘之，因其衰而取之，所謂資不費而寇自除
矣，人不疲而虜自寬矣。

C50. The Northern Di

The Northern Di dwell without city walls, they wander about following the availability of water and pasture land. When powerful, they invade the areas in the south; when losing might, they withdraw to the north. Their long mountain ranges and wide deserts are suitable for their self-defense. When hungry, they capture wild animals and drink their milk; when cold, they sleep on skins and wear pelts. They gallop around and hunt with bows; killing for them is a daily task. They cannot be tamed with moral principles, cannot be subjugated with weapons.

The Han do not fight them and there are three main reasons for this. The Han soldiers now toil the earth, now fight, thus they are fatigued and timid. The barbarians, on the other hand, raise livestock and hunt, thus they are well rested and courageous. Using the fatigued against the well rested, the timid against the courageous is inappropriate. This is the first reason why they cannot be fought.

The Han are good at marching on foot and can cover a hundred *li* a day. The barbarians are good at riding on horseback and thus can cover twice as much in a day. When the Han are in pursuit of the barbarians then they haul their provisions and carry their armor

during the chase. When the barbarians are in pursuit of the Han, they move at great speed and transport things on horseback. The efficiency of transporting things on horseback as opposed to carrying those on foot being so different, the means of pursuit are unequal. This is the second reason why they cannot be fought.

In battle, the Han mostly move around on foot, the barbarians mostly move around on horseback. When competing for advantageous terrain, riding is faster than walking. The difference between the efficiency of slowness and speed: this is the third reason why they cannot be fought.

There is no other way to deal with this than guarding the frontier line. The way of guarding the frontier line lies in choosing a good general to employ; training elite troops to resist them; extending cultivated lands and filling those; erecting beacon towers to expect them (i.e. the enemy); detecting their weak moments and taking advantage of those; capturing them when they are in decline. This is referred to as having the bandits eradicated themselves without expending any resources; making the barbarians consoled by themselves without exhausting one's own people.

What we have here are the well-known traditional categories for China's neighbors, commonly translated into English as Eastern, Southern, Western and Northern Barbarians. The designations go back to pre-Qin times but in later times they lost their specificity and became used as generic terms for different non-Chinese ethnicities according to their geographical distribution. Similar

descriptions of the types of people living at the four cardinal directions of the world are known in other sources and these are often found within the framework of the cosmogony of Five Phases and Four Seasons.[13] In terms of wording, individual elements of the description of foreign tribes in the *Jiangyuan* seem to have their roots in the histories of compiled during the mid 7th century (*e.g. Nanshi* 南史 [The History of Southern Dynasties], *Beishi* 北史 [The History of Northern Dynasties]), with bits and pieces of it occurring as early as the *Shiji* 史記 [Records of the Historian]. Yet as a system, it seems most closely connected with the *Tongdian* 通典 [Comprehensive Institutions], a large encyclopedia compiled by Du You 杜佑 (735-812) towards the end of the 8th century.[14] In the section titled "Frontiers" (Bianfang 邊防), the *Tongdian* demarcates the world beyond the borders of the Tang empire using the four categories of Eastern Yi, Southern Man, Western Rong, and Northern Di, matching the description at the end of the *Jiangyuan*. Only in the *Tongdian*, this serves as the framework of a much more detailed analysis of the various ethnicities under these generic terms. Thus the four sections, into which the Western Rong category is divided, include no fewer than seventy-six peoples and kingdoms, ranging from Kucha and Loulan to Persia and India. This was also the category into which the Dangxiang 黨項, ancestors of the

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[13] For example, in Chapter 12 of the Han dynasty medical treatise *Huangdi Neijing Suwen* 黃帝內經素問 [The Internal Canon of the Yellow Emperor, Simple Questions], we see a similar description of the world at the cardinal directions and the people inhabiting it. Only in this case, in order to conform with the Five Phases model, we also have an additional region called Center, where the people do not have to work that hard and, accordingly, have illnesses caused by their lack of exercise.

[14] The *Tongdian* was officially presented to the throne in 801, although Du You had worked on it for over thirty years prior to that, and made minor changes up until his death in 812 (see Twitchett 2002:106-107). Although we know that much of the *Tongdian* came from earlier sources, including the now lost *Zhengdian* 政典 [Institutions of Governing] by 8th-century scholar Liu Zhi 劉秩, it would take more research to determine the primary sources for the sections on China's neighbors.

Western Xia, were grouped. The Northern Di, on the other hand, had fewer categories, but some groups (*e.g.* the Xiongnu and the Turks) were treated in more detail.

What distinguishes the *Jiangyuan* from its sources is that, being a text on military strategy, it specifically identifies these foreign tribes as a threat and offers a feasible solution how each of them could or should be fought. Yet it does not take long to recognize that the four categories of barbarians around the Chinese domain are not immediately relevant for the Western Xia at the end of the 12th century.[15] They had different neighbors: the Tibetans to the south and southwest, the Jurchen to the east and southeast, the Kara-Khitans[16] to the west, and the Mongols to the north. By the end of the 12th century, the Tangut did not share borders with the Southern Song state, as the southern frontier region was by that time under the Jurchen control. In fact, from the perspective of the original *Jiangyuan*, the Tangut would have been included in the category of Western Barbarians, as is the case with the Dangxiang in the *Tongdian*. Perhaps this is the reason why the Tangut translation omits three of the four neighbors and includes only the Northern Di. After all, reading about "neighbors" like the Southern Man in the regions of the modern Yunnan 雲南 and Guizhou 貴州 provinces would have been completely irrelevant for the Tangut reader.

Before proceeding to the Tangut translation, it is worth pointing out that this last part of the *Jiangyuan* stands apart from the rest of the text, as instead of discussing theoretical strategic

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[15] Arguably this description of neighboring barbarian tribes threatening a central — and unified — domain does not reflect either the political conditions in China during the 3rd century AD when Zhuge Liang lived.

[16] The Kara-Khitans (or Qara-Khitans) are descendants of the Khitans who had fled their homeland after the Jurchen conquest of the Liao and established the Western Liao dynasty (1124-1218) in Central Asia.

issues of warfare and leadership (*i.e.* the general), it provides a descriptive, although idealized, account of the peoples living in the four directions. This standing apart from the main body of the text, coupled with its location at the end of the work, raises the possibility that we are dealing with an addendum that has not always been part of the text. Nevertheless, these four sections were part of the edition included in the *Shuofu* compiled at the very end of the Yuan dynasty, and this is the earliest Chinese version we know. Although we do not have an original copy of the *Shuofu*, there are extant Ming dynasty manuscript copies that testify to this effect.[17] At the same time, an early Qing printed copy of the *Shuofu* from the 3rd year of Shunzhi 順治 (1646) omits these four sections altogether.[18] The evident explanation for this is that the description of the barbarians living beyond the borders as the enemies of the state would have felt insulting for the Manchu who have by this time become the rulers of China. As Eric Grinstead puts it, "[t]he rulers of the Ch'ing dynasty, being Manchus — that is, northern non-Chinese — could well have felt themselves included in the general term" (1962:36). In his study of the *Shuofu*, King P'ei-Yuan (1946:1) mentions that from the Qianlong 乾隆 (1735-1796) and Jiaqing 嘉慶 (1796-1821) reign periods, the work in its original form was prohibited because of the numerous fragments that appeared offensive to the Manchu ancestors.[19]

Similar cases of textual omission due to politico-ethnic sensitivity are also known from the Manchu period. In an article devoted specifically to this subject, Hans van Ess (2002) shows examples of how Qing editors changed and omitted references to barbarians in Song or Ming texts because they felt that these were

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[17] For the comparison of the earliest editions of the *Shuofu*, see Tao (1988).

[18] This is a copy in the collection of Princeton University Library, in which the text ends immediately after Section 46.

[19] For an extensive bibliographic study of the complex system of the *Shuofu* in a western language, see Pelliot (1924).

too much resonant with their own identity. One such case is the *Siku Quanshu* 四庫全書 [Complete Collection of the Four Treasuries] edition of Hu Anguo's 胡安國 *Chunqiu Zhuan* 春秋傳 [Commentary to the Spring and Autumn Annals], in which all references to the Western Rong and Northern Di barbarians had been removed (van Ess 2002). To support van Ess's observation, we can also note that the part on the four barbarians is also missing from the *Shuofu* edition included in the *Siku Quanshu*.[20]

This, of course, does not mean that this last part of the *Jiangyuan* was not transmitted during the Qing. We have a later manuscript in the collection of the Shanghai Library, annotated by the 18th-century scholar Shen Kepei 沈可培 (1737-1799), which has these four sections joined together into a single section called "Four Barbarians" (Si Yi 四夷).[21] Therefore, while the arrangement of the rest of the *Jiangyuan* is fairly consistent in the various editions, this part shows a smaller degree of stability. The Tangut version of the *Jiangyuan* presents yet another version of this account, although it certainly did not omit it entirely.

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[20] At the same time, the *Jiangyuan*'s description of the barbarian appear in the *Siku Quanshu* as block quotes in the Ming dynasty encyclopedia *Tushubian* 圖書編 [Compilation of Charts and Books] (1613). The encyclopedia quotes the full text of Southern Man, Western Rong and Northern Di sections, separated from each other and inserted into its own categorization of China's neighbors; however, it omits the section on the Eastern Yi, no doubt because it did not fit its more detailed elaboration of these peoples. Yet the fact that the other three sections appear in the *Siku Quanshu* in their full form suggests that the process of censoring out references to the Rong and Di barbarians was either not comprehensive or not thorough.

[21] *Xinshu Jiaozhu Yi Juan* 心書校注一卷 [The Book of Heart with Commentary, in One Fascicle], Shanghai Library, Department of Rare Books, No. 802672-79. This is a concise edition with less than half of the text and no section numbers. It is hard to know whether Shen Kepei only wanted to comment on these parts and consequently left the rest of the text out or he was working from an earlier copy that already had the same arrangement.

Another example of the way the sensitive issue of barbarians was dealt with during the Manchu dynasty is seen in the version of the *Jiangyuan* (titled *Xinshu* 心書) preserved in a 1705 edition of the *Zhongwu Zhi* 忠武誌 [Epitaph of the Loyal and Martial Lord] by Zhang Penghe 張鵬翮 (1649-1705). Here the term 'Eastern Yi' *dong yi* 東夷 is written as 東彝 *dong yi*, where the second character is replaced with a phonetically equivalent ethnonym that is deprived of any negative connotations.[22] While the names for the Western Rong and the Southern Man remain unchanged in the text, the Northern Di appear under the label 'Northern Enemies' *bei di* 北敵. In addition, the larger part of the final section of the original text is omitted in this edition, confirming our suspicion about its relative instability.

We should also realize that the depiction of the barbarians did not have to be taken literally, as referring to specific types of foreigners by name. That this in fact was not the case is evidenced in another manuscript copy that is undated but was most likely written in the second half of the 19th century.[23] At the end of this booklet, a different hand added a note, with red dots as a form of punctuation, commenting on the description of the four barbarians:

行間則隙生‧釁之以內亂‧候其虛而乘之‧因其衰而
敢之‧此審勢禦外國之最要著也

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[22] Such a replacement of characters in a text is strongly reminiscent of the practice of imperial name taboos.

[23] *Xinshu Bufen Juan* 新書不分卷 [The New Book, Undivided into Fascicles], Shanghai Library, Department of Rare Books, No. 863710. The manuscript is undated, but p. 20 has a comment on the top margin written in Manchu. In addition, there is an owner's seal imprint with the words "Descendant of the Three Generals" 三將軍後人 *san jiangjun houren*. The library catalogue states that this is a late Qing copy, which might be based on the circumstances of its acquisition, although there is no mention of any of this information in the catalogue itself. A 19th-century dating is also supported by the fact that this edition is much closer in its wording and textual features to the Zhang Shu edition than to earlier editions.

> Inserting a crack between them so a hole is born,
> intruding upon them to create internal wars, detecting
> their weak moments and taking advantage of those,
> driving them off when they are in decline — these
> are the very essence of examining the state of affairs
> and resisting foreign countries.

Each of these tactics is taken from one of the descriptions of the four barbarians, to which the reader added his own conclusion. As a comment on how to fight foreigners, this note dramatically reflects the situation of the last decades of the Qing dynasty, when China was increasingly forced to confront European powers. Obviously, Western colonizers could not have been equated with the Western Rong and the Eastern Yi, yet the advice in this last part of the *Jiangyuan* is so generic that a late Qing reader with patriotic sentiments could have found inspiration in it for devising ways to desist foreign aggression.

3. THE TANGUT TRANSLATION OF *JIANGYUAN*

The manuscript with the Tangut translation of the *Jiangyuan* was found by Aurel Stein in 1914 in the dead city of Khara-Khoto, where the Russian explorer Pyotr Kuzmich Kozlov (1863-1935) had discovered large quantities of Tangut books and manuscripts in 1908. The manuscript was first identified as the translation of the *Jiangyuan* in 1962 by Eric Grinstead (1962:35), who was the curator of the Stein collection at the British Museum at that time. The manuscript is currently kept at the British Library (Or.12380/1840) as part of the Stein collection. When the manuscript was first brought to London, it was, in the words of Grinstead (1962:36), merely "a twist of paper" and conservators of the British Museum backed it with a thicker paper to provide support for it. It is currently kept in a scroll format. Unfortunately,

the lower part of the manuscript is missing. For this reason, all lines are incomplete and lack each several characters at the bottom. The beginning of the scroll is also torn off. Judging by the section numbers in the manuscript, we only have approximately half of the original text. The last line at the end of the scroll identifies the preceding text as *The Book of the General's Grove* 𗾶𗾅𗾉𗾏𗾑 *ga biu lĭu bĭuo tçhie* (將軍森林本). It is likely that the name of the editor or copyist was originally added to the same line, but it is now missing. Since the Chinese word *yuan* 苑 in the title, customarily translated into English in this place as 'garden' also has the meaning of a 'grove', the Tangut colophon corroborates the title of the text as *Jiangyuan*. While the Tangut title does not mean that the text could not have circulated under other names during the same period, it nevertheless provides evidence that the title *Jiangyuan* was in use in Chinese editions before the end of the Western Xia state.

The manuscript is undated and contains no direct clues regarding its date. Ksenia Kepping points out that secular writings, including military texts, were typically translated into Tangut in the 12th century (Kepping and Gong 2003:22). She also suggests that the *Jiangyuan* would have been translated "not earlier than the second half of the 12th century but seemingly much later" (*ibid.*) This conjecture is partly based on the supposition that the horse-riding Northern Di described at the end of *Jiangyuan* were a reference to the Mongols, who began their raids into Tangut territory starting at 1205 (Dunnell 1994:206). The same line of reasoning, however, could be applied to the Chinese text, as the description of the Northern Di already appears there. Was the Chinese text then composed on the eve of the Mongol conquest as well? At first glance, it does not seem probable that the Chinese text of the *Jiangyuan* was composed within a few years of it being translated into Tangut. Since the text was attributed to Zhuge Liang, it was created specifically with the intent of making people believe

that this was his work. It seems unlikely that a newly forged text within a decade or so after its compilation would have become popular enough to warrant a translation into Tangut, along with such authoritative works of military strategy as the *Sunzi Bingfa* 孫子兵法 [The Art of War by Master Sun], the *Liu Tao* 六韜 [Six Scabbards] or the *Huangshi Gong San Lüe* 黃石公三略 [Three Strategies of Duke Huangshi]. Moreover, while the Mongols were a perfect fit for a horse-riding militant nation to the north, the northern steppes were for most part occupied by a variety of other nomadic tribes who led a very similar lifestyle. This, of course, does not necessarily contradict the assumption that the Tangut translation dates to the early 13th century, but more evidence is needed to come to a definite conclusion.[24]

Like most Chinese editions, the Tangut translation also consists of numbered sections. At the same time, their order does not correspond to that in the Chinese version. Moreover, the latter has fifty sections, the Tangut only thirty-seven, thus there are parts that do not appear in the translation. As the first half of the manuscript with the translation is missing, we only have Sections T20-T37. Beside the different sequence and numbering, however, the Tangut version follows the Chinese quite closely, with no major deviations.[25]

The only part that shows significant discrepancy is the last four sections of the Chinese text, which describe the four barbarians. More precisely, three groups mentioned in the original Chinese text are omitted from the Tangut translation, so that the Tangut text only contains the description of the Northern Di. This part appears in the

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[24] Of course, unless this is a translator copy, the date of the manuscript is later than that of the translation.

[25] Kepping and Gong (2003:23) also suggest that the text is an adaptation rather than a word-for-word translation. However, my own comparison of the two versions did not confirm this hypothesis (see Galambos 2011).

Tangut translation as Section T37. The same section also includes Section C46 of the Chinese text. In other words, the last section of the Tangut translation (T37) combines Sections C46 and C50 of the Chinese original and leaves out the description of the three barbarians in sections C47, C48 and C49 of the original Chinese text. To show this correlation in a slightly more transparent way, below are the last five sections of the Chinese version:

C46. "Authoritative Orders" 威令第四十六 *Weiling disishiliu*
C47. "The Eastern Yi" 東夷第四十七 *Dongyi disishiqi*
C48. "The Southern Man" 南蠻第四十八 *Nanman disishiba*
C49. "The Western Rong" 西戎第四十九 *Xirong disishijiu*
C50. "The Northern Di" 北狄第五十 *Beidi diwushi*

Of these, only C46 and C50 appear in the Tangut translation, united into Section T37, with the title "T37. Authoritative manner" 𗋽𗤒𗤔𗥦𘄒𗄰 *pĭụ wəi sọ γiạ c̣iạ tsəu* (威儀三十七第).[26] This title undoubtedly corresponds to the title of C46 of the Chinese version, only for the second character the Tangut uses the equivalent of 儀 *yi* 'demeanor, manner' instead of 令 *ling* 'orders, instructions'. In the manuscript, the first three and a half lines cover the contents of C46 and the rest is the translation of C50.

Below I reproduce the original Tangut text corresponding to Section C50 in the Chinese version and provide a Chinese gloss for each Tangut word, plus an English translation. The Chinese text and its English translation have already been presented earlier in this paper as part of the last four sections on the four barbarian tribes. The Chinese glosses here are not a translation but Chinese characters used for writing the corresponding word. Since we have

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[26] The last character of the Tangut title (*i.e.* 𗄰 *tsəu* [第]) is missing from the manuscript, but it can be reconstructed with confidence. It is the suffix that produces ordinal numbers, frequently appearing in other titles.

a parallel text in two languages, these glosses are extremely useful for comparing the two versions.[27]

The passage in question is the description of the Northern Di. It begins three and half-lines into Section T37 of the Tangut text, which is why the first line in my transcription is indented. The first three lines of text roughly correspond to Section C46 of the Chinese text, describing how one person (*i.e.* the general or ruler) sets an example to those below him and if it is not the case, then he would be no different from tyrants such as Jie 桀 and Zhou 紂. While the Tangut text here follows the Chinese original in C46 (at least, as far as we can tell based on its mutilated lines), the last third of the Chinese text is clearly left out. Instead, the Tangut text continues seamlessly with the translation of C50, describing the Northern Di barbarians. This sudden change of subject is especially interesting because the Tangut text faithfully follows the Chinese original up to this point (C1-C46). However, the final part of the Tangut translation presents a completely different text by joining the four omitted sections (C47-50) together. Overall, both Chinese and Tangut versions are structurally highly segmented, with each section consisting of only a few lines of texts. It is therefore intriguing that the most apparent break in the entire work falls in the middle of a line in the Tangut translation and the transition is left unmarked.

An early attempt at transcribing—without translation—part of this last section of the Tangut version has been made by Eric Grinstead (1962) who began working with Tangut manuscripts around 1960 using Nevsky's newly published dictionary.[28] Fortunately,

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[27] While some scholarrs (*e.g.* Kepping 1997) prefer to avoid using such Chinese glosses because they feel this as an extra step away from the original text, other researchers (*e.g.* Jacques 2007) make use of them because they help to understand the relationship of the Tangut translation with the original Chinese.

[28] This dictionary was part of Nikolai Nevsky's (1892-1937) monumental two-volume work that came out posthumously and revolutionized the study of the Tangut language (Nevsky 1960).

during the five decades that have passed since then our knowledge of the language and the script has evolved and it is possible not only to provide a better reading of these characters but also to produce a coherent translation. Because the scroll with the translation is missing its lower half, none of the lines is complete and each line has a number of square boxes at the end, indicating the missing characters from the line.[29]

𗾈𗥼𘃽𗆟𗉞𗥩𗷖�020000
廣主人者城中不依□□□□□
The Lords of the Steppes do not find
shelter inside city walls...

𗩾𗼃𗣼𗥃𗏆𗗟𗉞𘃽𗩾𘝞𘃽𗥼𗋽𗖒020000
時漢國伐△利不得時山川遠逃匿□□□□□□
... when [...] they attack the Han state, when it is
disadvantageous for them, they flee far away and
hide in the mountains and rivers...[30]

𗷒𗩾𗮔𘅣𗫶𗆟𘔆𗫧𗥼𘝋𗗟𗉞𘄿𗯧020000
饑時乳飲寒在裘服圍獵獸射生殺□□□□□□
When hungry, they drink milk; when cold, they wear
pelts. They shoot wild animals in battue hunts,
killing ...

𘀗𗩯𗤋𗤓𘃏𗂧𘀊𘀗𘝢𗅢𘓺𗥼𗾈𗾙020000
戰以服無肯之與戰可不△者三種□□□□□□
... cannot be subjugated by fighting. There are three
types of [reasons] why they cannot be fought...

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[29] In my estimation, the original line was twenty characters long (see Galambos 2011).

[30] The Chinese and Tangut versions differ here. The Chinese only says that when the Lords of the Steppes are powerful, they invade the areas in the south. The Tangut says that they come and destroy Chinese territories.

藏瓸甫 縼毡嚹愻袬愻陇瓱瓞□□□□□□□ [列]

戰疲倦 勞苦多廣主獸射敏勇□□□□□□□ [一]

... fight, thus they are fatigued and experience much hardship. The Lords of the Steppes, [on the other hand,] shoot wild animals, are agile and courageous...

磱豞瓾豿漀蕔筎甅豼刻爛瓾籿蕔□□□□□

第缺△也漢軍地程遠一日百里步□□□□□□

[first] inadequacy. On a long march, Han troops can cover on foot a hundred *li* in a single day...

豵鼰豿漀愻後咇嶢 甅蕔 瓗瓗蒾□□□□□□□[31]

一倍餘漢廣主後追 糧食 兵器舉□□□□□□

...more than twice as much. When the Han are in pursuit of the Lords of the Steppes, they [have to carry] their provisions and weapons on their own...

咇嶢豿陇雝沘瓲蕔豿齣豞豞慲磱豞[甅豿] □ [豞蕔]

後追騎上迅速及步騎步不等二第缺[△也] □ [漢步]

... are in pursuit [of the Han], they reach them swiftly on horseback. When [transporting things] on foot or on horseback, the pace is unequal. This is the second inadequacy ... [The Han...]

瓲愻後豿瓼嚹轵甅饠饠豞豿紮□□□□□□□

多廣主騎騎多風形競爭時騎疾□□□□□□

... mostly [move around on foot], the Lords of the Steppes mostly move around on horseback. When

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[31] In this line the first character of the word 甅蕔 *dzǐu dë* ('food, grains' 糧食) is written in the manuscript as 甅 *lɪe* ('fragrant' 香), producing the awkward and unattested combination 甅蕔 *lɪe dë* ('fragrance and grains' 香糧). It is therefore likely that this is a mistake and that the much more common word 甅蕔 *dzǐu dë* ('food, grains' 糧食) was intended. I am grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers of this paper for this observation.

competing for environmental advantages, riding is faster than...[32]

猕殟袤蘸叕絗雝籤骹磠骱瓾澮歘□□□□□□□
大之與戰可不此者三第缺△也唯□□□□□□□
... great. This is the third inadequacy why they cannot be fought. Now ...

祅蘨薼槝敠蘨瓠 毻匜 糐繺蕨觬□......[33]
攻將軍善任兵卒 指揮常保守接□......
... attack; to employ a good general to command the troops; to constantly guard connecting(?) ...[34]

    One of the most apparent features of the Tangut text is that the Northern Di barbarians of the Chinese original are described under the label 'Lords of the Steppes', appearing in Tangut as 散後 *gjiw 'o*, which can be glossed in Chinese as 廣主 *guang zhu*. The English translation is suggested by Kepping (Kepping and Gong 2003:21). Grinstead, who was the first scholar to write about this manuscript, used the term "lords of the great plain" (Grinstead 1962:36). Although both terms basically convey the same meaning, I use Kepping's translation because it feels more contextualized in

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[32] Here the phrase 鼨瓾 *li̵ çiẽ* ('features of the wind' 風形) translated into English as 'environmental advantages' is somewhat problematic. The Chinese equivalent in this place of the text is 地形 *di xing* in the sense of 'features or advantages of the terrain'. Instead of the word 'terrain', the Tangut uses the word 'wind', presumably to refer to the features of natural environment.

[33] The characters of the word 糐繺 *khiu wuę* (保守) appear in the manuscript in reversed order but a correction mark in the form of a modern check mark was added between them by an editor, or possibly the copyist himself, to indicate that the two characters should be reversed. I transcribe them here in their correct order as shown by the correction mark.

[34] Because this is the last line of text before the colophon that begins on a new line, it is uncertain how many characters the text originally contained. Therefore, I place only one single square box for the character partially visible on the manuscript.

this framework. In the Tangut term 散移 *gjiw 'o*, the character 散 *gjiw* is understood to refer to some sort of wideness or broadness, and is usually rendered into Chinese using the characters 廣 *guang* ('broad') or 寬 *kuan* ('wide'). In the Tangut dictionary *Wenhai* 文海 [Sea of Words] (54.161), this word is explained as signifying the wideness of terrain, which in our text clearly refers to vast expanses of open terrain without trees or mountains.

Kepping also identifies three other ethnonyms in Tangut ritual songs for the peoples at the other cardinal directions, namely 'lords of the West' (*i.e.* the Tibetans), 'lords of the East' (*i.e.* the Chinese) and 'lords of the mountains', a group that resided to the south of Western Xia (Kepping and Gong 2003:20).[35] While Kepping believes that the 'lords of the steppes' in our manuscript provides the "missing indigenous term" for the ethnic group that resided to the north of the Tangut Empire, it is perhaps more likely that these terms were not concrete ethnonyms but simply references to peoples based on their place of residence from the Tangut point of view. I suspect that these terms were used similar to how in English we may use words such as 'westerner' or 'easterner', 'highlander' or 'lowlander', without the need or desire to specify an actual ethnicity in a given context.[36] This is particularly likely if we consider the actual neighbors of the Tangut changed several times

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[35] Unfortunately, Kepping does not specify what ritual songs she refers to and I have not been able to examine their content myself. Accordingly, I can only rely on the discussion in Kepping. Overall, as pointed out by one of the external reviewers, the only ritual texts in the St. Petersburg corpus are court odes (see Institut Vostokovedenija 1999, vol. 10).

[36] Arguably, the Chinese terms for the four barbarians (Western Rong, Northern Di, etc) have by this time also lost their specificity and thus ceased to be used as ethnonyms. At the same time, these terms in Chinese are not descriptive and are used only in this sense. In addition, each of these terms also has specific connotations or stereotypes associated with it, precisely as it appears in the Chinese version of the *Jiangyuan*.

as they moved up north themselves and then began their rapid expansion.

A similar term that appears in the Tangut text *Xinji jinsui zhangzhi wen* 新集金碎掌置文 [Newly Collected Grains of Gold Placed in the Palm], where the Tangut neighbors are described as follows:[37]

The Tangut march bravely and vigorously,
The Khitans walk in a slow pace,
The Tibetans mostly revere the Buddhas and monks,
The Chinese all like vernacular literature,
The Uighur drink sour milk,
The "lords of the mountains" love to eat buckwheat.[38]

The ethnonym 'lords of the mountains' 帯㦳 *śiā 'o* (山主 *shanzhu*) in the last line matches the format of the term 'lords of the steppes', as well as the other terms identified by Kepping in ritual songs. Kychanov (1971:158) raises the possibility that these two characters are used phonetically to write the name of a country.[39] Considering the attested existence of the exact same structure in the above examples, as well as its occurrence in the ritual songs, it seems perhaps more likely that this is a native Tangut ethnonym of a descriptive nature and the characters should be read using their semantic values. Which people they refer to, however, remains a mystery.

In the *Jiangyuan* passage above, the Lords of the Steppes are contrasted with the Han, which word is written using the word *źạ*

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[37] For a description and translation of this text, see Kychanov (1969).
[38] I mostly adopt the Russian translation in Kychanov (1971:157). The first four lines of Kychanov's translation are, in turn, adopted from Nevsky (1960, vol. 1, p. 81).
[39] More precisely, Kychanov suggests that this might have been the ancient Kingdom of Shanshan 鄯善 in the area of Lopnor, although this possibility is based purely on phonetic grounds.

粶, commonly rendered into Chinese with the character 漢 *han* 'the Han Chinese'. This means that the translation kept its Sinocentric perspective and the people fighting the Lords of the Steppes are still the Han, not the Tangut. No attempt was made to substitute the Han with the Tangut in order to make the text truly relevant for native readership, which suggests that the text was regarded not as a manual with concrete instructions on how to defend the Tangut homeland but as a Chinese military treatise, which became relevant only as an example of a particular type of attitude and logic.[40]

A fundamental question in evaluating the quality and purpose of the translation is to examine how closely it follows the Chinese text. Although we are at a disadvantage because more than a third of each line (*i.e.* its lower part) is missing from the manuscript, it is nevertheless apparent that the Tangut version is in general faithful to the original. While the translation was not carried out in a rigid word-for-word manner, the content in the source and target languages can be easily aligned with each other. In some cases the same sense may be expressed in more or fewer words but fundamentally there are no major deviations. The only exception is the very end of the Chinese version of this section (C50) which offers concrete solutions on how to deal with the Northern Di (*i.e.* 'picking a good general to employ', etc.). The translation (T37) omits most of this part, of which we can be certain because the end of the manuscript is complete, revealing that the text comes to an end here. Based on its content there appears to be no obvious reason why the missing text would have been deemed unnecessary for

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[40] With reference to the translation of works on strategy (*Sushu* 素書 [The Simple Book], *Huangshi Gong San Lüe* and *Liu Tao*) into Manchu, Stephen Durrant (1979:654-655) points out that these would have offered little precise knowledge of concrete strategies for warfare. Instead, he suggests that it was the ostensible authors of these texts that were the subject of interest, as they all "were associated with a rising power on the eve of its conquest, and the Mukden rulers might have gained a particular interest in them by a perceived, and at that time desired, analogy between the earlier pre-conquest powers and themselves."

Tangut readers, yet this portion is present in all extant Chinese editions,[41] which makes it likely that it was also part of the edition used by the translator. Thus at present we cannot explain why this last part appears truncated in the Tangut translation, although we may suspect that the reason was rather technical than ideological.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Despite its relative neglect in mainstream Chinese philological tradition, Zhuge Liang's *Jiangyuan* was one of the Chinese texts translated into Tangut. This translation is today the earliest known edition of the work, predating all others by nearly two centuries. One of the interesting parts of the translation is the last four sections of the *Jiangyuan*, which describe the barbarian tribes at the four cardinal directions. We have seen that while the translator kept the Sinocentric perspective of the original text, he excluded three of the four barbarians, leaving only the Northern Di. He called this horse-riding people the Lords of the Steppes, a denomination that may have referred to the Mongols who by the beginning of the 13th century had established a significant military presence to the north of the Western Xia. This identification has important ramifications for the date of the translation. With no explicit clues to date the manuscript, the possibility of a Mongol threat beyond the northern frontier would suggest an early 13th century dating for the Tangut version, which would somewhat disagree with our knowledge that most secular writings were translated during the 12th century. The Lords of the Steppes however could have equally referred to the Khitans or Jurchens, and such identification would indicate a much earlier date. Moreover, the description of Northern Di comes from the Chinese original, which obviously predated the Mongol period, not to speak of the

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[41] Exceptions are those Qing dynasty versions of the *Shuofu* where this entire part on the four barbarians is omitted.

stereotypical characteristics of these people, which go back to even earlier times. While it is true that the Mongols were also a horse-riding militant nation to the north, throughout Chinese history the northern steppes had been occupied by nomadic tribes who led a similar lifestyle. The descriptive property of the term Lords of the Steppes also suggests that the Tangut used this not as a reference not to a specific ethnicity but as an umbrella term for nomadic tribes in the north.

As to why the sections describing the other three types of barbarians were omitted from the translation, it appears that this was the only ethnic agglomeration from the original four that fit the Tangut worldview. Despite their geographical location, the Liao and later the Jin states would not have been called Eastern Barbarians (Dong Yi) because the Western Xia state itself had been at one point in a subordinate position to either of them, acting as their vassal state. But most importantly, these states occupied territories, which for many centuries had been the center of the Chinese cultural domain, effectively acting as heirs to that tradition. Similarly, the Song, who had been adjacent to the Western Xia until the Jurchens pushed them further south, fit into neither the Eastern nor Southern Barbarians. The Tibetans to the south and southwest, once again, from a Xia perspective were not "barbarians" but a civilization with which the Tangut shared an important part of their cultural heritage. The cultural dependency and indebtedness of the Western Xia to its neighbors is also demonstrated by the fact that beside the Tangut language, Tibetan and Chinese were both widely spoken and officially recognized. This speaks not only of the multi-ethnicity of the state but also of its most important cultural and political connections. Another important aspect between these empires was a shared Buddhist background, which would have also interfered with calling them "barbarians".

Therefore, of the four stereotypical barbarians in the Chinese version of the *Jiangyuan*, it was only the Lords of the Steppes that could not be associated with some form of high culture and a

common religious tradition. This was the only group of the four that corresponded to the Tangut geography in which the center itself was moved from its original epicenter to the northwest, creating a completely different culturo-geographical layout. Accordingly, while it is tempting to regard the Mongols as the greatest threat to the Western Xia, this becomes evident only in retrospect, whereas at the time the Jurchen, with whom the Xia were also at war, would have probably been perceived as a more formidable military challenge.

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