

works written in Chinese, taking the name from the district Hia Chou 夏州 the ancient centre of the Tangut population and the dynasty founded in the same region by the Hun Heliabobo in the IX century, which he called Hia.

The name Tangut (-ud is the Mongol plural ending) which Marco Polo and Raschid-eddin use, has probably some connection with the Tang-hiang 党項 Huns who were divided into eight gentes, but descended from one: the T'o-pa 拓拔. The expression "Tangut" is found in the Sino-Turkish inscription of Kosho Tsaidam, of the year 734 (cf. W. Radloff "Altürkische Inschriften der Mongolei", vol. I p. 58, Z.D.M.G. 1924-25, p. 144 sq., and V. Thomson "Inscriptions de l'Orkhon" pp. 123, 178).

In any case, the official name found in Tangut documents was in Chinese characters 𐰃𐰆𐰚 (Mang-ming-ling) and was probably pronounced by the Tanguts ^mb'o-^mb'e-le. They called themselves "mi" or "me" (cf. Si-Hia "me" (man) with the Tibetan "mi" which has the same meaning). In some Tangut works we find the ending "mi- (or me-) le", i. e. "The empire of the Tang".

This empire was founded in 1032 by Li Têh-Ming and destroyed in 1226 by Čingis Khan. It comprised the territory between the 34° and the 42° North, and was bordered on the east by the Huang-ho and the province of Shan-si; on the west by the Kûke-nôr; on the north by the city of Hami (Qomul), Edsin-gol, Alashan Mount, and the Huang-ho; on the south by the province of Ssi-chuan. The capital of the empire was a city which corresponds with the Ning-hia-fu of today, situated on the left bank of the Huang-ho. The population was made up of Tanguts, Tibetans, Chinese, Jurjen, Mongols, Turco-Tartars, above all, Uigurs. Buddhism was the state religion. The entire Buddhist canon was translated into the Tangut language. But there was also interest in Confucian literature; Chinese books were printed, schools were established after Chinese models in all prefectorial and district centres, and in 1154 they even founded a learned academy, an exact copy of the famous Chinese Han-lin office. In 1150 among others a certain Wa Tao-chung 韓道冲 (called Tsung-shêng 宗聖) was appointed by this academy, professor of Tangut and Chinese literature. Among other works he translated the Lun-yü of Confucius into the Tangut language, adding a special commentary of 30 volumes. Monks in their cloisters, the majority descendants of the Uigurs, western neighbours of the Si-hia, were charged with the study and translation of Buddhist texts.

A system of writing was used that, according to Chinese sources, was invented by the emperor Li Yüan-hao, and at his command, perfected by a certain Yeh-li Jên-jung 野利仁榮. He was probably only a reformer of the writing that, according to other sources, was invented by the Emperor Li Têh-ming, and, according to still further sources, by a certain Yü-Ki 遇乞. This form of writing was treated in the Chinese chuan ductus, as it is found, for instance, in the Shuo-wên dictionary. Thus Li Yüan-hao probably gave this writing its