Representations of Descent: Origin and Migration
Stories of the Ninth- and Tenth-century Turkic Shatuo

ABSTRACT:
Modern scholarship has explored aspects of the origin stories of the Shatuo. The latter were the military elite of Turkic extraction who dominated northern China in the second half of the ninth century and built the foundation of four of the northern regimes of the first half of the tenth. This article compares three specific origin stories that differ significantly: 1. the entombed epitaph of Li Keyong (856–907); 2. the *Jiu Wudai shi*’s chapter “Wuhuang ji” (“Basic Annals of the Martial Emperor Li Keyong”); and 3. the “Shatuo liezhuan” (“Shatuo Memoir”), namely, chapter 218 of *Xin Tang shu*. The primary argument here is that each of these narratives has uniquely reassessed Li Keyong’s historical role and political legitimacy. Moreover, the article questions the narrative of the alleged southeastward migration of the Shatuo–Zhuxie from territories northwest of Beiting to Hedong during the second half of the eighth century and early-ninth century, arguing that this narrative was enhanced in the “Shatuo liezhuan” as a means to create an image of the Shatuo as “subjugated barbarians.”

KEYWORDS:
Shatuo, Li Keyong, Chinese historiography, funerary biography, epitaph, migration, Turkic peoples, medieval elite, Hedong

INTRODUCTION

Yao Runeng’s *An Lushan shiji* *安祿山事迹* (Deeds of An Lushan) states that:¹

The Hexi and Longyou military governor and prince of the peaceful west Geshu Han was made vice-commander; he had control over all the non-Chinese units of the He and Long region: the Nula, the Xiedie, the Zhuxie, the Qibi, the Hun, the Dailin, the Xijie, the Shatuo, the Pengzi, the Chumi, the Tuyuhun, and the Sijie,² [in all]

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² These are names of Tegreg/Tiele 鐵勒 groupings. For the sake of this article I have only provided the romanization of the names in the translation. Xiedie 額跌 appears in the Chinese
thirteen units; he was the superintendent in charge of 208,000 men of the foreign and Han troops and stationed [them] at the Tong Pass. 以河西、隴右節度使、西平王哥舒翰爲副元帥，領河、隴諸蕃部落奴剌、韋、駱、朱邪、契苾、渾、譙林、奚結、沙陀、蓬子、處蜜、吐谷渾、思結等十三部落，督蕃漢兵二十一萬八千人，鎮守潼關。\(^3\)

The event this excerpt refers to, namely, the control of Tong Pass by the Tang general of Turko-Khotanese descent Geshu Han (d. 757), with his army of mostly foreign troops who faced An Lushan (d. 757) in 755,\(^4\) is very well documented; moreover, An Lushan shiji does not add any relevant details.\(^5\) It does include a list of the thirteen units that constituted Geshu Han’s troops. Among them were two distinct units, the Zhuxie and the Shatuo, names that became associated with a single kinship group called the Shatuo–Zhuxie in tenth- to eleventh-century sources: Shatuo served as a designation of geographical origin and Zhuxie as a surname or appellation. Leaving aside the questions concerning the reliability of An Lushan shiji,\(^6\) this brief mention is indeed one of the earliest references to the Shatuo and Zhuxie.


5 According to Edwin Pulleyblank’s reconstruction, An Lushan shiji was based on the same sources used in the compilation of the biography of An Lushan in Jiu Tang shu, mainly Suzong shilu 唐書紀年 (“The Tszyjh Tongjiang Kaoyih,” p. 61; see also idem, The Background of the Rebellion of An Lu-shan [London: Oxford U.P., 1955], pp. 3 ff).

6 Zhang Qun maintains that here the text is incorrect and that Shatuo and Zhuxie refer to the same group [Zhang, Tang dai fanjiang yanjiu, p. 266]; see also Huang Yingshi 黃英士, “Shatuo de zushu ji qi zushi” 沙陀的族屬及其族史, Deming xuebao 德明學報 14.2 (2010), p. 56.
founding Western Turks, from as early as the first half of the seventh century in the region north of Beiting 北庭 protectorate (duhu fu 都護府) and Ting prefecture 庭州, whose township is also known by its Turkic name Beshbalik (in present-day Jimsar county, Xinjiang). The Chinese sources say that they were organized into buluo 部落, a term that is conventionally translated as “tribe” or “tribal confederation.” As recent scholarship has aptly pointed out, buluo is used in the Chinese official sources to refer to both the social and administrative structure of the steppe regimes, as well as the units of Turko-Mongol settlements under Tang emperor Taizong’s 太宗 (r. 626–649) so-called “loose rein” (jimi 羈縻) system of protected prefectures and area commands. This wording distinguished the steppe structures from Tang “regular prefectures.”

Christopher Atwood proposes the more suitable solution of translating buluo as “local followings” or “militia settlement,” which confers the idea that until the late-medieval period, the term bu 部 in the Chinese sources “was used in the sense of a body of armed men, a military (or bandit) unit under one leader. Luo 落 was meant in the sense of a sedentary or semi-sedentary small village or large camp.”


8 The Chinese medieval sources use a variety of terms to indicate the nomadic and semi-nomadic sociocultural and political units of the steppe peoples (bu 部, luo 落, buluo 部落, bu-zuo 部族, zhong 族, xing 姓), all of which are generally and somewhat improperly translated with the English term “tribe.” (In particular, the single words bu, luo and zu have connotations that cannot be rendered with the term “tribe.”) Jonathan Skaff contends that “the term must be taken critically, yet medieval Turkic usage supports retention of the term to describe socio-political units of nomads” (Sui-Tang China, p. 33, n. 9). For a discussion on the meaning of buluo and “tribe,” see also Ildikó Ecsedy, “Tribe and Tribal Society in the 6th Century Turk Empire,” AOSH 25 (1972), pp. 245–62, and Mihály Dobrovits, “The Thirty Tribes of the Turks,” AOSH 57-3 (2004), pp. 257–62. Buluo is also the Chinese word used in Dunhuang manuscripts to refer to the military units of 1,000 households in which the population of Sha-zhou 沙州 was divided after its conquest in 762–765; Gertraud Taenzer, The Dunhuang Region during Tibetan Rule (787–848): A Study of the Secular Manuscripts Discovered in the Mogao Caves (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), pp. 50 ff. Christopher Atwood believes that it was with the historiographical sources produced at the court of the 10th-c. Shatuo rulers that buz 部族 came into use as a substitution for buluo, thus conforming “their own Zhuxie ancestry to the Chinese idea of the multigenerational corporate lineage of officials” (Atwood, “Notion of Tribe,” pp. 608 ff), which in his analysis reflected “a new conception of barbarian society as based on descent groups” (p. 595). Atwood continues, stating that in Chinese sources the term buz 部族 in fact first appears in the 10th c., precisely in Jiu Tang shu, which was produced at the court of the Shatuo Later Jin 後晉 (936–947), and suggests that the occurrences of the term in Jiu Wu dai shi 九五代史 “raise the possibility that the binome buz 部族 was coined as a way to describe the adherents to the Shatuo cause in a respectably kin-based way” (pp. 610 ff).

9 Skaff, Sui-Tang China, pp. 61 ff.

10 Atwood adds that only in later times would buluo be used to refer to nomads and that “the buluo is indeed seen as different from Chinese administrative units, but the ethnographic
According to the eleventh-century *New Tang History* (*Xin Tang shu* 新唐書), over the final decades of the eighth century the conquest of China’s Western Regions by the Tibetan empire led to an eastern migration by the Shatuo, acting as head of other Turkic and Central Asian units. At the beginning of the ninth century, the Tang court moved the Shatuo and other settlements to the defensive zone of Guanzhong 關中. The Turkic military clique was subsequently relocated to northern Hedong 河東 as part of the army of the military governor, and the settlements were divided into different prefectures. The story of the alleged migration east is part of the origin story of the Shatuo as narrated in chapter 218 of the *New Tang History* that was titled “Shatuo liezhuan” 沙陀列傳 (“Memoir on the Shatuo,” and referred to for convenience as “Shatuo Memoir,” occasionally “Memoir”).

It is notable that this migration is not mentioned in the *Old Tang History* (*Jiu Tang shu* 舊唐書), nor in sources prior to the tenth century. The first appearance of the Shatuo in this standard history is dated to the end of the first decade of the ninth century, during the Yuanhe 元和 era (806–820) of Tang Xianzong’s 憲宗 (r. 805–820) reign, when Turkic units became an integral part of the defense system of the Tang regional military command of the north and northwestern frontier.13


12 *Jiu Tang shu* was produced at the court of the Shatuo Later Jin, first under the patronage of Shi Jingtang 石敬瑭 (Gaozu 高祖, r. 936–942) and subsequently under the reign of his son, Shi Chonggui 石重貴 (r. 924–946). Its compilation is attributed to Liu Xu 劉昫 (888–947), although most of the work was done by the historian Zhang Zhaozuan 張昭遠 (j.s. 877) and the court diarist Jia Wei 賈緯 (d. 952). On the compilation of *Jiu Tang shu*, see Denis Twitchett, *The Writing of Official History under the T'ang* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1992), pp. 160 ff.

13 It has already been remarked by previous scholarship that Chinese institutional and geographical sources traditionally showed only a marginal interest in borderland communities and tended to treat borderland non-Chinese communities only in their function as components of the Tang defensive system. (The formulaic definition of the role of foreign military elites, “employing [surrendered] barbarians to defend the frontiers yi yi shou bian 以夷守邊,” summarizes what sources have to say about them.) This disinterest is mirrored, e.g., in Du You’s 杜佑 (735–812) preface to his comprehensive compendium *Tongdian* 通典, compiled at the beginning of the ninth century. In naming the institutional and administrative priorities of the state, Du lists as primal the “financial administration” (shihuo 食貨) and “selection by examination” (xuanju 選舉), and as last the “local administration” (zhoujun 州郡) and “border defense” (bianfang 邊防). Even in the geographical work commissioned by Xianzong and compiled by Li Jifu 李吉甫 (*Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* 元和郡縣圖志), namely, *Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* 中書省刊, which aimed at recovering knowledge and control over the provinces, there is but a vague treatment of the old Turkic family clans that controlled the prefectures of former Anbei 安北 and Chanyu 喬那 protectorates in northern Hedong (Li Jifu, *Yuanhe junxian tuzhi* [Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1933] 4, p.
As will be discussed in more detail in the present article, this context might suggest that the narrative of the migration originated within a historiographical project undertaken by Mingzong 明宗 (r. 926–933), the second Shatuo emperor of the Later Tang dynasty.

The migration east can be argued to have taken place in several waves, rather than one single migration. But more importantly, several textual elements suggest a complex picture in which multiple settlements existed under the name of Shatuo in different parts of northern and northwestern China. Shatuo settlement units that joined the imperial troops may have already relocated to the northern border region and to northern Hedong in the aftermath of the An Lushan rebellion.

Throughout the ninth century, the dominant Shatuo military clans consolidated their power over the northern borderlands of Daibei 代北, in northern Hedong. The Shatuo came to dominate the heterogeneous non-Chinese elites, which included Sogdian, Tangut, and Qarluq groups, and became an integral part of the northern ruling elites, adopting some of the social conventions and aspects of the capital elites. Furthermore, they accumulated military titles and administrative responsibilities in the local communities.14

Zhuxie Chixin 朱邪赤心 (d. 887),15 for example, was awarded the title of great protector-general of Chanyu 單于大都護 and military governor of Zhenwu 振武軍節度使,16 in the second half of the ninth cen-
tury, for his having suppressed the military mutiny of Pang Xun 龐勛 (d. 869);\(^{17}\) the Tang court would later also bestow upon him the imperial surname Li 李 and formally register his family clan as one of the branches of the imperial family that traced its lineage to Tang Gaozu 高祖 (r. 618–626). Sources claim that a genealogical record of the Shatuo kinship group (zongji 宗籍) was subsequently created.\(^{18}\) In the late-Tang period, his son Li Keyong 李克用 (856–907) reached the high-ranking position of grand preceptor (taishi 太師), and Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007–1072) includes him and two generations of ancestors in his “Genealogical Table of Grand Councilors” (“Zaixiang shixi biao” 宰相世系表; see table 3, appended below) as belonging to the Daibei Li 代北李 family clan.

Following the conferral of the imperial surname, “the next generations of Li grew in importance and the barbarians considered the Shatuo as being of noble stock 李氏後大,而夷狄之人遂以沙陀為貴種云,” as reported by Ouyang Xiu. The latter also stated that the clan of Zhuxie Chixin, now Li Guochang 李國昌 (literally “Glory of the State”), acquired prestige among the peoples in the north thanks to the family’s new imperial surname.\(^{19}\) By the late-Tang period, however, bestowing the imperial surname as a form of political adoption had become common practice.\(^{20}\) As Richard Davis notes with regard to the Shatuo Li family clan, this practice “acquired an added layer of cultural meaning as the Shatuo leaders became a symbolic extension of the ruling family and assumed its titles and offices.”\(^{21}\)

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\(^{17}\) ZZT J251, p. 8150.

\(^{18}\) Li Keyong’s father was registered as a member of the branch of the family descended from the prince of Zheng 鄭王, Li Yuanyi 李元懿, one of Gaozu’s sons; see Wang Pu 王溥 (922–982), Tang huiyao 唐會要 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991) 65, p. 1141.

\(^{19}\) XWDS 4, p. 40. My translation is adapted from that of Richard Davis, Historical Records of the Five Dynasties (New York: Columbia U.P., 2004), p. 39. On another occasion, Ouyang Xiu reports that, since the barbarians regarded the Shatuo as being noble, some individuals would declare that they are of Shatuo extraction (XWDS 46, p. 515).

\(^{20}\) On the practice of bestowing the imperial surname as “another means by which emperors sought to increase the size of the patrimonial political family,” see Skaff, Sui-Tang China, pp. 235 ff. The biographies in the dynastic histories record many cases in which the Tang court bestowed the imperial surname on Chinese and non-Chinese individuals. The histories of some of the most influential of these families who prospered during late Tang are grouped into the “Shixi liezhuan” 世襲列傳 section of Jiu Wudai shi 舊五代史, alternatively titled “Chengxi liezhuan” 承襲列傳 in the reconstruction of Chen Shangjun 陳尚君, Jiu Wudai shi xinji huizheng 舊五代史新輯會證 (Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2005; hereafter cited as Chen), vol. 11, pp. 4933–51. Two of the most important ones are those of the family clans of Li Maozhen 李茂貞 (856–924), military governor of Fengxiang 凤翔, and the Tangut Li Renfu 李仁福 (d. 933), military governor of Dingnan 定南, whose family claimed descent from the Xianbei rulers of the Northern Wei 北魏 (386–534).

\(^{21}\) Davis, Historical Records, p. 11.
It is notable that the *Old Tang History* and the *Old Five Dynasties History* (*Jiu Wudai shi* 舊五代史) do not describe the Shatuo as a neatly defined elite group characterized by (real or forged) kinship relations in any way. This is in contrast with the attempt in the eleventh century to outline a “Shatuo identity” in a clearer way. In the last lines of the biography of Kang Fu, a minor official presumably of Sogdian origins who served at the Later Tang court, Ouyang Xiu reports the following anecdote:

Fu’s ancestors were originally barbarian: as the barbarians considered the Shatuo to be of noble stock, he always said of himself that he was a Shatuo. One time, when Fu was suffering from a disease and lying down in his bedroom, an attendant entered the room to ask about his condition and saw his colorfully patterned coverlet. They looked at each other, and he [the attendant] took the liberty of joking by saying: “That patterned coverlet is worn-down indeed!” Hearing this, Fu angrily said: “I am of Shatuo stock, how can you call me a Xi?” Those who heard this story laughed at it.22

Recent scholarship has highlighted the way in which the sources of Shatuo history are markedly inconsistent in their representations of descent.24 Some researchers have aptly pointed out that these differences reflect contrasting political agendas.25 However, whereas the “Shatuo Memoir” (“Shatuo liezhuan”) chapter of the *New Tang History* has been read mostly as a source of reliable factual information — in contrast to the fabricated account provided in the chapter of the *Old Five Dynasties History* titled “Wuhuang ji” 武皇紀 (or, “Martial Emperor’s

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22 Kang Fu misunderstands the archaic exclamatory particle *xi* 喊 as the ethnonym *Xi* 奚 (Qay). His ignorance of literary Chinese and his ethnic snobbery were laughed at by those who heard the story. I am grateful to Shao-yun Yang for pointing this out to me.

23 *XWDS* 46, p. 515.


Annals”) – little attention has been given to its function as a narrative interpretation of the Shatuo’s early history.26

The present article attempts to shed some light on questions concerning the function of the “Shatuo Memoir.” How does it relate to what it seeks to represent? Despite its title and its location within the New Tang History, the Memoir is mostly an account of two generations of the Shatuo Daibei Li – Li Guochang and Li Keyong – during the second half of the ninth century, when they each reached the high-ranking position of military governor in the Tang provincial system: out of the more than 7,000 characters contained in it, about 5,000 are dedicated to the deeds of these two figures. The remaining characters, which form the beginning of the chapter, provide a sketchy account of Shatuo individuals, purporting to follow a line of succession that covers two hundred years from the second half of the seventh century to the early-ninth century. It can be argued that the “Shatuo Memoir” draws a clear line of distinction between late-medieval Tang elites and the Shatuo Li by framing the latter as culturally and politically closer to foreign peoples (namely, Turks, Tibetans, and Uighurs) precisely because of where the chapter is positioned in the New Tang History. The latter’s arrangement of the relevant sections in fact separates the Shatuo from the Tang elites: “Shatuo Memoir” 沙陀列傳 (chapter 218) is positioned after “Tujue Memoir” 突厥列傳 (chapter 215), “Tufan Memoir” 吐蕃列傳 (chapter 216) and “Huihu Memoir” 回鶻列傳 (chapter 217). (See table 1, opposite.) Such textual positioning in the New Tang History, along with its representation of the Shatuo’s alleged southeastward migration from the northwestern territories to Daibei, can be argued as having constituted a reassessment of Li Keyong’s role and position in the course of the dynasty’s history. The present article argues that the narrative of the “Shatuo Memoir” reassesses the role of the northern military elites of non-Han extraction by reframing their ancestral history to be located at the margins of the Tang institutions. To a broader extent, the Memoir indicates a general historiographical shift to an exclusivist approach towards the role of non-Chinese elites in the Tang empire that reflects the eleventh-century need to define clear conceptual and cultural boundaries between what was a core part of the Chinese empire and what was at its margins.

26 The understanding of epigraphic and historiographic sources as narrative representations (or “organizations of knowledge”), in which the Shatuo portrayed their ancestral memory and were portrayed by later historians, is enriched by and borrows from the notion of historicism and historical narrative developed by F. R. Ankersmit, History and Tropology: The Rise and Fall of Metaphor (Berkeley: U. California P., 1994), pp. 33–43. This article seeks “historical
Table 1: Arrangement of Chapters on Foreign Peoples in the Two Tang Histories

(Numerals refer to the chapter numbers given in each History.)

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LI KEYONG’S FUNERARY AND STANDARD-HISTORY BIOGRAPHIES

The tenth-century historical accounts of the Shatuo are largely a product of historiographical projects patronized by Shatuo rulers, or by other rulers whose sovereignty was built on support from Shatuo military forces. The picture these accounts provide of the Shatuo as historical agents is blatantly biased, and the claims of descent are most certainly fabricated. One particular matter, however, is made transparent, namely, the Shatuo’s Turkic origins. Christopher Atwood argues that “the emphasis of the Zhuxie on their Turk ancestry was probably a response to the extreme heterogeneity of the Shatuo, within which Iranian (Hu 胡) elements actually predominated, in number if not in status.”28 At the same time, the Shatuo emphasized that they had served as area commanders (dudu 都督) in the region of Beiting since the beginning of the Tang, without interruption. It may be argued that the combination of being both non-Chinese and having a pedigree within the respected ranks of officialdom was valued across borders among

27 The board involved in its production included Li Fang 李昉 (925–996) and his team of fellow historians, Lu Duoxun 劉多遜 (934–985), Hu Meng 韓蒙 (915–986), and Zhang Dan 張澹 (919–974), among others, and was supervised by the minister Xue Juzheng 薛居正 (912–981). Jiu Wudai shi 九世紀 was compiled in less than two years; Li Fang and his co-workers brought the Veritable Records together section by section without too much editing; see Wang Gung-wu, “The Chiu Wu-tai shih and History-writing during the Five Dynasties.” AM ns 6.1 (1957), pp. 1–22. On the early-Song compilation of standard histories, see Johannes Kurz, “The Consolidation of Official Historiography during the Early Northern Song Dynasty,” Journal of Asian History 46.1 (2012), pp. 13–35.

potential allies in neighboring states. At the same time, by depicting their family members as loyal officials in the Tang administrative system, the Shatuo defined themselves as culturally akin to the Tang elites. Their definition of a patrilineal family line thus functioned to affirm the prestige of their uninterrupted service.

The funerary biography of Li Keyong, an epitaph (hereafter referred to as “Li Keyong Epitaph”) presumably written shortly before or after his death in 907, identifies the progenitor of the clan as “Lord of the Xue–Yantuo (Sir–Yantuo), and a general without enemies 薛延陀國君、無敵將軍.” The standard-history biography, titled “Wuhuang ji” (introduced, above), compiled under the patronage of the Song emperor Taizong 太宗 (r. 976–997), revises this and claims instead that Baye 拔野, possibly a chieftain of the Bayegu (Bayarqu), was the First

29 The epitaph was drafted by Lu Rubi 魯汝弼, a member of the prominent Fangyang 范陽 Lu family clan; see Iwami Kiyohiro 石見清裕, Moribe Yutaka 森部豊, “Tōmuji Sada ‘Ri Kokuyō boshi’ yakuchú, kōsatsu” 内陸アジア言語の研究 18 (2003; hereafter, Iwame and Moribe), p. 31; Fan, pp. 1–18 ff. The epitaph was archeologically retrieved in 1989 in Dai county 代縣 (Xinzhou 忻州, Shanxi) during the excavations at Li Keyong’s tomb. To the best of my knowledge, Iwami and Moribe published the first transcription of it. Fan follows the transcription of Iwami and Moribe, as does Chen. The transcription given in Zhou Agen 周阿根, Wudai muzhi huikao 五代墓誌彙考 (Anhui: Huangshan shushe, 2012), pp. 1–4, provides some variants.

About Lu Rubi, Ouyang Xiu states, “His father Jianqiu had been military governor of Hedong; as part of a famous Tang family Lu Rubi had great knowledge of the old affairs of the Tang 其父簡求為河東節度使, 爲唐名家, 故汝弼亦多知唐故事” (XWDS 28, p. 311). For this reason, Lu Rubi was appointed vice-governor of Hedong under Li Keyong and his son. 與唐 909, p. 8781, records a peculiar event that involved Lu Rubi: Li Keyong ordered Lu to cut out the heart of his archenemy, Liu Rengong 劉仁恭, and sacrifice his blood on the burial mounds of his ancestors in Daizhou 代州 (also XWDS 39, p. 427).

30 The Xue–Yantuo 薛延陀/Sir–Yantuo are first mentioned in Suishu 隋書, chapter 84. As in the case of the other Tegreg tribes, the text regards the Sir–Yantuo as military units and, counting them together with other groups, reports a total of more than ten thousand soldiers located southwest of the Altai Mountains; see Wei Zheng 魏徵, Suishu, n. 643 et al., Suishu 論書 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1973; hereafter, SS) 84, pp. 1879–80. Atwood proposes Ser–Yian[da] (“Notion of Tribe,” p. 601, n. 24); Skaff, Sui–Tang China, pp. 36 ff and p. 335.


32 When the adopted son of Li Keyong, Li Siyuan 李嗣源, posthumously known as Mingzong 明宗 (r. 926–933), ascended to power in 926, he supported the reorganization of the Historiographical Office and provided patronage for a large project of history writing that included the compilation of three chronicles (jinian lu 紀年錄), now lost, that were dedicated to the life and deeds of the last three generations of Shatuo forefathers: Li Keyong, Zhuxie Chixin (Li Guochang) and Zhuxie Zhiyi. They would later be used as sources for the compilation of the history of the Five Dynasties period during the early-Song period [see Wang Pu 王普 (1879–1942), Wudai haiyao 五代會要 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji, 1978; rpt. 2006) 18, pp. 298–99; Wang, “The Chiu Wu-tai shih,” pp. 10 ff]. As we see, below, some fragments of the texts are preserved in the commentary to Zizhi tongjian.

33 Four variants of bayegu using different characters may be found in the sources: 拔也古
Ancestor (shizu 始祖) of the Shatuo. Both of Li Keyong’s biographies trace the origins of the Shatuo back to the Turkic Tegreg tribal confederation, known in the Chinese sources as Tiele 鐵勒, which dominated the Mongolian steppe at the beginning of the seventh century. In the second decade of the century, units of Tegreg revolted against the Turks of the First Turk Empire and established an independent regime under the leadership of the Sir–Yantuo Zhenzhu Bilgä qaghan 真珠苾伽 (r. 628–645). Almost a half-century later, when the Turks of Inner Mongolia led by the Ashina 阿史那 clan revolted against the Tang and established the second Turk empire, Tegreg units including Uighurs, Sir–Yantuo, and Bayarqu relocated to the Tang frontier region. These Tegreg then began to establish long-term relationships with the Tang, which would last until the units eventually fell under the dominion of the Uighurs during the first and second Uighur empires (646–90 and 744–840).

For some unknown reason, the “Martial Emperor’s Annals” amended the “Li Keyong Epitaph,” tracing the progenitor of Li Keyong to another of the Tegreg confederations under Tang influence. It specifies that a person named Bayarqu served as army commissioner under Tang Taizong and fought against the rebellions of the Koguryó kingdom and the Sir–Yantuo. Bayarqu, thanks to his accomplishments in...
the military campaign, is said in the text to have been named vice-pro-
tector-general of Jinfang circuit 金方道副都護 and to have subsequently
established himself in Guazhou 瓜州. The text continues as follows:

After Taizong pacified all the divisions of the Sir–Yantuo, he estab-
lished protectorates-general in Anxi and Beiting [military
garrisons] and subordinated them [the Sir–Yantuo] to them [the
protectorates]; he separated the people of the Tongra and Buqut
[groupings] and established the Shatuo Area Command. In Bei-
ting there probably were sandy slopes called “shatuo”; this there-
fore became the name [of the clan]. In the Yonghui era [650–55],
Baye was made area commander and his sons and grandsons in-
herited the title for five generations. 太宗平薛延陁諸部，於安西、北
庭置都護屬之，分同羅、僕骨之人，置沙陁都督府。蓋北庭有磧曰沙陁，故
因以爲名焉。 永徽中，以拔野爲都督，其後子孫五世相承。

The “Martial Emperor’s Annals” states that Tang Taizong created
a Shatuo area command and that Bayarqu acquired the title of area
commander under the reign of Gaozong 高宗 (r. 649–683). The title
was to be inherited by his progeny for five generations without inter-
ruption. This account was refuted as inaccurate by eleventh-century
historians, as will be shown, below. The New Tang History in parti-
cular provides a very different narrative of the ancestry of the Shatuo that is
only partially mentioned in Ouyang Xiu’s New Five Dynasties History, a
narrative Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019–1086) would follow in his histori-
cal work 資治通鑑.

The “Martial Emperor’s Annals” portrays the Shatuo as having
been loyal members of the Tang ruling house all along. This is one
of the chapters that, in my opinion, makes the Old Five Dynasties His-
tory, compiled in 974, more a product of the Five Dynasties period
(and of the reigns of Shatuo rulers) than an expression of early-Song
historiography. It may be argued that its early-Song compilers had

39 Ibid.
40 My translation of duhu 都護 as “protector-general” and dudu fu 都督府 as “area com-
mand” follows Skaff, Sai-Tang China, 248 ff). The Protectorate of Anxi was located at Turfan
at the time the Sir–Yantuo were subjugated.
41 The military headquarters of Beiting, also known as Ting prefecture 坦州, was a Tang
prefecture located in the Dzungarian Basin.
42 Tongra/Tongluo 同羅 and Pugu/Buqut 僕骨 are names of Tegreg groupings who lived
on the steppe, along the Tuul and Kerulen rivers.
44 Atwood, “Notion of Tribe,” p. 601.
45 Ouyang Xiu points out these inaccuracies for the first time in XWDS 4, p. 39. See also
merely copied over an early-tenth-century text compiled at the court of the Shatuo rulers, without much alteration.\textsuperscript{46} The Annals states that Bayarqu’s position as area commander indeed “was passed down hereditarily to his sons and grandsons for five generations.”\textsuperscript{47} In this manner the text bypasses the more than one hundred years of history leading up to Li Keyong’s great-grandfather (\textit{zengzu} 曾祖), Jinzhong 畫緒 (literally “Loyal to the Utmost”), which may have been an exhortatory name bestowed on him by the Tang court.\textsuperscript{48} We read that in the Zhenyuan era (785–805) Jinzhong held the title of area commander of the Shatuo prefecture:

The great-grandfather was Jinzhong [Loyal to the Utmost]. In the Zhenyuan era (785–805) he succeeded [his father] as area commander of the Shatuo command. Soon after, they were invaded by the Tibetans; thereupon he took up leadership of his clan of seven thousand units and moved to Gan prefecture. Jinzhong at last led a unit of 30,000 [households]\textsuperscript{49} and fled east; shortly thereafter, the Tibetan troops who were in pursuit arrived in great numbers, and Jinzhong died in battle. The grandfather, Zhiyi,\textsuperscript{50} who was the eldest son of Jinzhong, reunited the remaining troops and arrived at Ling prefecture. Dezong bestowed upon him the title of area commander of Yinshan command. At the beginning of the Yuanhe era (806–820), [Zhiyi] entered [the court and was installed] as general of the imperial insignia guard, [and then was] transferred [to the position of] prefect of Wei and pacification commissioner of the Daibei mobile encampment. When [the Later Tang emperor] Zhuangzong ascended to power, he bestowed upon [Zhiyi] the posthumous title of Bright and Illustrious Emperor, and the temple title of Virtuous Ancestor.

\textsuperscript{46} Ouyang Xiu calls this account a \textit{zixu} 自序 (\textit{XWDS} 4, p. 39), which Atwood understands to mean the “author’s preface” to the Veritable Records of the Later Tang dynasty (“Notion of Tribe,” p. 601, n. 24, and p. 608). I argue that \textit{zixu} means “self-account” and possibly refers to the Veritable Records of Zhuangzong or to the three commemorative \textit{jinian lu} dedicated to the three Later Tang ancestors (discussed later in this article; see n. 32, above).

\textsuperscript{47} Chen, vol. 3, p. 623.

\textsuperscript{48} On the bestowal of given names in the medieval period see Skaff, \textit{Sui-Tang China}, p. 230.

\textsuperscript{49} This group included other divisions, such as the Dangxiang/Tangut, who are also known to have migrated eastwards around the same period.

\textsuperscript{50} The “Li Keyong Epitaph” has Zhi Yi 儀 (Zhou, \textit{Wudai muzhi huikao}, p. 1; Iwabi and Moribe, p. 21).
The “Martial Emperor’s Annals” briefly reports that sometime in the late-eighth century, the Shatuo area command suffered an invasion by the Tibetan army, which at that time occupied Beiting, and that for this reason, the then area commander Jinzhong, at the head of his people, moved to the south and fled east soon after. Pursued by the Tibetan troops and decimated in battle, the Shatuo relocated to Ling prefecture under the guidance of Jinzhong’s son, Zhuxie Zhiyi. The then Shuofang military defense had already been moved there as a consequence of the Tibetan invasion. Tang emperor Dezong (r. 780–804) then bestowed upon Zhiyi the title of area commander of Yinshan.

To be sure, the “Li Keyong Epitaph” is even vaguer in its depiction of the early history of the Shatuo, omitting all information concerning the migration east. Moreover, there is no mention of Beiting or the original geographical location of the Shatuo. The text imparts the following instead:

The taboo name of the prince was Keyong, his style was Yisheng, and he was from Chengji in Longxi. … [His ancestor] from the fourth generation, Yidu, [had the title of] lord of the Sir–Yantuo and general without enemies. The great-grandfather was Sige; he took the place [of his father] in [the leadership of] the state, inherited the enfeoffed rank and territory, and exercised hegemony over Yinshan. The grandfather was Zhiyi; the emperor appointed him great area commander of Yinshan command, military commissioner of the Shatuo three armies, and palace aide to the censor-in-chief.

\[\text{51 Chen, vol. 3, p. 623.}\]

\[\text{52 On the Tibetan invasion of Beiting, see Ildikó Ecsedy, “Uighurs and Tibetans in Pei-t'ing (790–91) A.D.,” } \text{AOASH} \text{ 17 (1964), pp. 83–104.}\]


\[\text{54 The “Martial Emperor’s Annals” has Longyou 隴右 (Chen, vol. 4, p. 623). The place of origin does not indicate Li Keyong’s place of birth but rather the place of origin of the Longxi 李氏, the prestigious aristocratic family clan from which the Tang also claimed descent. } \text{Beimeng suoyan 北夢琐言} \text{ records that Li Guochang, when asked by the Tang emperor Yizong about his family origins, replied that they were people from Jincheng in Longxi, to which the emperor replied, “My ancestors and yours were fellow villagers 我先與汝同鄉里” (see Sun Guangxian 孫光憲 [900–968], } \text{Beimeng suoyan 北夢琐言} \text{ [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju] 17, p. 317].}\]

\[\text{55 Zhou, p. 1.}\]
The Epitaph inscription lists four generations of ancestors, yet their investiture as area commanders by the Tang only starts with the third generation. Accordingly, until the fourth generation the Shatuo held key positions in the Sir–Yantuo confederation without official recognition from the Tang. Moreover, the inscription records the name of two ancestors who do not appear in the official sources — Yidu 益度, the ancestor of the fourth generation, and Sige 思葛, the ancestor of the third generation (table 3, below).\(^{56}\) The fact that it records the non-Chinese given names of the ancestors who “exercised hegemony over Yinshan” may mean that the Shatuo used their non-Chinese names in a social context. Furthermore, it clearly exposes the military nature of the Shatuo by stating that Zhiyi was named military commissioner of the Shatuo three armies (\textit{san jun Shatuo 三軍沙陀}),\(^{57}\) a term that rarely appears in the official sources, where we usually find “Shatuo \textit{san buluo 沙陀三部落}” or “Shatuo \textit{san bu 沙陀三部}.”

As shown in table 3, the “Li Keyong Epitaph” covers four generations of ancestors over almost two centuries, from the first half of the seventh to the mid-ninth century, with a gap of more than fifty years between Sige and Zhiyi. While Li Keyong’s “Martial Emperor’s Annals” claims the direct patrilineal descent of Shatuo officials under Tang jurisdiction for more than five generations of ancestors, the Epitaph highlights the last three generations (\textit{san shi 三世}) of officials, who progressed from area commander (Zhuxie Zhiyi) to general commander (Li Guochang) to prince of Jin 晉 (Li Keyong).\(^{58}\) The Epitaph thus draws a line between the Shatuo–Li and the rulers of the state of Jin, one of the largest of the northern states in the Spring and Autumn period (ca. 770–475 BC). During the reign of lord Wen (636–628 BC), the state of Jin exercised hegemonic control over the other states; it extended over most of what constituted northern Hedong in the late-

\(^{56}\) “Iwame and Moribe, p. 32; Fan, p. 18, which argues that Sige might be Gele Abo 謝勒阿波, younger brother of Jinzhong (p. 20). This hypothesis is based on the account recorded in the “Shatuo Memoir,” which states that Gele Abo, also chased by the Tibetans, “at the head of the remaining contingent of seven hundred, kowtowed before [the] Zhenwu [military governor] and surrendered; he obtained the title of great general of the militant guard and area commander of Yinshan Command 盟忠弟葛勒阿波率殘部七百叩振武降, 授左武衞大將軍, 封陰山府都督” (Fan, pp. 20 ff; \textit{XTS zt 188}, p. 6155; \textit{YTS 14}, p. 426; Wang Qiruo 王欽若 [902–1025], comp., \textit{Cefu yuangui 帛府元龜} [Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1986] 170, p. 2056). However, Fan, p. 20, concludes that this hypothesis is purely speculative and not backed by any further evidence. Nevertheless, it supports the idea that, by the end of the eighth century, the Shatuo were not a unitary family clan, but rather a congregation of military units whose chiefstains might have alternately taken leadership.

\(^{57}\) On the meaning of \textit{jun} as a “large army unit of premanently stationed troops” in the context of the Tang defense system, see Lai, “Tang Military,” pp. 103 ff.

Tang period. For this reason, the sources often use the old name of the region of Hedong, referring to it as Jin. For the same reason, Li Keyong is called the prince of Jin. The Epitaph says that “[Li Keyong] carried on the honorability of the three audiences of lord Wen of Jin; he cut the leaves and appointed the meritorious 继晋文三命之尊, 剪葉策勲.” I translate san ming 三命 as “three audiences,” since the Epitaph here refers, arguably, to the three audiences of lord Wen with the king of Zhou in the aftermath of the victory over the state of Chu 楚 at Chengpu 城濮 in 635 BC. The three audiences constituted the culmination of Jin’s hegemonic power, as in this occasion lord Wen received from the Zhou king the written command to govern the domains. The Epitaph also draws a line connecting the Shatuo to Tang (the former name of Jin) and links Li Keyong to the legacy of Shu Yu 叔虞, the younger prince of Tang 唐 and Jin.

**REPRESENTATION OF SHATUO**

**GENEALOGICAL HISTORY IN THE “SHATUO MEMOIR”**

The “Shatuo Memoir,” a chapter written for *New Tang History*, is by far the most detailed account of the history of the Shatuo. It is a novelty among the numerous chapters on foreign peoples in that work, and, as previously mentioned, it does not appear at all in the *Old Tang History* (see table 1, above). Compiled in the mid-eleventh century and presented in 1060 by a team of historians that included Song Qi 宋祁 (998–1061) and Ouyang Xiu, the *New Tang History* was the product of a historiographical project under the patronage of the Song emperor Renzong 仁宗 (r. 1023–63). It reflected an attempt to rewrite the *Old Tang History* (a name retrofitted by later historians). The latter was considered inadequate in many respects, mostly because it did not present the issues surrounding the Tang in ways that reflected contemporary

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59 Iwame and Moribe, p. 21.

60 I am very grateful to Yuri Pines for suggesting to me this reading of the text. As he pointed out, acting as the de facto ruler on behalf of the emperor was the maximum to which Li Keyong could aspire as a military governor of the Tang dynasty, just as the historical lord Wen had become the de facto ruler under the nominal aegis of the Zhou king. For a translation of the account on the three audiences, see Stephen Durrant, Li Wai-yee and David Schaberg, trans., *Zuo Tradition: Zuozhuan. Commentary on the “Spring and Autumn Annals”* (Seattle and London: U. Washington P., 2016) vol. 1, pp. 420–21.

61 Iwame and Moribe, pp. 21 and 34. As Tang was the old name of the state of Jin, in the “Hereditary House of Jin” (Jin shijia 晉世家) he is called “Yu, the younger prince of Jin and Tang 叔虞 晉唐叔虞” (William H. Nienhauser, Jr., ed., *The Grand Scribe’s Records, Volume 5.1: The Hereditary Houses of Pre-Han China*, Part I [Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana U.P., 2006], p. 297, n. 3).

62 Chavannes, pp. 96 ff., made a partial translation of the “Shatuo Memoir.”
problems. It had been compiled in 941, more than a century earlier, under the patronage of the second Shatuo dynasty, the Later Jin ruler Shi Jingtang (Gaozu 高祖, r. 936–942), under the supervision of Liu Xu 刘昫 (888–947), and completed during the reign of Shi Chonggui 石重貴 (r. 943–946) in 945. With the compilation of the Old Tang History, the Later Jin was arguably looking back to the Tang legacy for its own legitimacy.

Furthermore, it can be argued that there was a certain enmity between the Sogdian/Central Asian Shi clan and the Shatuo Li because Shi Jingtang himself had rebelled against the last Later Tang ruler, Li Congke 李從珂 (r. 934–936), a stepson of Mingzong. We can see evidence of this enmity between the Shatuo Li and the Shi in the treatment of such sensitive issues as the Shatuo’s early history, as well as the genealogical history of Shatuo individuals in the Old Tang History. Indeed, that work records but little information about members of the Shatuo clique. Historical narratives concerning Shatuo members can be found scattered among two other genres – the basic annals and memoirs (also called “collective biographies”) – yet not a single chapter is dedicated to Li Guochang or Li Keyong, despite their high-ranking positions in government and their primary roles in the last decades of the dynasty.

Song Qi and his colleagues were commissioned to produce the New Tang History in the mid-1040s, and it was concluded in about two decades – in 1060. Earlier, in 1054, Ouyang Xiu had joined the team and took charge of compiling the basic annals, treatises, and tables. The sources uniformly attribute the compilation of the collective biographies, or memoirs, to Song Qi; they cite Ouyang Xiu’s respect for Song Qi as the reason he ultimately declined to revise those biographies; nonetheless, the possibility that Ouyang Xiu may have been involved in the compilation and revision of some of them cannot be ruled out completely.

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64 Twitchett, Writing of Official History under the Tang, pp. 160 ff; Wang, Cefu yuangui 557, p. 6693.
Song Qi’s and Ouyang Xiu’s notions about the chapters on foreign peoples probably did not diverge from one another much. In fact, Ouyang’s biographical accounts of Shatuo notables in his New Five Dynasties History (compiled in about 1053 and published later, posthumously, in 1077) mostly follow the narrative in the New Tang History’s “Shatuo Memoir,” one reason to support the possibility that he was involved in the compilation and/or editing of the Memoir. In the New Five Dynasties History, he briefly discusses the Shatuo’s line of descent in the first part of the chapter “Zhuangzong ji” 莊宗紀, which is the annals dedicated to Li Cunxu 李存勖 (who reigned as Zhuangzong 莊宗, r. 923–926), the founder (in 923) of the Later Tang dynasty. “Zhuangzong ji” ends with a well-known statement in which Ouyang Xiu says that the genealogical narrative in the “Martial Emperor’s Annals,” which he may have regarded as a product of Shatuo historiography, was a forgery. He blames the genealogical forgery on the fact that “barbarians lack a written language to preserve their past” 夷狄無文字傳記, and claims that “the Zhuxie were too insignificant to be noted [elsewhere], their posterity having lost touch with their own legacy” 朱邪又微不足錄, 故其後世自失其傳.” Ouyang Xiu also highlights the notion that “barbarians have no surnames”夷狄無姓氏: Zhuxie was simply the designation of the clan, and Shatuo a designation of a geographical origin.

The Shatuo never constituted an independent regime and were subjects of the Tang for most of their predynastic history; furthermore, by the late-medieval period, the Shatuo Li held high-ranking offices in the Tang system and had become an integral part of the upper echelons of the Tang military aristocracy. Nonetheless, the authors of the New Tang History clearly distance themselves from the Shatuo, portraying the group as culturally and politically other. This distance is also indirectly applied to the ruling class of northern China during the Five Dynasties period, which had grown and developed in the political milieu of northern Hedong and was mostly of Shatuo “extraction.”

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67 XWDS 4, p. 39; as discussed previously (see n. 46, above), Ouyang Xiu talks of a “self-account” that probably refers to some official records compiled at the court of the Shatuo rulers (such as the jinian lu) that were extant in the eleventh century.

68 XWDS 4, p. 40; Davis, Historical Records, p. 39.

69 XWDS 4, p. 39; Davis, Historical Records, pp. 38 ff (all changes are my own). Atwood, “Notion of Tribe,” p. 616, maintains that “Ouyang Xiu’s rejection of the Five Dynasties culture centered on what he saw as the related corruption in both kinship and state. The prevalence of political adoption (cixing 賜姓, i.e., the bestowal of a patron’s surname on his client) subverted the true feeling of kinship in the imperial family which in turn led to a general abandonment of morals in the society as a whole.” On the bestowal of the imperial surname in the medieval period see Skaff, Sui-Tang China, pp. 247 ff. On the use of Chinese surnames by non-Chinese “surname-less” peoples in medieval China, see Xin, “What’s in a Surname?” pp. 97 ff.
In addition, the “Shatuo Memoir” promotes the idea that the Shatuo were part of the Chuyue/Chong’al 處月, a small Tegreg grouping that was part of the Western Turk empire.\textsuperscript{70} Ouyang Xiu would later endorse this idea privately in his *New Five Dynasties*.\textsuperscript{71} The hypothesis presented here, that the name “sandy slopes” was used to refer to the wasteland “which is now south of the Jinsha 金沙 Mountains and east of the Pulei 蒲類 Sea,”\textsuperscript{72} corresponding to the area of modern Barköl Lake in Xinjiang (a hypothesis also endorsed by Sima Guang), is now the most widely supported hypothesis among modern scholars.\textsuperscript{73}

The Memoir narrates the history of the Shatuo from the beginning of the seventh century. During the reign of Tang Taizong, several of what are loosely defined as Chuyue units that inhabited the area east of Barköl Lake came under the protection of the newly-established “Northern Court,” Beiting 北庭, located west of Mount Chuoke 錫岳山. At that time, Beiting was under the control of Libi duolu 利邲咄陸 (Ashina Nishu 阿史那泥孰; d. 634), who had been invested as qaghan by Taizong.\textsuperscript{74} In 638 Yipi Duolu qaghan 乙毗咄陸 (Yipi Tardush) proclaimed himself qaghan without the official recognition of Tang Taizong. After he attacked Tang-controlled Yiwu 伊吾 and was defeated by the protectorgeneral of Anxi, Guo Xiaoke 郭孝恪 (d. 649),\textsuperscript{75} Yipi Duolo fled to Tuhuoluo 吐火羅 (Tokharistan).\textsuperscript{76} Following this event, Ashina Helu 賀魯, the son of one Shekui 射匱 tegin,\textsuperscript{77} submitted to the Tang and the emperor made him area commander of Yaochi 瑤池都督.\textsuperscript{78} Ashina Helu’s divisions were relocated to the Fortification of Mohe 莫賀 in Ting prefecture 庭州. The Chuyue chief, titled as *sijin* 候斤, *irkin*,\textsuperscript{79} namely

\textsuperscript{70} According to Atwood (“Notion of Tribe,” p. 602, n. 27), the Chuyue should be identified with the Chigil branch of the Oghuz. Wang Xiaofu 王小甫 reconstructs Chuyue as Chöl Ort, theorizing that the name includes the meaning of “fire,” an element of worship in Turkic tradition, and that it is connected to Zoroastrianism; see Wang, *Tang Tufan Dashi zhengzhi guanxi shi* 唐吐蕃大食政治關係史 (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 1992), pp. 224 ff.

\textsuperscript{71} Chavannes notes that, although the text says that the Tujue lived east of Barkol Lake, they probably also occupied the east side (p. 97, n. 4).

\textsuperscript{72} XTS 218, p. 6153.

\textsuperscript{73} XWDS 4, p. 39; *ZTJ* 210, p. 6678; Chavannes, p. 97.

\textsuperscript{74} His full title transliterated into Chinese is 阿史那拔奚利邲咄陸可汗, “Duolu qaghan” for short.

\textsuperscript{75} Chavannes (p. 97, n. 7) says that, according to *Zizhi Tongjian gangmu* 資治通鑑綱目 (1172), this event occurred in 642.

\textsuperscript{76} XTS 218, p. 6153.

\textsuperscript{77} XTS 215, p. 6060.

\textsuperscript{78} It lay in the region east of Lake Balkhash in modern-day Kazakhstan (Victor Cunrui Xiong, *Historical Dictionary of Medieval China* [Scarecrow Press, 2009], p. 754).

\textsuperscript{79} On this Turkic title see Skaff, *Sui-Tang China*, pp. 34 and 265.
Zhuxie que/kül 朱邪闕 (also called Ajue 阿厥),\textsuperscript{80} similarly volunteered to submit to Tang rule.\textsuperscript{81}

The “Shatuo Memoir” documents that in 650, following the rebellion of Ashina Helu against Tang authority, Zhuxie Guzhu 朱邪孤殺 killed the pacification commissioner sent by the court,\textsuperscript{82} and led his troops to occupy Mount Lao 牢山.\textsuperscript{83} Guzhu was presumably a son of Zhuxie Ajue (see table 3). Meanwhile, the chieftain of another small branch of the Turkic Shatuo, Shatuo Nasu 沙陀那速 (the irkin of the Shepi 射脾 grouping),\textsuperscript{84} was awarded the title of area commander of Yaochi by emperor Gaozong 高宗 (r. 649–683). In the following year, the general of Tegreg extraction named Qibi Heli 契苾何力 (d. 677?) led Tang forces in an attack in which Zhuxie Guzhu was killed and his troops captured.\textsuperscript{85} The Area Command of Yaochi was then dissolved, and the territories of the Chuyue units divided into two protected administrative units – Jinman 金滿 and Shatuo 沙陀 prefectures – each under an area commander (dudu 都督), a status quo that persisted until the Shatuo overtook Jinman.\textsuperscript{86} At the beginning of the eighth century, Shatuo Jinshan 沙陀金山 was appointed area commander of Jinman and enfeoffed with the title of lord of Zhangye 張掖 commandery. Upon Shatuo Jinshan’s death, his son Fuguo 輔國 (whose given name literally means “Sustainer of the Kingdom”) inherited his titles.\textsuperscript{87} In the years 712–13, under the reign of Xuanzong 玄宗 (r. 713–756), Fuguo moved his units to Beiting to escape from the attacks of the Tibetans. Archeological evidence attests that the Zhuxie units relocated to Xi prefecture 西州 (Turfan) around the year 728.\textsuperscript{88}


\textsuperscript{81} See also Luo Xin 羅新, “Lun Que Tele zhi ‘Que’” 論闕特勒之闕, \textit{Zhongguo shehui kexue 中國社會科學} 3 (2008), pp. 192–208.

\textsuperscript{82} This is Shan Daohui 单道惠 (\textit{XTS} 3, p. 54).

\textsuperscript{83} Chavannes, p. 98, n. 2.

\textsuperscript{84} On this unidentified tribal unit, see also \textit{XTS} 215B, p. 6061, and Chavannes, p. 61, n. 2.

\textsuperscript{85} \textit{XTS} 218, p. 6154; see also \textit{XTS} 110, p. 4119.

\textsuperscript{86} Although \textit{New Tang History} is vague on this, scholars generally agree that Shatuo units were initially located in and in charge of the Shatuo prefecture; on the other hand, there is not general agreement on the hypothesis that Jinman prefecture was under the command of Zhuxie chieftains (for a discussion see Li, \textit{Tang Xizhou xingzheng tizhi kaolun}, pp. 380 ff).

\textsuperscript{87} On the bestowal of auspicious given names and surnames during the reigns of empress Wu and Xuanzong, see Skaff, \textit{Sui-Tang China}, p. 230.

\textsuperscript{88} On the archeological evidence attesting to the presence of Zhuxie units in Turfan by the eighth century, see Li, \textit{Tang Xizhou xingzheng tizhi kaolun}, pp. 377 ff.
Shatuo Fuguo is believed to have established particularly good relations with the Tang court, so much so that he was invited to a court audience around the year 714, where he was invested with the titles of area commander of Jinman and prince of Yongshou commandery 永壽郡王. His mother, Shunishi 鼠尼施, was invested with the honorific title of lady of Shan kingdom 鄯國夫人.

The two generations of Shatuo chiefs, Jinshan and Fuguo, cemented relations with the local powerful Turkic elite through marriages with members of their families. Though the “Shatuo Memoir” only offers glimpses of such kinship relations, entombed epigraphy provides evidence that the Shatuo were part of powerful local elites whose influence extended even to the capital in Chang’an. In fact, as shown in table 2, below, the Shatuo intermarried with the Qarluq Chigil and the Turk Ashina, the leading clan of the Western Turks, to which the qaghans belonged. One of Fuguo’s sisters was married to Chisi Hongfu 熾俟弘福, a Qarluq, and Fuguo himself was married to the eldest daughter of Ashina Huaidao 阿史那懷道 (670–727), who was the son of Ashina Buzhen 阿史那步真, a cousin of Ashina Nasu, who had served as protector-general of Beiting and had been invested as qaghan by Taizong. Fuguo’s marriage to a woman of the Ashina clan indicates that he belonged to a family of some status. The entombed epitaph of his wife reads that Fuguo was invested with the titles of “grand master of splendid happiness of Yinqing, area commander of Jinman prefecture, and grand commissioner of the Helan army 銀青光祿大夫金滿州都督賀蘭軍

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89 According to Chavannes, p. 99, Shunishi is the name of a tribe of the Qarluq Chigil.
93 For a list of funerary biographies of members of the Ashina and Chigil family clans, see Zhu Zhenhong 周紹良, ed., Tang muzhi huibian 唐代墓誌彙編 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1991–92), vol. 1, p. 1223. Ashina Buzhen had received the title of area commander (dudu 都督) of Mengchi 濛池 (Xinjiang); see his epitaph in ibid. 1, pp. 601–3.
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Fuguo’s wife seems to have borne a title as well, namely “lord of Jincheng county 金城縣君.”

Table 2: Turkic People Related by Blood to the Shatuo in the First Half of the Eighth Century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Kinship Relation to Shatuo</th>
<th>Burial Date</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chisi / Cigil Hongfu</td>
<td>Shatuo Jinshan’s son-in-law</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>Rong Xinjiang56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashina Hauidaod 阿史那懷道</td>
<td>Shatuo Fuguo’s father-in-law</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>Qian Qunli57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife of Ashina Hauidaod</td>
<td>Shatuo Fuguo’s mother-in-law</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>Yue Qi and Zhang Dechen58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lady Ashina 阿史那氏</td>
<td>Shatuo Fuguo’s wife</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>Zhou Shaoliang, Rong, Iwami Kiyohiro59, Quan Tang wen60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon Fuguo’s death, Shatuo Guduozhi 骨咄支 inherited the latter’s titles.601 The “Shatuo Memoir” reports: “At the beginning of the

594 Zhou, Tang muzhi huibian 1, p. 1223. As part of the reorganization of the frontier commands, in the second decade of the Tang court, several chiefs of Tegreg units who had established themselves on the Tang border were invested with the title of Dashi 大使 (grand commissioner), ZZT J 212, p. 6732; Pulleyblank, Background of the Rebellion of An Lu-shan, p. 108.
595 Zhou, Tang muzhi huibian 1, p. 1223.
596 Rong, “Cong xin chu muzhi kan ru Tang xiyu ren de huodong,” p. 81.
600 Dong, Quan Tang wen 65, p. 1105.
601 The name Guduozhi is most certainly the Chinese version of a Turkic name. It appears also in Wang, Cefu yuangui 456, p. 11252.
Tianbao era (742–756,) the Uighurs submitted to the [Tang] authority; at the same time, Guduozhi held the title of vice-protector-general of the Uighurs 天寶初, 回紇內附, 以骨咄支兼回紇副都護.”102 Thus it may be argued that Guduozhi was very close to the Uighurs and that the Tang took advantage of this relationship. Moreover, it appears that the Shatuo were affected by the attempted revolt in 734 by the protector-general of Beiting, Liu Huan, 劉渙, 103 an event that is only briefly mentioned in the histories of the Tang. 104 It is highly probable that the Shatuo troops also joined forces with the joint army of Qarluqs and Uighurs that overthrew the Eastern Turks between 742 and 744, and that they then took part in the defeat of the Qarluqs by the Uighurs, the event that led to the establishment of the Uighur empire in 744.105 The military importance of the Shatuo grew as a result of their military support in repressing An Lushan’s rebellion.

Unfortunately, the “Shatuo Memoir” is silent on most of these events and limits itself to a few sketchy biographical details concerning Shatuo individuals. Upon Guduozhi’s death, the text tells us that his son Jinzhong inherited the titles and was also named great general of the imperial insignia guard 金吾 and lord of Jiuquan 酒泉.106 Nothing is said in the Memoir about the situation of the Shatuo and Zhuxie settlements in Beiting and Xi prefecture in the aftermath of the An Lushan Rebellion. Nor does it refer directly to the conquest of the Gansu corridor in 764–776, but merely reports that “the Central Lands (i.e., north China) had many problems [to deal with],” and that for this reason Beiting was isolated from the Guanzhong central region, and that the only route to the capital was through the Uighur territories. Relations between the Uighur and Turkic administrative units under Chinese dominion in the border regions were far from peaceful. At the end of the 780s, Turkic units in Beiting including the Shatuo revolted against the Uighurs and sought the patronage of the Tibetans. Furthermore, the Tang court lost control of the northwestern protectorates after the second Tibetan invasion of Beiting in the early 790s. The Tibetans would rule this region and the Gansu corridor from 787 to 848. According to the New Tang History, settlements of Turkic units were subsequently relocated from

102 XTS 218, p. 6154
103 Pulleyblank says that they might have participated in the revolt (Background of the Rebellion of An Lu-shan, p. 155). The Shatuo were in all likelihood forced to move from Beiting, as a consequence of the revolt (Wang, Quan Tang wen 284, p. 2885). For the context of Liu Huan’s “revolt” see Yang, “What Do Barbarians Know of Gratitude?” pp. 61 ff.
104 JTS 8, p. 201; XTS 5, p. 138.
105 On these events, see Chavannes, p. 94.
106 XTS 218, p. 6154.
Beiting to the borders of the Tang empire.\textsuperscript{107} The Tibetan invasion of Beiting is narrated in the Memoir as follows:

Between the Zhide (756–758) and Baoying (762–763) eras, as the Central Lands (i.e., north China) had many problems [to deal with], Beiting and Xi prefecture were cut off [from the court]; envoys [from Beiting and Xi prefecture] bearing memorials to the court had to pass through the Uighurs, but the [Uighur] caitiffs often seized their property opportunistically and they [the envoys] suffered extremely from this. Even those among the Shatuo who were aligning with Beiting were similarly burdened by their [the Uighurs'] excessive tax levies. In the Zhenyuan era (785–805), 7,000 tents of Shatuo units subordinated themselves to the Tibetans, and [they] jointly attacked Beiting and captured it. The Tibetans moved the [Shatuo] units to Gan prefecture and made [Shatuo] Jinzhong senior counselor. Whenever the Tibetans plundered the frontier territories, they would often use the Shatuo as a vanguard.

Although the information on these events is very fragmentary, the “Shatuo Memoir” attests to the fact that the Shatuo were under the patronage of the Tibetans for several years and documents that they were eventually employed as army units to attack and plunder Tang territories. According to it, those units in Beiting actively sought Tibetan protection as a means of escaping their greedy Uighur patrons. After being relocated to Gan prefecture \textsuperscript{109} Jinzhong accepted the title of senior counselor 軍大論 (\textit{blon chen}) from the Tibetans. The Memoir provides further context:

In previous times, the Shatuo had served the Tibetans as subjects; they [the two peoples] were roughly similar in their placing of the elderly in [the less favorable] left position and the strong in [the more favorable] right position, and in confusing male and female

\textsuperscript{107} On this subject see also Huang, “Shatuo zaoqi lishi.” Some Tibetan sources report the names of certain Turkic peoples that have been identified with the Tuyuhun 吐谷渾, Uighurs, and Hu 胡 (“Central Asian” or “Sogdian”); see Géza Uray, “The Old Tibetan Sources of the History of Central Asia up to 751 A.D.: A Survey,” in J. Harmatta, ed., \textit{Prolegomena to the Sources on the History of Pre-Islamic Central Asia} (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1979), p. 303. However, no mention is made of the Shatuo.

\textsuperscript{108} XTS 218, p. 6154.

\textsuperscript{109} According to \textit{Zizhi tongjian}, settlements of Shatuo already existed in Ganzhou during the Guangde 广德 (763–764) era of the reign of Tang Daizong 代宗 (TJ 223, p. 7169).
[in their treatment of the two]. But in horse riding and shooting, in being fast and courageous, [the Shatuo] surpassed [the Tibetans]; the [Tibetan] caitiffs relied on their [Shatuo] troops, and often [used them] to harm the frontier territories. When [the Shatuo] turned to the Tang, the Tibetans fell into decline for this reason. 始，沙陀臣吐蕃，其左老右壯，溷男女，略與同，而馳射趫悍過之，虜倚其兵，常苦邊，及歸國，吐蕃繇此亦衰。^{110}

The *New Tang History* affirms that the Shatuo were under the patronage of the Tibetans for at least a decade. The Tibetans relied on the military forces of the Shatuo to such an extent that the decline of the Tibetan empire is reported to have begun when the Shatuo returned to the patronage of the Tang.

Whereas both the “Martial Emperor’s Annals” and the “Li Keyong Epitaph” omit all references to the relations between the Shatuo and the Tibetans, the “Shatuo Memoir” gives a quite detailed account of their interactions. It could be argued that the funerary and official records carefully polished the Shatuo origin story, eliding the most shameful events concerning their connection with the Tibetans and their role in the fall of the Tang garrison at Beiting. If this is the case, however, then what is the *New Tang History*’s source? Surprisingly enough, the earliest account of the relations between the Shatuo and Tibetans is yet another early-tenth-century product of the Later Tang dynasty’s historiographical enterprise, a source roughly a decade older than the Epitaph, namely, *Hou Tang Yizu jinian lu* (Annalistic Record of the Later Tang Virtuous Ancestor). This is a chronological, celebratory account of the deeds of Zhuxie Zhiyi that was compiled in 929 under the supervision of then chief minister Zhao Feng. It is part of a trilogy of texts dedicated to the forefathers of the Later Tang rulers – Li Keyong, Li Guochang, and Zhuxie Zhiyi.^{111} Their compilation followed Minzong’s formalization of the Shatuo’s ancestral pantheon; as such, the three annals/records are celebratory in nature. Although the work is lost, a fragment preserved in Sima Guang’s *Kaoyi* commentary to his *Zizhi tongjian* attests to the Later Tang historians’ attempt to construct a positive narrative concerning the Shatuo’s relations with the Tibetans:

^{110} XTS 218, p. 6155.

The taboo name of the Virtuous Ancestor was Zhiyi; his father’s taboo name was Jinzhong [Loyal to the Utmost]. From the time when his great-grandfather had been received at court by the emperor,\textsuperscript{112} they were in charge of the troops north of the desert. In the fifth year of the reign of Dezong (789), the Uighur Qarluqs\textsuperscript{113} and the white-eyed Turks\textsuperscript{114} rebelled against the Uighur Loyal and Pure qaghan [Tolosu],\textsuperscript{115} and sought the patronage of the Tibetans; consequently, they became the vanguard administrative unit\textsuperscript{116} and advanced with 3,000 soldiers of the Tibetan troops to plunder our [Tang] Beiting. The Eminent Father [of Zhiyi] said to the Zhongzhen [Loyal and Pure] qaghan: “Last year the Tibetans massacred and destroyed [the people of] Ling and Yan [prefecture]. I heard that the Son of Heaven wishes to form a marital alliance with the Tsenpo; [you] the qaghan have collected merit for several generations and have married a princess. You enjoy grace as a favorite son; if the Tsenpo becomes favored by the Tang, then [you] as qaghan will certainly no longer have the favor you had before.” The Loyal and Pure [qaghan] said: “What is to be done?” The Eminent Father said: “The Tang general Yang Xigu, who has tenaciously held Beiting, does not have roads to return to the court; right now, the Tibetans and the Turks have attacked him together. If he does not receive help his destruction and death will be inevitable. If Beiting is lost, we will be next in line. Is it possible that [you], Loyal and Pure, have not thought of this?” Zhongzhen was afraid and then ordered his general Il Ügäsi\textsuperscript{117} to lead the troops together with the Eminent Father to give relief to Beiting. In the sixth year of the Zhenyuan era (790), they fought a battle with the Tibetans at the mouth of the desert; Il Ügäsi retreated without success. The Eminent Father kept his ranks together at the feet of the fortress so as to protect [Yang] Xigu. The Tibetans attacked and put [the fortress] under siege for

\textsuperscript{112} According to \textit{Xin Tang shu}, this must be Guduozhi (\textit{XTS} 218, p. 6154, see below).

\textsuperscript{113} Some Qarluqs (Geluoluo 歌邏祿) who lived on Ötükän Mountain were subjects of the Uighurs. Other units of Qarluqs lived in the region of Beiting (between the Altai and Beiting) and were called \textit{gelu} 葛祿 (Ecsedy, “Contribution to the History of Karluks in the T’ang Period,” p. 29).

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{ZZIT} 233, p. 7520, has White-clothed (\textit{bai fu} 白服) Turks.

\textsuperscript{115} This is Tolosu (Duoluosi 多邏斯; d.790), who became qaghan in the year 789 (Mackerras, \textit{Uighur Empire}, p. 157).

\textsuperscript{116} On the role of small administrative units as local militias, see Su Hang 餘航, “Tangdai beifang neifu fanbu yanjiu” 唐代北方內附蕃部研究, Ph.D. diss. (Beijing University, 2006).

\textsuperscript{117} Il Ügäsi (Jiegan Jiasi 頡干迦斯) was a general of the Uighur army (\textit{JTS} 195, pp. 5208–10; \textit{XTS} 217, pp. 6124–25).
a full year, after which all the military divisions successively were lost. In the twelfth month, the troops of Beiting forced the Eminent Father to surrender to the Tibetans, and for this reason [Zhiyi’s father] moved 7,000 tents to Gan prefecture, where he served as a subject of the Tsenpo. In the thirteenth year of the Zhenyuan era (797), the Uighur Fengcheng [Respectfully Sincere] Qaghan regained Liang prefecture and soundly defeated the Tibetan army. Someone questioned the Eminent Father’s loyalty in front of the Tsenpo, saying: “The Shatuo were originally a division of the Uighurs. Now, if they hear that the Uighurs are powerful, they will certainly conspire with them within our ranks.” The Tsenpo was about to move the Eminent Father’s troops to the other side of the Yellow River.

This long and colorful narrative, filled with direct speeches depicting the Shatuo as considerate intermediaries between two mutually antagonistic regimes, is a product of the Later Tang historiographical project to celebrate the memory of the dynastic forefathers; as such, it obviously cannot be taken at face value. Nonetheless, it was arguably one of the few sources on Shatuo–Tibetan relations, if not the only one, available to the eleventh-century historians who compiled the New Tang History. The Annalistic Record of the Later Tang Virtuous Ancestor and the “Shatuo Memoir” present story-lines so similar that eleventh-century historians can be assumed to have drawn on this source. The original text of the Annalistic Record of the Later Tang Virtuous Ancestor was nonetheless heavily edited and its narrative consistently modified. For in-

118 This was Achuai 呃啜, who became Fengcheng Qaghan in 790 (Mackerras, Uighur Empire, p. 157).
119 ZZTJ 237, p. 7651.
stance, it moves up the date of the eastward movement of the Shatuo to the final years of the reign of Dezong. Moreover, the dialogue between Zhuxie Zhiyi (Virtuous Ancestor) and his father, in which the former confesses his wish to regain his status as subject of the Tang, appears in both texts, with some variation.120 Sometime at the beginning of the ninth century, seemingly as a result of this (improbable) conversation between the two leaders, Zhuxie Zhiyi led his division of 30,000 troops eastward from the Ötükän Mountains 烏德鞬山.121 When the military governor Fan Xichao 范希朝 (d. 814) heard that Zhuxie Zhiyi had arrived, according to the Annalistic Record, he immediately informed the court. The latter work portrays Zhuxie Zhiyi’s alleged “turn to the Tang” as a celebrated event in which Tang Dezong is personally involved, and states that upon hearing the news, the emperor “sent an imperial commissioner to grant [Zhiyi] an audience at court and express his regards, and rewarded him with several tens of thousands of tin items.”122 The court then “established a Yinshan Command in Yan prefecture and made the Virtuous Ancestor area commander, with the titles of tegin,123 and

120 Jinian lu has: “Our family have been subjects of the Tang for generations, but unfortunately was conquered by the [Tibetan] caitiffs. We served them [the Tibetans] loyally, risking our lives, and in return were met with suspicion. We might as well take advantage of their not yet having taken precautions and return to our [Tang] dynasty吾家世為唐臣, 不幸陷虜, 為他效命, 反見猜嫌, 不如乘其不意, 復歸本朝”; ZZTV 237, p. 7652. XIS 218, p. 6154, has: “Jinzhong and Zhuxie Zhiyi planned a strategy, and [the latter] said: ‘We have been subjects of the Tang for generations, but unfortunately we were invaded; if we now go to the Xiao Pass and return [to the Tang] of our own accord, wouldn’t that be better than [letting] our race [be] extinguished?’ Jinzhong said: ‘Very well’”盡忠與朱邪執宜謀，曰: “我世為唐臣, 不幸陷汙, 今若走蕭關自歸, 不愈於絕種乎?” 竽忠曰: “善.”

121 It is notable that the migration narrative of Jinian lu (followed by XIS and ZZTV) reports that the Shatuo passed the Ötükän Mountains, the sacred mountains of the Turks presumably corresponding to part of the Khangai Mountains on the steppe. In the Orkhon Inscriptions the Ötükän Mountains are depicted as the sacred center of legitimizing charisma; see Talat Tekin, A Grammar of Orkhon Turkish (Bloomington: Indiana U.P., 1968), pp. 231, 234, 261 ff; Michael R. Drompp, “Breaking the Orkhon Tradition: Kirghiz Adherence to the Yenisei Region after A.D. 840,” JAOS 119.3 (1999), p. 391; Peter Golden, “Courts and Court Culture in the Proto-urban and Urban Developments among the Pre-Chinggisid Turkic Peoples,” in David Durand-Guedy, ed., Turkic-Mongol Rulers, Cities and City Life (Leiden: Brill, 2013), p. 42; also Wang, Tang Tufan Dashi zhengzhi guanxi shi, pp. 229 ff). Since the mountains are placed far north of Gan prefecture and definitely not en route to Ling prefecture, the Shatuo would not have needed to pass them in order to get to Ling prefecture. As suggested by Shaoyun Yang in a personal communication (for which I owe a debt of thanks), the fact that the migration narrative says that the Shatuo passed the sacred mountain on their way back to the Tang empire might carry some sort of symbolism, as though they were reconnecting to both their Turkic roots and their Tang roots at the same time. References to the Ötükän Mountains as place of origin of the ancestors can also be found in some funerary biographies (see Dong Chunlin 峇春林, “Anshi zhi luan hou Hexi Tiele buzu de qianxi, yi Tangdai Qibi zu wei li” 安史之亂後河西鐵勒部族的遷徙，以唐代契苾族為例, Qinghai minzu daxue xuebao 青海民族大學學報 38.1 [2012], pp. 81–84).

122 ZZTV 237, p. 7652.

123 On this Turkic title see Skaff, Sui-Tang China, p. 243.
brave and safeguarding general.” The *Annalistic Record* goes on to state that when Xianzong 憲宗 (r. 805–820) became emperor, he again summoned Zhuxie Zhiyi to court and bestowed upon him the title of safeguarding general of Jinwu, and kept him and his troops at the capital as imperial bodyguards.\(^{125}\)

After comparing the *Annalistic Record* with other documents at his disposal, Sima Guang ultimately rejects its historical accuracy and remarks that the *Dezong shilu* 德宗實錄 does not record the move of the Shatuo to the Tang; moreover, he claims that the official documents contain no mention of Zhuxie Zhiyi’s having been invited to court for an audience with the emperor in 806.\(^{126}\) In addition, the “Biography of Fan Xichao” in the *Old Tang History* states that at the time of Dezong, Fan Xichao was military governor of Zhenwu 振武; not until 807 did he become governor of Shuofang 朔方 and Ling-Yan 灵鹽,\(^{127}\) at which time he recruited the Shatuo to join his troops.\(^{128}\)

On the other hand, the “Shatuo Memoir” contains narrative differences that remind the reader of the non-Chinese origins of the Shatuo. It mentions, for instance, that Fan Xichao wanted to “use them to defend against the [Tibetan] caitiffs 藉以捍虜,” and to buy oxen and goats for them, to enlarge their grazing lands in order to give them respite and nourishment. Their children and elders who had come from Fengxiang, Xingyuan, and Taiyuan provinces all returned to their [Shatuo] unit. 爲市牛羊，廣畜牧，休養之，其童耄自鳳翔，興元，太原道歸者，皆還其部.\(^{129}\)

The “Shatuo Memoir” also mentions a younger brother of Jinchong, Gele Abo 葛勒阿波, in charge of the remaining legion of 700, who submitted to the Zhenwu military governor,\(^{130}\) and was granted the titles of great general of the militant guard and area commander of Yinshan, just like his elder brother.\(^{131}\) When Fan Xichao became mili-

\(^{124}\) *ZZTJ* 237, p. 7652.

\(^{125}\) Ibid.

\(^{126}\) Ibid.

\(^{127}\) *JTS* 151, p. 4058. Fan Xichao was military governor of Zhenwu from 790 to 803, and military governor of Shuofang and Ling-yan from 807 to 809; see Wu Tingxie 吳廷燮, *Tang fangzhen nianbiao* 唐方鎮年表 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), pp. 165 ff.

\(^{128}\) *JTS* 151, p. 4059.

\(^{129}\) *XTS* 218, p. 6155.


\(^{131}\) *XTS* 218, p. 6155. Gele Abo also appears as area commander of Yinshan in *JTS* 14, p.
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tary governor of Hedong and moved to Taiyuan, the Shatuo units fol-
lowed him and became his personal army. Zhuxie Zhiyi then “guarded
the Mound of the Yellow Flowers 黃花堆 at the Shenwu 神武 River,”
and his units became known as the “Northern Shatuo of Yinshan 隴山
北沙陀.”

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this article I have analyzed the three accounts of Shatuo ge-
nealogical descent: the “Li Keyong Epitaph,” the “Martial Emperor’s
Annals,” and the “Shatuo Memoir.” I argued that they are discrete
representations and self-representations of the ancestral memory of
the Shatuo. The three origin stories differ in their respective portray-
als of the Shatuo as historical actors in the late-medieval history of
Central Asia. The term Shatuo conventionally identifies the very het-
erogeneous members of a group of settlements of Turkic extraction
who were originally semisedentary and went on to play important
military and defensive roles throughout the late-Tang period, first in
the “loose rein” system of protected prefectures, and then as merce-
naries of the imperial and provincial armies, including a short period
of time in the Tibetan army. Once the Shatuo rose to a high-ranking
position in the provincial system and members of its leading Zhuxie
clan had established a dynasty, historians and writers in the tenth and
eleventh centuries attempted to shape the origin stories of this het-
erogeneous group into coherent narratives, both privately and under
imperial commission. Because each narrative legitimated a distinct in-
terpretation of the Shatuo’s role within the Tang empire, this article has
correspondingly sought to analyze them as different representations.
The “Martial Emperor’s Annals,” for instance, portrays the Shatuo as
a multigenerational group of patrilineal descent, composed of officials
who served under the Tang, a description that elides the more than
one hundred years of history preceding Li Keyong’s great-grandfather,
who is referred to by the Chinese given name Jinzhong – “Loyal to the
Umost.” On the other hand, in the funerary epigraphic source that I
have called the “Li Keyong Epitaph,” Li Keyong’s forefathers are not
depicted as descended from the Turkic units of Beiting protectorate,
nor do they migrate east to Hedong. Their clan history is territorially
bound to northern Hedong for several generations, first as hegemons

\[\text{Footnotes:} 426; 170, \text{p. 2056; and 965, p. 11355.}\]

\[\text{132 XT} \text{S 218, p. 6155.}\]

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and “generals of the Sir–Yantuo” and then as Tang generals. They inherit and perpetuate the local tradition of the state of Jin, providing narrative continuity, and their loyalty to a dynastic house appears to be of secondary importance.

At the time the Epitaph was written by Lu Rubi, the Tang dynasty had recently collapsed, and the Taiyuan Jin were fighting against the Later Liang for hegemony over the Central Plains. Moreover, in the Epitaph the term “Shatuo” is used only in reference to the military units “san jun Shatuo,” and not as an appellation of the family clan. To be sure, the surnames Zhuxie and Li do not appear either: Li Keyong is always addressed by the title “Prince of Jin” and his forefathers only by their non-Chinese given names. The Epitaph also shows that Li Keyong’s clan did not consider him to be part of the Tang dynasty until the third generation of his ancestors, namely Zhuxie Zhiyi.

The Epitaph’s omission of the Shatuo eastward migration and of any connection with the northwestern protectorates could suggest that more than one group of settlements went by the name of Shatuo, and that one of these was already located in northern Hedong prior to the ninth century, possibly established there in the aftermath of the An Lushan Rebellion. Another detail that would suggest the existence of several settlements is the ambiguity of the location of Yinshan command. The Yinshan mountain range is located in northeastern Xinjiang, but the source texts place the Yinshan command in more than one place in the early-ninth century: in Ling–Yan prefecture (Ningxia) and in northern Hedong. Furthermore, in the “Li Keyong Epitaph” the term Yinshan seems to refer to a broader area that stretches from the Yinshan range to northern Hedong, covering the territorial domain of the Sir–Yantuo. It could be argued that the post of great area commander of Yinshan was a sort of “mobile” prefectural seat: in other words, the Yinshan command did not coincide with a specific geographically identified territory, but rather identified the geographical origins of the settlements under its jurisdiction. According to the “Shatuo Memoir,” the seat of the Yinshan area commander was first established in Ling-Yan prefecture and bestowed upon Zhuxie Zhiyi. Once the Shatuo troops were moved to northern Hedong, the seat moved with them, and Zhuxie Zhiyi kept his title. The Memoir mentions that both Zhuxie Zhiyi and a younger brother of Zhuxie Jinzhong, Gele Abo, were simultaneously (but possibly in two different locations) invested as Yinshan commanders.

I would like to thank one of Asia Major’s anonymous reviewers for bringing this issue up in his/her report.
appellation “Northern Shatuo of Yinshan” applied to the Shatuo military groups that relocated to northern Hedong also suggests the existence of multiple Shatuo settlements referred to as Yinshan.

With some differences, both the entombed “Li Keyong Epitaph” and the “Martial Emperor’s Annals” see the Shatuo ancestors as descending from Tegreg units. Both sources carefully polish the Shatuo genealogical history and omit all references to the Shatuo’s service as border guards of the Tibetans, as well as their migration eastward. The “Shatuo Memoir,” by contrast, reports that the “Loyal to the Utmost” ancestor (Jinzhong) served the Tibetans as senior counselor. The latter text states that the Tibetans relied on the military forces of Zhuxie Jinzhong’s troops to such an extent that the decline of their empire was a consequence of his turning to the Tang.

Despite their high-ranking positions in government and their primary role in the final decades of the Tang dynasty, there is little recorded information about members of the Shatuo military group in the *Old Tang History*. Historical narratives concerning Shatuo members are to be found scattered in the Basic Annals and Collective Biographies. The only chapter of a standard-history work that was dedicated to the Shatuo was the “Shatuo Memoir” contained in the *New Tang History*, located at the end alongside chapters dedicated to the Turks, Uighurs, and Tibetans.

While the “Martial Emperor’s Annals” elevates Li Keyong to the rank of emperor, and the “Li Keyong Epitaph” compares his deeds to those of lord Wen of Jin (636–628 BC), the *New Tang History* seems to banish him to the level of a (subjugated) foreign people. Insisting on foreign origins as a marker that excludes the Shatuo from the Tang elites, this representation frames the Daibei Li as culturally and politically akin to the Uighurs and the Tibetans and again places them away from the center of Tang political and cultural power. The “Shatuo Memoir” arguably reassesses the Daibei Li’s identity and role in the dynastic history, and indirectly the role of the northern Turkic military elites, by framing their family history at the margins of the Tang institutions (in accordance with the traditional concentric and hierarchical view of the world). The setting of the Memoir seems to retrospectively freeze the Shatuo into the pre-An Lushan Rebellion “loose-rein prefecture” system, when members of the Shatuo elites were praised for adopting Chinese customs. Most certainly, the neat boundaries established by the “Shatuo Memoir” contributed to the vision of the Shatuo as, in the
words of Wolfram Eberhard, “the smallest tribal federation that ever conquered and ruled north China.”

**Ninth- and Tenth-Century Turkic Shatuo**

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Author/Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chavannes</td>
<td>Édouard Chavannes, Documents sur les Tou-kiue (Turcs) occidentaux</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chen</td>
<td>Chen Shangjun 陳尚君, Jiu Wudai shi xinji huizheng 舊五代史新輯會證</td>
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<td>Fan</td>
<td>Fan Wenli 范文禮, Li Keyong pingzhuan 李克用評傳</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iwami and Moribe</td>
<td>Iwami Kiyohiro 石見清裕, Moribe Yutaka 森部豊, “Tōmatsu Sada ‘Ri Kokuyō boshi’ yakuchū, kōsatsu” 唐末沙陀“李克用墓誌”訳注, 考察</td>
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<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td>Liu Xu 劉昫 et al., Jiu Tang shu 舊唐書</td>
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<tr>
<td>SS</td>
<td>Wei Zheng 魏徵 et al., Suishu 隋書</td>
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<tr>
<td>XTS</td>
<td>Ouyang Xiu 欧陽修 et al., Xin Tang shu 新唐書</td>
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<td>XWDS</td>
<td>Ouyang Xiu, Xin Wudai shi 新五代史</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZZTJ</td>
<td>Sima Guang 司馬光, Zizhi tongjian 資治通鑑</td>
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</table>

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Table 3: Ancestry of the Shatuo According to Tenth- and Eleventh-century Sources

(Table based on Iwami and Moribe, p. 44, with changes, “gen.” = “generation”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LI KE-YONG FORBEARS</th>
<th>LI KEYONG EPITAPH</th>
<th>MARTIAL EMPEROR’S ANNALS (JIU WUDAI SHI)</th>
<th>ZAI XIANG SHIXI (XTS)</th>
<th>SHATUO MEMOIR (XTS)</th>
<th>ZHUANGZONG JI (XWDS)</th>
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<td>Shuyu Zhuxie Que sijin 處月朱邪闍闍 也算是其子</td>
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<td>9th gen.</td>
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<td>Zhuxie Guzhuk Zhuxie Guzhuk Zhuxie Guzhuk Zhuxie Guzhuk Zhuxie Guzhuk</td>
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<td>(始祖)</td>
<td>Baye 拔野 (Bayanqu)</td>
<td>喬者蘭中軍墨離軍使，金方軍副都護，沙陀都督府</td>
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<td>Zhuxie Guzhuk Zhuxie Guzhuk Zhuxie Guzhuk Zhuxie Guzhuk Zhuxie Guzhuk</td>
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<td>8th gen.</td>
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<td>7th gen.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th gen.</td>
<td>Yidu 益度 (詳見諸版)</td>
<td>Patrilineal males (names unknown) appeared successively through these 5 gen’s.</td>
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<td>Shatuo Junshan 沙陀金山 (都統，兼管沙陀戰事) Shatuo Junshan 沙陀金山 (都統，兼管沙陀戰事) Shatuo Junshan 沙陀金山 (都統，兼管沙陀戰事) Shatuo Junshan 沙陀金山 (都統，兼管沙陀戰事) Shatuo Junshan 沙陀金山 (都統，兼管沙陀戰事)</td>
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<td>5th gen.</td>
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Under Tibetan rule: 貫火論