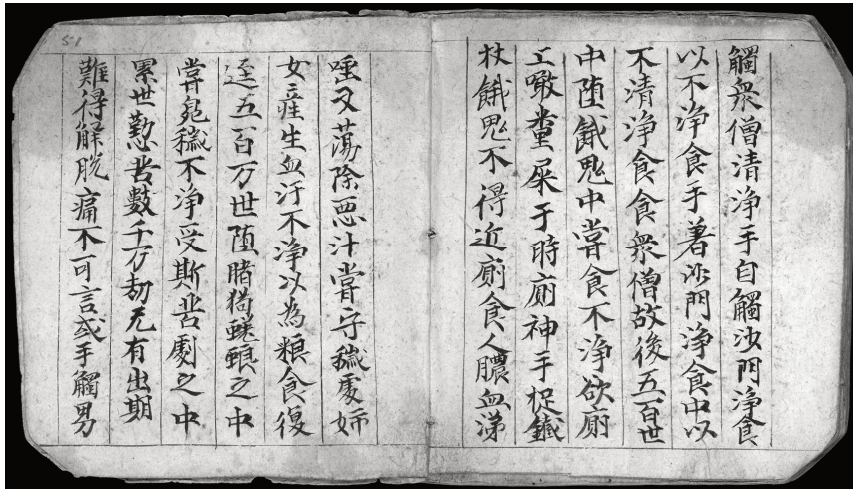




STUDIES IN CHINESE MANUSCRIPTS: FROM THE WARRING STATES PERIOD TO THE 20TH CENTURY

EDITED BY

IMRE GALAMBOS



BUDAPEST MONOGRAPHS IN EAST ASIAN STUDIES

SERIES EDITOR: IMRE HAMAR

STUDIES IN CHINESE MANUSCRIPTS:
FROM THE WARRING STATES PERIOD
TO THE 20TH CENTURY

EDITED BY
IMRE GALAMBOS

INSTITUTE OF EAST ASIAN STUDIES, EÖTVÖS LORÁND UNIVERSITY
BUDAPEST 2013

The present volume was published
with the support of the

Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation
and the
Foundation of the Hungarian Sinology.

© Imre Galambos (ed.), 2013

ISBN 978-963-284-326-1
ISSN 1787-7482

The manuscript image on the cover page is from Or.8210/S.5645,
a copy of the Diamond Sutra from Dunhuang.
Image reproduced by kind permission of © The British Library.

CONTENTS

Preface	vii
William G. Boltz: Why So Many <i>Laozi</i> -s?	1
Françoise Bottéro: The <i>Qièyùn</i> Manuscripts from Dūnhuáng	33
Takata Tokio: On the Emendation of the <i>Datang Xiyuji</i> during Gaozong's Reign: An Examination Based on Ancient Japanese Manuscripts	49
Irina Popova: Tang Political Treatise from Dunhuang: “Heavenly Instructions” (<i>Tian xun</i>)	59
Imre Hamar: Huayan Texts in Dunhuang	81
Gábor Kósa: A Correction to the Chinese Manichaean <i>Traité</i>	103
Christoph Anderl: Was the Platform Sūtra Always a Sūtra? – Studies in the Textual Features of the <i>Platform Scripture</i> Manuscripts from Dūnhuáng	121
Costantino Moretti: Visible and Invisible Codicological Elements in Manuscript Copies of Commentaries on the <i>Yogacārabhūmi-śāstra</i> from Dunhuang	177
Imre Galambos: Correction Marks in the Dunhuang Manuscripts	191
Sam van Schaik: Ruler of the East, or Eastern Capital: What Lies behind the Name <i>Tong Kun</i> ?	211
Kōichi Kitsudō: Liao Influence on Uigur Buddhism	225
Raoul David Findeisen: Towards a Critical Edition of Feng Zhi's Last Poem: Considerations Drawn from Three Draft Manuscripts	249
Index	273

Ruler of the East, or Eastern Capital

What Lies behind the Name *Tong Kun*?

SAM VAN SCHAİK

The Letter

In the late 960s a Chinese Buddhist monk made his way towards the holy land of India. On his pilgrimage he passed through the Sino-Tibetan borderlands of northern Amdo (modern Qinghai province). As he travelled, the monk requested letters of passage, and kept a copy of each letter on his personal scroll. The letters were written in Tibetan, and around them the monk wrote his own notes, in Chinese. To this scroll he also added a sheet containing a Chinese inscription that he had copied at a temple in Liangzhou 涼州, dated to the year 968, and signed with his own name, Daozhao 道昭. He also added another scroll, gluing it to the back of the letters of passage, which contained a Chinese sūtra on one side, and Tibetan tantric texts on the other. This manuscript, IOL Tib J 754, came from the ‘library cave’ at Dunhuang and is now kept at the British Library, and has recently been the subject of a monograph-length study.¹

This unique Sino-Tibetan manuscript sheds light on both Chinese and Tibetan history, and in particular, helps us to understand better the interface between Chinese and Tibetan cultures during the second half of the 10th century. In this paper I will look at one of the many fascinating questions raised by the manuscript: the identity of the Chinese emperor who is named in Tibetan in one of letters of passage. The etymology of the title given to this emperor has puzzled Tibetan scholars for centuries; the manuscript suggests an answer to their question, one that was not previously considered.

¹ See van Schaik and Galambos 2012. The author would like to thank Imre Galambos and Dan Martin for their invaluable help, without which this paper could not have been written.

The letters of passage in the manuscript IOL Tib J 754 are written to the heads of monasteries and contain requests for escorts for the pilgrim. In one of the letters there is a reference to the fact that the pilgrim began his journey with the blessings of the emperor:

A monk coming from the presence of the Chinese emperor [of] *tong kun*, a great ascetic and a particularly fine scholar, is going to India to see the face of Śākyamuni. Up to this point we the monks of the Serpa thousand district have escorted him stage by stage. From this point onward, since he should [not be caused] mental strain, consider your commitments. Not to conduct him to the monastic estate of Longxing would be improper. It would be improper for any in the religious and secular spheres not to consider likewise.²

The presence of the emperor in this letter is particularly interesting. If the emperor in question is the Song emperor Taizu 太祖 (r. 960–976), this would link the monk to the large group of pilgrims whose travel was authorized by the emperor. In 966, Taizu issued a decree commissioning a large-scale pilgrimage. In the decree he wrote that, “the road through Qin and Liang has become passable, and thus it is possible to send monks to India in search of the dharma.”³ These words imply that the stability provided by Taizu had made pilgrimage possible again. But the number of pilgrims departing with the emperor’s blessing at this time suggests that the movement was organized and coordinated by the emperor as part of the legitimating strategy for his new dynasty. As Sem Vermeesch has said, Buddhism was for Taizu, “an integral part of the state-building project” and he utilized it in order to justify his “rise to power and claim to legitimacy.”⁴

So the emperor mentioned in this letter of passage is almost certainly Taizu. The phrase we have translated as “the Chinese emperor [of] Tong kun” is *tong kun rgya rje*. We have good precedents for taking the title *rgya rje* to refer to the Chinese emperor. Several old sources, including

² IOL Tib J 754, recto, letter 4, ll. 6–10: *slad nas tong kun rgya rje'i spyā nga nas / hwa shang dka thub ched po mkhas pa'i phul du phyin pa cig [7] rgya gar gi yul du shag kya thub pa'i zhal mthong du mchi ba lags / 'di tshun chad du bdag cag gser ba stong sde'i [8] dge slong rnams kyis kyang / bskyal rim pas bgyis / de phan chad du yang de bzhin thugs khral [9] ... nas / thugs dam la dgongs pa ste / lung song gi lha sde'i stsam du myi bskyal du myi rung // // [10] lha myi phyogs kyang de bzhin du myi dgongs su myi rung //*.

³ *Fozu tongji* (T2035): 395b.

⁴ Vermeesch 2004: 9.

the *Old Tibetan Annals*,⁵ the Zhol Pillar and the Lhasa Treaty Pillar use *rgya rje* to denote the emperor of Tang China.⁶ This use would have been well known to Tibetans. Later, for example in the document Pelliot tibétain 1111 (l. 19), we find *rgya rje* used to refer to other Chinese rulers.

The other part of the name, *tong kun* is more mysterious, though it is also found in later Tibetan literature, where it is often spelled *stong khun*. Since the occurrence in our manuscript from the 960s represents the earliest appearance of the term which has previously gone unnoticed, it may be worthwhile to see if it might help us to understand its significance. This *(s)tong k(h)un* is almost certainly a loan-word from Chinese, as most Tibetan commentators have recognised. The question has most recently been addressed by the contemporary Tibetan scholar Skal bzang thogs med (2005). However, his treatment does not consider IOL Tib J 754, and he ultimately reaches the same conclusion as many previous Tibetan scholars.

Now, possible readings of the Chinese characters behind *tong kun* are:

- (i) Tangjun 唐君: “Ruler of the Tang”
- (ii) Dongjun 東君: “Ruler of the East”
- (iii) Dongjing 東京: “Eastern capital”

I will deal with the first suggestion only briefly, as it seems a remote possibility. It was suggested in passing, and only as a possibility, by R. A. Stein:

On l’appelle aussi Tang-kun rgyal po avec la même épithète (Stein, *L’épopée de Gesar...*, p. 78) ou encore Tong-khun, sTong-khun (’khun) [dKar-chag du Tang-jur de Dergué, 274a, 282b, 318a]. Ca dernier nom est peut-être une transcription de chinois T’ang-kiun 唐君, “souverain des T’ang.”⁷

Given the content of the letter of passage in IOL Tib J 754, which dates to well after the collapse of the Tang dynasty, this reading is rather unlikely. It is conceivable that the Tibetan neighbours of China’s 10th century dynasties continued to refer to Chinese emperors with the name of the old Tang dynasty, but as this name is not attested in any Tibetan writings from the Tang period, this would be a very speculative conclusion. Let us now turn to the second interpretation.

⁵ See Or.8212/187, ll. 49, 54, 80.

⁶ See the Zhol Pillar (South face), l. 46 in Li and Coblin 1987: 144); and the Lhasa Treaty Pillar (West face, l. 13) in Li and Coblin 1987: 38.

⁷ Stein 1961: 29 n. 70.

The Ruler of the East

The reading of *tong kun* as Dongjun 東君, the mythical “ruler of the East,” is the most commonly accepted reading in the Tibetan tradition, and is given by the modern Tibetan–Chinese dictionary *Tshig mdzod chen mo*, in which *tong khun* is equivalent to *tūng kus*, the transliteration of 東君. This the dictionary defines as a term of respect.⁸ This interpretation of *tong kun* was originally suggested in the 14th century by the fourth Karma-pa Rol-pa’i rdo-rje (1340–1383).

The term became famous in Tibet through verses of praise written for the Indian teacher Atiśa, by his disciple Nag-tsho (1011–1064). These verses became very well known through being included in the first pages of Tsong-kha-pa’s famous *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path*.⁹ The phrase occurs in a description of the Indian king who was Atiśa’s father, whose wealth is compared to that of this Stong khun king:

To the East, in the supreme country of Zahor,
There lies the great city Vikramaṇipur.¹⁰
At its centre is a royal palace,
A vast extensive mansion,
Known as ‘Having Golden Banners’.
Its pleasures, power and riches
Rival that of the king of Stong khun in China.¹¹

⁸ In addition, a modern dictionary of archaic terms, the *Bod yig brda rnying tshig mdzod* has an entry for *tong kun smad* (‘lower’ *tong kun*), which it defines as either a place-name for Khotan, or as *rkong nyang*, the ruler of Khotan. This would seem to be a specific meaning created by adding *smad* (‘lower’).

⁹ On Nag-tsho’s hymn, see Eimer 2003. For Tsong-kha-pa’s text, see Tsong-kha-pa 2000: 36 (f. 4), and 377 n. 8. See also *Blue Annals* 297; translation in Roerich 1996: 31. The Tibetan text is cited in Skäl bzang thogs med 2006: 270. The same phrase appears in a 17th-century Tibetan history which mentions a Kho yo Mkhan rgan (“Old Abbot Khoyo”), a disciple of Stag lung thang pa (12th c.) at the court of *rgya nag stong khun rgyal po*. See Stag lung Ngag dbang rnam rgyal, *Stag lung Chos ’byung*, Bod ljongs Mi rigs Dpe skrun khang (Lhasa 1992), 230.

¹⁰ This may refer to Vikramaṇipura or Vikrampura, the ancient city now known as Bikrampur, located in the Munshiganj of Bangladesh. See Chattopadhyaya 1967: 60.

¹¹ From *Jo bo rje’i bstod pa brgyad cu pa*, ll. 1–5 (Eimer 1989: 25): *shar phyogs za hor yul mchog na // de na grong khyer chen po yod // bi kra ma ni pu ra yin // de yi dbus na rgyal po’i khab // pho brang shin tu yangs pa yod // gser gyi rgyal mtshan can zhes bya // longs spyod mnga’ thang ’byor pa ni // rgya nag stong khun rgyal po ’dra /*.

A 19th-century printed copy of the prayer glosses *stong khun* as “meaning ‘eastern ruler’ in the language of China.”¹² If true, we would have to retranslate the final line of the verses cited above as “The king who is the Ruler of the East, China.” Skal-bzang thogs-med, in his study of the term, also favours this interpretation:

This term *stong khun* is not a genuine Tibetan word. It means “a king of eastern China,” as stated by the all-knowing Rol-pa’i rdo-rje. Later it was transliterated into Tibetan. Based on the methods for doing this, the Chinese characters 東君 were transliterated as *stong khun* and the like, based on their sound. As the phrase was widespread, minor regional differences appeared in the way it was written – this is certainly the reason. That is why, if one tries to understand the Tibetan word on its own merely according to the method of etymology, then surely it need hardly be said that one will naturally fall down the precipitous cliffs of meanings.¹³

The strength of this interpretation of (*s*)*tong k(h)un* as “eastern ruler” is that it offers a close approximation of the pronunciation of Dongjun 東君 in the 10th century. Yet there is a problem here: none of the above sources suggest conclusively that (*s*)*tong k(h)un* was a personal epithet rather than the seat of the emperor, and in fact Tibetan syntax suggests the latter. The phrase *stong khun rgyal po* has exact parallels in Tibetan literature with titles like *sde dge rgyal po* “the king of Derge” in which the first part of the title indicates the seat of the king’s power. Furthermore I have not as yet found a Chinese source identifying any Chinese emperor by the epithet Dongjun 東君. So it seems reasonable to step outside the received interpretations of the term, and look at whether (*s*)*tong k(h)un* was not a person, but a place.

The Eastern Capital

Throughout the 10th century there were several dynasties based in Kaifeng 開封, which contributed to the city becoming the economic hub of central China. The city was first given the name Eastern Capital (Dongjing 東京) in 938 during the Later Jin. Prior to this, this name had referred to the city

¹² *stong khun ni rgya nag skad de shar rgyal po zer /*.

¹³ Skal bzang thogs med 2006: 277 (translated from the Tibetan).

of Luoyang 洛陽.¹⁴ The Later Zhou (951–960), who briefly preceded the Song dynasty, unified much of northern China, and contributed to the construction of Kaifeng and the surrounding regions.¹⁵ The outer walls of Kaifeng, which greatly expanded the city, were built in 954. At the advent of the Song dynasty emperor Taizu would have been merely the next in a line of recent imperial dynasties based at what was already known as the Eastern Capital.¹⁶

It is interesting that the term *tong kun* does not appear in any Tibetan writings from Tibet's imperial period (7th to mid-9th centuries, during the rule of the Tang dynasty); here the Chinese emperor is always referred to simply as “Chinese emperor” (*rgya rje*). Thus the emergence of the Tibetan phrase “*tong kun* Chinese emperor” may be a result of the fragmentation of power in China, when the term “Chinese emperor” could refer to a number of different rulers. It would have specified which Chinese emperor was intended by reference to the fact that he was based at the Eastern Capital and distinguish him from other emperors such as the Khitan emperors of the Liao dynasty (907–1125), whose capital was at Shangjing 上京 or the Turkic emperor of the Northern Han dynasty (951–979) based at the capital Taiyuan 太原.¹⁷

Tibetan contacts with the emperor of the Eastern Capital are attested in the Song Annals from as early as 1002, when the ruler of Liangzhou, Panluozhi 潘羅支, sent five thousand horses to the city as a tribute to the emperor.¹⁸ Kaifeng continued to be the most important mercantile city in China during the 11th century, when there was a liberalization of regulations regarding travel and trade which made the city into a new kind of urban centre.¹⁹ The city produced a vast amount of fine produce, including silk and porcelain goods. After Kaifeng fell to the Jurchens in the 12th century, it remained the southern base of the new Jin dynasty. It was only in the Yuan dynasty (1271–1378) that Kaifeng lost the title of “Eastern Capital” and was renamed Bianliang 東梁. This also marked the beginning of the city's decline.

¹⁴ *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大辭典 4: 834; *Zhongguo lishi diming da cidian* 中國歷史地名大辭典 I: 692. My thanks for Valerie Hansen for pointing out these reference sources.

¹⁵ See Gernet 1996: 268, 300–301, 317.

¹⁶ See for example Gernet 1996: 268, 300–301, 317.

¹⁷ On Tibetan contacts with the Liao dynasty, see Petech 1983: 179.

¹⁸ Petech 1994: 175. Petech suggests that the Tibetan behind the Chinese rendering of this figure's name may be Phan bla rje, and that his may have been from the Rlangs clan.

¹⁹ Grenet 1996: 316–318.

If *tong kun* is really the magnificent Eastern Capital of the Song dynasty, we ought to find other references to it in Tibetan literature from the Song period (960–1279). And we do – for example, in a biography of the first Karma-pa, Dus-gsum Mkhyen-pa (1110–1193), there are several stories told by the Karma-pa about the past lives of his teachers and disciples. Dus-gsum Mkhyen-pa had some familiarity with the Chinese political and geographic landscape; he was in contact with the Tangut court, and sent students to attend there. His name, “Knower of the Three Times,” alludes to his clairvoyant ability to see into the past and future.²⁰ In one of Dus-gsum Mkhyen-pa’s stories about his own teachers we find a reference to Tong kun as a famous site:

On another occasion he had the thought that it was important to get a view of Tong kun. He was immediately seized with a burning desire to go there.²¹

In another biography of Dus-gsum Mkhyen-pa there is mention of an Indian teacher who “traveled down from India to *tong kun*, and then again back up from there, bringing a Chinese letter.”²² We also find a reference in the works of ’Jig-rten Mgon-po (1143–1217), to the “seat of Tong kun (in) China” (*rgya nag tong kun gyi gdan*):

The painted vases from of the seat of *tong kun* in China are completed with precious stones, and are beautifully completed sometimes with embossed decorations, sometimes with [colored] powders.²³

²⁰ See Sperling 1987: 38.

²¹ yang dus cig tu / tong kun lta ba cig byed dgos snyam tsam na / deng tsha ’khar du phyin zin (p. 18 in *Selected Writings of the First Zhwa-nag Karma-pa Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa*). The specific text is *Rje ’gro ba’i mgon po rin po che’i rnam thar skyes rabs dang bcas pa rin chen phreng ba ’bring po*, attributed to a Bde chung ba. In another story in this text there is a reference to an Indian alchemist who was invited to China by the “king of Tong kun” (*tong kun rgyal po*) and met him at Wutaishan (p. 30).

²² a tsa ra rgya cig rgya gar nas mar song tong kun nas bskyar yar ’ongs pas rgya yig cig ’ongs (pp. 75–76 in *Rje dus gsum mkhyen pa’i rnam thar*, attributed to a Sgang lo tsa ba and found in the *Selected Writings of the First Zhwa-nag Karma-pa Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa*).

²³ rgya nag tong kun gyi gdan gyi rtsi ba las grub pa’i snod rin po che rnam gang ba dang / p[h]ur mar byas pa dang / ma byas pa dang / phye mar byas pa dang / phye mar ma byas pa legs par gang bar rdzangs. See vol. 4, p. 95 of *The Collected Writings (Gsung-’bum) of ’Bri-gung Chos-rje ’Jig-rten-mgon-po Rin-chen-dpal*. On the same page there is also a reference to “the land of Po in China” (*rgya nag po’i yul*). It is clear in both cases that these are toponyms (unless we

Though it is not clear here whether *tong kun* is a place or personal name, it is interesting to note that the seat of *tong kun* is mentioned as a place where particularly beautiful vases are made. This provides another association with the Eastern Capital.²⁴

In later Tibetan literature, the term continues to appear as a toponym. The spelling in these later instances is generally *stong khun*. The metamorphosis of *tong kun* to *stong khun* seems to follow a common trajectory seen with other Chinese loan-words in Tibetan. In terms of actual meaning, *stong khun* makes little sense, as Skal-bzang thogs-med has shown. Most of the later references to *stong khun* are in a similar context to 'Jig-rten Mgon-po's discussion of the fine vases produced there. For example the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617–1682) mentions fine varicolored silks:

This patriarch commissioned a copy of the Bka'-'gyur (the essence of the Sugata's words) written in melted gold, and sacred images made from the multicolored silks fashioned by the dextrous fingers of the skillful ladies of *stong 'khun*.²⁵

The skill of Chinese women in making fine cloth was famed in Tibet.²⁶ Over a century later, the well-known scholar Dngul-chu Dharmabhadra (1772–1851), also uses *stong khun* as a toponym in a flowery conclusion to one of his letters. He mentions the silk produced by the “magical fingers” of the young ladies of *stong khun*:

take *rgya nag po* to be an extended version of *rgya nag*). Note that this follows the standard form of Tibetan toponyms, where a specific location can be prefixed by a more general location for the sake of clarification. For some discussion of the activities of 'Jig-rten-mgon-po see Sperling 1987.

²⁴ Helmut Eimer (2003: 20–21) has suggested that *Stong khun* may refer to the former name of Hanoi, Đông Kinh (東京). These are of course the same characters used for the Song capital at Kaifeng. However, Hanoi was not known by this name until the 15th century, much later than our early Tibetan references to (*s*)*Ton k(h)un*. See Ooi Keat Gin 2004: vol. II, 562.

²⁵ gong ma 'di nyid kyis bde bar gshegs pa'i gsung gi snying po gser zhun ma'i khu bas bris pa'i bka' 'gyur dang / stong 'khun mdzangs ma'i sor mo'i 'du byed las bskrun pa'i gan gos kha dog sna tshogs las grub pa'i sku brnyan bzheng ba. The full title of this historical work is *Gangs can yul gyi sa la spyod pa'i mtho ris kyi rgyal blon gtso bor brjod pa'i deb ther/ rdzogs ldan gzhon nu'i dga' ston dpyid kyi rgyal mo'i glu dbyangs*. See vol. 11 of the *Gsung 'bum*, pp. 5–228. The lines quoted here are from p. 172, l. 6.

Translation in Ahmad 2008: 122. In a footnote Ahmad notes that *stong 'khun* cannot refer to a Chinese emperor here, and simply translates it as “China”.

²⁶ See Martin 2008.

This letter is a cloud raised up
 Like the silken scarf which arises
 In the magical fingers of the *stong khun* ladies
 Raining down praises like thunder and lightning.²⁷

It is interesting, considering the importance Kaifeng once had as a source of fine Chinese goods, that the term *stong khun* is still associated here with particularly fine silk. A final example from another of Dngul-chu's short works will show that *stong khun* was still in use as a toponym, though clearly meaning simply "China" in the 19th century. Here in a text on pilgrimage, Dngul-chu mentions medicines made from objects collected from the sacred sites of four countries: India, Nepal, Tibet and *stong khun*:

The secret ingredients – earth, stones, and wood from the usual
 famous sites
 Of the great countries, the Noble Land (India), Nepal, Tibet and
 Stong khun –
 Are well mixed in flowing water by the magical fingers
 Of those skilled in the production of arts and crafts,
 Becoming a fragrant medicine filled with powdered gems.²⁸

In this context it is clear that Stong khun is simply China. Thus in the latter phase of its career, the term *(s)tong k(h)un* seems to have entered the lexicon of obscure poetic words used by the Tibetan literati, as alternative term for China.

We can now see that there is a strong case for identifying the original source of the Tibetan loan-word *(s)tong k(h)un* with the Eastern Capital 東京, the city of Kaifeng. Moreover the use of the term as a Chinese place-name by other Tibetan writers during the Song period shows that Eastern Ruler 東君 is not a satisfactory explanation for the term. Some explana-

²⁷ zhes pa'i zhu mchid nam mkha'i ta ma la // 'degs byed stong khun mdzes ma'i sor 'phrul la // byung ba'i lha rdzas 'jug pa brgya pa can // bsngags pa'i sprin gyi sgra dbyangs sgrog pa zhig Dngul chu Dharmabhadra (1772–1851). This appears in a collection of his letters, *Zhu 'phrin gyi rim pa phyogs gcig tu bsdebs pa kha ba'i dus kyi me tog* (*Gsung 'bum*, vol. 5, f. 3a).

Full text edition at http://aciprelease.org/r6web/flat/S6397M_T.TXT.

²⁸ bzo rig mthar son mkhas bsdus sor 'phrul gyis // 'phags yul bal bod stong khun yul gru che'i // yongs grags gnas chen phal gyi sa rdo shing // gsang 'bru chu snas sbrus pa'i 'jim bzang la // sman spos rin chen phye mas sbags pa'i rgyur /. The text is *Byams mgon gsar bzhengs dkar chag*, found in the collection of texts on temples and pilgrimage practices, *Dkar chag dang skor tsad kyi rim pa phyogs gcig tu bsgrigs pa* (*Gsung 'bum* vol. 4, 555/f. 20a).

Full text edition at http://aciprelease.org/r6web/flat/S6371M_T.TXT.

tion for the inexactitude of the rendering of Eastern Capital 東京 may be found in its origin in the 10th century, a chaotic period of fragmentation for Tibet, when we should not expect to see the clear and relatively standard transliterations of Chinese names and places that occur in the Tibetan imperial period.

Conclusion

The Sino-Tibetan document IOL Tib J 754, once the personal possession of a Chinese pilgrim, has provided us with a vital clue for interpreting the mysterious term *tong kun*, one that was not available even to the earliest Tibetan scholars who attempted to interpret it. We know from Chinese historical sources that the first Song emperor Taizu sponsored large groups of pilgrims in the 960s. By this time he had established his capital at Kaifeng, known as Eastern Capital 東君. As we have seen, a letter of passage in IOL Tib J 754 mentions that this particular pilgrim came from the presence of the “Chinese emperor [of] *tong kun*” (*tong kun rgya rje*). This was probably a reference to Taizu, and as I showed above, in the usual syntax of Tibetan royal titles, where the ruler’s seat is given before the title, and the name afterwards, *tong kun* ought to refer to the emperor’s capital.

The evidence provided by IOL Tib J 754 is supported by other instances of the term in Tibetan literature. As we have seen, first reference to *tong kun* (or as it appears in the extant versions, *stong khun*) after our manuscript is in an 11th-century prayer by the West Tibetan translator and traveler Nag-tsho, in which “the king [of] *stong khun* [in] China” (*rgya nag stong khun rgyal po*) is mentioned only for his fabled wealth. That this might still refer to the Song emperor is not unlikely, considering that the Song dynasty and Kaifeng were at the height of their magnificence in this period, and that the Tibetan petty kingdoms of Amdo engaged in diplomatic relations with the dynasty. Nag-tsho’s text shows that if the use of the loan-word *tong kun* began in Amdo, it had already spread to other parts of Tibet by this time.

The clear evidence that *tong kun* was used by Tibetans to refer to a place, rather than a person occurs in less well-known appearances to the term as a toponym in the work of two 12th-century Tibetan scholar monks who had diplomatic relations with the Tangut dynasty and other Chinese rulers. Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa, founder of the Karma bka’ brgyud school, refers to *tong kun* as a place visited by Indian religious teachers, while ’Jig-rten mgon-po, the founder of the ’Bri gung bka’ brgyud school, refers

to the fine things made in Tong kun. It is worth noting that Kaifeng (still known as the Eastern Capital) was the premier merchant city of East and Central Asia at this time, and it seems likely that *tong kun* continued to signify the city.

Though many later Tibetan writers seem to have been unaware of these uses of *(s)tong k(h)un* as a toponym, and to have favoured the interpretation of the term as “Eastern Ruler” some Tibetan writers from the 17th and 19th centuries continued to use *stong khun* as a toponym referring to a place famous for fine silks. By this time Kaifeng was a shadow of its former imperial glory, and these references may be indicate merely the perpetuation of an ancient memory of the Eastern Capital and its fine products preserved in Tibetan literature. On the other hand, we should perhaps not entirely forget that Kaifeng continues to be a centre for silk production to this day.

In short, the pilgrim’s letters of passage in IOL Tib J 754 show us that the Tibetan term *tong kun* was being used in Amdo in the 10th century to refer the Eastern Capital, and the emperor of the Song as the ruler of the Eastern Capital. By the 11th century, at the height of the Song, the fabled wealth and glory of the king of the Eastern Capital had spread to other parts of Tibet. In the 12th century it was known as a city famous for its arts and crafts, and this reputation continued to be crop up in references to *stong khun* in Tibetan literature right through to the 19th century. In the end, it became a place of myth and fable, its original link to the Eastern Capital forgotten – so much so that many Tibetan scholars did not even consider the possibility that the term referred to a place at all.

Appendix

The Letter of Passage

This is addressed to the lords of the teachings and the monastic community, they who unite the sun and the moon, the sublime ornaments of Jambudvīpa, the assembly of teachers who [venerate] their precious enlightened masters and who single-mindedly carry out their commitments: a petitioning letter from Dmog ’Bum-bdag. According to what has been said in the previous letters that have gone back and forth [between us], your meditative activities of maintaining all the vehicles, ... becoming accomplished and single-mindedly [carrying out] your vows have not fatigued your bodies. I hear that your precious bodies, as valuable as gemstones, are free from infirmity. I request with devotion a letter from the thirty great emanations.

On to other matters. A monk coming from the presence of the Chinese emperor [of] *tong kun*, a great ascetic and a particularly fine scholar, is going to India to see the face of Śākyamuni. Up to this point we the monks of the Gser-pa thousand district have escorted him stage by stage. From this point onward, since he should [not be caused] mental strain, consider your commitments. Not to conduct him to the monastic estate of Longxing would be improper. It would be improper for any in the religious and secular spheres not to consider likewise.

- 1 @ bstan pa {dang dge' 'dun} gi mnga' bdag / gnyi zla 'od sbyor gi rkyen / 'dzam bu gling [rgya]n dam pa' / slob ched po byang chub
- 2 rin po ches ...r du mdzad pa / thugs dam rtse gcig du mdzad pa'i dg[e ba'i bshes gny]en sde tsogs kyi zha sngar // //
- 3 dmog 'bum bdag gis mchid gsol bas // snga slad 'drul ba las mchid kyis {rmas} pa // spyi'i theg pa bskyang
- 4 ba dang ['grub mang po] {chen po} {rkyen} du 'gyur ba dang / thugs dam rtse gcig du mdzad pa'i dgongs pas sku mnyel ba ma lags
- 5 pa / {sku ri}n po che dbyigs gces pa ma snyun [myi mnga' ba] khums / 'sprul chen sum cu las gus par snying gsol
- 6 {bar} mchis // [sla]d nas tong kun rgya rje'i spyā nga nas / hwa shang dka thub ched po mkhas pa'i phul du phyin pa cig
- 7 {rgya gar gi} yul du shag kya thub pa'i {zhal} mthong du mchi ba lags / 'di tshun chad du bdag cag gser ba stong sde'i
- 8 {dge slong} rnams kyis kyang / bsu <deletion> bskyal rim pas bgyis / <deletion> de phan chad du yang de bzhin thugs khral
- 9 ... nas / thugs dam la dgongs pa ste / lung song gi lha sde'i stsam du myi bskyal du myi rung // //
- 10 lha myi phyogs kyang de bzhin du myi dgongs su myi rung //

Bibliography

Works in Tibetan

- Dngul-chu Dharmabhadra. *Collected works (gsun 'bum) of dñul-chu dharmabhadra*. 8 vols. New Delhi: Tibet House, 1973–1981. [TBRC id: W20548]
- Dus-gsum mkhyen-pa (Karma-pa I). *Selected Writings of the First Zhwa-nag Karma-pa Dus-gsum-mkhyen-pa*. Gangtok: Dzongsar Chhentse Labrang, Palace Monastery, 1980.
- 'Jig-rten mgon-po. *The Collected Writings (Gsung-'bum) of 'Bri-gung Chos-rje 'Jig-rten-mgon-po Rin-chen-dpal*. New Delhi: Khangsar Tulku, 1969–1971.

- Ngag-dbang blo-bzang rgya-mtsho (Dalai Lama V). *Rgyal dbang lnga pa chen po'i gsung 'bum*. Dharamsala, 2007.
- Skal-bzang thogs-med. 2005. "Stong khun zhes pa'i tha snyad kyi mtha' la dpyad pa ke ta ka'i phreng mdzes." In *Bod kyi rig gnas las 'phros pa'i gtam spyi nor blo gsal mgul rgyan*. Beijing: Mi rigs dpe skrun khang.

Works in English

- Ahmad, Zaharuddin. 2008. *The Song of the Spring Queen, or A History of Tibet*. New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan.
- Chattopadhyaya, Alaka. 1996 [1967]. *Atiśa and Tibet*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Eimer, Helmut. 2003. *Testimonia for the Bstod pa brgyad cu pa: An Early Hymn Praising Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna (Atiśa)*. Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute.
- Gernet, Jacques. 1996. *A History of Chinese Civilization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Second Edition.)
- Martin, Dan. 2008. "Ethnicity as an Issue for the Circle of Padampa Sanggyé at Tingri Langkor." Accessed January 2010 at <https://sites.google.com/site/tibetological/Home/ethnicity-as-an-issue>
- Ooi Keat Gin. 2004. *Southeast Asia: A Historical Encyclopedia, from Angkor Wat to East Timor*. 3 vols. Santa-Barbara: ABC Clío.
- Petech, Luciano. 1983. "Tibetan Relations with Sung China and the Mongols." In Rossabi, Morris, ed., *China Among Equals: The Middle Kingdom and its Neighbours, 10th–14th Centuries*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 173–203.
- van Schaik, Sam. 2011. "A New Look at the Invention of the Tibetan Script." In Yoshiro Imaeda, Matthew T. Kapstein and Tsuguhito Takeuchi, eds., *New Studies of the Old Tibetan Documents: Philology, History and Religion* (Old Tibetan Documents Monograph Series, vol. III). Tokyo: ILCAA, 45–96.
- van Schaik, Sam and Imre Galambos. 2012. *Manuscripts and Travellers: The Sino-Tibetan Documents of a Tenth-Century Buddhist Pilgrim*. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Sperling, Elliot. 1987. "Lama to the King of Hsia." *Journal of the Tibet Society* 7: 31–50.
- Stein, Rolf A. 1961. *Les tribus anciennes des marches sino-tibétaines*. Paris: Bibliothèque de l'Institut des Hautes Études chinoises.
- Tsong-kha-pa. 2000. *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path* (translated by the Lamrim Chenmo translation committee). Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications.
- Vermeersch, Sem. 2004. "Buddhism and State-Building in Song China and Goryeo Korea." *Asia Pacific Perspectives* 1.1: 4–11.

