Tibetan Documents from Chinese Turkestan. III: The Nob Region

BY

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(Continued from p. 98)

BY the "Nob region" I would for the present purpose indicate generally the stretch of country south of the desert of Chinese Turkestan and lying between "the Ša-cu region" on the east and "the Khotan region" on the west, together with any part of the mountain hinterland to the south. It would thus include, for example, Cer-cen (Calmadana), Charkalik (Nob), and the former Shan-shan kingdom. The documents come mainly from the old fort of Mīrān, which was also, as we have seen, in communication with Ša-cu; there is, indeed, ample evidence of active intercourse between the Tibetan authorities from Khotan as far as Ša-cu and Kva-cu and even further into China proper. In general it is clear that by the routes along the desert edge and otherwise, long journeys, covering many hundreds of miles, were habitual among the populations of the scattered oases and widely separated mountain settlements; in respect of distances they thought in large measures. It is in virtue of apparent importance and frequent mention in the documents that Nob, with its three or four towns, or forts, may be used to symbolize the whole region. The citations may be arranged under the names of the districts or places, which hereafter may acquire a more definite location. The dates are, no doubt, for the most part in the eighth century A.D.

I. Tshal-byi

That this name is connected with Nob we have already seen (JRA$\gamma$. 1927, p. 87). Otherwise it has been known only from a mention in one of the Tibetan chronicles relating to Khotan (Rockhill, Life of the Buddha, p. 242). At the time of the downfall of Buddhism in Khotan the monks
who abandoned the country and after a toilsome journey found refuge at the Tibetan capital reached Tibetan territory first at a place called Tshal-byi. Whether the name is itself Tibetan or dates from a pre-Tibetan period and is perhaps connected with a personal name Salvi or Saluvi, occurring in the Kharoṣṭhī documents, can hardly yet be considered. The available information is contained in the following documents:—

1. M.I. xix, 001 (wood, 16 × 2 cm., complete; ll. 2 recto + 2 verso of clear dbu-can writing).


[1-2] "A servant of Councillor Stag-bzer, Jehu Lho-gzigs, having been in Little Nob, employed by order (or as a punishment, bkhaḥ-cad-cyis-bcad-de) among the government subiects (mñaḥ-gyi-ḥbaṅs ?) of Tshal-byi, [2–B 1] I in Tshal-byi at the time of His Excellency’s demand sent a note of instruction requiring him to serve on hire: [B 2] the message was that his handiwork should be cup-making. [B 2–3] As, while he was staying in Little Nob, they did not come, I sent to him to go to Ka-dag and engage in cup-making in accordance with the order given."

Notes

1. Jehu: On this clan name see above, p. 93. Mñaḥ-gyi-ḥbaṅs: This is a recurrent phrase of not definitely ascertained meaning. Thus in M.I. xxiv, 0029, we read

| mñaḥ . gi . ḥbaṅs . | Mon . Tshe . skyes . la . | "To the government servant, the Mon Tshe-skyes."

bsnan: see below, p. 559.
B 2. Ka-dag : Concerning this place see below, pp. 565-8.

2. M.I. i, 3 (wooden tablet, complete; c. 18 × 2.5 cm.; ll. 2 recto + 3 verso of ordinary cursive dbu-can writing, partly erased).

[1] /orders of the newly appointed authorities, it appears that men should not be sent away, as if in frolic and mirth, without a promise from me.  [B 2] From . . . trouble has arisen on the frontier, and in the region of Tshal-byi also there are runaways (ḥbro-cog ?). The longheads have committed simply every possible mistake.”

Notes

ll. 2 and B 1. dañ-sbyar-na and ḥbyuñ : On these phrases see JRAS. 1927, p. 79.

mthoñ-khyab : see below, p. 559.

1. B 3. glo-ba-riñs : This phrase has occurred, supra, 1927, p. 823. ma-legs-dgu : On dgu as a sign of plurality see above, 1927, p. 823.

3. M.I. i, 23 (paper; 31.5 × 8 cm.; partly incomplete with loss of two half-lines at the upper right); ll. 8 + 1 recto inverted of somewhat cursive dbu-can writing: verso a different document).

[1] /orders of the newly appointed authorities, it appears that men should not be sent away, as if in frolic and mirth, without a promise from me.  [B 2] From . . . trouble has arisen on the frontier, and in the region of Tshal-byi also there are runaways (ḥbro-cog ?). The longheads have committed simply every possible mistake.”

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1. B 3. glo-ba-riñs : This phrase has occurred, supra, 1927, p. 823. ma-legs-dgu : On dgu as a sign of plurality see above, 1927, p. 823.

[1-2] “For a reminder to Guñ Khri-bier [letter of] inquiry as to his health on the part of us, a staff of old employees (šùn.lan.myi ?) in the watch-tower of Tshal-byi. [2-4] Whereas by order in our father’s lifetime... instruction was given for keeping guard as employees in the watch-tower, the Tshal-byi general... summarily (stams-las) reduced the staff employed in the guard. [4-5] As previously submitted to the great Uncle-Minister, a letter was sent directing a change of staff in the Tshal-byi watch-tower; only compensation (pay ?) for the employment was not received. [5-8] We being five or six brothers, sons of a father in service, and both families being capable persons carrying on the work (skyà-pherd ?) of the watch-tower, if a letter were sent with orders on the part of the prince... advising that the staff in the watch-tower should receive compensation (pay ?) for their employment and that the Tshal-byi general should be pleased to admit us to his presence
(or to take it under his eye?), it would be as if we had been saved from death. [8] So long as we are still alive, we brothers are confident of seeing a [just] decision.''

Inverted. [9] "To the divine presence: letter-petition of a poor hireling (g-yar-žan?) Mtsiñ-sa Bor-sga."

Notes

1. bsűel-byan: The phrase recurs in M. Tagh. a, iv, 00128.
1. 3, etc. mthon-khyab (= khab): This might be an alternative form of mthon-khab (there being not a little indifference as between n and ñ final), which might mean "high residence, head-quarters"; but the other occurrences of the phrase (see, e.g., above, p. 557, and cf. M.I. iv, 27; iv, 57x; xiv, 0012; xxv, 003; xxviii, 0036; lviii, 001) seem to favour the rendering given.

bsnan: This is clearly a form from snon, which occurs later in the document; the usual sense being that of "augmentation", the meaning here may be to employ in addition. Cf. p. 556.

kbyuñ-ba-las: On this phrase see JRAS. 1927, p. 823.
1. 4. stams-las: The phrase has occurred 1927, p. 838; the exact sense is not certain.
1. 6. skya-pherd: Is this a metaphor "pull the oar"?
1. 8. spogs: This seems to be = spobs "confidence".

4. M.I. iv, 49 (wooden tablet, fragmentary at right; c. 13 x 2.5-3 cm.; ll. 2 recto + 2 verso of ordinary dbu-can writing).

    Tshal.byihi.thad.kar.bsñens.par.bla.nas.thug. . . .
    [1-B 2] "It having been previously decided (?) from dispatches of Councillor Ldoñ-bzañ Lha-sgra, Gsas . . . above and from reflections that the Upper Dru-gu had extended (were apprehended) in the direction of Tshal-byi, [B 2] we two friends . . . ."
Concerning the Dru-gu, with whom Tshal-byi is here associated, see JRAS. 1927, p. 80 (the Drug-cun), p. 81 (Ha-za).

5. M.I. xvi, 19 (paper; c. 24.5 × 8.5 cm.; obscure and left lower corner torn away; ll. 5 recto in a rather square cursive dbu-can writing + ll. 6 verso, more rounded).

{l. 4} . . . . {. . . .} Tshal.byi.khri[m]. bon.pho[g]. pahi. na. bran. skies. ste. sgrol. bar. chad. ces | | bde. blon. gyis. mchid. stsal.d. nas | | stag. . . .

B, l. 5. . . . | ŋa. Klu.len. . . .

"The excellent councillor having sent a letter to the effect that, there having been a young servant (na-bran?) who has struck the Tshal-byi judge, protection should be given, the soldier . . . The witness (?) Klu-len . . ."

Note

1. 3. khri[m]-bon-pho[g]-pahi: The reading is somewhat uncertain. As regards khrim-bon = khrims-dpon it may be remarked that dpon often appears in the documents in the forms bon and phon. Judges are sometimes mentioned, and it seems that the district Tshal-byi was provided with one. With na-bran "young servant" compare pha-bran above, p. 558.

6. M.I. xxi, 5 (wooden tablet, complete; c. 15 × 2 cm.; ll. 2 of ordinary cursive dbu-can writing).


"Sent to the Tshal-byi general and [as] the price of the land-settlement."

Notes

1. 1. dmag-pon: It appears that there was a "general commander" for Tshal-byi; cf. No. 8, below.

žiṅ-lgod: The phrase occurs below, p. 573.
The reading rin (= rin) is not quite certain; gthad-pa = gtad-pa “sent”. The la seems to do double duty, “to” the general and “for” the price: cf. rin-du, p. 568, No. 29. But rin-la may mean “during”.

7. M.I. xli, 0013 (wooden tablet, c. 8.5 × 2 cm.; ll. 2. recto + 2 verso of ordinary dbu-can writing).
   “Was appointed Ru-dpon (Horn- or Wing-Commander) of Tshal-byi.”

Notes

Ru-dpon: The title occurred above, 1927, p. 829.

8. M.I. iv, 10 (paper; c. 10 × 8 cm.; ll. 5 of ordinary cursive dbu-can writing).
   “bagman (?), Htshal-byi, . . . general.”

Note

sgyehu-ka: See below, p. 569.

9. M. Tagh. a, iv, 00128 (paper).
   [l. 2] . . . Tshal.byir.mchis.nas . . .
   “having gone to Tshal-byi.”

From these passages it appears that Cer-cen was included in Tshal-byi, which according to the other evidence would appear to be rather the hinterland to the south. From the mention of the general and the “horn-commander” it is plain that it was the district of a military unit.

II. NAG-ŠOD, RGOD-TSAÑ-SMAD (Lower Rgod-tsañ), RGOD-TSAÑ-STOD (Upper Rgod-tsañ), KHA-DRO

These are four districts, as is evident from the arrangement of the wooden document, M.I. vii, 0017.
10. Nag-šod  |  Rgod-tsañ-smad  |  Rgod-tsañ-stod  
| gro  nas  |  gro  nas  |  gro  nas  
| (wheat) (barley) | (wheat) (barley) | (wheat) (barley) 

Kha-dro

| gro  nas  | (wheat) (barley) |

Clearly a tally intended to record amounts of wheat and barley from the districts. The first three are not infrequently mentioned in connexion with their respective territorial regiments, e.g. in—

(a) 11. M.I. ii, 32.

Nag-šod.kyi.sde.gyab.Lha.ston.

"The gyab Lha-ston of the Nag-šod district (or regiment)," where gyab seems to be a military title occurring elsewhere.

12. M.I. xiv, 76.


"The skyañ-po Khrom-rma of the Nag-šod district (or regiment)." Skyañ-po recurs below, p. 583.


"Captain Kha . . . lad Klu-rton. Cook of the Nag-šod regiment, Thre Mthoñ-rma."

(Further mentions in M.I. ii, 16; xiv, 67; xvi, 005; xxv, 001. In M.I. viii, 37, we have the rje-žiñ “lord’s land” of Nag-šod.)

(b) 14. M.I. viii, 45.

|  |  | Rgod.tshañ.smad.gyi.sa.mkhar.la  | dor.gsum  |  |

“To the land-town of Lower Rgod-tshañ three teams.”

(On dor, = “team” or “yoke” of oxen (or yaks) for ploughing, see JRAS. 1927, pp. 817-18. Many of the documents relate to the hiring-out of such teams.)

15. M.I. xiv, 006.

“Of the Lower Rgod-tsaṅ district (or regiment), Lbeg-rma Nuṅ-żub.”

Rgod. tshaṅ. smad. kyi. sde | tsa. rņu. Khrom. legs.
“Of the Lower Rgod-tshaṅ district (or regiment), the tsa-rņu Khrom-legs.”

(tsa-rņu (or ce-rņu), apparently an official title, recurs in M.I. xiv, 46; xiv, 109b, p. 571 below; xxiii, 009.)

17. M.I. lviii, 004.
Spon. Raṅ. slog | Rgod. tshaṅ. smad. kyi. ston. pon. gyi. żǐṅ | dor.ch[j]g.
“Land of Spon Raṅ-slog, thousand-commander of Lower Rgod-tsaṅ, one yoke.”

It appears herefrom that Lower Rgod-tsaṅ was a Thousand-district, stoṅ-sde, and had a stoṅ-dpon. The term stoṅ-sde, which perhaps denotes a district of 1,000 estates (as Dr. Prāṇa Nath suggests for similar phrases in India), has been noted above, 1927, pp. 75 and 808. The district is mentioned also in M.I. 003, and M. Tagh. a, ii, 0097.

(c) 18. M.I. iv, 85.
“Of the Upper Rgod-tshaṅ district, stom-kyaṅ Lha Ḥbrug-brtson.”

1. 2. Rgod. tsaṅ. stod. so. pa. myi. bcu. gsum. mchis. pa.
“Upper Rgod-tsaṅ soldiers (police), thirteen men, came.”
(Another mention of Rgod-tsaṅ in xiv, 124.)

Connected probably with Rgod-tsaṅ are Rgod-ldiṅ:—
“Cook, Rgod-ldiṅ regiment, P(h)yi-sgra . . . captain.”
Rgod ldin gi rje ziṅ.
“The lord’s land in Rgod-ldin.”
(The phrase “lord’s land”, rje-ziṅ, will recur again below, p. 573: see also above, pp. 562, 564.
and Rtse-rgod (“Peak-Rgod”) mentioned below (p. 590).

III. Ḥdzom-smad (Lower Ḥdzom) and Ḥdzom-stod (Upper Ḥdzom)

A district Ḥdzom is several times mentioned in the documents, more often, in fact, than would be the case if it were in another region. The name Ḥbrug suggests (see 1927, p. 68) that it lay east, towards the Sa-cu quarter.
(a) 22. M.I. ii, 25.
Ḥdzom. smad. kyi. sde | Ḥo. nal. Lha. zo.
“Of the Lower Ḥdzom district (or regiment), the Ḥo-nal Lha-zo.”

Ḥo-nal seems to be an official title in M.I. ii, 27; vi, 6; xiv, 58a; xxviii, 11, also.
(Other mentions in ii, 37, 38; viii, 17; xxiii, 009 (verso); the last a letter from Ḥbrug-legs to Councillor Stag-bzan.)
(b) 23. M.I. ii, 17.
Ḥdzom. stod. kyi. sde. Lda. tshoṅ. Ḥbru (?). Ḥbrug. btsan.
“Of the Upper Ḥdzom district (or regiment), Lda-tshoṅ-Ḥbru (?) Ḥbrug-btsan.”
(The Ḥdzom-stod district is mentioned again in vii, 33.)

IV. Cer-cen

One reference to this well-known place has occurred above (p. 557); another may be cited, since there are no more.
24. M.I. xxviii, 2 (wooden tablet, complete; c. 20.5 × 2.3 cm.; ll. 3 recto + 4 verso of neat, cursive dbu-can writing, in very black ink, partly faded).


[1] “To the chiefs Mtsho-gzigs and Klu-lhtsho: petitioner Myes-rton. [1-2] After I also had made the journey down there was a report that Your Excellency yourself were departing to Cer-cen. [2-B 1] Here the ass (asses ?) had fallen a little behind, so that nu, ,, 3 morsel of millet and barley had arrived down here. Subsequently there has been a delay of some ten days. [B 1-3] While considering carefully a letter inquiring whether I ought or ought not to go to Cer-cen, I very unfortunately did not send the previous letter which I had written at once: so I ought to go. [B 3-4] Since, if a good robe shall not have been procured, matters (or my husband ? gtan) will not be well arranged, please . . . price and quality, as may be arranged, and send it.”

Notes

1. 3. kham-ga: Apparently = kham-gañ.

V. KA-DAG

As is noted by Sir Aurel Stein (Serindia, pp. 320 n., 454 n.), Mîrzâ Haidar, in his Ta'rikh-i-Rashîdî (Elias and Ross, pp. 10, 52, 64, 406), mentions in connexion with Lob (= Nob) a city named Katak, and tells a story of its having been overwhelmed in a sand-storm. There has been some question concerning the name, which some MSS. give as
Kanak; and Sir A. Stein even thinks that the story is legendary, being based upon the expression kötek-shahri “town of dead trees”. These doubts must now disappear in view of the references to be cited from the Tibetan documents; but whether the place Kotak-Sheri, located by Mr. E. Huntingdon (The Pulse of Asia, p. 387) at a distance of 138 miles from Endere and 264 miles from Lulan, represents the old site and name we have at present no means of determining.

25. M.I. x, 7 (wood; 19–20 × 2.5 cm., complete; ll. 2 recto + 3 verso of cursive dbu-can writing).


[1] “To the great lord, the magistrate, are submitted sorrow and mirth (?). [1–B 1] Previously in council deliberating the taking of the citadel of Little Nob we on the top of a part of the watch-tower were engaged in guarding the town (mkhar) of Ka-dag. [B 1–3] Meanwhile an enemy troop in great force slew our families. First of all they destroyed the harvest (or they carried off the things in the houses ?). The food and victuals that were in the store-pits the enemy ate. Such a loss having taken place, we report.”

Notes

1. 1. [skyo]-gsolan-rgad : The reading is uncertain. We have translated skyo-gsol-ham-rgod.

1. 2. skun-mkhar : Note that Little Nob has a citadel. mthoṅ-kyab : See above, p. 559.

i. B 3. ŋams : See below, p. 569. Or = “reflection”?
26. M.I. xlii, 1 (wooden tablet; c. 21 × 2 cm., somewhat fragmentary; ll. 3 recto + 3 verso of regular dbu-can writing, partly erased—for further use of the tablet?).

[1]  şnon. glo . . . . . . . . [cag. ra?] . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
(the addressee) + 3 verso of ordinary epistolary dbu-can writing).


28. M.I. iv, 101 (wooden tablet, fragmentary; c. 7 × 2 cm.; ll. 2 recto + 3 verso of regular dbu-can writing, blurred and barely legible).


“In Great Nob Councillor . . . assembly was assembled and from Ka-dag . . .”

29. M.I. ii, 005 (wooden tablet, fragmentary; c. 17.5 × 2 cm.; ll. 2 recto + 2 verso of small, regular dbu-can writing).


“To Little Nob two loads of millet were conveyed. From the Ka-dag millet Lha-chuñ levied for the price of a horse.”

Ka-dag was mentioned above (in No. 1, p. 556), and it is further named in M.I. 0077, i, 14; i, 17; iv, 19; xiv, 38, 61α; wherein, however, there is no information. In ii, 40 (below, No. 30, p. 569) a courier of Ka-dag is mentioned.

The place was, as we see, a town (mkhar) with a watchtower (mtsoṅ-khyab) and a chief lord (rtse-rje). It seems to have been closely associated with Great and Little Nob, and it was, no doubt, in their neighbourhood. There was a territorial regiment belonging to the district.

VI. Nob-ched-po (Great Nob), Nob-chu-ṇu (Little Nob), Nob-ṣod (Lower Nob), the Ḥo-bḥog (River Nomads?) of Little Nob

Concerning Nob and its “three castles”, for which we should probably read “three towns” (mkhar-sum), informa-
tion furnished by the documents and elicited by Professor A. H. Francke has been given by Sir Aurel Stein in Serindia (pp. 322, 468–9, 1462). The obvious importance of the place or places, especially of Little Nob, which Sir Aurel Stein identifies with Charkalik, may justify a publication in full of the more extensive documents, which also serve to throw light upon the circumstances and life of the time and name some of, no doubt, the leading personages.

30. M.I. ii, 40 (paper, complete; c. 30 × 5 cm.; ll. 3 of ordinary cursive dbu-can writing, clear).


One or more red seal-impressions.

[1] “Sent by Councillor Hphan-po-rje to the sgyehu-ga (bagmen ?) of Nob, the Three Towns. [1–2] Of the revenue of presents, whatever has been collected, and besides (?) the ñams and snams (defaults and surpluses ?) of the subjects, an exact statement is to be sent later to Stag (Tiger) G-yu-bzañ Lha-rtsa-skies. [2–3] After a rest there (?) send by a swift courier of Ka-dag.”

Notes

1. 1. sgyehu-ga: “bagmen” is a conjecture; see above, p. 561, and cf. sgyehu “small bag”.

Nob-mkhar-sum: Here we have the Three Towns of Nob; so too in M.I. viii, 10, which mentions also the various towers (?) of the town boundary (mkhar.ris.so.soḥi.rtse). The next document will mention the Four Towns.

1. 2. Stag G-yu-bzañ: Evidently the local “general” (dmag-dpon), who, as in JRAS. 1927, p. 70, would proceed to put pressure on the defaulters.

Խdi-na-gthir-gyur: Perhaps this means “if there is any
question there” (ḥdi-na “here” = “there”, like atra in the Kharoṣṭhī documents) from gtī-ba “to question”. Or perhaps gthir comes from sti “rest”.


31. M.I. xiv, 109b (paper; c. 29 × 19 cm.; ll. 12 of large, rather coarse, cursive dbu-can writing + l. 1 (inverted) in a smaller, neater hand).


[1] “. . . sent to . . . and the chief lord Khrom-bżer Bzañ-koñ [to the effect that] it should be sent so as to reach Little Nob by the tenth day of the first autumn month of
this year, after the arrival \((bsgya\text{\textasciitilde}s) = brgya\text{\textasciitilde}s \text{ 'arrive in haste'}) \ldots \text{of the missive, we on the seventeenth day of the first autumn month of the Dragon year came back to Little Nob.} [3–5] \text{We not being satisfied with what you had written, Pag-\text{-tsa, who was associated with the Klurtse soldiers, and Myo with some twenty arrogant fellows} (lba-tsha ?), said 'Give us leave to go to Klurtse'.} [5–6] \text{Later, as a mistress who was with child} (spu-mdzad-mo) \text{was come to Little Nob, the Four Towns, they waited.} [6–8] \text{On the seventeenth day of the first autumn month of this year they took the road and went saying 'We are discontented with . . . . . . . . . from a missive on the part of the previous chief of the Four Towns.'} [8–9] \text{The things required by the courier Lda-ka Hwa-lwa not having been done and quarrelling with (one another ?) . . . . . . . . . they did not leave even the tent-coverings and sent not a word to Rma-sgra, the chief of the Four Towns.} [10] \text{The courier Hwa-lwa having represented in the presence of the chief lord Councillor Legs-bzai, Councillor Rma-sgra and the rest, the tsa-r\text{\textasciitilde}nu Gun-tshal Klus-ma-de and the sgya-ro Zigs-legs that 'This ought to be reported. Those two should be looked after', the Uncle-Ministers caused their signatures to be attached.'} \text{Inverted: ‘‘Hand-signature of Lda-ka Wa-lba.’’} \text{Notes}\n
1. 4. \text{Pag-\text{-tsa}: This is perhaps for \(Pa-\text{tsab, which occurs in M.I. viii, 53; xiv, 34; M. Tagh. 0583, c. iii, 009, p. 583 below, and often in the \text{Bstan-\text{-lhgyur colophons}.}}\)} \text{Klu-rtse: See below, p. 587.}\n
1. 5. \text{mkhar-bzi: The Four Towns of Nob.}\n
1. 11. \text{tsa-r\text{\textasciitilde}nu: Probably an official title; see above, p. 563.}\n
1. 13. \text{sug-yig-tshad: This phrase has occurred before, \text{JRAS}. 1927, p. 814.}\n
32. M.I. iv, 93b (paper; c. 28 × 11 cm.; discoloured; ll. 10 of black, ordinary epistolary \(dbu-can\) writing).
In the summer of the Hare year the lord’s land in Little Nob was made into four partitions. [1–2] Counsel was taken to divide the tillers numerically; and the total of owners and of those who desired work according to the old usage of the land settlement was written down with mention of the names. [3–4] No persons having rights, or agreed lands, or remains of enclosure being confirmed, it was decided to divide the people of the various small lands numerically. [4–5] None being allowed to abandon the plough or to break open the partition, the division was made into five partitions, and the partition boundaries are to be furnished with boundary marks. [5–6] In case of any falling off from the total or of any persons breaking open
the partition or abandoning the plough, thereby violating the division of the tillage, they are to be brought in to the superiors (? thog-blar-bsdu? the yield is to be raised ?). Fines were fixed at rates for the several cases. [6–7] The number of men of the several fields was made into a song and committed to the chief officers of the town boundary. [7–9] If any should be recalcitrant or cause the water to dry up or disregard the officers or desire to alter (sbyur ?) what had been fixed, procedure should be according to the old town (fort) law of former times. [9–10] Great Uncle-Councillor Dge-bzan and Councillor Btsan-la-hphan—these, who were at first appointed, having gone back down, the chief Lord Dpe-gzan and . . . continued the work.”

Verso: “Send by fifteens according to a fixed reckoning (dam-šib-las ?).”

Notes

1. 2. žiñ-hgod : “Settling the land”; the phrase has been noted above, p. 560. Rje-žiñ, pp. 562, 464.

2. 3. gtan-žiñ : = “fixed field” or “established agreement”? The phrase recurs below, No. 33.

l. 2 and 5. rtsis-mgo : “Total”; see JRAS, 1927, p. 81, and M.I. viii, 64b.

l. 5. tho-rgya : = “boundary mark”, occurs in other documents (Ch. 79, xiv, 5, etc.).


33. M.I. xlv, 2 (wooden tablet, c. 13.5 × 2 cm., fragmentary at left; ll. 3 recto + 2 verso of ordinary cursive dbu-can writing).

[B 1] . . [mkh]ar . Nob . ched . po . -is (?) . rje . ziñ | | gi-
[2] divided into . . fields. Some two were summoned (?) . . . [B 1] the lord’s land of Great Nob [B 2] the people settled in Little Nob.’’

Notes

This document has points of similarity to the preceding, e.g. in the phrases db(y)añ-thaṅ-can and gtaṅ-ziṅ.


34. M.I. xiv, 109a (paper; c. 29 × 17 cm.; smudged and discoloured; ll. 10 of large, rather cursive dbu-can writing).


[1-2] “In reply to the despatch of Councillor Maṅ-zigs and the rest in the summer of the Snake year, at the mart (town) assembly place, Gtsos-mo-gniṅ. [2-5] There having arrived from the government servant (mñaṅ-gyi-hbaṅs) Steṅ-bor Legs-snaṅ three travelling parties, the Hor Baṅ and Gsas with a g-yag-sdiṅ (?) and two ḥgris-sdiṅ (?) hidden
and not to be found, and Ko-lgoön without a rtug (?) and a sgal-dra (load-net ?), the time for making payment is the fifth day of the middle autumn month, being the intercalary autumn month, of the present year. [5–7] Delivery is arranged to be at Little Nob. If delivery is not made at the time or does not reach the amount arising from the attested signature, or if it does, but Ko-lgoön, not showing agreement in proportion to the six kinds and the prices, does not furnish an attested signature of the three times (i.e. a bill payable at sight) up to the value of the missing merchandize (?), [7–9] then whatever belongings there may be in the hands of Legs-snañ and his guarantor, Nan Ldoñ-koñ, property, cattle and barley and fruit, wherever found, may be seized without right of complaint: [9–10] in attestation whereof the attestation seals of the ‘royal eye’ (rgyal-zigs = rāja-caksuḥ) Legs-rtsan and the rtsig Lha-rtsa-skyes and . . . and the hand-marks and hand-signatures of those two are attached."

Notes

The translation is in a few points uncertain or even conjectural. The general sense is that three persons are conveying merchandize from Legs-snañ, to be delivered in Little Nob. In case of failure of delivery in time or in the right quantities or with bills for what is deficient Legs-snañ and his guarantor may have their whole property seized without right to bring a suit. The agreement is signed by a government overseer, a lawyer (?), and the two persons concerned. The gap in line 9. for a missing name, shows that the document is a draft only.

1. 1. khrom-gyi-hdun-sa: Concerning these assemblies see JRAS. 1927, p. 70.

Gtsoś-mo-glin: The place is not otherwise known.

1. 2. mīn-gyi-hbañs: See above, p. 556.

Hor: A Turk.

1. 3. g-yag-sdiñ, ḥgri-sdiñ: Is sdiñ = rtīn “tail” or “end”; ḥgri may be for ḥbri “female yak”.

Notes
rad: “Caravan” (†), has been already noted (JRAS. 1927, p. 820). Elsewhere we have the expression rad-gos “travelling-clothes”.

1. 6. hog-tshoṅs: “Missing merchandise” or “merchandise sold below”?

1. 9. rtsig: Possibly this means “a lawyer”; the same rtsig Lha-rtsha-skies is mentioned in another legal agreement (M.I. xiv, 24).


35. M.I. xlv, 7 (paper; c. 31.5 × 9 cm.; ll. 9 of neat, commonplace dbu-can script; red impressions of six or more seals).

In the . . . year, in reply to the despatch of the great Uncle-Councillor, Councillor Dpal-bzan, at the mart of Little Nob. [1–3] From a person of the Rgod-tsxan upper district, who previously, when a layman, was called Hu-taň Gnas-chun, but after entering the community was named Byaň-cub-bkra-sis (Bodhimangala), Gños Ho-se [had hired] a servant stated to be Pho-btson, a man of . . . Chinese family, but in his letters named the Chinaman Phu-tsab, aged about fifty years. [3] Ever since the arrival of an army in old days, the bande having been made by Ho-se . . . of the lord’s land (?), he had been in service with Ho-se. [3–4] In the present year Ho-se, having come to an agreement, the price being eight red sran, sent it forthwith to the bande in full. [4–5] Phu-tsab, while according to this agreement under the authority of Ho-se, became involved in a dispute at law and, being defeated (?), ran away to this side. [5–6] After the bande had caused a demand by letter to be made as to what the dispute was, it has been arranged that the bande should at once give an equally capable servant to whoever is in possession of this agreement. [6–7] In case the bande does not come, it has been arranged that his guarantor shall send by letter all that results from the above decision; [7–9] in evidence whereof the attestation marks of Councillor Stag-sgra, the head and lord Councillor Stag Stag-rtsan, Councillor Dpal-bzan-po Dge-rje, Councillor Dge-bzer Lha Hbrug-brtsan, the farmers Stag-bzan. Lha-spe, Ldon-phreň, Mdo-goň, and others and the written signatures (hand-marks) of [the bande] and the guarantor are attached.”

Verso: “Attestation mark of Phu-tsab.”

Notes

The case seems to be that a certain bande, Byaň-cub-bkra-sis, hired out his slave Phu-tsab, a Chinaman, to a
person Giōs Ho-se in Ho-se (?), who paid a sum in composition for the slave’s services. The slave became involved in legal trouble and fled away to his old master, who after inquiring into the matter engages to compensate Giōs Ho-se either by a substitute or otherwise. The signature of Phu-tsab on the verso proves that he was with his old owner, the bande.

1. 1. Rgod-tsan-stod-kyi-sde: Concerning this district see above, pp. 561–4.

sky-ya-bo: An ordinary man or layman.

1. 2. thar-mar-žugs-nas: The reading mar is partly conjectural; the sense must be that of “having become a monk”.

Ho-se: A Chinese place-name, “West of the river,” used as the name of the person.

Pho-btson: The name has occurred before, JRAS. 1927, p. 828.

1. 3. rje-gol: This must be some agricultural designation, since in another document (vol. liii, fol. 37) we have the phrase rje-gol-skya-bcu “rje-gol ten crops”.

Phu-tsba: Compendious for Phu-tsab.

1. 4. žal-mchu: Perhaps only apparently = “face-lip”. In the sense clearly of a dispute it occurs in a very analogous document from Tun-huang, appended infra, pp. 592–4.

tha-sñad = Sanskrit vyavahāra “affair”.

1. 5. brgya-la: Apparently = brgyal-la, but in the sense of being the loser, recurs similarly in the above-mentioned document (infra, p. 594).

steñ-du: “After”; see JRAS. 1927, p. 79.

pod-pa: = phod-pa “capable”.

1. 6. — khas-len: The gap is, no doubt, for the insertion of the name, as in European legal drafts.


36. M.I. xliv, 0013 (paper fragment, torn and showing gaps; c. 22 × 9 cm.; ll. 4 of cursive dbu-can writing).

[phya]g . rgya . p[h]o[g . ste] | žiǔ . ḥgod . kyi . riñ . lugs .
dañ . mkhar . bži . bla . dañ | Nob . che ... [3] ... Ho-ses.
gsol . bañ | bda[g] . [ca]g . Nob . chuñu . pañi . sdum . pa .
sar . | Nob . ched . po ... .

“Sent, seal attached, from the upper (eastern?) town, petition of Ho-se to the messenger of the farm-settlement and the ... four chief towns (or heads of the four towns and ... Great Nob. ... Petition of Ho-se. I at my family residence in Little Nob ... Great Nob.”

Notes

1. 2. žiǔ-ḥgod : See above, pp. 560, 573.
1. 3. sdum-pa-sar : sdum-pa has occurred above, p. 566. On sar see JRAS. 1927, p. 558.

37. M.I. xxx, 8 (paper, nearly complete; c. 28 × 75 cm.; ll. 9 recto + 6 verso (five in a different hand) of neat dbu-can writing, rather closely packed and in parts illegible).

[1] [♀ | . | —] sgre . gañ . sgra . la | | Khrom . koñ .
gyi . mchid . gsol . bañ | | mchid . kyis . rmas . na . thugs .
mchis . na | | bar . du . thugs . bdeñam . myi . bdeñ . sñun .
nad . lo (?) [4] ma . mchis ... ... | mdad (?) . dañ .
bañ (?) . soñi . [rkye]n . ru . yañ . lag . smad . man . chad . la |
mchi | Skal . ḫkhar . gyi . yi . geh . pho . brañ . na . tshal .
ža . bgyid . pa . ma . mchis | | Khrom . [bžer?] . gyi . bkañ .
pa . tsham . du . bañs | | mchid . yi . ge . ḥdi . spriñ . ba .
myi . bol . dag . chig . mchis . pa . ḥdi . ba (?) | smad . nas . [rjes.
dnos . kyis . gsal . pa . lags . te . gnañ | ši . sos . kyi . [gla].
dgra . chud . ma . htshal . bar . gyis . šig . par . ḥdrul . ba .
dag . tu . yañ . stsaañ . lo . dgra . nos . pas | [bas . ma].
pa . ltar . bgyis . šīñ . mchis | |

(The remaining text (inverted) is a letter, in a different
hand, from Rmañ-la-skyes and Stag-slebs to Jo-bo Zla-
bzer.)

[1–2] “To . . . sgre-gan-sgra : letter-petition of Khrom-
koñ. I was glad to have heard above that, as a letter stated,
you were happy. Begging to inquire whether in the interval
you have been happy or not happy, I beg you to send your
received in the residence, first and last, and of the district
[news]. With the magistrate Zla-bzer there is tidings [ched ?]
that disease of men and disease of cattle have not ceased (?).
. . . In the property of monuments (?) and tombs, down to
minor establishments, out of some six crops not more than
six sran of silver has been levied. Before winter an army of
brethren cannot assemble. [5–6] Letter of [from?] Skal-
khar: In the residence there is nothing to eat. As for
a letter of Khrom-bzer, what has . . . . . from Councillor
Khri-rma, need only be mentioned. [6–8] At the moment
of sending this letter there have come from the residence of
the Councillor of Mdo three despatches to the extent of nine
sides. He states that from Nañ-goñ plenty of men have
come: from Smad it is the same. There is nothing to report
to your divan. Thanks for making now clear what has been
sent to Councillor Mañ-zigs. [8–B I] As regards stringent
orders not having been sent by letter that at the price of

1 phyi . ma is crossed out.
life and death the enemy should not be allowed to penetrate, among the people here also, not content with the year's grain having been taken by the enemy, as soon as autumn arrives it is desired to let them in on the Nob-šod side. Rmañ-cuñ's handiwork (or tidings?) has abundantly come to Nob-šod—so it has been made to appear."

Notes

The document reports the substance of news from various sources and not of a cheering character: an epidemic among men and cattle, want of money and food, scarcity of men for the army, encroachment of "the enemy". The places named are Skal-ḥkhar, which sounds like Khalkha (if conditions of time and place allow), and Mdo, which is clearly Mdo-khams. Who "the enemy" are does not appear. The translation is in part uncertain.

1. 3. _ched_ : This seems to mean "tidings".
1. 4. _mdad_ : In the sense of a monument to the dead the word occurs in the Chronicle, ll. 32, 116.

_rkyen_ = "property" (?). Cf. 1927, p. 837. It seems as if the property of the tombs and monuments was being called into use.

1. 5. _spun-dmag_ : "Army of brethren," i.e. of monks (?).
1. 6. _ḥphar-ma_ : "Missive" occurs in M. Tagh., b, ii, 0035; c. iii, 0025, etc.

_rol-dgu_ : "Nine sides" of paper or wood?
1. 7. _Nañ-goñ_ : This might mean "Eastern or Upper Nañ".

_Smad_ : No doubt = Mdo-smad.
1. 8. _ši-sos-kyi-gla_ : "Wages of being saved from death."
1. 8. _B 1. sug-las_ : This might also mean "tidings".

38. M.I. xxviii, 002 (paper, discoloured and torn; c. 28 × 34 cm.; ll. 19 of rather cursive and scrawled _dbu-can_ writing).


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Five seals illegible.

1 h erased.
2 nas below the line.
3 paṅi. mchid. nas is here crossed out.
4 ku here crossed out.
"On the new-moon day of the first spring month of the Snake year, in the presence of the chief lord, Councillor Ju-cug, and the Uncle-Councillor Skyani-po Dbye-rma and the rest. The complainants, Pan-tsab Rbeg-chun and Ldon-phran Spra-hu-kon, having by messenger engaged on hire the Rla-n eldest (?) brother and elder brother and younger brother Klu-hdus and Hbe Myes-mthon and Rla-n-phran Hphan-legs and others, the complainants Rbe[g]-chu-n and the rest write: We, having from Little Nob assembled a company of eight porters . . . . . of the Turks, came to Great Nob. Having from the chief lord procured the hire of some stick-gatherers and the stick-gatherers not having come, we were told to break down a ruined house outside. When we two had broken down a ruined house, the five above-mentioned persons, at a time when the children were tired . . . . . came upon us and ill-treated us almost to the point of death. With the sordid . . . . clinging to our garments (?) we humble persons make complaint by letter as follows: Spra-hu-kon during his removal here fell ill. The two Sto-n-sdes not . . . . to us and sending us to the Bkah-lun, we went to the distinguished Dkah (sic). The Bkah-lun was biassed and abused us. 'Law you can have, if you like. In case you desire to complain by petition up to the great Lama (bla), pray take care to summon (?) witnesses according to law. As to the names and families of their witnesses, they are Hgren-ro Klu-brtan, Klu Stag-chu-n and So-nam-legs, Rum Mtsho-brtsan, Hbrin-hbrug Spe, Dru-gu Lha-legs, whose attestation marks and the hand-signatures of the messenger, the courier and of those persons are attached. The seminary assembly has been called by letter for the beginning of the middle summer month."

Notes
1. 2. Pan-tsab: See above, p. 571.
1. 3. **Rlaṅ**: This is, no doubt, a local name, and the **Rlaṅ-phran** below is "the little Rlaṅ". In M.I. iv, 105, is named a Rlaṅ Klu-stod, and in M. Tagh., c. iv, 0035, we have mention of a Rlaṅ district or regiment (sde). The three brothers seem all to have been named Klu-ḥdus, whence the manner in which they are particularized.

1. 6. **Hor-gyi-mjug-stog**: Is mjug-stog for ḥjug-ldog, which seems to have the sense of "obstacles" (= "protection against?")? But mjug occurs elsewhere (= "rear")?

1. 8. **slad-rol**: "Outside," as in M.I. xxviii, 0023, skun-kar-gyi-slad-rol "outside the fort". The ruined house was perhaps to be torn down for firewood.

II. 12–13. **ston-sde...bkah-lun**: "Thousand District" and "Command" seem to be used for the respective officials.

1. 14. **gan-t(h)an**: "As much as you like"?

1. 15. **dum-ba**: = dun-pa?


1. 18. **rin-lugs**: = rin-lus of l. 3; cf. JRAS. 1927, p. 66.


39. M.I. i, 27 (paper fragment, right hand; c. 17 × 16.5 cm.; ll. 4 of rather clear, faint dbu-can writing).


**Notes**

1. 3. **ḍpen-pahi-žo-ṣa**: On this phrase see JRAS. 1927 p. 75 n. žo-ṣa-cher-bul recurs in M.I. x, 3.
40. M.I. iv, 138 (wooden tablet, partly broken away at left; c. 15.5 x 2.5 cm.; ll. 2 recto + 2 verso of ordinary dbu-can writing).

[1] "To the head Lama (?) and head physician of Little Nob: In the first spring month of the Hare year. Begging . . . . . . request the attention of writing a prescription for lag-dgra (?) and sogs-mcin (retention of urine? gsog-gcin?)."

Note

It seems as if there were in Little Nob an official "head physician".

41. M.I. xiii, 12 (paper, smudged and discoloured; c. 30 x 8 cm.; ll. 6 recto + 1 verso of cursive dbu-can writing).

[1] "To the magistrates Btshan-ta and Klu-sgra: letter petition of the land-overseer. Then he inquires as to your health. [2] In case the receipt for the delivery of the year-levy from Rtse-rgod in Great Nob has come to your
lordinship's hands, despatch of the receipt is requested. [3-4] What remained of our year-levy, ass, yak, bell-metal, wool (or Khotanese and Nepalese, Li-Bal-pha), whatever there was in each case, these in residue I am requesting Councillor Lha-bzaṅ to supply. [4-5] Of hair and wool there is thus with no one any not delivered remainder. [5] My own signature also I beg now to submit. Attention is requested accordingly."

Verso: "Year-levy of Great Nob for the Mouse year."

Notes

1. 2. Rtse-rgod : "Summit Rgod" is probably a part of Rgod concerning which see above, p. 561-4. It is curious that rtse-rgod may mean also "mirth and laughter", as supra, p. 566.

1. 3. li-bal-pha-re-gaṅ-zig : I have taken re-gaṅ-zig as = "whatever there was in each case". But the whole phrase is rather puzzling; compare M.I. xiv, 59, bal-pho-re-gaṅ-zig, and xxi, 1, phyin-rgyu-bal-pho-re-gaṅ.

Summarizing, we may mention in regard to Little Nob that we hear of its "chief lord" (rtse-rje, M.I. vii, 27, 76; xiv, 0027; xxvi, 13; xxxii, 13), of its mgo-ron (M.I. vii, 27; x, 3), of its "foreign councillor" (dgra-blon, M.I. xxvii, 7), of its "regional chiefs" (ños-pon, M.I. xxvii, 7), and its "chief Lama" and "chief physician" (M.I. iv, 138). It is called a "town" (mkhar, M.I. xlv, 005) and a "mart" (khrom, M.I. xlv, 7). We hear of the "Three Towns" and also of the "Four Towns". Great Nob is a "town" (mkhar, M.I. xlv, 2), and it has a "chief lord" (rtse-rje, M.I. x, 2, 3, 9; vii, 27) and "lord's land" (rje-ziṅ, M.I. xlv, 2). Sometimes we hear of the "chief lord of Great and Little Nob" (M.I. vii, 27).

VI. Nob-šod (Lower Nob), Klu-rtse, G-yun-drun-rtse

42. M.I. i, 24 (paper fragment; c. 11 × 17 cm.; much torn and badly smudged; ll. 17 (?) recto + 8 (?) verso of cursive dbu-can writing, barely legible).
Not proper to perform"
[A 9] “As far as the mart Der-ŋa-ra a rumour”
[A 14] “beyond Klu-ṛtse”
[B 3] “in Lower Nob”
[B’ 6] “Little Nob also.”

**Note**

Concerning Der-ŋa-ra and Mdo-sgral we have no information. Klu-ṛtse is mentioned p. 571 above and in—

43. M.I. xxviii, 0021.


“Rtsaṅ Spe-sme, captain of the Spring of Klu-ṛtse.”

44. M.I. xxviii, 0010.


“To Klu-ṛtse also a message has been sent.”

45. M.I. iv, 132 (paper fragment; c. 31 × 7 cm.; l. 1 of large, ordinary cursive dbu-can writing).


“In the Horse year at G-yun-druṅ-ṛtse in Little Nob fort. . . .”

**Note**

It looks as if G-yun-druṅ-ṛtse were merely a height or tower in the fort itself.
VII. SNAÑ-SDAÑ AND SNAÑ-RTSE

46. M.I. viii, 44 and 43 (two wooden tablets; No. 44, c. 17.5 × 2 cm.; ll. 2 recto + 3 verso; No. 43, c. 20 × 3 cm.; ll. 3 recto + 3 verso; ordinary cursive dbu-can writing, in places rather faint).

[1] "Taking the road at daybreak on the twenty-fifth day of the last spring month, march so as to arrive at Tañ-gśor by the time it becomes hot. [B 1] Thence onwards be very alert in front and behind; avoiding the high road, look out for dust and heads during the day and during the night suppress sounds and listen. [B 3–43, 3] As far as Snañ-sdañ and Snañ-rtse you will be awaited by an advance party (?); where there is a convenient place for fighting not involving apprehension, be willing to accept a combat if not taken at a disadvantage. [43, 3–] Having halted in the Snañ-rtse territory five days, supposing nothing happens if the followers.
Notes

The latter part of the document is for the present untranslatable, several of the expressions, e.g. dog-sa (“narrow place” ??), phyug-ma, sna-ltogs, gnam-ltor-bor, being obscure.

44, B 1. ye-myig: On this phrase see JRAS. 1927, p. 844.

43, 2. thabs-ma-naüns-par-zind-cin: This might be read thabsam°: could we translate “if caught where you must either fight or fly”?

VIII. STAGU

In M.I. iv, 18, we have a wooden “card” of a certain Stagu G-yu-sgra, i.e. G-yu-sgra of Stagu, and a person of Pug-tshe Stagu, i.e. perhaps Pug-rtse in Stagu, is mentioned in another wooden tablet (M.I. xxvii, 4). The place is, no doubt, the Stagu-khrom “mart (market-town) Stagu” mentioned in M. Tagh., a, iv, 00128 (l. 5).

IX. RTSE-HTHON

The sde, district (or regiment) of Rtse-hthon, is mentioned in M.I. xvi, 22; and a person Go-hji Spe-rtton is named on his wooden card as belonging thereto (xv, 0012: Rtse hthon gi | Go. hji. Spe. rton |

47. M.I. viii, 58 (wooden tablet, complete; c. 9 × 2 cm.; ll. 2 recto + 9 verso of ordinary cursive dbu-can writing).


“Plougher ḡPhan-la-brtsan: Rtse-hton land, one and a half yoke.”

Note

The hire of a dor, “yoke of oxen (or yaks),” for ploughing is the subject of many of the wooden documents.

48. M.I. xvi, 003 (wooden tablet, complete; c. 12 × 2.5 cm.; ll. 3 of ordinary cursive dbu-can writing).
For the ploughing of G-yu-ston, Rtse-thon land, one yoke, one and a half yokes.

It suffices to mention the possibility that this Rtse-hthon may be identical with the Se-to or Se-ton named in a document previously edited (J.R.A.S. 1927, pp. 60-1).

X. RTSE-RGOD

49. M.I. viii, 89 (wooden tablet, complete; c. 17.5 × 2 cm.; ll. 2 recto + 1 verso of ordinary cursive dbu-can writing).


“The Rtse-rgod goods, which should have been delivered at first, have not been delivered. If it is true that they have been secretly put in store (?) and remain in store, be so good as to send them at the earliest moment.”

Notes

On Rtse-rgod see p. 586 above.


XI. BYEHU-LIÑ

50. M.I. xxviii, 005 (paper, rather poor; c. 27 × 5 cm.; ll. 5 of ordinary dbu-can writing, rather clear).

To the Home Ministers, Councillor Stag-bzan and Councillor Mdo-bzer. Letter petition of Śaṅ Rdzoṅ: That the two Home Ministers may be perpetually happy and in state exalted is my prayer. The kindness of having given attention also is very great. [3–4] I have arrived at Byehu-liṅ: the escort also, which fell behind, is coming; what with sickness and poor oxen and asses, taking not even a little rest, with water very short and little hope of obtaining water, it has been a little hampered in its coming. [4–5] We are thus a little late. Be so considerate as not to order punishment.’’

Notes

Byehu-liṅ has been noted, upon Professor A. H. Francke’s information, by Sir Aurel Stein (Serindia, pp. 470 and 480). It is mentioned, as he reports, in M.I. xxvii, 19 (verso, recording an assembly, ḫdun-sa, there). Conceivably it is the Yü-ling of the Chinese, placed by Dr. Hermann in the neighbourhood of Dālai-kurghān (Die alten Seidenstrassen, p. 99, cf. Serindia, p. 296).

XII. Gtösos-mo-gliṅ

See pp. 574–5 above.

XIII. Dor-te

51. M.I. lviii, 003 (wooden tablet; c. 17 × 2 cm.; ll. 2 recto + 1 verso of rather small, cursive dbu-can writing).

"Beg to report in your hearing when seeing your face. As regards the number of loads from the grain of the Dor-te people also, it seems to have come. If there is anything further that you are expecting, I beg you to send precise orders."

Notes

In M.I. 0034 we have mention of a soldier or police agent (so) of Dor-te (Dor-te-ḥi-so).

XIV. Șod

This may be identical, or connected, with Nob-șod.

52. M.I. xxviii, 0024 (wooden tablet, complete; c. 21 × 1.7 cm.; l. 1 of ordinary dbu-can writing).

|$| ma . thag . tu . Șod . tu . mchis . na . de . las . cha . myur . du . spriñ . bar . gsol |

"As soon as you arrive in Șod, please send news from there forthwith."

The nomads of Șod (Șod-ḥbrog) are mentioned in M.I. i, 41, and the Ho-ḥbrog (River nomads?) in M.I. xiv, 108 d.

XVI

Hbri-char-smad (Lower Ḥbri-char) seems to be a place-name in M.I. xxviii, 7.

Appendix

53. Verso of Ch. fragm. 82 (c. 28 × 19 cm.; ll. 12 of clear, ordinary, cursive dbu-can writing).

At the beginning of the first summer month of the Mouse year: district of Tshas-stobs.

At the beginning of the first summer month of the Mouse year: district of Sñiñ-tsoms. From the village (or house) of Lha-skpes some three loads of barley having previously been required above (g-yar-du? or “on loan”) by Sag Dge-legs of district Rgod-sar, as regards the time of rendering it back, it is the middle autumn month of the present year. Until death (or until this is effected? gum = khums), half a bre is agreed (? bzan-su? as interest): the delivery of the bre is to take place without interruption at one time at the house of Lha-skyes. If it is not there delivered, or if trickery is attempted, the amount becomes doubled. Together with the capital(?), whenever at his house a last demand and request for restoration endorsed by the Home Minister shall have been delivered(?), it may be recovered according to the old usage without a word of protest.

1 These two syllables crossed out.
2 su crossed out.
3 ni crossed out.
4 These two syllables crossed out.
5 ni crossed out.
6 Compendious for bar.
of failure, if Dge-legs is not in [possession of] the land or if through consideration on the part of His Excellency a division is made, then the witnesses to the agreement and the guarantor his elder . . . upon a demand by letter in accordance with the outcome of the above indenture are required to deliver: [11–12] in attestation whereof the attestation marks and written signatures of . . . . and the others are attached.”

Notes

The agreement is a draft, as appears from the fact that in l. 1 a different document was commenced, and also from the gaps left in ll. 11–12 for insertion of the names of witnesses, etc. Concerning the phrases žal-cu, dam-goṅ-nas-byuṅ, brgya-la, we may refer to the notes on the similar document discussed above, p. 578. This instrument comes from the Tun-huang library (it is written on the back of a MS.) and relates to the Śa-cu region.

1. 1. Tshas-stobs: This district has not hitherto been found.
2. 2–3. Sūṅ-tsom and Rgod-sar: On these districts see the references in JRAS. 1928, p. 97.
3. 3. Sag: On this clan-name see ibid., p. 93.
4. 4. bzaṅsu: Reading and sense uncertain.
5. 5. myi-gcad-par: This seems clearly to mean “without interruption”; one would have preferred “if the delivery of the bre is not carried out”.
7. 7. phyi-phyi(a)g . . rgyab-hgos: The rendering is somewhat uncertain.
8. 9. bkur-te-guṅ-chad-du: The reading is uncertain.

List of Places and Peoples mentioned above

Ce(a)r-cen, pp. 556, 564–5, 567. Dor-te, pp. 591–2.
Gtson-mo-glik, pp. 574-5, 591.

Hbri-char-smad, p. 592.
Hbrug (Hbriṅ-), p. 583.
Hdzom-smad, p. 564.
,, -stod, p. 564
Hgreṅ-ro, pp. 583-4.
Ho-lhbrog, p. 592.
Ho-ni, p. 568.
Hor, pp. 574-5, 584.
Ho-se, pp. 577-8.

Ka-dag, pp. 556-7, 565-9, 570.
Kha-dro, pp. 561-2.
Khotan, p. 555.
Klu-rtse, pp. 571, 586-7.
Kotak-Sheri, p. 566.
Mdo-sgral, p. 587.
[, ]-smad, pp. 580-1.
Miran, p. 555.

Nag-ṣod, pp. 561-2.
Naṅ-gon, pp. 580-1.
Nob, pp. 555 sqq., 569.
Nob, Great, pp. 568, 574, 579, 583, 585-6.

Nob, Little, pp. 556, 566-87.
Pug-rtse, p. 589.

Rgod-liṅ, pp. 563-4.
,, -sar, pp. 593-4.
,, -tsaṅ-smad, pp. 561-3.
Rlaṅ, p. 584.
Rtse-lḥthon, pp. 589, 590.
,, -rgod, pp. 585-6, 590.

Śa-cu, p. 555.
Skal-lḥkhar, pp. 580-1.
,, -sdan, pp. 588-9.
Sniṅ-tsoms, pp. 593-4.
Ṣod, p. 592.
Stagu, p. 589.

Taṅ-gšor, p. 588.
Tshal-byi, pp. 555-61.
Tshas-stobs, pp. 593-4.

Yū-lung, p. 591.