

No. IV. Translation of a Tibetan Passport, dated
A.D. 1688.

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In Hyde's *Historia Religionis Veterum Persarum* (2nd edition, page 552-3), there is an engraving of a passport granted by the governor (or grand Lama) of *Lassa*, to an Armenian, of which, at the time of its publication, no European was able to decypher the characters. The learned author's account of it is in the following words :

“Secundò damus *Scripturam Tatarorum de Boutan** (al. *Boutani*) *citra Imaum supra Indiam*. Hujus lectio est á dextrá†: et hocce ejusdem elegantissimum specimen est, id quod vulgò sonat, *un passport*, seu *salviconductus* literæ, à principe urbis et provinciæ de *Boutan* datæ, nuperis annis, *Chogja Ouanni* (i. e. Domino Joanni) mercatori *Armeno* ibidem negotianti: et dictus princeps nomen suum (ut vides) *sigilli* loco et forma majusculis et implicatis characteribus infra apposuit. Talis sigilli impressio *arabibus* dicitur *توقيع* *taukia*; *Persis et Turcis* *طغرا* *togrâ*, unde, apud eos, talis majusculorum characterum scriptor, aut talis sigilli factor, vel appositor seu principis subsignator, vocatur *Togrâi*. Hanc *chartam* nobiscum communicavit singularis amicus D. Joh. Evans S. T. D. nuperis annis ex *India* redux.”

The character of this curious manuscript proves to be the small running-hand of the Tibetans, written and engraved with hardly a single error. The following is a version of it in Roman characters, which may be interesting to those who possess Hyde's very learned volume.

Chhos-hkhor dPal gyi Lha-sa nas.—rGya-gar hphags-yul bar-gyi Sa-lam-du hkhod-pahi Ser, skya, drag, zhan, Lhahi mi-rje rdsong bsodod gnyer las-hdsin, Sog, Bod, Hor, hBrog, ir-hehhihi hgrul hgrims, lam hphrangs bsrung bkag, rgan mi dmangs bya-va zhi drag-gis sné slébs bchas mthah dag-la springs pa.—Lha-sa p'hun-ts'hogs lchang-lo-chang-gyi hgron-po mGo dkar‡ It'hang-na-chan mi bzhi zhon khal bchu-drug bchas nyé-

* *Boutan*, though applied by Europeans and Mohammedans to Tibet generally, is properly the name of one of the southern provinces, called in Tibetan *Llopato*: *Lhasa* is the capital of Tibet Proper or *U-tsang*. [See *Journ. As. Soc.* i. 123.]

† This is of course a mistake: the Tibetan reads like the Sanskrit from the left hand.

‡ The name *mGo-dkar* (properly white-headed, but rendered by me, above, by Mohammedans) formerly was applied in Tibet both to the Mohammedans of India and to the Europeans. But of late the Tibetans have commenced calling the Europeans by the name of *Philing-pa*, and an European of British India by that of *rGye-Philing* (-pa) or Indo-European.

khohi ts'hong gyur grubs-nas rang yul-du log hgro-var stahur-gyi (? Lha-hur-gyi) mts'hon gang spyihi par rog nyan-du gang hgro-las sné gor hp'hrog bchom sogs gnod hgol-du log-par hgro-va nyan ma byed-par phar phyir-du bde-var hgrims-ehhug.—Zhes sa-hbrug zla ts'hes-la lugs gnyis kyi mdun-sa Chhos-hkhor chhen po dPal-gyi Lha-sa nas bris.

Bod-pahi zla h'dres med-ching lo-thog mi-khal-gyi khkri sgrub dés hgré byung phyin bdé-var hgrims ehkug.

A square seal.

Translation.

“ From the noble (city) Lhasa, the circumambulating race of religion.—To those that are on the road as far as *Arya Dèsa* or India, to clerical, laical, noble, ignoble lords (or masters) of men; to residents in forts, stewards, managers of affairs, to Mongols, Tibetans, Turks, and to dwellers in tents in the desert; to ex-chis (or el-chis, envoys, or public messengers, vakils or ambassadors, &c.) going to and fro; to keepers and precluders of bye-ways (or short-cuts); to the old (or head) men, collectively, charged to perform some business of small or great importance; to all these is ordered (or is made known). These four foreign (or travelling) persons residing at Lhasa, lehanch-lo-chan, Mohammedans of It'hang-na, after having exchanged their merchandize, going back to their own country, having with them sixteen loads on beasts; having nothing for their defence except some Lahori-weapons,—do not hinder, rob, plunder, et cetera, them; but let them go to and fro in peace.

Thus has been written from the noble Lhasa, the great religious race, from the senate-house of both ecclesiastical and civil affairs, in Sa-hbrug* (in the year of T. ch. 1688). On the day of the month. (These dates are wanting.)

Note.—There is no Tibetan joined with them. They have about a man's load of victuals wrapped up in a bundle; with that there has been made an increase (of packages), but let them go in peace.”

A square seal.

* Sa-hbrug (*earth's dragon*) is the title of the second year of the Tibetan cycle of sixty years: it corresponds with *Vibhava* of the Indian and *Vú Dhin* of the Chinese cycle. The Tibetan reckoning commences from February, 1026: as therefore Hyde's first edition was printed in 1701, and he uses the expression “*nuperis annis ex India redux*,” the MSS. has been referred to the twelfth cycle, then current, which fixes its date to the year 1688.

Colonel Warren in the *Kala Sankalita* (Chron. tab. xxi.) has given a full description of the Indian system;—a catalogue of the Tibetan cycle, which is two-fold, one following the Sanskrit, the other following the Chinese system, will be published in the Tibetan Dictionary now preparing for the press.