

XXI. The Song of the Dard Colonization of Baltistan and Ladakh

The following song is taken from a collection of Dard songs called *Bono-nā-yi-glu-'a-thrun's*, "the eighteen songs of the Bono-nā festival." When I discovered this collection at Mdah (Dah), in Lower Ladakh, the natives told me that they had written it down about thirty to forty years ago at the request of the famous traveller R. Shawe. No reference to it can, however, be found among Shawe's publications. I published this interesting hymnal in my *Ladakhi Songs*, where it is found under Nos. xxxi-xliv, together with a Tibetan translation; and again in the *Indian Antiquary*, where it was furnished with an English translation. The "Colonization song" is No. vi of the hymnal, and is found under No. xxxvi of *Ladakhi Songs*. As I am not satisfied with my previous translation of this song, I propose to publish a new attempt at solving its difficulties. I have come to the conclusion that several words which I believed to be terms of a descriptive character are in reality local names. These places cannot yet all be traced on modern maps; but a tour along the Indus from Skar-rdo to Ha-nu would probably help us to identify them all. On the whole the song follows the natural course of the Indus in enumerating them. If several places are mentioned together in a single line, we may expect to find them close together in the district. As I believe, the hymnal contained in earlier times several more Ladakhi names than it does now. Probably some of the names were dropped when the Dard language became extinct in those places. But a study of Ladakhi ethnography and archæology leads to the conviction that several villages which nowadays appear to be entirely Tibetan were in former centuries Dard.

DARD TEXT

1. སོ་རྟོ་ཏེ། རྫོང་རྩུང་རྩུང་ཏུ་རྩུ་རྩུ་ལྷོ་ལྷོ་མོ།
2. རྫོང་རྩུང་རྩུང་ས་ལི་ལོ་ཡ་ཤ་ཡན་ཟློང་།
3. ཏང་སེ་རྟོ་རྟོ་ལོ་ཏང་སེ་མེན་ན་ཡན་ཟློང་།
4. བ་ཤོ་གུ་ལྷུང་ས་ལི།
5. སོ་ལཱ་རྟོ་ལྷུང་ས་ལི་རྟོ་ཡ་ཤ་ཡན་ཟློང་།
6. ཏང་སེ་རྟོ་རྟོ་ལོ་ཏང་སེ་མེན་ན་ཡན་ཟློང་།
7. ལྷུང་རྟོ་ལོ་རྟོ་ལྷུང་ས་ལི་རྟོ་ཡ་ཤ་ཡན་ཟློང་།
8. ཏང་སེ་རྟོ་རྟོ་ལོ་ཏང་སེ་མེན་ན་ཡན་ཟློང་།