

to look out for a good day. A few documents seem to treat of religious persecution. They may refer to the struggle between the Buddhist and the Bonpo religions in the eighth century.

The title *sMan-pa* may be that of a doctor. In one of the documents a recipe is given regarding a medicine to be 'smeared on a corpse', probably to preserve it. It consists of sheep-dung boiled with a little water 'until it melts', butter, barley, etc. A few names of diseases occur, but we do not yet know what their nature was. Such names are: *yams*, *grums*, *gcong*, *'abring-nad*.

The style of the letters and secular documents is absolutely different from that of the classical language as it has become known from Buddhist religious literature. The language of the latter has practically remained stationary; for the fragments of Buddhist literature as found in the ancient sites of Turkestan show the same language as the present editions of the *bKā-'agjur* and the *bsTan-'agjur*. The language of the secular documents of the eighth century, on the other hand, is full of constructions with the auxiliary *mchis*, which is very rarely used in classical essays. From this it becomes probable that the language of Buddhist literature was already a sacred language when it was used for the first translations. It may have been the sacred language of Bonpo literature which had been handed down orally. The secular documents of the Stein Collection, on the other hand, may represent the language of daily life of the eighth century.

As regards the orthography of the documents, it is anything but settled. The nowadays silent prefixes are written or not according to the pleasure of the writer; thus we read *gzigs* or *zigs*, *dgra* or *gra*, *mchod* or *chod*, *bkā* or *kā*, *mkhar* or *k[h]ar*, etc. Aspirated tenues are continually mixed up with unaspirated ones. . . .

We must not forget, however, that most of the documents were written in a foreign country, and this circumstance may account for a great number of orthographical mistakes. But one observation may be of importance: although the prefixes are not written in a great number of cases, we hardly ever find the wrong prefixes used. In this respect the old documents differ from Tibetan letter-writing by ordinary people as we find it nowadays. . . .

There are many words the meaning of which is still quite uncertain. To mention only one instance, we do not yet know how to explain the local names *Bod*, Tibet, and *Li*, Khotan, when they are connected with numerals—*bod-gnyis*, *li-bzhi*, etc.—as is often the case. . . .