

# A New Gāndhārī Document from Niya

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The sands of the Taklamakan desert in the ancient settlement of Niya (or Caḍota) on the southern Silk Road continue to reveal written treasures of the past, shedding light on the life of an agrarian community in the western reaches of the Krōrayina kingdom.<sup>1</sup> The first finds of documents on wood, leather and silk written in Kharoṣṭhī script and Gāndhārī language were made by Aurel Stein during his four expeditions to Niya and published in Boyer et al. 1920–29 and Burrow 1937a. The 782 documents included in these two publications have been joined by more than a hundred more recent discoveries, from Niya and other sites on the Silk Roads, unearthed by Chinese and Sino-Japanese archeological expeditions as well as illicit diggings and chance finds. All of these, insofar as they are published, are cataloged and their texts critically evaluated in the Baums & Glass 2002– a online corpus, and the greater part of their vocabulary is now described in Baums & Glass 2002– b.

The document edited and discussed in the present article was first illustrated in Fogg 2004. According to the description there it measures 19.5×17.5 cm. It is exceptionally well preserved, including an intact double sealing. This wooden document is of the rectangular type consisting of two wood slabs, one inserted into the other, tied and then sealed, which was regularly used for legal documents. No detailed provenance is given, but the document is presented in the catalog together with another wedge-shaped document (an edition of which is under preparation). While the documents were at Sam Fogg’s store, photographs were taken by the International Dunhuang Project at the British Library and made available on the IDP website (<http://idp.bl.uk/>), where the present document appears twice (under the numbers “SF2004/2a” and “SF2004/2b”). The document was subsequently acquired by Middlebury College, where it is now preserved in the Middlebury College Museum of Art under the acquisition number 2006.021. Another illustration of the document was published in IDP 2017: 6. It is a pleasure to dedicate this first edition and study of the document to Jens Braarvig, who has done so much to make ancient

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1 A good introduction to ancient Niya, with further references, is Atkins 1991. Recent comprehensive studies include Padwa 2007 and Felföldi 2012.

manuscripts in Sanskrit and Gāndhārī from the Indian end of the Silk Road available to scholarship, with exceptional generosity and constant good cheer.<sup>2</sup>

The contents of the document can be briefly summarized as follows: Two plaintiffs—Kuṽiṇe and Mutre<sup>3</sup>—bring to court a case concerning the ownership of a certain Lepata. The court magistrates Yitaka and Vukto establish that current ownership of Lepata rests with Mutre. Mutre agrees, however, to transfer ownership of Lepata to Kuṽiṇe in exchange for three two-year-old camels. Mutre further states that he had already paid seven days' wages to Lepata.<sup>4</sup> In recompense, Kuṽiṇe pays twenty *muli* (a unit of currency) to Mutre. This settles all financial claims of the plaintiffs, as certified by four witnesses called Mutre (like the plaintiff), Rutre, Calmasa and Budharakṣi. The document was prepared by a scribe named Sunamta, has geographically unlimited validity and is the first (and only) document in relation to the case. It concludes by listing two claims of Mutre on Kuṽiṇe (for a seven-year-old camel and a piece of land) that have not been met, and by stating the punishment for breaking the agreement.

## Text

My transcription of the document uses the following conventions: co = cover-tablet, obverse; uo = under-tablet, obverse; cr = cover-tablet, reverse; [ ] = unclear text; ( ) = lost and supplied text; { } = intrusive text to be deleted. The transcription system is that of the *Dictionary of Gāndhārī* (Baums & Glass 2002– b).

- co1. eṣa lihitaga ari kuṽiṇeyaṣa paride  
 co2. lepatasa muliyena praceya mutreyaṣa anatha  
 co3. daridavo  
 co4. eṣa mutre cozboana yitaka vuktoṣa ca  
 uo1. saṃvatsare 20 1 mahanuava maharaya ji[u]ga mayiri devaputraṣa maṣe 4 3  
 divaṣe 20 1 iṣa  
 uo2. kṣṇammi {mutra} ari k[u]ṽiṇeya mutreyaṣa ca garahitamti lepatasa  
 praceya vivata prochi[taṃ]-  
 uo3. ti cozboana yitaka vuktoṣa ca ahono niṇeya hoda ahono puna se lepata  
 mutreyaṣa

2 In doing so, I owe thanks to Ingo Strauch, who with similar generosity—on hearing that I was preparing the present edition—shared with me an unpublished independent transcription that he had made of the same document several years ago and discussed several difficult points.

3 In this article, I use by preference the shorter form of local names, without the added Indo-Aryan stem vowel *-a-*.

4 The payment of wages shows that the ownership relation vis-à-vis Lepata was one of serfdom, not slavery, both of which existed in ancient Niya (cf. Agrawala 1953, 1955, 23–24 and Atwood 1991, 175–185).

- uo4. tanu ho[d]a puna ahono rajadaragena mahatvana puraṭha mutreya kuviñeya-  
yaṣa ca
- uo5. priyोजना sarajitaṃti lepataṣa kridena mutreya uthi[t]a ari kuviñeyaṣa
- uo6. lepatena picavita ari kuviñeyaṣa uthita lepataṣa muli duvarṣaga uṭana
- uo7. treya dita aṃña puna lepataṣa parikreya praceya mutreya kuviñeyaṣa ca  
sara-
- uo8. jitaṃti mutreya uthita sata[d]inaparikreya dura oḍita viṣati parikreya
- cr1. ari kuviñeyaṣa dadavo ho[taṃ]ti mutreyaṣa giṃnidavo eda niḥeya ki[d]aṃti  
puraṭha
- cr2. cozboana yitaka vuktoṣa ca aju kṣana uvatae aṃñamañaṣa vaṃti nasti  
danagrahana
- cr3. tatra sakṣi azate jaṃna apsu mutreya sakṣi rutreya sakṣi tarmena calmasa  
sakṣi
- cr4. śramaṃna budharakṣiya sakṣi eṣa lihitaga mahi tivira sunaṃtaṣa mutreya a-  
cr5. ri kuviñeyaṣa ca ajeṣaṃnae śarvadeśaṃmi pramana avi ca purvika kalaṃmi
- cr6. [mu]treya kuviñeyaṣa ca [bh]ete na hoati eda ahono mutreya uthita  
kuviñeyaṣa
- cr7. satavarṣi uṭi na dura oḍi[d]a aṃña [bh]uma na dura o[ḍi]da viṣati muli  
mutreyaṣa giṃni[da]-
- cr8. {da}vo h(o)de p(r)ahara dui śa[da] suṽarna sa[de]ra 1

## Translation

[co1] This document from *ari* Kuviñe [co2] concerning the price of Lepata [co3] is to be carefully kept by Mutreya. [co4] This is the seal of the *cozbo*s Yitaka and Vukto.

[uo1] In year 21 of his majesty, the great king, *jiṭuga* Mayiri, the son of the gods, on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the 7<sup>th</sup> month, [uo2] at this time, *ari* Kuviñe and Mutre made a complaint. They asked for a court case concerning Lepata. [uo3] The *cozbo*s Yitaka and Vukto have now made a decision. Now this Lepata [uo4] is the property of Mutre. Now again, Mutre and Kuviñe [uo5] amicably(?) reached agreement in front of the royal officials, the magistrates. Mutre came forward with regard to Lepata. [uo6] He handed over Lepata to the *ari* Kuviñe. The *ari* Kuviñe came forward. [uo7] He gave as price for Lepata three two-year-old camels. And also, Mutre and Kuviñe [uo8] reached agreement over the wages of Lepata. Mutre came forward. He had released seven days' wages. Twenty (*muli*) in wages [cr1] were to be given by the *ari* Kuviñe. They are to be taken by Mutre. They made this decision in front [cr2] of the *cozbo*s Yitaka and Vukto. From this time onward, there is no giving or taking towards each other. [cr3] The witnesses to this are free-born people: the *apsu* Mutre is witness, Rutre is witness, the *tarmena* Calmasa is witness, [cr4] the monk Budharakṣi is witness. This document of me, the scribe Sunaṃta, [cr5] at the request of Mutre and *ari* Kuviñe is an authority in all places. [cr6] And also there is no second

(document) of Mutre and Kuyiñe at an earlier time. Now concerning the following Mutre came forward: Kuyiñe [cr7] did not release a seven-year-old camel. He also did not release a piece of land. Twenty *muli* were to be taken by Mutre. Two hundred strokes, 1 gold stater.

## Notes

*ari*: Many of the personal names in the documents from Niya are prefixed with foreign words that are usually interpreted as titles, but in some cases may also be honorifics or family names. The term *ari* is tentatively taken as an honorific (whether or not it is derived from OIA *ārya*) by Burrow 1937b, 76, on the basis of not being associated with any clear function in the documents. Accordingly, I use it without article in my translation.

*praceya*: This postposition according to Burrow 1937b, 42 governs the the stem or the genitive (as it does in lines uo2 and uo7 of the present document), but at least one clear example of the instrumental (as in line co2) occurs in CKD 527 *tena prace*.

*cozbo*: The most common title in the Niya documents, to be compared with Tumshuqese (Maralbash) *cazba* and Avestan *čazdahvant-*. It appears to denote an intermediate administrative rank (Burrow 1937b, 90–91).

*jituga*: As shown by Brough 1965, 600–601, this title is a transcription of the Chinese 侍中 *shizhōng* (ONWC \*džətun, cf. Coblin 1994), indicating a vassal of the Chinese emperor and adopted by the Krorayinan king Amgoka (immediate predecessor of Mayiri) in his seventeenth year.

*ahono puna*: I take the *ahono* in *ahono puna se lepata mutreyaša tanu ho[d]a* in a strict temporal sense: the court establishes as a basis for its further proceedings that currently Lepata is, in fact, the property of Mutre. The *puna* in this sentence then has very weak force, apparently linking this sentence to the preceding one without true contrast (similar to the Greek particle δέ). In the next sentence, the two words occur in inverted order as *puna ahono*, and here a true contrast or progression is intended.

*priyojena*: There can be no doubt about the reading of this word, but its interpretation is problematic. One might suspect an intrusive vowel mark in the first syllable and suggest a derivation from OIA *prayoja-* in a slightly modified adverbial sense of ‘properly.’ On the other hand, such an intrusion would be quite unusual and unmotivated, and I therefore prefer to take the first part of this word as OIA *priya-*, and the whole as an adverb meaning something like ‘amicably,’ even though this has to leave the latter part of the word unexplained. We are in a formulaic expression, but the other documents from Niya offer no help: there *sarajitamti* is usually preceded by a mere indication of mutuality such as *samena sama* (e.g., CKD 209) or *eka bitiyena sadha* (CKD 574).

*uthita*: As a technical term in court documents, *uthita* (OIA *utthita-*) is used of the person initiating a particular action as part of the court case (similar to the English expression ‘to make a motion’). The subject is usually marked in the direct case, as

here in uo8 and cr6 *mutreya uthita*. In uo6 *ari kuyiñeyasa uthita* we have a rarer genitive subject (cf. CKD 655 *teṣa uthavidati*, and the general discussions of genitive subjects in Burrow 1937b, 59 and Jamison 2000, 77–78).

*lepatena*: Another instance of rare case marking is this direct object in the instrumental case, a phenomenon based on the merger of the old nominative and accusative into a single direct case, which in the case of agent marking came to be used interchangeably with the instrumental (Burrow 1937b, 56–58, Jamison 2000, 78–79).

*uṭana*: The genitive is, as here, occasionally used as object marker in the Niya documents, particularly when a partitive sense applies (Burrow 1937b, 59).

*sata[d]jinaparikreya*: The term *parikreya* (OIA *parikraya-*) in the Niya documents invariably means the wages provided to a laborer, either in money (the currency being called *muli*) or in goods. In view of following uo8 *viṣati parikreya* ‘twenty (*muli*) in wages,’ it would be tempting to read *satatina parikreya* ‘seventy (*muli*) in wages,’ but is not clear how the two different amounts would relate to each other, and the apparent genitive ending on *satatina* would remain unexplained. I therefore prefer to take the expression as a compound with *sata* ‘seven’ and *dina* ‘day,’ and to assume that the new owner of Lepata (Kuyiñe) here pays to the previous owner (Mutre) the equivalent of one week of Lepata’s wages, presumably as a reimbursement for work owed to Mutre but not done.

*dura oḍita*: The first word of this idiom, known from a number of other Niya documents, is variously spelled *dura* and *dhura*, raising the question of whether it should be interpreted as OIA *dūra-* ‘far’ or as OIA *dhurā-*, P *dhura* ‘burden, obligation.’ Boyer et al. 1920–29, 350 favor the former with their gloss “= *dūra*” on statements such as CKD 546 *tahi hastammi uṭi dura oḍidemi*. Burrow 1940, however, appears at least to toy with the latter interpretation, translating CKD 345 *avi ca cozbo larsu ima daṣutaraṣata muli śramamṇa anamdaṣenaṣa dhura oḍita* as “[a]lso the cozbo Larsu abandoned his claims against the monk Anaṃdaṣena for this 110 *muli*” (66) and CKD 425 *dura oḍita* (fragmented) as “released (from obligation)” (87). In the context of the present document, uo8 *sata[d]jinaparikreya dura oḍita* can be considered an obligation to be met, but less clearly so cr7 *satavarsī uṭi na dura oḍi[d]a* and cr7 *[bh]uma na dura o[ḍi]da*. A recently edited document from Niya provides, in the context of a divorce settlement, another clear example of the idiom referring to the release (here of the wife) rather than the meeting of an obligation: CKD 788 *campira uthita ima paṃcapriyae dura oḍidavo*, translated by Lín 1990, 285 as “Campira arose and parted from Paṃcapriyaka.” On balance, OIA *dūra-* thus appears to be the most likely identity for the first word of this idiom, with the well-known phenomenon of unetymological aspiration in writing (Burrow 1937b, 9–10) where it is spelled *dhura*.

*aju kṣana*: This formula regularly contains *aja kṣuna* ‘at this time,’ with *aja* from OIA *adya* and *kṣuna* a loanword from Bactrian *χπονο* and possibly, ultimately, Greek *χρονοσ* (as first suggested by Thierfelder in Humbach 1966, 24). In the

present document, the initial vowels of both words have been accidentally transposed (maybe under the influence of OIA *kṣana*).

*nasti danagrahana*: Another frequent legal term indicating that the two parties in this court case have no further financial claims on each other.

*azate jamna*: This term is regularly used to introduce lists of witnesses in the legal documents from Niya. It is likely that it is an Iranian loanword (cf. Avestan *āzāta-*) meaning ‘free-born’ or ‘noble,’ thus affirming the honorable standing and reliability of the witnesses.

*gimni[da]{da}vo*: Here the scribe accidentally repeated the syllable *da*, which he had already written at the end of line cr7, in the beginning of line cr8. It is possible that he was thinking of the antonym of *gimnidavo*, i.e., *dadavo*, but we already know from line cr1 that Mutre received, not gave, twenty *muli*.

*p(r)ahara dui śa[da] suyarna sa[de]ra 1*: The tablet ends rather abruptly with the specification of what is clearly a punishment and fine, presumably for the case that one party disobeys the terms of the agreement laid down in this document. Punishment by beating is also mentioned in other documents, but the specified number of strokes is unusually high in the present one.

## Onomasticon

All of the names mentioned in the present document occur—sometimes many times—in other documents in the Niya corpus, and a consideration of the information given in association with these other occurrences, as well as of the identity or otherwise of the persons bearing these names, is called for.

The simplest case is that of the great king Mayiri (also spelled Mahiri, Mahiriya and Maīri) in the dating formula of our document. Mayiri was the fourth of six known kings of Krorayina, and the present document was prepared in the latter part of his reign, in the second half of the third century CE (cf. Boyer et al. 1920–29, 323–328, Brough 1965, 594–596 and Padwa 2007, 304–308). Since he occurs only as part of the dating formula and did not play any role in the court case or the production of the present document, he does not need to be discussed further. Other occurrences of his name in the corpus are readily retrievable from Baums & Glass 2002– a.

The plaintiffs in the court case that produced the document are called Kuyiñe and Mutre. Kuyiñe is modified by the honorific *ari*, while the name of Mutre is given on its own. These two names co-occur in only one other known document from Niya (CKD 277), in a list of names correlated with numbers of camels. The Kuyiñe in this other document occurs under the heading *vurcugana pradejade* ‘from the district of the *vurcuga*,’ the Mutre under the different heading *krorañmciyana* ‘(from that) of the Krorayinans,’ but given the scarce context it is impossible to say whether we have to do with the same persons as in the present document.

Taking the plaintiffs individually, the name Kuyīñe (also spelled Kuyīñeya, Kuyīñeya, Kuyīñaga and Kviñaga) occurs in fourteen other documents (see also Padwa 2007, 314 s.v., who however lists only a selection of them). Again, it is not clear whether all of these documents refer to the same person, or indeed which ones among them do. Possible guides to the identity of persons are the titles prefixed to their names, but these are not infallible. First, the same person can progress through a number of offices and associated titles in the course of their lifetime (see Atwood 1991, 179 for the careers of Lýipe and Bhimaṣena). Second, it is clear from some documents that the same person could hold more than one, even numerous, offices at the same time (e.g., Lýipe in CKD 10, Bhimaṣena in CKD 439 and Suḡiya in CKD 520, cf. Padwa 2007, 275); this is compounded by the fact that some titles can be used either in a specific or in a loose sense (cf. Atwood 1991, 195 and Padwa 2007, 282–283 on *cozbo*). Third, it is always possible that two different people happen to have the same name, and possibly even the same name and same title. A clear case of different identities is document CKD 571, in which the name Kuyīñe occurs no less than three times in a list of witnesses, with different titles affixed each time: *kuhaneci cozbo* ‘governor in the capital,’ *ageta* ‘tax conveyor’ and *yatma* ‘tax conveyor.’<sup>5</sup> Here it would make no sense to list the same person as witness several times over.

With all these caveats, the titles associated with the name Kuyīñe in other documents can be subdivided into three groups.<sup>6</sup> Administrative titles are *daśavida* ‘master of ten’ in CKD 173 and 758, *ageta* ‘tax conveyor,’ *yatma* ‘tax conveyor’ and *cozbo* ‘governor’ all in CKD 571 (A.17.12.8), *gamñavara* ‘treasurer’ in CKD 310 and *maravara* ‘accountant’<sup>7</sup> in CKD 385; the military title *jenavida*<sup>8</sup> ‘armorer’ together with *camkura*<sup>9</sup> occurs in CKD 506 (A.31.1.10); and *kilmeci* ‘serf’ occurs in CKD 806. The name Kuyīñe occurs without title in CKD 25, 209 (V.3.1.12), 277, 802, 821, 826 and 858.<sup>10</sup> In principle, any of these Kuyīñes could be identical with the one from the present document bearing the simple honorific *ari*, even the serf from CKD 806 since serfs could become free men by joining the saṃgha (Atwood 1991, 174–175), and presumably remained so if after some time they resumed lay life. Chronologically, the Kuyīñe of CKD 571 is least likely to be identical to the one of the present document since (following the chronology in Atwood 1991, 161) at least 42 years intervene between the two documents. CKD 506 is at least 28 years

5 In my tentative translations of titles, I follow Atwood 1991, especially 194.

6 Where a document is explicitly dated, the date is indicated in parentheses after its number using the conventions of Padwa 2007: name of the king (A = Aṃgoka, M = Mayiri, V = Vaṣmana) followed by his regnal year, the month and the day.

7 On the meaning of this term cf. Burrow 1934, 510, 1935, 785.

8 A loanword from Bactrian ζηνοβιδο, cf. Davary 1982, 299.

9 The precise meaning of this title, which has been compared to Tibetan *cang khyur*, *cang khyir* remains unclear, cf. Burrow 1937b, 88 and Padwa 2007, 281–282.

10 Read “? *viñagaṣa*” in Ching 2012, 27.

earlier than the present document, but both are still possibly within the lifetime of a single person, as is CKD 209 (composed at least 12 years after the present document).

Similarly, the name of the other plaintiff in the present document as well as one of its witnesses, Mutre (also spelled Mutreya and Mudreya) occurs in thirteen other documents. Twice he bears the high title *kala* ‘prince’: CKD 181 and 216, once he is called *daśavida* ‘master of ten’: CKD 146, and ten times he bears no title: CKD 2, 74, 87, 93, 277, 304, 409, 463, 650 and 792. The last of these documents concerns a dispute about land (*bhuma*), which reminds one of the mention of land in line cr7 of the present document, but of course we may not conclude that the persons concerned are identical. We can probably also assume that the plaintiff of the present document is not identical with *kala* Mutre, since then either this title or some other honorific would certainly have been attached to his name. The witness *apsu* Mutre of the present document appear to be yet another person.

The object of the dispute, Lepata, shares his name with the father of the well-known Niya official Lýipe (on whom see Atwood 1991, 196–197 and Padwa 2007, 325–326), mentioned in CKD 106, 162 and 275. Again, however, it seems unlikely that here we have to do with the same person, since Lýipe was already an important person, mentioned as a *vasu* ‘administrator’ only five years after the present document was produced, and eventually ascending all the way to *cozbo*. Surely his father would not have been a serf to another person at the same time.

The decision in the present court case is made by the two *cozbo*s Yitaka and Vukto, who also affixed their seal to the document. Atwood 1991, 176, 196 points out that the office of *cozbo* usually involved dual government through two persons, one of them in a subordinate role, and that Vukto regularly appears as subordinate of Yitaka (Atwood 1991, 176, 196). Vukto’s title throughout much of this collaboration was *tomga* ‘transport officer,’ but by the time of the present document he had evidently been promoted to *cozbo* himself (unless this letter title is here used in its loose sense of ‘official,’ see above).

The name of Yitaka (spelled thus; Yitaga, Yitaya and Yitgo appear to be different persons; cf. Padwa 2007, 324) occurs in a total of 46 other documents. In 25 of these, he operates as *cozbo* together with the *tomga* Vukto alone: CKD 3, 11, 23, 28, 37, 42, 45, 138, 189, 216, 226, 236 (?21.1.21), 375, 427, 451, 468, 470, 481, 516, 524, 540, 561, 720, 729 and 746<sup>11</sup>, and in a further 2 together with the *tomga* Vukto and one other official (the *kori* Rutraya in CKD 49, and the *cozbo* Lýipe<sup>12</sup> in CKD 124). In three other documents—two of them dated in the same year as the present one—both Yitaka and Vukto are called *cozbo*: CKD 322 (M.21.2.11), 421 and 576 (M.21.12.23). CKD 44 also mentions the *cozbo* Yitaka together with Vukto, but the title of the latter is lost; CKD 741 mentions the *cozbo* Yitaka with another person

11 Boyer et al. 1920–29 read *t.m[ga v]u[g]tosa*.

12 Boyer et al. 1920–29 read *cojhbo-yitaka-co[jhbo] – pe – sa ca dadavo*, which is probably to be reconstructed as *cozbo yitaka co[zbo] (lýi)pe(ya)sa ca dadavo*.

whose name and title are lost. In four documents, the *cozbo* Yitaka occurs without subordinate: CKD 115, 266, 350 (?5.3.1) and 507, and in one document (CKD 399) he occurs alone and is given the title *mahacozbo* ‘great governor.’ Finally, there are nine other documents that mention a Yitaka (not necessarily the same person) without any title: CKD 13, 103, 108, 123, 210, 442, 545, 631 and 762.

Turning to Vukto, his name occurs in a total of 43 other documents (cf. Padwa 2007, 327). Those in which he figures together with Yitaka have already been discussed. The remaining twelve call him *apsu* ‘tax collector’: CKD 290, 384 and 577 (M.20.10.3; dated to the year before the present document), *tomga* ‘transport officer’: CKD 224, 272 (??.11.7), 436 (M.19.1.25), 568 (M.11.2.9) and 820 (M.14.11.24) and *cozbo* ‘governor’: CKD 407, while another two give the name without title but indicate that a Vukto was in charge of a district (*pradeja*): CKD 41 and 168, and one merely mentions a Vukto: CKD 859.

Four witnesses to the court case are named in the present document. The first of these is called *tarmena* Calmasa. It is not entirely clear whether *tarmena*—which in other documents is prefixed to the names Suḡita and Kule—is a title or a surname (Burrow 1937b, 94). The name Calmasa is known from 16 other documents, with the titles of *apsu* ‘tax collector’: CKD 72, 104, 120, 210, 350 (?5.3.1), 383 and 384,<sup>13</sup> *ṣoṭhamga* ‘finance officer’: CKD 341,<sup>14</sup> *cozbo* ‘governor’: CKD 532, and *ekhara* (unknown meaning, possibly a surname; Burrow 1937b, 80): CKD 762. The name occurs without title in CKD 80, 103, 115, 117, 120 and 552, and in CKD 163 Calmasa is in charge of a district (*pradeśa*). Whether one or several people are designated by these occurrences of the name, they would all seem fit to serve as ‘free-born’ witnesses.

The witness *apsu* ‘tax collector’ Mutre cannot be the same person as the plaintiff Mutre, but see above for a discussion of the other occurrences of the name.

The third witness is a Buddhist monastic (*śramaṇna*) called Budharakṣi. The name (also spelled Budharakṣida, Budharakṣiya and Budharakṣaya) occurs in seven other documents (cf. Padwa 2007, 321), with the titles *śramaṇna*: CKD 419 (A.28.11.13) and 425 (M.28.4.2),<sup>15</sup> *divira* ‘scribe’: CKD 330, 348 and 415 (M.7.3.5) and *cozbo* ‘governor’: CKD 288, and without title: CKD 809. Whether all of these refer to the same person is unclear, but at least the monk Budharakṣida is likely to be the same as the witness in the present document.

The fourth and last witness does not bear a title and is named Rutre. This name (also spelled Rutraya and Rudraya) is exceptionally common at Niya and occurs in

13 It is not entirely clear that Calmasa bears this title in CKD 120 (*apsu apñiya calmaśa kaṃciyaśa ca*) and 384 (*apsu vugto calmaśa paṃcimna namaśura*), since in both cases it precedes several names with Calmasa in second position.

14 Again, the title does not with absolute certainty apply to Calmasa in *ṣoṭhamga [koljisa] calma[sa]śa ca*.

15 Probably: the document has *śramaṇna śirmitra budharakṣiya śronaś[e]na śronapr(e)ma*.

46 other documents (cf. Padwa 2007, 324).<sup>16</sup> The wide variety of titles with which it occurs suggests strongly that we have to do with several different persons: a *kala* ‘prince’: CKD 112, 169 (M.26.10.?), 210, 467, 513, 529 and 531, a *kori* ‘animal officer’: CKD 4, 5 (?26.2.21), 32, 49, 74, 213 (?26.2.9), 223, 228, 250, 256, 330, 393, 416, 454, 547, 563 and 709 (A.26.1.18), a *kori* and *yasu* ‘administrator’: CKD 797, a *cozbo* ‘governor’: CKD 671, an *ariyaga* ‘escort’: CKD 22, 507 and 593 (M.17.6.20), a *tivira* ‘scribe’: CKD 90<sup>17</sup> and a *korara* (unless this is a surname; Burrow 1937b, 84): CKD 147, 180 (M.13.?26), 382, 429 and 762 (?8.1.25). The name Rutre occurs without title (or with unclear title) in documents CKD 45, 103, 123, 129, 131, 132 (?30.9.5), 151, 436 (M.19.1.25), 449, 709 (A.26.1.18) and 734. The dated occurrences place the prince, the escort, the *korara* and the titleless person in CKD 436 in temporal proximity to the present document, and out of these four the first three are unlikely to be referred to without title as in the present document, though it is equally uncertain whether the last can be considered identical with our Rutre.

The person most immediately involved in the production of the present document is of course its scribe (*tivira*), whose name is given as Sunaṃta. This is evidently an Indian name, spelled Sunaṃda in some of its other 20 occurrences. The profession of scribe was hereditary in Niya, and while the name of the father of Sunaṃta is never given, we know from CKD 516 that the mother of (one) scribe Sunaṃta was called Catisa (cf. Padwa 2007, 332). Sunaṃta is called a scribe in CKD 384, 436 (M.19.1.25), 576 (M.21.12.23), 577 (M.20.10.3) and 588 (M.20.10.17) and probably also in CKD 222 (*tivira ramṣomtsa suḡuta sunaṃta kuṇīta caṣgeyaṣa ca*, M.22.1.25). The dates given five of these documents make it highly likely that they were produced by the same person as the present document. The handwriting of CKD 222 is compatible with this conclusion (unfortunately no images are available for CKD 436, 576, 577 and 588). Sunaṃta is called *pulaya* (apparently a family name; Burrow 1937b, 106) in CKD 8 (?11.5.8) and 525 and *maṃtoṣa* (an unclear epithet) in CKD 558. No title is affixed in CKD 79, 80, 407, 459, 516, 524,<sup>18</sup> 528, 540, 558, 561<sup>19</sup> and 575 (M.17.1.22).

16 The different name Rutra is not considered here.

17 If the title applies to his name as well as the preceding: *tivira tgaca rutrayaṣa ca*.

18 The singular in (*ṣoṭhaṃga sucama sunaṃtaṣa ca*) as well as the otherwise known identity of Sunaṃta suggest that *ṣoṭhaṃga* here only applies to Sucama.

19 Yitaka and Vukto figure in the same document, suggesting that here too we have to do with our scribe.

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Outer side of cover tablet with statement of content, holder and issuing authority, and inner side of base tablet with beginning of body of document. (Image courtesy of the International Dunhuang Project, British Library.)



Inner side of cover tablet with continuation and end of body of document. (Image courtesy of the International Dunhuang Project, British Library.)

# Reading Slowly

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