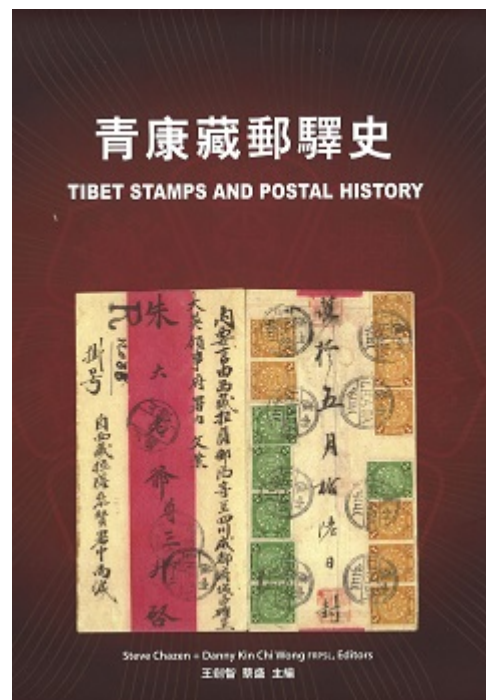


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PHILATHEK Verlagsauslieferung

Chazon, Steve/Wong, Danny Tibest stamps and postal history This

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Chazon, Steve/Wong, Danny Tibest stamps and postal history

This book is the first attempt to outline the postal history of the entire Tibetan highland.

Chazon, Steve / Wong, Danny Tibest Briefmarken und Postgeschichte

Dieses Buch ist der erste Versuch, die Postgeschichte des gesamten tibetischen Hochlandes zu skizzieren.

In a narrow sense, 'Tibet' refer to a much larger area of people sharing the same culture, spilling into the south of the Himalayas. This is the first survey of the postal history of the Tibetan-speaking people, from antiquity to modern times. Previous studies have tended to focus on central Tibet and overlook the other regions. Chapter 1 outlines the historical and geographical background of this study. Geographical boundaries of this study are defined by the boundaries of the Tibetan autonomous polities, which roughly

correspond to the traditional cultural divisions of U-Tsang (central Tibet), Kham (eastern Tibet), Amdo (northeast Tibet) and Ngari (western Tibet). Hence, Ngari is included in the chapters on Tibet, Labrang and other Tibetan regions in Gansu Province are included in the chapters on Qinghai, and Tibetan regions in Sichuan and Yunnan provinces are included in the chapter on Kham (Xikang).

The next chapters deal with the Imperial courier system (yizhan) in Tibet during the Qing dynasty and beyond. Chapter 2 focuses on domestic mail including Chinese, Mongolian and Tibetan, and chapter 3 on trans-Himalayan mail. Many letters are of historical significance and deserve further study.

Chapter 4 deals with Nepali military and official mail from Tibet handled by couriers, Nepali Court mail in the three border towns of Tibet, and mail from Mustang, a Tibetan enclave in Nepal. British military and civilian post offices in Tibet are discussed in Chapters 5 and 6. British military intrigues in Tibet shaped the modern history of Tibet. They caused the opening of the Yatung Customs and the route to Lhasa in 1894, and the importance of the Khasa trade route rapidly diminished. The more systematic Waterfall numbering system for postal markings are restored here, alongside the Hellrigl numbering. The British Indian post dominated Tibet for decades until their withdrawal in 1955.

Chinese post offices in Tibet, Kham (Xikang) and Qinghai during the Imperial and Republican eras are discussed in the succeeding Chapters 7, 8 and 9, plus chapter 10 deals with China-Tibet mail during the period of Tibetan separation from China. This includes important discoveries in the earliest mail, combination covers and secret postal routes, as well as a clarification of the Imperial postal tariffs in Tibet. The numbering of the postal markings in these chapters are original to this book.

The Tibetan local post and its fascinating proofs, cliches, settings, papers, colours and shades of the 1913, 1924 and 1933 and other issues are discussed in Chapters 11 and 12. Rates, markings, and domestic and international routes are presented in Chapter 13. As will be shown, we argue that the 1912 issue was in fact issued in 1913, and we attempt to clarify the prevailing postage rates. We also argue that the eastern route is not what it was perceived to be. Here the Waterfall and Hellrigl numbering of the postal markings are used in parallel.

The last part of this study is devoted to the early years of the People's Post. Chapter 14 is a pioneering study of the military posts, and Chapters 15-18 deal with the People's Post in Qinghai, Kham, Chamdo and Tibet respectively. The year 1965 marked the birth of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, the closure of the Yatung route and the opening of the Khasa exchange office. History effectively turned a full circle. The numbering of postal markings in these chapters are original, although Hellrigl numbers are listed alongside to save our readers trouble. Furthermore, in order to complete the story of the evolution of the postal markings, some of those described post-date 1965.

Tibetan regions outside China including Sikkim, Bhutan and Ladakh are discussed in brief in the appendices. Sikkim and Nepal played such important roles in the postal history of Tibet that two chapters are devoted to Nepal and references to Sikkim are found throughout this study.

A note on the translations. Tibetan names are transliterated according to their pronunciation, rather than the lengthy phonetically more precise spellings. Hence, the simpler version 'hamdo' (or Chabdo as it appeared in postal markings) is used instead of Chab mdo, and 'Ngari' is used rather than mNga 'ris. For Chinese names, the transliteration as it appeared in contemporary postal markings is used whenever possible, and pinyin is adopted where no contemporary postal markings are to hand. Thus, 'Tatsinlu' (itself a transliteration of Dαtsindo from Tibetan) morphed into 'Kangting' in the Republican era, and into 'Kangding' today. Similarly, 'Sikang', derived from 'Kham' in Tibetan became 'Xikang' in 1950-55 before the province was dissolved, and 'Peking' became 'Beijing' with the advent of the People's Republic. Measurements are in metric whenever possible, although Imperial measures used in earlier literature are retained.

This book is intended as a general introduction to this important aspect of Tibetology, incorporating major

findings over the past decades. For specialists in the respective stamps, please consult the studies in colour, shade, plating, varieties and errors listed under 'Other reading' in the respective chapters.

FOREWORD by STEVE CHAZEN

FOREWORD by DANNY KC WONG

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1 TIBET, THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

1. Historical background
2. Modern political geography
3. Traditional Tibetan postal history
4. Modern postal history

CHAPTER 2 THE IMPERIAL COURIER POST IN TIBET

1. Historical background
2. The yizhan system and procedures
3. Yizhan routes in Tibet:
4. Chinese stations and Tibetan stations
5. The Yizhan mail of Qinghai
6. Yizhan mail in the Tibetan regions of Sichuan and Yunnan
7. Lhasa Amban mail
8. Official mail conveyed by yizhan in Tibet
9. Dalai Lama letters
10. Panchen Lama letters •
11. Letters from the Sakya Lama and Karmapa
12. Letters from the Regents
13. Other monks and lay officials
14. Tibetan monastic letters to Mongolia
15. The last days of the yizhan in Tibet

CHAPTER 3 TRANS-HIMALAYAN YIZHANMAIL TO NEPAL AND INDIA

1. Tibet-Nepal War mail
2. Amban covers
3. The Anglo-Nepali War 1814-1816
4. The loot of Lhasa, 1883
5. The Khasa yizhan route
- The Kerong yizhan route
- The Yatung yizhan route

CHAPTER 4 NEPALI MILITARY AND CIVILIAN MAIL IN TIBET

- 1 Military mail during the Nepal-Tibet War 1855-56
- 2 The Gurkha Office and Tribute Missions
- 3 Nepali courts in Nylam, Kuti and Kerong
- 4 Mustang

CHAPTER 5 BRITISH FIELD POST OFFICES IN TIBET

- 1 The Bhutan campaign
- 2 The Sikkim campaigns
- 3 The Tibet Frontier Commission at Khambajong
- 4 The Younghusband Expedition
- 5 The Occupation of the Chumbi Valley

6 The Abor Punitive Expeditions

CHAPTER 6 BRITISH INDIAN POST OFFICES IN TIBET

- 1 The Indian postal tariff
- 2 The Yatung-Gyantse postal route
- 3 The Simla-Gartok postal route
- 4 The British Mission in Lhasa
- 5 Germany and Tibet
- 6 Indian censorship of Tibetan mail
- 7 Everest mountaineering expeditions
- 8 The Indian Post in Tibet, 1947-55

CHAPTER 7 THE CHINESE IMPERIAL POST IN TIBET

- 1 The Yatung Customs and the post office
- 2 The opening of postal services in Tibet
- 3 Co-operation with yizhan
- 4 The earliest Tibet CIP mail
- 5 Imperial postal markings
- 6 The imperial postal tariff
- 7 Special Trans-Himalayan tariff
- 8 Tibet surcharged stamps
- 9 A study of the Schultz (Diers) correspondence to Shanghai
10. The sea route via India
11. The closure of the Imperial Post In Tibet
12. The last Chinese Amban

CHAPTER 8 THE CHINESE POST IN KHAM 1902-1950 169

1. The first post office in a Tibetan town
2. The attempt on the Overland Route
3. The Tibet Expeditionary Force
4. Chamdo post office resistance
5. War between Sichuan and Tibet
6. The Red Army
7. Post offices in the Tibetan towns of Sikang Province
8. The postal markings of the Tibetan towns of Sikang Province
9. The postal markings of the Tibetan towns of Northern Sichuan
10. The Postal markings of the Tibetan towns in Yunnan

CHAPTER 9 THE CHINESE POST IN QINGHAI (AMDO) 1906-1949 197

1. The founding days
2. Postal markings of Qinghai
3. The extension of postal routes
4. Deliveries to nomadic areas
5. Air mail
6. Postal markings of the Tibetan regions in Gansu
7. Postal censorship
8. The Qinghai 'anti-bandit' overprints
9. The postal network in 1949

CHAPTER 10 CHINA-TIBET MAIL EXCHANGE

1. Chinese mail to Tibet via India
2. Tibetan mail to China via India
3. The attempt to reopen the Overland Mail Route

4. The Chamdo postal agency
5. The operation of the secret Overland Route
6. Unissued 'Tibet' overprinted stamps
7. The closure of the Overland Route, 1949
8. Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama offices in China
9. The reopening of the Overland Route

CHAPTER 11 TIBET LOCAL POST: FIRST AND SECOND ISSUES

1. The founding of the Tibet post office
2. The native proof
3. The Waterlow proofs
4. The First Issue
5. The Second Issue of high-value stamps

CHAPTER 12 TIBET LOCAL POST: THIRD AND SUBSEQUENT ISSUES

1. Proof sheets
2. The Third Issue
3. Perforated sheets and booklets
4. Use of bisected stamps
5. Postal fraud
6. The Telegraph Issue
7. The 'Official' Issue
8. 3 Trangka 'revenue' stamp?

CHAPTER 13 TIBET LOCAL POST: RATE, ROUTES AND MARKINGS

1. Postal rates
2. Postal routes and markings
3. Lhasa
4. Gyantse
5. Along the Lhasa-Gyantse post route
6. Along the Shigatse-Phari post route
7. The post route east of Lhasa
8. Other seals and crests
9. The international postal route via India
10. Chinese-Tibetan combinations
11. Closure of the Tibet post office

CHAPTER 14 MILITARY AND CONFIDENTIAL POSTS IN TIBET

1. The Chamdo Campaign
2. First Field Army mail from Qinghai
3. First Field Army mail from Xinjiang
4. Mail of the 181st Army Group
5. Second Field Army mail
6. The unified Military Post, 1951
7. Confidential mail

CHAPTER 15 THE PEOPLE'S POST IN QINGHAI

1. Sining (Xining) and East Qinghai
2. The Yushu and Golok Tibetan tribal areas
3. The 1958 Revolt, Youth Farms and Communes
4. People's Communes and Labour Camps
5. Mineral riches
6. Sky-high post offices

7. The Qinghai-Tibet Railway
8. National standard dates tamps in Qinghai
9. Tibetan regions in Gansu

CHAPTER 16 THE PEOPLE'S POST IN KHAM

1. Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture
2. Ngawa Tibetan-Qiang Autonomous Prefecture
3. Road building mobile post offices
4. Muli Tibetan Autonomous County
5. Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yurman
6. National standard date-stamps

CHAPTER 17 THE PEOPLE'S POST IN CHAMDO

1. Chamdo datestamps
2. The history of Kham-Tibet road building
3. The Chamdo road building mobile post offices

CHAPTER 18 THE PEOPLE'S POST IN TIBET

1. Lhasa JJJ lfi
2. Other principal towns in U-Tsang
3. Tibet interim cancellations
4. Ngari (Western Tibet)
5. National standard datestamps in Tibet
6. Bhutan mail via Yatung
7. Transit postage to India after the withdrawal of the Indian Post
8. The concessionary Trans-Himalayan postage rate
9. The postal impacts of the Sino-Indian Border War
10. Indian postal censorship after the War
11. Freedom from Hunger 1963
12. Reopening of the Zhangmu (Khasa) post route
13. Standard international datestamps
14. Tibet air mail

ADDENDUM: OTHER TIBETAN REGIONS

- I. Sikkim
- II. Bhutan
- III. Ladakh

BIBLIOGRAPHY

CONTRIBUTORS AND SPONSORS

INDEX

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