

medhā dhrtiś śuciś caiva prajñā kṣāntismṛtir yaśaḥ |  
 samāni stutigītāni gāthās ca vīdhā api |  
 bhāṣyāṇi tarkayuktāni dehāyanti viśāmpate |  
 kṣaṇo lavo mubūrttaś ca divā rātriś ca bhārata |

The Telugu MS. of the India Office agrees here with our editions, but there can be no doubt that the line in which the drama is mentioned is the work of a very recent interpolator. For the Rev. J. Dahlmann ("Mahābhārata als Epos und Rechtsbuch," p. 298) the passage in question was a very welcome proof of the existence of a dramatic literature in the fifth century B.C. (his date of the Mahābhārata-Smṛti). There was in his opinion no reason why this passage should be, as Professor Sylvain Lévi ("Le théâtre Indien," App., p. 58) said, "plus que suspect." From the point of view of textual criticism, the Rev. J. Dahlmann said there could be no objection to describing that verse or that passage as 'old.' Now we see that it is real 'textual criticism' which proves the very line in which *Nāṭaka* occurs to be anything but 'old.' This shows again how important the South Indian MSS. of the Mahābhārata are, and it is one more proof of the great need of a *critical edition* of the great Hindu epic.

M. WINTERNITZ.

Prague, April 19, 1903.

## 2. TIBETAN MSS. IN THE STEIN COLLECTION.

Washington, D.C.

April 6th, 1903.

DEAR PROFESSOR RHYS DAVIDS,—I have read with great interest Mr. Barnett's article, which appeared in the January number of the Society's Journal, on the Tibetan MSS. in the Stein Collection.

I have only had Dr. Stein's Preliminary Report and the accompanying plate (xvi) for the purpose of studying this valuable Tibetan document. Dr. Stein (p. 57) is inclined to believe that the Endere site, where the find was made,

was deserted earlier than Dandan-Uiliq, which he tells us (p. 40) was probably abandoned about the end of the eighth century. On the other hand, Mr. Barnett, relying on a Chinese sgraffito found in the same building as the Tibetan fragments, states his conviction that the latter cannot be dated later than the eighth century.

While I am unable, without having seen this Chinese sgraffito, to express an opinion on this important question, I must confess that I fail to see how it can fix the date of Tibetan manuscripts found scattered about the building on which it was scrawled.

However, I am ready to agree with Mr. Barnett that these fragments are among the earliest known relics of Tibetan literature which have reached us. We have fortunately, for purposes of comparative study, a document in Tibetan dating from the early part of the ninth century, and consequently practically contemporaneous with the Stein fragments, and which has the inestimable value of being dated, or rather whose date we can exactly fix by means of unimpeachable historical records, both Tibetan and Chinese. I refer to the tablet, locally called the *do-ring*, still standing in Lhasa before the great temple or *Jo-wo k'ang*, which gives the text in Tibetan and Chinese of a treaty concluded in A.D. 822 between the Emperor of China, Mu Tsung, and the King of Tibet, Ralpachan. A fairly good facsimile of a rubbing taken of this inscription was published in the Journal of the Society by Dr. S. W. Bushell (see n.s., XII, pp. 435-541).

I have compared the spelling of the Tibetan part of the Lhasa inscription with that of the Stein fragments, and have found that in both *myi* (མི) is used instead of *mi* (མེ) 'not,' *myed* (མེད) for *med* (མེད) 'not, nothing,' and *mying* (མིང) instead of *ming* (མེང) 'name.' Mr. Barnett tells us that in other leaves of the Stein fragments he has examined he has found *mye* (མེ) for *me* (མེ) 'fire,' and *dmyigs* (དམིགས) for

*dmigs* (དམིགས) 'thought, idea.' Not one of the other singular features noted by Mr. Barnett in the MSS. occurs in the inscription. The absence of a final *d* at the end of words, which in the modern language terminate in *r*, *l*, or *n*, is particularly interesting. It has *bkur* (བཀུར), *sbyar* (སྟུར), *hphrul* (འཕྲུལ), *mjal* (མཇལ), *yul* (ཡུལ), *rdul* (རུལ), *dbon* (དབོན), *phrin* (ཕྱིན), etc., which is the spelling of the present day.

As regards the use of *y* between *m* and the vowels *i* and *e*, I am inclined to see in it an attempt, since abandoned, to differentiate, in certain cases, words with nearly the same sound in the spoken language of the time. Mr. Barnett remarks that while *mye* (མེ) is used in the fragments for *me* 'fire,' it is written *me* (མེ) in the compound word meaning 'flower' (*me-thog* མེ་གོག). This, it seems to me, confirms my view, for there was no possibility of confusion in this case. At the present time, I may remark, such words as ལྷ་བ 'sickness' are pronounced *nya-wa*, ལྷ་བ 'to wound' is *ma-wa*, ལྷུག་མ 'a reed pen' is *nyug-ma*, but ལྷུག་པ 'a fog' is *mug-pa*; but when the language was first fixed in writing all superposed letters which were prefixes were pronounced (see Schiefner, *Tibetische Studien*, p. 330).

As to the frequent use in the Stein fragments of final *d* after *r*, *l*, and *n*, I hesitate to accept it as evidence of an archaic form, but think it is probably an irregularity peculiar to the copyist, in other words simply a fault in spelling. In two cases at least in the fragments published in the Preliminary Report (pl. xvi), the final *d* seems only explainable by supposing it introduced for the sake of euphony. I refer to line 2 of the first fragment, where we have *tinge-hdzind-to* (ཉིང་འཇིན་ཏོ), which then as now must

have been pronounced *tingen-dzindo*. The second example is in the fifth line of the same fragment, *ma-nord-pa dang* (མ་ནོར་པ་ངང་), which in many portions of the country would still be pronounced *ma-nord-pa dang*, though written *ma norpa dang*. As to evident cases of irregular spelling, we find one in the first fragment on the first line, where we have *hdhi lta ste* (ཨ་ཨི་ལ་སྟེ་), while on the second line we have the correct form in *hdi lta bu* (ཨ་ཨི་ལ་བུ་). On the third line we have *bkah stsabr to* (བཀའ་སྟེང་ལོ་) instead of *bkah stsal to*.

The second Stein fragment on pl. xvi, although I think written by the same hand which wrote the first, does not contain any of the singular orthographic features found in the latter, with the sole exception of the use of *myi* (མིའི) instead of *mi* (མི) 'not.'

On the whole, I am not yet ready to accept the views expressed by Mr. Barnett as to the "enormous importance of the Stein fragment for the knowledge of Tibetan palæography and orthoepy" until the peculiarities met with in them have been found in a much larger number of texts—(1) because a practically contemporaneous document, the Lhasa inscription, does not offer similar irregularities, except as regards the use of *y* between *m* and the vowels *i* and *e*; (2) as regards final *d* after *l*, *n*, and *r*, the use of double final suffixes (there are ten in Tibetan, *g*, *ng*, *d*, *n*, *b*, *m*, *r*, *l*, *s*, and *a*) is in violation of a well-known rule of Tibetan grammar as laid down in the works of the early Indian missionaries and interpreters who in the seventh or eighth centuries—at all events somewhere near the time when these fragments were probably written—gave the present script to the country and a regular orthography, which, so far as we know, has never been departed from in good manuscripts, books, and lapidary inscriptions.—Very sincerely yours,

W. W. ROCKHILL.