

as there is no people or land called Setebha. And when Binya Nwē is styled rājādirit=rājādhirājā, and is said to have taken possession of Dagun, now Rangoon, and to have devoted his latter years to religion, this fits well with the inscription in which he is called rājā sabbarājissaro, etc., and ratanattayamāmakō, saddhasaddho, etc. If kupati cannot be taken as a noun proper, as you think, it will very well do to understand it with the same meaning as bhūpati=the sovereign of the land.

As for the scroll, I remember the late Mr. Norris, one day in 1858, bringing it to the Asiatic Society's Rooms for my inspection. He had himself gone down to Professor H. H. Wilson, at the East India House Library, to fetch it. Mr. Norris was a very conscientious man, and I am sure he himself would have taken it back again to the East India House. I suppose, therefore, that it must now be kept either in the India Office Library or in the Indian Museum attached to it.—Believe me, dear Sir, yours sincerely,

V. FAUSBÖLL.

3. THE VIDYĀDHARAPIṬAKA.

DEAR SIR,—It may not be without interest to the readers of the R.A.S. Journal to notice a citation and short quotation of the Vidyādharapiṭaka contained in the Ādikarma-pradīpa (MS. R.A.S. Cat. by Cowell, and Eggeling, No. 69, and Minayef, *Recherches sur le Bouddhisme*, trad. Assiez de Pompignan, dans Musée Guimet).

The so-called Vidyādharapiṭaka has hitherto only been known through "Hiouen Thsang's Life and Travels" (see St. Julien's translation, i. 159, ii. 38, and S. Beal's *Fo-Koue-ki*), and more recently through I-tsing's translation by M. E. Chavannes, pp. 101, 102, "Les prières magiques se disant en Sanscrit p'i-t'i-t'ouo-louo-pi-ti-kia (Vidyā-dharapiṭaka). La traduction de p'i-t'i (Vidyā) est prières magiques, t'ouo-louo (dhara) signifie tenir dans les mains,

pi-ti-kia (piṭaka) signifie recueil. Il faut donc dire : le recueil de prières magiques.”

The St. Petersburg Dictionary, smaller edition, gives the word Vidyādharaṭṭaka, followed by the sign ? In the larger edition is added the note : “ Vidyādhara Piṭaka (vie de Hiouen Thsang, 159), doubtless a mistake for Dhāraṇī Piṭaka, as is the reading in Hiouen Thsang, ii. 38. To judge by the index it is this last which is wrong.” And surely enough the index under Dhāraṇī Piṭaka has, “ Read Vidyādhara Piṭaka (Kin-tcheou-thsang).” But the above-mentioned passage in M. Chavannes’ important contribution establishes clearly enough that in this instance the St. Petersburg Wörterbuch is wrong.

The few lines of Hiouen Thsang concerning the Vidyādharaṭṭaka are worthy of inquiry and discussion, as they are, nowadays, the very basis (alas! insufficient) of the historical scheme about the Buddhist Mahāyāna canons. What are the facts about the Vidyādharaṭṭaka (Dhāraṇī-ṭṭaka) and the equally obscure Saṃyuktasaṃcayapiṭaka ?

Dr. Kern, in his wonderful sketch of Northern Buddhism, has tried to explain names and things with a most reliable carefulness ; I dare not say always with a definite certitude. The problem is a very hard one, and a large part of the work is given to theory. Perhaps it may happen that Dr. Kern’s hypothesis will be confirmed by a further examination of documents, and if so, no one will be more glad than myself, as the story of Hīna and Mahāyāna becomes far more intelligible if we are duly authorized to accept the conclusions of the Dutch scholar.

“ In Hiouen Thsang we find a very important statement. He tells us that at the Council of Rājagṛha, immediately after the death of the Buddha, five Piṭakas were composed, that is to say, the three official or canonical ones, and besides them the Saṃyukta Piṭaka and the Piṭaka of Dhāraṇī’s, which he elsewhere mentions under the title of Vidyādhara Piṭaka. This statement of the Chinese pilgrim is quite true, if only its true meaning be grasped. There is not the smallest ground to suppose that the charms were younger

than the Suttas, the Vinaya, or the Abhidharma. Whether the collection of them, as we now have it, is as old as that of the three Piṭakas can neither be proved nor disproved till it has been edited. . . . The Piṭaka of the Dhāraṇī's corresponds to the Atharva Veda, just as the three others correspond to the three other Vedas . . ."¹

The passage of the Ādikarmapradīpa which is the subject of this letter, is a very short one; it occurs at the end of the work in a somewhat diffuse explanation of Tantra ritual and Vinaya precepts. It runs (fol. 12a *in fine*)—

Na mandracittena sarvadā muditacittena nāpyanyacittena :
tathā coktaṃ Vidyāḍharapīṭake :

Tapās tapāṃsi sarvāṇi dirghakālakṛtanyapi

Anyacittena mandena sarvaṃ bhavati niṣphalaṃ

Punaḥ pradāyavelāyāṃ

ityādi saddharmasvādhyāyādīnā pūrvarātraṃ jāgarikā
kartavyā.

It is unnecessary to point out the very common character of this idea. I think I have read it several times already, presented in the same or quasi the same terms, especially in the Bodhicaryāvatāra by Çāntideva, A.D. 600 (edidit Minayef)—

Tapās tapāṃsi sarvāṇi dirghakālakṛtāny api

Anyacittena mandena vṛthaiṣvety āha sarvavit.

(B.C.A. v. 16.)

I am, of course, not able to say whether the writers of the Ādikarmapradīpa had in their minds the same Vidyāḍharapīṭaka of the Chinese pilgrims. There may be many Vidyāḍharapīṭakas. A Vidyāḍharapīṭaka (dhāraṇī-pīṭaka) is properly a basket of books or special works (like Sūtras or Sāstras in Brahmanical schools) for the use of men directly engaged in magical business. The Vidyāḍharas are not only "himmlische Boten" or "Engel," but also "des porteurs de prières magiques" (compare the meaning of the word "vidvān" in Tantra rituals).

We have (Cambridge, Paris, Calcutta) several collections

¹ Kern's 'Buddhismus,' i. 510 and foll.

(saṅgraha) of Dhāraṇīs and Hṛdayas which can claim to the title of Dhāraṇī or Vidyādharapiṭaka. Like writers of similar handbooks the editor of Hiouen Tshang's Vidyā-dharapiṭaka (used or referred to in the Vihāras visited by the pilgrims, and compiled at an uncertain date) had, for the completion of his work, to collect every Mūlatantra approved by the regular schools Mahāsaṅghikas, Yogācāras (see Wassilief's Buddhism). Every Buddhist work has been canonical and worshipped as "word of Buddha" (Buddhabhāṣitam) by some part, not in every case known, of the Saṅgha.

Employing the word Piṭaka in this historical sense, it appears that Vidyādharapiṭaka would include all the reliable works of mediæval times which could have been classified amongst the Yogatantras (compare Pañcakrama, ii. 1).

In the actual state of our knowledge it would be unwise to say more. The Dhāraṇī and the Vidyādhara-piṭaka seem to be different names for the same thing. Can it be affirmed that some Dhāraṇipiṭaka or Tantra Saṅgraha has been promulgated by the Mahāsaṅghikas of Rājagṛha, together with the three Catholic canonical baskets? Nobody can yet hope to have a certain opinion on this point. To repeat the very words of Dr. Kern, "Nichts kann weder bewiesen, noch widerlegt werden ehe die sanskritischen und chinesischen Texten edirt sind." The only disputable point is the very "vraisemblable" opinion of Dr. Kern. Our Tantra and Dhāraṇī collections are not so modern as it has been said; they have in the Atharvamantras in the Kaṅgikasūtras a very old and classical prototype. Both Tantra and Atharva manuals have, I daresay, the same origin, and that a contemporaneous one.

It is established by the present notice that the Vidyā-dharapiṭaka is not, as MM. Roth and Böhtlingk seem to be persuaded, a word fancifully elaborated by Stanislas Julien, or Chinese writers.—Yours respectfully,

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Feb. 22nd, 1895.