

author as conclusive. As a matter of fact, it is wholly without weight, and ignores the constant errors of the MSS., which render it quite needless to see in the confusion of *y* and *ś* or *k* and *bh* a proof of their being originally in Kharoṣṭhi script.<sup>1</sup>

A. BERRIEDALE KEITH.

#### BESNAGAR PILLAR INSCRIPTION B RE-INTERPRETED

This Brahmanical religious record of the second century B.C., discovered by Mr. Marshall in 1908, is, I find, of considerable historical importance—firstly for the light it throws upon the origin and development of Buddhist doctrine and terminology, and secondly for its manifestly containing the first instance I can find of the affixed medial vowel *ri* in a Sanskrit document. The occurrence of the *ri* is not recorded by Bühler in his *Indian Paleography* (eds. 1896, 1904, table iii) before the Christian era; and this earlier appearance, not previously noticed, contributes to fixing the lowest date for the evolution of Sanskrit, one conspicuous difference of which language from the older Prakrit, from which it was evolved, being the tendency to insert this characteristic vowel.

The contents of the inscription, moreover, bear a somewhat different meaning from that assigned to them by previous translators. For I find that the terms, to which the different interpreters give diverse meanings, form really a known trifold category of cardinal Brahmanical virtues. As a result of not recognizing this fact, whilst one member of the triad has been given such varied

<sup>1</sup> I take this opportunity to correct Mr. Pargiter's complete misunderstanding (JRAS. 1914, p. 743) of my statement that the Vedic texts are not books of historic purpose; that phrase merely means, as I think must be plain, that they do not deal with history; their historic context is incidental and in my view of infinitely greater value than the pseudo-history of the epic and *Purāna* texts.

renderings as “liberality”, “self-surrender”, and “self-denial”, another, *svaga*, has been omitted altogether from the group, and a different word from the context substituted.

The stanza is incised in two lines upon the Viṣṇuite Garuḍa pillar, and it was indited presumably by the Greek ambassador Hēliodōros, whose dedicatory inscription on the opposite side has been ascribed, through the contemporary kings therein named, to the middle of the second century B.C., about B.C. 175–135,<sup>1</sup> which is in keeping with the Mauryan form of its Brāhmī script.

In citing here for comparison the four transliterations and translations already published I have italicized in the latter trifold category as rendered therein. Dr. T. Bloch's (JRAS. 1909, p. 1056) is—

1. tiṁnam amuta-padānām . . . anuṭhitānā[m]
2. neyati va dam[o] chāga apramāda.

“ [Hēliodōros] pledges himself to the three (cardinal virtues?), the observance of which leads to immortality, (viz.) *self-constraint, liberality, and modesty.*”

Professor L. D. Barnett's (JRAS. 1909, p. 1093)—

1. Trini (triṁni?) amuta-padāni[kā]le (?) anuṭhitāni
2. neyā ti v[uttam?] damaṁ chāga apramādo.

“ It has been said that one should know that there are three things which practised at the proper time are steps to immortality, viz. *self-restraint, self-surrender, and diligence.*”

Dr. Vogel's (Ann. Arch. Surv. Rep. 1908–9, p. 129)—

1. Trini amuta-padāni . . . [pta] anuṭhitāni
2. nayanti svaga[m] damō chāgō apramāda.

“ Three are the steps to immortality which . . . followed lead to heaven, [namely] *self-control, self-denial, and watchfulness.*”

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Fleet, JRAS. 1909, p. 1089.

Professor Venis' (JRAS. 1910, pp. 814–15)—

1. Trini amutapadāni . . . su anuṭhitāni
2. nayainti svaga damō chāgō aprāmādo.

“The paths to immortality are three; when rightly followed they lead to Svarga; they are *restraint of one's organs, surrender (of one's actions to the Lord), and attention (i.e. holding to the truth).*”

My own transliteration is the following. I have italicized those letters in which I differ from former readings.




1. Trini amṛta-padāni . . . sa anuṭhitāni
2. nayati svaga dama cāga apramādo.

This I translate as follows—

“Three are the paths which . . . followed lead to immortality, [namely] earnestness in Heaven[-aims], earnestness in self-restraint, and earnestness in charity.”

My transliteration, it will be noticed, differs from the previous ones in disregarding, as merely accidental flaws in the stone, several dots which have been read as *anusvāras*, and in reading as *ṛi* the letter previously read as *u* in the second word of first line, thus giving *amṛta* instead of *amuta*. That the letter in question is *ṛi* and not *u* will be evident by a reference to the published facsimile of the inscription in this Journal (1909, p. 1054, Pl. XVI). This photographic reproduction is much clearer in all its details than the ink impression given by Dr. Vogel (Ann. Arch. Surv. Rep. 1908–9, p. 128, pl. xlvi), though that also shows the *ṛi* element unmistakably.

The earliest form of the *ṛi* figured by Bühler in table iii, l. 7, shows it as a short lateral stroke attached to the left side of the dagger-shaped *ka*, thus, † which is, indeed, the normal location for the *r* in the later scripts. Now this lateral stroke is clearly seen in our inscription attached to the left side of the *m* (see below)

in both reproductions, but especially in Dr. Marshall's copy. On the other hand, the subscribed or "ligatured" *ra* in the Asokan alphabet is represented by a short vertical stroke affixed to the bottom of the latter, almost identical with the ordinary medial *u* (see table ii, l. 42, letters *prā*, *pra*, *bra*, and l. 43, *vra*). To differentiate the suffixed *ra* from this *u* our inscription uses the crinkled, wavy, ornamental form of *ra* as found in the Siddhapur edict of Asoka (table ii, l. 34, Nos. 11, 12). The initial letter *tri* is an example of this, where it is fixed to the letter *ti*, . From this *ra* we now find in our inscription that the *r* is distinguished by using the old straight stroke for the *ra* with the addition of the transverse stroke on the left side of the *ma*, thus . It was doubtless because of this downward stroke leading to confusion with the medial *u*, such as has misled all the translators of this inscription, which led to its being eventually omitted from below, and the whole suffixed letter placed further to the left and attached to the main letter by one extremity only, thus . As the shape in which we find the *ri* in this inscription is obviously a transition form which early dropped out of use, its presence elsewhere may afford a useful criterion for dating undated records to this period, namely about B.C. 175-135.

The triad category of the three "paths", or literally "steps" (*pada*), specified in the Brahmanical stanza are, I find, absolutely identical with the first three cardinal virtues specified by Buddha in his first sermon at Benares, in its most archaic version preserved in the *Mahapadhāna Suttanta*,<sup>1</sup> as the path for "crossing" to *Nirvāṇa*, and forming the original version of the *Pāramiyo* or *Pāramitā*. They are there enumerated in

<sup>1</sup> *Dīgha Nikāya*, ed. Pāli Text Soc., ii, 43, par. 11. See my article on the age and authority of this Suttanta in the *JRAS.*, July, 1914.

inverted order, with different synonyms for two of the terms, but they are essentially identical as seen in this table, where I have contrasted the category from several other sources.

THE TRIFOLD PATH, BRAHMANICAL AND BUDDHIST, COMPARED

(The order as numbered in each column is that in each respective list, and in columns 4 and 5 the prefixed Tri-ratna are excluded.)

Besnagar Visnuite Inscription 'B ( <i>anūthitāni amṛta-pādī</i> ). (1)	Mahā-padhāna S. ( <i>Pāramīyo</i> ). (2)	Saddharma Puṇḍarika (Kern, SBE. xxi, 316, and Lal. Vist. [Mitral, p. 34] ( <i>Pāramitā</i> ). (3)	<i>Anussatiṭṭhāna</i> of Pāli Dharmapada, p. 346 (Childers, <i>Dict.</i> , p. 45).. (4)	<i>Anusmṛtaya</i> (Nagarjuna's Sührillekha, p. 4; Mahavyutpatti, St. P. ed., li, 18; Dharma-Sam. liv, 46). (5)
1. <i>Svaga</i> , Heaven.	3. <i>Saggo</i> , Heaven.	3. <i>Kṣānti</i> , Patience.	3. <i>Devatā</i> , Gods.	3. <i>Devatā</i> .
2. <i>Dama</i> , Self-restraint.	2. <i>Śīla</i> , Right Conduct.	2. <i>Śīla</i> , Right Conduct.	1. <i>Silā</i> , Morality.	2. <i>Śilā</i> .
3. <i>Cāga</i> , Charity.	1. <i>Dāna</i> , Charity.	1. <i>Dāna</i> , Charity.	2. <i>Cāgā</i> , Charity.	1. <i>Cāgā</i> .

That Buddha should ever have taught that the worship of the gods was one of the main paths to *Nirvāna* is certainly opposed to the general spirit of later Hinayāna Buddhism. Yet we find in the very first *Hīnayāna* book of the first collection of Buddha's discourses that *Saggo* is declared by Gotamo to be the third of the cardinal virtues, and the ordinary meaning of that word is heaven (= Skt. *svarga*). Another meaning of *Saggo* is "abandonment", that is, the Sanskrit *sarga*, in which direction I find that the word was eventually altered; but originally it seems as if Buddha took over these three Brahmanical "paths" bodily as the basis of his *Pāramitās*. For I find in what is the same trifold category under the title of *Anussatiṭṭhāna*, in the *Dharmapada*, that *Saggo* therein appears as *Devatā* or "the gods" (see column 4 of table).

This Pāli category of the Buddhist *Anussatiṭṭhāna* appears to me to be absolutely the same group as the Brahmanical *Anūthitāni* of our Besnagar inscriptions

(cf. columns 1 and 4 of table), and the two titles themselves to be identical. That Pāli title seems to me to be manifestly an attempt to reproduce phonetically the Sanskrit *Anuṣṭhitāni*, and the Ceylonese interpretation of that title erroneous. The traditional Pāli explanation, according to Childers (*Dict.*, p. 45), derives the first part of the word, *Anussati*, from *Anussarati* (Skt. *Anu + smra*), "to be recollected," and interprets the category as "Subjects to be recollected". It is in this latter sense presumably that there has been introduced in front of the triple cardinal virtues the Buddhist triad, "The Three Treasures." Whilst this etymology, however, leaves altogether unaccounted for the second part of the name thus mutilated, *the significant fact remains that these three virtues (including worship of the gods) are positively placed within the selfsame category as the Buddhist Trinity; and thus presumes for these three-fold virtues a position of cardinal importance in Primitive Buddhism.*

*Dama*, in the Bhagavad Gītā (10. 4), has the sense of "curbing the passions" and "self-restraint" (Apte, *Skt. Dict.*, 1890, p. 380), and in Manu's category of cardinal virtues it is clearly employed as the equivalent of *śīla* or "right conduct" (Manu, v, 92). In the Dharmapada and Buddhist Abhidharma it is also "self-restraint, abstinence, sobriety, and discipline" (Childers, *Dict.*, p. 111). As it is derived from  $\sqrt{dam}$ , to tame, its literal sense is well brought out by "self-restraint", which conveys the idea of "curbing wild passions".

*Cāga*, literally "giving away", "liberality", is clearly the *dāna* of Buddha, though the former word is also ascribed to him, instead of *dāna*, as we have seen in the *Anussatitthana* (table, col. 4). The word is obviously archaic and is not found in the ordinary lexicons. Childers notes (*Dict.*, p. 97) that it represents *tyāga*, the ordinary meaning of which is "charity". *Tyāga*, with the higher idea of "giving up" or "renouncing" and

“self-sacrifice”, occurs in the Bhagavad Gītā, 12. 41, etc., and *Tyāgin* is one who looks for no personal reward from the performance of ceremonial rites (Bh.G. 18. 11; Apte, *Skt. Dict.*, p. 371).

*Amṛta-padāni* . . . *apramādo*. This Brahmanical phrase for the path to immortality was manifestly taken over bodily by Buddha to define the path to his *Nirvāṇa*. For we actually find in the Dhammapada, v, 21, the words *Appamādo amata-padam*, which is translated by Childers as “Diligence is the way to *Nirvāṇa*” (*Dict.*, p. 28), and by Max Müller as “Earnestness is the path of immortality (*Nirvāṇa*)” (SBE. x, 9). In appropriating the phrase, however, the Dharmapada has left out the three Brahmanical (and also early Buddhistical) categories for which the earnestness is requisite.

*Amṛta* or immortality was in Buddha’s primitive Buddhism the recognized equivalent of *Nirvāṇa*. Indeed, as late as the fifth century A.D. we find the orthodox Pāli commentator Buddha-ghoṣa saying, “*Nirvāṇa* is *Amata* (i.e. *Amṛta*), because not being born, it does not decay or die” (Childers, *Pāli Dict.*, p. 28).

The above evidence seems to establish irrefutably the fact that Buddha, according to what must be accepted as the earliest authentic texts, took over bodily from the Brāhmins their Viṣṇuite “Three-fold Path to Immortality” (*Amṛta-padāni anuṣṭhitāni*) and made it the basis of his own Six-fold Path to *Nirvāṇa* (the *Pāramitā*), and that the third cardinal virtue in Buddha’s original “path” was “worship of the gods”.

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### MAHA-PADHANA SUTTANTA

In confirmation of the conclusion reached in my article in the Journal pp. 661–80, that the proper designation of the 14th book of the *Dīgha-Nikāya* is “Mahā-Padhāna”,