

36 leaves of a grammatical work (commentary on a dhātu-pāṭha ?).

Commentary (not all in Sanskrit) on the Haremekhala, a known work on divination. By Māhuka, pupil of Durgaya. Calls itself (f. 3) a *proyoga-mālā*.

Siddhayogeśvarī-tantra.

Commentary on *Ḍākārṇava-tantra*.

C. BENDALL.

3. PURIFICATION BY RUNNING WATER.

DEAR SIR,—Purification by means of running water played a great part in the ceremonies of the Essenes, in the cult of the Dea Syra at Hierapolis, and in the religion of the Mandaites, who have retained much of the faith of their Babylonian ancestors. Manes appears to have laid stress upon it; and we have biblical illustrations in the story of Naaman and in the practice of St. John the Baptist. Wishing to know how far the idea was purely Syrian or had Babylonian analogies, I consulted my friend Mr. W. St. Chad Boscawen, and he has sent me a note which appears to me worthy to find a permanent place in the records of the Journal. I need hardly add that baptism in running water was only one of the modes whereby men were purified from sin or defilement in ancient Babylonia. The peculiarity of the cults I have noted above consists in the exclusive adoption of this method of purification, and in the fact that baptism must be in a running stream.—Yours truly,

J. KENNEDY.

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To the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society, London.

“PURIFICATION BY RUNNING WATER.”

In Chaldean mythology there was a goddess especially associated with purification, to whom running or tidal water was sacred. Her name was *Nin-a-kha-kud-du*, explained as

Belit egubbil, "Mistress of the waters of purification." In K. 157 we have a valuable passage: *ána me telelte ana me ella ana me Nin akha kuddu*, "To the pure waters, to the holy waters, to the waters of Nin.A." In K. 111 she is especially associated with Ea, the lord of the Ocean (*absu*), where we read, "by the charm of Nin.A., by the incantation of Eridu, the incantation of the deep and the noble charm of Eridu, which fails not." In another fragment, K. 2573 and K. 9274, 15-17, we have her again alluded to as "the pure lady, the traverser of the channels." She was also the goddess of the waves of the sea. In an incantation she is associated with the river-god, the god Naru 𒀭 𒌆 𒀭; and we have the passage *ina kibir Naru ellite*, "in the bed of the holy river (destroy them)." The name 𒀭 𒌆 𒀭 𒌆 𒀭 is composed of *Nin* = lady + *a* = water + *kha* = holy + *kud* = channel + *du* = goes.

In a magical fragment we have the *mie mute*, "waters of death," mentioned, and in the tenth Tab. of the Nimrod Epos, 70. 3, we read *mie mute qatta la iltapit*, "waters of death which cleanse not the hands"; there was also a well or spring of death referred to in R. iv, 26: *mie buri sa qata la iput*, "waters of the fountain or well which cleanse not the hands." In contradistinction to this there was the *mie naqbi ellutim*, "the waters of the holy fountain," in which the tree of life grew, and the waters of which were poured out for Istar in the underworld, where we read, "sprinkle Istar with the waters of life (*mie napiste*) and lead her from me (*Allat*)."

The cleansing power of tidal or running water is shown by Gilgames being told to bathe *seven* times in the sea, "and may the sea carry away his leprosy": see my article on Leprosy in the *Babylonian Record*. The fountain of life was called *Sukhal-ziku*, "the grotto of Life." Those sacred bathing-places were common, and are represented on the Ballawat gates; these were situated at the head waters of the Tigris, the river Zubnat, now the Tebeneh Su."

