

The book of Dzyân - Reality or a romance of the wildest kind?

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Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (12 Aug 1831 – 8 May 1891) founded the Theosophical Society in New York in September 1875, together with Oberst Henry Steel Olcott (2 Aug 1832 – 17 Feb 1907) and others.

Her «Isis Unveiled» (1877) and «The Secret Doctrine» (1888) influenced several esoteric groups after her demise. She also published «The Voice of the Silence» (1899), a translation of a pearl of wisdom.

«The Secret Doctrine» is a commentary to an otherwise unknown work, which scholars have been unable to identify, mentioned in the beginning of chapter 1 of «Isis Unveiled»:

THERE exists somewhere in this wide world an old Book--so very old that our modern antiquarians might ponder over its pages an indefinite time, and still not quite agree as to the nature of the fabric upon which it is written. It is the only original copy now in existence. The most ancient Hebrew document on occult learning--the *Siphra Dzeniouta*--was compiled from it, and that at a time when the former was already considered in the light of a literary relic. One of its illustrations represents the Divine Essence emanating from ADAM like a luminous arc proceeding to form a circle; and then, having attained the highest point of its circumference, the ineffable Glory bends back again, and returns to earth, bringing a higher type of humanity in its vortex. As it approaches nearer and nearer to our planet, the Emanation becomes more and more shadowy, until upon touching the ground it is as black as night.

In her «Secret Doctrine», she continues:

The "very old Book" is the original work from which the many volumes of *Kiu-ti* were compiled. Not only this latter and the *Siphrah Dzeniouta* but even the *Sepher Jezirah*, the work attributed by the Hebrew Kabalists to their Patriarch Abraham (!), the book of *Shu-king*, China's primitive Bible, the sacred volumes of the Egyptian Thoth-Hermes, the Puranas in India, and the Chaldean *Book of Numbers* and the *Pentateuch* itself, are all derived from that one small parent volume.

(Introduction, I p. 43)

«A romance of the wildest kind»?

Blavatsky based her «Isis Unveiled» and «Secret Doctrine» on a prehistoric text – guarded by secret societies. Evil tongues said that it was her own **invention**.

She was aware of such accuses when writing:

«It is more than probable that the book will be regarded by a large section of the public as a romance of the wildest kind; for who has ever even heard of the book of Dzyan?»

(Secret Doctrine, Preface, I, p. 8)

Is «the book of Dzyân» only a romance of the wildest kind?

Why not judge for yourself?

The Books of Kiu-Té

The books of Kiu-Té, also pronounced Kiou-Té, Kiu-Ti and Kiu-Che, are the source of Blavatsky's writings.

In «The secret books of "Lam-Rim" and Dzyan», she wrote:

«The *Book of Dzyan* - from the Sanskrit word "Dhyan" (mystic meditation) - is the first volume of the Commentaries upon the seven secret folios of Kiu-te, and a Glossary of the public works of the same name. Thirty-five volumes of Kiu-te for exoteric purposes and the use of the laymen may be found in the possession of the Tibetan Gelugpa Lamas, in the library of any monastery; and also fourteen books of Commentaries and Annotations on the same by the initiated Teachers.

Strictly speaking, those thirty-five books, ought to be termed "The Popularized Version" of the Secret Doctrine, full of myths, blunders, and errors; the fourteen volumes of *Commentaries*, on the other hand - with their translations, annotations, and an ample glossary of occult terms, worked out from one archaic, folio, the *Book of the Secret Wisdom of the World* - contains a digest of all the Occult Sciences. These, it appears, are kept secret and apart, in the charge of the Teshu Lama of Tji-gad-je. The Books of Kiu-te are comparatively modern, having been edited within the past millennium, whereas, the earliest volumes of the *Commentaries* are of untold antiquity, some fragments of the original cylinders having been preserved. With the exception that they explain and correct some of the too fabulous, and to every appearance, grossly-exaggerated accounts in the Books of Kiu-te - properly so-called - the *Commentaries* have little to do with these. They stand in relation to them as the Chaldaeo - Jewish *Kabalah* stands to the Mosaic Books. In the work known as the *Avatumsaka Sutra*, in section: "The Supreme Atman [Soul] as manifested in the character of the Arhats and the Pratyeka Buddhas", it is stated that:

Because from the beginning all sentient creatures have confused the truth and embraced the false, therefore there came into existence a hidden knowledge called Alaya Vijnana.

"Who is in possession of the true knowledge?" is asked. "The great Teachers of the Snowy Mountain", is the response.

These 'great Teachers' have been known to live in the "Snowy Range" of the Himalayas for countless ages. ... When the Buddhist Saviour appeared in India, their Ashrams ... where on the spots they now occupy, and that even before the Brahmans themselves came from Central Asia to settle on the Indus. And before that more than one Aryan Dvija of fame and historical renown had sat at their feet, learning that which culminated later on in one or another of the great philosophical schools. Most of these Himalayan Bhante were Aryan Brahmans and ascetics.

... Those exoteric volumes must be read with a key to their meaning, and that key can only be found in the *Commentaries*. Moreover there are some comparatively modern works that are positively so injurious as far as a fair comprehension of even exoteric Buddhism is concerned. Such are the *Buddhist Cosmos*, by Bonze Jin-ch'on of Peking; the *Shing-Tau-ki* (or The Records of the Enlightenment of Tathagata) by Wang Puk - seventh century; *Hisai-Sutra* (or Book of Creation), and some others.»

(H.P. Blavatsky Collected Writings, TPH, 1950-91, 14:422.)

The books of Kiu-Té is thus a name on 35 exoteric volumes in Tibetan Buddhism, 7 secret volumes and 14 esoteric volumes of Commentaries. The Book of Dzyân is the first volume of the Commentaries.

The name *Kiu-Té* was used in 1730 (101 years before her birth) by the Jesuit missionary *Horace Della Penna di Billi Fransesco Orazio* in «Breve notiza del regno del Thibet» («Brief Account of the Kingdom of Tibet»):

«This Shakia Thupba [Buddha] restored the Law that, according to them, had fallen into disgrace, and that consists now ... of 106 volumes, in which the disciples of Shakia Thupba compiled all the contents of these books after the death of their master, in the way they heard it from his mouth. ... These volumes are divided into two types of Laws, the first of the two Books are called the Laws of Endows, and the other, which consists of 38 volumes, is called **Kiute.**» [1]

The two scripture collections Kansjur and Tansjur are divided into «sections» (Tibetan: *sde*), examples are Sûtras (*mDo sde*) and Tantras (*rGyud sde*). The Catholic Pater was referring to Mahâyâna Sûtras («the Laws of Endows») and Tantric texts, *rGyud sde* – pronounced *Kiu-Té* as two scripture collections.

Those accusing Blavatsky to be an impostor, have not understood the Tibetan language.

The Book of Dzyân = The Book of Jain

In any encyclopedia we find the name **Jain**. In a Norwegian Aschehoug encyclopedia from 1969, the name Jain is spelled **dzain**. English spelling is /dzeI.n/.

Jain is a very ancient religion in India. Excavations in Mohenjodaro and Harappa trace it to the Indus Valley civilisation 3,000 BC. The founder is called **Jina** (dzina), «conqueror» or **Tirthankara**, because he gains victory in the battle for liberation, and makes a «ferry» (tirtha) to carry people over the ocean of the world suffering into Nirvâna.

Jainism have a lineage of 24 such Jinas or Tirthankaras. The 23rd and the 24th Tirthankaras, Parśwa Nâtha (877 – 777 BC) and Vardhamana (599 – 527 BC), are recognised as historical persons. The 24th has Mahâvira, the «Grand Hero», as a title of honour.

Similarities between Jainism and Buddhism are striking. So very striking that there are reasons to consider Buddhism as an offshot, a spesific sect within Jainism.

In «Isis Unveiled», Volume II, Chapter VII, «Early Christian Heresies and Secret Societies» (p.321), we read:

«Does not Pliny show them [Buddhists] established on the shores of the dead sea for "thousands of years"? After making every necessary allowance for the exaggeration, we still have several centuries B.C. left as a margin. And is it possible that their influence should not have left deeper traces in all these sects [Gnostics] than is generally thought? **WE KNOW THAT THE JAINA SECT CLAIMS BUDDHISM AS DERIVED FROM ITS TENETS - THAT BUDDHISM EXISTED BEFORE SIDDHÂRTA, BETTER KNOWN AS GAUTAMA-BUDDHA.** ...The Hindu Brahman records show the incarnation from the Virgin Avany of the first Buddha - divine light - as having taken place more than some thousands of years B.C., on the Island of Ceylon... The story of Virgin Avany and her divine son, Sâkyamuni, is recorded in one of the sacred books of the Cinghalese Buddhists - The Nirdhasa; and the Brahmanic chronology fixes the great Buddhistic revolution and religious war, and the subsequent spread of Sâkyamuni's doctrine in Thibet, China, Japan, and other places at 4,620 years BC.

...His [Buddhas] ideas were developed and matured while under the tuition of **TIR-THANKARA**, the famous guru of the Jaina sect. The latter claim the present Buddhism as a diverging branch of their own philosophy, and themselves, as the only followers of the first Buddha, who were allowed to remain in India... If any disinterested scholar could study carefully the Jaina litterature, in their thousands of books preserved - or shall we say hidden - in Rajpootana, Jusselmere, at Patun, and other places; and especially if he could gain access to the oldest of their sacred volumes, he would find a perfect identity of the philosophical thought... between the Jainas and the Buddhists. And now, if we trace the Jainas back, ...they are the only true descendants of

the primitive owners of old India, dispossessed by those conquering and mysterious hordes of white-skinned Brahmans whom, in the twilight of history, we see appearing at the first as wanderers in the valleys of Jumna and Ganges. The books of the Srawacs - the only descendants of the Arhâtas or earliest Jainas, the naked forest-hermits of the days of the old, might throw some light, perhaps, on many a puzzling question. But will our European scholars, so long as they pursue their own policy, ever have access to the RIGHT volumes? We have our doubts about this.»

In a footnote, we read that –

«We are told that there were nearly 20,000 of such [hidden] books.»

The book of Dzyân is the secret book of Jainism. In volume II of the Secret Doctrine, we find a passage with the title «Additional fragments from a commentary on the verses of Stanza XII [of the book of Dzyân]»:

«The MS. from which these additional explanations are taken belong to the group called "Tongshaktchi Sangye Songa" [in Tibetan], or the Records of the "Thirty-five Buddhas of Confession" as they are exoterically called. ... Of these "Buddhas", or the "Enlightened", the far distant predecessors of Gautama the Buddha... eleven only belong to the Atlantean race, and 24 to the Fifth race, from its beginnings. They are identical with the Tirtankaras of the Jainas.»

24 Tirthankaras of Jainism wrote **commentaries** to sacred texts. Those texts were Jain texts. The book of Dzyân = The book of Jain. It's as simple as that.

Orientalists, *unable to find* the name Dzyân, accused Blavatsky for having «fabricating» and «inventing» the name Dzyân. Dzyân is known in encyclopedias all around the world!

«One of the greatest, and, withal, the most serious objection to the correctness and reliability of the whole work will be the preliminary STANZAS: "How can the statements contained in them be verified?" True, if a great portion of the Sanskrit, Chinese, and Mongolian works quoted in the present volumes are known to some Orientalists, the chief work -- that one from which the Stanzas are given -- is not in the possession of European Libraries. The Book of Dzyan (or "Dzan") is utterly unknown to our Philologists, or at any rate was never heard of by them **under its present name**. ... The main body of the Doctrines given is found scattered throughout hundreds and thousands of Sanskrit **MSS.**, some already translated -- disfigured in their interpretations, as usual, -- others still awaiting their turn. Every scholar, therefore, has an opportunity of verifying the statements herein made, and of checking most of the quotations. A few new facts (new to the profane Orientalist, only) and passages quoted from the Commentaries will be found difficult to trace. Several of the teachings, also, have hitherto been transmitted orally: yet even those are in every instance hinted at in the almost countless volumes of Brahminical, Chinese and Tibetan temple-literature.»

(Secret Doctrine, Introduction, I, pp. 22-23).

To summarize:

- The book of Dzyân is a Tantra, a Tantric Text
- It was compiled in Central Asia in pre-historic times
- Jainism was the ingenious faith in India, predating Hinduism and Buddhism
- Buddhism was an offshot of Jainism, and Buddha was a disciple of Mahāvira
- Mahâyâna texts as well as the Buddhist Tantras (Kiu-Té) are Jaina texts
- Jainism was widespread in the Middle East
- The Quabbalah, the Pentateuch, Chaldean and Egyptian texts were based on this Jain work.
- The Essenes was a Jain community raising Jesus the Christ

Why Dzyân instead of Jain?

«DAN, now become in modern Chinese and Tibetan phonetics CH'AN, is the general term for the esoteric schools and their literature. In the old books, the word Janna is defined as "to reform one's self by meditation and knowledge", a second inner birth. Hence DZAN, DJAN phonetically, the "Book of Dzyan".»

(Secret Doctrine, Introductory, I, p. xx)

Early Middle-Chinese pronouncement of Ch'an is **DZIAN**. [2]

Translations of Mahâyâna Sûtras from India or Central Asia into Chinese in the first centuries AD contains errors. The Gandhâri hypothesis, supposed in the 1960's by John Brough and others, stated that most early translations of Buddhist texts into Chinese and Tibetan were translated – not from Sanskrit – but from Gandhâri Prâkrit where words were **written and pronounced in different ways**.

In 1998, Daniel Boucher published an analysis of the translation into Chinese by Dharmaraksha on 15 Sep 286 AD of the Lotus Sûtra, comparing it with the Sanskrit text translated by Kern. [3 , 4]

- The Central Asian Kashgar manuscript of the Lotus Sûtra (31a.2-3) states: «*samadapeti bahu bodhisatva(m) acintika kotisahasra jnane*» [3]. The

same passage translated by Dharmaraksha (Dh66c.2-3) confuse «inconceivably knowledge» (**jnana**) with **jana** (people).

- A sentence in Dharmaraksha's translation (Dh 71c.21-24) contains both **Jnana** (knowledge) and **dhyâna** (meditation, the correct word in the Nepalese Sanskrit version), since the translator team were unable to decide which of them were correct.
- In two places in Dharmaraksha's translation (Dh 65a.13, Dh 67a.3-4) we read **dana** (giving) instead of the correct **dhyâna** in the Sanskrit text.
- In the Central Asian manuscript from the Stein Collection (H3 Kha.i 24, fol.4a.8) as well as the Nepalese Sanskrit manuscripts Add.1682 and Add. 1683 from the 10th and 11th century AD in the British Library, we read **jnanena** (knowledge): *desenti te ranasahasrakotinam jnanena te prasthita agrabodhim* (14.4). The Kashgar-manuscript, the Gilgit manuscript from Kashmir and Dharmarakshas translation rendered **jnanena** (knowledge) as **danena** (giving) (Kash20a.6).

Prâkrit dialects in Gandhâra were confused with Sanskrit. **Jhana** was pronounced **jana** (short vowel) in northwestern Prâkrit. And **Dhyâna** was pronounced **jâna** (long vowel). In Kharoshti document no 511 from Niya, Central Asia, **dhyâna** is written **jâna**: *te jâna parami gate* - «they attain mastership through meditation». When reciting loudly a text in his own dialect, words with different meanings could sound the same and be indistinguishable to the ear.

If dental stops (the tongue pressed against the teeths) between vocals were hearable, words beginning with a **J** was written **D** and pronounced **Z**. In a seal inscription from Taxila, Central Asia, it is written «mahadhana» instead of the correct «mahajana». What is pronounced **Z** is written **D** and then confused with **DH**.

Why did Blavatsky use the name Dzyân instead of Jain?

She used a **correct pronouncement**, while western Philologists did not understand Prâkrit orthography until 1998. Central Asian and Chinese scribes in the first centuries AD also had problems understanding differences between written words and their pronouncement.

If you hear again the question «Who has ever even heard of the book of Dzyan?»

You may - Now - answer YES !

References:

[1] Reigle: «The Books of Kiu-Te or the Tibetan Buddhist Tantras. A Preliminary Analysis», Wizards Bookshelf, San Diego

[2] Cornelius Jan Kuiken et.al, «The Other Neng, Topography and Hagiography of the Sixth Ancestor», Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 21 Feb 2002, ISBN 90-71809-59-5

[3] «Gandhari and the early Chinese Buddhist translations reconsidered: the case of the Saddharmapundarikasutra», The Journal of the American Oriental Society, Vol.118 No.4, Oct 1998, pp.471-473

[4] Kern, Hendrik. 1884. «Saddharma-pundarika or the Lotus of the True Law», Oxford: Clarendon Press; reprint, New York: Dover Publications.

Appendix

The author of the above article, later on commented on his motivation for writing the above as follows:

“I was writing these words, because the Theosophical Society themselves have been completely and utterly silent on the subject. In 1888 philologs cried to Blavatsky: «impostor»! «liar»!
The answer: Silence.

When, in 1981, I made them aware that many accuses against them were false, the answer was: Silence. When, in 2006, a mail was posted to both their departments in Adyar and New York, the answer was: Silence.

So, I felt a moral obligation to tell those who listen that Dzyân = Jain, a religion predating Buddhism, and as old as the Indus seals from Happaranda, where its existence is documented, and that Kiu-Te in 1730, attested by a Jesuit missionary and pater was the pronouncement in a Tibetan dialect of what today is written rGyud-Sde - Tantra !

In short: Some cries «impostor» and «Liar»! Other states: We may actually prove - with linguistic and other branches of science, that Blavatsky was not a liar.

The answer from the Theosophical Society is - Silence. ”