

Kabul the *Trifolium giganteum* is called *sibarga*, and *Medicago sativa* is styled *riška*, is unsatisfactory. The word *sibarga* means "trefoil" (*si*, "three;" *barga* = Persian *barak*, *varak*, "leaf"), and is Iranian, not Sanskrit; the corresponding Sanskrit word is *tripatra* or *triparna*. The word *riška* is Afghan; that is, likewise Iranian.¹ Considering the fact that nothing is known about the plant in question in early Indian sources, it is highly improbable that it should figure in a Buddhist Sūtra of the type of the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*; and I think that Li Ši-čen is mistaken as to the meaning of the word, which he says he encountered there.

The above transcription occurs also in the *Fan yi miñ yi tsi* (section 27) and answers to Sanskrit *çāka-vrika*, the word *çāka* denoting any eatable herb or vegetable, and *vrika* (or *baka*) referring to a certain plant not yet identified (cf. the analogous formation *çāka-bilva*, "egg-plant"). It is not known what herb is to be understood by *çāka-vrika*, and the Chinese translation *mu-su* may be merely a makeshift, though it is not impossible that the Sanskrit compound refers to some species of *Medicago*. We must not lose sight of the fact that the equations established in the Chinese-Sanskrit dictionaries are for the greater part merely bookish or lexicographical, and do not relate to plant introductions. The Buddhist translators were merely anxious to find a suitable equivalent for an Indian term. This process is radically different from the plant-names introduced together with the plants from Iranian, Indian, or Southeast-Asiatic regions: here we face living realities, there we have to do with literary productions. Two other examples may suffice. The *Fan yi miñ yi tsi* (section 24) offers a Sanskrit botanical name in the form 鎮頭迦 *çen-t'ou-kia*, anciently **tsin(tin)-du-k'ie*, answering to Sanskrit *tinduka* (*Diospyros embryopteris*), a dense evergreen small tree common throughout India and Burma. The Chinese gloss explains the Indian word by *ši* 柿, which is the well-known *Diospyros kaki* of China and Japan, not, however, found in ancient India; it was but recently introduced into the Botanical Garden of Calcutta by Col. Kyd, and the Chinese gardeners employed there call it *çin* ("Chinese").² In this case it signifies only the *Diospyros embryopteris* of India. Under the heading *kan-sun hiañ* (see p. 455), which denotes the spikenard (*Nardostachys jatamansi*), Li Ši-čen gives a Sanskrit term 苦彌哆 *k'u-mi-č'e*, **ku-mi-či*, likewise taken from the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa*sūtra; this corresponds to Sanskrit *kuñci* or *kuñcika*, which applies to three different plants,— 1. *Abrus precatorius*, 2. *Nigella indica*,

¹ There are, further, in Afghan *sebist* (connected with Persian *supust*) and *durešta*.

² W. ROXBURGH, *Flora Indica*, p. 412.