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## EXEGETICAL AND ETYMOLOGICAL NOTES ON

### A FEW PALI WORDS\*

By

M. G. DHADPHALE

In this paper, I propose to discuss a few tricky words in Pali, etymologically and exegetically.

1. *Vekurañjāya*—This queer word, which occurs in the famous Assalāyana-Sutta of the *Majjhima-Nikāya* ( M. II. 154 ), is not registered by the *PTSD* although both the Sinhalese and the Roman editions of the text have accepted the reading. The context is that of a young mule, which being born of a mare and a he-ass, resembles both of them and hence can equally be called a horse and an ass. Buddha asks : “ *Yo so vaḷavāya gadrabhena kisoro uppanno, siyā so mātu’pi sadiso, pitu’pi sadiso, asso’ti pi vattabbo, ‘gadrubho’ti pi vattabbo’ti ?* ” ‘to which Assalāyana answers : “ *vekurañjāya hi so, bho Gotama, assataro hoti ; idaṃ hi’ssa, bho Gotama, nānākaraṇaṃ passāmi* ”. Miss I. B. HORNER translates this ( *Middle Length Sayings*, II. 346 ) as ‘because of its crossed birth’. This is quite in keeping with the *nānākaraṇa* referred to in the context and as a free rendering of the term it is quite fair also. I, however, propose to translate it more literally as ‘because of its being a *bi-kin*’, suggesting its derivation from the Skt. *dvaiikulajanya* (= one born in two families). NEUMANN ( *Die Reden Gotamo Buddhos*, Vol. II. p. 881 ) suggested the reading as *vekuranvāya* = *vaikriyānvayāya*. But he neither demonstrated the stages in the formation of the word, nor explained precisely the meaning which he wanted to suggest thereby<sup>1</sup>. I shall demonstrate the successive stages through which the Skt. *dvaiikulajanya* came to assume the present form *vekurañjāya*. That *-dvi-* or *-dve-* in Prakrits and even, sometimes in Pali, becomes *-be-* or *-ve-* does not need a special proof. About *kurañja* the following can be suggested. We come across a word *kolañña* in such places as *D. I. 89 ; DA. I. 152 ; Miln. 256*. According to the *PTSD*, the word means ‘belonging to the family of’. A primary stem *Kulañña* can be assumed to account for this secondary formation. *Kolañña* is

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<sup>1</sup> NEUMANN translates ( *ibid.* p. 228. ) *vekurañjāya* as ‘infolge der kreuzung’ i. e. as a consequence of cross-breeding.

formed from the weak grade  $-\tilde{n}\tilde{n}a-$  of  $\sqrt{Jan}$  (to be born<sup>1</sup>). Now, there is no difficulty in  $kula\tilde{n}\tilde{n}a$  becoming  $kura\tilde{n}\tilde{n}a$ , the  $la : ra$  fluctuation being quite common in Pali. We have  $m\tilde{a}r\tilde{u}ta : m\tilde{a}l\tilde{u}ta ; k\tilde{i}la : K\tilde{i}ra$ . The presence of  $-ja-$  is slightly disturbing but it seems to be due to a sort of contamination between  $kula\tilde{n}\tilde{n}a$  and  $-kulaja-$  both of which convey the same meaning. It may even be a sort of cockneyism for  $vekura\tilde{n}\tilde{n}\tilde{a}ya$ . So ultimately we have  $dvaikulajanya > vekulaj\tilde{n}\tilde{n}a > bekuraj\tilde{n}\tilde{n}a > vekura\tilde{n}\tilde{j}\tilde{a}ya$  (with the contamination of  $-ja-$  with  $-\tilde{n}\tilde{n}a-$  and a spontaneous nasalization after  $-ra^2-$ ). From the etymological aspect if we now turn to the exegetical aspect of the term we find that the Vedic Literature (*Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, VII, I, 1, 2,3; *Pāṇcaviṁśa Brāhmaṇa* VI. I. 6; *Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa* I. 57. 4) in allusion to the biological fact that a mule is a hybrid of the asinine and equine species chooses to refer to it as  $-dvi-retas-$  (=an off-spring receiving double seed). This expression in a way confirms the derivation of  $-vekura\tilde{n}\tilde{j}\tilde{a}-$  from  $-dvikulajanya-$ . Again, if we refer to the Pali accounts of the life-story of the Monk Bākula (v. l. Bakkula, Vakkula, etc.) we find that he received this queer name because of his being born and bred up in two different families. He thus came to be known as 'the two family-one'. ('NEUMANN in his *Die Lieder der Mönche und Nonnen Gotamo Buddho*, p. 63, attempts the derivation of Bākula from a Pali word  $-bakurus-$  or  $-bukuras-$ . This would have shed some light even on  $vekura\tilde{n}\tilde{j}\tilde{a}$ . But unhappily the words suggested by him are not noted by any of the Pali, Prakrit or Sanskrit Dictionaries. ).

Now a word about the reading '*kuṇḍam hi so, bho Gotama, assataro hoti*' which we find accepted by the Siamese and Nāgari editions of the text. This reading preserves, I think, a mild joke for, *kuṇḍa*, as we know, is a technical term in Smṛti-s which explain, '*patyau jīvati kuṇḍaḥ syāt, mṛte bhartari golakāḥ*' (*Manusmṛti* III. 174. *Yājñ.* I. 222). *Kuṇḍa* thus is a son born in adultery, more precisely the son of a woman by a man other than her husband while the husband is alive. Now, if we apply this legal terminology to the birth of a mule, the mule will turn out to be a *kuṇḍa*. He happens to be a son of a mother mare by the father ass when actually the horse ( who alone

<sup>1</sup> \*gnē or \*genē is the Indo-Eur. prototype of Skt.  $\sqrt{jan}$  and  $\sqrt{jnā}$  -to be born. Lat. *Genus*. Gr. *Gnētos*. The feminine form \**dvaikulajanyā* or \**dvaikulajnā* will mean literally 'a two-family genus.'

<sup>2</sup> spontaneous nasalization after  $-ra-$  is not uncommon in Pali. cp. *nānaveraṇjaka*, which in Skt. will be *nānavairājyaka*. Probably because some people pronounced *raja* and *rāja* as *raṅja* that Kālidāsa could have a pun like the one in *Raghu*. IV. 12. *rāja prakṛtirāṅjanāt*, when actually *rājan* is to be derived from  $\sqrt{rāj}$  and not  $\sqrt{raṅj}$ .

would have been a lawful husband to the mare) was alive. The whole description becomes humorous with the application of the legal terminology in the context of the birth of a hybrid animal<sup>1</sup>.

2. *Two Cases of Apheresis not properly understood*.—

a) *Bhujissa* : This occurs in several contexts ( *Vin.* I. 93 ; *J.* II. 313 ; *PvA* 112 ; in the form *bhujissam karoti* i. e. to grant freedom to a slave *J.* V. 313 ; VI. 389 ; *DhA* I. 19. *ThA* 200 etc.). *Abh* II. 516a reads ' *Adāso tu bhujisso* ' *tha* '. The meaning is pretty clear, It means an independent person, not a slave. *Nd*<sup>1</sup>. 160 says ' *dāsā bhujissam patthenti pihayanti* '. *Mhvyut.* 84 tries to derive it from *-bhunjati* : to purify. The word is really to be derived from Skt.  $\sqrt{bhuj}$  (= to enjoy, to use). Bhānuji-Dikṣita ( *Uṇādi.* IV. 179 ) explains it as *bhunkte svāmyucchiṣṭam* | *bhujyate vā* |. ' *rucibhujibhyām kiṣyan* |. The word is actually *a-bhujisya* and is used in the *Mṛcchakatika*<sup>2</sup> in the sense of a freed slave-girl. In Pali the initial *-a-* was dropped and the form became *-bhujissa-*.<sup>3</sup> ( As an adjective of *pātra*, *bhujisya* occurs at A. V. XII. I. 60. ' an enjoyable vessel '.)

b) The form *sithila* in *Dh.* 346 :

*Dhammapada.* 346. reads :

*etaṃ daḥam bandhanamāhu dhīrā*  
*ohārinam sithilam duppamuṇam* |

The corresponding verse of the *Udānavarga* ( 2. 6 ) gives the reading *susthira* in the place of the Pali *sithila*. LÜDERS ( *Über die*

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that the *Tattvabodhinī*, while explaining Pāṇini's aphorism *vatsokṣāśvarṣabhebhyaśca tanutve* ( V. 3. 91 ), explains *aśvatara* in a way similar to that in which it is explained in *M.* II. 153. Read : *aśvāyām aśvādutpannaḥ aśvaḥ* ; *aśvatvam ca jātiḥ* ; *tatsahacaritasya aśvāyām aśvādutpannatvadharmasya nyūnatvam*, *anyapitṛkatā* ; *tathā ca gardabhena aśvāyām utpāditāḥ aśvatarāḥ*, For *tara* in the *aśvatarā* meaning ' less of a horse ' see T. BURROW ABORI, XXXII, p 26.

<sup>2</sup> In Act IV Madanikā tells Sarvilaka what her Madam once spoke to her. It was : *yadi mama chandaḥ, tadā vinā'rtham sarvam parijanam a-bhujisyaṃ kariṣyāmi*. In the same Act Vasantasenā says about Madanikā : *Sādhu, Madanike, sādhu; a-bhujisyaṃ eva mantritam* ( Good ! Madanikā ! Good. You have spoken out like one not a slave ).

<sup>3</sup> Dr. N. H. SAMATANI ( *The Arthavinīścaya-sūtra and Its Commentary.* Patna. 1971. p. 257. f. n. 1 ) perhaps not knowing that *bhujissa* means ' dependent ' and not ' independent ', makes the following remark : "...But in Divy, this word ( i. e. *bhujisya* ) gives opposite meaning viz. ' dependent ', not ' independent ', or free as in out text .. Did archetype of Divy. read *nirdeśo'bhujisyo* ? ". The above explanation ( i. e. *bhujissa* in Pali represents *a-bhujisya* in Skt. ) obviates the necessity for the reading suggested by SAMATANI.

sprache des buddhistischen Urkanons. pp. 70-72) therefore thought, that the original Canon must have had *sutthila* written as *suthila* and not *sithila* as the present Pāli Canon gives us. Dr. M. A. MEHENDALE (*Aspects of Indo-Aryaa Linguistics*, p. 53) while admitting LÜDERS' conclusion 'that the difference between the Dhammapada (*Sithila*) and the Udānavarga (*Susthira*) version points to a common eastern origin', differs from him in the interpretation of the evidence. He quotes *Taitt. Sāmh.* 3. 2. 4. 3 where the heaven and the earth are addressed as '*dr̥ḍhe sthah̄ sithire*'. In these contexts, he says, *dr̥ḍha* means 'strong' and not 'fixed'. They, therefore, are not incompatible, as is presupposed by LÜDERES. He further suggests that a contrast seems to be intended when the *kāmapāṇḍana* is called *sithila* (loose) yet *duppamuñca* (difficult to get rid of). All this appears very illuminating yet a simpler explanation of how *sithila*, *dāḷha* and *duppamuñca* go together appears to be that *sithila* here represents *a-sithila* (with the loss of the initial vowel). Pāli has many such examples. (see 'Aphesis in Pāli'. M. MALLIK *Viśveśvarānanda Indological Journal*, Vol. V. Sept. 1967, pp. 195-97). Pāli has *vats̄msa* (*Vin.* II. 153) for *avatamsaka*; *gini* (*J.* IV. 36) for *agni* etc. Along with this there is also a tendency of stating contents in both the ways, positive and negative. Some precision is sought by using a tern formed by a negation of its antonymous expression. (Helmer SMITH. *Saddanāṭi* p. 1135. 'Noter aussi la précision apportée par un terme négatif selon la formule'). We have such examples as '*eko a-dutiyo*' (*Dhs.* 11), '*puññehi a-pāpakethi*' etc. as we have in the *Ait. Brāhmaṇa* (I. 13) '*sthemne balāya avisramsāya*' where Sāyaṇa comments, "*tasyaiva anvaya-vyatirekābhyaṃ vyākhyānam prābalyaṃ avisramsanaṃ ca*"! In *dāḷha*, *sithila* and *duppamuñca*, we have only an instance of the same style. The meaning of *dāḷha* is strengthened by a negative synonymous expression *a-sithila*. It should be pointed out that *dr̥ḍha* and *a-sithila* as a pair of synonyms occur in Vedic Literature also. *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* III. 1.5 has *dr̥ḍho'sithilāḥ syām'iti* and *dr̥ḍho ha vā a-sithilo bhavati*. These passages from the Vedic Literature — and not the one cited by LÜDERS and MEHENDALE — are, more pertinent in the explanation of the above Dhammapada verse.

3. *Atthikatvā* = This word, almost always, occurs as coupled with *manasikatvā*, *PTSD* (*atthikatvā*, s. v.) explains it as equivalent to *atthikatvā* derived from Skt. *arthikṛtvā* (= *arthikṛtya*) and hence meaning 'to make something one's *attha* i. e. object'. The commentators suggest a derivation from Skt. *astikatvāt* abl. sing. of the abstr. noun *astikatva* (= the attitude of a believer). Taken independently this well suits the context. But the tenor of the passage — especially its almost invariable coupling with *manasikatvā* — does not favour its interpretation as a form of an abstract noun. *manasvikatvā* is a gerundial form

and so must also be *atthikatvā*. I, therefore, suggest the derivation from Skt. *āsthā* (not merely 'regard' or 'respect' but 'attention'). The gerundial form of the denominative from *āsthā* would be *atthikatvā* (= 'having attended to', 'respecting' (the speech) etc.). The shortening of the first vowel (-ā- changing to -a-) is due to the stress on it and we find the same in *attamana* which is intended for *āttamana* i. e. 'one whose mind is uplifted', 'one who is elated'. It will be noticed that SnA on Sn. 680 *cittimkaritvā* (which replaces many times *atthikatvā*) has *ādaram karitvā* and explains Sn. 1058 *atthitam ovadeyya* as *sakkaccam (ovadeyya)*. These expressions containing the synonyms of *āsthā* strengthen the suggestion that *atthikatvā* stands for Skt. *āsthām kṛtvā*. Lastly the *Sunakha-Jātaka* (No. 242) contains a verse which goes as *atthitam me, mansmim me, atho me hadaye kataṃ*. the Skt. paraphrase of which will be, *āsthitam me, manasi me atha me hrdaye kṛtam* (Tr. I have attended to it, I have kept it in my mind, I have kept it in my heart). *M. II. 212* has *atthitavatam Gotamassa padhānam ahosi* which Miss I. B. HORNER, rightly translates as 'Gotama's striving was steadfast' (*Middle Length Sayings*, Vol. II. p. 401).<sup>1</sup>

4. *Paḷibodho*: The meaning is clear. It is 'hindrance', or 'obstacle'. ANDERSON (*Pali Reader* s. v.) takes this as a dissimilation for *Pari + ruddhati*, while TRENCKNER (Notes. 66) suggests its derivation from *pari + √bādh*. Nd2. p. 188 by using in collocation with *paḷibodho* such other words as *laggita* etc. suggests its derivation from *prati + √bandh*. The preposition *prati* becomes in Prakrits as *paḍi* and *Paḷi*. In *paḷibodho* the latter is seen. The change of *bandha* into *budha* and *bodha* is of course very irregular. But it seems to be due to some peculiar pronunciation. There is an indication in *Samantapāsādikā* p. 894 (= Nāgari Edn. Vol. II. p. 927) that regular puns for the sake of fun were made on *Buddha* and *baddha*. This is given in the explanation of -*dava*- or mirth. We read *kiṃ Buddho? Patibuddho; kiṃ dhammo? go-dhammo, ajadhammo! kiṃ saṃgho? migsamgho pasusamgho* etc. *Paḷibodho* thus comes from *pratibandha* which if translated literally is only 'interception'.

5. *Tiracchānakathā*: To translate this merely as 'animal talks' (PTSD. s. v.) is to miss its real implication. The animals do not play any part here. The word *tiracchāna* which later came to assume the

<sup>1</sup> Recently I have come to know that WINDISCH (*Māra Und Buddha*, p. 100) has also tried to connect *atthikatvā* with Skt. *āsthā*. He translates the word as 'Acht geben'.

meaning 'animal' is used here in its etymological sense<sup>1</sup>. The word was first applied to stray movements of the animals. The proper translation, therefore, should be stray-talks or talks which go off the tangent (i. e. irrelevant speech or speech not pertaining to the point in view.) In other words it is an *ana'tthasamhitā vācā* (PTSD. s. v.)

*Abbreviations:*

<i>Ait.</i>	— Aitareya.
<i>Abh.</i>	— Abhidhānappadīpikā
<i>D.</i>	— Dīghanikāya
<i>DA.</i>	— Dīghanikāya-Atthakathā
<i>DhA.</i>	— Dhammapada-Atthakathā
<i>Dhs.</i>	— Dhammasaṅgaṇi
<i>J.</i>	— Jātaka
<i>M.</i>	— Majjhimanikāya
<i>Mhvut.</i>	— Mahāvvyutpatti
<i>Miln.</i>	— Milindapañho
<i>Nd.</i>	— Mahāniddeśa
<i>PTSD.</i>	— Pali Text Society's Dictionary. by. Rhys DAVIDS and STEDE
<i>PvA.</i>	— Petavatthu-Atthakathā
<i>Taitt. Samh.</i>	— Taittirīya Samhitā
<i>Vin.</i>	— Vinaya-Piṭaka
<i>Yājñ.</i>	— Yājñavalkya-Smṛti.

<sup>1</sup> DA. I. 89. correctly interpretes *tiracchāna-kathā* as *Sagga-mokkha-maggānam tiraccha-bhūtā kathā*.