

PROHIBITED SPEECH AND *SUBHĀSITA*  
IN THE THERAVĀDA TRADITION \*\*

*e keci... bhagavatā budhena bhāsite  
save se subhāsite vā*<sup>1</sup>.

Whatever the society or communities they wished to enlighten, all Indian legislators and teachers have laid great emphasis on the rules concerning speech and truthfulness. I propose to examine here some of the views expressed on this subject by the Theravādins in various Sutta and KhuddakaNikāya texts, and to investigate how they extend the concept of *musāvāda* or lie, and define *subhāsita*. From even a cursory

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\* Member of ERA 94.

I thank Mr. K. R. Norman who was kind enough to amend the English text.

\*\* Abbreviations. For Pāli texts, as in *A Critical Pāli Dictionary*, cf. *Epilegomena to Vol. I*, by HELMER SMITH, Copenhagen, 1948. For Jaina texts, as in WALTHER SCHUBRING, *Die Lehre der Jainas...*, Berlin und Leipzig, 1935 (Gundriss der Indoarischen Philologie und Altertumskunde 3.7) = *The Doctrine of the Jainas...*, translated from the revised German edition by Wolfgang Beurlen, Delhi-Varanasi-Patna, 1962. T = *Tikā*.

1. ASOKA, Calcutta-Bairāt. Cf. the editions by E. Hultzsch, CII, I, Oxford, 1925; and K. L. Janert, in *Abstände und Schlussvokalverzeichnungen in Asoka-Inschriften*, Wiesbaden, 1972 (Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland, Supplementband 10).

Falsehood is always strongly condemned, e.g. Sn 664:

*mukha-dugga vibhūta-m-anariya*

*bhūnahu pāpaka dukkata-kāri*

*puris'anta kali avajāta*

*mā bahu bhāṇ' idha, nerayiko 'si,*

« O foul-mouthed, false, ignoble man,

Truth's murderer, ill-doer, vile:

Thou ill-born, least of men, woe's seed,

Speak here not much! Hell's man art thou! » (Hare's transl.). See also

M I.415.16-19; It 18.8-18; etc.

On « truthfulness » in the « Jātaka Stories », see JOHN GARRETT JONES, *Tales and Teachings of the Buddha. The Jātaka Stories in Relation to the Pāli Canon*, London, 1979, *passim*, especially 138 ff.; cf. index, s.v.

comparison with the precepts handed down in other communities, it appears that, among the Buddhists, a shift of emphasis had very early taken place, and the new attitude they developed never lost ground: though always highly praised, exactitude and accuracy have nevertheless been supplemented by other much valued virtues.

Bearing in mind the fact that Brahmanic, Jaina and Buddhist circles share an important background, I shall here consider the Buddhists' opinions on three points.

First: like the other communities, the Buddhists consider *vāc* as belonging to the well-known triad *kāya, vāc, manas*<sup>2</sup>, in which *vāc* is clearly a prominent item<sup>3</sup>: A II.51.29 \* f. states that

*nābhāsamānaṃ jānanti missaṃ bālehi paṇḍitaṃ*  
*bhāsamānaṃ ca jānanti desentaṃ amataṃ padaṃ,*

Perhaps it is not out of place here to recall Asoka's views on the subject. Several Minor Rock Edicts recommend telling the truth: II (B) *sace vataviye* (Erragudi; cf. Brahmagiri, Jaṅga-Rāmeśvara, Rājula-Manḍagiri, Siddāpura); *sacca* is one of the components of *dhamma*, according to Pillar 2 (C) and 7 (EE); and, as is well-known, the Calcutta-Bairāt edict enjoins the *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs* to listen to and meditate upon several texts, among which *e cā Lāghulovāde musā-vādaṃ adhigīya*, Lāghulovāda concerning lying. On the other hand, in the XII Rock Edict, *vaca-gu(t)ti* is extolled and defined as « neither praising one's own sect nor blaming other sects », a *vaca-guti kiti ata-pāsaṃḍa-pūjā va pala-pāsaṃḍa-galahā vā no siyā* (Erraugdi, D), cf. Hultsch's transl. Compare *infra*.

In a recent paper (*The Calcutta-Bairāt Edict of Asoka*, in the « Volume in Honour of Professor J. W. de Jong... », edited by L. A. Hercus et al., Canberra, 1982, 491-498), U. Schneider has commented upon these recommendations emphasizing the fact that the Calcutta-Bairāt edict especially condemns lie and liars. It seems to me that, in fact, the above formula, *e keci... Bhagavatā bu(d)dheṇa bhāsita sa(v)ve se subhāsita vā*, « all that has been spoken by the Blessed (One, the) Buddha is well spoken indeed », cannot be separated from the Buddhists' definition of *su-bhāsita* (*infra*, 70 ff.). In this connexion, Professor E. Lamotte kindly reminds me of the reverse phrase, A IV, 164, 7 ff., *yaṃ kiṃ ci subhāsitaṃ sabbhaṃ taṇi tassa bhagavato vacanaṃ arahato sammāsaṃbuddhassa*, « whatsoever be well spoken, all that is the word of the Exalted One... » (Hare's translation): a formula which, as he informs me, has no counterpart in the *Ekottarāgama*, though it occurs in a Mahāyānasūtra, the *Madhyāśayasaṃcodanasūtra*, the Sanskrit text of which is quoted in the *Śikṣā-samuccaya* (p. 15) and the *Pañjikā* (p. 431 f.; cf. the discussions in E. LAMOTTE, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, Louvain, 1949, in « Bibliothèque du Muséon », 18, I, pp. 80-4, and notes; II, p. 1070 f.).

2. For references in Pāli texts, see PED, s.v. *kāya* III. « (Ethical) ... *kāya* as one of a triad »; cf. the definition of *vinaya*, Pj I, 134, 15: *kāya-vācā-citta-vinayana*; etc.

As for the Jains, they teach three *gūptis* (W. SCHUBRING, *Die Lehre der Jainas*, Berlin-Leipzig, 1935 = *The Doctrine of the Jainas*, Delhi..., 1962, § 173.

But, according to L. Renou, this triad, well-known in Avestic, is absent in Vedic (*Canon bouddhique pāli*, II [in the press], see the note to I, Paris, 1949, p. 53.27 f. = D I 60.21 f.).

3. J. G. Jones emphasizes the « typically Buddhist attitude to right speech as being of paramount importance », *loc. cit.*, 60 f.; cf. 122 f., etc. He assumes that in Ja n° 56, guarding the voice is the first to be recommended. Actually, though Chalmers translates « do no evil whether in word, or thought, or act », the pa. text uses the usual phrase: *kāya-dvāraṃ vacī-dvāraṃ mano-dvāraṃ ti tiṇi dvārāni rakkha, mā kāyena pāpa-kammaṃ kari mā vācāya mā manasā*, I, 276, 27-29.

« If he utter no word men know him not —  
 A wise man mixed with fools.  
 If he open his mouth men know him  
 When he teaches the Deathless Way... »<sup>4</sup>.

As a matter of fact, the fool is characterized, in contradistinction to the wise man, by his bad behaviour as far as action, speech, mind, are concerned<sup>5</sup>. On the other hand, the Pabbajjā-sutta describes « the seer » (*cakkhumā*) thus:

*pabbajitvāna kāyena pāpa-kammaṃ vivajjayī,  
 vacī-duccaritaṃ hitvā ājīvaṃ parisodhayī,  
 « Gone forth, he wholly shunned  
 In body evil deeds,  
 And rid of wrongful talk,  
 He cleansed his way of life »*<sup>6</sup>.

In the relevant commentary<sup>7</sup>, *vacī-duccarita* is said to be fourfold, a remark which agrees with many canonical passages<sup>8</sup> and with what is said in the Hemavata-sutta; here, yakkha Hemavata asks several questions about Gotama, among which we find:

« Say, doth he never speak false words?

.....

Doth he not use provoking speech?  
 Say, is his talk not slanderous?  
 Speaketh he never emptily?»,

to which yakkha Sātāgira's answer is the following:

*musā ca so na bhaṇati*

.....

*atho na khīṇa-vyappatho  
 atho vebhūtiyaṃ nāha, mantā atthaṃ so bhāsati*<sup>9</sup>,  
 « Nay, he doth never speak false words,

.....

Nor speaketh he provokingly;  
 His talk is never slanderous;

With insight speaks he of the goal »<sup>10</sup>.

4. = S II 280.28\* f. = Ja V 509.27\* f.; *Gāndhārī Dharmapada* (ed. J. Brough) 235; *Uddānavarga* (ed. F. Bernhard) 29.43.

Woodward's translation.

5. *Tihi... dhammehi samannāgato bālo veditabbo... Kāya-duccaritena, vacī-duccaritena, mano-duccaritena*, A I, 102, 3 f.; *tīhi... dhammehi samannāgato paṇḍito veditabbo... Kāya-sucaritena, vacī-sucaritena, mano-sucaritena, ib.*, 7 f.; *bālo duccintita-cintī ca hoti, dubbhāsita-bhāsi, dukkaṭakamma-kārī, ib.*, 19 f.; *paṇḍito sucintita-cintī ca hoti, subhāsita-bhāsi, sukaṭakamma-kārī, ib.*, 30 f.

6. Sn 405-407, Hare's translation.

7. Pj II, 382, 14: *catubbidhaṃ vacī-duccaritaṃ*. Cf. *infra*.

8. *Cattār' imāni... vacī-duccaritāni... Musā-vādo, piṣuṇā vācā, pharusā vācā, saṃphappalāpo*, A II, 141, 2-5. Also see D III, 170, 13-175, 27\*, *infra*.

9. Sn 158-159.

10. Hare's translation.

On *khīṇa-vyappatha*, K. R. NORMAN, in BSOAS, 42.2 (1979), 324 ff.

It can be seen that, as well as untruth and frivolous talk, harshness and slander are also vigorously condemned here: I shall revert to this fourfold condemnation in my third point.

But now, my second point. The Buddhists share the general Indian conviction that *vāc* is an active force<sup>11</sup>, and a sort of weapon; therefore, it can be dangerous, it can imply violence, and, if misused, it can hurt the man who handles it. Hence the rules which everyone, and more particularly consecrated individuals, should observe regarding speech. In a śloka concerning the *snātaka*, Manu summarizes them as follows:

*satyaṃ brūyāt priyaṃ brūyāt na brūyāt satyaṃ apriyaṃ  
priyaṃ ca nānṛtaṃ brūyād, eṣa dharmah sanātanaḥ,*  
« Let him say what is true, let him say what is pleasing, let him  
utter no disagreeable truth,  
and let him utter no pleasant falsehood; that is the eternal law »<sup>12</sup>.

So saying, Manu follows — or rather encapsulates — various teachings of the Dharmaśāstras; for there also it is prescribed that one must abide by truth, and speak no harsh words, for they are liable to create enmity<sup>13</sup>.

The Dhṛp has the same warning:

*mā voca pharusam kaṃci, vuttā paṭivadeyyu taṃ;  
dukkhā hi sārambha-kathā, paṭidaṇḍā phuseyyu taṃ* (133),  
« Speak not harshly to anyone; those you address may answer you;

For angry words bring trouble; blows for blows may touch you »<sup>14</sup>.

Now, the terrible consequences brought about by cruel words and reprehensible speech are illustrated by the fate which Kokālika (alias Kokāliya) had to suffer after his deaths; they are alluded to in several

11. Cf. J. GONDA, *Die Religionen Indiens, I. Veda und älterer Hinduismus (Die Religionen der Menschheit)*. Herausgegeben von C. M. SCHRÖDER, 11), Stuttgart, 1960, p. 21 ff. (« Das Wort »); *tejo-mayī vāg iti*, ChUp 6.5.4; 7; *infra*, n. 20; further the « victory by speech(es) »; *subhāsita[m]-jaya*, S I 222.20-224.15 (*infra*, n. 59); etc. Compare, metaphorically, « the capacity of the language as a weapon », M. M. DESHPANDE, *Sociolinguistic attitudes in India. An historical reconstruction*, Ann Arbor, 1979 (*Linguistica Extranea. Studia* 5), 94.

12. Mn 4, 138; Bühler's translation (SBE 25).

13. Cf. *ĀpastambaDharmaSūtra*, ed. Bühler, Bombay, 1868, 1.11.31.17: *nāsau « me sapatna » iti brūyāt; yady « asau me sapatna » iti brūyād dviṣantaṃ bhrātrvyaṃ janayet*, « (In company) he shall not say, "This person is my enemy". If he says, "This person is my enemy", he will raise for himself an enemy, who will show his hatred », Bühler's translation (SBE 2: 1.11.31.15!); cf. *Arthaśāstra*, 8.3.25 f.

14. BURLINGAME's translation, in *Buddhist Legends* (HOS 29, part 2). Fausbøll notes a parallel saying, in *Mahābhārata* (SBE 10, p. 37 note); cf. « *Patna* » *Dharma-pada* (ed. G. Roth) 198; *Udānavarga* 26.3.

Generally speaking, compare, on *The origin of ahimsā* (and its « magico-ritualistic background »), H.-P. Schmidt, in *Mélanges d'indianisme à la mémoire de Louis Renou*, Paris, 1968 (Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne, 28), pp. 625-55.



Jātakas: he was punished because he spoke without considering circumstances and place, and without moderation and reflexion...<sup>15</sup>; and in addition, in his last rebirth, because of the calumnies and harsh words he uttered and the malevolent thoughts he nurtured against Sāriputta and Moggallāna<sup>16</sup>. The consequences are serious illness, death, and hell<sup>17</sup>.

It should be observed that (1) Kokkālika's words are condemned as being an act of cruelty, « *phārusaṃ te kammaṃ kataṃ* »; (2) it seems to be accepted that aggressive speech normally meets with retribution; for instance, Kokkālika is told: « may you be tormented according to your own word », « *tava vācāya tvam eva paccassū* » ti<sup>18</sup>.

The same view is stated, although in other words, in Sn, where the opening stanza of the Kokkāliya-sutta compares *dubbhāsita* with an axe...

« Wherewith the fool doth cut himself  
Whenas he speaketh evilly »,  
*purisassa hi jātassa kuṭhārī jāyate mukhe*  
*yāya chindati attānaṃ bālo dubbhāsitaṃ bhaṇaṃ*<sup>19</sup>,

that is *atta-cchedak'aṭṭhena kuṭhārī-sadisā pharusa-vācā*<sup>20</sup>. This saying, it should be noted, is repeated twice in S I, as well as in A V<sup>21</sup>; it also occurs at the beginning of the Lokapaññatti<sup>22</sup>.

(3) It is remarkable that the Buddhists pay great attention to the feelings underlying the words that are actually uttered: Kokkālika's thoughts are not separated from his words; he is told: « *pasādehi Kokkālika Sāriputta-Moggallānesu cittaṃ* », « let your heart be in charity with Sāriputta and Moggallāna »<sup>23</sup>.

I now come to my third point: the general acceptance, in India, of the value of asceticism, discipline and self-control. In this connection,

15. Cf. Ja III.103.12\*-19\*; II.177.8\*-11\*; etc.

16. Cf. *Takkāriya-Jātaka* IV, 242 ff.; « *Kokkālikena dve agga-sāvakaṃ akkuṭṭhā* » ti, 244.30.

17. Compare *supra*, n. 1, Sn 664; or the dramatic narrative of the first lie, Ja III 454-461...

18. Ja IV 245.2; 7. - Conversely, kind words are rewarded, Ja IV 448 ff. (to which Mlle. Nalini Balbir draws my attention).

19. Sn 657; Hare's translation.

20. Pj II.477.15: it will be observed that *dubbhāsita* is equated with *pharusa-vācā*, which is « similar to an axe in the sense that it cuts (the user him)self. Cf. the *Mahābhāṣya* on *duṣṭa śabda: sa vāg-vajro yajamānaṃ hinasti* (*The Vyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, ed. F. Kielhorn, Poona, 1962, third ed. by K. V. Abhyankar, 2.10.14); compare the heated axe in the ordeal ChUp 6.16.1 f.

21. S I.149.17\* ff., 152.22\* ff.; A V.171.12\*-13\*, 174.1\*-2\*.

22. Cf. EUGÈNE DENIS, *La Lokapaññatti et les idées cosmologiques du bouddhisme ancien*, Lille-Paris, 1977, I (text), p. 3; II (notes), pp. 5-6. It recurs in the *Mahāprajñā-pāramitāśāstra* (ETIENNE LAMOTTE, *Le traité de la grande vertu de sagesse*, II, Louvain, 1949, repr. 1967, Bibliothèque du Muséon, 18, p. 812 [precisely, in the development concerning Kokkālika, pp. 806-13]).

23. Ja IV.244.22; cf. Sv I.74.6 ff., *infra*.

the Buddhists, as is well-known, define ten *śikṣāpada*s<sup>24</sup>, the first four of which are closely related to the first four (*mahā*-)vratas of the Jains and the first four vows of the Brahmanic ascetics<sup>25</sup>. The Buddhist list is often mentioned and the wording of the formula is quoted, e.g. in the Dasasikkhāpada of Khp:

1. *pāṇātipātā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi*,
2. *adinnādānā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi*,
3. *abrahmacariyā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi*,
4. *musāvādā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi*...<sup>26</sup>.

The first *mahāvratas* of the Jaina monk are: (1) not to destroy life, (2) not to lie, (3) not to take what is not given, (4) to abstain from sexual intercourse<sup>27</sup>. Jacobi rightly observed that the corresponding « Buddhist vows... agree with those of the Jaina ascetics »<sup>28</sup> — except that the order of the enumeration is slightly different: with the Buddhists the pledge not to lie comes not as the second, but as the fourth vow<sup>29</sup>. Can the reason for this change be surmised? And is the difference between the Brahmanic and Jaina communities on the one hand, and the Buddhist community, on the other hand, not more important than would seem at first sight?

24. Vin I.83.31-84.2: *anujānāmi... sāmaṇerāṇaṃ dasa sikkhāpadāni...: pāṇātipātā veramaṇī, adinnādānā veramaṇī, abrahmacariyā veramaṇī, musāvādā veramaṇī...*, referred to in E. LAMOTTE, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien...*, Louvain, 1958 (Bibl. du Muséon 43), p. 59, observing that all possible infringements are detailed in the *Prātimokṣa*. It is noteworthy that, in the *Vin*, « telling a conscious lie » is generally atoned for by a *pācittiya*, thus in Vin IV.2.14\*\*, etc.; cf. the discussion by I. B. HORNER, *The Book of the Discipline*, I (SBB 10), p. XXV; II (SBB 11), p. 166, n. 1, also referring to Kkh.

The atonements imposed on those who infringe the second *śikṣāpada* (i.e. taking what is not given) appear to be harder, cf. MARCEL HOFINGER, *Le vol dans la morale bouddhique*, in « Indianisme et Bouddhisme », *Mélanges offerts à Mgr Etienne Lamotte*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1980 (Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain 23), p. 177 ff.

25. H. JACOBI, *Jaina Sūtras* (SBE 22), p. XXII ff. - Cf., among the eight *angas* of the classical yoga, the first four *yamas*.

26. Khp 1.15-8.

27. On the Jaina monk's *maha-vvāyas*, SCHUBRING, *loc. cit.*, § 171; the *Dasaveyāliya-sutta* quotes them thus: *paṭho'ne bhante mahavvāe pāṇāvivāyāo veramaṇaṃ...; ahāvare docce bhante mahavvāe musāvāyāo veramaṇaṃ...; ahāvare tacce... mahavvāe adinnādānāo veramaṇaṃ...; ahāvare cauttihe... mahavvāe mehuṇāo veramaṇaṃ...* (chapter 4, cf. ed. E. Leumann, ZDMG 46 [1892], p. 615.20 ff.).

28. *Loc. cit.*

29. Could this fourth position point to the fourfold content of *musāvādā-veramaṇī*? In any case, there seems to be some traditional association between the number « four » and items concerning speech, cf. the four Jaina *bhāsā-jāyā*, not to speak of the well-known *catvāri pada-jātāni*, *nāmākhyātōpasarga-nipātāś ca*, name, verb, prefix, participle, of the *Mahābhāṣya Paspasā* (ed. Kielhorn, p. 3.26) and the Sanskrit grammarians, and ultimately, of RV 1.164.45. See, on the semantic development of the word *pada*, and related problems, L. RENO, *Les connexions entre le rituel et la grammaire en sanskrit*, in JA 233 (1941-42), pp. 134-37; 161 ff. Recent observations by Ch. Malamoud, in « Arch. europ. sociol. », 23 (1982), 219-220.

From Manu's śloka *satyaṃ brūyāt priyaṃ brūyāt...*<sup>30</sup>, it appears that there is a tendency to distinguish between different aspects of speech, of which, by means of permutations, Manu defines four varieties. In the canonical scriptures of the Śvetāmbara Jainas also, *bhāsā* is analyzed into four main varieties (the so-called *bhāsā-jāyā*)<sup>31</sup>. They are: (1) truth, (2) untruth, (3) truth mixed with untruth, (4) what is neither truth nor untruth, nor truth mixed with untruth: *bhikkhū jāṇejjā cattāri bhāsā-jāyāni, taṃ-jahā: saccaṃ egaṃ paḍhamañ bhāsā-jāyaṃ, bīyaṃ mosañ, taiyaṃ saccā-mosaṃ, jaṃ n'eva saccam n'eva mosañ n'eva saccā-mosaṃ asaccā-mosaṃ taṃ cautthañ bhāsā-jāyaṃ*<sup>32</sup>. In the first variety, there are two subvarieties: truth which should not be uttered because it hurts; truth which can be spoken, as it is « not to be blamed and is not rough »,

... *saccaṃ ca aṇ-avajjaṃ a-kakkasaṃ*<sup>33</sup>

... *giraṃ bhāsejja...*

Thus, the Jainas insist on the absolute necessity of refraining from directly or indirectly aggressive speech<sup>34</sup>; but, though they do examine this problem in detail, the main emphasis, in this second *mahāvratā*, is often on truth and accuracy.

With the Buddhists, the outlook seems somewhat different. For, when pure religious life is described — for instance, when the life led by « Samaṇa Gotama » is detailed, and this in his own words — the report begins with the first three *śikṣāpadas* (abstaining from destroying life, from stealing, from impurity), but, when it comes to the fourth *śikṣāpada*, the texts mention not one, but four items, viz., together with abstaining from falsehood, also abstaining from slander, from cruel talk, from frivolous talk: *pāṇātipātāṃ pahāya pāṇātipātā paṭivirato Samaṇo Gotamo... viharatīti...*; *adinnādānaṃ pahāya adinnādānā paṭivirato S. G.*

30. Cf. *supra*. A parallel recommendation occurs in *Mahābhārata* (BhORI ed.) 12.288.38 (quoted in CAILLAT, *Rules concerning bhāsā in the Āyāranga- and Dasaveyāliya-suttas in the light of their Brahmanic counterparts*, in « Volume in honour of Dalsukh Malvania », in the press (*ubi alia*).

31. Cf. *Āyāranga-sutta* book 2, lesson 4; *Viyāhapannatti* chapter 13, ed. *Suttāgame*, Gurgaon, 1953, vol. 1.692.4 ff.; *Pannavaṇā*, ed. Puṇyavijaya, etc. (*Jaina-Āgama-Series* 9.1), p. 215, §§ 870-876; *Thāṇaṅga* chapter 4.1, ed. *Suttāgame*, 223.8 (*cattāri bhāsā-jāyā*).

32. *Āyāranga-sutta*, ed. Jacobi, 2.4.1.4 (p. 91).

33. *Dasaveyāliya-sutta* chapter 7, st. 3\*.

34. *Āyāranga-sutta* 2.4.1.6: *se bhikkhū vā 2 jā ya bhāsā saccā, jā ya bhāsā mosā...*, *tahāppagāraṃ bhāsaṃ sāvaṃjaṃ sa-kiriyaṃ kakkasaṃ sakaḍḍiyaṃ niṭṭhuraṃ pharusañ aṇhaya-kariṃ cheyaṇa-kariṃ bhayaṇa-kariṃ pariyāvaṇa-kariṃ uddavaṇa-kariṃ bhūḍvaghāiyaṃ abhikanḥa no bhāsaṃ bhāsejjā*, « a monk or a nun, having well considered..., should not use speech which is blamable, sinful, rough, stinging, coarse, hard, leading to sins, discord, factions, grief, outrage, to destruction of living beings » (translation mostly following Jacobi, SBE 22, p. 151). The *Tikā*'s gloss for *pharusañ* is *marmōdghātana-parām* (cf. ed. AgS, p. 387).

34. Cf. note 30.

*viharatīti...*; *abrahmacariyaṃ pahāya brahmacārī* S. G. ...; further: *musā-vādaṃ pahāya musā-vādā paṭivirato* S. G. ...; *pisuṇā-vācaṃ* (v.l. *pisuṇaṃ* v.) *pahāya pisuṇāya vācāya paṭivirato* S.G. ...; *pharusā-vācaṃ* (v.l. *pharusam* v.) *pahāya pharusāya vācāya paṭivirato* S. G. ...; *samphappalāpaṃ pahāya samhappalāpā paṭivirato* S. G. ...<sup>35</sup>. More or less the same pattern is also followed elsewhere, for instance in the *Sallekha-sutta*<sup>36</sup>. Moreover, it will be remembered that several of the Tathāgata's *Mahāpurisa-lakkhaṇas* are due to his having abstained from the above four *vacī-duccaritas*<sup>37</sup>. On the other hand, these four abstentions, from false, slanderous, brutal, and frivolous words, *musā-vādā veramaṇī*, *pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī*, *pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī*, *samphappalāpā veramaṇī*, constitute a set group, listed among the « Fours in the Dhamma », which are enumerated in the *Sangīti-sutta* of the *DīghaNikāya*<sup>38</sup>, and there called *ariya-vohāra*, « the noble usage », or « noble mode » of speech, whereas not abstaining from the above mentioned faults is said to be *an-ariya-vohāra*<sup>39</sup>.

What is more, it is quite clear, from several passages, that each of these « fours » is counted as an independent item: when analyzing « failure in morals », *silā-vipatti*, or « success in morals », *silā-sampatti*, which lead to bad destiny and *niraya*, or to good destiny and *sagga-loka* respectively, the *AnguttaraNikāya* enumerates seven different sorts of individuals, each in his own right: *ekacco paṇātipātī hoti, adinnādāyī*

### 35. D I.4.13-29.

From the attached reflections in D, it is clear that *pisuṇā vācā* leads to the disunion of friends and discord; that *pharusā vācā* wounds, while *a-pharusā vācā* is *neḷā kaṇṇa-sukhā pemaṇiyā hadaya-gamā, porī bahujana-kantā bahujana-manāpā*, « harmless, pleasant to the ear, agreeable, touching the heart, courteous, delightful to many folk, pleasant to many folk » (Woodward's transl., of A I.128.23-25); as for *samphappalāpa*, it is futile (see D *ib.*). According to Sv. I.74.1-4, *pisuṇā vācā* fills the heart of the person with whom one is conversing with amicable dispositions towards oneself, but estranges him from other people, *yāya vācāya yassa taṃ vācaṃ bhāsati, tassa hadaye attano piya-bhāvaṃ parassa ca suñña-bhāvaṃ karoti, sā pisuṇā vācā*; whereas *pharusā vācā* makes both oneself and others hurtful, is hurtful in itself, *yāya pana attānaṃ pi paraṃ pi pharusāṃ karoti, yā vācā sayāṃ pi pharusā, n' eva kaṇṇa-sukhā na hadaya-sukhā vācā, ayaṃ pharusā vācā*.

Compare Āyār T, note 33. *supra*.

### 36. M I.42.9-15.

37. D III.170.13-175.27\*: ... *musā-vādā paṭivirato ahoṣi... ekeka-loma ca hoti unṇā ca bhamuk'antare jātā hoti...*; *pisuṇāya vācāya paṭivirato ahoṣi... cattārīsa-danto hoti avivara-danto ca...*; *pharusāya vācāya paṭivirato ahoṣi... pahūta-jivho ca hoti Brahmasaro ca karavika-bhāṇī...*; *samphappalāpā paṭivirato ahoṣi... siha-hanu hoti*.

### 38. D III.232.7-8; 5-6; 7-8:

*Cattāro an-ariya-vohārā: musā-vādo, pisuṇā vācā pharusā vācā, samhappalāpo. Cattāro ariya-vohārā: musā-vādā veramaṇī, pisuṇāya vācāya veramaṇī, pharusāya vācāya veramaṇī, samhappalāpā veramaṇī.*

39. For a different definition of (*an*)-*ariya-vohāra*, *ib.*, 10-21; A II.246.4 ff. = Vin V.125.9 ff. (*aditṭhe aditṭha-vādītā...*).

On the compound *ariya-vohāra* used to refer to « the vernacular speech of the Aryans », viz. pa., CPD I s.v.; on the implication of the word, (« langue noble »), L. RENOUE, *Histoire de la langue sanskrite*, Lyon, 1956 (*Les langues du monde*), p. 6 and n. 1.

hoti, kāmesu micchā-cārī hoti, further *mūsā-vādī hoti, pīṣunā-vāco hoti, pharusā-vāco hoti, samphappalāpī hoti...*: *sīla-vipatti-hetu vā... sattā kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇā apāyaṃ duggatiṃ vinipātaṃ nirayaṃ uppañjanti*<sup>40</sup>. Thus, the four constituents of *ariya-vohāra* are all equally important, and each tends to be regarded as equivalent to each of the previous *sikkhā-padas*.

It could even be asked whether the Buddhists do not, in fact, more or less establish the superiority of *a-pharusā-vācā*; for the Anguttara-Nikāya introduces a threefold distinction: between the *gūṭha-bhāṇī*, « who speaks filth », that is untruth<sup>41</sup>, on one side, and, on the other side, the *puppha-bhāṇī*, « flower-tongued », who speaks the truth, and *madhu-bhāṇī*, or « honey-tongued », who has abandoned all harsh speech<sup>42</sup>. It thus appears that amiable speech is given special importance — provided that it is prompted by equally amiable feelings<sup>43</sup>.

To return to the fourfold *ariya-vohāra*: the commentaries do not hesitate to recognize its four constituents whenever four aspects of speech are mentioned, e.g., when the Buddha's behaviour is extolled by

40. A I.268.23 ff. « And of what sort is failure in morals? Herein... a certain one takes life, steals, is a wrong-doer in sensual desires, a liar, a slanderer, of bitter speech, an idle babblers. This is called « failure in morals »... it is due to failure in morals... that beings, when body breaks up, after death are reborn in the Waste, the Way of Woe, in the Downfall, in Purgatory », Woodward's transl.; compare III.433.3-11.

41. Or *kūṭa-bhāṇī*? (Kern); hence Woodward's translation « tricky tongued »; cf. his note, *Gradual Sayings I*, p. 110, n. 3.

42. A I.127.33-128.28.

*Tayo 'me... puggalā santo saṃvijjamānā lokasmiṇ. Katame tayo? Gūṭha-bhāṇī puppha-bhāṇī, madhu-bhāṇī...*

*Katamo ca puggalo puppha-bhāṇī? Idha... ekacco puggalo sabha-ggato vā parisaggato vā... So... na saṃpajāna-musā-bhāsītā hoti...* (128.12-20; cf. Pp 29.26-34);

*Katamo ca... puggalo madhu-bhāṇī? Idha... ekacco puggalo pharusā-vācaṃ pahāya pharusāya vācāya paṭivirato hoti.*

*Yā sā vācā neḷā kaṇṇa-sukhā pemaṇiyā hadayaṃ-gamā porī bahujana-kantā bahujana-manāpā tathā-rūpiṃ vācaṃ bhasītā hoti* (A *ib.*, 21-26; cf. Pp 29.35-30.3).

[« Sweet(ness) » or « honey » (*mādhu*), and « words », *vācas*, are seen to be more than once associated in the *Rksaṃhitā*:

*āvocāma... Agnāye mādhumad vācaḥ...*, 1.78.5;

*tūbhayedām Agne mādhumattamaṃ vācaḥ*, 5.11.5;

*vācaḥ / ghṛtāt svādiyo mādhumas ca vocata*, « sweeter than ghee and honey », 8.24.20; etc.; cf. K. F. GELDNER, *Der Rigveda*, ... Vierter Teil. Namen- und Sachregister... von Johannes Nobel, Cambridge, Mass., 1957 (HOS 36), p. 197, s.v. Rede. Compare *TaṭṭirīyaSāṃhitā*, 3.3.2 (éd. B I, III, p. 273): *mādhu maṇiṣye, mādhu janiṣye mādhu vakṣyāmi, mādhu vadīṣyāmi*, « sweetness shall I think, sweetness shall I beget, sweetness shall I tell, sweetness shall I speak... » (*madhuvat priyam*, Commentary). This association is admittedly Prearyan, cf. MARCELLO DURANTE, *Ricerche sulla preistoria della lingua poetica greca*, in « Rendiconti, Atti dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei », 357 (1960) = *Indogermanische Dichtersprache*, herausgegeben von Rüdiger Schmitt, Darmstadt, 1968 (Wege der Forschung 165), p. 264, n. 10, comparing *μελι-γῆρον* δπα, μ. 187; also Greek *μελι-γλωσσος* and Vedic *mādhu-jihva*].

43. Cf. Sv I.74.6 ff. (*yā tesam* [scil. *mūsāvāda*, etc.] *mūla-bhūtā cetanā pi pīṣunā vācādi-nāmaṃ eva labhati...*).

yakkha Sātāgira <sup>44</sup>. Again, they are said to define *su-bhāsita*, in Buddhaghosa's commentary on the Subhāsita-sutta of the SamyuttaNikāya <sup>45</sup> and the parallel explanation given by the Paramatthajotikā on the identical sutta of the SuttaNipāta <sup>46</sup>. The prose introduction of the sutta specifies that speech is well spoken if provided with four elements: *catūhi... angehi samannāgatā vācā subhāsītā hoti nā dubbhāsītā*: which four? *Idha... bhikkhu subhāsitaṃ yeva bhāsati no dubbhāsitaṃ; dhammaṃ yeva bhāsati, no adhammaṃ; piyaṃ yeva bhāsati, no appiyaṃ; saccaṃ yeva bhāsati, no alikaṃ* <sup>47</sup>. In the same way, the following tristubh of the sutta mentions successively *subhāsita*, *dhamma*, *piya*, and *sacca*, which, according to the commentaries, mean abstaining from *pisuṇā vācā*, *samphappalāpa*, *apharusā vācā*, and *musā-vāda* <sup>48</sup>. I shall not question the details of the equation; but attention must be drawn to the commentaries' opinion concerning the conclusion of the prose passage of the sutta, viz., *imehi kho bhikkhave catūhi angehi samannāgatā vācā subhāsītā hoti na dubbhāsītā anavajjā ca ananuvajjā ca viññūnaṃ ti* <sup>49</sup>, « when a word has these four qualities (*anga*), it is well-spoken, not ill-spoken, it is not blameworthy, nor blamed by the wise » <sup>50</sup>.

From Buddhaghosa's discussion of this passage, it can be surmised that some understood the phrase *imehi... catūhi angehi* as referring to

44. Cf. *supra*, Sn 158 f.; Pj II, 203 f.: *na khīṇa-vyappatho ti na pharusa-vāco ti vuttaṃ hoti...*

45. S I.188.25-189.25\*; Spk I.272.8-275.24.

46. Sn p. 78 f., 450-454; Pj II, 394.9-400.5.

Four stanzas (= Sn 451-454) recur in Th (1227-1230); Sn 450 and 454 are also quoted in Pj I, 135 f., commenting upon the *pāda subhāsītā ca yā vācā* (= *pāda c* in the 4th śloka of Mangala-sutta, Khp 3.7\*-8\*).

The wording of the two commentaries is very similar. For discussions on the authorship of Pj I and II, E. W. ADIKARAM, *Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1946, p. 7 f.; NĀNAMOLI, *The Minor Readings and Illustrator*, London, 1960 (PTS Transl. Series 32), X ff.; remarks by K. R. NORMAN, in *The Role of Pāli in early Sinhalese Buddhism*, in « *Buddhism in Ceylon...* » (Symposien zur Buddhismusforschung I), ed. H. Bechert, Göttingen, Abh. der Ak. der Wiss. Philol.-Hist. Kl. Dritte Folge n° 108), p. 42; ID., in *Buddhist Studies in honour of Walpola Rahula*, 1890, p. 177, § 6.1.

47. S I.188.31-189.2 = Sn p. 78.8-13.

48. « *Subhāsitaṃ uttamam āhu santo dhammaṃ bhāṇe, nādhammaṃ, taṃ dutiyaṃ piyaṃ bhāṇe nāppiyaṃ, taṃ tatiyaṃ, saccaṃ bhāṇe nālikaṃ, taṃ catutthaṃ* » ti, S I.189.7\*-10\* = Sn 450:

« The goodly word calm men proclaim supreme;

And second, speak ye Dharma not otherwise;

Third, speak kindly, not unkindly words;

And fourth, say ye what is true, not false » (translation following Hare and C. Rhys Davids). Spk I.272.8-10 = Pj II.395.20-23 run: *angehi ti, kāraṇehi avayavehi vā, musā-vāda-veramaṇi-ādini hi cattāri subhāsita-vācāya kāraṇāni, sacca-vacanādayo cattāro avayavā*.

49. S I.189.24 = Sn 78.14-16.

50. Hare's translation.

grammatical elements, and to grammatical niceties<sup>51</sup>. In the present context, however, this interpretation is evidently untenable. But it was not irrelevant to raise the question. For, as is well-known, the Brahmanic tradition did consider grammar to be *vedānām veda*, as the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad puts it<sup>52</sup>; and, according to the Sanskrit grammarians, correct speech is of religious value<sup>53</sup>. As for the Jainas, it is noteworthy that, in the Āyāranga-chapter which deals with the four « *bhāsā-jāyā* », they quote a list of grammatical items, and recommend abiding by grammatical rules — for this means speaking with accuracy and due circumspection, thus conforming to ascetics' standards<sup>54</sup>. Thus, the Jainas both

51. *Yan ca aññe paṭiññādihi avayavehi, nāmādihi padehi, linga-vacana-vibhatti-kāla-kāraka-saṃpatthi ca samannāgataṃ musā-vādādi-vācaṃ pi « subhāsita » ti maññanti, taṃ dhammato paṭisedheti*, Spk I.273.14-18 = Pj II.397.24.

52. ChUp 7.1.2; but, *ib.* 3, grammatical and similar knowledge is said to be « mere name », *nāmaivaitat*.

53. Cf. *Mahābhāṣya*, ed. Kielhorn, p. 2, 19\*-20\* ff.:

*yas tu prayunkte kuśalo viśeṣe śabdān yathāvad vyavahāra-kāle*  
*so 'nantam āpnoti jayaṃ paratra vāg-yoga-vid, duṣyati cāpaśabdaiḥ,*

« the learned grammarian who uses the words correctly... gets unlimited success in the other world; but one fares ill by the use of incorrect words... Cf. L. Renou, in JA (1941-42), 160 ff.; *ib.*, *Histoire de la langue sanskrite*, Lyon, 1956, p. 6: « L'idée de la grammaire comme instrument de purification est présente dans le plus ancien commentaire grammatical, la Paspasā du Mahābhāṣya, comme à travers toute la Mimāṃsā. Also see P. THEME, *Meaning and form of the « grammar » of Pāṇini*, *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 8/9 (1982-83), 3-34 (especially §§ 22; 26; 30 ff.); M. M. DESHPANDE, *loc. cit.*, 7 ff. (ch. II, « Brahmanical Puritanism »).

54. *ayuvī nittā-bhāsi samīyāe samjāe bhāsaṃ bhāsejjā, taṃ-jahā: ega-vayaṇaṃ 1, du-vayaṇaṃ (!) 2, bahu-v. 3, itthi-v. 4, purisa-v. 5, nappiṇṇasaga-v. 6, ajjhattha-v. 7, uvaṇiṇya-v. 8, avañiṇya-v. 9, uvaṇiṇya-avaṇiṇya-v. 10, avañiṇya-uvaṇiṇya-v. 11, tiya-v. 12, paḍuppanna-v. 13, añāgaya-v. 14, paccakkha-v. 15, paroakkha-v. 16... Āyār 2.4.1.3: « well considering (what one is to say), speaking with precision, one should employ language in moderation and restraint: the singular, dual, plural; feminine, masculine, neuter gender...; past, present, or future (tenses), the first and second, or third (person) », Jacobi's translation.*

The importance of self-control (i.e. religious life) is emphasized in *Paṇṇavanā*: in § 899, it is asked whether one who uses the four *bhāsa-jjāyas* reaches the goal or fails to do so, *icc'eyāim... cattāri bhāsa-jjāyāim bhāsamāṇe kiṃ ārāhae virāhae?* Answer: only he who speaks with due attention can reach the goal; otherwise, « if one is not self-controlled, has not totally ceased, desisted from, renounced, bad deeds, whether one speaks truth or lie, or truth mixed with lie, or neither truth nor lie, one does not reach the goal, but misses it »: *icc'eyāim cattāri bhāsa-jjāyāim bhāsamāṇe ārāhae. no virāhae; teṇa paraṃ assaṃjayaṃvirayāpaḍiḥayaṃpaccakkhāya-pāvakamme saccam vā bhāsaṃ bhāsanto mosam vā saccā-mosam vā asaccā-mosam vā bhāsaṃ bhāsamāṇe no ārāhae, virāhae.*

But, in the *Samayasāra* (one of the early « procanonical » books of the Digambaras) 1.8, Kundakunda (quoted by M. M. DESHPANDE, *loc. cit.*, 55) writes:

*jaha na vi sakkam añajjo añajja-bhāsaṃ viṇā u gāhedum*  
*taha vavahāreṇa viṇā param'atth'uvadesaṇam asakkaṃ,*

« just as a non-Aryan (foreigner) cannot be made to understand anything except through the medium of his non-Aryan language, so the knowledge of the Absolute cannot be communicated to the ordinary people except through the *vyavahāra* point of view » (transl. A. Chakravarti, also see his commentary, based upon Amṛtacandra's Ātmakhyāti, Delhi, 1971, 2d ed., Bhāratiya Jñānapīṭha Publication).

enhance spiritual values and consider grammatical correction to be an integral part of their religious rules.

The Buddhists certainly do not disregard grammar and lexicography: in a paracanonical treatise like the Nettipakaraṇa, the « *phrasing* or wording of ideas » (*vyāñjana*), is connected with *nerutta*, etc.<sup>55</sup>, which is included in one of the sixteen *hāras* or « modes of conveying » used for the communication of *dhamma*<sup>56</sup>. But they have no hesitation in stating that the phrase *subhāsītā ca yā vācā* (used in Khp 3, 8\*) « should be understood as [speech] devoid of the defects of lying, [harsh speech, malicious speech, and gossip]... or else speech simply without gossip... since it brings welfare and pleasure in both worlds »<sup>57</sup>.

Still more drastically, commenting on this fourth stanza of the Mangala-sutta, Pj adds: *paesaṃ dhamma-desanā vācā idha subhāsītā vācā ti veditabbā; sā hi... sattānaṃ ubhaya-loka-hita-sukha-nibbānādhigama-paccayato mangalaṃ ti vuccati*, « what is to be understood here as "well-spokenness" is the words [used] in teaching the True Idea to others; for that... is called a good omen since it is a condition for creatures to attain welfare and pleasure in both worlds and also extinction as well »<sup>58</sup>. Buddhaghosa even appears to consider grammatical purity as irrelevant as far as Dhamma is concerned: provided that a discourse is free from the four blemishes, slander, idle talk, harshness, untruth, — and even though it contains *milakkha-bhāsā*, barbarian's words, and words sung by a humble servant — it is nevertheless *subhāsita* « as far as it conveys bliss for this and the other world »<sup>59</sup>. Examples

55. Nett 32.30 ff.

56. Cf. the analysis of *nerutta*, Nett 33.1-11. It implies, among other proficiencies, for the bhikkhu to be « ...skilled in designations of past [tenses], skilled in designations of future [tenses], skilled in designations of presently-arisen [tenses], skilled in designations of the feminine [gender], skilled in designations of the masculine [gender], skilled in designations of the neuter [gender], skilled in designations of the singular [number], skilled in the designations of the plural [number]... » (Nāṇamoli's transl.): ...*atītādhivacana-kusalo anāgatādhivacana-kusalo paccuppannādhivacana-kusalo itthādhivacana-kusalo purisādhivacana-kusalo napuṃsa-kādhivacana-kusalo ekādhivacana-kusalo anekādhivacana-kusalo* (6-9); compare Pet 91.24 ff.; for a comparison, and study of the mutual relationship between Nett and Pet, NĀṆAMOLI, *The Guide*, London, 1962 (PTS Translation Series 33), p. XIII ff. and passim.

57. Pj I.135.23-136.1, translation by Nāṇamoli: *subhāsītā vācā nāma musāvādādi-dosa-virahitā..., asamphappalāpā vācā eva vā...; ayaṃ pi ubhaya-loka-hita-sukhāvahanato mangalaṃ ti veditabbā...*

58. Pj I.136.4-7 (Nāṇamoli's translation).

59. *Imehi pana catūh' angehi samannāgatā, sace pi milakkha-bhāsā-pariyāpannā ghaṭa-ceṭikā-gītaka-pariyāpannā pi hoti, (sā) tathā pi subhāsītā va lokiya-lokuttara-hita-sukh'āvahattā*, Spk I.273.20-23 (Ee: -*ceṭaka*-) = Pj II.397.7-10.

On the contrary, *Mahābhāṣya*, *Paspaśā*, p. 2.7-9, recalls the misfortune of the Asuras because of their barbarism (cf. *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* 3.2.1.23-24) and concludes: *mlecchāḥ mā bhūmēty adhyeyaṃ vyākaraṇam*, « to prevent our becoming "mlecchas", grammar is to be studied ».

Did Buddhaghosa have this famous passage in mind? On Buddhaghosa and Pāṇini and the Sanskrit grammatical tradition, NĀṆAMOLI, *Minor Readings and Illu-*



are further alleged of bhikkhus attaining *arahatta* after having heard Sinhalese girl servants singing inspiring words, in the Sinhalese language. In this connexion, the *viññus*, or experts, are *not* the grammarians, but those noble people who aim at and look for refuge in the highest goal, *atth'atthikānaṃ kula-puttānaṃ attha-ṭṭisaraṇānaṃ, no vyanjana-ṭṭisaraṇānaṃ ti*<sup>60</sup>.

This catholic outlook is all the more remarkable as it is expressed by the revered Buddhist ācārya, alleged to have stemmed from a Brahmin family, Buddhaghosa<sup>61</sup>.

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strator, p. XVIII, notes passim (for references see Index of Proper Names s.v. Pāṇini, Sanskrit allusions); K.R. NORMAN, *The Role of Pāli in early Sinhalese Buddhism*, p. 42 and nn. 22-23.

With the above Mahābhāṣya (- SBr) passage, contrast the verbal contest between Vepacitti, ruler of the Asuras, and Sakka, sovereign of the devas, in S I 222.20-224.15 (supra n. 11): « the verses spoken by Vepacitti belong to the sphere of force and violence... » (*sa-daṇḍāvacarā sa-satthāvacarā iti bhaṇḍanaṃ iti viggaho iti kalaho [ti]*, cf. Ne Se); those spoken by Indra, on the contrary, were « free from force and violence... », and this ensured the latter's victory: *a-daṇḍāvacarā a-satthāvacarā... Sak-kassa devānaṃ indassa subhāsitenā jayo ahosi* (224.8-14).

For discussions similar to Spk I 272-275 (and the sociolinguistic attitudes or conflicts they reflect), see the lives of the « Marathi saint-poets », in M. M. DESHPANDE, *loc cit.*, 68 ff.

60. Spk I.274-20-23 (Ee att') = Pj II.398.11-12. Such an asseveration clearly is not unlike the Buddha's famous advice « *anuṇāmi bhikkhave sakāya niruttiyā buddha-vacanaṃ pariyāpuṇituṃ* » ti, permitting the disciples « to learn the Buddha-word each in (his) own language », Vin II.139.14-16. For a summary of the discussions on the interpretation of this phrase, E. LAMOTTE, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien*, p. 610 ff.; recently, J. BROUGH, *Sakāya niruttiyā: Could kale het*, in « The Language of the Earliest Buddhist Tradition » (*Symposien zur Buddhismusforschung*, II), ed. H. Bechert, Göttingen, 1980 (Abh. der Ak. der Wiss. in Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Kl. Dritte Folge, n° 117), 35-42.

61. I may be permitted to quote what Professor E. Lamotte writes to me in connexion with the above remarks:

« Dans la généralité des cas, le *subhāsita* est *satya*, mais pas toujours. Il peut se faire que le Buddha, tenant compte des dispositions et de la mentalité de ses auditeurs, leur enseigne une erreur, mais ce n'est qu'un artifice salvifique.

Le Buddha a refusé de se prononcer sur les grands problèmes philosophiques qui préoccupent l'humanité: l'éternité des êtres, la survie, les rapports entre le corps et l'esprit (cf. *Traité*, I, p. 153 sq.), non pas que ce soient des questions insolubles, mais parce que les réponses sont discutables, provoquent des querelles et ne sont d'aucune utilité à la délivrance.

Vu dans ce contexte, le *Subhāsita* est au premier chef une parole aboutissant à la destruction des passions, à la fin de la douleur, à l'apaisement de l'esprit, au *Nirvāṇa*. Tant mieux si cette bonne parole est strictement vraie, agréable à entendre, énoncée selon toutes les règles de la grammaire, mais ce n'est pas nécessaire. La loi bouddhique n'a qu'une saveur (*rasa*): celle de la *Vimukti*.

A ce propos,... dire un mot de l'enseignement intentionnel ou énigmatique du Buddha (*saṃdhā-bhāṣya, saṃdhāya bhāṣita*) où le paradoxe tient un grand rôle... » (16th January, 1983).