

DRAVIDIAN CONTRIBUTIONS
TO AN INTERPRETATION OF PĀLI GĀMAPODDAVA
AND BUDDHAGHOSA'S EXPLANATION OF THE TERM *

One of the Pāli words whose precise meaning has not yet been established is the compound *gāmapoddava* that occurs only in a passage of the *Vinayapiṭaka* (II, 105):

... *pitthim pi seyyāthāpi mallamuṭṭhikā gāmapoddavā 'ti*
(v.l. *kāmapudavā*).

Its meaning would be, according to Buddhaghosa:

kāmapudavā 'ti chavirāgamaṇḍanāmuyuttā nāgarikamanussā.
*gāmapodavā 'ti pi pādho*¹

that is to say, following Rhys Davids and Oldenberg's translation: « town's people given to adorning themselves by painting their skin »². Rhys Davids and Oldenberg have already remarked that it is difficult to see how Buddhaghosa's explanation fits in with the connexion in this passage³.

Let us consider the whole passage that refers to an unseemly behaviour of the monks that people censure. The translations of the passage run as follows: « And at that time the *Khabbaggiya* *Bikkhus*, when bathing, used to rub their bodies — thighs and arms, and breasts, and back — against wood. The people were annoyed, murmured, and became indignant, saying. " How can the *Sakyaputtiya Samanas* do so, like wrestlers, boxers, or shampooers? " » (T.W. Rhys Davids and H. Oldenberg); « Now at that time the group of six monks, while they were bathing, rubbed their bodies against a tree and their thighs and

* In the present paper Prof. D'Onza Chiodo is to be held responsible for pp. 355-358 and Prof. Panattoni for pp. 358-363.

1. *Vin* II, 315.

2. *Vin*. Texts III, 66, no. 2. Cp. also *Vin* II, 107.

3. *Ibidem*.

their arms and their chests and their backs. People looked down upon, criticised, spread it about saying: « How can these recluses, sons of the Sakians, while they are bathing, rub their bodies against a tree... and their backs, like boxers and wrestlers and young villagers? » (I. B. Horner). In the first translation the rendering of the compound *gāmapoddavā* by « shampooers » is in our opinion quite inexplicable, because there is no connexion not only with Buddhaghosa's commentary, as the translators themselves grant, but neither with any possible etymological explanation of the term. On the other hand, Horner's translation, that perhaps is partially more consistent with Buddhaghosa's commentary, does not offer a satisfactory explanation of the strange comparison occurring in the passage: people rubbing their bodies against a tree like young villagers. As a matter of fact, Mrs Horner remarks in a note that the word is very uncertain and that it seems to show confusion between *gāma-* and *kāma-*. She besides points out that Takakusu and Nagai's edition of the *Vinaya-atthakathā* (VI, 1199) reads:

... *gāmapūṭavā* (v.l. *gāmamuddavā*) *ti chavirāgamaṇḍanānuyuttā nāgarikamanussā. gāmapotakā* (i.e. young village men) *ti pi pāṭho*⁴.

As regards the first part of the compound, the confusion between *gāma* and *kāma* brings forth a notably dissimilar meaning, but it is difficult, in our opinion, to accept in any way the reading *kāma-* and to understand its implication with the remainder of the word. The reading *gāma-*, therefore, is to be considered the right one and its interpretation does not present many choices, the meaning « village » (and the like) being quite acceptable, as we shall see later on.

Now let us contemplate the most interesting part of the compound, the term *poddava* (with its various readings), the explanation of which involves some complications but is, in our opinion, the clue of the problem. It is worth noting in this connexion that no example of such a word are quotable from literature and probably in view of the vagueness about its meaning the term is not been included as independent entry in the *PED*. Moreover there is no equivalent of Pāli *poddava* in Sanskrit or in other IA languages.

The question arises as to whether there is any etymological connexion between *-poddava* and Buddhaghosa's commentary or whether different connexions are acceptable. Now the context could seem, at first sight, to offer for this term a basic meaning « someone who is in the habit of rubbing himself » in consequence, for instance, of a particular sportsmanlike activity or of local customs. The fact that the term is used adjacent to other terms like *malla* and *muṭṭhika* (« boxer » and « wrestler ») could apparently suggest a close relation among these

4. *The Book of the Discipline*, V, p. 141, n. 1.

classes of persons and their activities or customs. But the whole passage keeps its obscurity as far as the strange and unsuitable comparison is concerned, unless we consider that it is not necessary to find a close relation between the *action* of rubbing and the *activity* of people cited as examples. By the consideration of other manifold passages occurring in the *Vinayapīṭaka*, the elucidation of this passage can perhaps be taken a stage further. Often indeed in the *Vin* an unseemly and blameworthy behaviour of the monks is compared with an equally unsuitable behaviour of dissimilar categories of people; nevertheless the comparisons may always be considered in a generic and figurative sense, that is to say that whichever misbehaviour, however peculiar it may be, is comparable to the general misbehaviour of low and ill-bred people⁵. Also in the above case, therefore, the useemly action of the monks rubbing their bodies is paralleled with the blameworthy behaviour of *mallamuṭṭhika*-s and *gāmapoddava*-s. The relation therefore among these three classes of persons is perhaps to be traced in a general idea of rudeness and vulgarity that would associate them independently of their activities. As far as the category of *mallamuṭṭhika*-s is concerned, we must take into consideration a passage of the *Visuddhīmagga* in which several kinds of *mada* (in the meaning « sensual excess, intoxication ») are distinguished; the passage in question runs as follows:

...*muṭṭhikamall'ādayo viya madatthaṃ bala-mada-nimittaṃ porisamada-nimittaṃ cā ti vuttaṃ*⁶.

This seems to justify the hypothesis that this category of people is held up as an example of blamable activity and, in consequence, it is quite reasonable to suppose that the term *gāmapoddava* occurring together with *mallamuṭṭhika* indicates peoples of fairly similar kind.

It is interesting to observe in this connexion a metaphoric use of the word *gāma*- as first element of a compound, occurring in Pāli as well as in other IA languages. We can quote as examples Pa. *gāmadhamma* « vile conduct »⁷, Pkt. *gāmāra* or *gavāra* « rustic, fool », Kāśmīrī *gammār* « insolent, ignorant, fool », Pañjābī *gāvar* « rustic », Nepālī *gamār* « rustic, uncouth », Bengalī *goyār* « stubborn and ignorant », Maithilī *gamār* « rustic », Gujarātī *gamār* or *gavār* « boorish ». In Sanskrit we can note the derivatives *grāmya*, *grāmyatā*, *grāmyatvā* « rustic or vulgar speech », and *grāmyabuddhi* « clownish, ignorant »⁸.

As we have seen, therefore, while it is impossible to reach a conclusion about a precise meaning of *gāmapoddava* by judging only on

5. See *Vin* I, 90, 102, 152, 185, 191, 192, 194, 306; II, 105, 114, 115, 137, 138, 139, etc. 6. At *Vism* 31.

7. *DN* I, 4; *AN* I, 211; *Ja* II, 180 (= *vasaladhamma*).

8. Cf. R. L. TURNER, *A Comparative Dictionary of the Indo Aryan Languages*, London, 1966, pp. 234-35.

the basis of the above remarks, we can at any rate say that the word indicates a low and ill-mannered class of people. And yet none of these remarks is sufficiently meaningful to enable us to understand the particular explanation given by Buddhaghosa. Then it seems to us best to consider the problem on the basis of etymological observations and possibly to draw further information from these.

Since no IE etymology can be plausibly provided, and the existence of divergent forms such as *poddava*, *puḍava*, *podava*, *pūṭava*, *potaka* is indicative for the word being non-Aryan, we are inclined to derive the term from a Dravidian source.

Tamiḷ has a word, whose range of meanings can be easily connected with the sense established in Buddhaghosa's commentary. In fact the noun *poṭṭu* is given the meanings « drop; round mark, red, white or black, worn on the forehead; dot, spot, mark ». From this the verbal form *poṭṭukkuttu* (or *poṭṭukkurru*) is derived, in the special meaning « to make indelible spots on the body with a vegetable preparation »⁹, « to tattoo with a kind of vegetable extract »¹⁰; it corresponds very closely to the explanation given for *poddava* by Buddhaghosa. With these terms we can place also *pōṭu* « to put, apply, place, set, lay; to put on, as ornaments; to draw, as a figure (colloquial); to strike, stamp, beat; to lose, drop ».

In the other Dravidian languages the above forms are attested as follows: Ma. *poṭṭu* « a circular mark on the forehead, mostly red », *pōṭuka* « to put; to strike », *pōṭṭuka* « to put a mark on the forehead »; Ka. *boṭṭu* « drop; round mark worn on the forehead », *baṭṭu* « round mark worn on the forehead »; Te. *boṭṭu* « drop; mark on the forehead »; Tu. *boṭṭa* « id. »; Kol. (SR) *boṭṭa* « id. »; Pa. *boṭ* « id. »; Koḍ. *boṭṭi* « mark on the forehead »; Tu. *boṭṭa* « id. »; Ga.(P) *boṭu* « drop, spot »; Konḍa *boṭu* « drop of water; mark on the forehead »; Kuvi (F) *būttū* « to tattoo ».

Moreover, if we take into consideration the consonantic alternation *-ṭṭ-/-tt-/-rr-* (or *-ṭ-/-t-/-r-*)¹¹, we may extend the list of cognates to include not only forms with *-r-*, but also a form with *-t-*. As far as the *-r-* or

9. Cp. M. WINSLOW, *A Comprehensive Tamil and English Dictionary of High and Low Tamil*, Madras, 1862, *sub voce* *poṭṭukkutta*.

10. Cp. *Tamil Lexicon*, vol. V, Madras, 1932, *sub vocibus* *poṭṭukkuttu* and *poṭṭukkurru*.

11. A few examples for the alternance *-ṭ-/-t-/-r-* or *-ṭṭ-/-tt-/-rr-*, which we assume when incorporating all the above forms in the same etymological family, may be necessary to justify this inclusion. Cp., e.g., T. BURROW - M. B. EMENEAU, *A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary (DED)*, Oxford, 1961, nos. 821a, b, 804, 809; 2327a, b, 2239; 2183, 2214, 2237; 4270, 4355, 4377; and also the groups of terms taken into account and connected in the same way in our papers: M. D'ONZA CHIODO - E. PANATTONI, *On a rare word in Pāli and its Dravidian etymology*, in « Ludwik Sternbach Felicitation Volume » (Lucknow, 1980), pp. 814-17, and: Kuḍḍa-rājan and allied terms: a set of Dravidian loan-words in Pāli, in « Indologica Taurinensia », VIII-IX (1980-81), pp. 155-59, where this alternance is briefly accounted for. Instances can be multiplied.

-*rr-* variant is concerned, the following words can be quoted: Ta. *pori* « to impress, stamp, inscribe; to write, delineate, sketch, paint; to be impressed or imprinted »; n.: « strife, line on the palm; spot, dot, point, speck; mark, impression, sign, token; letter, character, writing; seal, signet; auspicious mark on one's body; beauty spot on the body of a person; peacock's tail, as spotted »; Ma. *pori* « sign », *porru* « mark on the forehead ». As to the alternating consonant *-t-* or *-tt-*, only a single case in Malayāḷam can be plausibly found¹²: Gundert, in his *Malayalam-English Dictionary*¹³, gives a form *pottu* and equates it to *poṭṭu* and *porru*.

Let us consider now some phonetic implications of our etymology. It is rather improbable to derive *poddava* from the isolated Malayāḷam term *pottu*, the word most closely resembling it. We must then assume it and its variants to be based on the Dravidian forms showing internal cerebral consonants. On comparing these Pāli and Dravidian groups of words, it is to be observed that only Pa. *pūtava*, occurring in Takakusu and Nagai's edition of the VA, corresponds phonetically to the Dravidian forms and seems to preserve the original cerebral consonant. All the other Pāli forms show the decerebralization and (except *potava*) the voicing of the internal consonant group. A parallel case of these changes and fluctuation can be seen also in the very passage of Buddhaghosa's commentary, where *pādho* alternates with *pāṭho*¹⁴.

The probabilities seem to favour this etymological conjecture, and we are inclined to consider this solution more satisfactory than any other, because it is consistent with Buddhaghosa's commentary and accounts for it. However, it is not possible to be sure about the interpretation of an isolated word like *poddava*, and no etymology which can be considered definitive can be produced. Our discussion would not seem complete without taking into consideration a few other possibilities.

We must now turn our attention to Mrs Horner's translation of *gāmapoddavā* as « young villagers ». She should certainly have based it on the form *gāmapotakā* as read in Takakusu and Nagai's edition of the VA, and should have equated the second part of the compound to Pa. *potaka* « the young of an animal; a small branch, offshoot, twig » and Skr. *pota*, *potaka* « a young animal or plant ». The meaning of the Pāli and Sanskrit words seems however to have been arbitrarily extended to include the notion of « young man ». Besides, the rendering of the

12. On the basis of the above alternance, are also Ta. *pottakam* « feather of the peacock » and *puttakam* « peacock-quill » to be connected with *pori* in its very specialized meaning « peacock's tail » and hence ultimately with *pottu* « drop; round mark, etc. »?

13. Cp. H. GUNDELT, *A Malayalam and English Dictionary*, vol. II, Osnabrück, repr. 1970, *sub voce pottu*.

14. Cp. W. GEIGER, *Pali Literature and Language*, Delhi, 1968², pp. 86-7. Cp. also, e.g., the Sanskrit loan-word *kadamba*, derived from Ta. Ma. *kaṭampu*, Ka. *kaḍamba*, etc.

compound does not show any connexion with Buddhaghosa's explanation. At any rate, if one accepts the interpretation which has been proposed by Mrs Horner, another good Dravidian etymology is available. A Dravidian origin is usually accepted for the Sanskrit and Pāli terms mentioned above¹⁵; a number of words in various Dravidian languages correspond phonetically to them and have a meaning suitable for such a comparison¹⁶: Ta. *pōttu* « sapling, tender branch or shoot of tree », *pōtu* « flower bud ready to open, freshness, beauty »¹⁷; Te. *bōda* « the young of a bird »; Kui *podeli* « sapling, young green branch », *bōda* « child »; Kuvi *pōda* « woman, girl », *pota* « girl », *pōdipōda* « boys and girls »; Pa. *pottid* « twig »; Konḍa *bōdel* « bride, young lady ».

But this does not exhaust the list of etymological conjectures. One further group of Dravidian forms could be possibly discussed here and associated with *poddava*: Ta. *purru*¹⁸, *purram* « anthill, hillock thrown up by termites or other animals; hole as of ants; anything scurvy, scrofulous or cancerous, considered as resembling anthills », *purruvai* « to form small mounds of earth, as by white ants; to become cancerous »; Ma. *purru* « ground thrown up by moles, rats, esp. a white anthill; what is like it; a scab, dry pus, cancer »; Ka. *puttu*, *putta*, *huttu*, *hutta*, *utta* « white anthill »; Te. *puṭṭa* « anthill, snake's hole, heap, lot, crowd »; To. *wit-xudy*, *wit-mon* « white anthill »; Koḍ. *putti* « id. »; Kol. (Kin.) *puṭṭa* « id. »; Nk. *puṭṭa* « id. »; Pa. *puṭkal*, (NE) *puṭkal* « id. », *putta*, (NE) *puṭṭa* « nest inside anthill »; Ga.(Oll.) *puṭkal* « white anthill »; Go. *puttu*, *putti* « id. »; Konḍa *puṛhi* « anthill »; Kui *pusi* « white anthill ». (K.) *pucci* « anthill »; Kuvi (F) *pūci*, (Su.P.) *pucci* « id. »; Pe. *puci* « id. »; Kur. *puttā* « id. », *putbelō* « white ants'queen »; Malt. *pute* « anthill »¹⁹. In this case, the etymological connexion seems to lie in the

15. Cp. T. BURROW, *Dravidian Studies VII*, in «Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies» (BSOAS), XII (1948), p. 386, no. 223; M. MAYRHOFER, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-46; *DED* no. 3748 and *Suppl.*

16. D. W. Mc ALPIN (*Proto-Elamo-Dravidian: the Evidence and its Implications*, Philadelphia, 1981, p. 105) proposes a connexion between PDr. **pot* « young of animal or plant » and Achaem. El. *putu* « lamb », and reconstructs a Proto-Elamo-Dravidian form **pot* « young animal ».

17. *potam* « the young of any animal » and *potakam* « youthfulness, infancy, juvenility; the young of the elephant, tiger and lion; young tree, a sapling » are probably to be regarded as reborrowings from Sanskrit and not as genuine Tamil forms.

18. M. Winslow (*op. cit.*, *sub voce*) lists a form *puttu* and equates it to *purru* as a vulgar variant of it.

19. From the same Dravidian group are derived in Sanskrit *puṭa* « anthill » (found only in the compound *pipilakapūṭa*) and *puttikā* « white ant or termite ». The Sanskrit words are borrowed from two different Dravidian languages and show the same development of the internal consonant that occurs respectively in Telugu and in Kannada. Cp. T. BURROW, *Some Dravidian Words in Sanskrit*, in «Transactions of the Philological Society» (TPS) (1945), p. 111; M. B. EMENEAU, *Linguistic Prehistory of India*, in «Tamil Culture», V (1956), pp. 45-6; *DED* no. 3556; M. MAYRHOFER, *op. cit.*, pp. 285 and 304.

special development of meaning that can be found in Tamiḷ and Malayālam, namely « scurvy, scrofulous, cancerous, as resembling anthills ». This sense could be eventually associated with the idea of an itching skin-disease and hence with monks' misbehaviour of rubbing their bodies against the trees.

On the same hypothesis, another Dravidian derivation might be suggested by assuming a completely different Dravidian root: (a) Ta. *pokku*, *po* « to be blistered », *pokkulam* « boil, bubble, blister », *pokkuli* « to rise in blisters », *pokuṭṭu* « bubble »; Ma. *pokkuḷa*, *pokkiḷa* « blister, vesicle, bubble », *pokkuḷikka* « to bubble », *pokitu* « bubble »; Ka. *puguḷ*, *bokke*, *bobbe* « blister, vesicle, pimple, pustule », *hokku* « boil », *hoppaḷa* « blister occasioned by a burn », *hoppaḷisu* « to blister »; Te. *pokku* « blister, pustule, pock, pimple; vb.: to blister, be blistered », *bugga*, « bubble », *bobba* « blister »; Ko. *poḷ* « blister », *poḷc-* « (hand) becomes blistered from heat »; To. *piḡ* « bubble », *piḡ-* « (hand) gets blistered by friction »; Koḍ. *pokkaḷa* « blister »; Tu. *pokkè* « blister, pustule, sore, ulcer », *bokkè*, *bokki* « itch, pustule, pimple », *poṅku* « a kind of boil or sore »; Kol. (Kin.) *pokk* « blister », *bugga* « bubble »; Pa. *pova* « blister »; Go. (A) *poppul* « id. », (A) *popoṭa*, (Mu.) *papel* « bubble »; Nk. (Ch.) *poponḍel* « bubbles », Pe. *poka* « blister », Mand. *puka* « boil »; Kuvi (Su.) *bugga* « bubble »; Kur. *pokkhnā* « to get blistered, swell »; Malt. *poka* « blister, blain ». (b) Te. *poṭamarincu* « to rise or swell up, as a boil »; Ko. *poṭ-* « (hand) blisters from friction or hard work », *poṭ!* « blister »; To. *piṭ-* « (hand) blisters by frictions »; Tu. *poṭla* « pustule, blister », *puṭla* « id., bubble »; Pa. *poṭka* « pimple »; Go. *bōṭṭā*, (SR.) *boṭṭā*, (Mu.) *boṭka*, (G.) *boṭṭa*, (Tr.) *bottā* « blister », (LuS.) *botta* « boil »; Kui *poḍosi* « boil, blister », *poṭkori* « blister », *ādi-puti* « small-pox pustule », *brōga* « pimple, small boil »; Kuvi *poṭka* « id. »; Ga. (P.) *poṭ-* « to blister », Br. *pūtuṛō* « blister »²⁰. As can be seen, only the second group of forms, which occur mostly in non literary Dravidian languages,

20. Uralian has the following words corresponding to those listed above: a) Est. *pung* « rounded protuberance »; Lp. *bug'ge* « bump, lump; lump; swollen or expanded object »; Md. *pokol'* etc. « lump; protuberance »; Zyr. *bugyl'* « hump; ball, globe »; Vog. *puuñhlāp* « which has a knob »; Os. 1) *Tremjagan puñkal*, S *poḡgal* « knob, knoll, protuberance; gnarl on a tree »; 2) *Tremjagan puñkət*, N Kazym *poḡət*, S *poḡət* « abscess, boil; gnarl on a tree »; 3) N *pōñkəpsi* « boil »; Hg. *bog* etc. « knob; thickening on a plant stalk; gnarl on a tree ». b) Zyr. *piški*, *pišti* « vaccine, birthmark »; *piška* « pustule, pock »; Voty. *poški*, *poške* « cutaneous eruption, abscess, blister, pock », *poškitiini* « to rupture (as ulcer, abscess) », *peštiini* (intr.) « to rupture (as ulcer, abscess) »; SamO. *pūkka* « blister ». These Finno-Ugric forms show a fluctuation between *-šk-* and *-št-*. This is reflected in Dravidian, where with the usual assimilations *-šk-* has developed into *-kk-* and *-št-* (through *-ṣṭ-*) into *-ṭṭ-* (> *-t-*, *-d-*). An unassimilated form can be found in Hi. *phoskā* « blister », which must have been borrowed from some Dravidian language in which *-šk-* was preserved. Nep. has *phoko* « blister, boil, ulcer, tumour; bubble ». Cp. T. BURROW, *Dravidian Studies IV*, in BSOAS, XI (1943-46), pp. 354-55; B. COLLINDER, *Fenno-Ugric Vocabulary*, Stockholm, 1955, pp. 109.

can be phonetically compared with *poddava* and chiefly with its variant *pūṭava*. It is possible that Pāli has borrowed from one of them. This has also happened in Sanskrit, that borrowed *piṭaka*, *piḍaka* « boil, blister, pimple, pustule » from the Dravidian forms showing the internal consonant *-ṭ-* or *-ḍ-*²¹.

It can not be denied that the two last etymologies proposed for *poddava* raise some doubts. The chief difficulty with them is that they request a literal, specific interpretation of the comparison occurring in the VP passage between the monks and the three kinds of people quoted in it, which would so be supposed as having the habit of rubbing themselves. It would not easily account for *malla*²² and *muṭṭika*, and we have already said that, in our opinion, a general notion of misbehaviour concerned with low, ill-mannered people is involved in the comparison. Besides, the last etymologies do not agree at all with the explanation offered by Buddhaghosa's commentary²³.

Finally, the problem of *gāmapoddava* can not be dismissed without an attempt to account for its peculiar *varia lectio gāmapoddavā* occurring in Takakusu and Nagai's edition of VA VI.1199. The second part of the compound can not be associated or paralleled with any other Pāli or Sanskrit word. But it is very similar in form to a set of words belonging to a wide and important Dravidian etymological family²⁴: Ta. *mutu* « old, ancient », *mutuvar*, *mutuvōr* « elders, old persons, persons of ripe wisdom, men of experience, counsellors », *mūttavaṇ*, « one who is senior in age, elder brother, superior », *mūttār* « aged persons, elders »; Ma. *mutu* « old, prior, ripe », *muttan* « old man », *mūttavan* « elder, senior, elder brother », *mūttān* « an old Nāyar, senior », *mūttōr* « old men »; Ka. *muttu* « advanced age, oldness, old age, priority »; Te. *mudara*, *muduru* « ripe, mature, advanced, old », *mutta*, *mutti* « old person », etc. This comparison invites the assumption of a Dravidian origin also for the *varia lectio*, that could be conveniently explained as borrowed from or influenced by some of the above terms. The meaning

21. Pa. *piḷakā*, *piḷaka*, with identical meaning, are obviously connected with the Sanskrit terms, as shown by the vocal *-i-*, which does not appear in the Dravidian languages. Cp. T. BURROW, *op. cit.*, p. 354.

22. It may be of interest to mention here that another term with which *poddava* appears associate in the comparison, namely *malla*, is of Dravidian origin. Cp. T. BURROW, *Loanwords in Sanskrit*, in TPS (1946), pp. 17-8; DED no. 3871.

23. One might be tempted here to propose a correction of Buddhaghosa's text and substitute the term *roga* instead of *rāga*. The resulting compound *chavi-roga*, « skin-disease », occurs just in another Buddhaghosa's commentary too (*DhA* III, 295). There is however one circumstance which casts a doubt upon this tantalizing emendation: the word *maṇḍana* has only the meaning « ornament, adornment, finery » that does not agree with the notion of « skin-disease ».

24. Cp. DED no. 4057 and *Suppl.*

suggested by such an interpretation, however, although non inconsistent with the first part of the compound, is in evident opposition with the general sense of the comparison between misbehaving monks and misbehaving people, and does not show any possible connexion with Buddhaghosa's text. As a consequence, this *lectio* is to be considered wrong and discarded. Yet the assumption of a Dravidian etymology also for it seems to be a further argument speaking in favour of a pronounced influence of the Dravidian languages on Pāli, and in particular on the language of the commentators, many of which, as is well known, were born or studied and worked in Southern India.