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A possible quotation from the Niruktavārttika known to Durga in the Yuktidīpikā*

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1.1 The Yuktidīpikā (38.8-10) explains the term *śeṣavat* in the following passage:

*śeṣa iti vikāranāma, śiṣyata iti kṛtvā/ tathā coktam: na śeṣo'gneranyasya jātaṃ ity
asti nāpatyam anyena jātaṃ sambhavatīty arthaḥ/ śeṣo 'syāstīti śeṣavat/*

The passage consists of three sentences. The first sentence claims that *śeṣa* can mean "modification" (*vikāra*); the second gives a quotation in order to support this claim; the third gives a semantic analysis of the term *śeṣavat*. This much is clear.

It is, however, hard to make sense of the first part of the quotation, the part which comes before the first occurrence of *iti* in it. The situation becomes even more complicated because one of the two Mss. of the Yuktidīpikā contains *na śeṣogretyajātam* instead of *na śeṣo'gneranyasya jātaṃ* and omits *tathā coktam* (YD 38, n. 1). Chakravarti's (1938: 44, l. 3-4) edition reads: *na śeṣo'gre'nyajātam ity astinā apatyam anyena jātaṃ sambhavatīty arthaḥ*. V. Raghavan (1958: 7), commenting on the sentence in this form, remarks: "Meaning and connection in context obscure."

1.2 Fortunately all readings allow us to surmise that the quotation is intended to show that *śeṣa* is synonymous with *apatya* "offspring". This is enough to put us on the right track. The Nighaṇṭu (2.2) contains a group of words which are synonymous with *apatya*. This group contains *śeṣaḥ* (Ngh. 2.2.6). [91] The section of the Nirukta (3.2) which deals with this group cites RV 7.4.7, the third pāda of which reads: *na śeṣo agne anyajātam asty ...*

This solves part of our problem. The first part of the second sentence is a quotation from the Ṛgveda (7.4.7c). The question remains if the last word of this Ṛgvedic quotation is *anyajātam*, as our text suggests, or perhaps *asti*, as in the third

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pāda of RV 7.4.7. This latter alternative might be realized by assuming that the words *asti* and *iti* have changed place, possibly on account of a scribal error.

Such an exchange of places seems implausible on account of the following circumstance: Clearly the remaining part of the second sentence is a paraphrase of our Ṛgvedic quotation. If *asti* belongs before *iti*, this *asti* must be considered directly paraphrased by *saṃbhavati*. This seems impossible. Perhaps the second sentence had originally two occurrences of *asti*, one before and one after *iti*. This double occurrence may then have been responsible for the disappearance of one of them. Since no decisive evidence for or against this second *asti* is available, we tentatively write our second sentence as follows:

*tathā cōktam: na śeṣo agne anyajātam (asti?) ity asti nāpatyam anyena jātam
saṃbhavatīty arthaḥ/*

1.3 The line from the Ṛgveda cannot be the whole of the quotation, for it fails to tell us that *śeṣa* means *apatya* "offspring". We must therefore assume that also what follows that Ṛgvedic line in the above sentence derives from some literary work. The most likely candidate is, of course, the Nirukta. The Nirukta does not, however, explain the line from the Ṛgveda in this way.

We therefore turn to the commentaries on the Nirukta. Three have survived: one by Durga; one connected with the names of two authors, Skandasvāmin and Maheśvara; and Nīlakaṇṭha's Niruktaśloka-vārttika. Of these three the first two have been published. The third one needs some comments. Verses from it were cited by Payyūr Parameśvara Bhaṭṭa, the author of the Gopālikā, a commentary on Maṇḍanamiśra's Sphoṭasiddhi. These verses were reproduced and discussed by C. Kunhan Raja (1940-41: 5-6) and Bishnupada Bhattacharya [1950: 164-65 (106-08)]. Kunhan Raja (1943; 1944) later discovered a Ms. of this work and obtained a copy of it, which came, after his death, in the possession of Kunjunni Raja (1964: 251). From this Ms. it is known that the author of the work was called "Nīlakaṇṭha" and that he refers to his own creation as Niruktaśloka-vārttika (Kunjunni Raja, 1964: 251-53; Mīmāṃsaka, 1965: Introduction, p. 9).

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None of the above works contains the sentence from the Yuktidīpikā.¹ The closest approximation occurs in Durga's commentary, where the following is found (p. 205, l. 5-6): *nāsti śeṣo nāsty apatyam anyena jātam*. The difference from the sentence in

¹ Prof. K. Kunjunni Raja was kind enough to send me, at my request, a copy of the verses in Nīlakaṇṭha's Niruktaśloka-vārttika which comment on RV 7.4.7 in Nir. 3.2. They differ widely from the sentence in the Yuktidīpikā.

the Yuktidīpikā (*asti nāpatyam anyena jātaṃ saṃbhavatīty arthaḥ*) remains great. The word *saṃbhavati* is absent in Durga's sentence and *na* precedes *asti*, not *apatyam*. We must conclude that the Yuktidīpikā did not quote Durga.

It remains, however, likely that the Yuktidīpikā took the sentence under consideration from a commentary on the Nirukta; only there was this Ṛgvedic mantra cited in order to show that *śeṣaḥ* means *apatya*. This leads us to the fourth and last commentary on the Nirukta which is known to have existed. Durga mentions a Vārttika and ascribes verses to it [Kunhan Raja, 1940-41: 8-11; Bhattacharya, 1950: 159-64 (97-105)]. This Vārttika is different from the one composed by Nīlakaṇṭha (Kunjūni Raja, 1964: 251; Mīmāṃsaka, 1965: Introduction, p. 9). The few quotations in Durga's commentary are all we know about this work. It clearly dealt with the same topics as the Nirukta. This, as well as its name, justify the conclusion that the Vārttika known to Durga was a commentary on the Nirukta.

Durga ascribes only verses to the Vārttika. This does not, of course, prove that this work consisted only of verse (as does Nīlakaṇṭha's Niruktaśloka-vārttika): it may have contained both prose and verses. It is, none the less, striking that the quoted sentence in the Yuktidīpikā:

asti nāpatyam anyena jātaṃ saṃbhavatīty arthaḥ

displays an impeccable śloka metre. No rash conclusions should be drawn from this: the metrical form may be coincidence. Moreover, the syntax is somewhat unusual. As it stands, it can only be translated if it is assumed to contain the idiomatic peculiarity discussed — and illustrated with the help of passages from the Īśopaniṣad and Mahābhāṣya — by P. Thieme [1965: 90 (229)]: "... *asti* in a sentence that contains another finite verb form ... is quite idiomatic older Sanskrit." Our above sentence would then come to mean: "It is [a fact]: what is born through [the offices of] somebody else cannot be [one's] offspring; this is the meaning."

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We do not, fortunately, have to decide whether the sentence quoted in the Yuktidīpikā was originally metrical or not. Either way we may assume that it was perhaps taken from the Niruktavārttika known to Durga.

1.4 The (corrected) passage of the Yuktidīpikā can now, tentatively, be read and translated in the following manner:

*śeṣa iti vikāranāma, śiṣyata iti kṛtvā / tathā cōktam: na śeṣo agne anyajātam
(asti?) ity asti nāpatyam anyena jātam saṁbhavatīty arthaḥ / śeṣo 'syāstīti śeṣavat
/*

"Śeṣa is a name for 'modification', because it is left over (*śiṣyate*). And it has been said thus with respect to [the line from RV 7.4.7] *na śeṣo agne anyajātam (asti?)* [in the Niruktavārttika:] 'the meaning [of this line from the Ṛgveda] is that it is [a fact]: what is born through [the offices of] someone else cannot be [one's] offspring'. Śeṣavat is what has offspring (*śeṣa*)."

We see that, properly speaking, only the last half of the second sentence is the quotation which is introduced with the words *tathā cōktam*. The absence of *iti* to mark the end of a quotation is a regular feature of the Yuktidīpikā, certainly where verses are concerned. Verses, introduced by *tathā cōktam* and not followed by *iti*, are found at YD 33.30-34 and YD 49.9-11, to mention but the two cases which are closest to the passage under discussion.

We note that the author of the Yuktidīpikā made a mistake when writing this passage. His concern was with the masculine word *śeṣa*, which figures in *śeṣavat*. The Ṛgveda passage which he quotes, on the other hand, contains the neuter word *śeṣas*, which alone means "offspring".

2.0 If we accept that the Yuktidīpikā quotes, in the passage studied above, a line from the Niruktavārttika known to Durga, there are some consequences which deserve our attention.

2.1 The first consequence is, of course, that this Niruktavārttika is older than the Yuktidīpikā. This information cannot but be welcome, for our knowledge regarding the chronology of the commentaries on the Nirukta is in a far from satisfactory state (see § 2.2, below). It is true that the precise date of the Yuktidīpikā is not known either, but a probable estimate can be made on the basis of the following considerations.

The Yuktidīpikā is younger than Bhartṛhari, the author of the Vākyapadīya. Verses from the Vākyapadīya are quoted at YD 7.10-14 (VP 2.423-24) and YD 34.7-8 (VP 2.147), be it in slightly different form. Moreover, it appears that Bhartṛhari's commentary on the Mahābhāṣya was known to the author of the Yuktidīpikā. When the latter wants to show that also in grammatical works [94] sometimes the subordinate member of a compound is semantically connected with an outside word, he quotes the Mahābhāṣya on Śivasūtra 1 (vol. I, p. 15, l. 3): *akārasya vivṛtopadeśaḥ*; see YD 26.2. That in this phrase the subordinate member of the compound, *vivṛta*, is semantically connected with the outside word *akārasya*, is pointed out in Bhartṛhari's

Mahābhāṣyadīpikā (47.20 ff.), probably for the first time. The Mahābhāṣya itself, where it discusses this problem, takes as examples *devadattasya gurukulam*, *devadattasya guruputraḥ*, *devadattasya dāsabhāryā* (vol. I, p. 360, l. 22-23), not its own phrase *akārasya vivṛtopadeśaḥ*. Bhartṛhari lived no later than the fifth century A.D. (Cardona, 1976: 299). The Yuktidīpikā was therefore composed after that date.

But the Yuktidīpikā is older than Vācaspatimiśra, the author of treatises on many of the philosophical systems of India (see R.C. Pandeya's Introduction to his edition of the Yuktidīpikā, p. xiii). Indeed, the time which elapsed between these two must have been considerable, long enough to explain that Vācaspati, normally well acquainted with the literature, could erroneously ascribe statements to Pañcaśikha which really were written by Vṛṣagaṇa, a fact known to the Yuktidīpikā (Oberhammer, 1960: 82 f.). Vācaspati seems to have written in the first half of the 10th century A.D. (Srinivasan, 1967: 54-63). The Yuktidīpikā was composed a considerable time before this date.

The above discussion shows that we cannot be far off the mark when we say that the Yuktidīpikā was written in the 6th century A.D. This same conclusion has been arrived at by Nakamura according to Potter (1970: 59; Hajime Nakamura, 1973-74, chapter IV, p. II-2 gives c. 700 as date). Frauwallner (1953: 287) gives 550 A.D. as approximate date. The Niruktavārttika known to Durga may therefore be said to date from the 6th century or earlier.

2.2 A second possible consequence of the assumption that the line of the Yuktidīpikā which we studied is quoted from the Niruktavārttika known to Durga must now be considered. It is this, that Durga may have been profoundly influenced by the Niruktavārttika while writing his commentary, and may have followed the same on many points. We shall see that a mere acceptance of this as a possibility has its effects.

In order to see that this is indeed a possibility, we consider the following points. To begin with, the verses which in Durga's commentary are said to belong to the Vārttika, do not allow us to form a clear opinion about the exact relation between this Vārttika and the Nirukta. No doubt the two dealt with the same or closely related topics, and the name of the former suggests that it was a commentary on the latter. But the question remains open if the Vārttika [95] commented upon the Nirukta in any detail. The quotation in the Yuktidīpikā suggests that this question be answered in the positive. Here the Vārttika (if it is that) comments on a pāda of a mantra quoted in the Nirukta. Quite conceivably the Vārttika commented in a similar fashion upon most, if not all, sentences of the Nirukta.

Then there is the similarity between Durga and the line in the Yuktidīpikā, which consists essentially in this that both paraphrase *anyajātam* as *anyena jātam*. This similarity may, at first sight, seem of not much weight. It is to be noted, however, that

Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara, as well as the two commentators on the Ṛgveda whose comments on RV 7.4.7 have come down to us, Sāyaṇa and Veṅkaṭamādhava, preferred to leave *anyajātam* unanalyzed. Moreover, the past passive participle *jāta* can be accompanied by a word in the locative, instrumental or ablative case (Monier-Williams, 1899: 417 s.v. *jāta*). The use of the instrumental case both in the line quoted in the *Yuktidīpikā* and in Durga's commentary is therefore more coincidental than it seems at first sight.

I do not wish to unduly stress the two points here mentioned. They prove nothing. But they show that there is a distinct possibility that Durga's commentary on the Nirukta drew extensively upon the Niruktavārttika. We shall now see what consequences this has.

The commentary of Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara on the Nirukta was written by Skandasvāmin and Maheśvara. This is known from the colophons, which mention sometimes Skandasvāmin, at other times Maheśvara as author. Sarup (1934: Introduction, p. 78) argues that Maheśvara edited the commentary of Skandasvāmin, thereby introducing small changes, but leaving most of the commentary intact. The commentary as known to us mentions Durga by name once (Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara on Nir. 1.1, p. 4). Sarup (1934: Introduction, pp. 81-82) has shown that the sentence in which this happens was probably not part of the original text. He thinks that it was inserted by Maheśvara. All that can be concluded from the mention of Durga is, therefore, that Durga must have preceded Maheśvara.

Sarup (1934: Introduction, p. 65) further argues that Skandasvāmin lived at the end of the 5th century or the beginning of the 6th century A.D. Maheśvara, on the other hand, may, according to Sarup (1934: Introduction, p. 80), be assigned to the 12th century A.D. This would mean that about Durga nothing more definite can be said than that he lived in or before the 12th century A.D.

This is not Sarup's conclusion. The commentary of Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara sometimes refers to the opinion of others, in order to criticize it or [96] show its approval of the same. Some of the opinions referred to are found in Durga's commentary. Sarup (1934: Introduction, pp. 83-87) has collected some such passages. He is of the opinion that Skandasvāmin is their author, and that they refer to Durga. This, together with another argument which in itself has not much force, leads Sarup (1934: Introduction, p. 101) to the conclusion that Durga lived in the first century A.D.

Let us, for argument's sake, assume that the date which Sarup assigns to Skandasvāmin is correct; further, that the passages which according to Sarup refer to Durga, were indeed written by Skandasvāmin. Even then his line of reasoning has a weak spot. Sarup was aware of this, for he writes, while discussing a difference between Skandasvāmin and Durga regarding the word *adas*:

There is no doubt that the object of Skanda's criticism here is Durga for otherwise it will have to be assumed that Skanda's basis of criticism is the commentary of some hitherto unknown commentator. If this assumption is made, it will have to be conceded that Durga's explanation of *adas* must be identical with the comment of the unknown commentator. On the face of it, it will be an idle assumption. It will be more reasonable to assume that Skanda's criticism is directed against Durga.

(Sarup, 1934: Introduction, pp. 83-84.)

It will be clear that Sarup's argument is no longer valid when we assume that Durga relied on the older Niruktavārttika in writing his commentary. It is to be recalled that Durga's name does not occur in the commentary of Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara except for the sentence which we discussed above. Moreover, the commentary of Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara never quotes directly from Durga, as far as I know. Where it seems to reject Durga's opinions, it may reject the opinions expressed in the Niruktavārttika. That the Niruktavārttika was known to the commentary of Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara is established by the fact that two of the verses which Durga ascribes to the Niruktavārttika are found quoted in this commentary. Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara on Nir. 8.3 (part III, p. 123, l. 12-13) and Durga on Nir. 8.4 (part II, p. 740, l. 11-13) quote the same verse and ascribe it to the *vārttikakāra*; and Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara on Nir. 11.13 (part IV, p. 62, l. 13-14) quote the verse which Durga on this same passage (part II, p. 897, l. 15-16; see the variant reading in the footnote) also quotes and ascribes to the Vārttika. Moreover, in one of the cases where, according to Sarup (1934: Introduction, p. 87), Skandasvāmin refers approvingly to Durga, both the commentaries quote the same verse, which, for aught we know, may have belonged to the Niruktavārttika; it concerns Skanda-[97]svāmin-Maheśvara on Nir. 9.11 (part III, p. 153, l. 5-6) and Durga on the same passage (part II, p. 786, l. 24-26).

Not all scholars came to the same conclusions as Sarup. Kunhan Raja (1930: 250 ff.) is of the opinion that Maheśvara alone wrote the commentary on the Nirukta. Venkatasubbiah (1937: 218 ff.) thinks that Skandasvāmin and Maheśvara were contemporaries and wrote the commentary together, each the portions which carry his name in the colophon. We note that both these opinions imply that the commentary on Nir. 1.1 was written by a single person, Maheśvara. (The name "Maheśvara" occurs in the colophon to Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara to Nir. 1.1-3, part I, p. 45.) This means that the argument which led Sarup to believe that the sentence mentioning Durga's name was later added by Maheśvara (see above), might now be considered to show that this

sentence is a later addition to the text, added after Maheśvara. That is to say, if these opinions are accepted, we cannot even be sure that Durga preceded Maheśvara.

Let me finally point out that the evidence on the basis of which attempts have been made to fix the date of Skandasvāmin is far from satisfactory. A couple of verses in Harisvāmin's commentary on the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa, which mentions Skandasvāmin as Harisvāmin's teacher, led Sarup (1934: Introduction, pp. 54 ff.) to believe that Skandasvāmin lived around the year 500 A.D. (see above). Kunhan Raja (1937: 261-62) concluded from these same verses that Skandasvāmin lived around the year 600 A.D. And Mīmāṃsaka (1965: Introduction, pp. 3-4), following Sadāśiva Lakṣmīdhara Kātre, gives such an interpretation to these verses that they place Harisvāmin in the middle of the first century B.C.; Skandasvāmin lived even earlier. Small wonder that Venkatasubbiah (1937: 201-3) decided, already in 1937, to do without these verses. Other evidence caused him to assign Skandasvāmin to some time between 1060 and 1350 A.D. Renou (1936: 327) preferred to advocate an attitude of wait and see.

3. Summing up, if the Yuktidīpikā indeed quotes a line from the Niruktavārttika known to Durga, then this gives us some information regarding the date of the Niruktavārttika: it existed in the 6th century A.D. or earlier. At the same time, ironically, this quotation throws doubt on the only thing that was considered certain with respect to chronological questions pertaining to the commentaries on the Nirukta, viz. the relative chronology of the commentaries of Durga and Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara. We can no longer be sure that the commentary of Durga preceded the one of Skandasvāmin-Maheśvara.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|---------------------------|
| Ngh. | Nighaṇṭu |
| Nir. | Nirukta |
| RV | Ṛgveda |
| VP | Vākyapadīya |
| YD | Yuktidīpikā (ed. Pandeya) |