

CHAPTER - II

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1. Commentary :

The word *ṭikā* is derived from the root *ṭik* ‘go move.’ *Ṭikā*, therefore, means “that which goes to, which takes one to (the meaning of the work)”. *Śabdakalpadrūma* defines it: “*ṭikyate gamyate praviśyate jñāyate vā'nayā / ṭik + ghañarthe kaḥ / tāp ca /vivarāṇa-granthaḥ /*”¹ *Ṭikā* is a work of explanation. By it, the meaning of the original book is explained, understood, is entered into or is known. The term is derived by adding the suffixes *kaḥ* (in the sense of *ghañ*) and *tāp* to the root *ṭik*. *Vācaspatyam*² explains almost in the same words, but adds: in a type of works which explains (only) difficult words (of the original). According to Rajashekhara: *ṭikā* ‘commentary’ is that which explains the meaning (of the text) as far as possible.³ Abhinava says: That is commentary in which the meaning of the text is explained, is understood, is cleverly made appropriate to move into the heart (of connoisseurs or scholars).⁴ Hemachandra remarks: *Ṭikā* is a continuous explanation, that which comments on or explains the meanings, smooth or difficult, continuously.⁵ *Nyāyakoṣa* elaborates it as follows: revealing the author’s intended meaning in other (than the author’s) words, by removing non-comprehension, contrary-comprehension, other wise comprehension etc.⁶

2. Functions of Commentary

1. Construe of the verse
2. Gives meaning of each word by synonyms

3. Resolves compōunds and explains individual words, explains grammatical formation and quotes from authorities.
4. Supplies lacunae
5. Brings out inner meaning
6. Gives comparisons
7. Discusses and gives preference for readings
8. Offers an overall view or criticism
9. Gives quotations which when identified show the upper time limit of the commentator.

3. Different Types of Commentaries:

Commentary can be of various types. They are: *vyākhyā*, *nirukta*, *vṛtti*, *vārtika*, *bhāṣya*, *ṭīkā*, *pañjikā*, *cūrṇi*, *avacūrṇi*, *nirukti*, *vivarāṇa*, *vivṛti*, *ṭippani*, *dīpikā*, *tilaka*, *chāyā*, *paryāya*, *ṭippanikā*, *phakkikā*, *bālābodha*, *āloka* etc. Many other names of commentaries except these are available in *Koṣa* etc. but probably they were not in practice. It is likely that most of them may even be only synonyms of some or the other types mentioned above.

The word *ṭīkā* 'commentary' is a common term for all these types, it is a sort of generic term. However, the different type-names indicate (or are supposed to indicate) some peculiar characteristic of that commentary. Thus for example, *vyākhyā*⁷ explains the idea of the text by illustration, counter-illustration and even bringing out of implied meanings. *Vyākhyāna* means explaining point by point. *Vyākhyā* explains every word of text grammatically and explains and elaborates upon the meaning of the text. Many such learned commentaries like those of stalwarts like Abhinava, Bhaskarāchārya etc. adorn the Sanskrit scientific literature. *Nirukta*⁸ is

supposed to explain the meaning of the text by first separating the words and then showing grammatical and etymological formations of each of them. *Vṛtti*⁹ can not be clearly defined but it aims explaining the meaning by other words (or the same meaning in other words). It is different from *nirukta* and shorter than *vyākhyā*.

*Vārtika*¹⁰ shows the purpose of the topic, its importance in the entire work, and even brings out unsaid things. *Bhāṣya*¹¹ sets and refutes counter arguments, and expands the meaning. *Pañjikā*¹² analyses and explains the meanings of difficult words only. *Cūrṇi*¹³ is almost synonymous with *vṛtti*. *Ṭippaṇi*¹⁴ is generally a super commentary i.e. a commentary upon a commentary. *Vivaraṇa*¹⁵ means word-analysis. *Nirukti*¹⁶ mostly written on Prakrit words, clarifies the exact meaning of the text. *Phakkikā*¹⁷ is a *nyāya*-related definition.

There are terms like *vivaraṇa*, *vivṛti*, *vyākhyā*, *chūrṇi*, *avacūrṇi*, *dīpikā* etc. in use, but they are only synonymous of one or the other of the types of commentary mentioned above.

Many of these terms are found employed in Vedic literature and often in the same meaning. For example, the root *vi + ā + khyā* is used in the *Rgveda* in various contexts, as in “*jāto yadagne bhuvanā vyākhyāḥ*”, “*vi suvarṇo antarikṣāṇi akhyata*, / *āṣṭau vi akhyata kakubhaḥ pṛthivyāḥ*”¹⁸

Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā uses the root in the sense of explanation; *vide* - “*keśīnam vaidarbhya gandharvāpsaraso'pṛcchan x x x āṅgā no yajña vyācakṣā iti tebhya yajña vyācaṣṭa*”¹⁹ (Here the Gandharvas and Apsarases

ask Kesin of Vīdarbha, indeed! explain the sacrifice to us. He, therefore, explained the sacrifice to them). Commenting upon the words *sīkṣāṁ vyākhyāsamah* in *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*²⁰. Shankaracharya comments: “*vyākhyāsamo vi spaṣṭam ā samantāt kathayiṣyāmah / cakṣiṇaḥ khyānādistasya vyañpurvasya vyaktavākvarmana etad'rūpam*”²¹ According to Shankaracharya, therefore, the root *vi + ā + cakṣ* means ‘explain.’ Similarly, the term *nirukta* occurs in the sense of repetition in the *Brāhmaṇa* Literature. *Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa* explaining the meaning of *gāyatram* says: “*etadvai gāyatrasya krūram yan niruktam*”²² Vide *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*²³ and *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.²⁴ In *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* it is used in the context of etymological explanation. “*sa vā eṣa ātmā hṛdi tasya etad eva niruktam hṛdyam iti tasmād hṛdayam*”²⁵ The term *bhāṣya* is first mentioned probably in the title *Mahābhāṣya* of *Patañjali*. In various *Koṣas* like *Amarakoṣa*, *Vaijayantī*, *Abhidhānaratnamālā*, *Kośakalpavṛkṣa*, terms like *īkā*, *pañjikā*, *cūrṇi*, *bhāṣya*, *vṛtti*, *nirukta*, *vivarāṇa*, *vārtika*, *paddhati*, *saṁkṣā*, *kārikā*, *vyākhyā*, *ṭippaṇa* etc. are explained, as already seen before.

The beginning of the vast commentary literature in Sanskrit can be traced to the Brahmanical literature. Brahmanas aim at *vinīyoga* ‘application’ of a *mantra* to a ritual. They give verbal meaning of the words of *mantra* and they explain it and elaborate upon it. Particularly *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* not only does all this but even attempts at the deificatory and spiritual interpretations of those *mantras*. These have developed into *Āraṇyakas* and then into *Upaniṣads*. On the other hand, *nirukta* only aims at etymological and semantic explanations mainly of difficult or obsolete or anomalous

words. This method seems to have further developed into Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, and then into various śāstraic commentaries.

These commentaries reveal certain apparent characteristics. They are supposed to perform some definite functions and there are certain standard modes and methods to achieve them. They are: (1) '*Prayojana*' purpose, (2) '*Anvaya*' construe, (3) '*Nirvacana*' explanation/ etymology, (4) '*Praśnottara*' catechism/ question-answer method, (5) '*Śaṅkā-samādhāna*' doubt and resolution, (6) '*Paramata*' refutation of rival-opponent views, (7) '*Itivṛtta*' anecdotes, establishing the context and (8) '*Koṣā*' acting as dictionary, giving meanings, other words.

- 1) ***Prayojana* 'Purpose'**: The commentary is generally expected to show the purpose of the text. For example, the *Brāhmaṇa* portion of *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* shows that the *mantras* are employed for the ascertainment of the sacrificial ritual. This characteristic is not taken very seriously in *Nirukta* and *Mahābhāṣya*.
- 2) ***Anvaya* 'Construe'**: In the explanations of Vedic *mantras* in some *Brāhmaṇas*, the different words of the *mantra* are given in prose order, i.e. beginning with the subject the construction of the words goes downwards i.e. the verb is mentioned the last.
- 3) ***Nirvacana* 'Explanation, etymology'** : The *Brāhmaṇa* portions very often give explanation with the help of *Upākhyānas* i.e. stories or anecdotes; *Nirukta* also adopts this method sometimes.
- 4) ***Prasha-uttara* 'Catechism'**: To explain the meaning often the method of catechism is employed. This method is continuously employed throughout

in the *Nirukta*. The catechisms are found in the commentaries like the *Mahābhāṣya*, *Vyāsaśāstra* and *R̥gārthavṛtti*.

- 5) *Śāṅkī-Samādhāna* ‘**Doubt and Resolution**’: The method of raising doubts and resolving them removes the views contrary to those in the text and establishes its validity. Yet it germinates the tendency of dialectical discussions and striking at the weak points of the author.
- 6) *Paramata* ‘**Refutation of rival-opponent views**’: The views of the rivals are also mentioned in some places in the Vedic and Vedāṅgic texts. Such views are often mentioned with the names of the rivals, their views are given in details and refuted vehemently.
- 7) *Itivṛtta* ‘**Anecdotes**’: Anecdotes corroborating the context are also mentioned often in the Brāhmaṇas like *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, *Nirukta* etc. They are important for the treasures of our folk-lore and often for their historical value.
- 8) *Koṣa* ‘**Dictionary**’: *Nighaṇṭu* collects groups of words having the same meaning. This is also seen in some places of *Nirukta*. These are the oldest specimens of *Koṣa*-literature. Many *Koṣas* are quoted or referred to later in the commentaries of classical literary works, particularly *Mahākāvya*s.

Of course most of these characteristics are more apparent in commentaries on scientific literature. The commentary should show the purpose either of writing the work (which is commented upon) or of writing this commentary. This is necessary to establish the validity of the efforts undertaken. The main purpose of writing a commentary is to explain the arguments (in scientific literature) or poetic beauties in creative literature. Therefore explanation and appreciation are the basic principles of a good commentary. It is supposed to bring out the hidden delights of a piece of

literature. Thus, the commentaries achieve a number of things: First, it construes the verses in a prose order, thus simplifying the process of comprehension. Then it generally explains the meaning of each word, often with the help of synonyms, grammar and etymology. It also narrates the story referred to passing by narrating the relevant details. It often correlates the literature text with the śāstraic theories and corroborates its viewpoints by quoting from śāstraic texts. ✓

REFERENCES

1. *Śabdakālpadruma*, Part- II, p.572.
2. *Vācaspatyam*, p.3188
टीक्यते गम्यते ग्रन्थार्थोऽनया । टीक् करणे षञ् षञर्थे के वा । विषमपदव्याख्यारूपे ग्रन्थभेदे ।
3. Rājashekhara's *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, p.5
यथासम्भवस्य टीकनं टीका ।
4. Abhinavagupta *Vimarsinī 'Isvarapratyabhijñā'* p. — १
टीक्यतेऽवगम्यते हृदय भूमि संचरण चातुर्ययोग्योऽर्थः क्रियते यथा सा टीका ।
5. Hemachandra's *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi*, p. 108, v.170
टीका निरन्तर व्याख्या-टीकयति गमयत्यर्थान् टीका,
सुषमानां विषमाणां च निरन्तरं व्याख्या यस्यां सा तथा ।
6. *Nyāyakoṣa*, p.306
मूलग्रन्थस्य अप्रतिपत्तिविप्रतिपत्त्यन्यथाप्रतिपत्तिनिवारणेन तत्कर्तुरभिप्रेतार्थस्य शब्दान्तरेण विवरणम् ।
7. *Kalpādrakoṣa*, v.51, p.444
x x x आक्षेपश्च समाधानां व्याख्यानां वर्णनं समे ॥
8. *Nirukta Vṛtti*, p.6
वर्णागमो वर्णविपर्ययश्च द्वौ चापरो वर्णविकारनाशौ ।
घातोस्तदर्थतिशयेन योगस्तदुच्यते पंचविधं निरुक्तम् ॥
9. *Samārhāhnikā* (2.1.1.), fn.123, p.75
“परस्य शब्दस्य यो अर्थस्तस्याभिधानं शब्दान्तरेण यत्र सा वृत्तिरित्यर्थः ।”
10. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, 3.6, p. 14
प्रयोजनं संशयनिर्णयौ च व्याख्याविशेषो गुरुत्वावहे च ॥
कृतव्युदासोऽकृतशासनं च सवार्तिको धर्मगुणाष्टकश्च ॥
11. Rājashekhara's *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, p.5
आक्षिप्य भाषणाद् भाष्यम् । ;
Hemachandra's *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi*, 2.168, p.108

भाष्यं सूत्रोक्तार्थप्रपञ्चकम् ।

12. Rajashekhara's *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, p.5

विषमपदभञ्जिका पञ्जिका ।

13. प्राकृत साहित्यका इतिहास, fn-1, p.196

x x x तथा परिभाष्यते अर्थोऽनयेति परिभाषा चूर्णिरुच्यते ॥

14. *Śabdakalpadruma*, Part-II, p.572

टेष्यति व्याख्यायतेऽनया । टिप् + करणे ल्युट् डीप् च । पृषोदरादित्वात् पस्य ह्रित्वे साधुः ।

15. *Vaijayantī Koṣa*, 2.4.26, p.23

भञ्जना स्याद्विवरणम् ।

16. प्राकृत साहित्यका इतिहास, fn-1, p.194

निर्युक्तानामेव सूत्रार्थानां युक्तिः-परिपाट्या योजनम् ।

17. *Śabdakalpadruma*, Part-III, p.378

न्यायसम्बन्धी व्याख्या ।

18. *R̥gveda Samhitā*, 7.13.3, 1.35.7 and 1.35.8

19. *Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā* 1.4.12, p

20. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* - 1.1.2, P.15

शिक्षां व्याख्यास्यामः । वर्णः स्वरः । मात्रा वलम् । साम सन्तानः । इत्युक्तः शिक्षाध्यायः ।

21. *ibid. Śāṅkarabhāṣya*, 1.1.2, p.9

22. *Tāṇḍya Mahābrāhmaṇa*, 7.1.8, p.229

23. *Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*, 11.1, p.52,

उच्चैर्निरुक्तमनुब्रूयादेतद्ध वा एकं वाचो नन्ववसितं पाप्मना यन्निरुक्तं तस्मान्निरुक्तमनुब्रूयाद्यजमानस्यैव पाप्मनोऽपहत्यै ।

24. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, 1.4.4.6, p.87 x x x निरुक्ता हि वाङ्निरुक्तो हि मन्त्रः । &

5.4.4.13, p.807 परिमितं वै निरुक्तम् ।

25. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*-8.3.3, p.336