Chapter 2

ETYMOLOGICAL APPROACH OF YĀSKA’S PREDECESSORS

2.1 Introduction

In India, scientific treatises on various sciences like linguistics, philosophy, music and even literary criticism have their own traditional methodology. This methodological approach in various disciplines, exhibit the views and notions of early writers on the subject matter. The observations and speculations of predecessors and contemporaries are helpful to understand the different attitudes of various disciplines. Some times these observations are providing some cultural
and sociological data. Pāṇini, Patañjali, Kātyāyana, Jaimini, Bādarāyaṇa and others always establish their own views on various topics quoting from their predecessors or contemporaries. These remarks on early scholars are quoted by the writers for various purposes. Among them three are important -

1. To establish their own views.
2. To oppose the established views.
3. To respect the preceptors.

This tendency of Indian writers is a valuable source for an awareness of early history and educational tools of the society. There is always a slackening of (lack of) historical approach in the works of Indian writers - such cross references to the ancients will help to imbibe the awareness of the time factor.

In the *Nirukta* Yāska quotes valuable views of some sixteen predecessors or contemporaries on various linguistic problems. Some views of these scholars are referred to by Yāska to firmly establish his own view. He shows respect to the preceptors on such occasions by mentioning them individually. He quotes the
varied views of his preceptors eulogizing some and criticizing others.

The scholars quoted by Yāśka in the *Nirukta* are Āgrāyana, Audumbaraṇa, Aupamanyava, Aurṇavābha, Kāthakya, Kautsa, Krauṣṭuki, Gārgya, Gālava, Carmaśiras, Taitiki, Vārṣāyaṇi, Śatabalākṣa, Śākapūni, Śākalaya and Sthaulāṣṭhīvi. All these Scholars had expressed their observations on many linguistic problems. Yāśka shows real interest in quoting them. The *Nirukta* thus introduces a strong background of linguistic thoughts of ancient India. These quotations reveal the society life of Vedic period. A detailed note on the earliest Indian writers on language studies is noteworthy in the present context. Observations of these scholars are valuable information about the earliest linguistic perspectives of ancient India.
2.2 Kautsa

Yāska’s *Nirukta* discusses the problems and possibilities of meaning through word analysis. Yāska introduces discussions on the prominence of meaning with great emphasis quoting the strong opponent views of Kautsa on the position of Vedas. Kautsa was of the opinion that the Vedic stanzas are without any particular meaning. He had adduced several arguments to substantiate his view. Yāska vehemently opposes the ideas of Kautsa and establishes the importance of awareness of meaning.

In the first chapter of *Nirukta*, Yāska presents the views of Kautsa who questions the purpose of *Nirukta*. According to Kautsa if the text is intended for the awareness of meaning of Vedic terms, it is useless -

\[ yadi \text{ mantrārthopratyayāya anarthakam} \]

\[ bhavatīti kautṣah \ (\text{Nirukta I.15}). \]

Because the Vedic hymns are without any particular meaning (*anarthakā hi mantrāḥ*). Kautsa presents his view through six arguments and among them, the following three are important:-
niyatavācogyuktayo niyatānupūrvyā bhavanti.
athāpi brāhmaṇena rūpasampannā vidhiyante.
athāpyanupapannārthā bhavanti. (Nirukta.I.15)

‘Propositions have their words fixed, their order, too, is
immutably fixed. Further, the accomplishment of the
ritual form is enjoined by the Brāhmaṇa texts still.
Further their meaning is impossible’.

Yāska establishes his objections with the main arguments
that-
arthavantaḥ śabdasāmānyāt (Nirukta I.16)

Vedic stanzas are significant, because (their) words are identical
(with the spoken language). Lakshman Sarup has discussed
these arguments very seriously and according to him Kautsa was
a historical entity, which represents the anti-Vedic scepticism of
the early stages. He says -

‘As the Nirukta is one of the six auxiliary treatises of
the Veda, it is rather difficult to say with what object
Yāśka presented and tried to controvert the view of
his opponents, for it is inconceivable that the learned theologians would reproduce, in their orthodox books, a controversy which challenges the most fundamental beliefs of their religion. The reproduction of the Kautsa controversy endowed with a rationalistic spirit, and was free from bigoted fanaticism, but also that it was possible to carry on such discussions with tolerance at that period of remote antiquity, and implies on other, that Kautsa was an eminent scholar, or some great personality or the exponent of some philosophic system, whose thought could not be ignored.

It may also be taken for granted that he was the leader of a movement, which may be desirable as something akin to materialistic rationalism, and which was the result of a remarkable literary activity, a characteristic of the epoch of Yāska, as pointed out elsewhere’


This view of Lakshman Sarup about Kautsa is not acceptable
as such because Kautsa represents not the materialistic schools but only to the Brahmanic tradition. Kausta’s arguments quoted by Yāska, question the purpose of *Nirukta* which is explaining the meaning of Vedas. The views of Kautsa seek to establish the idea that, *Brāhmaṇas* are the authoritative texts and Vedic hymns only substantiate the rules of *Brāhmaṇa* texts. Here Kautsa admits the authority of *Brāhmaṇa* texts. *Mīmāṃsā* tradition also accepted the authority of *Brāhmaṇas*. According to it, Vedas are the only infallible authority; and it has been divided into two forms- *mantrarūpa* and *brāhmaṇarūpa*.

*Brāhmaṇarūpa* has been accepted as the authoritative texts and *mantrarūpa* are only means to accomplish them. This view indicates that Kautsa was more or less a *Mīmāṃsaka*. Kautsa’s arguments against the meaning of Vedas signify the standpoint of Kautsa as a *Yājñika*. i.e. He accepted the Vedas only as a tool of *yajña*. During the time of Yāska, there were at least two divisions in Vedic tradition; among them one gave importance for sacrificial performances in which the hymns of Veda were used
without seeking any meaning in the Vedic passages; and the other one stresses the importance of meaning of Vedic passages. Yāska, who was a strict follower of the tradition of etymologists gave importance for the awareness of meaning of Vedic texts. Kautsa, on the other hand, may be a follower of a tradition which stresses on the Vedic chanting. This is an important factor in the development of the history of Vedic tradition. In the later period, in India there was a strong influence for this chanting tradition, which stresses divinity of sounds -Vedic sounds- and practised this from generation to generation for the preservation of the Vedas in its verbal purity.

Kautsa, may be one among the promoter of divinity of sound. But Yāska who stressed the awareness of meaning had to oppose strictly this tradition of Kautsa. Such a divergent view on Vedic interpretation may be the cause of the origin for Nirukta. Yāska says that-'without etymology the precise meaning of Vedic stanzas cannot be understood. For one who doesn't understand the meaning, a thorough investigation of accent and grammatical
form is not possible' (Nirukta.I.16). This statement implies the importance of the knowledge of meaning in Vedic hymns.

Lakshman Sarup has illustrated Kautsa as a representative for anti-Vedic scepticism at the time of Yāska. According to him, Kautsa may be a critic, who questioned the authority of Vedas, and maintained that the Vedic stanzas are meaningless. Sarup presents a view that Kautsa represents the anti-Vedic tradition. A series of observations of the references available in Nirukta reveal the fact that Kautsa represents an authority of the Vedic tradition of sacrificial performances. Kautsa seeks to prove that the meaning of Vedic passages are irrelevant or useless, and these are meant exclusively for sacrifices. In such sacrificial tradition, Vedic hymns are to be chanted without any change even in the accent.

2.3 Gārgya and Śākaṭāyana

Gārgya is mentioned by Yāska only twice. These two references are in the first chapter. Śākaṭāyana is also mentioned
in the first chapter of *Nirukta* for three times. But these two scholars are discussing same theories of linguistics. Yāska’s serious observations and hypotheses on some linguistic problems go like this - ‘prepositions and particles are words and they have various meanings, all words are derived from roots’ etc. These are discussed in the first chapter. In these discussions he quotes the scholars referred above.

Śākaṭāyana’s view on the prepositions is -

\[
na \text{ nirbaddhā upasargā arthānirāhuriti śākaṭāyanaḥ}
\]  
(*Nirukta* I.2).

‘Prepositions when separated from verbs and nouns have no meaning - they only express an extended sense of nouns and verbs’.

Gārgya on the other hand says-

\[
\text{uccāvacāḥ padārthā bhavantīti gārgyaḥ (Nirukta I.2).}
\]

‘The prepositions convey multiple meanings in various contexts’.

According to Śākaṭāyana, prepositions have meanings; but they
are subordinate in nature. But Gārgya says that they are employed in a variety of meanings.

These observations may be considered as the two different views on linguistics; i.e. of grammarians and of etymologists. Grammarians do not accept the prepositions as words. According to them the derivation of prepositions is useless. But etymologists always stress on patterns of meaning and this lead them to accept the prepositions and particles as words. Further, Yāska’s treatment is concerned with Vedic language and it is highly analytic in nature. In Vedas, there are no strict rules for the position of prepositions connecting with verbs. Classical Sanskrit is more meticulous in this matter. It never violates the rules of prepositions which are always attached with verbs. So Yāska provides much importance to the prepositions and particles which are capable to convey the liveliness of the Sanskrit language. Really nouns and verbs are more colloquial only if they are used with the prepositions and indiclinables. The Sanskrit word nipāta which means ‘fallen’ in some remote past, indicates
the development of it in the language.

Śākaṭāyana’s observation on the root theory is as follows -

\[ \text{tatra nāmānyākhyātajānīti} \]

\[ \text{śākaṭāyano nairuktasamayāśca (Nirukta I.12)} \]

has been noted by Yāska. The interesting fact is that, in this occasion Yāska’s theory has been opposed by Gārgya (\textit{na sarvānīti gārgyah}). The divergent attitudes of different scholars on the meaning and importance of particles in a language indicate the considerable development of linguistic discussions during the time of Yāska.

2.4 Aupamanyava

Yāska has quoted the name Aupamanyava for nine times in the \textit{Nirukta}. The term ‘Aupamanyava’ has been described by the Durga as follows:-

\[ \text{uparatamanyurupamanyu stasyāpatyam aupamanyava iti.} \]

\[ (Nirukta I.1) \]
‘The man who retreated from anger’ is the meaning of the word *uparatamanyuh*. The person who belongs to his family is known as Aupamanyava. Such names are popular in *Nirukta* and the method of etymology based on semantic principles is related to that of Yāska’s. Yāska’s etymologies are based mainly on semantic grounds. His concern was to establish the purpose of using a particular word to denote the meaning connected with it.

The name Aupamanyava has been mentioned for the first time by Yāska while explaining the word *nighaṇṭu*. Here the author quotes the name Aupamanyava to show respect. The *Tīkākāra* also agrees with this while saying:

\[ kīrtyartham aupamanyavagrahaṇam. (Nirukta I.1) \]

According to Yāśka, Aupamanyava was a well-known scholar whose linguistic views were accepted by Yāska and others. Aupamanyava’s etymology for the word *nighaṇṭu* is quoted as follows –

\[ ‘te nigantava eva santo nigamanānīghaṇṭava ucyanta \]
ityaupamanyavah' (Nirukta I.1).

That means, ‘Aupamanyava holds that, as these are the quoted words of the Vedas, they are called nighanta on account of their being quoted (nigamanat).’

This explanation of Aupamanyava for the word nighantu establishes the three types of words in which the root element is either perceivable, or not perceivable or difficult to perceive -

pratyaksaparoksaatiparoksa vrttayah.

According to Durga, in the Nirukta, Yaska describes these three types of words with the tools of etymology. Yaska says that the words which are considered difficult to derive the meaning or grammatical modifications (atiparoksa vrtti) are considered as the subject matter of Nirukta and the explanation of the word nighanta according to Aupamanyava is a pattern of illustration of Yaska’s methodology.

The next place, where Aupamanyava’s view are illustrated is as follows -‘damanaditaupamanyavah’ (Nirukta II.4)

While explaining the word dantha, Yaska quotes the view of
Aupamanyava. Yāska’s etymology for dāṇḍa is as follows -

\textit{danda dāṇḍo dadaterdhāravyatikarmāṇaḥ} \textit{(Nirukta II.4)}.

Aupamanyava derives the form \textit{danda} from the root \textit{dam} which means ‘alleviation’. There is a sociological and historical analysis in the explanation of the word \textit{danda}. It is discussed in the fifth chapter of the present study.

The next observation of Aupamanyava from Yāska’s remarks is the etymology of the word \textit{paruṣa}. According to Aupamanyava the word \textit{paruṣa} is derived from the root \textit{bḥā}. While explaining the word ‘\textit{gau}’ Yāska says that the word \textit{gau} has a number of meanings in different contexts. The word \textit{gau} is used in the sense of \textit{āditya} (sun) in a particular hymn \textit{(utraḥ paruṣe gavi)}. For considering this meaning, the word \textit{gau} is discussed by Yāska with the etymological assistance of Aupamanyava. According to Aupamanyava \textit{paruṣe} means -

\textit{parvavati bhāsvatītaupamanyavah} \textit{(Nirukta II.6)}.

The word \textit{paru} means \textit{sandhiḥ} (‘joint’). Aupamanyava says that the word \textit{gau} in the sense of sun as follows- ‘the sun goes through the joints of the day with a divine light’.
The next quotation of Aupamanyava comes when explaining the word ṛṣi. There are two etymologies for the word ṛṣi. Yāska says- ṛśirdarśanāt (Nirukta II.11.). According to Aupamanyava ṛśi means - stomāṇḍadārśetyaupamanyavah. stoma means hymns or mantras. The term ṛṣi means 'who saw the hymns'. The etymology provided by Aupamanyava in this context extends a step ahead than that of Yāska’s. Yāska says that ṛṣi is a person who has the power to see things. And Aupamanyava says ṛṣi should realize the mantras with his mental power.

While explaining the word vajra Yāska quotes again Aupamanyava. The word vajra has several synonyms and among them kutsa is a doubtful one -

vajrah kasmat? varjayatīti sataḥ.

tatra kutsa ityeta kṛntateḥ. (Nirukta III.11.)

kutsa denoting vajra is derived from the root kṛnt which means to cut. Sometimes the word kutsa may be denoting ‘ṛṣi’ as in the case -

ṛṣiḥ kutso bhavati. kartā stomāṇāmitaupamanyavah.

atrāpyasya vadhakarmaiva bhavati.
tatsakha indraḥ śuṣṇam jaghāneti. (Nirukta III.11).

Hence it is derived from the root \( kr \). The etymology of the word \( kutsa \) in the sense ‘sage’ or ‘\( rṣi \)’ has been illustrated by Yāska with the quotation of Aupamanyava. According to Aupamanyava \( kutsa \) means the name of a seer. A seer is a composer of hymns. Further it has the meaning ‘to kill’. The word \( kutsa \) is used to denote \( vajra \) also. But when it denotes \( rṣi \), there is a common factor or similarity in the process. Actually the word \( kutsa \) means \( vajra \) because of the process of ‘cutting crucially’. When it means \( rṣi \) it accepts its root \( krṇ \) ‘to do’ or ‘compose hymns’. But the real nature of the word \( kutsa \) in the sense of \( rṣi \) in ‘stomāndadarśeti rṣih’ changes as ‘the person who kills with the help of hymns’. Yāska also illustrates the history of the word \( rṣi \) which gains the meaning \( kutsa \) through the story of Indra and Vṛtra. Tīkākāra quotes the reason for this meaning as follows -

\[
\text{vadhasahakāriṇopi vadhakatvamāmnāyate.}
\]

(Nirukta III.11)
That means, ‘one who helps to kill too is considered a killer’.

This observation of Aupamanyava on the word *kutsa* indicates the social dissenting on the sacrificial offerings to the gods. It may be interpreted that, from times of Yāśka, there were some rational discussions which are opposed the *Yājñīka* tradition and Aupamanyava may be a maverick (non-conformist).

When illustrating the word ‘*kāka*’, after providing his own view which is similar to the onomatopoeic theory of modern philology, Yāśka quotes Aupamanyava. The word *kāka* is explained as follows-

\[
\text{*kāka iti śabdānukṛtyāḥ. tadidam śakunisu bahuḥam} \]

(Nirukta III.18).

According to Aupamanyava the word etymology is -

\[
\text{na śabdānukṛtyādīta ityauampamanyavaḥ.}
\]

\[
\text{kāko’pakālayitavyo bhavati. (Nirukta III.18)}
\]

Aupamanyava’s observation on this word deviates from that of Yāśka’s. Aupamanyava disagrees with the etymology of sound imitation tendency. His observation on the word *kāka* is notable.
He says that ‘kāka means the creature which is to be kept at a distance’. Here the definition given for kāka deserves a socio historical explanation. The approach of man to different types of animals and birds deviates according to their nature, beauty and the like. From the very ancient age the crow was not considered as a domestic bird or as a good omen. Man always kept a distance from this bird. This has been intended by Aupamanyava through the etymology of kāka.

Aupamanyava’s name was quoted by Yāska while explaining the words kāṇa and vikaṭa. According to Aupamanyava-

kāṇo‘vikrāntadarśanaḥ (Nirukta VI.30).

‘A person who is called kāṇa on account of his short vision, i.e. one eyed’. The word vikaṭa is explained as -

vikaṭo vikrāntagatirityaupamanyavaḥ.

(Nirukta VI.30).

‘Hideous, (vikaṭa) is one whose manner of walking is crooked says Aupamanyava’.

While explaining the word Indra, Yāska quotes different etymologies of the word like -
indra irām dṛṇāti (Indra divides food),
irām dadāti (he gives food),
irām dadhāti (he bestows food),
indave dravati (he runs for the sake of soma).

(Nirukta X.8).

According to Āgrāyana he (Indra) is so called from doing everything (idam karaṇāt). According to Aupamanyava Indra is so called from seeing everything-

indra idam darśanādityaupamanyavaḥ (Nirukta X.8).

The word Indra is etymologized by several scholars and Yāska’s quotations are identical with them. According to Yāska’s etymologies, the prominent deity Indra is a master provider of sustenance or bestower of food. These exhibit the performance of the god Indra, as a provider of sustenance. Deviating from this observation, Āgrāyana explains Indra as an omnipotent hero who is capable of doing anything in this world. Aupamanyava depicts the picture of Indra as, ‘one who is omniscient; i.e. one who has an outstanding vision. However, Yāska’s quotations and etymologies portray Indra as a prominent deity of the Vedic age.
There were a number of other deities who were not so popular then. One of them is Viṣṇu. His two synonyms are quoted by Yāska -

śipiviṣṭo viṣṇuriti viṣṇordve nāmanī bhavataḥ.

(Nirukta V.7).

But according to Aupamanyava the former has a contemptuous meaning. He says -

kutsitārthīyam pūrvam bhavatītyaupamanyavaḥ.

(Nirukta V.7)

There is no other reference for the word śipiviṣṭa - The observation of Aupamanyava is that ‘the word śipiviṣṭa contains a contemptuous meaning’ is a strange indeed.

The word yajña is explained by Yāska in many ways such as an act of well-known worship, an act of supplication of gods and so on. These explanations are identical with etymologists like Aupamanyava. These various observations illustrate the different dimensions of yajña. Aupamanyava’s observation on yajña is as follows-
Durga explains the word *bahukṛṣṇājina* as follows—

\[
yadyadatra dṛṣyate prativiśiṣṭam sādhanam
tīrṇcittattatkṛṣṇājinamīti tāllaṅkṣanopalakṣitam
karma yajña ityaupamanyava ācāryo manyata iti.
\]

(Nirukta III.19)

That means 'each and every substance, used in a sacrifice, (yajña) is *krṣṇājina*. Hence *bahukṛṣṇājina* means all the materials employed in a sacrifice. According to Aupamanyava yajña is a big programme needing various materials in abundance. This observation of Aupamanyava differs from that of other etymologists. The word *krṣṇājina* denote yajña by the time of Aupamanyava shows the substitution theory about the materials and the like in the performance. Thus from the above mentioned references about Aupamanyava it is clear that he was one among the notable linguist or etymologist of the times of Yāska.
2.5 Śākapūṇi

Among the scholars referred to by Yāska, Śākapūṇi has been mentioned for more than twenty times. Brhaddevatā of Saunaka quotes a number of Ācāryas like Śākapūṇi who were referred to in the Nirukta too.

According to Durga the term Śākapūṇi is explained as follows-

śākāni yaḥ pūṇayati samhanti saḥ śākapūṇih’ (who collects vegetables). Here the root pūṇ means samghāte (collect).

(Nirukta II.8)

At first Yāska mentions the name Śākapūṇi, in the second chapter. Yāska illustrates the story of Śākapūṇi in connection with a deity in this context. Śākapūṇi is depicted as a person blessed by the divine power, to identify the deity in her real nature. Yāska quotes -

śākapūṇih sankalpayāmcakre. sarvā devatā
dvāmna jānāmi. tasmai devatobhayaliṅgā prādurbabhūva. tām na jajñe. tām papraccha. vividiśāṇī tveti.
Durga explains - 'Śākapūṇi claimed that he knows all the deities. Then a deity appeared before him as a hermaphrodite. He could not identify and said; 'I would like to know you'. She chanted the following hymn and said 'You, the etymologist identify me from this hymn'. (Nirukta II.8).

The above mentioned incident, illustrates the status of Śākapūṇi at the time of Yāska. Besides, Yāska considered him as the most prominent etymologist because he determined the deity through direct perception. According to Yāska, the third objective of the science is the enlightenment on deities of the hymns.

\[ athāpi yājñe daivatena bahavaḥ pradesā bhavanti \]

(Nirukta I.18).

The third objective was satisfied by Śākapūṇi and thus he was considered as a personality among the etymologists.

Besides this, Śākapūṇi is mentioned at several instances. These are mostly connected with word etymologies. Śakāpūṇi
gives his own views on etymologies which are different in nature. For example; He explains six words denoting the meaning of *agni* (fire). They are as follows- *idhma* (VIII.5), *tanūnapāt* (VIII.5), *narāśamsa* (VIII.6), *mādhyamika* (VIII.14), *viśvam* (VIII.10), and *vanaspatiḥ* (VIII.17). Yāska quotes a number of other views of many scholars on these six words besides those provided by Śākapūṇiḥ. Kātthakya derives the word *idhama* as -

*yajñedhma iti kātthakyaḥ* (*Nirukta* VIII.5).

The definition of Śākapūṇi is -

*agniriti śākapūṇiḥ* (*Nirukta* VIII.5).

According to Durga the meaning of the word *idhama* as *agni* etymologized by Śākapūṇi is more or less acceptable for the sacrificial purposes. (*agnyarthatāyāḥ ārādupakāritvāt, praiṣasya tu sannipatyopakāramitī durbalatvāt*). Durga remarks that the observation of Śākapūṇi is more accurate to explain the meaning of the hymn and Yāska accepts it.

While explaining the word *śītāma*, Yāska cites different derivations of Śākapūṇi, Taitīki and Gālava. Yāska explains the
meaning of the word *sitāma* as ‘arm’

*doḥ sitāma bhavati* (Nirukta IV.3).

Śākapūṇi explains the word *sitāma* as uterus - *yonih sitāmeti śākapūṇiḥ*. According to Taiṭiki, it means liver *syāmato yakṛtta iti Taiṭikiḥ* and Gālava explains as fat *śītimāmsato medasta iti gālavaḥ*.

Durga comments on Śākapūṇi’s derivation for *sitāma* as -

*atra yoniravānānīyeti tatsamānādeśo guda evātra yonisābdanābhimataḥ* (Nirukta IV.3).

That means uterus is not for offering. The word *sitāma* quoted from the Vedic passage which says that ‘Oh Hota! Please offer from all parts of the body like, from the region of ribs, hips and arms to the Aśvi deities and they will offer them in sacrifice’. In this context uterus has been considered as an impure part of the body and it should not be offered. According to Śākapūṇi the word meaning of *sitāma* is anus (*guda*).

This indicates that some part of the sacrificial animal were offered and some other parts were considered not good for
offering. There were divergent opinions among the scholars even in the time of Yāska. These references show an anatomical awareness about the inner parts of human body; even the meaning of the physical parts are explained with their characteristic features.

This discussion on the word *sitāma* illustrates the controversy of finding out an acceptable meaning for certain terms among the Vedic scholars. Due to the social, cultural and geographical reasons, even at the time of Yāska, Vedic scholars encountered this problem. This shows the substitution theory to a great extent.

On many similar instances in the *Nirukta*, Yāska quotes the opinion of Śākapūṇi. Yāska very much appreciated the observations of Śākapūṇi. It is obvious that he may be a well known scholar during or around the time of Yāska.
2.6 Kāṭṭhakya

Kāṭṭhakya is mentioned by Yāska six times. The name Kāṭṭhakya is explained by Durga as - *katthakasya putraḥ* (son of Katthaka) the quotes come under the eighth and ninth chapters of the *Nirukta*. Yāska quotes him first as -

*yaññedhma iti kāṭṭhakyah* (*Nirukta* VIII.5).

Here Yāska explains the āpri citations. Among them *idhma* is the first one. *idhma* means fuel, i.e. *samindhanāt*. It is so called from ‘being kindled’. According to Kāṭṭhakya, *idhma* means *yajña*-sacrifice. Two divergent views are held by Kāṭṭhakya and Śākapūṇi on the word *idhma* which is already mentioned in the discussion of Śākapūṇi.

Another point of discussion comes under this āpri deities' group is *tanūnapāt*. *tanūnapādājyam bhavati* - says Kāṭṭhakya. i.e. ‘how the word is used in the sense of ājya’. Here ājya (butter) is the offspring of milk, which in itself is produced from the cow; thus clarified butter is the grandson. *tanu* means cow. This is a beautiful imagination. In the Vedic age clarified
butter is considered as an enivguorating food. It is considered as a sacred sacrificial substance. Cow is the most divine animal in Indian culture from a very remote past. So butter is as blessed and blissful as one’s own progeny. Kāṭṭhakya explains this word in a striking way which stresses on a materialistic temper.

There is another observation for the word ‘tanūnapāt’ by Śākapūṇi. He says it means ‘fire’. He explains: ‘tanū is water, it is spread in the atmosphere. Herbs and trees are produced from water and fire is produced from herbs and trees’ (Nirukta VIII.5). So it is called fire. This explanation for the word tanūnapāt is connected mostly to the natural resources. His observation on this word has an ecological grace.

The next observation of Kāṭṭhakya is as follows - narāśamsa yajña iti kāṭṭhakyah (Nirukta VIII.6). To Kāṭṭhakya, narāśamsa means sacrifice. The etymology of the word narāśamsa is as follows -

narā asminnāsīnā śamsanti (Nirukta VIII.6).
(seated men praise gods in sacrifice).

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This is also connected with sacrifice and sacrificial rituals. The interpretations of the words *tanunapāt*, *narāśamsa* and the like exhibit the idea that, Kātthakya is a strict follower of *Mīmāṃsā* tradition or *Yājñika* tradition.

Yāska’s another reference to Kātthakya is in the interpretation of the word ‘*vanaspati*’. To him, *vanaspati* means *yūpa* the sacrificial post (*Nirukta* VIII.17). But to Śākapūṇi *vanaspati* is fire. This too confirm his observation with nature and natural resources.

Kātthakya’s interpretations of the words *vanaspati*, and the like are not in a nature centric sense. His interpretations are always correlated with sacrificial rituals. In explaining the clarified butter as the grandson of cow, Kātthakya’s sense of humour is revealing. Śākapūṇi’s interpretations more or less subscribe to ecological views. He always stresses on nature and natural resources.
2.7 Aurṇavābha

Yāska refers to Aurṇavābha five times. At first, he mentions him in the second chapter. He narrates the story of Viśvāmitra and the rivers vipāṭ and śutudrī. The seer Viśvāmitra was the domestic priest of Sudāś the son of Pijavana. Having gathered his wealth, the priest comes to the confluence of the rivers vipāṭ and śutudrī. Others (servants or robbers) followed him. Viśvāmitra, implores the rivers to become fordable. He addresses them in dual and plural. This is the legend of Viśvāmitra and the rivers. Here Yāska quotes and interprets the two hymns addressed to the rivers. These passages are mentioned in the second chapter, while explaining the word nadya (Nirukta II.26). In these hymns, there is a word ‘urvyā'. Here, Yāska quotes Aurṇavābha’s explanation for the word urvyāḥ is as follows -

urvyāḥ urṇotervṛṇātityaaurṇavābhah

(Nirukta II.26).

‘urvyā' means ‘expanded’. According to Aurṇavābha, the word is derived from the root urṇu meaning ‘to cover’. Here Durga
suggests that, the word vrṅāte is not a correct version; because, the root vrṅī is studied with the meaning of varane 'to cover'.

The next context, were Yāska quotes Aurnavābha is in the sixth chapter. While, explaining the word śrusṭi Yāska quotes a hymn from Ṛgveda 'nāsatya' there in. Aurnavābha explains the word as follows-

satyāveva nāsatayu ityaurṇavābhah (Nirukta VI.13).

nāsatya is a synonym for Aśvin deities. Aurnavābha says that Aśvins never utter any lie, hence the name nāsatya. This is a keen observation of the deities of Vedic texts. Aurnavābha shows respect for the dual deities’ Aśvinau.

In Nirukta Āgrāyaṇa supports the statement of Aurnavābha. To him the word nāsatya means-
satyasya praṇetārau (Nirukta VI.13) ‘promoters of truth’. Durga explains the observation of Aurnavābha by commenting on this-

tau hi satyameva brūtaḥ na kadācidapyasatyam.
tasmān nāsatyāvityucyate (Nirukta VI.13).
In the twelfth chapter also, Yāska illustrates the dual gods Āśvinau. Here Aurṇāvābha’s etymology has been quoted by Yāska. Aurṇāvābha explains the word āśvinau as follows - āśvairaśvinau iti. Durga comments this as - āśvaisturangaistadvantau rājānam punyākritāvaśvinau.

(Nirukta X11.1)

Aśvins are blessed with horses or horses are accompanying them. That is the reason for the name āśvinau.

The next observation of Aurṇāvābha in the Nirukta is while explaining the Rgvedic hymn ‘agnimīle’. Here, Aurṇāvābha, explains the word ‘hotāram’ as follows -

juhoterhotetyaurṇāvābhaḥ (Nirukta VII.15).

According to him hotāram is derived from the root hu means dānādanayoḥ. The word is explained as juhoteh means ‘doing sacrifice’. To Yāska the word hotāram is hvātāram, which means ‘one who is calling the gods to accept the offerings’.

The next occasion where Yāska quotes Aurṇāvābha is in the context of demonstrating the hymn -
Yāska cites two illustrations of the hymn by Śākapūṇi and Aurnavābha. According to Śākapūṇi the three fold existence of Viṣṇu’s foot is as follows -

prthivyāmantarikṣe divīti śākapsūṇhi.

‘On the earth, on the intermediate space and on the heaven’.

According to Aurnavābha these are

samārohaṇe viṣṇupade gayāśirasītyaurṇavābhah.

‘On the mountain of sunrise (udayagirau), on the meridian (antarikṣe) and on the mountain of sunset (astagirau)’. Durga explains the word viṣṇu as ādītya the sun. Durga’s commentary is subscribes to Aurnavābha. Durga says that viṣṇu is the deity of the hymn which implies sun - i.e. sun is the god of the hymn. Aurnavābha’s explanation is attached with the god Āditya; and Śākapūṇi’s with the god Viṣṇu. Yāska only says that -

yadviśiṣṭo bhavati tadviṣṇurbhavati.

Yāska’s explanation is not substantiating the idea of sun for the word viṣṇu.
2.8 Śatabalākṣa

In the eleventh chapter Yāska mentions the name Śatabalākṣa. In this context, Yāska quotes his name as Śatabalākṣo Maudgalya. The name Śatabalākṣa is derived by Durga as follows -
śatabalāṇi aksāṇi yasya saḥ śatabalākṣaḥ (Nirukta X.6).
‘One who possesses organs (aksāṇi) hundred stronger’: Śatabalākṣa is the descendant of Maudgalya. These illustrations about Śatabalākṣa reveal the fact that Mudgala who may be a saint or seer had a descendant who acquired an extreme power of strong body which implies an interesting notes of social veracity. Further, he illustrates the god of death (mṛtam cyāvayati) as a strong entity.

In the eleventh chapter of Nirukta the word mṛtyu is explained. Yāska says, mṛtyu means -
mṛtyurmārayatīti sataḥ (Nirukta XI.6)
‘The god of death kills’.
Śatabalākṣa’s explanation is more or less the same -
`mṛtam cyāvayatī ti va.

‘Death takes away prāna from the dead.

Here the word is derived from the root cyāvu. A similar quotation is there in Brhaddevatā. This too explains the word mṛtyu. The all encompassing power of the god of death is described by the Brhaddevatā. Here mṛtyu is described thus-

\[ yattu \text{pracyāvayanneti} \ ghoṣeṇa \ mahatā \ mṛtam. \]

\[ \text{tena mṛtyumimam} \ \text{santam} \ \text{stauti} \ mṛtyuriti \ \text{svayam} \]

\[ (\text{Brhaddevatā II.}60) \]

To Yāśka and Maudgalya the word mṛtyu is the ‘God of Death’. Siddheshwar Varma criticizes their etymology and explains: ‘Yāśka failed to imagine that death itself could be metaphorically spoken as the Lord of Death. Or according to Maudgalya, mṛtyu was derived as mṛtam cyāvayati, lit.‘one who throws down the dead person’. Here the lack of imagination led Maudgalya not to see the active aspect of death, and to manufacture another verb cyāvay out of the suffix yu. It seems as if a lack of imagination was a characteristic feature of the etymologies of Yāśka’s age’.

(Varma, 1953, p-38).
This observation of Varma on the etymologies of Yāska is based on the early philological thinking. Here Varma stresses on the differences in the grammatical forms of the word mṛtyu, which will be māryu if the root is māray. But the explanation of Yāska and Maudgalya enunciate the approaches of society of the dead one. It indicates the absurdity of the statement that - ‘mṛtyu - thrown away after the death’. Siddheshwar Varma quotes a number of etymologies of Yāska which indicate the poor imagination power of Yāska. He tries to explain all these etymologies through the eye of a philologist and a grammarian. Yāska's etymologies always stress on the characteristics of the living society of that age.

2.9 Sthaulāṣṭhīvi

While explaining the etymological possibilities of the word agni, Yāska refers to Sthaulāṣṭhīvi. Sthaulāṣṭhīvi defines the word agni thus -

aknopano bhavatīti sthaulāṣṭhīvih.
na knopayati na snehayati. (Nirukta.VII.14).

‘He is a drying agent, says Sthaulāśṭhīvi, he does not sodden, he does not moisten’. This is the first context where Yāska quotes Sthaulāśṭhīvi.

Yāska explains the word agni in a number of ways. He refers to various interpretations of scholars like Sthaulāśṭhīvi, Śākapūṇi, and gives several quotations from Vedic hymns. Yāska interprets the word agni as a sacrificial leader. So his interpretation is -

agranirbhavati, agram yajñēsu praṇīyate,

aṅgam nayati sannamamānah (Nirukta.VII.14).

‘He becomes the presiding deity, he presides over the yajña, he officiate with all reverence’. Yāska’s interpretations target on sacrificial ends. Sthaulāśṭhīvi is a well known etymologist and linguist during the time of Yāska. He interprets the word agni in differently. In his observation, agni is a drying agent. It does not sodden or moisten. This explanation of Sthaulāśṭhīvi indicates the natural properties of agni.
While explaining the word *vāyu*, Yāska again quotes Sthaulāṣṭhīvi. Here also Sthaulāṣṭhīvi gives a more convincing and natural interpretation for the word *vāyu*. According to him the word *vāyu* is derived from the root *etēḥ.*

\[\text{eteriti sthau̲ḷāṣṭhīviḥ. anarthako vakāraḥ.}\]

(Nirukta X.1).

The verb ‘e’ means ‘to go’. Here the letter *v* is used without any sense or purpose. Sthaulāṣṭhīvi is more or less intent on the characteristic features of objects in their word derivation. Explanations of Sthaulāṣṭhīvi differ from those of Yājñika tradition.

2.10 Śākalya

In the sixth chapter Yāska mentions Śākalya (Nirukta VI.28). Here Yāska presents a discussion on the rendition of hymns word by word (*Padapāṭha*). Śākalya is said to be the author of *Padapāṭha* of *Rgveda*. Śākalya splits the word ‘*vāyo*’ differently from that of Yāska. Yāska says that if Śākalya’s
splitting of the word is accepted (*veti ya iti ca*), then the meaning would be incomplete. The finite verb should have the acute accent *udāṭta*; and here it does not have.

This discussion of Yāśka has been illustrated by Siddheshwar Varma. According to Varma, Yāśka differs from Padakāra. Varma quotes several observations of several scholars like Rajavade V.K., Skold.H. These scholars give exegetical contributions on the *Nirukta*. According to Rajavade this difference indicates that -

‘But there are only two instances of *padavibhāga* in the *Nirukta*, namely *mehanā* and *vāyaḥ*. By *padavibhāga* he apparently means deviations from the analysis of *Padapāṭha*.’

Varma comments on this - 'On the other hand Rajvade’s edition of *Nirukta* (p.277) is nearer to the truth, when he says thus’.

There is another occasion in the *Nirukta*, when Yāśka illustrates a divergent view of Śākalya from that of Gārgya, i.e. the discussion on the word ’*mehanā*’ (*Nirukta*.IV.4).
Here Durga says that it was Śākalya who interpreted mehanā as mamhaniyam. According to Gārgya, yanma iha nāstīti vā.ṛiṇi madhyamāni padāni. Durga says that according to Gārgya, the word division in the Vedic passage is as follows - 'yat me iha nāstīti vā'. So the quotation 'yatindra citra mehanāsti...' (Ṛgveda V.2.10) occurs to different word division. This observation is an interesting phenomenon for modern scholars. Deliberations on meanings are provided various types of word divisions. Varma criticizes Yāska on these two occasions with several quotations. Brhaddevatā also mentions these words and it supports the Padakāra’s view.

These discussions indicate that during the time of Yāska, there were divergent views on the padavibhāga of Vedas. This is a clear deviation from the later period. These divergent views were made possible only because of the discussion on different etymological interpretations. Yāska’s derivations and interpretations always stressed on the meaning. Later on, the padavibhāga of Veda established a permanent method for
splitting of Vedic words. Śaunaka’s Brhaddevatā, a later work sometimes deviates from Yāska. In the later periods, after the great scholar Yāska, the stress and priority were shifted from the meaning to mere chanting of Vedic hymns.

2.11 Carmaśiras

The word vidhavā has been explained by Yāska in various ways. All these derivations are illustrating the status of a widow in society during the time of Yāska. As quoted by Yāska, Carmaśiras explains the word, as -

\[
\text{vidhavā vidhā́트kā bhavati, vidhavanādvā}
\]
\[
\text{vidhāvanadveti carmaśirāḥ, api vā dhava iti}
\]
\[
\text{manusyanāma, tadviyogād vidhavā (Nirukta III.15).}
\]

‘A widow becoming sans sustainer, devoid of the sustainer or traumatized by the death of the sustainer says Carmaśiras. It can also be explained dhava means man and due to his extinction one becomes widow ’.
This explanation of Carmaśiras is remarkable and Durga comments on this derivation thus -

\[ sā hi bharturabhāvādanurudhyamānā \]
\[ pumbhiryatastato dhāvati (Nirukta III.15). \]

‘A female running helter-skelter, intercepted and impeded by other males due to her being devoid of a husband’.

This explanation for the word \textit{vidhavā} explicitly states the status of a woman during the time of Yāska. Then she was respected only because of her husband, sans husband she is sans respect. This picture of a widow precipitated to a helpless condition at the death of her husband has been depicted by Yāska through this explanation. The derivations made by Yāska on the word \textit{vidhavā} imply the prominence of a husband in a woman’s life then.
Yāśka mentions the name Taiṭiki while explaining the word śitāma. According to Taiṭiki, śitāma means yakṛt (liver). He says the reason for this explanation as syāmataḥ (Nirukta IV.3). Liver is black in colour; so the word meaning of śitāma explained as yakṛt - liver.

The interpretations of the word śitāma quoted by Yāśka are the reflections of the materialistic thought of Vedic age. Vedic tradition of culture was highly philosophical in its various interpretations like prasthānaratraya, upaniṣadic heritage and so on; at the same time Samhitā portions of Vedic age were elucidated in their materialistic and realistic nature. The scholars like Taiṭiki, Krauṣṭuki and Kāṭhakya always provide various interpretations for the Vedic words referred to in a materialistic observation. In this context, Yāśka gives numerous derivations for the word śitāma which are connected with human body and its inner parts. The same word śitāma has been interpreted as white and black from different roots. According to Taiṭiki it is
black (śyāmataḥ) and according to Krauṣṭuki is white (śiśth). These contradictory views of two scholars mentioned by Yāska, establish the divergent approaches of etymological study.

2.13 Krauṣṭuki

The name Krauṣṭuki is mentioned by Yāska in the eighth chapter of the Nirukta. Krauṣṭuki gives the derivation for the word draviṇodā (Nirukta VIII.2). He derives the word as dātṛtamaḥ. The word draviṇam means ‘wealth’ because ‘people run towards it’, or ‘strength’ because ‘people run by means of it’; therefore the word draviṇodā means the giver of wealth or strength.

\[
dhanam \ draviṇamucyate \ yadenadabhidravanti
\]
\[
balam \ vā \ draviṇam \ yadenenābhidravanti \ tasya \ dāta
\]
\[
draviṇodāḥ (Nirukta VIII.2).
\]

In the discussion of the word meaning of draviṇodāḥ, Yāska quotes different opinions of Krauṣṭuki and Śākapūni. According to Krauṣṭuki the word is attributed to Indra as -
Krauṣṭuki reveals that Indra is the most liberal giver of wealth and strength. So the name is suitable to Indra.

Sākapūṇi varies from this opinion and according to him the word is attributed to Agni. Sākapūṇi may be sometimes an ardent devotee of god Agni. These two observations of scholars may be indicative of the two main streams of Vedic deities. So the origin of the wealth and strength has been discussed during the age of Yāska and Indra and Agni are the eminent deities who considered as undefendable. Some scholars believe that Indra is the authority of wealth and strength and at the same time some believe that it was Agni. Yāska gives various quotations from Vedic passages which illustrate Indra as *draviṇodāḥ* and Agni as *draviṇodāḥ*. The word *draviṇodāḥ* is a symbol for the wealth and strength; hence there may be divergent interpretations for the word. Vedic deities like Indra and Agni are prominent gods
at the age of Yāśka, and others attribute the word \textit{draviṇodāḥ} to different deities.

Yāśka's quotations on these divergent opinions of different scholars explain the variety and richness of studies on linguistics and etymology of words. Among such scholars there are etymologists, philosophers and followers of other disciplines like \textit{Naidānas}, \textit{Nairuktas}, \textit{Parivrājakas}, \textit{Pūrve Yājñikas}, \textit{Yājñikas}, \textit{Vaiyākaraṇas}, \textit{Duhitṛdāyādas} and \textit{Haridrāvikas}. All these disciplines have substantially contributed in illustrating words with their meanings and derivations for their own objectives. Yāśka and other scholars, while discussing the derivations of some words refer to the various disciplines like ecology, anatomy and the others. Thus it is possible to derive a single word in many ways. A keen observation of such varieties is helpful in socio linguistic studies. Some times these derivations and elucidations obviously state the characteristic features and objectives of their own disciplines. So it may be an interesting area for linguistic and socio linguistic observations.
through which one can trace out the earliest views of different disciplines. Further, Yāska’s age can be depicted through the socio linguistic discussion and observation, for which there should be considerable data from these pieces of narrations of various scholars.