

Some folk-etymologies in the Anuyogadvāra-sūtra*

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1. Among the ten types of nouns described in the Anuyogadvāra-sūtra*, two are called गोष्ण and नोगोष्ण. गोष्ण is गुणनिष्पन्न 'appropriate to the meaning' and नोगोष्ण is 'contrary to the meaning.' The illustrations of the former type are: खमणो (=खमतीति), तपणो (=तपतीति), जलणो (=जलतीति), पवणो (=पवतीति). The illustrations of the latter type are : सकुंत 'bird', which is अकुंत 'not having a lance'. समुग 'box' (Sk. समुद्ग), which is without 'the मुग (Sk. मुद्ग) grain'. समुद् 'sea' (Sk. समुद्र) which is without मुद्दा 'seal' (Sk. मुद्रा). पलाल 'dry grass' (divided as प-लाल, Sk. प्र-लाल 'having abundant saliva'), which is अलाल 'not having saliva'. सञ्जलिया 'kite' (divided as स-ञ्जलिया, Sk. सकुलिका 'having a family'), which is अकुलिया 'having no family'. पलास 'the पलाश tree' (Sk. पलाश, understood as पल+अश 'eating meat'), which is अपलास 'not eating meat'. इंदगोव 'a rainy insect' (Sk. इन्द्रगोप), which is not a 'protector of Indra'.

2. Another type is that which is designated by a word having a contrary meaning. The illustrations are : शिवा 'vixen' (meaning also 'auspicious'), although it is अशिवा 'inauspicious'. अग्नि 'fire' is called शीतल 'cold'. विष 'poison' is called मधुर 'sweet'. In the house of liquor-distiller liquor is called स्वाद् 'sweet' eventhough it is अम्ल 'acidic'. अलक्तय (but understood as अरक्तय i. e. Sk. अरक्तक 'not red'), eventhough it is रक्त 'red'. अलाउ 'gourd' (Sk. अलाबु, understood as अ-लाबु 'not a container') eventhough it is लाउ 'container'. For कुसुंभ 'Indian Maddar' (divided as कु-सुंभ 'that which appears unbeauteous') is used eventhough it is beautiful.

3. One type of names are given according to their etymology.

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The illustrations are : महिष 'buffalow' is so called because he sleeps on the ground (मह्यां शेते). भ्रमर 'honey-bee' is so called because it wanders and drones (भ्रमति रैति च) मुसल 'pestle' is so called because it rises up frequently (मुहुर्लसति). कपित्थ 'the wood-apple fruit' is so called because it hangs like a monkey (कपि+स्थ). चिक्खल्ल 'liquid mud' is so called because it makes sound like चिद् and it is low in the middle (खल्ल). उलूक 'owl' is so called because its ears are high (उर्ध्वकर्ण). मेखला 'girdle' is so called because it is a row of मेख (?).

4. Even if Ārya Raksita may not be author of the Anuyogadvāra, there is no doubt about the fact that its author was highly learned and well-versed in Sanskrit. Hence we are intrigued with the structural division or etymologies of the words like सकुंत, समुग्ग, समुद्, पलाल, सडलिया, पलास, इंदोव that he has given just like a common man, who being ignorant of grammar or etymology gives a fanciful etymology to match the meaning—what is known as 'folk etymology'. In every language such fanciful etymologies are current. For example in Modern Gujarati माशी 'mother's sister' is explained by some as मा-शी 'like the mother'. Actually it is derived as Sk. मातुःस्वसृका, Pk. माडस्सिया, Old Guj. माडसी > माशी. भत्रीजो 'nephew' is explained as भय त्रीजो 'the third danger', while actually it is derived as Sk. भ्रात्रीयः, Pk. भत्रिज्जओ, and then through भत्रीजड, भत्रीजो. टपाली 'postman' is facetiously explained as टप दर्इने आली जाय ते 'He who delivers speedily', when etymologically it is connected with टप्पो 'halts at intervals in the path'. In Hindi the following doggerel is well-known—

रंगी को नारंगी कहे, चलती को कहे गाडी ।

गंदे को साफ़ी कहे, ऐसे लोक अनाडी ॥

(Variants खारे को मीठा कहे; वाढी को कहे पाली; पाली को वाढी कहे). In this नारंगी 'orange' is divided as ना-रंगी 'not coloured' when in fact it is coloured. गाडी is 'cart, car' taken as a homonym for 'buried'. The piece of cloth used to cover

the end of चल्म of a hookah is dirty, but it is called साफी meaning also 'clean'. खारा 'salty' is called मीठा 'sweet'. वाढी 'knife' is also called पाली which also means 'that which has increased'.

5. In the non-standard Sanskrit of Jain Prabandha works many fanciful etymologies are advanced. Pk. पाणहिआ 'shoe' derived from Sk. उपानहिका is re-Sanskritised as प्राणहिता 'beneficial for the life' ! Guj. डोकरो 'old man' is Sanskritised as डोलत्करः 'he whose hands dangle'. दोहरो (दोहडो) 'a meter of that name' is Sanskritised as दुग्धघटक 'a pot of milk' (probably based on the wrong alternative name दोधक, which is a different metre). अलत्तय, अलाउ, कुसुम्भ as etymologized in the Anuyogadvāra are in line with the above given back-formations.

6. We however know that the tradition of giving fanciful, artificial or imaginary etymologies goes back to Yāska's निरुक्त (about fifth century B.C.), and it continues later in the explanations given in the literature on the उणादिसूत्र and still later in the one-letter dictionaries (एकाक्षरी शब्दकोश). Among the illustrations cited above from the Anuyogadvāra the etymologies of the words Sk. अलावु (Pk. अलाउ), उलूक, कुसुम्भ, Pk. चिक्खल्ल, Sk. पलाश, Pk. पलाल, Sk. मुशल, मेखला, Pk. सकुंत (related Sk. words शकुन्त, शकुन, शकुनी), Pk. सउलिया (Sk. शकुनिका, Guj. समळी), Sk. समुद्र are unknown. भ्रमर is connected with भ्रम् 'to wander' (with-अ-derivative). महिषी is based on Sk. महत् 'great' and समुद्र derives from सम्+उद्र (the same root as that of उद्रक 'water'). इंद्रगोप is in the same class as the popular names given to some insects etc. (e.g. fungus is called in Guj. बिलाडीने टोप 'the hat of a cat'). In the case of the use of शिवा ('auspicious' for that which is really considered अशिवा 'inauspicious') and स्वादु 'sweet' (which is actually अम्ल 'acid'), the verbal taboo has prevailed, under the belief that if an unauspicious word is spoken the harmful thing may possibly materialize. The terrible Vedic god रुद्र

came to be called शिव, शंभु, शंकर 'the benign one', to appease him.

In Gujarati under the superstition that when somebody goes out to carry out a task, if any one enquires क्यां जाओ छे ? 'Where are you going ?', then the use of the word क्यां would invite failure in the undertaking. So instead the word श्चिद is used (श्चिद जाओ छे ?), because that word is derived from Sk. सिद्ध, implying the undertaking will be successful.

