

## BOOK REVIEW

**Sharma, Ramesh K. 2018.** *Yuktidīpikā. The Most Important Commentary on the Sāṃkhyakārikā of Īśvarakṛṣṇa.* [MLBD Classical Systems of Indian Philosophy 1.] Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. clxxiv + 400 pp. ISBN 978-8120841758

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There are several editions of the *Yuktidīpikā*, this highly important work on Sāṃkhya philosophy from probably the 6th century CE. Sharma's book is a fully critical edition utilizing all the known manuscript sources. There is, however, another edition doing the same, based on exactly the same manuscript material, published twenty years earlier: Albrecht Wezler and Shujun Motegi: *Yuktidīpikā. The Most Significant Commentary on the Sāṃkhyakārikā*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1998.<sup>1</sup> The reviewer's task is, for the most part, to compare the editions and evaluate the differences.

Sharma's book starts with a Preface (xv–xxiv), mostly outlining the author's involvement with the text edited. In the Introduction (xxv–lii), he describes the manuscripts and previous editions of (and other text-critical work on) the *Yuktidīpikā*. Surprisingly he does not even mention that there is an English translation (Shiv Kumar and D. N. Bhargava: *Yuktidīpikā*. Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, 1990–1992, in the Bibliography hidden among the 'Sanskrit Works cited in the present edition', p. 364) – although he is fully aware of it, since he quotes from it (on p. ciii, giving the reference in footnote 2). I cannot really imagine that an editor – at least when facing a problematic or difficult passage, of which there are plenty in the *Yuktidīpikā* – would not check what the translators could understand from the text.

Perhaps in order to justify the need for a new critical edition, Sharma emphasizes three criticisms in his description of W: (a) First, he thinks that the previously suggested emendations should have appeared in the apparatus. This is far from clear, since all those attempts were based on more limited manuscript sources. (b) Second, 'the information regarding the actual readings

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter referred to as W. References to pages of this edition will be prefixed by w.

was not always accurate’ (p. xxxii). This is obviously true and unavoidable in a work of such magnitude. *Errare humanum est*, so in the few years remaining till AI takes over the frustrating work of reading and collating manuscripts we have to live with it. A list of such errors would have been most welcome; unfortunately, Sharma did not provide one. It is a shame that the manuscripts of such important works are still not available online; so in preparing the (obviously incomplete) list below I could rely only on Sharma’s text. (c) Third, ‘[w]hat is worse, Wezler and Motegi were a bit too free in making emendations and other alterations’ (p. xxxii). I find this statement unjustified. Emendations are risky, but if you do not want to publish meaningless garbage, they are absolutely necessary. At least W marks very clearly all emendations and even obvious corrections in the text itself, not only in the apparatus.

In the short chapter on ‘Issues relating to the Title, Authorship, and Date of *Yuktidīpikā*’ (pp. liii–lxiv) Sharma suggests a date around 550 CE, which seems convincing. It is followed by an explanation of the conventions used in the edition and sample photos of a page from each manuscript.

Last in this first part of the book is a substantial study, ‘Search-light of Reasoning: A Philosophical Introduction to the *Yuktidīpikā*’ (pp. lxxviii–clxxiv). This chapter does contain some interesting analyses of some parts of the *Yuktidīpikā*, but also has many problems. At places it reads as a first introduction to Sāṃkhya thought, other parts are for dedicated experts only. Mostly he compares the *Yuktidīpikā* to the later works of Vācaspati Miśra and Vijñāna Bhikṣu, without mentioning that these people while writing on Sāṃkhya were actually followers of Vedānta. An analysis of where the *Yuktidīpikā* differs from earlier Sāṃkhya would have been more relevant. The study is also quite outdated; the last paper Sharma mentions is from 2004. It has too many errors, I counted 123 – mostly incorrectly spelt Sanskrit words.

The book ends with several appendices: ‘Complete Text of the *Sāṃkhyakārikā*’ (319–326); ‘Tables of Classifications’ (327–336) containing 40 tabulated lists of categories, unfortunately unsourced; ‘Glossary of Technical Terms of *Sāṃkhya*’ (337–360), an alphabetical list of terms with short and mostly uninformative Sanskrit explanations (like ‘*dr̥ṣṭir darśanam*’, ‘sight is seeing’), again unsourced. Then a ‘Bibliography’ (361–368), where the most recent secondary source is his own paper from 2004. Lastly we find four indices (369–400).

## THE EDITION (1–317)

Sharma’s edition is in Devanāgarī, whereas W is in Roman script. Devanāgarī, being identical or (in its structure) very close to the scripts in the manuscripts, makes it easier to contemplate possible scribal errors. On the other hand, it often makes putting a space between words impossible, and therefore makes the text way more difficult to read; also footnote markers cannot be positioned to the exact location where they would be needed. In the Roman script, the easy use of diacritical marks and hyphens could further facilitate reading, but unfortunately W does not make use of this possibility.

Sharma’s main Devanāgarī text is beautifully printed, well organized and remarkably error-free. (It is now [01.12.2024] available online, Romanized:



<https://www.wisdomlib.org/hinduism/book/yuktidipika-sanskrit.>) I have found only three obvious misprints:<sup>2</sup>

53.9 = w58.1	‘tatpunataścaturthā’ → ‘tātpunaścaturthā’
109.3 = w101.14	‘pratyāyaty’ → ‘pratyāyaty’ <sup>o</sup>
166.8 = w150.26	‘viśeṣatanmātrāṅkāra’ → ‘viśeṣatanmātrāhaṅkāra’ <sup>o</sup>

There are seven cases where Sharma explicitly corrects W, explaining it in a footnote:

36.4 = w39.8	‘stuvann api’ → ‘stuvann api na’
38.1 = w41.1	‘upalambhau’ → ‘upalabdhau’
57. <sup>17</sup> = w61. <sup>20</sup>	add to the footnote: ‘A. <i>asaṃśayām avasthād etad evaṃ</i> ’
69.10 = w70.15	‘lakṣaṇaṃ’ → ‘mūlalakṣaṇaṃ’
186.2 = w164.36	‘śaktiś ca’ → ‘śaktiś ca’
287.3 = w246.12	‘puruṣaḥ’ → ‘pūruṣaḥ’
290.1 = w248.12	‘sandadhya’ → ‘sandadhya’ <sup>t</sup>

There are many further cases where comparing the two editions it is clear that W needs to be corrected, although Sharma does not notice the problem. I have found the following examples:

42.4 = w46.6	‘kayātiśayayogāḥ’ → ‘kṣayātiśayayogāḥ’
45.13 = w50.8	‘prakāśitānām bhavati’ → ‘prakāśitānām upalabdhir bhavati’
92.11 = w87.20	‘atīndriyābhāvāḥ’ → ‘atīndriyā bhāvāḥ’
93.3 = w88.1	‘sanbandha’ → ‘sambandha’
98.11 = w92.5	‘pratipravṛttir’ → ‘prati pravṛttir’
114.4 = w107.7–8	‘asyābhāvad’ → ‘asyābhāvad’
119.13 = w111.15	‘parimāṇo’ → ‘pariṇāmo’
126. <sup>2</sup> = w116.21	‘sarvavivāda’ add footnote ‘A. <i>sarvavāda</i> ’ <sup>o</sup>
141.11 = w129.18	‘utpadyate’ → ‘utpadyeta’
143.6 = w131.3	‘tavad’ → ‘tāvad’
153.19 = w140.24	‘ahetumadāyaḥ’ → ‘ahetumadādayaḥ’
157.1 = w143.1	‘Catuṣṭayam’ → ‘Caturtham’
164.2 = w149.8	‘yathāsattvasya’ → ‘yathā sattvasya’
165.9 = w150.5	‘tadā nivārita’ <sup>o</sup> → ‘tadānivārita’ <sup>o</sup> or ‘tadā ’nivārita’ <sup>o</sup>
173.15 = w156.14–15	‘paramādnavaḥ’ → ‘paramāṇavaḥ’
174.7 = w156.27	‘sadbhāvo siddhaḥ’ → ‘sadbhāvo ’siddhaḥ’
175.18 = w157.30	‘buddhimadbhāvo’ → ‘buddhisadbhāvo’
306.5 = w262.15	‘prāmāṇābhāvāt’ → ‘pramāṇābhāvāt’
315.15 = w269.14–15	‘anāndriyamāṇaḥ’ purātanākhyānavyākhyānavākyaṅṇuḥvyākhyānagarbham’ → ‘anāndriyamāṇaḥ purātanākhyānavyākhyānavākyaṅṇuḥvyākhyānagarbham’

Unfortunately, there are many instances of differences between the two editions that are not explained in the notes where without access to the manuscripts it is undecidable which reading is correct, e. g.

6.17 ‘jijñāsām’ = w4.20 ‘jijñāsanam’ (both adding in the apparatus „A. jijñāsāprayojanam’)

<sup>2</sup> The notation 53.9 means page 53, line 9; 57.<sup>17</sup> means page 57, footnote 17.



Again, there are many cases where the two editions differ in which manuscript's reading to accept; often the meaning will be essentially the same. In the few cases where the difference is significant, I have not always been able to decide which reading makes more sense in the context. However, I think that there are clear cases where Sharma is right, and there are clear cases where W is preferable.

The critical apparatuses of the editions are very similar, even the sigla used and the English wording are nearly identical. In the main text we find a footnote number at the end of the problematic word, and in the footnote only the variant readings are given. A positive apparatus would have been much better, as W clearly admits (but 'it was too late to change', p. XI fn.11). Where the reported readings differ between the two editions (in about every sixth case!), it is usually impossible to guess which is correct. This could have been avoided if Sharma had consistently reported whenever his reading of a manuscript did not match the data in W (e.g., 'pace W's xyz').

However, when Sharma reports an edition's reading, it can easily be looked up – and we do find errors, e.g.:

15.<sup>4</sup> 'Wezler (14.15) reads °īrṣyāratyasūyā° = w14.15 °īrṣyāratyāsūyā°

Again, when a variant is not reported, the omission is unambiguous, e.g.:

21.8 = w22.18 'py ayam' – in Sharma, no footnote, whereas w22.<sup>15</sup> adds 'A. omits *apy*'.

Both editions mark all emendations or corrections (W clearly, surrounding it with <> angle brackets), and if it was previously suggested by someone, they mention the source. A notable and regrettable exception is that Sharma frequently does not mention that an emendation was suggested by W. For example, w17.22 'tad<apaghātāc.' with note w17.<sup>19</sup> 'All the Mss read *tadabhighāte*' – in Sharma 17.15 'tadapaghātāccā' the footnote merely says 17.<sup>18</sup> 'tadapaghātāccā° seems a better reading than *tadabhighāte* ca, which is found in all Mss.'

Sharma often reports earlier (Indian) attempts at emendation, even when he does not accept them; some of this material may be useful. Surprisingly, he also adds a few philosophical or historical remarks – these are quite out of place in the critical apparatus.

The *Yuktidīpikā* is a *vārttika*-style text: that is, in about every fifth or tenth line there is a short nominal phrase functioning as a kind of 'paragraph title'. In the manuscripts, they are formatted as any other sentence. W prints them in bold, which greatly facilitates following the argument. Sharma, however, decided not to mark them in any way, because 'the problem of distinguishing and separating the two portions... is an intricate one, and as things presently stand, difficult to resolve' (p. lii). While this is true, I think that this was nevertheless an unfortunate decision.

Sharma's edition is to a large extent derivative, as can be shown by identical omissions in his work and W. Both editions clearly mark all quotations from the *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā*, except the one they did not notice:

150. 4, 6 = w.137.1–3 'anyonyajanana-vṛttayo guṇāḥ ... anyonyamithuna'

This clearly quotes *kārikā* 12cd: '**anyonyābhibhavaśraya-janana-mithuna-vṛttayaś ca guṇāḥ**'.

An even more telling example is the famous verse found e.g. in the *Mahābhārata*:

Na tat parasya saṃdadhyāt, pratikūlaṃ yad ātmanaḥ –  
eṣa saṃkṣepato dharmāḥ. Kāmād anyañ pravartate.

This verse is quoted twice in the *Yuktidīpikā*. First 32.4–5 = w.34.17–18, where both editions precisely identify the source. Second 290.1–2 = w.248.12–13, where neither edition gives the source (although Sharma in a longish and quite misleading footnote corrects an obvious typo



in W). However, in their indices of the verses quoted in the *Yuktidīpikā*, both editions correctly show both occurrences (giving the source again): 370.21–22 = w313.10–12.

The fact that Sharma's edition is to a large extent based on W is not a problem in itself, since Wezler and Motegi's work is excellent. However, it would have been nice to see this fact duly emphasized; and this admission could have motivated the author to clearly indicate all the errors (misreadings) in W, which would make his book much more useful also for the more serious researchers.

In conclusion, Sharma's work is an excellent and reliable critical edition of the *Yuktidīpikā*. For most purposes, it is completely adequate. For really serious scholarly work, however, it is advisable to use and compare both critical editions.

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