

persécution, notre ancienne conclusion est toujours valide.

#### A Note on Discussions of Vācaspatimiśra's Dates

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The question on the dates of Vācaspati, referred to in later times by the epithet *śarvatantrasvalantra* and famous as the author of important works such as the *Bhāmātī* (BM), has been a lively topic of discussion since the very earliest stages of Indological studies. The order in which his works, beginning with the *Nyāyakanikā* (NK) and ending with the BM, were composed has been determined to a considerable degree of accuracy, and not only is it a matter of common consent that he lived around the period spanning the ninth to tenth centuries A.D., but it is also a known fact that he was a disciple of Trilocana or the author of *Nyāyamañjarī* (homonymous with the work of Jayanta) and that he received the patronage of King Nṛga (who has to date not been clearly identified with any historical personage). Although the six works extant among his major compositions—the *Tattvasamīkṣā*, thought to have been a commentary on the *Brahmasiddhi*, remains nonextant—contain no specific references to his dates, it is also a matter of common knowledge that the colophon to the *Nyāyasūcīnibandha* (NSN), a minor published work containing the name Vācaspati of which the ascription however is still uncertain, states that this work was composed in the year designated as *vasv-aṅka-vasu-vatsare* (898). Accordingly, discussions up until the present on the subject of Vācaspati's dates may be grouped under three heads, consisting of the two views which would interpret this date "898" either in the Vikrama era as A.D. 841 or in the Śāka (or Śaka) era as A.D. 976 and those views which do not set any great store by the chronological reference in the NSN but are based rather on other historical sources, primarily knowledge of Vācaspati's relationship to other philosophers. In all cases, it has been general practice to consider the question of Vācaspati's dates in connection with Jayanta and Udayana, the dates of whom have been more or less ascertained, and with the dates of Trilocana, of whom no written works remain extant but who is thought to have been a senior contemporary

to Vācaspati.

Recently, however, there appeared somewhat unexpectedly a most ambitious paper by S.Sankaranarayanan entitled "The Colophon in the *Bhāmātī* : A New Study" (ALB, 49, 1985, pp. 34-61). Sankaranarayanan takes up for consideration the chronological reference *vasv-akṣi-vāsava* in the colophon of the *Nyāyasūtra-uddhāra* (NSŪ), a published work of a similar nature to the NSN also containing the name Vācaspati, which had for certain reasons been virtually ignored in previous discussions of Vācaspati's dates, and bases his discussion of Vācaspati's dates on this phrase *vasv-akṣi-vāsava*, which he interprets as referring to the year 828. He understands the reference to the year 898 in the NSN as an error for 828, and having interpreted this date in the Śāka era, concludes that Vācaspati's three works on the Nyāya school (NSŪ, NSN, *Nyāyavārttikatātparyatikā*) were all written during approximately the same period, around A.D. 906. In addition, by taking the as yet only inadequately explained expression *mahīpe... śrīmannṛge* in the colophon of the BM to mean *Mahīpe* (= Mahīpāle)... *śrīman-nṛge*, he asserts that Vācaspati composed the BM under the patronage of King Mahīpāla, a historically verified ruler of the Pratihāra dynasty who ruled ca. A.D. 912-45, and further identifies Mithileśvara, referred to in the colophon of the NSŪ, with King Mahendrapāla, Mahīpāla's father, and Ādiśūra appearing in the NK, Vācaspati's earliest work, with Mahendrapāla's father Ādiśūkara (= Ādivarāha), namely, King Bhoja.

In the present paper, as a first step towards establishing the long-sought definitive dates of Vācaspati, we have presented a conspectus of previous discussions of Vācaspati's dates, followed by a detailed discussion of Sankaranarayanan's recently advanced ideas as well as an examination of moot points contained therein. His views are somewhat marred by his methods and mode of procedure in that for example by interpreting, without any clear indication of his grounds for doing so, the term *vāsava* in the phrase *vasv-akṣi-vāsava* to mean not "14" (following V.P. Dvivedi) but "8," he ascribes the NSŪ, previously considered to have been the work of Vācaspati II, to Vācaspati himself. But on the other hand through his extensive utilization of historical research, Sankaranarayanan has offered a tentatively plausible solution to the question of the region where Vācaspati lived and his patron,

and insofar as he has drawn our attention to the importance of the various "riddles" which have had to be disregarded as a result of an excessive concern with the colophon of the NSN, his views may be considered as deserving of our appraisal.