

Son of Surasā and Kaśyapa 5. 101. 4, 17; description 5. 101. 5-7.

Taksaka m. : A mythical serpent.

A. Birth and family : One of the sons (very likely the fourth son) of Kadrū (and Kaśyapa), hence called *kādraveya* 1. 31. 5, 2; 1. 59. 40 (placed third); 1. 3. 144; his youngest brother (*jaghanyaja*) was Śrutasena 1. 3. 146; his son Aśvasena (1. 218. 5) was his constant companion 1. 3. 145; (by *taksaka-putra* 8. 65. 39 Aśvasena is probably alluded to); his daughter Jvālā married to Rkṣa born in the line of Pūru 1. 90. 24; serpents belonging to his *kula*, Pucchaṇḍaka and others, listed by Sūta among those offered in the snake sacrifice of Janamejaya 1. 52. 7-9; Taksaka also named among the serpent-sons of Surasā and Kaśyapa 5. 101. 9, 4, 17. **B.** Residence : Lived in Bhogavatī Purī in the southern direction; he, with Vāsuki, protected it 5. 107. 19; 5. 101. 9; he had his abode (*niveśana*) also in the Khāṇḍava forest where Asura Maya happened to stay at the time of the great fire 1. 215. 7; 1. 219. 35; Uttānka, in his praise of the *nāgas*, referred to Taksaka as living in Khāṇḍava near Kurukṣetra, along the river Ikṣumatī 1. 3. 142-146. **C.** Status : Second only to Vāsuki according to an enumeration based on eminence (*yathāśreṣṭhān*) 5. 101. 8; called the king of the serpents *nāgarāja* 1. 3. 119, 120, 166; *sarpārāja* 1. 218. 4; chief of serpents *nāgendra* 1. 38. 34; 1. 39. 3; *pannagendra* 1. 38. 33, 35 etc.; best among serpents *pannagottama* 1. 37. 13, 19, etc.; *bhujagottama* 1. 48. 15, 18; *pannagaśreṣṭha* 1. 38. 32, 36; 1. 40. 3; *uragasattama* 1. 39. 16; however Uttānka called Taksaka *pannagādharma* 1. 3. 188. **D.** Description : He was of blazing lustre (*tigmatejas*), his poison acted like fire and burnt the being he bit

(*āśviṣa*) 1. 37. 13; lotus-coloured (*padma-varcas*) 1. 40. 3; he was called by Uttānka and Janamejaya 'evil-minded' (*durātman* 1. 46. 36, 40; *duṣṭāntarātman* 1. 3. 185, 187), and by Janamejaya 'sinful' (*pāpa*) 1. 46. 37. **E.** Khāṇḍava incident : Since Taksaka lived in the Khāṇḍava forest, whenever god Fire tried to burn it, Indra, being Taksaka's friend, he immediately extinguished the fire 1. 215. 7; when the forest was finally on fire, Taksaka was not in Khāṇḍava but was safe at Kurukṣetra 1. 218. 4; Indra was informed of this by an invisible voice 1. 219. 12-13. **F.** Taksaka and the *kuṇḍalas* : Uttānka informed by Pauṣya's wife (*kṣatriyā*) while handing over her earrings to him that Taksaka coveted them; Uttānka assured her that Taksaka would not be able to attack him 1. 3. 119-120; Taksaka assumed the form of a naked mendicant (*nagna śramaṇa*) and followed Uttānka on way; he took the *kuṇḍalas*, placed by Uttānka on the ground, and ran away; when caught by Uttānka, Taksaka assumed his original form and suddenly entered a big hole; on reaching *nāgaloka* he entered his residence (*svabhavana*); Uttānka went behind him 1. 3. 136-138; when the *nāgaloka* was filled with smoke issuing from the anus of a horse (really god Agni) the confused Taksaka, frightened by the heat of fire, returned the *kuṇḍalas* to Uttānka 1. 3. 158-159; when asked by the teacher the cause for delay in getting the *kuṇḍalas*, Uttānka told him the hindrance caused by Taksaka 1. 3. 165-166; angered by this incident Uttānka started for Hāstīnapura to take revenge on Taksaka 1. 3. 177. **G.** Death of Parikṣit : Due to the curse pronounced by Śṛṅgin king Parikṣit was destined to die within a week due to the burning lustre of the eminent serpent