

CONTRIBUTION OF KERALA TO SANSKRIT LITERATURE

B.A. SANSKRIT

**SEMESTER II
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**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION
STUDY MATERIAL
BA SANSKRIT
II SEMESTER
COMPLEMENTARY COURSE
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MODULE I KULASEKHARA'S OF MAHODAYAPURAM

Kulaśekhara Ālvār and the Mukundamāla

Kulaśekhara Ālvār is one of the greatest religious mystics of South India. According to the tradition Kulaśekhara was born as an incarnation of Kaustubha. Tiruvañchikulam is the place of birth of Ālvar. His father was Dridhavrata, the king of Kerala. He was an ardent devotee of Viṣṇu. Tradition says that after the coronation of his son, Kulaśekhara retired to Sriraṅgam to lead a life of an ardent prayer. He passed away at Mannarkoyil in Tinnevely District. According to tradition, the date of birth of Kulaśekhara Ālvār is 3075 B.C. According to Swamikunnu Pillai, the date of birth of Ālvar is 767 and K.G. Shesa Iyer calculated it as 527 A.D. Sir R.G. Bhandarkar assigned the Alvar to the 12th century A.D. Kulaśekhara Alvar is the author of Perumalīrumozhi in Tamil and Mukundamāla in Sanskrit.

Mukundamāla

Mukundamāla is a short devotional lyric in Sanskrit of Kulaśekhara. The commentator Rāghavānanda gives the additional information that Kulaśekhara was a king of Kerala. The language of this poem is quite simple and natural. Owing to the great popularity of the poem there are various recensions of the text. The Kerala recension contains 31 verses. Two commentaries on the Mukundamāla are known as the Tātparyadīpikā by Rāghavānanda is a scholarly commentary giving Advaitic interpretation to the verses. He explains the text as an exposition of the two mystic mantras. Mukundaṣṭākṣaramantra and Aṣṭākṣaramantra. He blends the Advaitic system of metaphysics with Bhakti cult. The other commentary of Mukundamāla by one Tiruvenkatasuri.

Rāghavānanda

Rāghavānanda is a versatile scholar. In Kṛṣṇapadi Rāghavānanda gives some details about his preceptor Kṛṣṇānanda. Kṛṣṇānanda was a sanyasin and was a native of Nāgapura on the banks of the Ganges. Rāghavānanda's house was situated on the banks of Bhāratappuzha. He took asceticism and became a great yogin and an ardent devotee of Viṣṇu. This Rāghavānanda is usually identified with Kokkunnatthu Swamiyar and lived in 1310 A.D. He is the author of Tātparyadeepika commentary on Mukundamāla, Kṛṣṇapadi commentary on Bhāgavatapūraṇa, a commentary on Viṣṇubhujāṅgaprayāstotra, Śeṣāryadeepika on Paramārthasāra of Śeṣa. Besides, two original works, Sarvasiddhāntasangraha and Vidyarcanaṁjari are also attributed to him.

The Royal dramatist Kulaśekhara

The Royal dramatist Kulaśekhara was the Emperor of Kerala, that he had his capital at Mahodayapuram, or the modern Tiruvañchikkulam. He has to his credit three Sanskrit dramas, viz. Tapatisamvaraṇa, Subhadrādhanañjaya and Vicchinnābhiṣeka. He has already composed a prose work viz. Āścaryamañjari, but this work is non extant. T. Ganapati Sastri identifies Vicchinnābhiṣeka with the first Act of the Pratimānāṭaka and ascribes to Bhāsa. The author of Vyaṅgyavyākhyā mentions only two dramas. Some scholars tried to identify the dramatist Kulaśekhara with Kulaśekhara Ālvar.

Tapatisamvaraṇa

The Tapatisamvaraṇa is a good drama which deals with the love story of Tapati and Samvarana, the king of Hastinapura. It has six Acts. The plot is taken from the Ādiparvan of Mahābhārata. The first three Acts describes the the development of the love of Tapatī and Samvaraṇa. In the last Act Mohanika tries to make the hero, the heroine and her two friends commit suicide, but she is overpowered by Kuru, the son of Tapati and Samvarana. In some contexts, the story closely resembles Abhijñānaśākuntala. The story happily ends with the reunion of Tapatī, Samvaraṇa and their son, Kuru. Śivarāma wrote a commentary on Tapatisamvaraṇa. A Brahmin scholar wrote the commentaries on the basis of explanation given by the author himself. These commentaries are called Tapatisamvaraṇavyaṅgyavyākhyā and Subhadrādhanañjayavyaṅgyavyākhyā.

Subhadrādhanañjaya

Subhadrādhanañjaya is written by Kulaśekhara. It describes the story of Arjuna's abduction of Subhadra from Dvāraka. Kulaśekhara's dramas are very popular in Kerala. They are staged even to this day by traditional actors in Kerala stage, Kūtiyāṭṭam. Śivarāma wrote a commentary on Subhadrādhanañjaya also.

Vyaṅgyavyākhyas

The author of Tapatīsamvaraṇavyaṅgyavyākhyā and Subhadrādhanāñjaya-vyaṅgyavyākhyā was a Brahmin contemporary of Kulaśekhara-varman. He belonged to Parameśvara-maṅalam on the banks of the Periyar. He was a great art critic that attracted the attention of the king. The king invited him to the palace for writing commentaries and for supervising the staging of the plays. It was he who popularised these two dramas in Kerala by introducing numerous verses in Malayalam Sanskrit mixture, in parody of the Sanskrit verses. We can identify this commentator with Tolan, the famous court jester of the king. Tolan is supposed to have written a Mahākāvya called Mahodayapureśacaritam in a simple style, keeping the normal syntax of the language.

Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi of Śaktibhadra

Śaktibhadra, author of the Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi was a South Indian dramatist. He had written other works like the Unmādavāsavadatta. There is a popular tradition which makes Śaktibhadra a contemporary of Śaṅkarācārya. It is said that Śaktibhadra was a native of Cennaṅṅur in Travancore. Since Kulaśekhara's date is fixed about 900 A.D. Śaktibhadra must be assigned to about the ninth century A.D. In seven Acts the drama depicts the story of Rāmāyana. All the seven Acts are being staged by the traditional actors, Cakyars. Prof. Kuppusvami Sastri refers to the Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi as the best of the Rama-plays perhaps barring Bhavabūti's Uttarāmacarita in certain respects. There is a commentary on the play by a certain Brahmin of Bhāradvājagrāma, who is follower of the Bhāṭṭa school of Mīmāṃsā. His date is not known.

The Yamaka poet Vāsudeva Bhaṭṭa

The Yamaka poet Vāsudeva Bhaṭṭa is the author of Yudhiṣṭhiravijaya, was a Bhaṭṭathiri of the paṭṭathu family of Namboodiri in the village of Peruvanam, very near to Trichur. His patron was Ravivarma Kulaśekhara who is the author of Pradyumnadabhyudaya. He lived in the first half of the 14th century A.D. Some scholars place him in the middle of 9th century A.D. There has been much confusion among scholars in identifying the author Vāsudeva correctly.

Yudhiṣṭhiravijaya

Yudhiṣṭhiravijaya is written by Vāsudevabhāṭṭa. It describes the story of Mahābhārata in eight cantos, containing about one thousand verses, mostly in the Arya metre. Even though it is a yamaka poem its literary merit is of very high order. The main sentiment of this kāvya is vira and kindled by other emotions also. Yudhiṣṭhiravijaya has been very popular throughout India. It has several commentaries written by various scholars. Padārthacidhanta by Rāghava, Bālavyuṭpattikāriṇi by Cokkanāṭha, Śiṣyahita by Rajānaka Ratnakāṅṭha of Kaśmir, Prakāśika by Dharmarāja, Vijayadaśika by Acyūta, Ratnapradeepika by Śivadāsa, Kavikanthābharaṇa by Śrikanṭha, Padārthadeepika by a disciple of Śrikantha are some of them. There are many Malayalam commentaries on the work are also known.

Tripuradahana

Tripuradahana is a yamaka poem written by Vāsudevabhāṭṭa. It describes the story of the destruction of tripura demons. It has three cantos containing about 200 verses in all. It has three well known commentaries in Sanskrit. They are Padārthadīpini by a son of Nityapriya, Hridayagrāhini commentary by Paṅkajākṣa and Arthaprakāśika by Nīlakantha.

Śaurikathodaya

Śaurikathodaya is a yamaka poem written by Vāsudevabhāṭṭa. It depicts the story of Lord Kṛṣṇa as per Bhāgavata in six cantos. There are two commentaries on the poem. They are Tattvapradīpika by Nīlakantha of Makkola and Anvayabodhika of Nityāmṛtayati.

Nalodaya

According to DR.K.K.Raja Nalodaya, a yamaka poem, may be authored by Vāsudevabhāṭṭa. Some scholars wrongly attribute its authorship on Kāidasa. It deals with the well-known episode of the Mahābhārata describing the story of Nala and Damayanti. There are several commentaries on Nalodaya.

MODULE II ZAMORINS OF KOZHIKODE

The court of Zamorins was one of the most important centres of Sanskrit learning. The number of scholars patronized by Zamorins is also very great. Among these Zamorins of Kozhikode Mānavikrama Śaktan Tampurān is the most outstanding. According to tradition, there were nineteen poets famous as patineṭṭarakkavikal in the court of Mānavikrama. Of these, Punam is called the Half poet, because he was on the Malayalam poet, and not recognized as Sanskrit scholar. Among the others nine members were from Payyūr Bhaṭṭa family, five Nambootiris from Tiruvegappura, and the rest were Uddaṇḍa Śāstri, Cennās Nārāyanan Nambūtiri, and Damodarabhaṭṭa of Kākkaśśery family.

Uddaṇḍa Śāstri and Kākkaśśery Damodarabhaṭṭa

Uddaṇḍa Śāstri was a native of Lāṭapura in Toṇḍamaṅgala, the present Chingleput District. He was the son of Raṅganātha and Raṅgādevi, the grandfather of Krishna and his great grandfather was Gokulanātha. Uddaṇḍa was not real name; it was a title assumed by him later on; or perhaps it was a title conferred on him by some king. His real name was Irugappanāha. He came to Kozhikode seeking patronage took part in the annual Sastraic discussions in Tali temple. There are so many traditional stories in connection with Uddaṇḍa and Kākkaśśery Damodarabhaṭṭa. Uddaṇḍa Śāstri, the author of Mallikamāruta and Kokilasandeśa and and Kākkaśśery Damodarabhaṭṭa., author of Vasumatīmānavikrama have praised Mānavikrama in their works. Both Uddaṇḍa and Kākkaśśery refer to Payyūr Bhaṭṭas in their works with great respect.

Mallikamāruta is a drama in ten acts and belongs to the prakarana type. Keith calls it a slavish imitation of Bhavabhūti's Malatimādhava. It describes the love story of Mallika, daughter of Viśvāvasu who is the minister of the Vidyādhara king, and Mādhava, the son of Brahmadatta who is the minister of the king of Kuntala. The books was published by Jivananda Vidyasagara from Calcutta in 1878 A.D. with a commentary by Ranganātha. Both the publisher and commentator wrongly attributed the work to Dandin. The text itself says that its author is Uddanda, the court poet of Mānavikrama.

Kokilasandeśa is an excellent lyrical poem written in a lucid style. It is one of the most popular sandeśakāvya in Kerala. In gracefulness of diction and the sweetness of melody it excels even the Sukasandeśa of Lakshmīdāsa. K.Rāmapīṣārati says that the Kokilasandeśa was written by Uddaṇḍa after he had returned to his native place. The absence of any reference to the learned academy under Mānavikrama suggests that this poem was written before he became acquainted with Zamorin. It is generally believed that Uddaṇḍa married lady from Mārakkara house in Chennamangalam and the heroine of the Kokilasandeśa was his own wife.

Another work, Svātīpraśamsā is generally attributed to Uddaṇḍa. These erotic verses, pretending to show the poet's great intimacy with the heroine. Ullur S.Pamesvara Iyer attributes the Naṭāṅkuśa also to Uddaṇḍa. Naṭāṅkuśa is a treatise criticizing the method of acting Sanskrit dramas adopted by the cākyaars of Kerala. There is no evidence to show that it is by Uddaṇḍa.

Damodarabhaṭṭa of Kākkaśśery

Damodarabhaṭṭa of Kākkaśśeryfamily is said to have been Uddanda's chief rival at Revatipaṭṭānānam. He has written a drama, viz. Vasumatīmānavikrama, in seven Acts belonging to Nāṭaka type. This drama describes the story of Mānavikrama's marriage with Vasumatī, daughter of his minister Mañṇat Accan. The influence of Kālidasa, Harṣa and Rājaśekhara is found in Vasumatīmānavikrama also. Though Kākkaśśery is popular through his stray verses and the traditional stories, he certainly deserves to be well known as a great dramatist and as a talented poet. M. Krishnamachariar attributes Indumatīrāghava to Kākkaśśery. But it is the work of a Brahmin disciple of Ravivarman who had his house on the banks of the river prācī in Kerala. Therefore, Kākkaśśery cannot be its author.

The Payyūr Bhaṭṭas

The Payyūr Bhaṭṭa family has played an important role in the history of Sanskrit literature in Kerala. There have been many scholars and poets in that family. Their contribution to the Mīmāṃsā literature and Sanskrit poetry is immense both in volume and depth. The family of Payyūr Bhaṭṭas is at present situated near Porkkalam (raṅakhala in Sanskrit), very near to Kunnamkulam.

Parameśvara I

The earliest member of Payyūr family is Rsi I. We have only literary references about him. He has a brother named Bhavadāsa who was a great scholar in Vedānta. Rsi I married Gouri and got a son named Parameśvara I. This Parameśvara has written several works. The following works of Parameśvara I are known.

1. Sumanoramaṇi commentary on Meghadūta
2. Jusadvamkaraṇi
3. Svaditamkaraṇi commentaries on Nyāyakanika of Vacaspatimiśra.
4. Haricarita and
5. Nyayasamuccaya a work on Mīmāṃsā

Of these Sumanoramaṇi, Svaditamkaraṇi and Haricarita are available. Jusadvamkaraṇi is mentioned in the Svaditamkaraṇi and must be the earlier of the two. The reference to Śaṅkara as Pūjyapāda suggests that he was a samnyāsin. Dr. Kunhan Raja suggests that Śaṅkara may be the author of the Niruktavārtika. His Nyāyasamuccaya is mentioned as an authority by his grandson Parameśvara II in Tattvavibhāvana. Sumanoramaṇi is an elaborate and comprehensive commentary on Meghadūta. In Sumanoramaṇi, Parameśvara criticizes the views of Pūrṇasarasvatī given in the Vidyullata commentary. A comprehensive study of these two commentaries shows that Parameśvara I must have been a younger contemporary of Pūrṇasarasvatī.

Haricarita is a poem of 248 stanzas dealing with the story of Kṛṣṇa. In this poem each stanza beginning with one of the astronomical vakyas of Vararuci in the same order.

Parameśvara I had five sons. Rṣi II, Bhavadāsa II, Vāsudeva I, Subrahmaṇya, and Śaṅkara. Of these Rṣi II married Gopālika and had son Parameśvara II.

Parameśvara II.

Parameśvara II was a great scholar in Mīmāṃsā and has several important works to his credit. Parameśvara II has written commentaries on some of the standard works on Purvamimamsa.

1. Gopālika commentary on Sphoṭasiddhi
2. Tattvavibhāvana commentary on the Tattvabindu of Vācaspati
3. a commentary on Cidānda's Nītatvāvirbhāva
4. a commentary on Maṅḍanamiśra's Vibhramaviveka

All these great works are referred to by his grand son Parameśvara III in the Jaminiyasūtrarthasamgraha.

Vāsudeva II

Parameśvara II had a brother named Vāsudeva II who was not only a good scholar, but also a wellknown poet. He is the son of Gopālika and Rṣi II. Vāsudeva has many scholarly yamaka poems to his credit. They are Devīcarita, Acyutalīla, Satyatapahkatha and Sivodaya. The Devīcarita is a Yamaka poem in six āśvasas describing the story of Goddess Gopālika. The Acyutalīla is also a yamaka poem dealing with the story of Kṛṣṇa in four āśvasas. The Satyatapahkatha is also a yamaka poem in three āśvasas dealing with the history

of Payyūr family. It is very difficult to understand the meaning of the poem. Sivodaya is a short poem in two āśvasas dealing with God Siva and His consort installed in the temple at Vedarāṇya. Besides these there are two other poems vākyāvāli and Kaumārīlayuktimāla or Kaumārīlayuktitilakam where poetry is mixed with scientific subjects. The former narrates with the story of Kṛṣṇa in four cantos in which each verse begins with a vakya of Vararuci. In the Kaumārīlayuktimāla substance of Kumārīla's Tantravārtika is summarized in metrical form. Cakorasandeśa also is attributed to Vāsudeva.

Parameśvara III

Parameśvara II had a son called Rṣi III. He married Ārya and had a son named Parameśvara III. This Parameśvara is the author of Jaiminīyasūtrarthasamgraha. In this work he says that he is the grandson of Parameśvara author of Gopālika and Tattvavibhavana. He also says that his father Rsi III was also known by another name Traividyeśa. There is a commentary on the Kāśika of Sucaritamiśra by one Parameśvara. The date of Rsi III and his son Parameśvara III as well as of Mānavikrama and others has to be at least the middle of the fifteenth century A.D.

Mānaveda

Some members of Zamorin's royal family were themselves great scholars who made original contribution to Sanskrit literature. Mānaveda author of the Kṛṣṇagīti and the Pūrvabhāratacampu, is the most important among Zamorins. Mānaveda was the nephew of Mānavikrama who was the Zamorin from 1637 till Nov.28.1648. Mānaveda was not only a scholar and poet; he was also a patron of letters. Melputtur Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa was quite probably a friend of Manaveda. It was at Manaveda's instance that Nārāyanapaṇḍita of Brahmakhala completed the Mānameyodaya left unfinished by Melputtur Nārāyanabhaṭṭa.

Pūrvabhāratacampu

Pūrvabhāratacampu and Kṛṣṇagīti are the two known works of Mānaveda. The former describes the early history of the soma dynasty and is intended as a supplement to the Bhāratacampu of Anantabhaṭṭa. It has eight stakas. It was composed in 1643 A.D. It is full of rare and difficult grammatical usages. There is a commentary of Pūrvabhāratacampu by one Kṛṣṇa who is generally identified with Mānaveda's teacher.

Kṛṣṇagīti

The Kṛṣṇagīti describes the story of Kṛṣṇa's life in eight cantos composed on the model of Jayadeva's Gītagovinda. It contains verses as well as musical portions and is intended to be enacted. The performance is called Kṛṣṇattam. It became very popular throughout Kerala. Even now it is staged in Guruvayoor temple. Mānaveda wrote Kṛṣṇagīti in 1652 A.D. On Kṛṣṇagīti there are two commentaries: the Hlādini of Anatanārāyaṇa and the Vipāñcika of Citrabhānu. Anatanārāyaṇa was patronized by Zamorin named Mānavikrama. The Vipāñcika commentary was written under the patronage of a Zamorin who is referred to as Rājarāja. Mānaveda refers with respect to his preceptor Kṛṣṇa piṣāroṭi in both these works. He seems to be identical with Kṛṣṇa, who was the teacher of Nārāyanapaṇḍita.

Nārāyaṇa Paṇḍita

Nārāyaṇa Paṇḍita is patronized by Mānaveda. He belonged to the Brahmin village Brahmakkala very near to Guruvayoor. He was the son of Nilakantha and Kāli, and had brother named Srikumāra. The date of birth of Nārāyaṇa is 1586 A.D. His padārthadīpika commentary on the Raghuvamśa and the vivaraṇa commentary on the Kumārasambhava are also well known. His other works are Gaurigunaughavarnana, Meya portion of Manameyodaya, Srimasotsavacampu, Aslesasataka and other poems, Bhagavataprabandha, Nrsimhacampu, Vaidehinavasangacampu, and Sarvanicaritastuti. Of these works only the commentaries on Raghuvamśa and Kumārasambhava, the Meya portion of Mānameyodaya, and the Aśleśāsataka are now available. In his commentaries Nārāyaṇa follows Arunagirinatha closely. Nārāyaṇa's commentaries are of great help to students, since he explains elaborately all the suggested meanings and difficult problems in a lucid manner.

Me ya portion of Mānameyodaya

The Me ya portion of the Mānameyodaya deals with the prameyas or the objects of valid knowledge according to the Bhaṭṭa school of Mīmāṃsakas. It is a complement to the whole work Mānameyodaya projected by Melputtur Nārāyaṇa Bhaṭṭa, who, however, left the Me ya portion unwritten.

Aśleṣāśataka

The Aśleṣāśataka is a century of verses about Princess Ganga, called Āśleṣa. It is possible that she was Nārāyaṇa's wife. Ullur says that the poem was composed after the death of the heroine, and the main sentiment of the poem is Karuna.

Śrīkaṇṭha

Śrīkaṇṭha flourished under the patronage of a Zamorin of Calicut. He was a member of the Vāriyar community and he lived in a house adjacent to the palace of the Zamorin. His works are Raghūdaya and Soricarita. Raghūdaya is a yamaka poem describing the story of Rama in eight cantos. It has a commentary by Rudradasa. It is quite probable that Rudradāsa is identical, with the commentator on the Soricarita. Soricarita is a yamaka poem in prakrit by Śrīkaṇṭha generally identified with the author of the Raghūdaya. Four Śrīkanthas are mentioned in Sanskrit literature. One of them is the author of Raghūdaya and Soricarita.

Divākara

Divakara wrote the drama named Laksmīmanaveda. He was the son of Udbahusundara and belonged to the Cola country. He was patronized by a Mānaveda of Calicut. In five acts the drama describes the story of the marriage of Rājalakṣmī with Mānaveda. While describing the greatness of his patron the poet does not mention the literary qualities of the King. This suggests that Divākara's patron is different from the author of the Kṛṣṇagīti.

Śṛṅgāravilāsa of Sāmbaśiva

Śṛṅgāravilāsa of Sāmbaśiva is a one act play belonging to the Bhāna type. The author was a Tamil brahmin patronized by a Zamorin named Mānavikrama. He was the son of Kanakasabhāpati of Śrīnivāsa gotra and belonged to the village of Gopalsamudra. Mānavikrama referred to in the work seems to be much later than the patron of Uddaṇḍa Śāstri. The exact date of this work is not known.

Anantanārāyaṇa

Anantanārāyaṇa of Bhāradvāja gotra who belonged to a village called Coravana in the Pāṇḍya country. He enjoyed the patronage of Calicut named Manavikrama and a king of Cochin named Ramavarman. His Śṛṅgarasarvasva is a one act play belonging to the Bhāna type. It was composed to be enacted at Tirunāvaya on the occasion of the Mamamka festival. He wrote a commentary on Viṣṇusahasranāma named Haribhaktikāmadhenu at instance of the king Rāmavarma.

Manorama

Manorama Tampurāṭṭi was a member of the Kizakke kovilakam of the Zamorin's royal family and was born in 1760 A.D. She studied under Rudra Vāriyar of the Deśamaṅgalam family and became a great scholar in Sanskrit grammar. It is said that she got the name Manorama because of her mastery of the Prauḍhamanorama. It was she who taught Sanskrit grammar Ārūr Mādhavan Aṭṭiri, the author of Uttaramaiśadham. She passed away in 1828 A.D. Manorama is not known to have written any work; but the few verses that are attributed to by tradition shows that she was a good poet with a graceful style.

Mānaveda

Mānaveda wrote a commentary named vilāsinī on the Śukasandēśa of Lakṣmidasa. He lived in the beginning of the nineteenth century. He has also written a commentary on the Rāmāyaṇacampu of Bhoja. He says that he is the student of Raṅganātha. He also refers to two friends Rudra and Śekhara. It is known that this Mānaveda died in 1840 A.D.

Bhavadāsa

Bhavadāsa, a member of Cīrakkuzhi family and native of Sāgarapurakṣhetra wrote a commentary called Padayojana on the 11th skandha of the Bhāgavata. on the basis of Śrīdharācārya's Bhāvārdhadīpika. He was the student of Puruṣottama and Aruṇagiri. This commentary is written at the instance of Uttarātam Tirunal Lakṣmi Tampurāṭṭi of Kizakke kovilakam in Calicut.

Bhāskara

Bhāskara of Mutukuriśśi family near Shornore wrote the Śṛṅgāra ketulilācarita well known as Mutukuruśśi Bhāna. He was patronized by a Zamorin of Calicut named Mānavikrama. Bhāskara flourished from 1805 to 1837. He wrote this Bhāna before he was sixteen years old. He was also patronized by the king of Cochin Vīrakeralavarman.

MODULE III

THE COCHIN ROYAL FAMILY

Introduction

The Cochin Royal family came into being followed by the Kulaśekhara of Mahodayapura, who were the emperors of Kerala in ancient times. The Cochin Royal family also known as Perumpatappu, had its capital at Mahodayapura till fourteenth century A.D., when it was shifted to Kochi. The shifting of the capital from Mahodayapura and the growth of powerful Zamorins of Calicut, the Cochin Royal family lost even the nominal overlordship of Kerala.

Literary contribution by the Cochin Royal Family

The Cochin Royal family has a great tradition of literary contribution from Kulaśekhara Varman. But it is not possible to trace it easily. In the Śivavilasa, a Mahākāvya written by Damodara Cākya under the patronage of the king of Kāyamkulam, the hero is a prince of Perumpadappu royal family at Mahodayapura, who is designated as the king of Kerala in the Malayalam campū called Unniyāṭīcarita, also attributed to this Dāmodara, it is said that there were five branches of this family and that there were eight other royal families who were feudatories of the Mahodaya kings.

The earliest work written under the patronage of Cochin Royal Family is the Bhāṇa called viṭanidrā which contains references to a prince Rāmavarman of Mahodayapura who was the son of Queen Laksmi. The work is of importance from the literary point of view.

Several poets and scholars were patronized by the king of Cochin; but it is very difficult to identify these kings. They are sometimes referred to as Rājarāja, a title which could be applied to any king. The names Rāmavarman Godavarman or Keralavarman which are given are also vague, as there have been many kings of Cochin having these names. Hence all that could be given are only tentative suggestions about their identity.

In the Malayalam Campū Thenkailanathodayam of Nīlakaṇṭha who was patronized by a Vīrakeralavarman of Cochin, there is a list of seven kings of Cochin who preceded his patron. Vaṭaśēri Nīlanthan Nambūtiri of Mūkkola who commented on the Tripuradahana and the Śaurikathodaya of Vāsudeva has referred to Rājarāja and Rāmavarman as the kings of Cochin and to Godavarman as helping the latter in the administration of the country. The patron of Balakavi who wrote the Rāmavarmavilāsa and the Rathaketādaya may be this Rāmavarman himself. The Nambūtiris of Malamangalam family must have also been patronized by this Rāmavarman and his predecessor or Keralavarman referred to in the Bhāṇa as Rājarāja.

The Mahiṣamaṅgala compositions

Mahiṣamaṅgala is only the house name of the author. It is the Sanskritised form of Maḷamangalam by which term the family is known in Kerala. It is sometimes referred to as Māṣamangala, Maḷagala and Moḷaṅgala. At present the family is in extinct, it is believed that it got merged with the present Tarananallur family in Perumanam village. The reference found in some of work by members of this family shows that the house was situated somewhere near Nandīṭira and the Vallī. More than one scholar is known as belonging to this family. The Mahiṣamaṅgala Bhāṇa is one of the most popular Sanskrit Bhāṇas of Kerala. The author was patronized by a king of Cochin who is referred to in the work as Rājarāja. In the prologue it is stated that the Bhāṇa was composed at the instance of the king of Cochin named Rājarāja.

The Ratnaketūdadaaya of Bālakavi was also composed at the instance of the king of Cochin. The information that can be gathered from these two dramas are of some use in the reconstruction of the mediaeval history of Cochin.

Vedāntācārya

Vedāntācārya who wrote a commentary on the Kāvya prakāśa called Uttejini, Prakāśottejini or Sarvatīkāvibhajini, was patronized by a king of Cochin named Ravivarman. He was a native of Kāñcīpura, and had once been in the court of the king Tanjore. He was the son of Śrinivāsādharin. Vedāntācārya was a scholar well-versed in all the śāstras. Once he came to the Irinjālakuda temple in Cochin state, and met prince Keraḷavarman, nephew of the king. It was at the request of this Prince that he wrote the commentary of on the Kāvya prakāśa. All the verses given in the commentary of the tenth ullasa of Kāvya prakāśa are about king Ravivarman of Cochin, hence that section is also called Ravirājayaśobhūsaṇa.

Vedāntācārya says that he is the chief of the scholars in the court of the king of Cochin, and that he has been praised by the great poet and Mantravādin Vāmana and by a samnyāsin who is like an incarnation of Sadānanda

Vīra Keraḷavarman

Vīra Keraḷavarman ruled Cochin from 1809 to 1828 A.D. He was an excellent scholar in Sanskrit and generous patron of literature. He was a follower of Mādhava school. He has written more than fifty Kathakāḷi works in Malayalam. In Sanskrit he wrote a few stotras like Pūrṇatrayīśāśataka and Daśavathārāślokamāla. Vīra Keraḷavarman was also attracting many of scholars and poets of the time to his court. Ārūr Āṭitiri, Cerānellūr Kṛṣṇa Kartā, Bhāskara of Matukkuriśśi, Nārāyaṇan Nambūtiri of Iḷayiṭam and Iḷaveṭṭikat Nambūtiri were all patronized by this king.

Ārūr Mādhavan Āṭitiri

Mādhavan Āṭitiri belonged Ārūr family in the village of Perumanam near Thrissur. He calls himself Vandārudvijamādhava and Vandārubhaṭṭa the term vandāru in the Sanskritized form of Ārūr. He was the son of Nīlakaṇṭha and Śrīdevi. He had his early education from his grandfather, later he studied under Rudra Vāriyar of Deśamaṅgalam family, and Pantalām Subrahmanya Śāstri. He also studied under princess Manorama of Kiḷakke Kōvilakam in Calicut. Later, after his marriage he went to Kodungalloor Palace, and was a teacher to Gōdavarman, the third prince at that time, He wrote Uttānanaīśadhīyacarita or Uttaranaīśadhā was written by Ārūr Mādhavan Āṭitiri which is a poem of sixteen cantos describing the life of Naḷa and Damayanti after their marriage, written as a supplement to Śriharṣas Nāīśadhīyacarita. He was patronized by the king Ramavarman who was his student and who had given him a huge pension. Ārūr Āṭitiri lived in the early half of the nineteenth century A.D. It is said that Mādhava was born in 1765 and died in 1836 A.D.

Kṛṣṇa Kartā of Cerānellūr

He was one of the court poets of Vīra Keraḷavarman, King of Cochin, and flourished during 1765-1845 A.D. He married the daughter of Rāmavarman, Śaktan Tampurān, of Cochin and Pārukkuṭṭi Amma of Kuruppam house, Thrissur. He wrote the stotra work Citpureśastuti on the deity of the temple at Chittur near Ernakulam. It is written on the model of Nārāyaṇīya and contains 312 verses. The date of its composition in 1808, as is indicated by the Kāḷi chronogram tvatkrpalabdhisadhyam, given in the work itself.

Iḷayiṭam Nārāyaṇan Nambūtiri

Nārāyaṇan Nambūtiri of Iḷayiṭam in Amballūr was also a protegee of Keraḷavarman. He lived between 1770 and 1840 A.D. and wrote Uṣāpariṇaya Campū in imitation of Rukmiṇīśwayamvara of Iḷivettikkat Nārāyaṇan Nambūtiri. It is said to have been composed in one day.

MODULE IV CONTRIBUTION OF KERALA TO SANSKRIT LITERARY CRITICISM

Kerala's contribution to literary criticism may be divided into three categories: works on poetics, 1. original works. 2. critical studies and 3. commentaries on Sanskrit poems and dramatical works.

1. Works on poetics-

Works on poetics may be divided into three groups. They are, a) original works, b) works modeled on Pratāparudrīya, c) commentaries on original works on poetics

a) Original works:

Sāhityasāra: Among the original works on poetics Sāhityasāra is well known. This was written by Sarveśvara in 13th century A.D. This is an authority on dramaturgy as is evident from quotations from it in the Abhijñānasākuntalacarca. Sāhityasāra describes almost all topics pertaining to dramaturgy in six chapters named prakasas.

Bālarāmabharata: Bālarāmabharata is noteworthy treatise on dancing. It was written by Ramavarma Kartika Tirunal Maharaja of Travancore (1728-98). In this text the author has made some valuable observations on bhava. Dr. Esvaran Namboodiri has made an elaborate study of this book and edited critically.

Nāṭakādīlakṣaṇa is a work which deals with the definition of nāṭaka and other rūpakas. The authorship of this work is unknown. Nāṭyaśāstrasamīkṣa by T.K. Ramachandra Iyer giving a summary of the main topics dealt with in Nāṭyaśāstra in a simple style.

Caṇḍamārutaśāstri (19th century) of Kāñchipura, teacher of Ravivarma Tampurān and Udayavarma Tampurān of Kadathanādu, has written two works on poetics. They are Citramāmāmsoddhāra and Laghurasakusumañjali. In the first, the author clears the blemishes attributed by Jagannatha in Citramāmāmsākhaṇḍana.

Naṭāṅkuśa deals with the defects in certain practices in Kūṭiyāttam by Chākyars. Some scholars ascribed this work to Uddaṇḍa Śāstri. Dr. K.G. Poulse had made an elaborate study on this text and published from Govt. Sanskrit College, Trippunithura.

Mukhabhūṣaṇa and **Ārsaprayogasādhutvanirūpaṇa** (15th & 16th centuries) are two small works deal with the grammatical points and poetic usages. However, these texts may be included in the works on kavīśikṣa, or instructions to the poet. In Ārsaprayogasādhutvanirūpaṇa, the correctness of some irregular words in Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Bhāgavata and certain puranas is examined.

b) Works on the model of Pratāparudrayaśobhūṣaṇa

Bālarāmavarmayaśobhūṣaṇa by Sadāśivadīkṣita (18th century) deals with almost all topics in Sanskrit poetics and dramaturgy in eight chapters. Following the model a full drama named Vasulaksmīkalyāṇa is also inserted in this text. All the verses in this treatise are eulogizing the author's patron, Kārtika Tirunāl.

Kulaśekhriya by Iñcur Keśavan Namboodiri (1855-1932) containing 125 verses in four sections on Nāyaka, Kāvya, Rasa and Guṇa. All the verses are in praise of Sri Mūlam Tirunal.

Kṛṣṇasudhi (19th century) has written a treatise on poetics by name Kāvyaśikṣānidhi. It is divided into ten chapters. All the examples are eulogizing the author's patron, Ravivarma of Kolathunādu.

Gōdavarṁmayaśobhūṣaṇa by Aruṇagirikavi (1550-1650) is a notable treatise on poetics. This text deals with the arthālaṅkāras only. The author eulogizes his patron Vaṭakkumkūr Gōdavarman.

Alaṅkāraustubha also called **Alaṅkārabhūṣaṇa** is a treatise on poetics written by Kalyāṇasubrahmaṇyasūri. Influence of Kuvalayānanda is obvious in this work. The illustrative verses are mostly in praise of Lord Padmanābha. The author also praises Kārtika Tirunāl Rāmavarma in some verses.

Rāmodaya by Ilattūr Rāma Śāstri deals with all the arthālaṅkāras in verses, in vasantatilaka metre. The first half forming the definition and the latter half illustration. The author praises his patron Āyilyam Tirunāl as well as Lord Rāma.

Arthacitramaṇimāla is a work on poetics written by T.Ganapati Śāstri (1820-1926). The author praises his patron Viśākhā Tirunāl of Travancore through its illustrative verses.

In Ramavarmaśataka K.Ramapisaroti (1860-1926) defines 100 alankāras from Kuvalayānanda with illustrations in praise of Ramavarma Maharaja of Cochin. In his commentatry K.P.Kocchuṇṇi Karta points out that the illustrative verses a double purpose eulogizing the king and Viṣṇu simultaneously.

c) Commentaries on original works on poetics

Commentaries on original works form a considerable portion of Kerala's contribution to Sanskrit poetics. There are two commentaries written by Keralite authors on Kāvyaṇprakāśa. They are Kāvyaṇprakāśōṭṭejini by Vedāntīcārya (16th century) and Kāvyaṇollāsa by Tirumaṇṅgalattu Nīlakaṇṭha (16th century). The Kāvyaṇprakāśōṭṭejini is remarkable for its profundity and comprehensiveness. The tenth chapter deals with the arthālaṅkāra portion and it is called Ravivarmayaśobhūṣaṇa, since it praises King Ravivaraman of Cochin through illustrative verses. A noteworthy feature of Kāvyaṇollāsa is that it is composed in verses. This commentary elucidates in a fairly good manner the difficult of the original work.

Samudrabandha (14th century) has written a commentary on the Alankārasarvasva. This commentary deserves an equal position with those of Jayaratha and Vidyācakravartin. The illustrative verses in praise of the author's patron, Ravivarma Kulaśekhara.

Prof. S.Neelakaṇṭha Śāstri has written a comprehensive gloss named Dhvnyālokottejini on Dhvnyāloka, sometimes even criticising the view of Abhinavagupta. A Commentary by Dāśarathi Namboodiri(17th century), Añjana commentary by an unknown author, Kaumudi commentary by Udaya(14th century), the author of Mayūrasandēśa, are elaborate and useful commentaries on Dhvnyālokalocana. Both of them are available upto the end of the first udyota only.

The single complete commentary on Dhvnyālokalocana is Bālapriya by K.Rāmapīṣaroṭi. Written in simple and lucid style, this beautiful piece of work is extremely useful for students and scholars as well. The most important among the merits of Bālapriya is that the author has taken great pains to correct the corrupt text of Locana and Dhvnyāloka. Rāmapīṣaroṭi is credited with the merit of publishing Locana on the fourth uddyota of Dhvnyāloka for the first time. Pisaroti has written commentaries on the other prominent works on poetics and dramaturgy such as Kuvalayānanda and Citramīmāṃsa and Daśarūpaka.

The commentary on Bhāgavadbhaktirasāyana of Madhusūdanasaraswati by Polppākkara Damodaran Namboodiri(1882-1964) is also to be noted here.

Lilatilaka,(14th cent.) written in Sanskrit, of unknown authorship is an epoch making volume as far as Maṇipravāla section of Malayalam literature. It contains eight chapters dealing with grammar and poetics in relation to Maṇipravāla. Alankārasamkṣepa(14th cent.) is a short treatise of figure of speech in which definitions and explanations are in Sanskrit, while the examples cited are from Maṇipravāla.

Vedo nāmottamam kāvyam by Dr.C.Kunhan Raja, Śakuntalapārmyam by Kerala Varma Valiyakoyittampuran Amarukaśatakamaṇḍanam and Viśākhavijayollāsa by Mānavikrama Eṭtan Tampuran, Raghuvamśāsvada and Ṣṅgāramañjarīmaṇḍana by Punnaśēri Neelakaṇṭha Śarma are some critical and noteworthy Sanskrit essays which are to be mentioned here.
