INTRODUCTION
PREVIOUS EDITIONS OF VIDDHASALABHAJIKĀ —

1. Text with the commentary by Satyabrata Sāmāsrāmi, printed at Calcutta in 1875. The text was based on a single Ms. of North Indian (Devanagari) recension. It also contains a few variants here and there. The average of these variants is not more than one on each page. It has therefore no critical value.

2. Text with the commentary by Jīvānanda Vidyāśāgara printed at Calcutta in 1883. The text is practically the same as in the above mentioned edition and is a word to word reproduction printed in the Pandit of Banaras. Not a single variant is recorded in this edition. The text serves the purpose of a Ms. As the edition with Sāmāsrāmi’s commentary was not available, Jīvānanda’s edition is used in the following pages as a Ms and is given the siglum Kha. 4. It contains many faulty and ambiguous readings. Use of na in the place of na in Pkt passages is very frequent. Pkt verses III, 12 to 20 and IV, 7 to 9 are written as prose passages. Verse 10 to 20 of the 4th Act are omitted in this edition. Many other Pkt readings are also given wrongly.

3.III. Text with the commentary of Nārāyaṇa, edited by Bhaskar Ram Chandra Ārte and printed at Poona in 1886, along with the Ritusāmhitā of Kalidāsa. This is
Arte used four Mss. The details of these Mss as given by him in the preface is as below:

A - Belongs to the Government collection, deposited in the Deccan College. Very clearly written and correct but incomplete (This Ms forms kha 7 of the present edition).

B - Belongs to Ms Ranade; procured from Nasik. Complete but very badly written. (This Ms forms kha 6 of the present edition).

C - Belongs to Ganesh Shastri Lele Tryambakkar. This differs in many points from the other two and appears to have been recently copied (This is not traceable in any MSS. Library).

D - Printed at Calcutta by Pandit Jibananad Vidyasagar. This and the one printed in "Pandit" are word for word the same.

Arte does not follow any scientific principles to constitute the text. He picks and chooses the readings so as to correlate the text with that of the commentary, and relegates the other variants to the foot notes. The position of verses III. 12; IV 7 to 9 and IV 10 to 20, is the same as in Jivananda's Edition. There was no need for writing
chāyā separately and this is an unnecessary duplication, because the commentary by Narayana already contains that. But the Notes and Glossary in English appended at the end are very useful.

4. Text with the two commentaries of Kamala Sundari and Ghanasyama, edited by Dr. J.B. Chaudhuri under the title "Contribution of Women to Sanskrit Literature (Calcutta in 1943).

This edition is a very useful addition to the already existing ones, so far as the two commentaries are concerned. But as a critical edition of the text, it has no merit. No fresh material has been utilized. In the Preface to his work, Dr. Chaudhuri writes only one line about the material "Four Mss of the Viddhasalabhanjika have been consulted". He gives no details as to which are those Mss. But while thanking the various persons for providing him the facilities, he mentions the authorities of Sarasvati Library, Tanjore and the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona. This shows that he might have used the two Mss of Poona (our Kha 6 and 7). In a foot-note on the verse dhunvantu etc he says "this verse is missing in the Mss of the Viddhasalabhanjika we have consulted."

1. Contribution of women to Sanskrit Literature (C.W.S.L.) by Dr. J.B. Chaudhuri (p. 10 of the text).
But one of the Ms of the text at Tanjore (our Ga 2) has this as the opening verse. This clearly proves that all the material directly connected with the task before him and available at Tanjore itself was not utilized by Dr. Chaudhuri.

Regarding his choice of readings he says:
"We are mainly concerned here with Sundari and Kamala. Therefore the readings that they chose, have been included in the text, though it is obvious that they are not always the best." Moreover, in recording the variants merely the abbreviation v. 1 (varia lectio) is used and no Ms is referred to. This is perhaps because no fresh evidence was used and the variants were collected mainly from Arte's edition. Dr. Chaudhuri had, of necessity, to adopt readings from Ms. No. 516 of Poona (our Kha 6) which is a contaminated version of Grantha and Devanagari recensions (See above, Manuscripts Material) and thus contained abundant readings occurring in the commentary of Kamala Sundari. But Kha 6 is not a very dependable source and abounds in corrupt readings, especially in the matter of the Pkt. passages. The additional text of Pkt included by him on page 190 (4th Act), is also from this Ms. But Dr. Chaudhuri failed to realise that this portion along with the preceding few lines, was not a prose passage but formed

2. ibid., Preface, p. 4.
printed at Calcutta in 1883. The text is practically the same as in the above mentioned edition and is a word to word reproduction printed in the Pandit of Banaras. Not a single variant is recorded in this edition. The text serves the purpose of a Ms. As the edition with Samasramis commentary was not available, Jivananda's edition is used in the following pages as a Ms and is given the siglum *Kha. 4.* It contains many faulty and ambiguous readings. Use of na in the place of na in Pkt passages is very frequent. Pkt verses III. 12 to 20 and IV to 9 are written as prose passages. Verse 10 to 20 of the 4th Act are omitted in this edition. Many other Pkt readings are also given wrongly.

III. Text with the commentary of Narayana, edited by Bhaskar Ram Chandra Arte and printed at Poona in 1886, along with the *Nityasamhâra* of Kalidasa. This is a much better edition than the two previously mentioned. Arte used four Ms. The details of these Ms as given by him in the preface is as below:

A - Belongs to the Government collection, deposited
10 Pkt verses in Arya metre. Therefore on the foregoing examination, this edition also does not possess much value as a critical edition.

5. Text with an introduction and translation in Hindi - By Ramakanta Tripathi and Published by Chowkhamba Vidya Bhavan, Varanasi, 1965.

The text adopted in this edition is a reproduction of Dr. Chaudhuri's edition. The only merit of this edition is a Hindi translation and an index of verses preceding the text.
As is obvious from the foregoing account, no attempt has so far been made for the systematic study of the text of VI. The editions which are available, record the tradition only of four Mss in Devanagari of the North Indian recension. But like various other wellknown works, VI was studied and was popular in all parts of India. Consequently, like other popular works, the text of VI also ran into various versions and at least three distinct recensions that might be called the Northern, the Southern and the Mixed, could be identified.

The South, being comparatively free from political upheavals, rightly deserves the credit for preserving the Sanskrit Text tradition in a comparatively purer and unpolluted form. After a thorough search of the Mss catalogues and Mss. Libraries, 23 Mss, in all, of VI could be located. Out of these, 9 are in Malayalam script, 10 in Devanagari, 3 in Grantha and one in Telugu. These Mss when divided on the basis of common readings and other common features resolved themselves into three groups:

1. **Ka Group.** (Southern recension) 9 Mss in the Malayalam script and one in Telugu.

2. **Ka group** (North Indian recension) 9 Mss in the Devanagari script.

3. **Ga Group** (Mixed recension) 3 Mss in Grantha script and one in Devanagari.
The Mss of VB form three distinct groups on the basis of the script and the variants.

Ka Group (In Malayalam Characters)

Ka1 - Ms No. 3781 of the Vishveshvarānand Vedic Research Institute, (now V.I.S.I.S.), Hoshiarpur Palmleaf, ff 27. (12"x1.8") with 10 to 11 lines a page and 45 to 50 letters a line. The Handwriting is very clear. At places it is written in comparatively bolder letters (35-40 a line).

Distinctive features in common with other Mss of Ka group -

Deletions by putting dots above. Zero-shaped figures are generally used for doubling the following consonant, or for Anusvāra. It uses lā in place of lā very often and quite a number of times in the place of ḍ, also. A special sign is used for repeating words. After 'ṛ' the succeeding consonant is always doubled. na and va are very much alike in shape and are the likely to confuse the reader. The Slokas are not numbered. Defective portions of the leaves left blank. This Ms ends with the words Namasiṣvāya netrānalāhutasvāntajanmane, gaurikucatatollasi-kunkumānkitavaksiṣe.

This Ms contains a few corrections which are done in the original scribe's own hand. Contains practically no mistakes. The more difficult readings (lectio difficilior) are found herein. In age this Ms appears to be the oldest.
(roughly 500 years). It is in a fastly decaying condition
and had to be handled very delicately. As, of all the
available Mss, this appeared to have preserved the text
in its original form to a great degree, if not completely,
this has been adjudged as the best Ms in all respects and
has been adopted as the base for editing the text. To do
this was all the more necessary because Vasudeva, author of
Margadarsini Commentary edited in the present volume, also
follows the text of this version.

Ka 2 - Ms. No. 1195 of the Kerala University Mss Library,
Trivandrum. Palmleaf, ff 49 (9"x 1\frac{1}{2}"") with 6/7 lines a page
and about 36 letters a line. Written in a beautiful stylish
hand. Full of uninked corrections by a revisor. The
original scribe omits many letters of the words which were
added below by the revisor. As many as 292 such additions and
corrections were counted. These correction are strikingly
common with Ms No. 3740 of V.V.R.I., Hoshiarpur which is
undoubtedly copied from this. Both these Mss. appear to
have been revised by the same person.

This Ms is one of the oldest and is now in a
very bad condition. Some of the folios are damaged and worm-
eaten. After the colophon it reads: Namaśivaye.
Namo harihiranyagarbheebyaḥ. It carries also an uninked
addition by the revisor:

kajjalehimanaka-rucaassuparna-prata-hansa-vahanā śām vah
jalanihi-giri-kamalasthā harihara-caturānamā dadātu.

This Ms also appears to be about 400-500 years old.
Ka 3 - Ms No. 3740 of V.V.R. Institute, Hoshiarpur. Palmleaf. 
ff. 44 (7.2''x 1.7''). Lines 9 to 10 a page and letters
30 to 33 a line. Written in a clear uniform hand.

Slokas not numbered. The Ms has passed through the hands
of a revisor. Full of deletions and corrections. Corrected
readings are given below the lines. Some variants are also
recorded below. Folios 5-11, 14, 15, 27-29 are slightly
worn eaten. The Ms. is in a decaying condition.

No date is mentioned; appears to be about 400 years old.

In readings and corrections it closely follows Ka 2,
which is most likely to be its exemplar and both these Mss might
have been corrected by a revisor with the help of some
other Ms.

Ka 4. Ms No. L 208 of Kerala University Mss. Library,
Trivandrum. Rough palmleaf. ff. 17 (13''x 1.8'') with
16 lines a page 80 letters/line. Written in a fair hand
in very small letters. No erasures or corrections. Gives
the chāvā of the Pkt. passages after the respective passages.
However, the chaya of Pkt. verses written in Arya metre
and occuring in 2nd and 4th Acts are not given blank spaces
being left for them. Gloss of some of the difficult
words have got mixed up with the text. This is a very
voluminous Ms. and contains the text of the following
works, in addition:

Mahāvīracarita, Kapūranañjarī, Subhadradhananiaya,
Nāgānanda, Mahānātaka-sūktisudhānīdhih by Immidideva-
mahārava, Mālatīmādhava, Probodhacandrodava,
Mālavikāgñimitra, Śakuntalā, Uttararāmacarita and Prāvadarāśikā.

This Ms also mostly follows its group but gives some readings common with kha group. It is about 250 years old.

Ka 5 - Ms. No. 13482 of the Kerala University Mss. Library, Trivandrum. Ordinary palmleaf. Ff.72 (7"x 1.2") with 6 to 8 lines a page and 18 to 30 letters a line. Ff. 56 to 66, 69 and 72 eaten up by rats. It is full of omissions. This Ms has also gone through the hands of some revisor who adds the omitted letters below the lines. The corrections are uninked. The writing is very good but not uniform, which has caused variations in the number of letters per line. After the colophon it reads:

Harihariharyagarbhēbhvo namāh.

akasram vat naribhrastam mātrāhinan tu vad (bhavet)

KNNXKNXN kañjantum arhanti (vi) dvānsah kasya nāsti

vyatikramah.

Govindaśisyena likhitam idam pustakam.

This Ms. also largely follows Ms Ka I. 2 and 6 and does not possess any original value except for a very few readings common with the kha group. The Pkt. portion of 3rd and 4th acts of this Ms have not been collected as this portion is not correctly copied.

Ka 6 - Ms. No. 10673 of the Kerala University Mss. Library Trivandrum. Palmleaf. Ff. 31 (82 to 113) (11.5"x 1.5") with
7 to 8 lines a page and 45 letters a line. The first 82 folios of this Ms. contain the text of Daśarūpa- 
vyākhya and folios 14-33 contain an unidentified work. 
The colour of the leaves have turned almost black, and the 
Ms. appears old. The rectos of the ff. are lost; it is 
making collation extremely difficult. It is full of gaps, 
omissions, mistakes and deletions. It ends with saṃjñā 
(IV. 36). The Ms. was collated up to l. 20 only. 

It appears about 400 years as could be gauged 
from the condition of the leaves.

OTHER MSS OF THE KA GROUP -

1. Ms. No. 12356 of the Kerala University Mss. Library, 
Trivandrum. Palmleaf. Ff. 50 (numbered 63 to 112) 
10" x 1.6", with 6 to 8 lines a page and about 35 letters a line. 
This Ms. contains in addition the text of Svapnavāsavadattām 
(ff. 1-31) and Pratijñā-vauṃgharāyana (ff. 31-62). 
It is in perfectly good condition. This Ms is dated 1071 
of the Kollam era, corresponding to A.D. 1796. It is 
obvious that it has been copied from Ka 3. The scribe seems 
to have very little erudition; he does not distinguish 
between the deleted letters and mixes them up with the 
corrections made by the revisor. For instance ka 3 corrects 
janani as javati by deleting a 'nani' and adding 'yati' 
below. But this Ms records the reading as Janavati. In verse
1. 4, Ka 3 corrects 'bhāma' as bhāva by putting a dot on ma and adding va below. But this Ms blindly follows, writes 'bhama' first and then adds 'va' below ma. Again, in verse 1.6, Ka 3 records the reading as 'pati' and a variant 'kula' below the word 'patē'. But this Ms copies it down as raghukulanati. (inter mixing both the variants). Thus it possesses no independent value. Hence dropped.

2. Ms. No. 625 of Kerala University Oriental Research Institute and Mss. Palmleaf. Incomplete Ff. 62 (9,1"x 1,1") with 5 to 6 lines a page and about 32 letters a line. Partly worm-eaten. Revised by the same hand. Deletions and corrections are few. The Ms. ends with IV. 2. The Ms. carries no new readings nor any other useful material. It mostly follows either Ka 1 or Ka 2 and 3. The Ms. has, hence not been used for collation.

3. Ms. No. 184 of the above Library, Trivandrum. It has only 7 folios, and contains a part of the 1st act ending with: (agटो vिोक्या)ranganganam laā-naccainam, bāhāyali. (p.18). It also contains (1) Ratnāvalī (f. 35)(Fourth Act incomplete) and (2) a portion of the 1st Act of Mudrārākṣasa. This Ms. does not add to our information and is only a fragment and therefore it is dropped.
Madras. Telagu characters, (13"x 8½") size paper Bound
pp. 169 with 23 lines a page and about 20 letters a
line. This Ms contains text as well as the Margadarsini
commentary by Vasudeva. The Ms ends with the 3rd Act.
It gives correct readings and has very few mistakes. But
it has no independent value as the text is a word for
word copy of Ka 3. The following words at the end of
the 1st Act in both the Ms are notable.

Srirajasekhara-katsu navaśalabhanjitikāyam
gireṇa likhitah prathmonka sah.

Since this Ms is only of a recent date and a
copy having no original value it has not been used
for collation so far as the text is concerned. But
the commentary part of it has been used.
II KHA GROUP (In Devanagari Characters)

Country-paper. ff. 44 (10"x 4") with 8 lines a page and 30-34 letters a line. First folio missing. Ff. numbered there is a confusion after f. 35; ff. 35 to 39 numbered as 40 to 44 in Red Ink and vice-versa in black. Borderline with yellow pigment on ff. 2, 3, 11, 12, 17, 18, 27 and 28. Written in good uniform handwriting.

Revised by the same hand. Erasures done by rubbing yellow or red pigment on the words or by putting dots above them. Omitted portions added in the margin on revision. Transposition of letters have been corrected by numbering them as 2, 1 etc.

It starts from -- -- (m kya) na jana ka punaradya etc Pkt. Ttha written as Coha (accha for atha), tha for dha and va for ba. This Ms gives very correct readings. Mistake negligible. This is the best Ms of the kha group. The name of the owner is given as Srinivasa Pustakam idam. No date is given but it appears to be fairly old, may be 250-300 years.

Kha 2 - Ms. No. 7/197 of the Sarasvati Bhavan, Varanaseya Sanskrit Vishvavidyalaya, Varanasi. Paper, ff. 35 letters per line. Double line margins at both sides upto f. 23 written in uniform hand. Stage directions marked with red pigment. The Ms. appears to be 150 years old.
tha often written like oha, tha for dha and ya like pa.
The stage directions are often mixed with the succeeding speeches. Verse II 5 and II. 6 are both numbered as 2.5, with the result that the succeeding verses are numbered one less. The Ms has gone through the hands of a revisor who supplies the ohāya of the Prākrit passages over the respective lines. He seems to have compared the Ms with another Ms., the variants being noted on the margin or above the words concerned. The original scribe, too, has made corrections which are easily distinguishable. The Ms. is fairly correct.

Kha 3 - Ms. No. 9177 of the Saravati Bhavan, Varanasi. Sanskrit University. Paper, 35 ff., (12"x 4") with 7 lines a page and about 49 letters per line. Written in uniform stylish hand with shining ink. The folios bear the syllable Om in the left margins, except ff. 5, 10, 12 and 29 which have the word Rama. Folios 13 and 33 have both Om and Rama, while 9 and 16 have neither. Folio 1 a is blank except for the title of the play. The Ms appears to be 50 to 100 years old. No scribal corrections are seen and the Ms. does not seen to have passed through the hands of a revisor. The text preserved is generally correct.

Kha 4 - Edition by Jivanand vidyasagar, discussed under the heading Previous Editions.

Kha 5 - Ms No. D 12680 of the Government Oriental Ms Library, Madras. Country-made paper, ff. 46 (12"x4") with
8 lines a page. Bound, carelessly written and is full of mistakes like transposition or dropping of letters. Revised, corrections being recorded on the margin with red ink. Yellow pigment used for deletions. Leaves space where readings could not be ascertained. Probably its exemplar was damaged. The hand changes after f. 8. Lines per page vary from 6 to 8. At the ends adds:

sarvam militia slokah 108.
niskrant sarve Caturthonsah.
Samvat 192 ... Sravanakrsn 12
(Dvadasi) Budhavasare. Last digit of the
Samvat omitted. Apparently the Ms was written between
Samvat 1921 and 1929. So, about One hundred years old.

Kha 6 - Ms No. 516 1887-91 of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona. Country-made paper. ff. 49 (7.5"x 4.3") with 9 to 12 lines a page. Folios numbered with the word Sri above the number in the left margin. Borders ruled in double black lines. Handwriting very poor the letters being sometimes small and sometimes bold. The first seven lines of F.33 b and portions of f. 45b are over written by a later hand as the original ink seemed to have faded away. The Ms has passed through the hands of a revisor, whose erasures and over-writings very frequent. The corrected readings are added in the margins.
Uses $La$ for $Lg$ and writes $mna$ by crossing $ma$ portion of $Pkt.$ separated with horizontal red strokes.

Condition of Ms. very bad. All the folios worn out and moth eaten ranging from $\frac{1}{2}''$ to $2''$, damaging the readings in a few cases. The Ms often follows the text tradition of the $Ga$ group. It also gives some new readings, not found in any other Ms. It therefore seems to be an 'misch codex' in which the text of $Kha$ and $Ga$ groups have got contaminated. Dr. Chaudhuri's edition of VB mostly bears the readings of this Ms. It is about 400 years old.

$Kha$ 7 - Ms. No. 168 1882-83, of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona. It appears to be about 250 years and is in old country-made paper. Incomplete, ff 1-14 only being extant. Size $10'' \times 4''$. Lines 12-13 in a page. Letters vary from 40 to 50 a line. Handwriting small but clear and legible. Borders in double red lines. Red pigment used to mark stage directions etc. Additional matter like $chāyā$ upto a little over 1.31, and a few comments recorded in the margins. Left hand edges slightly worn out and last leaf slightly torn.
All nasals written with *anusvāra.*

The names of characters, áloka members and technical terms rubbed with red pigment. F. Ia bears the title and the text starts on f. Ib. The Ms. begins with *Śrīganesāya namah.* Kulaguru and ends abruptly with *ye pūrvam yavasūciśūtrasuḥrdo.*

*Kha 8* - Ms No. 6828 of the V.V.R.Institute, Hoshiarpur. Country-made paper. Incomplete. Ff. 12. (9"x 3.7"), with 10-11 per page and 32 to 45 letters a line. The scribe was a devotee of Rama as this name written above the folio number on 'b' side of the folio would show. Double margin lines. Written in a running hand. Changes pen at ff. 4, 7, 8, 10, and 12. Text begins towards the close of the Second Act from *Rajāśīvevamasmān manasi* etc. (p. 58). f 5b ends *Mugdhanam Sinaralekha* (III.2) and the next folio begins in the middle of *Brahmani's* speech at the opening of the Fourth Act. With these words - *tto viakkhanāmuhena devi* etc. (p.101) Revised by the scribe and corrections written in the margin along with the line number. Deletions done by two strokes above or by covering the words in black. Has very useful colophon giving the date and the name of the scribe as Samvat 1716. *Srisidhesvaryaśāma namah Māghamāvasavyāyam likhitam Śrikantha Dīksitena.* Thus this Ms. is more than 300 years old.
OTHER MSS. OF THE KHA GROUP

Ms. No. 7/128 of the Sarasvati Bhavan Sanskrit
40 (9" x 4") with 5 lines a page and about 35 letters a line. First folio is missing. Edges of many of the folios worn out and damaged. For protection from damage, full size wax-paper is pasted on each page. The writing of this Ms. is not beautiful but bold. The scribe commits numerous errors that he seems to be copying without understanding the text. The Ms is thus full of mistakes and omissions and has no independent value. It has therefore not been used for collation.
Ga Group (In Grantha characters)

Ga 1. Cata. No. 4673 of Saraswati Mahal Library, Tanjore. Palmleaf. Ff. 27 (14½"x 1½") with 7 lines a page and about 60 letters a line. For collation of this Ms. the present editor had to depend on an officially certified Devanagari transcript. The transcript contains numerous gaps which leads one to conclude that the Ms. is in a damaged condition. The title page bears the inscription:

अग्नायहि वितावे,
ग्रामानो हव्यःदातेये,
निहोतां सति बर्हिमी,
श्रीनिलकांभदिकितानः,
गिर्वेनद्रे-दिकितानः,
अव्यदिकितानः. In a later hand is written:

अपादिकिताया विद्धसादाबद्धजीकान
प्रसांनराग्हवानाताकङ्गाचा.

Ga 2. No. 4674 of the Saraswati Mahal Library, Tanjore. Palmleaf, Ff. 21 (16½"x 1½") with 8 or 9 lines a page and about 60 to 65 letters a line. For the collation of this Ms the present editor had to be satisfied with the variants recorded along with the abovementioned transcript, G 1. The Ms
appears to be in a very much damaged condition and must be very old. This Ms has an additional opening verse, which is partly damaged and reads as follows:

\[ dhūnvantu \ x \ x \ x \ x \ sphurit, \ sangā-maṅgala- \ antarjāvalamūnītīla-locana-havyavāh-ivālāvāl-vilasita-bhramama-da-dhanah. \]

This verse is commented upon by Kamakṣa and Sundarī in their commentary of VB. But this is evidently an inter-polation by some scribe who might have originally written this prayer before he actually started to copy his exemplar. But later on it mysteriously crept into the actual text.

The above two Mss. from Tanjore form the main constituents of the Ga group. The special characteristic of this group is that its text partly agrees with the Mss of Ka and partly with those of Kha group. There are very few cases of readings which are different from that of the Ka and Kha groups. This therefore is a case of contaminated recension. The Pkt text of this group is also highly corrupt.

Ga 3. Ms. No. 2528 of the Kerala University Ms. Library, Trivandrum. Pine palmleaf. Appearance new. Folios 55 of 16.5"x 1.5" size. Lines 9 per page. Letters 75 per line. The Ms. contains the three works viz.,
VB. (22 ff.), Ratnavali (ff. 24), Nāgānanda (5th and 6th Acts. ff. 9) and a portion of a verse Index of Anaragharāghava. It is worm-eaten at many places, thus creating gaps. It is written in very small letters. Handwriting changes at folios 9 and 15. The name of the work is written on right margin of the first page. The names of the characters given only by first letter and even that is often omitted. The scribe takes liberty in changing the readings which are not supported by any other Ms. Often, it drops letters and records wrong readings. The scribe seems to be completely ignorant of Pkt. The blank spaces occasionally left in the Ms. by the scribe prove this ignorance beyond doubt. Therefore, Pkt portions of last three Acts of this Ms were ignored in the collation work, so as to avoid the recording of the incorrect material.

This Ms is comparatively of a later date and may be approximately 150 to 200 years old.

OTHER MS OF GA GROUP

Ms. No. 6461 of the Oriental Institute, Baroda. Country-made paper. This is written in Devanagari characters. Ff. 33 (11" x 5.7") with 10 lines a page and about 40 to 45 letters each line. The handwriting is uniform and clear. There are a few corrections in the scribe's own hand.
The text appears to have been copied from some Grantha Ms. But, on comparison with the other Ms of this group, it is found to be full of wrong readings which probably crept in due to the scribe's lack of proper understanding of the Grantha script. This Ms records the first Nandi verse in full which is partly damaged in Ga 2. It reads as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dhūnvantu sphurita-krītajatu-kalāpah,} \\
\text{dūkkhāni nāh sphurita sōnamārimālāy.} \\
\text{antarivalanuṭīla-locanabhavyavāha -} \\
\text{āvālayāli vilasitabhramamadadhāna.}
\end{align*}
\]

It follows closely the tradition of the text of Ga group and does not provide any useful or new material. This has, therefore, not been used for collation.
A 1. Ms. No. 12347 of the Kerala University Ms Library, Trivandrum. Palm leaf, Malayalam characters. Pf. 63 (5½ x 2) with 10 lines a page and about 56 letters a line. Incomplete.

This Ms is in good condition and very nicely written in a uniform hand. It contains practically no mistakes. The 3rd Act ends on f. 62b and 2 lines on 63a contain a portion of the commentary on the 4th Act and is written in a different hand. This portion should have been added later. This Ms served as an exemplar for a Telugu Ms (A3 below). The Ms is worm-eaten at a few places and consequently some gaps have occurred. It has been made the basis for constituting the present text of the commentary.

A 2. Ms. No. R.2715 of Government Oriental MSS. Library, Madras. Thick lined Paper. Devanāgari characters. Pf. 9½ (11"x 9") with 20 lines a page. Bound in a register form. This is a transcript from a Malayalam Ms which belonged to Narayana Nambudiripad, Kudalur Mana, Trittala, Malabar. It is a very authentic copy of it exemplar and carries the following post-colophon verse:

Śāhityomalla-kavīnā nimunam nibaddhā
This verse shows that the scribe of its exemplar was some Rāma. He was a man of fine literary taste and could also compose verses. He was deeply impressed by the commentator Vasudeva.

The transcript ends a little over the 3rd Act. At the end, it bears a note in red "Compared with the original Ms. M.A.J. 15.9.1918".

A.3 Ms. No. D 12681 of Government Oriental Mss. Library, Madras. Telugu Characters. Paper of foolscap size. Pp. 169 with 23 lines each page with about 20 letters a line. Incomplete; ends with the 3rd Act. Each page of this Ms is divided in Two portions. The upper portion gives the text of the play and the lower portion contains the commentary. The commentary is very nicely copied and there are very few mistakes. The scribe leaves spaces where he could not ascertain the readings. The Ms appears to have been revised by the same hand, as some corrections and additions are visible in the blank spaces left.

This Ms is a direct copy from A 1, which fact is amply proved by the uniformity of the text as well as
the spaces left for the damaged portions of A 1. As it is very carefully written on modern lines, it appears that the scribe had the motive of supplying this to the MSS Library.

B Ms. No. 2365 A of Kerala University MSS Library, Trivandrum. Palmleaf. Ff. 97 (12½" x 1½") with 5 lines a page and about 44 letters a line. This MS is written in a fairly good hand and contains practically no mistakes. But it is highly damaged and the readings are missing at many places. Therefore, it could not be used for collation and the present editor had to use its Devanagari transcript described below:

The MS. ends with a fragment of the 4th Act.

The name of the commentary as given in the colophon of this MS is Pradarsini.

B(Ba) - MS No. 1008 of the above Library. Paper, Devanagari transcript of No. 2365A described above. Ep. 182. It contains also the text which is appended copied from Jivānanda's Edition.

As recorded at the end, one L. Bhavani finished the transcript on 28.9.1110 Kollam era and the comparison was finished by E. Narāyana Sarma on 15.12.1110.

This Ms is very valuable because it is complete. The present text of the last act is based on this single Ms. Some confused readings occur in the text. While editing this portion of the text the "suggested" readings have been enclosed within brackets. The following verse after the colophon discloses that the scribe was a devotee of Lord Siva. Nothing more is known about the author of this portion:

rāgadwesa-vivarjitasaya kamalasamvāsaranyakārasava -
syānandaikaparāyenasaya purajitasyasaya tatsevinah
govindasaya guruh samastajagatām sarvajñatā nocitā
śrī-kailassapuresitū ravi sakhe yukteti sa maṁ mahe.

THREE VERSIONS OF THE COMMENTARY

It is very interesting to note that the Margadarsini commentary of VB of Vasudeva also runs into three different versions, A, B and C. The original text (A) has five beautiful introductory verses by the author and is full of quotations from various works of literature, rhetorics and Kosas, and detailed explanation
by the commentator. But B and C which are strikingly inter-connected seem to be attempts to make the original commentary brief. The introductory verses are omitted and many of the quotations and explanations are dropped. But whereas A and B versions end with a fragment of the Fourth Act, C has the complete text upto the end of 4th Act. It appears most probable that Vāsudeva could not complete his commentary and it ended with the 3rd Act. Making the B version as his base some other unknown author completed the commentary on the last Act. But the author of this portion does not possess that acumen depth and erudition which characterised Vāsudeva. He indulges, at times, in useless and extraneous details which are sickening for the reader. Simple words and phrases are unnecessarily dilated upon. Quotations, which are a characteristic feature of Vāsudeva's style, are conspicuous by their absence and simple literary meanings are given. So, the merit of this portion of the commentary is far less than that of written by the masterhand of Vāsudeva. But it certainly deserves the credit of making the commentary complete.

The three phases through which the text of the commentary has passed, may be summed up as follows -

1. A. Margadarsini commentary originally written by Vāsudeva upto the 3rd Act.
2. B. Attempt to make Margadarsini brief and entitled Pradarsini by an unknown person.

3. C. Keeping B as the base, an attempt to recast and complete the unfinished portion with the title 'Pradarsini'.

PRINCIPLES OF CONSTITUTING THE PRESENT TEXT

As mentioned earlier, in these pages, the first task before this editor was to classify all the available Ms into different groups on the basis of their respective scripts and common readings etc.

Having divided them into Ka, kha and Ga groups, being the best, Ms of each group were arranged and named in a succession, keeping the best Ms at No. 1 and so on according to their respective value on the basis of (a) Purity of readings, (b) Extent of the text preserved and (c) Rough age of the Ms.

Kha 7 and 8 have been relegated to the end of the group because of the incomplete text preserved in them,
although it may appear that they have preserved more
correct readings than Kha 4 or Kha 5.

The text of the best Ms of the best group, i.e.
Ms Ka I, has been made the base. But the readings of
this Ms which appeared to be wrong or ambiguous were
ignored (such instances, were, of course, very few)
and readings as obtained in Ka 2, 3 and 4 were adopted.
Luckily the commentary by Vāsudeva which has also been
edited along with this text has provided help in the
choice of readings as it invariably follows the text of
Ka 1.

For recording the variants, the Ms giving a particular
variant is mentioned with its Group symbol
and serial number. But, when the variant is common to
all the Ms in the whole group, only the group symbol
is mentioned. Thus, if a variant is given after Kha
without number, it means that all the Ms of this group have
that reading. Variations within the group or groups
are given within brackets.

OBVIOUS MISTAKES IGNORED

The main job of a critical Editor is to
reconstitute the text which may be nearest to the one
originally written by the author. For the examination of
the reader, variant readings have to be recorded. But
making a reference to each one of hundreds of mistakes
in every Ms or giving the details of corrections or
gaps created due to the damage to the Ms. is very
irksome both to the editor as well as the reader, more
so when the number of Ms used is large. Moreover
it serves no useful purpose from any point of view. As
such, in the present text only such variants have been
recorded which carry some meaning. In case of corrections,
only the corrected forms are recorded unless otherwise
found necessary. Obviously, wrong words have been
dropped. But in Pkt one Sanskrit word may be used in
various forms. As such all such variations have been
recorded. Extraneous matter in the form of Chāvā or some
comments or quotations on the margins had also to be
ignored since they have no direct hearing on the original
text and would have unnecessarily added to the bulk
of foot-notes which have already become too numerous.
Unlike some of the outstanding poets and writers of Sanskrit, Rājasekhara has given detailed information, in his works, about the various aspects and phases of his life. On the basis of this first-hand information and also numerous observation made about the poet by other writers, a well-connected history of his life can be traced.

Ancestors of Rājasekhara

The first important mention Rājasekhara makes to his ancestors is in Hālārāmāyana which probably, is his first work. He writes:

sa mūrto yatrāsid gunagana ivākālajalaladah
Surānandah sopi śravanaputapseyena vacasā na
śācānye ganyante tarlakavirājasprabhrtayo
mahābhāgastasminnayamajani yayāvarakule.

Tadāmuṣyaṇasya mahārāṣṭracudamanerakalajaladasya
caturtho daurdukiḥ, Śilavatisūnurūpādhyāya
Śrīrājāsekhara1

The verse discloses that the poet was born in the Yayāvara family in which there was Akālajalada, 'the very incarnation of a host of merits, that Surānanda

1. Bal. 1. 13 and the succeeding prose.
also whose sweet words are fit to be drunk by the cavities of ears and Tarala-Kavirāja and others. The prose passage further adds that Akālajalada, 'the crestjewel of Mahāraṣṭra was his great grand-father. Durduka his father, Silāvati his mother and he himself a teacher. Again, in VB he repeats Tadākālajaladasya pranaptuh,² 'the great grand son of Akalajalada'.

Akalajalada:

The poet is very proud of being in the lineage of Akalajalada. The two verses in Sūktimuktāvalī, attributed to Rājaekhara, throw light upon the literary achievements of his this ancestor:

Akalajaladendo sa hrada vaṣanaṇaṃṇīṇāya
nityam kaviṃ kāsaīryaṁ pīyaṁ na ca hīyate. (*N. 83*)

Again:

Akalajaladaslokeṣa citramātmakwitaṁ iva
jātah kādambarīramo nātakā pravaraṁ kaviḥ (*N. 84*)

It appears that Akalajalada was very well-known and popular among poets in those days and he had written a work Vaṣanāṇaṃṇīṇā, which, according to Prof. N.G. Suru,³ was probably a collection of independent verses. Some Kādambarīrama is said to have become great poet by

2. VB. I.6
plagiarizing the verses composed by Akālajalada.

But unfortunately no work written by this Akālajalada is available now except a few verses ascribed to him in the anthologies.

**Surananda:**

The next ancestor mentioned by the poet, is Surananda, whose sweet words, he says, are fit to be drunk by the ears. There is another verse ascribed to Rajasekhara in *Sūktimuktāvali*, in which he says:

\[ \text{Nādirām mekalasūtā nṛpāṇām Rānavigrahaḥ} \]
\[ \text{Kāvīnām ca Surānandah cēdimandalamanandanaṃ} \]

Surananda was best among poets, like Narmadā among rivers and Rānavigraha among kings’.

Rājasēkhara does not specifically mention his relation with Surananda as he did in case of Akālajalada. 4 Principal Apte holds that Surananda was probably the grand father of the poet. It appears that Surananda had a very respectable position as a poet in the court of the Cedi Kings. While discussing the topic of 'borrowing from other poets' in his *Kāvyasimāmsa*, Rajasekhara quotes the opinion of Surananda "Sāyamulīkhaṇḍanaṇugrahya mārgah iti Surānandah. MAHĀ This is the only available

4. Apte, Rajasekhara, his life and writings, p. 16.
quotation from Surananda. No work written by him to is either referred/ by any writer or is available.

Prof. Suru believes that this quotation is from some work on poetics by Surananda, now lost to us.

**Tarala:**

Another verse ascribed to Raja Sekhara in the Suktimuktavali and Haribhavali, describes Tarala.

*Yayyavakulasreneh haravastesca mandanam suvarnabandha rucistaralastarlo yathā.*

Probably Tarla wrote some work and named it as Suvarnabandha, but nothing can be said with certainty. Tarala's exact relation with Raja Sekhara is also not known.

**Kaviraja:**

No other reference except the one quoted above, is made to Kaviraja, by the poet. This word is so commonly used for and by the poets as an honorific title, that it is doubtful to say whether Raja Sekhara uses it along with Tarala, as a proper name. If at all it is so this Kaviraja did not have any literary achievements to his credit. Otherwise,

how could the poet remain silent about him, especially when he was so proud of his ancestors and their achievements as poets. Another probability can be that he might have said something more about Kavirāja also but that is now lost to us.

Rājasekhara's Father

In the Prologue to the Balaramāvana as well as of VB, Rājasekhara styles himself as Dauradaki or Dauhiki son of Durdaka or Duhik. He also describes his father as Mahāsumantrin and Mahāmantrin. But he does not make it clear in whose court his father was the Chief Minister. He did not feel it necessary, perhaps, because it was so well-known to all in those days and his patrons as his father's masters were identical.

There is one Dhiik mentioned in the two copperplates found at Una (893; 899 A.D.) (Gujarat State) and studied by Dr. Kielhorn. These plates are connected with Balavarman and his son and successor

6. Uktam hi tenaiva mahamantriputrena.
   Balabharata 1.9.

7. Sūktamidam tenaiva mahamantriputrena Bal. 1.8

Avantivarman II of Chalukya race. The inscriptions reveal that both these Chalukya kings were the feudatories of Mahândrapâla, son of Bhojadeva, both emperors of Kanauj. Dr. V.T. Zambare believes "that this Dhâluk was probably some high official appointed by Mahândrapâla to supervise the country ruled by Avantivarman II. I am inclined to identify this high official with the father of the poet."  

This identification seems plausible. As regards the difference in the two names, it may be attributed to the scribe. Dr. Kielhorn observes that the engraving is done carelessly.

About the mother of the poet, nothing is known except her name Silâvati. Perhaps the poet had nothing extraordinary to say about her.

Râjasekhara's personal Life

The poet was very lucky in having a Chief Minister as his father. Consequently he had all the amenities and pleasures of life at his disposal. He lead a life of full enjoyment in his young days. As his father seems

to have held the high position of a Regent (Tantrapala) with the various feudatory Kings under the Kanauj Empire, Rājaśekhara got numerous opportunities to visit various regions and had all sorts of enjoyments wherever he went. The following verse of Kaemendra is very significant in this connection.

Karnāṭi-dasaṇāṁkitah Sitamahārastrikataksahatah
praudandhristanapiditah praṇayini-bhrūbhanga-vitrāsitah
lāti-bahu-viveśitasca maḷavastri-tarjānitarjātah
soyam saṃprti Rājaśekharakavi vārānasī vānchati. 10

The theme of his two court plays, VB and the Karpūrmaṇjari maṇjari, and some of the most sensuous descriptions, also provide an insight into the frolicsome and licentious nature of the poet. Another fact which needs mention here is the poet’s partiality towards the Lāṭa-deśa (Gujarat) in his works. He refers to this land with attachment and respect. The heroines of his two court plays are drawn from this land. Prof. Sūru suggests that the poet perhaps spent the earlier part of his life, mostly, in this region with his father who acted as a regent in the feudatory territory of the Kannauj Kings.

Rājaśekhara had an ideal conception of a poet’s daily life and his house. The norm laid down by him in his

10. Kaemendra, Aucityavicāraracarog, 27
Kāvyamīmāsā is noteworthy. He says "The poet's house should be well-painted and clean. It should contain various apartments for use according to the requirements of the six seasons, there should be bowers formed by trees etc. and without roofs. It should have pleasure mounts, water tanks, artificial rivulets and an artificial sea. It should have various birds like mavura, sarasa, cakravakas, hamsas, krauṅgas, kurari, sūka and sarika. It should have fountains and swings. The poet should have a fleet of attendants, proficient in Apabhraṃśa language. Maid-servants should speak Māgadhī. The queens of the harem should be well-versed in Sanskrit and Prakrits. The poet should have a scribe adept in the use of various scripts and so on.

On reading these details, one feels as if Rājasekhara was describing the life of a king and not that of a poet. Surely, only a kingly poet could afford to have such a luxurious house, and it appears that Rājasekhara did have it. He had not merely imagined this ideal life but actually lived it. In his youth, as the son of a Chief Minister, and in later days as the Guru of Mahendrapāla and his son Mahīpāla of Imperial Kanauj, he could afford to lead a lavish life all through except for a short span when Mahīpāla faced political crisis for a few years and Rājasekhara had to leave Kanauj probably for some 4 to 5 years.
Avantisundari

Rajasekhara had another rare good fortune in possessing a very accomplished and talented wife. In the prologue of his Saṣṭṭaka 'Karpuramañjari' the poet mentions her name as Avantisundari. In the introductory portion of the play, on an enquiry by the stage-manager as to who has asked to stage the play, the attendant replies.

"It is Avantisundari, the crest-wreath of the Chauhāna family, the wife of the great poet Rājasekhara, who desires this (play) of her husband to be enacted." (कौमतुका)

This verse reveals that Rājasekhara's wife Avantisundari was a Chauhān (Rajaputa) princess. It was in deference to her wish and not to please any royal that Karpuramañjari was first enacted. This proves that the poet held her wife in very high esteem. This was not without reason. Coming from a royal family, Avantisundari was a very accomplished lady having high literary tastes. She was well-versed in Sanskrit and the Prākrits and was herself a writer. Rājasekhara quotes her opinions thrice in his Kavyamīmāṃsa.
CRITICAL STUDY OF VIDDHASALABHANJIKA

The Plot

1st Act: After the usual benediction and the prologue the act opens with the entry of Haradasa, disciple of Bhagurayana, the Prime Minister of King Vidyadharamalla, the hero of this drama. Haradasa sings the praises of the clear and keen intellect which is possessed by his Guru who has exhibited the same by cleverly bringing Mrgankavali, the heroine to the king’s palace. Mrgankavali is the daughter of Sandravarman King of Latadesa. But having no son, the Lata king had declared her to be his son and named ‘him’ as Mrgankavarman. This fact is kept as a top secret, but the shrewd Bhagurayana comes to know the prophecy that whosoever marries Mrgankavali, will achieve the exalted status of the king Emperor (Chakravarti Padavi). Therefore, he is ambitious to get her married to his master.

Haradasa informs the audience that the king had a wake-up early and it is likely because of the plan of the Minister, who got constructed a special sleeping chamber with perforated pillars with a special purpose. Here ends the explanatory scene (Viskambhaka)

Then enters the king, who is disturbed, and the Vidusaka. The king has seen a young maiden a perfect
beauty. But he is utterly confused as to whether it is only a dream or reality. It cannot be a mere dream because he finds a lustrous necklace placed by her around his neck. And, if it is a reality, how could she disappear so suddenly. The king discloses his feelings of intense new love to his friend Gārāyaṇa. Both the king and his friend proceed to the pleasure garden for a consoling sight.

Then follows the detailed description of the spring season (Vasanta) which still further adds to the king's pangs. Both go to see the crystal art gallery on sport-mount (Keli-Kailas). There they see Mṛgāṅkāvalī among other maidens absorbed in the swing-spect. Again, while looking at various paintings, the king finds her painted. Still further, he finds her in the form of a statue and once more in person on the other side of the crystal wall. By these successive sights of her physical charms in various forms, the king becomes completely enamoured and loses control over his actions. They rush to meet her but she disappears and the king is disappointed. The approach of noon-time is sung from behind the curtains and the king has to retire very reluctantly for a mid-day prayer in the queen's palace.

Act II. In the Introductory scene (Pravesākha)
the two maid-servants Kurangikā and Tarangikā meet and converse. The later discloses that after being deprived of his kingdom, Gandamahāsana, king of Kuntala, came here in Ujjainī. Her daughter Kāvalayamālā was seen while coming after a bath in Narmadā by their king and she captivated his heart. The queen wishes Kuvalayamālā to be married with Mrgaṅkavarman, the queen's cousin (maternal uncle's son who is in fact Mrgaṅkāvali). Tarangikā has been assigned the job of arranging various materials needed in connection with this marriage. Kurangikā discloses to her friend, the queen's plan of a mock marriage of Cārāyāna to ridicule him.

In the main act, the king gives expression to the extremely painful and lovelorn condition of his heart being burnt with the flames of love. This could perhaps be remedied only if the moon turns into a pool of nectar and his limbs become frigid by a bath in it.

The king asks the Vidusaka to lead him to the Plantain house (Kadali-grha) but the Vidūṣaka is mum as he is contemplative of his approaching marriage arranged by the queen.

The marriage is performed. The Vidūṣaka is en enraged to find that his new 'bride' is Damaruka, a
servant of the queen and not a woman. His anger is pointed towards the queen's foster-sister Mekhalā who played the bride's mother. In that angry mood he leaves the stage.

The scene changes. The king goes to the garden where Carāyaṇa also joins him. The king sees his sweet-heart playing with a ball. Her various movements attract his heart to a still greater degree. He again describes at length her charms. It is followed by a description, from behind the certain, of Mrgāṅkāvalī emaciated due to the effects of love.

**Act III.** In the introductory scene, the maid-servant of the king Sulaksana tells her friend Vicaksana how Bhāgurāyaṇa requested her to assist him in executing the plan of king's marriage with Mrgāṅkāvalī. Following the directions given by Haradasa, from time to time, she persuaded Mrgāṅkāvalī to enter the king's sleeping chamber and offer worship to the God of love who descends there in person. After that she was successively brought before the king in the swing, in pictures in Art Gallery, behind the crystal wall, in the form of a statue, at ball play and so on. All this has resulted in the intense infatuation of both the king and Mrgāṅkāvalī, towards each other. Sulaksana discloses her assignment by the king. Carāyaṇa wants to take revenge on Mekhalā.
for his humiliation. Sulakṣaṇā was asked to announce to Mekhā on a dark night from over a tree that she would die on the moon night of the Vaiśākha month. If she wanted an escape she should worship a Brahman well-versed in Gāndharva Veda, fall on his feet and propitiate him.

In the main act Mekhā is made to do all that and she is greatly embarrassed. The queen is annoyed and leaves in anger. A lengthy description of the darkness, the moon, and the moon-light follows. The king complains that the moon was piercing him with darts of rays, which, though cool, burnt him like flames of fire. The king beseeches the moon to show mercy.

The heroine appears for the first time and gives vent to her sufferings. The king listens to her lamentations, biding himself along with his friend, and is very deeply touched to see his sweetheart in an emaciated and pale condition, but otherwise feels inwardly gratified that she is pining for him. The heroine is disturbed by the boisterous laughter of Carayana and herself along with her confidante Vicakṣaṇa. Now, is their turn to watch the activities and listen to the talk between the king and the Vidūṣaka. The hero depicts his pathetic condition. The lovers come face to face for the first time, but soon after, the approach of
the queen is announced. She was coming to enjoy the sight of the bloomed Mādhavi bower. The lovers are made to part but very reluctantly.

**Act IV.** It starts with the singing of the description of the morning time from behind the scene. Then appears the Brāhmanī (Vidūśaka's wife) sleeping and the Vidūśaka attempting to awaken her. The Brāhmanī, in a half sleeping state, speaks out the plan prepared by the queen to play a dupe, this time with her own husband, with another mock marriage, and thereby take revenge of the trick played with her foster-sister Mekhā. The queen has conveyed thus to the King, "Mrgāṅkāvali has come to see her brother Mrgāṅkāvarman. The predicative goes that Mrgāṅkāvali will be the queen of a king emperor (Cakravarti). Wishing to see her husband in that position, she, like many other previous occasions wishes Mrgāṅkāvali to be married to the king. And she had already got the hands of many princesses for him (the king)."

After a long introductory speech of the Brāhmanī, the king and the Vidūśaka appear. Five long verses are devoted to the description, by the king, of the summer season with all its varied effects on life, the trees, the plants, etc. This is followed by ten Prākrit verses in describing in all its details the afternoon water-sports of the damsels (varavilāsinīs). The
Vidūṣaka then enquires of his friends as to how he passed the previous evening, and whether he had received any information about his beloved. The king tells the Vidūṣaka about the restless condition of Mṛgāṇkāvalī, as reported by the maid Vīcakṣaṇā. The Vidūṣaka further asks the king whom he loves more, Kuvalayamālā or Mṛgāṇkāvalī. Then enter the two maids, Vīcakṣaṇā and Kurangikā, with the wedding dress for the king and convey to him the request of the queen, to wear the dress and come to the marriage Hall. The king obeys and the marriage is solemnized.

After the marriage, the Chief Minister Bhāgurāyaṇa and the messenger of the Lāṭa King arrive. The messenger breaks the news that the king of Lāṭadēśa is blessed with a son and that since it was no longer necessary to keep Mṛgāṇkāvalī garbed as a son, his master wishes that she should be married to some virtuous king. The queen feels very small, finding that she has been caught in her own net. A marriage she had planned to be a fake one, and which she had planned to be a fake one and which she had arranged only for the sake of fun had proved real.

Now, remains the position of Kuvalayamālā to be settled, as her husband has turned out to be a woman. How can a woman be married to a woman. The Vidūṣaka
quoting the authority of religious code (*Dharma Sāstra*) proves that Kuvalayamālā also belongs to his friend, the King. In this manner the king gets, at the same time, the hand of both the girls desired by him. Vidūsaka repeats a humorous remark, “Among people it is said that a brother in law’s jīpīn wife is one’s half-wife but in the case of his friend, she has come out to be full-wife.” The Vidūsaka asks the maids to sing and dance at this festive occasion of double marriages. After this, Kurāṅgaka, the letter-bearer, arrives. He hands over a letter from the Commander-in-chief, Srivatsa which discloses that after very hard struggle and fierce fighting the kings of all quarters had been subdued and that the Tilaka of Khalacuri (their King) has become the King Emperor.

**SOURCES OF THE PLOT**

In its outline, the plot of *VB* is traditional, as adopted in some of the famous plays of Sanskrit, like *Pryadarsīka* and *Ratnāvalī* of Sri Harāka, *Malvīkāgīmitra* of Kalidāsa and to a limited extent in the *Svapnāsavanadattam* of Bhāsa. There is a king of the gay type (dīrālalita) whose main pursuits are love, art and music. He has a very able and devoted Chief Minister who aspires to see his lord achieve the position of a paramount king. On the other side, there is a princess about whom there seems to be a prediction that she would be the queen of a paramount king. The Chief
Minister prepares a plan, invariably without taking the king into confidence. The princess is brought in disguise to the king's harem. The king sees her and becomes enamoured of her physical charm. The princess also falls in love with him. They meet in secret places, arranged either by Vidūśaka or by the maid servants. The Chief Queen jealously guards her husband but ultimately submits to the inevitable and approves of the marriage. After the marriage, as predicted, the king gets the news that his forces have subdued all the enemy kings and he had become the paramount king.

Rhasa's Svapnavasavadattam is partly an exception to the extent that there the hero is deeply attached to his first love and he agrees to marry the other princess reluctantly under the pressure of circumstances.

This theme appears to have been very popular with the poets, especially those connected with the courts, for, through such literary activities they could please their patrons and justify their pursuits of love and frolic in a suggestive manner.

Although the outline of VB is common with the abovementioned plays, yet the details are worked out according to the poet's own ingenuity. Bringing the heroine in the garb of a prince, the construction of a special Chamber,
crystal wall scene, the art gallery, the statue and continued. the swing have been very ably, by presenting the heroine at all these places successively had the full effect of arousing the sentiment of love in the king's mind and gradually taking it to a climax.

On the lighter side, the able poet creates very interesting and humorous situations. The credulous Vidūṣaka is very happy that the queen is arranging another marriage for him. The queen's servant Damaruka is dressed as a bride, thus, a man is being married to a man. This creates a very humorous situation. Again in the 3rd Act the trick conceived to be played upon Mekhalā is also not less interesting. The Vidūṣaka plays the role of a great Brāhmaṇa proficient in Gandharva Veda and a warder of evil spirits. This lends an element of amusement to the scene. The motif of mock marriage seems to be very prominent in the mind of the poet, as it is repeated thrice in this play. Firstly a marriage between a man and a man in the case of the Vidūṣaka and Damaruka, a second time a woman with a woman in the case of Mrgankavali and Kāvalayamālā, and finally of Mrgāṅkavarman with the king. But, this time, it ultimately comes out to be a real marriage. One is likely to carry the impression that the writer failed to imagine new situations and indulged in the repetition of the same idea, which does no credit to a writer of Rājaśekhara's stature. But, on the whole, he
Development of the Plot

Merely conceiving an interesting plot of the story is not enough for a dramatist. Continuous development of the plot and action in the drama is the very life-breath of a play, in order to sustain the interest of the audience upto the end, Rājaśekhara has not achieved much success so far as the action in this play is concerned. Whereas the form of VB is that of a play, the contents are more poetic. It is full of lengthy descriptions which retard the progress of the story. Throughout the play, generally only two characters remain on the stage, the king and the Vidūṣaka. Very little is presented to the eyes and everything else to the ears and as such VB does not fulfill the requirement of a Dravya-kāvyā but it falls in the catagory of Śṛvyā-kāvyā.

In the first Act the king and the Vidūṣaka enter and remain engaged in a long conversation. The King describes at length the enchanting beauty he has witnessed and the anger displayed by the queen on finding the king attracted towards another woman. Then the king proceeds to describe the condition of his own love-affected heart. After that, he shifts to the description of the spring season and Malaya breeze. Even the Vidūṣaka adds to these descriptions unnecessarily by
his long speeches in Prakrt. Still other descriptions are that of the swing sport, the pleasure mount and the Art gallery. This in the whole Act there is no action, but only description and no other character except the hero and his friend is introduced.

In the Second Act, after the humorous scene of Vidusaka's marriage, again the hero and his friend alone are left on the stage and topics like his own condition and the play with a ball are dilated upon. Still more sickening are six Prakrt and five Sanskrit verses in lengthy Šārdūlavikārūḍita metre read from behind the curtain.

The introductory portion of the Third Act is again imbalanced. The activities of Vicākaśana and Sulakṣaṇa, on whom depends the execution of all plans prepared in the plot, are not shown on the stage but are merely conveyed through their dialogue as a Śucya-sāmagri (subject matter to be conveyed).

In the main act, also, are the description of darkness and the moonlight. Even the heroine is kept off the stage for the first two Acts and a half and she appears only after III. 15, and she speaks hardly six times in this Act and only once in the last Act.

In the Fourth Act, the Brāhmaṇī is made to utter a long passage which also has no dramatic value.
Another long description completely out of place, is that of a bathing scene in ten Prakt verses towards the close of the play, a fairly lengthy description of the battle is also added.

Thus, we find that the poet has in view the characteristic features of a Mahākāvyya in which such a style is desirable and can be appreciated by the reader. But in a play like the present one, consisting of four Acts only, such description have very limited scope.

In conclusion, we may say that Rajaśekhara has, no doubt, invented quite an interesting plot for his play but failed to present it properly in accordance with the requirements of a Drama. His play contains beautiful poetry but very little action.
MERITS OF VIDDAHASALABHAŅJIKA

Out of the 18 types of sub-plays (Uparupakas) Natikā has been the most popular form. The celebrated Bharata Muni defines a Natikā as follows:


To put it in brief. A Nātikā should have an imaginary story, a king as a hero, the winning of a maiden, Erotic as the predominant sentiment, numerous female characters and four Acts. The graceful dances, songs, music, amusement and amorous activities should be in abundance.

Putting VB to this test, we find that Rājaśekhara has tried to write this play strictly according to the rules laid down by Sage Bharata. Not only he, but all the famous dramatists have done the same.

Thus, a dramatist had not much of freedom in the choice in handling his subject-matter. In this way, the task of a dramatist was rendered most difficult because, following the firmly and strictly laid down traditions,
he had to face a hard competition. It is because of this limitation that in the matter of its theme VB appears to possess no originality. He chose the characters and the subject-matter according to the norms laid down in the works on dramaturgy.

But in order to understand fully and appreciate Rajasekhara, one has to judge him from a different angle. His own remarks in the Prologue to the Balaramayana needs our attention:

brūte yah kopi dosam mahad īti sumatir Bālaramayenesmin prastavvosau patiyan ihabhanitiguno vidvate va na veti yady asti svasti tubhyam bhava pathanarucih viddhi nah sat-prabandhan,
naivam ced dirgham āstām nātabatuvadane jāriyā Kāvyakantā.

Here, two words are worth nothing, as they provide a key to understand Rajasekhara. The first is bhanitiguno and the other bhava pathanarucih. The poet was conscious that people may find fault with his plays and asks them to test the novelty of his expressions and his choice of words, when there could not be two opinions on the fact that his works are treasuries of new expressions and phrases.

Through the use of the word pathana-rucih, he makes

1. Bal I. 12
it clear that his works are primarily meant for reading and not to be exacted on the stage. If this is not conceded to, it would take away most of their apparent defects, like lack of action or characterisation, abundance of long descriptions etc. The chief merit of VB is the delineation in a systematic way, ten stages of privation in love, as enumerated by the Dasarupaka, viz., longing, anxiety, recollection, enumeration of the merits of the beloved, distress, raging, insanity, fever, stupor and death. The enumeration of the last stage is forbidden in the plays.

Longing is beautifully described here:

tasyāntar nakhastuṣākṛta-sarasaṇḍra-prabhāṣīṣa angakāih,
dṛṣṭā kāpyabalā balāṅkratavatī sā manmatham manmatham(I.15)
A very rare simile given here is also noteworthy. "That damsel seen by me and having her limbs bright like the light of the autumnal moon pealed off with nails." By this the poet means to convey that even the autumnal moonlight cannot stand in comparison with the brilliance of her body, unless its upper layer is pealed off. Again, how the king's heart had been forcibly imprisoned by the maiden is described in the verse below:

ālikhitām Īva cetāh phalakṣeṣmin vikalpa-vartikāvā
bālām amara citraṅkṛitāṁ vilokya jātāmi tad vandī T.16

The king enumerates with gusto the physical
The moon, the gold, the lotus, the nectar, the arc of cupid, all are nothing in comparison with the face, the lustre, the eyes, the smile and the eyebrows, she possesses.' See the distress suffered by the king due to privation:

The king says that he is no match for the cupid to be attacked by him because he has a heart as delicate as the bud a *śīrṣa* flower. Therefore cupid should not attack him but be spared of his arrows.

The moonlight, otherwise so pleasing and cool for all, becomes like flames of fire for a person suffering from separation. There, the king requests the cakoras to drink completely the moonlight so that the
persons suffering privation could be saved from death.

not only are the various stages and states of a person in love described by the poet but various other subjects, as well.

on the reciprocity of love, the following verse has a striking similarity with one of the verses of Kalídása:

and, Kalídása says:

the following description of the powerful effect of the opposite sex on the mind of man is telling:
"We sing the praise of those fair-eyed damsels who with their very eyes bring cupid to life, who was burnt with the (fire) eye of Siva, for thus, these maidens are victorious over Lord Siva."

Another remarkable description is that of the youth with particular reference to the eyes. "Youth lends a special charm to every limb of the body. But the eyes attain a peculiar perfection that they can grasp the various feelings and intentions of the object seen, and they also reveal one's own state of mind to others'.

vidhatte sollekham katara[diha nāgam tarunimā, tathāpi prāgālbhyam kim api saturem locanavuge, yad ādatte dravyādakhilam api bhāvavatikaram, manovṛttir drastur mukharayati drayeṣaṃ prati janaṃ

IV. 22

The verses quoted above are by way of an illustration. There are many more which deserve the attention of the reader.

The conclude it may be said that applying modern principles of criticism evolved primarily by the West, in evaluating this play will not be justified. The author should be judged by the standards which prevailed when he lived. Probably he cared more for the thought-content and less for the outer form. The play is obviously written for those readers who possess some command over the language and understand the principles of Sanskrit dramaturgy. It
is certainly not meant for being enacted before the common illiterate or semi-literate masses. The fact that more than half the number of verses in the play have already been selected for being quoted in treatises on rhetoric and collected in anthologies by some of the most eminent connoisseurs of poetry, proves that the play was very popular among the intelligentsia.
OTHER WORKS OF RĀJASEKHARA

The works of Rājasekhara have been studied in great detail by scholars like V.S. Apte, Sten Konow, V.V. Mirashi, C.D. Dalal and Manomohan Ghosh. In recent years the Dr. Zambare’s thesis on Rajasekhara is a very welcome addition. As the scope of the present theses is limited to the edition of the text and the commentary, it will suffice to give here a brief account of the poet’s other works.

The poet makes mention of the number of his works in the Bālarāmāvya. (Cf. Vidyā nam sat prabandhan)² This means that he wrote six works in all. The conjecture of Dr. Zambare³ that six here refers to his six poems which were his juvenile productions, is wholly untenable. If what Zambare says is accepted, it will mean that while composing the Bāla Rāmāvya, he recommends the readers to read his six earlier compositions only which will exclude the Bālarāmāvya, being a later work. This argument is based on the assumption that since Bal. is his first work, he could refer to his later works here. It cannot be accepted that a person who wrote Kāvyāmīmāsa did not revise his

2. Bal., I. 12
work. Moreover, one would expect a poet to recommend to
the readers to his later works and not to the earlier one.
So, what appears probable, is that even if we accept that
he wrote the Bāla-rāmāyana in his early years, this
verse must have been added later while revising the play.

1. Karpūramaṇjari:

Judged on its quality and contents, the Karpūramaṇjari appears to be the poet's earliest composition. Since it is written in Prākṛt it is called a Sattaka whose definition, Rajasekhara himself gives in that work itself, verse 16.

Like the Natikā, a Sattaka also consists of four Acts which are however, named as Javanikās. A Sattaka is required to have Adbhuta (the Marvelous) as its predominant sentiment. This play was first staged in accordance with the wishes of his wife Avantisundari. The story describes how king Candapāla got the hand of Karpūramaṇjari, the daughter of the Lāta King. Candapāla's Chief Minister wants to make his master a paramount king and the easiest way to do so was to marry him to Karpūramaṇjari, whose husband was destined to achieve that position.

The King and the queen enter the palace garden and are happy on the advent of spring. In the main Act, princess Karpūramaṇjari is brought to the Candapāla's court in a bathing dress, by a master magician.
The king is greatly interested in the princess but the queen wants to keep her. In the second Act, the King is found to be restless and suffering from privation. The maid describes the suffering of the heroine. Vicakṣaṇā, the maid, and the Vidūsaka, arrange a swing for the lovers. This is followed by the description of that scene in eight verses. The lovers separate, the King's amorous fever increases.

Out of jealousy, the queen puts the heroine in prison. A secret passage is dug out to the room where she is kept captive and another meeting of the hero and the heroine is brought about. It is followed by a description of the full moon from behind the stage curtain.

In the last Act, the heroine is discovered to be a princess of Lātādesa and the queen is induced by the Magician, who is held in high esteem by the queen, to give her consent to the marriage of the King and the princess, as this would make the king and Emperor. It is significant to note that the Karpūrmanjari has served as the model for all the Sattakas written after Rājaśekhara.

2. Balarāmāyana

As the title itself indicates this is Nātaka based on the story of Rāmāyana. It is in 10 Acts and is, perhaps, the longest drama in Sanskrit. It contains 741 stanzas. Of the numerous plays in Sanskrit based on Ramayana, this is the only play in which complete story of the Ramayana has...
been covered. Sten Konow remarks about this play that "it is hard to see how so lengthy a play could well have been brought out upon the stage". But, as observed earlier, the poet makes it very clear that the play is meant for reading. Even in modern times, thousands of plays have been and are being written in different languages of the world. But all of them are not stageable and are written, primarily, for reading. The poet has made certain drastic departures from the original. The influence of Valmiki and Bhavabhuti's Mahāvīravārāha on the poet is very apparent and Rājaśekhara makes no secret of it. He rather boasts that in his previous births, he first appeared as Valmiki, then as Bharatam tena and, after that, as Bhavabhuti.

Sten Konow observes that "there are several passages of great lyrical beauty in it, and that the poet's mastery of several languages, is better shown in the Balaramayana than in any of his other plays".

3. Bālabhārata:

This play is alternately known as Pracandapāndava. At present, it is available to us only up to the end of Act II. The poet appears to have planned to write this play also on the lines of Balaramayana, and to dramatise the whole of the Mahābhārata. It seems probable that the poet completed this play and it was enacted before his patron Mahipala in its full length. Staging only the two acts could not satisfy the

5. Konow - Kar., p. 188
audience. The first act describes the svayamvara of Draupadi and the second takes the story up to the place where Yudhishthira loses everything in gambling. By giving this play a second name, the poet had wanted this play to be associated with his patrons who had also assumed several alternate names. It must have been written to celebrate the gaining of power by Mahipāla and the poet's own return to the Kanauj court after some years' stay at the court of the Tripuri Kings.

4. Kāvyamimansa

This is the last work written by Rājasekhara. It is a work on rhetoric in 18 Chapters and deals with various topics. The first chapter deals with the different Vidyas, the description of Kavya-Purusha and his relations with the two sages Valmiki and Vyasa and his marriage with Sāhitya Vidyā-Vadhu. The next Chapter tells us about the equipment necessary for a poet the rules to be observed by him and so on. It is followed by the detailed clarification of poets in eight groups. Next follow the definition of the Pada and the sentence: Ten kinds of sentence are enumerated. A very interesting chapter in Kāvyamimansa deals with the life a poet should lead. The author suggests that the kings should hold occasional tests for poets and those proving to be the best, should be honoured. The most striking chapter is 17th, which deals with the description of various continents,
oceans, mountains etc. Different regions with their boundaries falling within the limits of India are described in great detail, which reveals the remarkable acumen of the poet as a geographer, also. In addition to this the work deals also with various other interesting and subjects on different topics on Alahārasāstra. The author has quoted various authorities who preceded him, and gives his own opinion wherever necessary. On this account Kāvyamimāsa has, rightly, been stated by Dr. Kane to be a mine of information.
In Vasudeva, the author of the commentary edited here, Rajasekhara's work has found an expositor equal to the stature of its author. The commentary, true to its name Marga-darāṇī, is verily a model for the exposition of poetic and dramatic literature.

**Personal details**

Vasudeva was a Namputiri Brahman of Kerala and was a native of Mukkola (Sanskritised into Muktisthala, athali), a small town in North Malabar (Kerala), well known as a centre of learning during mediaeval times. Muktisthala is famous even to-day as a place of pilgrimage, the presiding deity of the place, viz., Goddess Bhagavati, being considered as one of the seven manifestations of Durga installed at seven holy places in Kerala.

At the beginning of the commentary, Vasudeva pays obeisance to the said Goddess, who is his isticvata:

\[
\text{muktriprādā padajusam mahisottamānga} \\
\text{vyaktasthitir nikhilakankaṣita-kalpavalli} \\
\text{bhaktasya me manasi khelatu sārvakālam} \\
\text{Muktisthali-nilayini paradevata mah} \ll
\]
"May my family deity, the Goddess having Her abode at Muktisthala, bestower of Salvation to the devotees who resort to Her abode, the divine creeper that fulfills all desires, who appears as seated on the head of the demoniac Mahiṣa, regale Herself, always, in my mind."

He bore the title Sahitya-madha, which is found in the colophons to his work: of Sri-karunakara sisyena Sahityamalla-aparakhyena Vāsudevena viracitayam." This is corroborated by a scribal verse found in one of the manuscripts of his work (over Ms A), which reads:

Sahityamalla-kavinā nipunam nibaddhā,
sauhitya-hetur adhikam vibudhottamānām,
vyākhya mano-lāsa bhava-vicāraguncūr,
vyākha vyālekhi kenacid āyan khalu Rāma-nāmnā.

It may be noted here that, besides giving the title of the poet, the above verse gives, in telling phrases, the qualities of the commentary which are all fully justified. It is, indeed, satisfying the expectations of scholars' (vibudhottamānām Sauhitya-hetur in that it is an able exposition of the pleasing sentiments and emotions' portrayed in the VB (Manojñā-rasa-bhava-vicāraguncūh). These qualities are discernible throughout the commentary.
Towards clarifying, reinforcing and illustrating his exposition of Rājaśekhara's text, Vasudeva quotes from a large number of source-books, mainly in poetry, drama and rhetoric. These include the Natyaśāstra of Bharata, Dāsarūpaka of Dhanañjaya and the Avaloka of Dhanika, Dhvanyāloka of Anandavardhana and the Locana of Abhinavagupta, Sarasvatikantabhārana of Bhoja, Kavyādarsa of Dandin, Kavyālekāra of Bhāma, Vākyapādīya of Bhattan, Manusmrti, Mānasollasa, Kāmasūtra, the works of Hala, Kalidāsa, Murāri, Bāna and Hārṣa, and the more important lexicons. These citations are a pointer to Vasudeva's close acquaintance with these texts and his competence to fulfil the task he had undertaken. But to himself, however, he is reticent about his abilities, as would appear from some of the introductory lines to his commentary, where he invokes the Goddess of Learning to forgive him his faults:

Avicāra-kṛtāṁ stet kāmyatāṁ sakalāṁ api,

Karunakara has been differently identified by scholars. One identification is with Karuṇākara Piśarati of the Anayattu family, whose members were hereditary teachers in the royal house hold of the Zamorins of Kozhikode (Calicut) in Kerala.
This Karunākara has written a detailed commentary called Kavicintāmani on the Uṛttaraṇākara of Kedārakhatra, which he wrote at the instance of Zamorin Manavikṛta (15th Cent. A.D.) famous as the patron of Eighteen Sanskrit poets who flourished in his court. A popular legend connects Karunakara with Uddanda Śastrin, one of the foremost of the said eighteen poets. While once Uddanda was worshipping at the shrine of Muktisthala, he composed extempore the first half of a verse to the rhythm of the drum that was being played at that time:

sambharita-bhurikram amba sūbbam angam,
sunbhātu cirantam idam tava mad-antah.

As the Śastri paused to compose the second half of the verse, the drummer, Karunākara, completed the verse as:

jambharpur-kumbhivara-kumbhayuga-dambha-
stambhi-kucakumbha-parirambhasara-sambhu

The astonished Uddanda turned round and asked who it was that completed the verse (ko yam Kavimallah?) and the drummer answered, "It's I, Karunakara, (devotee) of the Goddess" (vyam devyah Karunakarav). It is argued

2. Ulloor, Ibid., p. 53.
that the drummer in question was not a Pisarati
(a sub-caste of temple functionaries in Kerala,
whose duty it was to pluck flowers and prepare garlands
therewith for worship), but a Marar (another similar
sub-caste who were drummers in the temples). 3

The identification, as proposed above, of Karunakara
with the teacher of Mānāvīkara, the Zamorin (15th
Cent. A.D.), or with the temple functionary (whether
a Pisarati or a Marar) who was a contemporary of Uddanda
Śastrī, the protege of the above Mānāvīkara, would
place Vāsudeva, who is a pupil of Karunakara, in the
15th–16th centuries A.D.

Works of Vāsudeva

The Viddhaśālabhaṇjika-vyākhyā, edited here
is the only work which is definitely known to have been
written by Vāsudeva. Rājaśekhara's Karpūranaṇjari
has a commentary entitled Prakāṣika, by a Vāsudeva
who had been identified at some quarters4 with our
author. Some biographical details are available about
the author of Prakāṣika. At the outset of his work he

3. Vatakkumkur Rajaraja Varma - Kerala Saṃtya
Caritram: Careayum Puranavum: Pt. I (Trichur,

4. Vatakkunkur Rajaraja Varma, History of Kerala
Sanskrit Literature, Vol. (Trivandrum) M.E. 1113), p. 523
gives his parentage and *Istadevata*. Thus, he was the son of Prabhākara and Gomati and was a devotee of Lord Rama.

dasasyodyad āsvachidam Janakiṃ sam kulopasayamānasya
sastāṅgaphitam

Ganēṣam ca gandollased bhṛṅgasangam Harioccanga
sangāṃsod gangātarangam.

tataṃ Prabhākaram natva mātaram Gomatiṃ api
Karpūramañjāri-tikā Vāsudevaṇa tanyakte

At the close of the commentary of each Act of the drama, he adds an imposing colophon: iti Srimad-
vidvadvyndavandita-aravindasundara-padadvaya-kunḍaprātim
yasahprakara-praharakathoraṇikaranakaṇarpabhā-pratibha-
prabhākarakabhattatmaja-vāsudeva-virasita-karpuramaṇjāri-
prakāsā etc.

It is difficult to subscribe to this view for several reasons. The commentator of Karpūramañjāri
does not call himself Sāhityamalla, which, in tune with his grand eloquent style, he would not have omitted, if he had that title. He does not introduce himself as a pupil of Karamūkara as our author does, nor is a devotee of the Goddess of Muktisthala but is, on the other hand, a devotee of Lord Rama. The bombastic colophon of the Sattaka commentary is in dire contrast to the express humility and self-negation that characterise our
Vasudeva. The eloquent, illustrative style of Margadarsini on the VB as contrasted with the terse matter of fact method of exposition found in the Sattaka commentary also tend to indicate difference in the authorship of the two commentaries.

5. This view has been expressed stated by Ulloor, Ibid., p. 74 and endorsed by Vatakumkur (Kerala Sahitya Caritram: Caravum Puranavum, Vol. I. p.195) who had previously held the other view.