



**CHAPTER-I**

# HISTORICITY OF VIDYĀDHARA AND GENERAL OUTLINE OF EKĀVALĪ

## VIDYĀDHARA, THE POET

Vidyādhara,<sup>1</sup> a celebrated author on poetics displays his excellence in the field of *alanikāras*. He was the court poet of king Narasimha of Orissa. His poetic imagination and erudition made him important in his own place, as a result of which he is regarded as the torch bearer of literary criticism in Orissa. Besides this he was a poet of high order of his own time, for that almost all examples of *Ekāvalī* are of his own composition. His excellent poetic genius is understood by his exposition in *Ekāvalī*. The depth of meaning (*arthagauravam*) of Vidyādhara can easily be found out in the first verse of the first *unmeṣa* of *Ekāvalī* which has been used as *Maṅgalācaraṇam* or the *śloka*.<sup>2</sup> It is also a best example of *dhvani* of three sorts viz., matter, figure and sentiment.<sup>3</sup> It is the suggestion of a emotion (*bhāvadhvani*) of the poet that *rasa* has been exhibited in this *śloka* (*prāleyācala...*). Again his verse in the fourth *unmeṣa* is on the modes of *Meghadūtam*.<sup>4</sup> Like this, Vidyādhara displays his poetic genius throughout the *Ekāvalī*.

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1. Vidyādhara is known as 'Vaidyavidyādhara' in the colophone of *Kelirahasyam*, Ed., K.P. Trivedi, Intro, p. XVI.
  2. *Prāleyācala-kanyakākucataṭī patrāvalīśilpinaḥ, Ekāvalī*, Ed., P. Mishra, Orissa Sahitya Academy, 1983, I.1
  3. *Ekāvalī*, Ed. K.P. Trivedi, p. 345.
  4. *tvāmārūdhamaṁ madagaja... vīkṣya yuddhe Nṛsimhaḥ!*  
*Ekāvalī*, Ed. P. Mishra, *op.cit.*, IV.4.

## (I) HIS LIFE AND DATE

Vidyādhara's life is shrouded in mystery as his proper identification is yet to be found out. He has nowhere mentioned his place or time or anything, excepting Mahāmaheśvara as a title added to his name. He is completely silent about his parents or family and does not say anything anywhere in *Ekāvalī* about the date of composition of his work. In *Maṛigalācaraṇam* of his work he prays to Lord Śiva and in the colophone he calls himself the great devotee of Maheśvara. He was a staunch Śaiva, when Vaiṣṇavism was predominant in Orissa. He is well-known to the world of Sanskrit scholars for his work *Ekāvalī*.

All scholars, who have discussed the importance of his work are unanimous that its author Vidyādhara belongs to Orissa, as he has used some eulogistic verses for his patron Narasimha Deva, the king of Utkala in 314 verses composed by him as examples. But there is controversy regarding the identity of Narasimha as there were many rulers in Orissa in Gaṅga dynasty, bearing this name. As it is stated, each of the illustrative stanzas are all composed to glorify king Narasimha, the king of Kaliṅga or Utkala. It is therefore certain that the poet can eulogize a king in such magniloquent terms unless he was his patron.<sup>5</sup>

The question therefore turns upon the settlement of the age of king Narasimha. Mr. Robert Sevell, in his book, *Sketch of the Dynasties of Southern India*, Appendix VII, pp.64-69, eight kings bearing the name Narasimha are mentioned as follows :

SL.NO.	NAME	TIME
1.	Nṛsimha Deva	B.C. 421-306
2.	Narasimha keśarī	A.D. 1031-1026
3.	Lāngulīya Narasimha	A.D. 1237-1282

5. The Copper Plate Inscription of Narasimha Deva IV and Narasimha Deva II of Orissa published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Vol. LXIV, Part I, 1895 and Vol. LXV, Part I, 1896 are the latest source of information regarding king of Utkala.

*EĀ*, Trivedi, Intro. pp. XVII-XVIII.

4.	Keśarī Narasimha	A.D. 1982-1307
5.	Pratāpa Narasimha	A.D. 1307-1327
6.	Kapila Narasimha	A.D. 1329-1330
7.	Narasimha Deva	A.D. 1549-1550
8.	Narasimha Deva	A.D. 1628-1653

Calculating from the earliest of these inscriptions viz., that of Narasimha Deva II dates 1217 Śakas, which is mentioned the 17th year of his reign, and taking the periods of the reigns of kings, we get the following dates for the four Narasimhas mentioned in the inscriptions :

SL.NO.	NAME	TIME
1.	Narasimha Deva I	A.D. 1229-1262
2.	Narasimha Deva II	A.D. 1280-1314
3.	Narasimha Deva III	A.D. 1338-1362
4.	Narasimha Deva IV	A.D. 1388-1397

The period of reign has been assigned to these kings of Utkala, which we get from *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts of Orissa (DCSM)*, Ed. K.N. Mohapatra as follows :

SL.NO.	NAME	TIME
1.	Narasimha Deva I	A.D. 1238 - 1264
2.	Narasimha Deva II	A.D. 1278-1307
3.	Narasimha Deva III	A.D. 1327-1352
4.	Narasimha Deva IV	A.D. 1378-1407

It is slightly different than that of the periods given by K.P. Trivedi.

The question of Narasimha Deva IV (A.D. 1378-1407) does not arise as *Ekāvalī* has been criticised in *Rasārṇava Sudhākara* of Simha Bhūpāla, the date of which has been fixed by H.P. Sastri, Dr. S.K. De and Dr. V. Raghavan.<sup>6</sup>

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6. (a) H.P. Sastri, *DCSM*, Collection of ASB, Vol.VI, Preface, pp.CCXCIII - CCXCIV.  
 (b) S.N. Dasgupta & S.K. Dey, *A History of Sanskrit Literature*, University of Calcutta, 1975, p. 525.  
 (c) ABORI, Article of V. Raghavan, Vol. XVI, pp. 1-9.

On the strength of this evidence, Narasimha Deva III (A.D. 1327- 1352) also cannot be taken as the patron of Vidyādhara, as it was not at all possible for a work written in Orissa to gain circulation outside the state within three years (A.D. 1327- 1330). Therefore either Narasimha Deva I or Narasimha Deva II can be taken into consideration to become the patron of Vidyādhara.

According to P.V. Kane, *Ekāvalī* must have been composed in between A.D. 1285 - 1325.<sup>7</sup>

Mr. Trivedi collects all the data for arriving at the age in which Vidyādhara flourished. The *Taralā* is a model commentary of *Ekāvalī*. It is from the pen of the famous commentator of the *Mahākāvya*s, Mallinātha, who is taken to have flourished about the end of the fourteenth century.<sup>8</sup> According to him, Vidyādhara could not have been the protege of the last two Narasimhas mentioned by Mr. Robert Sevell, or Narasimha IV of inscriptions. Nor he has sung the glory of Kapila Nṛsimha, who rules over for one year. Thus there remain only three Narasimhas, Lāṅguliya Narasimha (1237-1282), Keśari Narasimha (1282-1307) and Prātapa Narasimha (1307-1327) of Mr. Sevell or the first three Narasimhas of inscriptions are to be considered.

Again in the first *unmeṣa* Vidyādhara has mentioned the name of the king Arjuna (1211-1216), who gave immense wealth to poet Harihara in appreciation of his literary work. This evidence can easily deny the acceptance of the first two Narasimhas of Mr. Sevell as the patron of Vidyādhara.

Taking into account all these evidences, Mr. Trivedi has put forth his conclusion before us that Vidyādhara must have flourished in the reign of the two remaining Narasimhas, Keśarī Narasimha (1282- 1307) or Prātāpa

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7. P.V. Kane, *History of Sanskrit Poetics*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1971, p.393.

8. (a) *EĀ*, Trivedi, p. XIII

(b) Bhandarkar's report on the search for Sanskrit Manuscripts, p. LXIX

Narasimha (1307-1327) of Mr. Sevell or Nrsimha II of inscriptions and that *Ekāvalī* was composed in the beginning of the fourteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

The reason of accepting Narasimha II as the patron of Vidyādhara by Prof. Trivedi and Dr. Bhandarkar is that he is described as Kavi priya and Kavi Kumuda Candra in the copper plate grants of Narasimha IV. But this identification cannot be accepted as we do not find these following epithets of Narasimha II in his four copper plate grants so far published.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. S.K.De has tried to fix up the period as follows : while Mallinātha at the end of the 14th century commented upon it, it can approximately be assigned to a period between the last quarter of the 13th century and the first quarter of the 14th century A.D.

S.N. Rajguru has tried to identify the patron of Vidyādhara with Narasimha III (1327-1352 A.D.) on the ground that his queen Kamalā has been eulogised in some verses of the 8th chapter quoted by him.<sup>11</sup> But the word 'Kamalā' denotes Lakṣmī, the goddess of wealth and does not specifically mean Kamalā, the queen of Narasimha III. So this identification is not tenable.

Dealing with all these evidences, I came to the conclusion with the opinion of K.N. Mohapatra. The latest source of information which we get from *DCSM* of K.N. Mohapatra regarding the fixation of date and patronage of Vidyādhara is given below:

Narasimha, the patron of Vidyādhara is described by his protege as *Hammiramānamardana*<sup>12</sup> (one who has crushed the pride of Hammira), who was probably Chauhan prince and began to reign in 1339 of Vikram

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9. *EĀ*, Trivedi, Intro., p. XIII.

10. K.N. Mohapatra, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts of Orissa*, Vol.II, Orissa Sahitya Academy, Bhubaneswar, 1960, p. LXVIII.

11. *ibid.*, p.LXVIII.

*OHRJ*, Vol. IV, pp. 89-98

12. *EĀ*, Trivedi, Intro, P.XXIII

Samvat i.e., 1283 A.D. This evidence resemblances Narasimha I who was reigning during the period 1238-1264 A.D.

Vidyādhara describes his patron Narasimha as incarnation of God Viṣṇu, tearing the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu to death.

The patron of Vidyādhara is described as a great hero in many verses of his work.

In an inscription in the Śikhareśvara temple Kapilāsa hill, Dhenkanal, Narasimha is described - *vasundharā samuddharaṇa... mahāvarāha*, etc.

Narasimha is described as a devotee of kātyāyanī in the 8th chapter of *Ekāvalī*. The same thing is also found to be written in the Gaṅgā copper plate grants, which describes Narasimha I as the son of Bhavānī. The inscription of Śikhareśvara temple also describes him as "*Jaganmūlakāraṇa Śrī Durgā Putra*."

There is also another word '*śilpajña*', which is found in a verse of 6th chapter for the patron of Vidyādhara as "*śilpajña san padmabhūḥ kimaparamī vāgmi sa no vākpatih*". The building of famous Konark temple (Sun temple) by Narasimha I fully exhibited him to be called a śilpajña by his court poet Vidyādhara.

The patron of Vidyādhara has been compared with Rāma, by his protege, *sadṛśamī bhāti Rāmeṇa Narasimha mahēśvara...* Narasimha is also described as a great patron of learning, a great builder etc.

All these evidences clearly show the resemblances with Narasimha I who is characterised by Vidyādhara throughout his work. Undoubtedly, it takes to the conclusion that Narasimha who was been eulogised in *Ekāvalī* by Vidyādhara can satisfactorily identified with Narasimha I, who flourished between 1238-1264 A.D.

So the date of Vidyādhara can easily be fixed up now. His period can be assigned between the last part of the 13th century and the first part of

the 14th century A.D. and was patronised by Narasimha I where he was his court poet.

## (II) WORKS OF VIDYĀDHARA

The *Ekāvalī* and *Kelīrahasya* are the two works ascribed to Vidyādhara in Dr. Aufrechts Catalogue Catalogorum.

*Ekāvalī* is a simple work on *Alamīkāra śāstra* dealing with all important topics connected with that *śāstra* and at the same time avoiding unnecessary long discussions. It is a work on poetics on the tune of Mammaṭa's *Kāvya Prakāśa* (*KP*). In this work, Narasimha I, the patron of Vidyādhara is being eulogised by his protege in 314 verses. Almost all the verses are his own composition. It is divided into eight *unmeṣas* or chapters.

The first chapter opens with an invocatory verse to Lord Śiva and discusses the question whether salutation should be one of the three forms to auspiciousness which according to Daṇḍin introduce a poetic work (*āśīrnamaskriyā vastunirdeśo vāpi tanmukham*), whether it is *sannipatyopakāraṅga* or *ārādupakāraṅga*, or it is *nityavidhi* or *naimittika vidhi* or *kāmya vidhi*.<sup>13</sup> Again it shows the purpose that poetry serves and Vidyādhara introduces the three types of *sāstras viz., prabhusammitam, mitrasammitam* and *kāntāsammitam*, from which he gives emphasis on *kāntāsammitam*.<sup>14</sup> In the first *unmeṣa*, the poet describes the purpose of poetry and the equipments of poetry on the lines of *KP*.

As a follower of ĀV he refutes the view of those, who do not accept *Dhvani* and finally establishes his own judgement that *Dhvani* is the 'soul' of poetry while word and meaning are its body.<sup>15</sup> Simultaneously, he refutes the theory of Vāmana, who holds *Rīti* as the 'soul' of poetry.

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13. *ibid.*, P.IX

14. *EĀ*, P. Mishra, I.1

15. *ibid.*, I.13

The second chapter deals with the three powers of words viz., *abhidhā*, *lakṣaṇā* and *vyañjanā* and the corresponding senses of words viz., *vācya*, *lakṣya* and *vyañgya*. Along with the two varieties of *lakṣaṇā jahatsvārthā* and *ajahatsvārthā*, a third variety *jahadajahat svārthā* is also accepted on the lines of the Vedantins which is not at all admitted by Mammaṭa.

The third chapter classifies *Dhvani* or excellent poetry, in which the suggested sense (*vyañgya*) excels the expressed sense with its divisions and subdivisions.

In the fourth chapter, the poet explains and illustrates the eight varieties of *guṇībhūtavyaṅgya*, the second kind of poetry as it is called in which the suggested sense is not more charming than the expressed sense. The eight folds of *guṇībhūtavyaṅgya* are *agūḍha*, *aparāṅga*, *vācyaśiddhāṅga*, *asphuṭa*, *vyañgya*, *sandhigūḍha prādhānya*, *tulya prādhānya*, *kāvyaākṣipta* and *asundara*. Though he explains these varieties closely following Mammaṭa, he does not enter like Mammaṭa into the discussions on such topics like *abhihitānvayavāda* and *anvitāvidhānavāda*, etc.

The fifth chapter treats the *guṇas* and classifies them. In this chapter, he clearly mentions distinctions between *guṇa* and *alamikāra*. He also tries to explain away the other *guṇas* as being the negations of *doṣas*, or being included under the accepted one. He is silent about the *arthaguṇas*. Like *guṇas*, he also accepts three *rītis*, viz., *Vaidarbhī*, *Gauḍī* and *Pāñcālī* and following Bhoja, feels that the other varieties like *Āvantikā*, *Lāṭī* and *Māgadhī* can be included under the above mentioned three varieties.<sup>16</sup>

In the sixth chapter, Vidyādhara explains about the principal *doṣas* *avimṛṣṭavidheyāmīsa*, *prakramabhaṅga*, *avācyaśavacana*, *vācyaśavacana* and *arthapaunaruktya*. He does not refer to the *doṣa* of *Rasa* at all. Mammaṭa refers 16 *pada-doṣas*, 13 *vācya doṣas*, 7 *padamīsa doṣas*, 21 *doṣas* which are associated with only *vācyaśas* (*vācyaśamātragata*) and 23 *doṣas* of

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16. *Ekavali*, Ed., P. Srirama Candrudu, Osmania University, Hyderabad, 1981, Intro, p.5

*artha*. He also mentions about 10 *doṣas* connected with *rasa*.<sup>17</sup> In the sixth chapter, like Mammaṭa, Vidyādhara also discusses incidentally about the appropriate use of *jatsabda* and *tatsabda* in a sentence.

In the seventh chapter, the poet explains five *śabdālamikāras* with their subdivisions following Mammaṭa in some cases (like *yamaka*).

In the last chapter he deals with *arthālamikāras*. In the classification and treatment of figures, Vidyādhara mostly follows Rājānaka Ruyyaka, the author of *Alamikāra Sarvasva* (AS.) whose classification is considered by the acclaimed authors on poetics to be logical, reasonable and perfect. Thus Vidyādhara, while composing *Ekāvalī*, gives more importance on the very lines of Mammaṭa, even he does not forget the *Dhvanikāra ĀV.* and Ruyyaka while giving importance on *dhvani* and *alamikāra* respectively.

This *Ekāvalī* has been commented by Kolācala Mallinātha, a genius commentator. The commentary *taralā* (central gem) of *Ekāvalī* is from the pen of the celebrated Mallinātha, the well-known commentator of the five *Mahākāvya*s and *Bhaṭṭikāvya*. It is a valuable commentary written in simple language, free from unnecessary discussions which are generally found in other commentators and so it is very much useful to the students.<sup>18</sup>

*Kelirahasya*, another work is also ascribed to Vidyādhara. It is a work on love. It opens with an invocatory stanza to God of Love.

*Kelirahasya* is divided into eighteen *parichhedas*. According to late Mr. Basu, it is believed to be a compendium of a larger work, *Ratirahasya*.<sup>19</sup> *Ratirahasya* is frequently quoted by Mallinātha, on the subject by Kokkoka. The following is the colophone of the work : *etat Śrī Vaidya-vidyādhara-kavi-viracite Kelirahasyam samāptam*. According to M.M. Chakravarty, Vidyādhara wrote *tīkā* on *Naiṣadha Caritam* known as *Sāhitya Vidyādhara*.<sup>20</sup>

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17. *ibid.*

18. *ibid.*, p.9

19. *Bengali Viśvakōṣa*, RAS, Bengal, Vol. XVIII, p. 570

20. *JASB*, 1903, p.49

Similar works of *Ekāvalī* are also available. *Pratāparudra Yaśobhūṣaṇa* by Vidyānātha and *Nañjarāja Yaśobhūṣaṇa* of Narasiṃha are similar works on poetics. The illustrative verses in the former are all composed in humour of Pratāparudra or Rudra, worshipper of Kakati God, who ruled at Ekaśilānagara.<sup>21</sup>

The latest work of this nature was brought to notice by Dr. R.G. Bhandarkar in his report on the search for Sanskrit manuscripts during the year 1887-88 and subsequent year up to 1890-91 in *Alanīkāramañjuṣā* by Purohita Devaśaṅkara Nāhānābhāi, who was a native of Rānera (Rānder near Surat) and lived at Urahapaṭṭana (probably Olpād in Surat district).<sup>22</sup>

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21. *EĀ*, Trivedi, Intro. p.XII

22. *ibid*, p. XIII