CHAPTER IV
CHAPTER IV
H.V. NAGARAJA RAO: HIS LIFE AND WORKS

IV.I PERSONAL LIFE

H.V. Nagaraja Rao was born on 10th September 1942 at Somenahalli, a village in Kolar District of Karnataka. Staryalakshamma and Venkaṭanārāyanāppā are his parents.1

IV.II EDUCATION

After the primary education in the village, he had his High School studies at Gudibande, the Taluka Headquarters. Being encouraged by his Sanskrit teacher N. V. Anantaramaiah, he moved to Mysore to pursue Sanskrit studies and joined the Maharaja’s Sanskrit College in 1958. He studied Vyākaraṇāṣṭra and Alankāraṣṭra. He has also passed the Vidvad Uttamā examination with distinction securing the first rank in both subjects. He went to the United States in 1971 and got the M.A. degree in Asian Languages from the University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.A. He also passed the M.A. (Sanskrit) examination of the University of Mysore, securing four gold medals.

IV.III ACHIEVEMENTS

Shekhavati Sanskrit University, Bhivani, Haryana honoured him with Maharṣi Vedavyāsa Praśasti in 1996 for the best Sanskrit Essay. The Seer of Svarnavally in Karnataka gave him the title Kāvyāṣṭra Vicakṣaṇa. In 2006, he received the Central Sahitya Akademi award for his Sanskrit translation of Sārthaḥ, a Kannada novel of Dr. S. L. Bhyarappa, published by Sudharma Prakashan. He has served as a Visiting Professor at the University of Chicago, University of Wisconsin and University of Jerusalem.

1 Dash, Achyutanand, Modern Sanskrit Writings in Karnataka of S. Ranganath, p. 69
As a student, he participated in the All India Sanskrit Education competitions held at Varanasi (1964) and Delhi (1966) obtaining gold medals in Sāhitya, Antyākṣari and Samasyāpūrti.

IV.IV WORKS

H. V. Nagaraja Rao is a versatile and talented author. He has written on rare and neglected themes and has contributed to new genres. He joined the Oriental Research Institute, Mysore as a Research Assistant and edited Sanskrit works. He worked as the Deputy Editor of the Ancient Indian Literature project of the Sahitya Akademi. In 1995, 1996 and 2001, he was invited by the University of Chicago to teach Sanskrit as a Visiting Professor. In 2003-04, he was invited by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem to be a Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies.

He has been writing Sanskrit commentaries on ancient works. He has written three plays - Vidulaputriyam, Samudhyatā and Dāmpatya kalalahāh. All of them have been published from Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mumbai in 1996. His other writings are - Varānvesanam and Mālavikā two short stories published in 1974 and 1975; Rṇavimuktiḥ - a novel, Śāradā-darśanam – a travelogue, Upākhyāna-yugmakam – prose and Siddha-gāngāyāḥ Śuddhacetanah a biography of Shivakumar Swamiji of Siddhaganga Mutt.2

Nagaraja Rao has edited Subhāṣitakaustubha of Veṅkaṭādhvari (1976) as well as Anyāpadeśaśatakam and Ānandasāgarastavah of Nilakaṇṭha Dīkṣita in 1973. His dissertation on Veda-Vedāṅga has been published from Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bangalore (2005). He has done valuable work as translator also. He has translated H. M. Nayak’s Kannada work ‘Namma Maneya Deepa’ under the title Asmākam Grhasya Dīpah in Sanskrit as well as the Kannada novel by well-known author S. L. Bhyarappa as Sārthah. He has also translated five short

2 Op. cit, p. 70
stories of Premchand, one of the greatest short story writers of our age, under the title *Vipañcikā*. He has also rendered several works from Sanskrit into Kannada, such as *Varadarājastavaḥ* of Appaya Dīkṣita, *Rāmāyaṇasārasamgraha* and *Raghuvinarastutih* of Nilakaṇṭha Dīkṣita, *Bhāvanālaharī* of Gauriśāṅkara Śvāmī, and *Śivapāḍādikeśāntastotram* of Śaṅkarācārya.3

*Varānveśanam* is a short story by Rao. It realistically portrays the plight of bride’s parents and their search for a bridegroom. Rao has rendered some of the Kannada proverbs in Sanskrit. *Vidulāputrīyam* is a play based on an episode from the *Udyogaparva* of the *Mahābhārata*. It is a very inspiring tale presenting the character of great lady Vidulā. *Samudyatā* is a social play based on the headlines of newspapers. The author raises several burning issues like dowry. The play presents contemporary society. *Dāmpatyakalahah* is also a social play depicting humorous situations of fight between husband and wife. In *Upākhyaṇayugmakam*, Rao presents two legends from the tradition concerning Urvaśī and Śakuntalā. It is a fine example of lucid prose. In *Śāradādarśanam*, Rao has presented an account of his visit to Sringeri.4 His important translation work includes Mummadi Krishnaraja Wosdyar’s *Shrītattva Nidhi* into English.

*Sārthah* is translated effectively in a lucid language with effective expressions, capable of capturing the minds of readers. The translator has matched the analytic intellect of the original author, in translating this work. The book is doubtlessly a rewarding addition to Indian fiction in Sanskrit translation.

Presently he is the Honorary Editor of *Susdharma* - the Sanskrit Daily (News Paper in India) publishing from Mysore. Apart from this, he has published many books under the Sudharma Prakashan and they are:

1. *Bhallataśatakam*
2. *Ānandasāgara-Stavah*

---
3 Ibid
4 Op. cit, pp 70-71
3. Varadarāja-Stavaḥ
4. Anyapadeśaśatakam (Anyopadeśaśatakam)
5. Asmākam Grhasya Dipah
6. Subhāṣitakaustubha
7. Rūpaka Catusṭayī (Four Sanskrit Dramas)
8. Haribhaṭṭana Subhāṣita (Kannada translation)
9. Daśāvatārarastotra (Translation - Sanskrit & Kannada)
10. Vipaṇcikā
11. Sūkṭi-Dviṣati (with Kannada Translation) and many more
12. Kathālaharī
d\14. Vicāralaharī

In the introduction of Kathālaharī, S. Ranganath writes about Dr. H. V. Nagaraja Rao as:

नागराजराव्यास के अनुसार हृदयाणि प्रतिपादिता | कविताओं में संगीतक वायुक्ति तथा वायुक्ति स्थानं तार्किकता संगीतक संस्करणं कथाप्रतिकार

Here, we can see the modern and readable style, even the beginners can understand easily.

कथाप्रतिकार | अनुक्रमणिक | अनुवादरूपण | सांस्कृतिक | तत्त्वकला | विचित्र भूतिकिय कथाप्रतिकार | भूमिका | वैदिकता | सांस्कृतिक | अनुवादक | अनुप्रार्थिता | कथाप्रतिकार | भाषायन | अनुवादरूपण | सांस्कृतिक | अनुवादक | अनुप्रार्थिता | कथाप्रतिकार

यदि भारत, अनुप्रार्थिता तरह संस्करण रूप से इच्छामय इतिहास नया उत्कृष्ट

121
Even in the following quotation of विचारलहरी also, we can see the language and style of the writer as follows:

अत्र कस्यचन राजा सुलितिरिम्। रिपुद्रोजनस्य गुदितेन राज शत्रूणः नामाब्योशान् कृतवान्
इति तस्य प्रामाणितशयो मुख्यो वाक्यः रिपुष्क्यः स्वच्छे पति दृष्ट्वा तत्र ते न ह भाषिता प्रेणा
tma, आळिंगनी। स्वप्नान्ते तत्सर्वम् मिथ्येति झाला स्वदन्ति इति वर्णनात् कहर्णसस्य
अभिव्यक्तिः। शब कहिणससा कविगतायथा राजविषयः राजेन्द्राम्। टपरितोष्याय उपालब्धः।
अत्माद्र रसे भार्तो अटरतम् अरुष्टे इति रसवदल्काराः। टवाह आन्दर्ष्यस्मृत्य फृष्टम् कहर्णसस्य
शुद्धस्वायमावात् स्पष्टेन रसवदलकारो भवति इति प्रताम् उद्भावाय ततसमाधानं प्रदर्शयति
अभिनवगुप्तौ लोचायते। ॥

In our History and Purāṇas, many Āruṇis, Naciketās, Dhruvas etc. showed there incredible strength. Aṣṭāvakra is also one of them. He defeated his father on the strength of knowledge. He was very intelligent. In the Vanaparva of Mahābhārata there is the story of Aṣṭāvakra.

Nagaraja Rao is very famous in the field of Modern Sanskrit Literature. His style is neither so easy nor so tough. Rnavimuktih was published in Sanskrit daily Sudharmā serially and became very famous. It was in great demand by a large group of readers to publish it in the book form. So, it got published by Sanskrit Bharati, Bangalore. Its language is lucid, simple and easily readable. We can see the easy and readable style in the following paragraph.

रूढ़ी दिक्ष्य अरुणकिरणः शोभमाना सूर्यस्य आगमनं सूर्यस्य स्म। तावत्त्वेनस्मृत्तम् अस्वकपारणः
आयूः नित्यानित्यं लिथितं जग्नते तेषा किरणानां स्वर्णविष्णुविनिष्ठत् सर्वत्रस्वर्गमिव भवति स्म।

5 Rao, Nagaraja, Kathālohaṇi, p. 20
6 Rao, Nagaraja, Vicāralaharī, p. 64
Thus, Dr. Nagaraja Rao has made valuable contribution to the field of Modern Sanskrit Literature. He is a distinguished scholar, writer and poet.

7 Rao, Nagaraja, *Rnavimuklih*, p. 1