CHAPTER - III

SUMMARIES OF THE TEXTS

The present chapter contains the summary of the compositions written by the poetesses belonging to the Medieval and modern period.

Madhurāvijayam:

The Mahākāvyya Madhurāvijayam consists of nine cantos composed by poetess Gaṅgādevī. The first canto is named “Rājadampatyosukhānubhūtī” by the commentator, i.e. Experience of happiness on the part of the Royal couple king Bukka and queen Devāyī. The name of the first Canto is not given by the poetess Gaṅgādevī but is given by the commentator P. S. Shastry.

The Canto begins with the invocatory verses addressed to God Gāneśa, Goddess Pārvatī, Lord Śiva and Goddess Sarasvatī.

In verses 4 to 16, poetess Gaṅgādevī has shown her respect to earlier celebrated poets viz. Kalidāsa, Bāna, Bhāravi, Daṇḍin, Bhavabhūti, Karṇāmṛtakavi, Tikkaya, Agastya, Gaṅgādhara and Viśvanātha. Thus she has envisaged her acquaintance and in-depth study of the well-known allied texts like Raghuvanśa, Kāvyādāra, Kirātārjunīyam, Saugandhikāharaṇam etc.

In verses 18 to 24, the poetess expresses her views regarding a poetic composition:

गुर्ण जिहाय काम्येवृं दुःखों दोषें गवेषते ।
वनेशु त्यक्तमाकुद् काको निम्भमेश्वते ॥मधुराविजयम्-१.२०॥

In other verses of the first canto she has given information regarding the ancestors of King Kampana. We also find description of various aspects of the nature like sunset, moonrise, seasons, lakes, reservoirs of water etc.
At the end of every canto (except the first one), we find two colophons, one by the poetess and another by the commentator, viz.

(i) हृदि श्री गंगादेवी विरचिते मधुराविजयनाथि वीरकम्पारायणि मधुराविजयसाधनेन नाम नवमसर्गः।

(ii) हृदि श्री परमेक्षरीकृपा समुपलयसाहस्वाहितीवैदुष्य साहित्यालक्ष्णर विद्वानकवीशान पेतुकुचिच सुब्रह्मण्यशाखिणिः “कल्याणकलापिष्ठी” “महापुरुषहराराजस्वाधेशानमहाविद्वारिकविः” श्री चिदम्बरशाखिणिः भागिनेयेन विरचितेऽया भावप्रकाशकलापसाख्येयाय समालङ्कृतायां श्रीगंगादेवीः कृती मधुराविजये महाकाशे मधुराविजयप्रशंसा नाम नवमसर्गः।

The second canto contains 42 verses which describe the beauty of King Bukka’s wife Queen Devayi, bearing the signs of pregnancy. Poetess has also referred to religious rites like Pumsavanam, Namakaraṇa and Caulakarma of prince Kampana.

Queen Devayi gives birth to three sons namely Kampana, Kampa and Saṅgama, who resemble the three eyes of Lord Śiva (उम्बक). According to the poetess the first prince is named Kampana because he made his enemies to tremble with fear at the very mention of his name. This canto is therefore named Kumārajanam by poetess Gaṅgādevī and Kumārottpatti-varṇana by the commentator P. S. Shastry.

Third canto contains 47 verses which depict the early military training given to prince Kampana by his father King Bukka and his marriage with Gaṅgādevī, belonging to the Kākatiya dynasty of Andhra Pradesh.

It is stated that his father Bukka guides him about the evil vices like indulgence in women, gambling, hunting and drinking liquor and he also advises him about the duties of the royal prince. Finally poetess Gaṅgādevī refers to king Kampana’s establishment of his own empire at Kanchi.

Thus, this canto is rightly named Jaitrayātrādesa by the poetess and Kāncī pura-Madhurāvijaya Sādhana by the commentator.
The fourth canto contains 83 verses describing the royal preparations of the march against the King Śambuvarāya, ruling over Kanchi. King Kamparāya is accompanied by the Cola, Keral and Pandya kings. He crosses the country of Karnat and in a fierce fight defeats and kills Śambuvarāya and happily rules over Kanchi. The name given by the poetess to this canto is Kāncīpuravijayapraṣāṁsā and it is named as Kāncīpuravijayavarṇana by the commentator.

There are 76 verses in canto five, which highlights the great city Kanchi, where King Kampana establishes his kingdom and properly looks after his subjects. There he is greeted by various kings ruling over different regions like Magadh, Malva, Sevan, Simhal, Dramil, Keral and Gauda. The name of this Canto is Kamparāya-Rājyaparipālanartupabhoga-varṇana and Rājyaparipālanartubhoga-varṇana by the commentator.

The sixth canto consisting of 69 verses, commences with the description of the water sports of king Kampana and his royal recreations. Thus it is rightly named Vanavihārajalakriḍā-varṇana by the poetess and Jalakriḍāvarṇanavihārapraṣāṁsā by the commentator P. S. Shastry. (Note: verses 14-56 are missing in the text).

The seventh canto comprises of 52 verses containing a dialogue between king Kampana and his wife Gaṅgādevī. There is a beautiful description of sunset and moonrise and therefore it is rightly named Candrodayakīrtana by the poetess and Candrodaya-varṇana by the commentator P. S. Shastry.

There are 36 verses in the eighth canto in which the devastated condition of the city Madhura is narrated by the Madhurādhidevatā (deity of Madhura) who urges king Kampana to destroy the invaders by presenting him a divine sword. Hence it is appropriately named Madhurādhidevatā-divyāstra-pradāna by the poetess and Divyāstra-pradāna by the commentator.
The ninth canto comprises of 42 verses in which the poetess presents a graphic description of the warfare between the *Yavana* ruler Jalāluddin Hasan Shah and the hero of the *Mahākavya* King Kampana in which the former is defeated and killed by King Kampana. This last canto is named *Madhurāvijayasādhana* by the poetess and *Madhurāvijayapraṣāṁśā* by the commentator.

Thus, the *Mahākavya Madhurāvijayam* comprises of nine cantos and 522 verses.

*Raghunātha-Abhyudaya*:

*Raghunātha-Abhyudaya* written by poetess Rāmabhadrāmbā is a *Mahākavya* containing twelve cantos which do not bear any name. There are in all 75 verses in the first canto which begins with a prayer to various Gods like Lord Śiva and Pārvatī, God Gāṇeśa and Goddess Sarasvatī and also gives a detailed description of the Cola region and depicts the natural beauty of trees, flowers, animals and the river Kāverī and Tāmrarāṇī which flows in the city of Tanjore.

The Second canto comprises of 60 verses delineating Tanjore, the capital city of the Cola and its prosperity.

In the Third canto there are 51 verses portraying the magnificent personality of king Raghunātha endowed with different virtues like valour, generosity and compassion.

The Fourth canto which contains 71 verses furnishes the details about the daily routine of the king such as reciting the morning prayers, uttering the mantras, paying homage to the Sun God, worshipping God Rāma and reading the *Rāmāyāna*.

The Fifth canto comprises of 58 verses depicting the physical beauty of the king *Raghunātha*, and the description of his court which was attended
by the contemporary rulers of regions like Keral, Anga, Magadh, Malava, Kaling, Gauda, Arrata and Nepal alias Jaffna.

The Sixth canto contains 59 verses describing the ancestors of king Raghunātha beginning from his great grand father Timma, who ruled in the second half of fourteenth century, Cinna Cevva (1549 to 1572 A.D.), king Acyutarāya (1572 to 1614 AD). It also depicts the penance observed by king Acyutarāya and his wife Mūrtymbā.

There are 79 verses in the Seventh canto beginning with a description of the physical beauty of the young prince Raghunātha. In about 33 verses poetess Rāmabhadrāmbā has depicted his beautiful big eyes, his teeth, his neck, his broad chest, his waist and his thigh.

The Eighth canto comprises of 102 verses describing the help offered by king Raghunātha, to the three rulers viz. Veṅkaṭadevarāya of Karnat, king of Nepal and Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka of Tundir.

The Ninth canto contains 71 verses in which king Raghunātha is described by the poetess as crossing the sea, defeating the Paraṅgis (Portuguese) and restoring the kingdom to the king of Nepal presently known as Jaffna in Srilanka.

The Tenth canto containing 73 versēs depict king Raghunātha vanquishing the kings of Pandya and Tundir. Finally, it is said by the poetess that King Raghunātha defeating Kṛṣṇappa Nāyaka, the ruler of the Tuṇḍira region returns to his country Tanjore along with his army.

Eleventh canto contains 109 verses which depict the learned ladies of the Tanjore city conversant with a number of languages. These ladies were skilled in the performing arts like music and dance for which they were honoured by the emperor Raghunātha.

The Twelfth and the last canto contains 89 verses describing the women of Tanjore conversant with performing arts like Karnatak Music and dance. They were efficient in dance and were knower of Tāla like Mārga
Tāla, Harīkṛma Tāla and Jaya Maṅgala. Thus art and literature flourished in his kingdom.

The Mahākāvya Raghunātha-Abhyudaya comprises of twelve cantos and 897 verses, depicting an interesting profile of king Raghunātha endowed with multifaceted personality.

**Vaidyanātha-prāsāda-prāṣasti:**

Vaidyanātha-prāsāda-prāṣasti is a Khaṇḍakāvya written by poetess Devakumārikā containing five chapters called Prakaraṇa.

The first chapter containing 48 verses enumerates the powerful kings like Bāppā Rāvala, Bhīmasimha, Kṣetrasimha, Kuṁbhakarna, Amarasiṁha, Jagatasiṁha, Saṅgrāmasimha-II and their achievements in life. The poetess gives the whole family lineage as under:

1) Bāppā Rāvala (c. 781-810 AD)
2) Rāhappa Rāṇa (1201 AD)
3) Narapāla (1300 AD)
4) Dinakara (1300 AD)
5) Yaśaḥkarṇa (1300 AD)
6) Nāgapāla (1300 AD)
7) Pūrṇapāla (1300 AD)
8) Prthavimalla (1300 AD)
9) Bhīmasimha (died 1303 AD)
10) Jayasiṁha (c. 1300 AD)
11) Lakṣmaṇasiṁha (1314 AD)
12) Arisimha (c. 1314 AD)
13) Hammīra (1327-1365 A.D.)
14) Kṣetrasimha (1365-1382 A.D.)
15) Lakṣā (1382-1397 OR 1422 A.D.)
16) Mokala (1397 OR 1422 AD)
17) Kuñimbhakarṇa (1433-1468 AD)
18) Rāyamalla (1474-1509 AD)
19) Saṅgrāmasimha I (1509-1530 AD)
20) Udayasiṁha II (1537 OR 1541-1575 AD)
21) Pratāpasiṁha (1571-1597 AD)
22) Amarasiṁha (1597-1620 AD)
23) Karṇasiṁha (1621-1628 AD)
24) Jagatasiṁha (1628-1654 AD)
25) Rājasimha (1654-1681 AD)
26) Jayasiṁha (1681-1699 AD)
27) Amarasiṁha II - Devakumārikā (1699-1712 AD)
28) Saṅgrāmasimha II (1711-1734 AD)

She has beautifully depicted in a poetical manner, the activities of the Rāpās (kings) of Mewar.

1) Dinakara : Since Dinakara possessed the lustre like that of the Sun and so was called Dinakara :

\[
\text{दिनकरस्तु ततोःप्रभवत् सुलो दिनकर दुमेति भादुरपलतः।} \\
\text{अवनिमण्डलभूपतिमण्डलोपुरुरालिविराजितपत्तजः॥३६॥} \\
\]

2) Yaśakarṇa : So called because he attained fame of the Rāpā, which was spread far and wide :

\[
\text{वशकर्ण इत्याभवतेऽर्यसैवचाविसमुर्ज्वलां पुरुषम॥३७॥} \\
\]

3) Pūrṇapāla : The name itself signifies that he governed his kingdom for the complete happiness of people :

\[
\text{ततोःप्रभवत् पूर्णमनोर्त्थवर्य कपालानाहः किल पूर्णपालः।} \\
\text{पूर्ण सुखेः पालयतीतिविश्व तत्पूर्णपालत्त्वमधायं तेन॥३८॥} \\
\]

4) Hammīra : As he was lustrous like Śiva who acquired Gaṅgā and thus
sanctified thousands of people:

तत्तोरिसिंहकाठिक्यं हमीरः समिद्द्वेजा इव सम्पूर्णम्।
शिरसुभलं स्वरूपूर्णसुप्रभावप्रविष्टिस्वरुपिनायः।०००॥

5) Rayamalla: Rayamalla was a great warrior. No malla or wrestler could defeat him:

यं रायमलं प्रति मल्लों धरातलेऽवस्तिनुं न बलवं कथितं।
०००॥

6) Pratapasimha: He defeated Mughal Emperor Akbar by his bravery and was a great warrior, who fought the famous battle of Haldighati.

प्रतापसिंहः बलवं तद्भवत धनुःधरी धर्मदर्शी धर्मयाम।
स्वेच्छाधिष्ठानं क्ष्मुरुणलेण मुकं धर्माध्यायं शरणं जगाम।
०००॥

Udayasimha, son of Saṅgrāmasimha, built the beautiful city of Udaipur.

The second chapter containing 23 verses describe the coronation ceremony of prince Saṅgrāmasimha, the son of Rāpā Amarasimha and queen Devakumārikā. Sukharāma, the old priest, took a leading part and made all the preparations for the proper performance of the ceremony.

After the performance of the coronation ceremony king Saṅgrāmasimha was given the bath with holy waters from the well known rivers like Gangā etc. and then he mounted on the elephant and moved around the city of Chittor. Soon after his accession to the throne there was a fight with the Muslim ruler Dalelkhan in which the Rāpā was victorious. King Saṅgrāmasimha was helped by Vihārīdāsa, his chief minister who was highly learned, very pious and extremely devoted to the good of the king.

In the third chapter there are 15 verses describing Rāpā Saṅgrāmasimha’s donations to learned priests and scholars like Dinakara (1724-25 A.D.) of Benares, Sukhānanda – the logician, Puṇḍarīka as well as Devarāma – well versed in Vedic Rituals.

The fourth chapter consisting of 29 verses describes the family of Devakumārikā:
In this chapter we get some personal information of Devakumarika herself who married Rana Amarasimha of Mewar and is the mother of Rana Sañgrámasimha. After the death of Rana Amarasimha and the accession of Sañgráma to the throne the queen mother made up her mind to dedicate her life to the cause of religion and performed three Tulādānas. Then she renovated the old Śiva temple and also arranged to dig a well, for the Abhiṣeka (consecrating by sprinkling water) of God Śiva.

The fifth and the last chapter contains 27 verses which describe the opening ceremony of the holy temple of Vaidyanātha built by Queen Devakumārikā. At that auspicious occasion kings of Kota as well as Dungarpur (Rajasthan) and celebrated priests took an active leading part. On this particular occasion Devakumārikā, the queen mother, was immensely helped by Minister Harajī and Udā, son of Premā, her own maid. Priest Sukharāma together with other renowned priests performed all the religious rites in connection with the inauguration of the temple. The canto concludes with an octet (अष्टक) glorifying the supremacy of God Śiva.
Santanagopāla Kāvyā:

Santanagopāla Kāvyā, a Khandakāvyā, contains three Cantos (सर्गः) and is composed by poetess Lakṣmī Rājī.

In the first canto which contains 43 verses poetess portrays the pathetic picture of pious Brahmin, who loses his eight children and approaches Lord Kṛṣṇa at Dwārakā. When his ninth son too died, he again goes to Dwārakā and on his return meets Arjuna who promises him to get back his tenth child.

As depicted by the poetess, Arjuna makes all his preparations to save the tenth child from the clutches of death, but he fails to do so. Being disappointed and abused by the Brahmin, he decides to put his life to an end, when Lord Kṛṣṇa comes to his rescue and promises him to help in getting back his lost children.

In the second canto containing 37 verses the poetess says that God Kṛṣṇa along with Arjuna approaches Viṣṇu for help. Lord Viṣṇu on hearing their difficulty assures them that the poor Brahmin would get back his lost children.

In the third canto, consisting of 50 verses, poetess depicts the return of God Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna from Viṣṇuloka. Brahmin is pleased to get his children back and with a glorification to Lord Viṣṇu describing his Avatāras the last canto comes to an end.

Thus the Khandakāvyā Santanagopāla Kāvyā contains three cantos and 130 verses.

I hereby present the summary of the compositions of some of the modern poetesses taken for study.

Pandita Kshama Rao:

Pandita Kshama Rao has composed Śankarajīvanākhyānam, Mirālahari, Tukārāmacaritam, Rāmadāsacaritam and Jñāneśvaracaritam, short stories
like *Kathāpancakam*, *Gramajyoti* and *Kathāmuktāvali* and the other compositions namely *Satyāgrahagītā*, *Uttarasatyāgrahagītā*, *Svarājyavijaya* which describe the freedom struggle of the Motherland – India.

*Sānkarājīvanākhyānam* is a *Mahākavya* containing 70 *Ullāsas*, in which poetess has described the great personality of her father Shankar Pandurang Pandit.

*Mīrālahari* is a *KhandaKavya* having *Pūrvakhanda* and *Uttarakhaṇḍa* depicting the life sketch of the great saint poetess Mīrābāī.

In the *Mahākavyas* *Tukārāmacaritam*, *Rāmadāsacaritam* and *Jñānēsvaracaritam*, poetess throws light on the life of great saints Tukārāma, Rāmadāsa and Jñānēsvara of Maharashtra.

Her *Kathāpancakam* is a collection of five stories. *Gramajyoti* contains three short stories and *Kathāmuktāvali* contains 15 short stories.

Her *Satyāgrahagītā* and *Uttarasatyāgarhagītā*, depict the events and episodes that took place during the freedom struggle undertaken by Mahatma Gandhi.

**Vanmala Bhavalkar**:

Poetess Vanmala Bhavalkar has written two short ballets namely *Rāmavanagamanam* and *Pārvatīparameśvarīyam*, which contain three scenes depicting God Rāma's exile to the forest and the penance performed by Pārvatī to obtain Parameśvara as her husband. *Pārvatī-parameśvarīyam* is based on *Kumārasambhavam* of Kālidāsa.

**Nalini Shukla**:

Poetess Nalini Shukla has written a *Stotra Kāvyā* named *Bhāvānjaliḥ*, which contains 21 *stotras* addressed to the deities like God Gaṇeṣa, God Kṛṣṇa, Goddess Sarasvatī etc.
Mithilesh Kumari Mishra:
Poetess Mithilesh Kumari Mishra has described in 100 verses the great personality of sage Vyāsa in her composition *Vyāsāṣatakam*.

Pushpa Trivedi:
*Agnisikhā* is a collection of 48 compositions by poetess Pushpa Trivedi, in which she describes the lovelorn condition of a lady separated from her husband.

Uma Deshpande:
In anthological work called *Arcanam*, Poetess Uma Deshpande in 43 compositions highlight different topics like significance of Sanskrit language, contribution of celebrated personalities and has introduced *Haiku* and *Garba* (मण्डलनृत्यगीत) prevalent in the state of Gujarat.

Pravesh Saxena:
Poetess Pravesh Saxena in *Anubhūti* containing 56 poems (some of which are translated poems), depict different topics related to nature, the contemporary society and the Indian Philosophy.

Conclusion:
Right from the Vedic age, the female writers have contributed to different genres of poetic literature in particular and Indology in general.

On the basis of the summaries of the composition of medieval and modern poetesses we find that the thematic beauty is continuously found in the texts of these poetesses. We find some salient features of the literary contribution made by the poetesses since the Vedic age. The *Ṛṣikās* during the Vedic period mainly invokes the deities like Agni, Indra, Āśvins, through their hymns, which highlight the social and family life during the Vedic period.
But the poetesses belonging to the medieval era have mainly focused on the description of the contemporary rulers and their prominent achievements. The ladies like Gaṅgādevī, Viśvāsadevī, Tirumālāmbā, Rāmabhadrāmbā, Devakumārikā and Lakṣmī Rājñī have contributed to several branches of Indology like Indian History, Philosophy, Mythology, Morality, Ethics etc. These poetesses have employed skilfully in their text a number of Alankāras, Rasas as well as metres. Their compositions reveal an attempt to imitate the celebrated poets like Kālidāsa, Māgha, Bāṇabhatta, Daṇḍin, Bhavabhūti etc. They have however, furnished a great deal of historical information through their poetry. But the modern poetesses have generally restricted themselves to the small compositions.

Except Kshamadevi Rao, all the poetesses have composed Khaṇḍa-kāvyā, Śatakāvyā, Stotrakāvyā or Muktaka containing a few verses. It can be surmised that these poetesses might not be endowed with the essential traits of qualities required to become a poet (Kavi), i.e. Vyutpatti, Abhyāsa and Pratibhā.

Secondly, they might not have absolute control over Sanskrit language, its grammar and the poetic nuances required for composing a Mahākāvyā.

Thirdly, these poetesses might have been influenced by the regional literature (Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Telugu, Kannada), which mainly comprises of short poetry, short stories and concise articles.

On the whole, it can be said that along with the poets the poetesses have also laid the torch of knowledge (Jñāna-pradīpa) to different corners of the motherland. They have attempted to continue the glorious tradition of writing charming poetry, commenced with the Vedic Rṣis and Rṣikās.