CHAPTER II

THE AUTHOR AND THE MANUSCRIPT

Vasudeva the author

The author of the poem is one Vasudeva of Sreedharamangala as mentioned in the colophon- ‘श्रीधरमङ्गललयभव वासुदेवाहवय: कृष्णार्जुनीयं व्यधात्’। The work by this author reveals, quite admirably, that he was an erudite scholar wellversed in the sastras, epics, puranas and other forms of Sanskrit literature.

It is, however, sad to note that there is no clear or any authoritative account available on the whereabouts of the author ie, the place where he lived or any specific informations connected with the location of his literary persuits.

While the story of the poem is connected with the lives of Pandava-s under the blessings of Lord Krsna, the author’s description of ‘Santanagopala’ the presiding diety of the Sripurnatrayisa temple in Tripunitura in the 9th and 10th Cantos of his works, adds credence to the belief that he lived somewhere close to this temple. According to the tradition, Arjuna brought the idol of Lord Purnatrayisa from Vaikuntha and installed it in the Tripunitura temple.
The poet brings out the glory of his favourite deity, ‘Santanagopala murti’ by narrating the story of Santanagopala.

His deep devotion to Lord Krsna is well brought out as the very title “Krsnarjuniya” implies

Again at the close of this poem, he offers his salutations “Purnatrayisaya namah”

Considering all these factors it is quite reasonable and appropriate to believe thus the author lived in close proximity to the Sree Purnatrayisa Temple in Tripunitura or other nearby places.

MANUSCRIPT MATERIAL OF KRSNARJUNIYA

A) This manuscript contains the first nine cantos of Krsnarjuniya. It contains 137 leaves, which are in good condition. The script used is Malayalam and the style of writing is uniform. In certain places, the letters of the manuscript are not very legible and hence cause much difficulty in understanding the verses used by the poet.
A-1) This manuscript (No. 285) contains Seven Leaves. The script used is Malayalam. The style of writing is uniform just like the former one. The letters of this manuscript are also not legible in some places.

A-2) This manuscript (No.913) contains the last portion of the 10th canto. It contains 14 leaves and the script used is Malayalam. Here the arrangements of the verses are very confusing. The verses of the manuscript are not given in their serial order. The letters are also not legible in some places.

B) This is a paper manuscript No. 11534 available in the Oriental Manuscript Library, Chennai. It is written in the Devanagari script. The style of writing is uniform. It contains only the first nine cantos of Krsnarjuniya. The letters are not legible in this case also.

METHODS ADOPTED

Krsnarjuniya is a beautiful poem presented in 10 cantos. The 10th canto is given in two manuscripts, manuscript No.285 and manuscript No.913. Here, the verses are all misplaced i.e the last one appearing in the first portion of the manuscript and vice versa.
Hence, it was a strenuous effort to rearrange the same. In order to edit the same, it has become necessary to go in to the full contents of the poem and fix the order of the verses. After checking the contents, the verses in the manuscripts have been grouped correctly so as to present this story in tact. The paper manuscript in the Oriental Manuscript Library Madras, contains only the first nine cantos. On examination, it was found to be an exact copy of the manuscript available in the manuscript Library of Governments Sanskrit College Tripunitura. The edited version is formed by incorporating the relevant and most suitable readings from these two manuscripts. The variations noticed in these manuscripts are referred to as ‘addition, and difference’ in the footnote given below.