CHAPTER - IX

CONCLUSION
CHAPTER IX
CONCLUSION

Kerala has made valuable contribution to enrich Sanskrit and the culture enshrined in it. The influence of Sanskrit was felt in every field of life cutting across the barriers of the rigid structure of a caste society. Reading the epics, purāṇās and stotras was a regular practice in houses and in temples. Sanskrit thus became very much associated with the life and thought of Keralites. There were many eminent scholars in Kerala who made substantial contributions to Sanskrit. The name of Śrīśaṅkara-cārya stands foremost. He promoted the Advaita philosophy by writing
commentaries on classical texts. There are many others, lesser known, who have contributed to the treasure of Sanskrit.

Some scholars wrote original works; where as some others commented on classical texts. Some of the commentaries became more popular than the original works. It can be safely said that commentators made the originals popular and promoted Sanskrit culture more than anyone else.

Kerala had a rich tradition of Sanskrit theatre. It is not an accident that Kerala preserved the Bhāsa plays as also the mode of presentation of Sanskrit drama extending back to more than 2000 years. The tradition of Sanskrit drama continued in the form of composing original dramas on the one hand and commenting on famous dramas on the other. It was through such commentaries that Kālidāsa, Śūdrakā, Bhavabhūti and others became household names in Kerala. The
commentators popularised the dramas of great poets.

One of the most outstanding commentary of a Sanskrit drama is the Rasamañjarī on Bhavabhūti’s Mālatīmādhava. The commendator, Pūrṇasarasvatī is one of the greatest Sanskrit scholars of Kerala. He was an eminent scholar, a poet of high genius, a dramatist and a commentator. He has commented on other works also.

Pūrṇasarasvatī is unique as a commentator. His Vidyullatā commentary is the best available for Mēghasandēśa. By elaborate discussions, scholastic deliberations on different aspects of poetics, new meanings to the text the author introduces Kālidāsa afresh to the readers. There is no doubt that Vidyullatā is the best commentary of Mēghasandēśa.
The works of Bhavabhūti especially Mālatīmādhava and Uttarāmacarita were very much popular in Kerala from very early times. They have received the attention of scholars and connoisseurs alike. There are several commentaries for them. The most important commentary on Uttarāmacarita is Bhāvārthadīpika. Similarly Mālatīmādhava also got an elaborate commentary, Rasamañjarī from Pūrṇasarasvatī.

Rasamañjarī is one of the best commentaries ever produced in Kerala for a literary work. The author is conscious that the work is very elaborate. He requests the readers to bear with him the voluminous nature of the commentary. While going through it one understands that there is not a single word unwanted in it. And hence readers will only appreciate the elaborate nature of the commentary.
By all standards Rasamanjarī stands as a model of a commentary for a dramatic work. The only weak point in this commentary is that it does not treat drama as a piece of theatre, and hence details of theatrical representations are almost ignored in this commentary. The reason may be that the commentator took the text only as a literary work. Moreover, Bhavabhūti’s plays were more read and relished than seen and enjoyed.

There is no doubt that Pṛṇāsarāsvatī is a great commentator of Kerala next only to Śaṅkarācārya.