PREFACE

Hastalakṣaṇadīpikā is a manual depicting the mudrās of the Kerala theatre. It is a very popular text in Kerala. The author is unknown. The date of the work is assumed as around 10th century A.D.. The present work is based on the paper manuscript No. 213 available at the Manuscript Library at the Government Sanskrit College, Tripunithura. Even though the book bears the title Hastamudrādīpikā, nowhere else in the text the title is mentioned. The word Hastalakṣaṇadīpikā is consistently used. Therefore in the thesis also the title Hastalakṣaṇadīpikā is accepted.

The work is done as two parts. Part I is the study of the HLD, Bharatas dramaturgy, Concept of abhinaya, Nātyadharmī and Lōkadharmī, Views of the authors of the AD and the BRB and The HLD - author - His date are dealt with here. Comparison of the mudrās of the NS, the AD, the BRB and those of the HLD, Comparison of Vedic and Tantric mudrās are also done in this part.

Part II consists of translation and critical edition based on the aforesaid manuscript and one printed text. The printed text is the one edited by Sri Tiruvangattu Narayanan Nambisan, published in 1958 by K.R.Brothers, Kozhikkode, printed at K.R.Brothers Acchukudam Kozhikkode. Other printed texts are seen which are merely the copies of the TNN. All efforts to get manuscript or other printed materials of different versions ended in vain. The last part of the manuscript i.e. the
svaras of Kūṭiyāṭṭom is edited with the NKD of Māṇi Mādhava Cākyār published in 1996. (Second Edition) by the Kerala Kalamandalam, Cheruthuruthy. The edition is followed by the critical notes.

I hope that present work will be helpful to know about the HLD in detail, the Kerala theatre and the tradition of Indian dramaturgy in general.

I am indeed happy to express my gratitude to the authorities and institutions which helped me to complete my research work.

I am very much thankful to Dr. C. Sukumaran, Head of Department of Sanskrit Sāhitya, Government Sanskrit College, Tripunithura who gave me guidance. I am very much indebted to Sri. C.P.Unnikrishnan [BSc Hons, MSc Zoology, Diploma (Vedanta), Diploma (Nātyaśāstra)], Head of Department of Zoology, Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Ernakulam who is well-versed in the NS, the AD, and the BRB, a connoisseur of the art forms of Kerala, a physiologist, a performing artist and who is in charge of the Research, Academic and Production faculties - Sri Sankara School of Dance, Kalady without whose efficient and exemplary guidance I could not have completed my research work. Dr. K.G.Paulose, Principal, Government Sanskrit College, Tripunithura helped me a lot by giving valuable suggestions and moulding up the ideas for my thesis.
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Sudha E.K.