

## CHAPTER –II

### PART – A

#### THE AUTHOR OF THE *SUBHADRĀDHANAÑJAYA* AND HIS DATE

Regarding the date of the dramatist Kulaśekharavarman, there has been great controversy. T. Ganapati Shastri has stated in his Preface to the *Tapatīsamvaraṇa* (TS) that the *Vyaṅgyavyākhyā*, a commentary on the *Subhadrādhanañjaya* (SDH) commented by a Brahmin contemporary of Kulaśekharavarman, contains a reference to the *Daśarūpaka* (DR) and the date of Kulaśekharavarman must, consequently, be later than the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Scholars like Winternitz<sup>1</sup>, Sten Konow and Keith<sup>2</sup> accepted this position. But Prof. K. Rama Pisharoti and Ullur S. Paramesvara Iyer refuted this theory, saying that the reference to the DR must be an interpolation. Even if it is not an interpolation the reference need not be to the 10<sup>th</sup> century work by Dhanañjaya, but might be to the eighteenth chapter of Bharata's NŚ.<sup>3</sup>

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1. “śaktibhadra's Place in the History of Sanskrit Literature”,  
-kuppuswami Shastri Commemoration Volume, Madras, p.12.  
as quoted in CKSL.,p.8
  2. *The Sanskrit Drama.*, p.247
  3. That chapter is called *Daśarūpaka* according to Abhinavagupta.

Prof. K. Rama Pisharoti argues<sup>4</sup> that the dramatist Kulaśekhara cannot be later than Śaktibhadra, as in the Prologue to the TS, only Śūdraka, Kālidāsa, Harṣa and Daṇḍin are mentioned, but not Śaktibhadra. Refuting this, Winternitz says, “The *Naṭī* who asks the *Sūtradhāra* if he is, going to stage a composition of the great poets Śūdraka, Kālidāsa, Harṣa, Daṇḍin and so on<sup>5</sup>, is not bound to give a complete catalogue of the poets known at that time. That the names are chosen at random may be concluded from the mentioning of Daṇḍin who is not known as a dramatist, while we should expect only authors of dramas to be mentioned.” On the other hand Winternitz maintains that Śaktibhadra must have lived before Kulaśekhara, the dramatist, as there is clear reference in the Prologue to the *Āścāryacūḍāmaṇi* (AC) of Śaktibhadra to the absence of original Sanskrit dramas in Kerela before his time.<sup>6</sup> Again the Prologue to Śaktibhadra’s drama makes it clear that though its author was a South Indian, the play was not supposed to be staged in South India. If Śaktibhadra had lived after Kulaśekhara, or even if he had been a contemporary of Kulaśekhara who

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4. IHQ., Vol.V., p.552 as quoted in CKSL., p.8

5. “succhan kālidāsaharṣadaṇḍippamuhānaṃ mahākaiṇaṃ ..”

-TS., p.7

6. ajja accāhidaṃ khuadaṃ āsaṃ pasabai pupphaṃ, siadāo

tellaṃ utpādaanti jai dakṣiṇāo disaō āadaṃ ṇāḍaṇḍibandaṇam.

- AC., p.8 as quoted in CKSL., p.9

stage. But since the date of Śaktibhadra is not fixed with certainty, this cannot help us in finding the exact date of Kulaśekhara. Tradition assigns Śaktibhadra to the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century; if that is accepted, then Kulaśekhara may be put later than the 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>7</sup>

Winternitz<sup>8</sup> seems to accept Ramanatha Ayyar's theory<sup>9</sup> that Kulaśekhara was the emperor of Kerala between 935-955 A.D. Ramanatha Ayyar accepts<sup>10</sup> king Rāma mentioned in Vāsudeva's *Tripuradahana* (TD) to be the son and successor of Kulaśekhara referred to in the *Yudhiṣṭhiravijaya* (YV) of Vāsudeva, whereas according to the early commentators,<sup>11</sup> Rāmavarman was the personal name of the king and

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7. tradition makes him a contemporary of Śaṅkara, but the date of śaṅkara has not been definitely fixed. -ibid.,p.9

8. HIL., Vol.III, Part I, p.210

9. JRAS., p. 220 as quoted in CKSL.,p.9

10. ibid.,p.226 as quoted in CKSL., p. 10

11. kulaśekhara ityabhiṣekakṛtaṃ nāma, pitrādikṛtaṃ tu Rāmavarmeti.  
-*Vijayadarśikā* of Acyuta as quoted in CKSL., p.10

kulaśekharasya kulaśekhar iti nāmavataḥ. etad abhiṣekaṃ kṛtaṃ  
namā, pitrādikṛtaṃ tu rāmavarmeti.

-*Ratnapradīpikā* of Śivadāsa, as quoted in KSC., Vol.1,p.183

kulaśekharanāmnaḥ kulālaṅkāro bhavatīti vicāryya gurubhistathā-  
kṛtanāmadheyasya. paṭṭabandha ityarthād bhavati, prāk  
rāmanāmasālitvāt.

-*Padārthacintana* by Rāghava, p.511 , as quoted in KSC., Vol. 1, p.183

Kulaśekhara was the title he received when he became the emperor. He also takes the word Rājaśekhara as referring to a king and identifies him with the father of Kulaśekhara.<sup>12</sup> This, as seen in the above discussion, is unwarranted. The mention of Daṇḍin and Harṣa in the Prologue to the TS makes it clear that Kulaśekhara must be much later than the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. In the commentary on the SDH, composed by the Brahmin contemporary of Dhvanikāvya.<sup>13</sup> This shows that Kulaśekhara is later than Ānandavardhana, the propounder of the *Dhvani* doctrine, who flourished in the court of the king Avantivarman of Kashmir (855-884 A.D.).<sup>14</sup> This gives the upper limit to the date of Kulaśekharavarman.

Regarding the lower limit to his date, it can be said that it must be much earlier than the 14<sup>th</sup> century, since in the Malayalam poem called *Uṇṇunīlasandēśa*, a work of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, there is reference to acting of the TS by the professional actors of Kerala.<sup>15</sup>

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12. JRAS., p.226 as quoted in CKSL.,p. 9

13. dhvaniyuk kāvyasaraṇiḥ śasteti procyate budhauḥ etasmādhvaniyuktā sā racitā nāṭakadvayī. -Vyv.,p.12 as quoted in KSC., Vol. 1, p.185

14. HCSL., p.740

15. kaṇṭomallo taliyil iruvamkūttu nām anrorikkal taivaṁ keṭṭāl oru tapatiyār nannayār ennenokki anyāsaṅgāt kiṁ api kaluṣā prākṛtaṁ koṇṭavādit pinnekkaṇṭūlaṇaya vivaśaṁ vīrttu maṇṭinra nine. ... *Uṇṇunīlasandēśa*, III.94 as quoted in CKSL.,p.12

Kulaśekhavarman's prose work, *Āścarayamañjarīkathā*, is quoted in the commentary on the *Amarakośa* by Rāyamukuṭa (1431 A.D.) and by Vandyaghaṭīya Sarvānanda (1159 A.D.),<sup>16</sup> hence the date of Kulaśekhara must be earlier than the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, in the *Sūktimuktāvalī* of Jalhaṇa, composed in 1258 A.D.<sup>17</sup> Kulaśekhara's *Āścaryamañjarī* (AM) is cited and attributing it to Rājaśekhara.<sup>18</sup> Rājaśekhara pays it a glowing tribute in a verse. This verse might quite probably be from Rājaśekhara's non-extant work, *Haravilāsa* and there is no reason to doubt its authenticity.<sup>19</sup> This definitely shows that the dramatist Kulaśekhara cannot be later than Rājaśekhara who lived in the beginning of the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. From these two limits, Kulaśekhara's date may be fixed about 900 A.D. K. Kunjunni Raja, opines that the royal dramatist must have flourished between Ānandavardhana and Rājaśekhara, about 900 A.D.<sup>20</sup> Of course,

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16. Preface to the TS, as found in the HSL., p.414

kulaśekhavarvarmakhyā scakārāścarmañjarīm as quoted in the Introduction to SDH., p. 13

17. HSL., p.222

18. dūrādapi satām citte likhitvāścaryamañjarīm

19. Ullur S. Paramesvara Iyer seems not to doubt its authenticity without any reason in KSC, Vol.I, p.132

20. *Siddhabhāratī* (Siddhesvara Varma Presentation Volume), p.220

Ilankulam Kunhan Pilla of the Travancore University, has taken objection to this view<sup>21</sup> on the ground that the term “Kulaśekharavarman” by which the dramatist is known, can never be a title like the term Kulaśekhara. He assigns the royal dramatist to the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, identifying him with the Āḷvār. But K.Kunjunni Raja says that it is impossible to believe that a South Indian commentator could have referred to the *Dhvani* doctrine, by the term (*Dhvani*) itself, so early as 800 A.D. Even if the *Kārikās* and the *Vṛtti* of the *Dhvanyāloka* (Dhl) are assumed to be by different hands, the doctrine to such an early date cannot be taken.<sup>22</sup> There is no reference to this doctrine before Ānandavardhana’s time. Udbhaṭa, Rudrata, Vāmana and others are silent about it. The earliest writers to refer to the *Dhvani* doctrine are Mukulabhaṭṭa, Jayantabhaṭṭa and Rājaśekhara, all elder contemporaries of Ānandavardhana.<sup>23</sup> The statement *budhaiṣṣamān-ātapūrvah* in the first *Kārikā* of the Dhl refers only to the idea about the

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21. Cila Keralacaritraprasnannal, (Part 1), p.62 as quoted in CKSL.,p.9

22. Introduction to SD.,P.V. Kane, pp.54-59

23. “The words of Mukula- dhvaniriti..... nūtanatayopavarṇitasya should leave no doubt in an unbiased mind that the reference is to a work recently produced”. -ibid.,p.168

importance of suggestion, not to the *Dhvani* doctrine as such.<sup>24</sup> Ānandavardhana himself says at the end of his work that the *Dhvani* doctrine has been lying in the minds of the learned in a latent state<sup>25</sup> and that he is giving expression to it. Hence neither the *Dhvani* doctrine, nor Kulaśekhara whose contemporary refers to it, can be pushed back to the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. That the royal dramatist is identical with the patron of Vāsudeva is strengthened by the evidence that is obtained from Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa's commentary *Vivaraṇa* on the astronomical work *Laghubhāskarīya*.<sup>26</sup> Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa was a great astronomer patronized by king Ravivarman Kulaśekhara of Kerala. He gives the date of his composition as 869 A.D.<sup>27</sup> Prince Rāmavarman mentioned by Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa himself, must have succeeded Ravivarman. From a study of the other historical records it has been suggested<sup>28</sup> that Rāmavarman must have ruled over the country from about 885 A.D. till 913 A.D. It is known that Vāsudeva's patron was

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24. CKSL.,p.14

25. sphuritaprasuptakalpaṁ manasyu viduṣam. -Dhl.,II.12

26. TSS.,p.162, as quoted in CKSL.,p.4

27. evaṁ śakābdaḥ puṇariha candrarandhramunisamkhyayā  
asmābhiravagatāḥ. ibid.,p.4

28. *cila keralacaritrapraśnaññal* (part-1), p.59-as quoted in CKSL., p.9

Rāmaṣvarman Kulaśekhara and hence it can be said that the dramatist Kulaśekharaṣvarman must have lived about 900 A.D.

### **GENEALOGY OF KULAŚEKHARAṠVARMAN**

In ancient Kerala there were several famous kings who called themselves Kulaśekharas. Their capital was Mahodayapuram at the mouth of the Periyar river, which may be identified with modern Tiruvancikkulam in Cranganore. 'Kulaśekhara' seems to have been a title assumed by the Kerala kings at the time of their coronation, because at least two Kulaśekharas are known whose proper names were different. Among them, one is Ravivarman Kulaśekhara, patron of the famous astronomer Śaṅkaranārāyaṇa and the other is Rāmaṣvarman Kulaśekhara, patron of the *Yamaka* poet Vāsudeva. There is much uncertainty regarding the age and identity of the various Kulaśekharas, the problem became more complicated at the hands of some scholars who considered that 'Kulaśekhara' was a proper name. Many of the Kulaśekharas of Mahodayapuram were not only great patrons of literature; they were themselves well accomplished scholars who made original contribution to Sanskrit literature. Kulaśekhara Āḷṣār who may be considered as the author of the *Mukundamālā* (MM) and the royal dramatist Kulaśekharaṣvarman who may be identified with the patron of the *Yamaka* poet, Vāsudeva, are the most noteworthy among them.

## (I) Kulaśekhara Āḷvār

Kulaśekhara Āḷvār is one of the greatest religious mystics of South India. According to tradition,<sup>29</sup> this *Vaiṣṇava* saint was born as an incarnation of Viṣṇu's *Kaustubha*. Vedānta Deśika mentions Tiruvancikkulam as the place of birth of the Āḷvār.<sup>30</sup> Kulaśekhara was the son of Dṛḍhavrata, king of Kerala. After coming to the throne he conquered the Pāṇḍya and Cola kingdoms and became the emperor of the whole of South India.<sup>31</sup> But as in the case of Ashoka, at the height of his military glory, his entire outlook changed and Kulaśekhara became particularly attached to the *Vaiṣṇava* school of devotion. There are several stories about his strong attachment to Śrī Rāma. He was also a devotee of Viṣṇu. It is said that after crowning his son as the king, Kulaśekhara retired to Śrīraṅgam to lead a life of ardent prayer. He passed away at Mannarkoyil in Tinnevely District on his way from Śrīraṅgam to Tirupati.

According to the *Vaiṣṇava* traditions the date of birth of Kulaśekhara Āḷvār is 3075 B.C.<sup>32</sup> He was born in the year *Parābhava*, the

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29. *ibid.*, p.10

30. *Prabandhasāram*, stanza 8. He calls the place Tiru-v-ancai-k-kulam

31. CKSL., p.11

32. HCSL., p. 277

month *Māṣī* (*Māgha* in Sanskrit), the twelfth of the bright fortnight and *Nakṣatra Punarvasu*. Obviously the date cannot be accepted from the astrological details given. Swamikannu Pillai calculated the date of birth of the Āḷvār as 767 A.D.<sup>33</sup> and K.G. Sessa Aiyar calculated it as 527 A.D.<sup>34</sup> But the astrological details that are given by the hagiologists have no historical significance and cannot be of any real value in fixing the date of the Āḷvār. Sir R.G. Bhandarkar assigned the Āḷvār to the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. by identifying him with Kulaśekharaṅka.<sup>35</sup> This view is not acceptable for the Āḷvār was certainly earlier than the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. There is record of Kulottuṅga Cola's 18<sup>th</sup> year (1088 A.D.) which makes provision for the recital of one of the works of the Āḷvār beginning with *Tettarum tiral*.<sup>36</sup> One inscription of 1050 A.D. belonging to the reign of Cola Keraladeva also provides for a similar recital. At Mannarkoyil where the Āḷvār is supposed to have passed away, there is a temple known as Kulaśekhara Āḷvār Koyil; from the mural inscriptions there it is known that the temple was consecrated to the memory of Śrī Kulaśekhara Perumāl by one Vāsudevan

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33. *The Indian Ephemeris*, Part 1, p.489 as quoted in CKSL.,p.11

34. IHQ, VII.,p.649 as quoted in CKSL.,p.15

35. *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and other minor Religious systems*,p.49

36. EHVI.,p.33 as quoted in the CKSL, p.3

Keśavan of Mullappalli in Kerala (Malaimaṇḍalam).<sup>37</sup> The earliest of such inscriptions referring to the Āḷvār is of the fourth year of Rājendra Cola (C.1015 A.D.). Hence it is clear that the Āḷvār must have been famous before that period.

Kulaśekhara Āḷvār is well known as the author of Perumāl Tirumoli in the Tamil *Prabandham*. There he calls himself as the ruler of Kolli, the master of Kūḍal, the king of Koli and also the overlord of Koṅgu.<sup>38</sup> Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar<sup>39</sup> says that this ascendancy of Kerala in South India does not seem possible after 900 A.D. when the first great Cola Parāntaka became supreme in South India, when the Cola capital was Tanjore, not Urayur. According to him such ascendancy would have been possible either before the rise of the Pallavas under the dynasty of Narasiṁhavarman sometime before 600 A.D. or after the collapse of the dynasty sometime about 800 A.D. Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyanger assigns the Āḷvār to the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. But according to K. Kunjunni Rāja, there is no

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37. śrīkulaśekharapperumālaiyukantaruluvitta malaimaṇḍalattu

mullaippali vāsudevan keśavan.---KSC, I.,p.61 and K.G. Sessa Aiyer,

as quoted in the CKSL., p.2

38. Perumāl Tirumali, I.X,II.X, III.X as quoted in the CKSL.,p.3

39. EHVI., p.33 as quoted in the CKSL.,p.2

need to take him to such an early date.<sup>40</sup> He might have flourished towards the close of the 8<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

## (II) The Royal Dramatist Kulaśekhara

From the Prologue to the TS<sup>41</sup>, the author of which is the royal dramatist Kulaśekhara, it is clear that he was emperor of Kerala, that he had his capital at Mahodayapuram or modern Tiruvancikkulam. It is also known that he had composed a prose work called AM prior to his dramatic works. In the Prologue to the SDH he tells that<sup>42</sup> it was composed later than the TS. A short description of the poet is given in TS itself.<sup>43</sup>

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40. CKSL., p.3

41. yasya.....mukhakamalādagaladāścaryamañjarīkathāmadhudravaḥ.....  
tasya rājñāḥ keralakulacūḍāmaneḥ mahodayapuraprameśvarasya  
śrīkula—śekhavarmanah kṛtiriyamadhunā prayogaviṣayamavatarati.  
- TSS,II. as quoted in the CKSL.,p.8

42. tapatīsamvaraṇasaṅghaṭanāpaṭutarasya ... tasya rājñāḥ  
kalamarāśipeśalakaidārikakeralādhināthaśya śrīkulaśekhavarmaṇo  
nijanibandhanamadya badhnāti budhahṛdayam. SDH.,p.5

43. uttuṅgaghōṇamurukandharamunnatāṁsam  
aṁsāvalambimaṇīkarnīkakarṇapāśam.

ājānulambibhujamañcitakāncañānābham

āyāmi yasya vapurārthiharaṁ prajānām.

– ibid.,I.2

According to the popular traditions in Kerala this Kulaśekhara is said to have reformed the Kerala stage and adapted many of the well-known Sanskrit dramas to this reformed theatre. It is said that in this work he was considerably assisted by a Brahmin named Tolan who composed several humorous verses in Malayalam to be used by the *Vidūṣaka* while staging the Sanskrit dramas. There is found a good number of stray verses, both in Sanskrit and in the macaronic Malayalam-Sanskrit mixture called Maṇipravālam, which are attributed to Tolan. Late Kunhikuttan Thampurān of Kotungallur<sup>44</sup> suggests that this Tolan may be identified with the Brahmin contemporary of Kulaśekhara who commented upon his dramas. The commentaries are known as *Vyañgyavyākhyā* (Vyv). This suggestion seems to be quite probable.

### (III) Kulaśekhara and Rāmavarman

In the introductory verse of the TD which is attributed to Vāsudeva,<sup>45</sup> it is said that the poem was composed by the son of Ravi during

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44. Preface to TS, p.3 as quoted in the CKSL.,p.11

45. tripuradahanasamjñam kāvyametadvidhātum

- kaviratha ravisūnurvāsudevābhidhanaḥ.

nirupamacaritoktayā devamīśānsamjñam

- natajanahitadam taṁ stautivighnātibhītaḥ.

- commentary on TD by Nīlakaṇṭha as quoted in CKSL.,p.13

the reign of king Rāma. In the *Śaurikathodaya*, another work attributed to Vāsudeva, the poet eulogizes a king named Rāma. It is quite probable that this Rāma is identical with the king Kulaśekhara praised in the YV, the author of which is Vāsudeva according to the popular tradition in Kerala.<sup>46</sup> Because the commentators like Rāghava, Acyuta and Śivadāsa state that Rāmavarman was the personal name of the king who received the title of Kulaśekhara at the time of coronation. And this Rāmavarman, patron of Vāsudeva, may be identified with the dramatist Kulaśekharavarman who flourished by about 900 A.D.

#### **(IV) Kulaśekhara and Ravivarman**

Keith and Zachariae tried to identify Vāsudeva's patron Kulaśekhara with Ravivarman Kulaśekhara, author of the drama called *Pradyumnābhyudaya* and assign him to the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. But but it is known from the commentators that Vāsudeva's patron was Rāmavarman Kulaśekhara who had his capital at Mahodayapuram, evidently he cannot be identified with Ravivarman Kulaśekhara who had his capital at Quilon.

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46. *ibid.*, p.13

## (V) Kulaśekhara and Rājaśekhara

*Śaṅkaravijaya* (ŚKV) of Vidyāraṇya mentions that one Kerala king Rājaśekhara has composed three dramas and read them out to Śaṅkara, the great philosopher. There is a view that this Rājaśekhara is to be identified with Kulaśekhara. It is held that the three dramas mentioned here are *Tapatīsaṁvaraṇa*, *Subhadrādhanañjaya* and *Vicchinnābhiṣeka*, since Vāsudeva in his TD refers to his patron Rāma as Rājaśekhara. Some hold that Rājaśekhara referred to in ŚKV and TD are two different persons. In the TD the word ‘Rājaśekhara’ having a double entendre is used simply to bring out the similarity of the king with Śiva, for it is explained by the commentator Nīlakaṇṭha as follows : *rājaśekharam rājñam kṣatriyānām śekharam śikhāmaṇim, rājā candraḥ śekhara yasyeti śivapakṣe*. If the word was used as the name of the king also, the commentator would certainly have explained that. Moreover, Kulaśekhara (Rāma) Varman, the dramatist, is much later than Śaṅkara.

## OTHER WORKS OF KULAŚEKHARAVARMAN

Kulaśekhara is supposed to have written five works, namely, *Āścaryamañjarī* (AM), *Vicchinnābhiṣeka* (VIAS), *Tapatīsaṁvaraṇa* (TS), *Subhadrādhanañjaya* (SDH) and *Mukundamālā* (MM). The AM is a prose work, the VIAS, the SDH and the TS are three dramas whereas the MM is a short devotional lyrical poem about whose authorship there is some

controversy. The first two works are known only through references and citations. The rest three only are available now.

### 1. *Āścaryamañjarī*

The prose work AM is known only through the citations in the commentaries on *Amarakośa* (AK) by Sarvānanda and Rāyamukuṭa and commentary on *Śivakośa*.<sup>47</sup> Rājaśekhara's glowing tribute to it shows that the work must have been popular even outside Kerala.<sup>48</sup> Sarvānanda, the author of *Ṭikāsarvasva* on AK is found to quote from AM on several times. He mentions it while going to explain the word *Kuśala*.<sup>49</sup> Again while going to explain the word *iṣṭkā* he mentions the name of AM.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, to

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47 “kuraṅgairiva kuśalavādibhiḥ.”—Sarvānanda.

“pāṇinipratyāhāra iva mahāprāṇasamāśliṣṭo jhaṣāliṅgitaśca  
samudraḥ.” — Rāyamukuṭa.

taruṅjāna ivādhigatasobhāñjano vasantasamayaḥ prādurāsīt.”

- *Śivakośavyākhyā* of Śivadattamiśra as quoted in CKSL., p.14

48. dūrādapi satām citte likhitvāścaryamañjarīm.

kulaśekhavararmākhyāścakārāścaryamañjarīm.

-Introduction to the SDH., p.13

49. kuraṅgairiva kuśalavādibhir ityāścaryamañjarīca. - ibid., p.13

50. śaratsamayamiva rocāmāneṣṭikam dviradamityāścaryamañjarī ca.

-ibid., p.13

explain the word *Kalāsa* Sarvānanda quotes the AM.<sup>51</sup> Another work which gives information is *Śvakośavyākhyā* of Śivadattamiśra, where the name of the AM is clearly found.<sup>52</sup>

## **2. *Vicchinnābhiṣeka***

According to tradition Kulaśekhara has written an another drama called VIAS of course no manuscript of this work is available. There is not any clear reference to this drama in any work. The Vyv commentary mentions only two dramas.<sup>53</sup> So it is quite possible that the dramatist must have composed VIAS at a later time so that when the commentator was asked to comment the dramatist had written only two dramas.

## **3. *Tapatīsaṁvaraṇa***

The TS is a drama which describes in six Acts the story of the love between Tapatī, daughter of the Sun-god, and Saṁvaraṇa, the king of Hastināpura. The plot is taken from the Mb (chapters 171-173 of the *Ādiparvan*). The first three Acts describe the development of the love between the hero and heroine. Through the grace of the Sun-god the king

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51. suk ṣetremiva sakalaśālikamsnānāgāram ityāścaryamañjarī ca.

– ibid.,p.13

52. taruṇjāna ivādhigataśobhāñjano vasantasamayaḥ prādur āsīd  
ityāścaryamañjarī ca.

– ibid.,p.14

53. tenāpi rasacittena racitā nāṭakadvayī.

– ibid., p.14

gains Tapatī for his wife. A son is born to them, but by the magic practised by her friend Rambhā, Tapatī forgets completely that she has given birth to a child. The attempt of the demoness Mohinikā to kill the child is thus frustrated. In the 5<sup>th</sup> Act Tapatī is seen going to heaven at the instance of her father, the king wanders here and there in search of her, but on hearing that a famine is raging in his country, he returns to his capital. In the last Act Mohinikā tries to make the hero, the heroine and her two friends commit suicide, but she is overpowered by Kuru, son of Tapatī and Saṁvaraṇa. The story ends happily with the re-union of the hero, the heroine and their son.

#### **4. *Mukundamālā***

The MM is a short lyrical poem of devotional fervour. In the text of the MM itself the author's name is given as king Kulaśekhara.<sup>54</sup> Rāghavānanda, the commentator, gives the additional information that Kulaśekhara was a king of Kerala.<sup>55</sup> This lyrical poem composed in Sanskrit proclaims that there is no easier path for attainment of final emancipations and eternal bliss than devotion to God. Here devotion is characterized as the

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54. rājña kṛtā kṛtiriyam kulaśekharena.— Concluding portion of the MM.

55. iha khalu ... keralacakravālacakravartīm ... mukundamālākhyam

*stotraratnamakarot.* --- Introductory portion of the commentary,

- as quoted in CKSL.,p.15

supreme, exclusive and motiveless love for God. There is no material motive for a true devotee. He is not tempted by the kingdom of heaven and earth. To him the heaven and earth are alike. The language of the work is quite simple and natural. Owing to the great popularity of the poem there are various recensions of the text, each different from the others in respect of the number of verses and in their arrangement. The Kerala recension contains 31 verses, the Kashmir version consists of 34 verses while there is a third version containing seven additional verses. In spite of having different versions the first two lines of the last verse of the poem remain same.<sup>56</sup>

Some scholars assign the authorship of the MM to Kulaśekhara Āḷvār. The main arguments for the identification of Kulaśekhara with Kulaśekhara Āḷvār are the following: both were kings of Kerala, staunch *Vaiṣṇava* devotees and composers of devotional songs. Moreover, both are known as Kulaśekharas. Orthodox *Vaiṣṇava* scholars deny that Kulaśekhara Āḷvār composed the MM. Anantācārya of Kāñcī in the introduction of his edition of the MM holds that the poem has never among

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56. yasya priyau śrutidharau ravidlokavīrau

mitre dvijanmavarapāraśavāvabhūtām

tenāmbujākṣacaraṇāmbujaṣaṭpadena

rājñā kṛtā kṛtiriyam kulaśekharena. - Last verse of the MM.

the canonical books of the Śrīvaiṣṇavas—an omission inexplicable if Āḷvār was the author. Kulaśekharavarman, the royal dramatist, may be identified with the author of the devotional poem. While explaining the last verse of the MM<sup>57</sup>, the commentator Rāghavānanda says that a certain Brahmin named Ravi and a Vāriyar named Lokavīra were Kulaśekhara's friends. From this it is postulated that the 'Brahmin Ravi' immortalized in these lines of Kulaśekhar was the father of the poet Vāsudeva.<sup>58</sup> There is some difficulty in accepting this view. The verse *yasya priyau.....* of the MM offers a number of variant readings.<sup>59</sup> But even if the authority of the commentator be accepted, that the author of the MM had a friend named Ravi, it does not necessarily follow that this Ravi is identical with the Ravi mentioned by Vāsudeva as his father.

Two Sanskrit commentaries on the MM are known. One is the *Tātparyadīpikā* by Rāghavānanda, the other is by one Tiruveṅkaṭasūri. Little is known about the second commentary. Rāghavānanda gives Advaitic interpretation to the verses.

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57. *ibid.*,II.4

58. JRAS.,p.269 as quoted in CKSL, p. 15

59. Instead of *ravilokavīrau*, other readings are *kavilokavīrau*, for *dvijanmavarapāraśavau*, there are other readings like *dvijanma-  
parivāraśivau*, as quoted in CKSL.,p.16

He explains the text as an exposition of the two mystic mantras : *Mukundāṣṭādaśākṣara mantra* and *Aṣṭākṣara mantra*. He blends the Advaitic system of metaphysics with the *Bhakti* cult, making Viṣṇu the *saguṇabrahman*.

### 5. *Subhadrādhanañjaya*

The SDH is a drama in five acts composed by Kulaśekhara-varman. The story of the SDH is based on the Mb. It is delineated in four chapters (217-220) of the *Ādiparvan*. The summary of the contents of the play is given in subsequent chapter i.e. Chapter II, Part - B of our dissertation.

### COMMENTATORS OF THE *SUBHADRĀDHANAÑJAYA*

A Brahmin contemporary of Kulaśekhara-varman had commented upon his dramas. The commentaries are known as *Sanvaraṇadhvani* and *Dhanañjayadhvani*. Generally they are referred to by the term Vyv. It was the scholar's fame as a great art critic that attracted the attention of the king, he was invited to the palace for writing the commentaries and for supervising the staging of the play. There is a long introductory portion to the commentary on the SDH where he gives a detailed description of the circumstances that led to his writing the

commentaries.<sup>60</sup> According to his description, a messenger from the emperor came to his house which was situated at Parameśvaramaṅgalam on the bank of the river Cūrṇikā and informed him that the emperor wanted to see him. A country boat with all amenities was ready for his journey. The scholar reached Mahodayapuram and met Kulaśekhara sitting on a throne in the court hall. At this stage in the course of his narrative the commentator gave a long description of the emperor, which might be compared with the description given by the poet himself in the TS. Kulaśekharavarman welcomed him warmly and taking him to his private chamber, told him that he had composed two dramas, the TS and the SDH following the *Dhvani* school of Indian poetics. Kulaśekhara wanted to know whether the scholar approved them or not. The emperor told him that if they were good, he himself would explain to him how they were to be represented and later get them staged by actors. The scholar wrote the commentaries on the basis of the explanation given by the author himself. In the commentary on the TS also, he said that he had been able to give the author's own ideas, since the king himself took the role of each character and explained to him how the

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60. KSC.,I.,p.128

representation ought to be made.<sup>61</sup> It is suggested that the name of the commentator might be Sumatin.<sup>62</sup> This suggestion is based on the reference of *Śivavarāma* to the earlier commentary where he also gave the information that the earlier commentator was a contemporary of the dramatist.

Besides the Vyv there are commentaries on the dramas of Kulaśekharavarman by one Śivarāma<sup>63</sup> who had also commented on Harṣa's *Nāgānanda*. Śivarāma must be later than the 12<sup>th</sup> century, since he quotes from BP.<sup>64</sup> The commentary on SDH by Śivarāma is called *Vicāratilaka* and that on TS is *Vivaraṇa*.

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61. athāhaṁ keralabhūbhṛtkṛteasmin nāṭake sthyāyibhāvaprayoga-  
mārgaṁ ca tatsahṛdayaḥ pradarśayāmi. kathamiti cet bhūbhṛt  
svayaṁ bhūmikayā niretya nijāmalaṅkṛtya tanuṁ manasvī yaṁ  
darśayitveti viniścītātmā prayogamārgam.

-Report no 3048 of Triennial Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the  
Govt. Oriental MSS. Library, Madras. as quoted in CKSL, p.10

62. Introduction to the SDH.,p.7

63. TSS., II as quoted in the CKSL,p.18

64. KSC, I.,p.163

**PART – B**  
**SUMMARY OF THE CONTENTS OF THE PLAY**  
**Act-I**

The SDH describes in five Acts, the wellknown story of Arjuna’s abduction of Subhadrā from Dvārakā. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Act Arjuna is said to reach the Prabhāsātūrtha after completing the year of pilgrimage. Arjuna now recollects his days with his mother and sister. The fame of Subhadra’s beauty attracts Arjuna to Dvārakā. With the bow and the arrow in his hand Dhanañjaya is greatly fascinated by the peaceful atmosphere of the hermitage. Even the behaviour of the birds and beasts has an impact on him. His Brahmin friend Kauṇḍinya (the *Vidūṣaka*) appears on the scene and laments deeply for his act of begging for a little food. He attributes the scarcity of food to his evil fate. He remembers his happy days with Draupadī who prepares his food. His evil days starts with his decision to follow Dhanañjaya who is on a pilgrimage. Suddenly he points out to a piece of cloud with a screaming lustrous object in his lap. Dhanañjaya observes that it is an invisible spirit running away with a damsel. He rescues the damsel not knowing that it is Subhadrā herself. He falls in love with her at first sight. Subhadrā, whose heart has already been captivated by the fame of Arjuna, is attracted by her protector against her will. She

finds fault with *Kāmadeva*, the god of love, for causing love for her protector as she is already in love with Arjuna. The damsel mysteriously disappears. Somebody drags her away incognito. The *Vidūṣaka* takes her for a *Yakṣiṇī* and wants to leave the place immediately. There was exchange of words between Arjuna and *Vidūṣaka* regarding the real identity of the damsel. But Dhanañjaya believes that her relatives must have taken her away. The *Vidūṣaka* asks his friend that it is not possible for a human being to become invisible all of a sudden. Dhanañjaya persuades him that people who are under the protection of Vāsudeva, whose mount is Garuḍa, are often helped by divine power. Thereafter Dhanañjaya gives a passionate description of the maiden. Then *Vidūṣaka* rebukes him for putting an end to his love for Draupadī and trying to marry another woman. Dhanañjaya then resolves that nobody can change his loving attitude towards his dear wife Draupadī. Knowing well that only fate can bring about his union with that unknown maiden whom he has rescued, he decides to enter Dvārakā with his friend to secure the union with Subhadṛā. *Vidūṣaka* wants to know whether Dhanañjaya is going to beg for the heroine or to kidnap her in the darkness of the night. But Dhanañjaya says that with the consent of Vāsudeva, he is going to take her by force defeating the Vṛṣṇis. To suit the purpose

he resolves to disguise himself as a sage. According to his plan Kauṇḍinya would play his role of a Brahmācarin. Kauṇḍinya cautions him saying that it will invite a fight and Duryodhana will take its advantage.

Kauṇḍinya sees that a serpent with a jewelled hood is about to attack him. Dhanañjaya finds that it is only a gold laced-bodice studded with jewels. He deduces that the girl whom he has rescued must have dropped it. He then places it on his chest. Kauṇḍinya sees several letters stitched on it and draws the attention of Dhanañjaya. But to his utter surprise Dhanañjaya notices that all his ten names are stitched on the bodice. He believes that the girl may be dweller of the city of Dvārakā. He hands the bodice over to the *Vidūṣaka* to keep it safe. Dhanañjaya enters the hermitage to get ready for the fulfilment of their mission.

## **Act – II**

Subhadrā asks her maid Kalpalatikā to go for Prabhāsatīrtha to find out her lost bodice. She is also entrusted to know about the whereabouts of the man who has saved Subhadrā's life from the demon. Kalpalatikā wants to know details of the incident through the inquiry done by Vinayapālita. Thereafter Vinayapālita, an old servant, informs her that Duryodhana has made an abortive

attempt to secure Subhadrā by force. Accordingly Alambusa tries to snatch her away through the sky. But Garuḍa, the divine bird, intercepts and restores her to her palace.

Dhanañjaya goes to Dvārakā in the guise of a Sannyāsin. Since Dhanañjaya's heart has already been captivated by the beauty and laudable qualities of Subhadrā, he now even thinks to marry her with winning the consent of her brother Vāsudeva. But now another maiden comes to love him. Dhanañjaya finds fault with *Kāmadeva*, the god of love, for putting him in this awkward position. Because the first object of his love, has not yet been met, but the second has come to win his love. Even the *Vidūṣaka* was there to witness his first love story. Vāsudeva and Saṅkarṣaṇa appear on the spot and Dhanañjaya gets a sigh of relief to get his dear friend. A short conversation takes place among Saṅkarṣaṇa, Vāsudeva and disguised Dhanañjaya. Dhanañjaya indirectly requests Vāsudeva to come to his aid in marrying Subhadrā. Dhanañjaya is able to note Vāsudeva's suggestion that he will be able to secure Subhadrā for which he has resorted to the form of a sage. Dhanañjaya hopes that with the Lord's blessings he has almost achieved his end. Vāsudeva asks Saṅkarṣaṇa to accommodate the sage and asks *Kañcukī* to bring him into the apartment of Subhadrā. Subhadrā is asked to look after the

requirements of the guest. On the way to the apartment he reached the Pramodavana, a garden. Dhanañjaya is totally absorbed in the thoughts of Subhadrā. Since it is a spring time various natural scenes are observed by him in the garden. A sweet voice coming from a bower of Jasmine creeper makes him curious and he approaches it. Subhadrā is also seen suffering from the pangs of love. There was a remarkable change in the behaviour of Subhadrā. Approaching the bower Dhanañjaya sees a maiden and realizes that she is the maiden whom he has saved from the demon. The maid of Subhadrā observes some sort of uneasiness on her behaviour. Dhanañjaya is eager to know the development of the situation. On being frequently asked by her maid, Subhadrā sadly discloses that her mind which has already been dedicated to Partha has now got attached to another man also. She now considers to degrade herself to the state of a prostitute. Being asked by her friend she reveals that she has now fallen in love with the man who has saved her from the demon. Dhanañjaya is overjoyed to learn that the lady whom he has saved is responding his love.

Kauṇḍinya is accused of stealing the bodice of Subhadrā. But Subhadrā is angry with her maid Kalpalatikā for harassing a venerable Brahmin. Kauṇḍinya tells that he is a Brahmacharin and

looking after the requirements of a great ascetic. He also confesses that he has found the bodice while he is begging for alms near Prabhāsatīrtha. Subhadrā believes it and inquires about the whereabouts of that stranger who had saved her. *Kañcukī* addressing the lady as Subhadrā offers a message from Sañkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva. Dhanañjaya for the first time realizes that the maiden whom he has saved from the demon is Subhadrā herself. Now he is all prepared to meet Subhadrā. Subhadrā is not able to receive him with proper attention since she finds herself loving three men at the same time – Arjuna, her protector and the new guest. The maid observes that the agony of Subhadrā’s love is doubled due to the presence of the sage. Subhadrā then washes his feet with water and Dhanañjaya is glad to note that Subhadā loves him. Subhadrā then departs.

### Act - III

Subhadrā worships Indrāṇī at the instance of her mother as it brings goodluck to maidens and gives away one of her valuable ornaments to a deserving Brahmin as a gift. Owing to a mistake on the part of the old *Kañcukī*, the jewelled bodice is given away instead of the necklace. Meanwhile there is a wide-spread rumour going on in the city involving the sage and Subhadrā. There arises a question on the behaviour of the disguised

sage since his behaviour is found to be somewhat different from ordinary ascetic in many a case. Being afflicted by the fire of love Dhanañjaya is very much eager to have a look either to his beloved or her bodice. *Vidūṣaka* carries and produces the bodice to give some comfort to his friend. Dhanañjaya is curious to know how his friend has managed it. *Vidūṣaka* replies that an old *Kañcukī* presented him this bodice mistaken it to be a necklace due to his old age. Being delighted Dhanañjaya asks him to find out a way to meet his beloved. They hear the voice of a girl coming from an arbour situated near a fountain. Hiding there they watch her and note that she is also in a lovelorn condition as Dhanañjaya is . Dhanañjaya comes to know that he is found reflected in the lake of her mind. The *Vidūṣaka* comes to know that Subhadrā loves Arjuna in his three different roles.

Being unable to control her mind from diverting to three different men, Subhadrā decides to commit suicide, rather than be a victim to such an immoral feeling. She promises Dhanañjaya her love even in the next birth. The hero intervenes in time and explains to her his identity in all the three roles in which she loved him. He tells that he is Dhanañjaya who rescued her from the hands of the demon near Prabhāsatūrtha. Now he is under the guise of an ascetic to win her heart. Hearing it her joy knows no bounds. *Ṣaṭpadikā*, having heard the conversation of Dhanañjaya and

Kauṇḍinya, reports Subhadrā that her love-lorn condition is much less painful in comparison with that of the sage.

Dhanañjaya wants to marry her according to *Gāndharva* form of marriage. Seeing her reluctant to marry him without the permission of her brother, the hero says that his father will come to their rescue. Thereafter a divine envoy enters and declares that Dhanañjaya's father Indra is descending upon the earth. The sage Kāśyapa comes to perform the marriage sacrifice. Subhadrā is taken to Indrāṇī to prepare her for the marriage function. The act comes to an end with the *Vidūṣaka* hastening Dhanañjaya to the place of marriage.

#### **Act – IV**

Subhadrā orders her maid Ṣaṭpadikā to ask the charioteer of king Ugrasena to bring the chariot loaded with plenty of weapons. Arjuna dressed in princely clothes occupies the chariot. Receiving the felicitations from her friends Subhadrā drives the chariot through the gates of Dvārakā. The very sound of bowstring of Dhanañjaya frightens the soldiers who try to block him. Vipr̥thuśravas, a Yādava chief who guards the city tries to prevent Arjuna from getting away. But Arjuna by his fierce arrows repels him. Though defeated in his attempt Vipr̥thuśravas congratulates and blesses Arjuna as he becomes aware of Vāsudeva's consent. Meanwhile soldiers seeing Subhadrā being taken away rush back to the city and inform the

Sabhāpāla. Soldiers are taking all kinds of weapons, ready to put up a fight. Balabhadra abuses Dhanañjaya for abducting his sister in the guise of an ascetic. He even tells Kṛtavarman that he will destroy all the Pāṇḍavas rather than kill Dhanañjaya alone. Kṛtavarman suavely asks him to calm down. Dhanañjaya, anticipating attack from Balabhadra, wants to kill him but Subhadrā pleads to spare her brother's life so that she may not be censured by the world. Balarāma asks the soldiers to wait till Vāsudeva's opinion in the matter is sought. Brushing aside the protests from his brother, Vāsudeva argues that in fact, Arjuna has bestowed upon them a great honour by marrying Subhadrā. Vāsudeva reminds Balabhadra that Dhanañjaya is closely related to them. Moreover, he is the son of Indra. Vāsudeva points out that it was Balabhadra himself who accompanied the sage in the apartments of Subhadrā. Honouring Vāsudeva's words Balarāma and other Yādavas decide to bring Arjuna back to the city with pomp and splendour. They get ready many precious articles to be presented to Dhanañjaya as wedding presents.

### **Act – V**

At the instruction of Yudhiṣṭhira the city of Indraprastha was decorated for the imminent visit of Dhanañjaya, Subhadrā and Vāsudava. Crossing rivers and mountains, planes and forests, Arjuna and Subhadrā reaches Khāṇḍavaprastha. Arjuna asks Subhadrā to assume the form of a

cowherdess and to repair to the side of Kuntī and Draupadī. Accordingly she goes dressed as a young cowherdess. She approaches Kuntī and Draupadī and kneels before them saying that she is to be treated as a servant. Impressed by her humility they embrace and bless her. However, Dhanañjaya is quivering while going to meet Draupadī, his first wife. On the other hand, the bodice of Subhadṛā is reported to be lost and it is picked up by Vātajava, a courier of Yudhiṣṭhira, who happens to note the ten names of Dhanañjaya stitched on it. At last it is placed on the breast of its owner by the hero. An announcement informs that a demon has taken away Subhadṛā by force. Dhanañjaya is shocked and he faints. Seeing the gravity of the situation the *Vidūṣaka* places the bodice of Subhadṛā on the chest of Dhanañjaya. Dhanañjaya then recovers at the touch of the bodice. Meanwhile goddess Kātyāyanī disguises as Draupadī and Subhadṛā in the dress of a cowherdess enters. The disguised Draupadī informs Dhanañjaya that goddess Kātyāyanī has rescued Subhadṛā from the demon. Subhadṛā bows to her lord, who is at a loss to understand what has happened. Dhanañjaya has taken goddess Kātyāyanī for Draupadī and hence he is unable to embrace either Subhadṛā or Draupadī. He is now naturally embarrassed. Kātyāyanī's disguise as Draupadī causes embarrassment to the hero when the real one presents herself to him. To ease the situation she reveals her form and discloses that she saved the heroine from Alambusa, the

demon who tried to kidnap her at the instigation of Duryodhana. She blesses Arjuna to have a worthy son. Draupadī embraces Subhadrā and wishes her a long and happy life. Then Arjuna enters the city and the people accord him a happy welcome. Descending from his chariot he bows before his elders and embraces his brothers with tears of joy. Yudhiṣṭhira congratulates him saying that the year of penance has turned fruitful since he becomes able to marry Subhadrā. Learning about Arjuna's presence the Yādavas come there led by Balarāma and Vāsudeva for giving wedding presents to him. The couple leads a happy life and in course of time Subhadrā gives birth to a boy whom they call Abhimanyu.

## **DEVIATIONS AND INNOVATIONS**

The story of the SDH is delineated in four chapters (217-220) of the *Ādiparvan* of the Mb. Kulaśekharavarman is found to have maintained singularity as a dramatist in this play. From the very beginning the Mb. had attained an unparalleled popularity and held in universal reverence, which must have inspired Kulaśekharavarman to compose a play on it. The poet himself admits<sup>65</sup> the superiority of the Mb in all spheres. The famous story of Dhanañjaya's abduction of Subhadrā forms the genesis of the drama SDH. The source of the plot is *Subhadrāharaṇa* contained in the *Ādiparvan* of the Mb. The five Acts of the drama have come to cover almost all the four chapters of the *Ādiparvan* of the Mb. The dramatist of the SDH introduces a

few changes. The deviations are found with regard to the dramatic situations as well as dramatic characters.

The deviations with regard to the dramatic situation can be shown as follow –

(a) In the 3rd Act it is said that the necklace *Sarvasantāpahara* is supposed to destroy all kinds of worry of the person who wears it. Subhadrā in order to get rid of her maid asks her to fetch the ornament.<sup>66</sup> This is not found in the original. Thus it is seen that the poet deviates from the original.

(b) Kulaśekharavarman's Draupadī is quite different from the Draupadī of Vyāsa's Mb. In the original Mb story Draupadī is a little jealous of Subhadrā. That is why, when Arjuna approached Draupadī after his marriage

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65. śrūyatām satatasannihitasaraśiruhākṣacaraṇarajovitānavirajīkṛtaḥ-  
dayapuṇḍarīkasya matimandaramathitamahābhāratapārāvārapari-  
grhītajñānāmṛtasañcayasya sakalamitramaṇḍalasvayaṃgrāhagrhīta-  
sārasamudayasya tapatīsamvaraṇasamghaṭanāpaṭutarasya.

- SDH., pp.4-5

66. sakhi kalpalatike, atidussaho mama santāpaḥ. asti kaustubhasodar-  
airmauktikairamrtamayairghaṭitaḥ sarvasantāpahara iti

kṛtanāmadheyo hāraḥ. taṃ grhītvāgaccha. - ibid., pp. 114-115

with Subhadrā she questioned his reason of arrival there with harsh word.<sup>67</sup>

But in the SDH Draupadī is eager to receive her. In the 5th Act of the drama she sends a maid called Nandinikā to find out whether the form of cowherdess which Subhadrā has assumed is attractive enough. She even prefers to commit suicide on hearing the false report of Subhadrā's death.<sup>68</sup> She embraces Subhadrā and wishes her a long and happy life.<sup>69</sup>

(c) In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Act of the drama Vāsudeva, the omniscient, is shown to know the laughable situations in which Arjuna is placed and breaks into a laughter. Arjuna has resorted to the form of a sage with a view to marrying Subhadrā. Vāsudeva conceals the fact from his wife Satyabhāmā, who insisted on knowing the reason for his smile. But Vāsudeva misrepresents the fact and tells her about the abortive attempt of Alambusa at kidnapping Subhadrā to

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67. abhyarcya brāhmaṇān pārtho draupadīmabhi jagmivān

taṁ draupadīṁ pratyuvāca praṇayāt kurunandanam.

tatraiva gaccha kaunteya yatra sā sātvatātmaajā

subadhasyāpi bhārasya pūrvabandhaḥ ślathāyate.

– Mb., *Ādiparvan.*, 220.16-17

68. sakhi nandinike, tasyāṁ vāsubhadrabhaginyāṁ mama cittārādhanā-

rtham pratipannagopālikāveṣyāṁ paścimāṁ daśāṁ pratipannāyāṁ

na kṣaṇamapi jīvitaṁ dhārayiṣyāmi.

-SDH., p.185

69. bhartuste avirahitā bhava. ehi, āliṅga mām.

-ibid., p.191

satisfy her curiosity.<sup>70</sup> But in the Mb. the reason of laughing is different.

Arjuna tries his level best to marry Subhadrā. So disguising himself as a Brahmin sage he gets into the hollow of a big tree to escape the heavy rain. Arjuna thinks that his friend Vāsudeva breaks into a laughter seeing his conditions. Satyabhāmā then wants to know the reason behind his laughter. The Lord explains her the plight in which Arjuna is placed.

The deviations with regard to dramatic characters can be shown in this way:

(a) There is a good number of characters who help in the development of the plot without appearing on the stage. Among the many changes made by the dramatist in the construction of the plot, the introduction of the character Alambusa, the demon, in the 1st Act, is the most important one. He makes two unsuccessful attempts to kidnap the heroine at the instigation of the Duryodhana.<sup>71</sup> It brings the hero and the heroine together for the first time. Introduction of Alambusa makes the plot more diversified and interesting.

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70. prodbhinnasya smitasya prabhavamupacitapremavikṣiptaśaṅkām  
pṛcchantīm satyabhāmāmakaravamayathābhūtavastūpalambhām.

- ibid.,p.47

71. vatsa, śrūyatām. purā khalu duryodhanaḥ pariṇetumicchannimām  
mādhavīm vāsubhadrabhayād gūḍhamalambusena rakṣasā  
bhūtarūpadhareṇa samājūharat. tadā tvayoiva paritrātā. - ibid.,p.191

The innovations of the writer, noticed in the drama, may be placed in this way:

(a) Dhanañjaya saved Subhadrā from the hands of the demon Alambusa. But some unseen power drags the girl away and her sudden disappearance frightens the *Vidūṣaka* who suspects that the girl herself might be a fairy (*Yakṣiṇī*).<sup>72</sup> But Dhanañjaya reasons that her relatives must have taken her away.<sup>73</sup> The mysterious disappearance of the Subhadrā is poet's own innovation in the 1<sup>st</sup> Act.

(b) Another innovation made by the dramatist is the exhibition of threefold love of Subhadrā for Dhanañjaya. Subhadrā loves Arjuna in his three different roles. Being unable to control her mind from diverting to three different men, Subhadrā tries to commit suicide by hanging herself.<sup>74</sup> The hero rescues her from hanging and discloses his identity in all the three roles in which she loved him. Thus, the dramatist shows his skill in changing the original plot.

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72. avihā , eṣā kāpi yakṣiṇī nau bhakṣayitumadarśanamupaga - ibid. p.24

73. sakhe, mā maivam. na khalu madbhujaparighasakāśavartinīm tām  
bhūyastarkayiṣyanti paripanthinaḥ. tanmanye bāndhavairapavāhiteti  
- bid.,p.26

74. yāvat sakhyāvāgatya mama maraṇavyavasāyavighnamutpādayataḥ,  
tāvadetad bahupuruṣābhilāṣapāṁsularaṁ pāpaśarīraṁ parityakṣyāmi  
-ibid.,p.109

(c) The twofold love of Dhanañjaya represented in the SDH is not found in the original source. Dhanañjaya has fallen in love with Subhadrā having heard of her noble qualities. Again he falls in her love when he rescues her from the hands of the demon Alambusa. But he fails to recognize her even though he once again falls in love with the lady taking her for somebody else. So he enters Dvārakā with a view to marrying both the ladies.<sup>75</sup>

(d) The bodice of Subhadrā bearing the ten names of Dhanañjaya plays a significant role in the drama which is not found in the Mb. This bodice is seen providing solace to him on several occasions. It revives him from his unconsciousness when he comes to know that a fearsome demon is lifting up by his hands the sister of Vāsudeva i.e. Subhadrā. Entrusted to the care of Kauṇḍinya, the bodice is taken away from him by the maid of Subhadrā i.e. Kalpalatikā who took him for a thief.<sup>76</sup> Later it is given away as a present to Kauṇḍinya by a *Kañcukī* mistaking it to be an invaluable necklace.<sup>77</sup>

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75. ....kadācidamuṣyāpi strūratnasyedameva dvārakāpuramākaraḥ syāt.  
tadubhayaprāptaye prayatiṣyāvahe .... - ibid.,p.37

76. prasīdatu, prasīdatu bhartṛdārikā. cora eṣaḥ, na brāhmaṇaḥ. -ibid.,p.66

77. ... yenādya prabhāta eva tatrabhavatyāḥ subhadrāyā vacanenaiko  
vṛdhakāñcukīyo mama pādaprakṣālanam kṛtvā pratigṛhaṇaitam  
hāramiti mām lambhayitvā gataḥ. aham punaretasyāndhatāvilāsa  
eṣa bhūṣaṇaviparyāsa iti cintayitvā..... ibid.,p.90

(e) *Giriyajña* which Yaśodā has promised to conduct provides a distraction for the people of the city and that indirectly helps Dhanañjaya's plan to get away with Subhadṛā. The incident has a twofold significance, for it suggests the love of the mother towards her daughter and at the same time it suits the hero's plans.

(f) The worshipping of Subhadṛā to Indrāṇī at the direction of her mother is the innovation of the part of the dramatist.

(g) In the Mb Vāsudeva gives his permission to Dhanañjaya to kidnap Subhadṛā<sup>78</sup> since it is supposed to be one of the duties of a *Kṣatriya*. But in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Act of the SDH the hero seeks the permission of Vāsudeva in the presence of Balabhadra,<sup>79</sup> but without his knowledge. Vāsudeva gives his permission in suggestive words.<sup>80</sup>

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78. prasahya haraṇam cāpi kṣatriyāṇām praśasyate  
vivāhahetuḥ sūrāṇāmiti dharmavido viduḥ.  
sa tvamarjuna kalyāṇīm prasahya bhaginīm mama  
hara svayaṁvare hyasyāḥ ko vai veda cikṛṣitam.

– Mb. *Ādiparvan.*,218.22-23

79. prayatetarāmamuṣmai śreyase. siddistu punarasya, hṛṣṭkeśasya  
kaṭākṣapātāpekṣiṇī. –SDH.,p.50

80. na khalvanyāpekṣiṇī bhagavataḥ siddhiḥ, tathāhi. –ibid.,p.50  
yasyāḥ kṛte yatidhurāmavalambamāno  
yogaṁ dadhāsi nacirādapunarnivṛttim.  
kleśaṁ jahat sahabhuvaṁ madhurām matirme  
prāpnoṣi nirvṛtimacintyarasām subhadṛām. –ibid.,II.7

The innovations with regard to dramatic characters can be shown in this way:

- (a) One of the important characters introduced in the SDH is Kātyāyanī. Kātyāyanī, the goddess and sister of Subhadrā, is presented as disguise Draupadī in the 5<sup>th</sup> Act of the drama. The goddess rescues Subhadrā when Alambusa makes a second attempt to kidnap Subhadrā. She then takes Subhadrā to her husband. Meanwhile when the real Draupadī enters there she is paralysed with fear seeing another person in her form. Thereafter she reveals her own form and explains the various incidents in their proper perspective to relieve Subhadrā of her worry.
- (b) A courier, Vātajava by name to whom Yudhiṣṭhira sends to find the whereabouts of Dhanañjaya who fails to return to his capital even after the period of exile was over. He brings with him a bodice bearing the ten names of Arjuna which he picked up on his way.<sup>81</sup>

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81. kumāra, mahārājaśāsanena kumāramanveṣṭum mahīmaṇḍalam  
paribhramatā kumāranāmadheyāṅkitām gātrikām mārge drṣṭvā eṣā  
kumārasambandhinīti cintayatā mayaiṣānītā                      .- ibid.,pp.168-169

(c) The introduction of the characters of two cowherds viz. R̥ṣabhaka and Mahiṣaka, though they did not appear on the stage, are the products of the poet's imagination. They report the fight and the flight of Dhanañjaya. Similarly the characters like Yaśodā, Devakī and Nandagopa without appearing on the stage influence the plot.

### **PROBABLE REASONS FOR DEVIATIONS AND INNOVATIONS**

As is the case with most of the Sanskrit dramas, herein the SDH also, the dramatist has to convert the epic story into a dramatic theme. He shows some originality in moulding the plot of the SDH. The dramatist has made some changes to enhance the dramatic effect and to ensure dramatic quality. For example, the twofold love of Dhanañjaya for Subhadrā in her two different roles shows the originality of the dramatist in moulding the plot of the drama. Same can be said in respect of the exhibition of threefold love of Subhadrā for Dhanañjaya in his three different roles. The deviations are found with regard to the dramatic situations as well as dramatic characters. For example, in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Act of the drama Vāsudeva, the omniscient, is shown to know the laughable situations in which Arjuna is placed and breaks into laughter. Arjuna has resorted to the form of a sage with a view to marrying Subhadrā. Vāsudeva conceals the fact from his wife Satyabhāmā, who insisted on knowing the reason for his smile. But Vāsudeva misrepresents the fact and tells her about the abortive attempt of Alambusa at kidnapping

Subhadrā to satisfy her curiosity. But in the Mb. the reason of laughing is different. Arjuna tries his level best to marry Subhadrā. So disguising himself as a Brahmin sage he gets into the hollow of a big tree to escape the heavy rain. Arjuna thinks that his friend Vāsudeva breaks into a laughter seeing his conditions. Satyabhāmā then wants to know the reason behind his laughter. The Lord explains her plight in which Arjuna is placed. It is assumed that the dramatist probably makes this deviation in order to giving a more natural and proper get-up to the dramatic theme.

The dramatist has made few necessary changes to show originality in presenting the theme. He also tries to create conflicts in the plot which are conducive to the enhancement of the dramatic merit by introducing dramatic characters. The introduction of the character Alambusa, the demon in the 1<sup>st</sup> and last Act, is the most important one. His two unsuccessful attempts to kidnap the heroine brings the hero and the heroine together. Another important innovation is the introduction of the character of Kātyāyanī. She is presented as disguise Draupadī in the 5<sup>th</sup> Act. She rescues Subhadrā when Alambusa makes a second attempt to kidnap Subhadrā. She then takes Sabhadrā to her husband. The introduction of the minor characters like Vātajaba, Rṣabhaka and Mahiṣaka help in the progress of the story. In addition to main changes introduced in the play the dramatist has made some minor changes for giving a better tempo to the dramatic theme. He

introduces some minor characters like Kalpalatikā, Śaṭpadikā, Nandinikā, Govardhanikā and others to create conflicts and interest in the play. These characters and the dramatic situations have enhanced the dramatic effect, necessary in a literary work of this type.

### **PROPRIETY OF THE TITLE OF THE DRAMA**

It is an old practice that the titles of literary compositions, not to speak of dramas only, are so selected that they either contain the name of the hero or heroine or both, or simply the main theme is indicated in the title. The matter perhaps considered to be so simple and obvious that neither the NŚ nor most of the later text on dramaturgy give any direction regarding the naming of dramatic compositions. In the NŚ, the titles of two plays viz. the *Amṛtamanthana*, a *Samavakāra* and the *Tripuradāha*, a *Ḍima* are found. Both these titles are indicative of themes. Chronologically speaking, so far as the extant texts are concerned, Sāgaranandin first refers to a principle regarding the naming of plays. It is said in the *Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa* (NLRK) that the title of the dramatic composition is to refer either to the *Pradhāna* (hero) or the *Vastu* (plot). Titles of Nāṭakas like *Rāmānanda*, *Jānakīrāghava* and that of the *Prakaraṇa* such as the *Mālatīmādhava* have been cited as referring to the *Pradhāna* and those of the *Nāṭaka* namely the *Kundamālā* and the *Prakaraṇa* called the *Mṛcchakaṭika* have been taken as indicating the *Vastu*. It appears from this that by *Pradhānanirdeśa* and

*Vastunirdeśa*, Sāgaranandin simply means that the title of a drama is to contain either the name of the hero or those of hero and heroine or a reference to the crucial incident of the plot. Sāradatanaya holds the same view.<sup>82</sup> The use of the word ‘*garbhitārtha*’ (crucial incident) is undoubtedly an improvement upon Sāgaranandin’s *Vastunirdeśa*. The view expressed by Amṛtananda in the 14<sup>th</sup> century is more elaborate. His view<sup>83</sup> gives much stress on the designation of the hero and heroine in naming a play but falls short to explain a title like *Kundamālā*, in as much as it omits the principle that the title of a play may be formed by referring to the main incident of the plot. Viśvanātha makes an attempt to give a more clear-cut principle and states that the title of a *Nāṭaka* should be *garbhitārthaprakāśaka*, i.e. indicative of the main event, the Prakaraṇas etc. are to be named after the names of the hero and heroine, whereas the name of the heroine

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82. tannāmanāyakādyantar garbhitārthopasūcakam.

BP, I.3 as quoted in NLRK in the *Perspective of Ancient*

*Indian Drama and Dramaturgy*, p.192

83. saṁjñā tu nāṭakādīnām nāyakenetarca va

nāyikānāyakavyākhyānāt saṁjñā prakaraṇādiṣu

nāṭikāsaṭṭakādīnām nāyikābhirviśeṣānām. – AS.,IX.30-31

alone may serve the purpose of naming *Nāṭikā*, *Saṭṭaka* etc.<sup>84</sup> This rigid principle of Viśvanātha lacks corroboration to the titles of ancient dramas. Because neither the title of the Nāṭakas like *Mālavikāgnimitra* (Māla) and *Jānakīrāghava* may be said to be *garbhitārthaparakāśaka*, nor the title *Mṛccha* or *Śāriputraprakaraṇa* is formed after the names of the hero and heroine. The broad principle of the NLRK seems to be more suitable to explain the titles of Sanskrit plays.

The word *Subhadrādhanañjaya* which is an example of the *Dvandvasamāsa* may be analysed thus - *subhadrā ca dhanañjayaḥ ca subhadrādha-nañjayau* ( *itaretara dvandva*); now to get the title of the drama SDH, it can be proceed in this way—*subhadrādhanañjayamādhikṛtya idaṁ nāṭakam pravartate iti subhadrādhanañjayam*. This may also be analysed as *subhadrādhanañjayākhyānam varjyate yasmin tat subhadrādhanañjayam (bahuvrīhisamāsa)*. The word ‘Subhadrā’ means provider of enjoyment of pleasure<sup>85</sup> and ‘Dhanañjaya’ means the winner of

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84. nāma kāryam nāṭakasya garbhitārthaparakāśakam

nāyikānāyakākhyānātsamjñā prakaraṇādiṣu

nāṭikāsaṭṭakādīnām nāyikābhirviśeṣānām.

- SD.,VI.142-143

85. paramakalyāṇarūpiṇim.—Śivarāma in his commentary on SDH.

-SDH.,p.51

the wealth i.e. Arjuna. It can also be further analysed as...*su sobhanā bhadrā subhadrā, dhanaṁ jayeti dhanañjayaḥ, subhadrā nāma dhanaṁ yena jayeti saḥ subhadrādha-nañjayaḥ*. Thus the title of the drama suggests that Dhanañjaya is the winner of the wealth i.e. Subhadrā. In order to keep conformity with the traditional norm which is noticed in almost all cases, the dramatist has used the title in a word in neuter gender, making it thereby an adjective to *Rūpaka*. In his drama although Kulaśekharavarman dramatizes the entire story of the Mb., he keeps the title after the name of the hero and heroine just to show his deep reverence for the characters. Entitlement of a dramatic composition after its hero and heroine is not uncommon in Sanskrit dramatic literature. The *Māla* and *Vikramorbośya* of Kālidāsa and *Mālatīmādhava* of Bhavabhūti etc. can be cited as examples. Kulaśekharavarman is found to keep the title in accordance with the requirement of dramaturgy.<sup>86</sup> It is found that Arjuna in spite of having various odds and obstacles attains Subhadrā in the long run. The title of the drama itself indicates that Subhadrā and Dhanañjaya are the heroine and hero respectively of this drama. Hence the title is appropriate.

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86. nāma kāryaṁ nāṭakasya garbhitārthaprakāśakam.

– SD., VI.142

## ADHERENCE OF THE *SUBHADRĀDHANAÑJAYA* TO THE NORMS OF A *NĀṬAKA*

The dramatist Kulaśekhavarman simply asserts his work as a *Nāṭaka*.<sup>87</sup> Yet an examination is supposed to gather the idea that it should be regarded as a *Nāṭaka*. There are some elements prescribed in the Sanskrit Dramaturgy which stand as requisites for the *Nāṭaka*. As regards the chief requisites, the plot (*vastu*) of a *Nāṭaka* must be *Prakhyāta*, i.e. historical, be possessed of five Sandhis. The hero should be of *Dhīrodātta* type, he should come from a renowned family and should be valorous. The predominant sentiment may either be *Śṛṅgāra* (the Erotic ) or *Vīra* (the Heroic), the other Rasas should be depicted as subordinate to the main one.<sup>88</sup> The *Vastu* is primarily divided into two kinds,<sup>89</sup> *Ādhikārika* (the principal) and *Prāsaṅgika* (the accessory). The *Ādhikārika* plot is that which deals with the

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87. etadabhinavaṃ subhadrādhanañjayābhīdhānaṃ nāṭakamakḥila...  
- SDH.,pp.4-5

88. nāṭakaṃ khyātavṛttaṃ syātpañcasandhisamanvitam  
prakhyātavaṃśo rājarṣīdhīrodāttaḥ pratāpavān  
eka eva bhavedaṅgī śṛṅgāro vīra eva vā  
aṅgamanye rasāḥ sarve kāryaḥ nirvahaṇe'dbhūtaḥ. -SD.,VI.7-10

89. idaṃ punarvastu budhairdivīdhaṃ parikalpyate  
ādhikārikamekaṃ syātpṛasaṅgikamathāparam. -ibid.,VI.42

main characters.<sup>90</sup> The *Prāsaṅgika* is that which is meant for the proper development of the *Ādhikārika* plot<sup>91</sup> and is concerned with the characters other than the hero and heroine. The plot should be divided into *Aṅkas*. The number of Acts should not be less than five and not more than ten.<sup>92</sup>

So far the plot of the drama is concerned, the SDH deals with the well-known story of the great epic, the *Mahābhārata*. All the five Sandhis viz. *Mukha*, *Pratimukha*, *Garbha*, *Vimarśa* and *Nirvahaṇa* are found to be present in the SDH. The hero Dhanañjaya hails from the celebrated family of the Kuru dynasty.<sup>93</sup> He is *Dhīrodātta* type who has a charming personality and possesses all good qualities. *Sambhoga Śṛṅgāra* (Love in union) is the predominant sentiment in the play. Other sentiments like *Hāsya*, *Adbhuta*, *Vīra*, *Raudra*, *Karuṇa* stand subordinated to it so as to enhance its charm. The *Ādhikārika* plot in the drama is related to the chief characters like Dhanañjaya and Subhadṛā. The episode of *Giriyajña* in the Raivataka mountain is presented as the *Prāsaṅgika* plot in the 4<sup>th</sup> Act.

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90. ādhikāraḥ phale svāmyamadhikārī ca tatprabhuḥ

tasyetivṛttaṁ kavibhirādihikārikamucyate. -ibid.,VI.43

91. asyopakaraṇārthaṁ tu prāsaṅgikamitīṣyate -ibid.,VI.44

92. pañcādikā daśaparāstatrāṅkāḥ parikūrtitāḥ. -ibid.,VI.8

93. ....kurukulapradīpaḥ kumāradhanañjayaḥ. -SDH.,p.126

*Giriyajña* which Yaśodā has promised to conduct provides a distraction for the people of the city and that indirectly helps Dhanañjaya's plan to get away with Subhadṛā. The incident has a two-fold significance, for it suggests the love of the mother towards her daughter and at the same time it suits the hero's plans. The plot of the drama is divided into five *Aṅkas*. The 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Act have 20,16,16 Ślokas respectively while the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Act contain a number of 22 and 16 Ślokas respectively.

It is found that the SDH can be considered as a piece of *Nāṭaka* in spite of the fact that the salient features of a *Nāṭaka* as described in the SD, may not be totally found in use in the drama. For instance, as stated in the SD<sup>94</sup> there is not an element of *adbhutarasa* towards the end of the SDH which may conveniently be employed in the *Nirvahaṇa Sandhi*. Daṇḍin observes that even at the absence of some of the features, there is no loss to a *Kāvya*.<sup>95</sup> Therefore, this *Kāvya* of Kulaśekharavarman can be recognized as a piece of *Nāṭaka*.

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94. kāryo nirvahaṇe'dbhutaḥ.

–SD.,VI.10

95. nyūnamapyatra yaiḥ kaiscidaṅgaiḥ kāvyam na duṣyati  
yadyupattesu sampattirārādhayati tadvidaḥ. KD., I.20