

Sanskrit Literature under The Patronage of The Sena Rulers in Bengal

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Abstract - During the 11th and 12th century, a great revival of Sanskrit learning is noticeable in different places of India after the Gupta period. Under the last three Sena king. Vijoy Sena, Vallala Sena and Laksman Sena , the study of Sanskrit received a great impulse. All these encouraged the story of Sanskrit literature in Bengal. The different part of Bengal at this time a band of Sanskrit writers flourished in the later part of the Sena rule. In the 15th and 16th century well known Navadwip school produces a remarkable group of Naiyayika and Smrti writers. Vallala Sena compiled 'Dana Sagara', 'Addvuta Sagara', Brata Sagara, 'Acharsagara', and 'Prathisthasagara'. Anirudh was the preceptor of Vallala Sena was a great Poet. Isana, Halayudhamisra, Udayana , Govardhana Charya, Umapatidhra, Joydeva, Dhoyi – all the great Sanskrit poet was born in this Period. In this discussion we tried to draw a pen picture of the rich Sanskrit literal revival of the Sena rulers of Bengal, specially the work of Dhayi, Umapatidhra, Jaydeva and Halayudha Misra.

Key Word : Advutsagara, Sadukti Karnamitra, Pabanduta, Aryasaptasati, Gitgovinda, Deopara prasasti, Prabandha-Cintamani, Dharmadhikara, Mimamsa Sarvasva etc.

Under the last three Sena kings viz. Vijaya Sena, Vallala Sena and Laksmana Sena the study of Sanskrit received a great impulse. During the 11th and 12th century, a great revival of Sanskrit learning is noticeable in different places of India. The courts of Kashmir, Kanauj, Cedi and Dhara were influential centres of scholars and Brahmanical learning. Mithila and Kalinga courts were also much progressive in this respect. All these encouraged the study of Sanskrit in Bengal, where it was not much encouraging upto the time of the beginning of Sena rule, presumably because of the Buddhist influence.

The different parts of Bengal such as Suhma, Vanga, Varendra and Radha were invited under one rule by Vijaya Sena and his two successors. A band of Sanskrit writers flourished in the later part of the Sena rule. Many toles also seem to have been established in and near Nadia, the capital of that time. To these toles may be traced the origin of the well known Navadwip school which produces in the 15th and 16th century a remarkable group of Naiyayikas and Smrti writers. In the Sena period, however, the authors confined themselves chiefly to rituals and poetry - the two subjects in which the kings took special interest.

Aniruddha was the preceptor of Vallala Sena and at his instance the king compiled his Dana-sagara. None of Aniruddha's works has yet been discovered, but that he composed works on rituals is proved by the statement of Gopalabhatta, the disciple of Caitanya. In the Satkriyasaradipika, a ritual work for the Vaisnavas, Gopalabhatta says that he compiled it after consulting the works of Aniruddha, Bhimabhatta, Narayanabhatta and others. Rajendralal Mitra in his Notices¹ mentions two ritual works of Aniruddha bhatta, i.e. Suddhiviveka and Haralata. Aniruddha and his Haralata have been mentioned in the Suddhikaumudi of Govindananda Kavikankanacarya who flourished in the 16th century A.D.

Isana, the elder brother of Halavudha Misra, is known to be a great Sanskrit scholar belonging to the Sena period. No manuscript of his work has yet come to light. But Halayudha in the introduction of his Brahmana-Sarvasva says that his elder brother Isana wrote a Paddhati or Manual on rites relating to the Ahnikas of Brahmans.

Udayana was a great poet and a pupil of Govardhanacarya. Govardhanacarya in his Arya sa_ptasati mentions that Udayana revised the poem. Govardhana calls Udayana and Valabhadra sisyasodarabhyam which means that they were brothers and Govardhana's pupils. Some scholars identify the Udayana with the Udayana who composed the Prasasti of Meghesvara temple at Bhuvanesvara in Orissa.²

Umapatidhara was a reputed poet during the rule of Laksmana Sena. The only complete work of his as yet known is the Prasasti in the Deopara inscription of Vijaya Sena.³ Stray verses of Umapatidhara are, however, quoted in the anthologies. About 92 verses of Umapatidhara have been quoted in Sridharadasa's Saduktikarnamrta, twelve verses in Jahlan's Suktimuktavali and two verses in the Sarnga- dhara paddhati. He has often been identified with one Umapati Upadhyaya, the author of the Parijataharana nataka.

Jayadeva in his Gitagovinda often mentions the name of Umapatidhara -

“ Vacah pallavayatyumapatidharah
sandharbhasuddhim giram /
janite Jayadeva eva saranah
slaghyo duruha-drute” //

Gitagovinda : I/IV

The name of Uma's father is Vatudasa who was the friend and chief officer of Laksmana Sena. In fact, excluding the Deopara Pras'asti we get about more than 100 verses of Umapatidhara. All of them are not of equal merit Sometimes Umapatidhara has been criticised by contemporary scholars particularly by Jayadeva. In the Gitagovinda Jayadeva speaks about Umapatidhara as vacahpallavayatyumapatidhara which means Umapatidhara makes his words exaggerated, i.e. he lengthened verses by addition of adjectives compound words etc. In a few verses Umapatidhara has supplied us with some historical facts such as in these verses reference is made to some unknown kings probably some Sena kings in connection with Pragjyotisa with Kasi janapada and mlechha narendra. In another verses Umapa -idhara mentions liberal gifts to a poet for a work named Iendracudacarita by Canakya candra.⁴

In the Saduktikarnamrta six verses appear under Srimat -kesava Sena deva and one under Kesava.⁵ They are apparently one in the same person. Kesavasena devaprob ably belongs to the Sena royal family and one of his verses agrees in a general way with a verse of Laksmana Ser.a deva and of Jayadevao (Gitagovinda, I.IV).

Acarya Govardhana was the author of Aryasaptasati. In the Sarngadhara paddhati⁶ one verse from Aryasaptasati -as been quoted under Govardhana. In the Sadukti karnamrta six new verses are quoted under his (Govardhana) name. The Aryasaptasati consists of 54 introductory verses, 696 verses in the main body arranged alphabetically and 6 concluding verses - in all 756, all in the Arya metre. It was zo—posed evidently in imitation of Hala's Gathasaptasati in Irakrt. These stanzas of Govardhana justify the remark of -ayadeva that the elegant works of Govardhana were distinguished by erotic sentiment.

“srngarottarasatprameya-racanair acarya-govardhana / spardhi kopi na visrutah srutidharo dhoyi kaviksmapatih” //

Gitagovinda 1.4.

According to tradition Govardhanacarya flourished in the court of king Laksmana Sena. So his time may be approxi - mately put in the 4th quarter of 12th century. It has earlier been stated that the poem was revised by his two pupils Udayana and Valabhadr. Five commentaries on the poem are asyet known - Ananta-pandita's Vyangartha dipanam,⁷ Gokula Chandra's Rasika-candrika and the commentaries made byGahgarama, Narayana and Visvasvara, Unfortunately all these commentaries had not yet been published.

Jayadeva is the author of Gitagovinda. Little is known about him and little is most traditional and conflicting. One tradition says that Jayadeva belongs to a family of Maithili Brahmins. A second tradition claims him belonging to Orissa and it has been stated that Jayadeva was born in the village Kenduvilva near Puri in Utkala, he married Padmavati and composed the Gitagovinda. But it is now mostly accepted that Jayadeva was born in the village Kenduli, district Birbhum, now in West Bengal and that he was a Pandit in the court of Laksmana Sena. The existantcommentaries at the Gitagovinda have unanimously accepted this tradition about Jayadeva. In the oldest known commentary, Rasikapriya of Kumbhakarna under verse IV Sarga I it is noted

“Iti sat panditastasya rajno Laksmanasenasya prasiddha iti rudhih”.

King kumbhakarna belongs to the 1st half of the 15th Century A.D. So the tradition about Jayadeva was current at least in this period. The verse IV of the Gitagovinda mentions Jayadeva's name with Umapatidhara, Sarana, Govardhana and Dhoyi - all of whom are Bengal poets and contemporaries of the king Laksmana Sena. In some manuscripts of the Gitagovinda it is found that the name of the father of Jayadeva is Bhojadeva and that of mother is Ramadevi. According to tradition the name of Jayadeva's wife is Padmavati and this fact has been supported by at least two verses (Vs. 1.2 and X.8)» The poem Gitagovinda is believed to have been composed before 1206 A.D.

Besides the Gitagovinda no other work of Jayadeva has yet been found. Eight Sanskrit verses under the heading Gangastava prabandha are seen to have been added to a manuscript of Gitagovinda. So it may be believed that Jayadeva composed these eight verses. The Gitagovinda for its charmingness and rhythm has become very popular not only in India but outside of our country also. This poem has been imitated .in some later works like Abhinavagita govinda, Ramagitagovinda and such others. The Gitagovinda ranks among the quasi-sacred works of the Vaisnavas and its songs were repeatedly sung by Caitanya and his followers in their processions.

Dhoyi is the author of the Pavanaduta. This poem was first intimated by Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit HaraprasadSastri in Notices of Sanskrit manuscript.⁸ A few years back Pavanaduta of Dhoyi has been edited by Cintaharana Cakraborty and published by Sanskrit Sahitya Parisat, Calcutta. The poem has 104 verses, all of which are in Man- dakranta metre. It was composed in imitation of Kalidasa's lyric poem Meghaduta.

The story of the poem is very simple and as the theme is not known to all, it requires some elaboration. The story runs thus - There remains a Gandharva town named Kakanagari on the sandal hills. A fair Gandharva girl named Kuvalayavati lived in that town. She saw king Laksmana Sena who had come on world conquest and fell in love with him. Being unable to express her own feelings to King Laksmana Sena, Kuvalayavati was overwhelmed with grief and at last requested earnestly the Southern breeze to convey her message to the King at Gauda. Then she gives a vivid description of the countries as well as of people to the wind so that it can easily reach Vijayapura, the capital of the king. Next she describes king's capital vividly and entreated the wind to communicate to the king the pangs of her sufferings. The last four stanzas are personal or benedictive.

Interesting geographical details are furnished in the description of wind's journey to Vijayapura. Incidentally we have reference to Suhma, which was the old name of a division of Bengal comprising Northern Midnapore and the eastern part of Burdwan. Tamralipti was a port in Suhma and the capital of Suhma was Vijayapura.

Pasupati, the elder brother of Halayudha, wrote the Dasakarma paddhati, a guide to the performance of ten domestic ceremonies. For this book Pasupati is indebted to Sukla Yajur Veda Kanya sakha. In the introduction to the Brahmana Sarvasva, Halayudha records that Pas'upati had written the sraddha-paddhati and a paddhati on Paka vajna. In the colophon of the Sraddha-paddhati it is stated that Pasupati was the Raja-Pandita. In the Sadukti-Karnamrta one verse is quoted under the name of Pasupatidhara who was not probably identical with Pas'upati.

Vallala Sena, the father of Laksmana Sena composed a voluminous work Dana sagara which is a manual describing various kinds of gifts and connecting ceremonies, He started another compilation named Adbhutasagara but he could not complete it because of his immature death. It was completed by his son Laksmana Sena. It gives the Sakabda (bhujva vasudasa) as his 1st year, i.e. (1082) (Ankasya vama gatih) .Aniruddha, the author of Haralata and Pitrdayita was the guru or spiritual guide of Vallala Sena.

The Saduktikarnamrta quotes eight verses under the name of Madhu who is said to Dharmadhikaranika (judge). His father Vatudasa was a very close loyal officer of Laksmana Sena. The well-known Sena king Laksmana Sena composed several verses which are quoted in the Sadukti Karnamrta and the Sarghadhara-Paddhati. In his inscription he is called Parama Vaisnava and almost all of these begin with an invocation to the Lord Narayana. His verses, therefore, often referred to Krsna. There are, however, several verses composed by him which contain beautiful description of nature.

Sarana, a contemporary of the poet Jayadeva has to his credit a good number of beautiful Sanskrit, verses quoted in the anthologies. But nothing definite is known about Sarana, for till now no complete work of this poet has been discovered. Jayadeva has praised Sarana as the best in composing difficult verses

“Saranah slaghyo duruha-druteh ...” Gitagovinda 1.4.

Sridharadasa. Was the author of the anthology named Saduktikarnamrta. This book consists of 2380 verses. In the colophon at the end of each pravaha of this book Sridharadasa calls himself Mahamandalika or the divisional officer. In giving the complete shape of this book Sridharadasa has undertaken much labour. These verses have been compiled by him from more than 450 authors, some of whose names are mentioned and some are not. The verses have been fairly selected and proportionately distributed under several subjects. We came to know the names of several authors of Bengal only because of Sridharadasa's Saduktikarnamrta.

The most celebrated author of the Sena period was Halayudha Misra who composed a very learned work named Brahmanasarasva. Halayudha even in his early days was appointed at the post of Raja-pandita and in his youth he was given the post of Mahamatya of Laksmana Sena. In his mature age he became the mahadharmadhikara, i.e. a senior judge. Besides Brahmanasarasva, Halayudha wrote Mimamsasarasva, Vaisnava-sarasva, Saiva sarvasva and Pandita Sarasva. The reason behind composing the Brahmanasarasva is that the Brahmans in Radha and Varendra did not study the Veda and therefore did not know the Vedic rites properly. Halayudha dealt in his book with rites laid down in the Vaja-saneyi-samhita. He said to have composed the commentary on the Sraddha-paddhati. But it has not been discovered. The Purana-sarasva and Sekasubhodaya are also attributed to Halayudhao But presently it has been established that Halayudha, the author of the last two mentioned works and at least of the Sekasubhodaya was a different person than the author of Brahmanasarasva.

From the list of the Sanskrit poets and authors mentioned above it can be easily concluded that Bengal under the Sena rulers had a wide culture of Sanskrit studies. Unfortunately, we are not able to get the works of all these authors, perhaps because the manuscripts of their works are lost or these are preserved in some unknown places. If at least in future some of these works

come to light, a new horizon will be open to the Sanskrit lovers and Bengal's contribution to Sanskrit learning will then be established more effectively.

Laksmansasena's impetus to the wide cultivation of Sanskrit Literature-works of Dhoyi, Umapatidhara and Jayadeva.

Laksmansasena must have come to the throne at a fairly old age and it appears that he devoted much of his time in peaceful activities. He was also a great patron of his time. He himself composed several Sanskrit verses and some of them are preserved in the Saduktikarnamrta. He also completed the Adbhutasagara which was left unfinished by his father Vallalasesna. His court was ornamented with a large number of famous poets such as Jayadeva the celebrated author of Gitagovinda, Sarana, Dhoyi, the author of Pavanaduta and also Govardhana, the author of Aryasaptasati. Jayadeva has singled out five poets of the Sena court including himself and has described what in his opinion constitutes the forte or characteristic quality of writings of each. The names of these five are Umapatidhara, Jayadeva, Sarana, Govardhana and Dhoyi. It is not quite clear whether the order in which he has mentioned these names shows that the succeeding was looked upon as of a higher rank than that of the preceding name, in the hierarchy of literati then prevalent. At any rate, Dhoyi, the last mentioned seems to have been looked upon as the poet-laureate of the Sena court because Jayadeva calls him Kaviksmapati, i.e., the king of the poets. This agrees with what Dhoyi has said of himself at the end of his work, the Pavavaduta. There he styles himself as the paramount lord of the kings viz. the poets.

Sridharadasa, the son of Vatudasa who is described as the chief feudatory (mahasamanta cudamani) ⁹ and a close friend of Laksmansa Sena, completed his Saduktikarnamrta, an anthology of Sanskrit verses during the reign of Laksmansa Sena. Halayudha Misra, the author of the Brahmana Sarvasva, was the chief minister and chief judge of Laksmansa Sena's court. Umapatidhara, the composer of the Deopara pras'asti of the time of Vijaya Sena also lived in the period of Laksmansa Sena. Merutunga in his Prabandhacintamani speaks of Umapatidhara as a minister of Laksmansa Sena. Jayadeva describes Umapatidhara as one of the several poets gracing the court of Laksmansa Sena.

The high tribute paid by Jayadeva to Acarya Govardhana that he had no rival in the composition of faultless erotic verse enables us to identify him with Govardhan acarya, author of Aryasaptasati, a punning verse (No. 39) of which refers to an illustrious king of the Sena dynasty (sena-kula-tilakabhupati). The poem, as its name indicates, is a collection of a little over 700 detached verses in the Arya metre, alphabetically arranged in sections most of which have a predominantly erotic theme.

Jayadeva also refers to another poetical contemporary named Sarana who in his opinion, was praiseworthy in quick and difficult composition, Saranadeva, the other grammarian of the Sena court composed Durghatavrtti, a work in which difficult usages of doubtful grammatical accuracy, picked up from classical authors, are justified with nicety. In the beginning of the Durghatavrtti he says that his work was composed in 1172 A.D. As the date of Durghatavrtti is 1172 A.D., his time certainly coincides with that of Vallala and Laksmansa. Therefore, he is most probably the same Saranadeva who has been mentioned by Jayadeva, Jayadeva says, "Sarana is praiseworthy in liquefying the stiff" (slaghyo duruhadrute).

We will now give a short account of three erudite scholars who have adorned the court of king Laksmansa Sena.

Dhoyi - Dhoyi is the celebrated author of the Pavanaduta, a short poetical work, consisting of 104 stanzas, written in the Mandakranta metre evidently in imitation of Kalidasa's famous work "Meghaduta". He has been called Kaviksmapati by Jayadeva. More light is thrown upon this matter by the account which the poet gives about himself at the end of his work. In V. 101, he says that being "The paramount Lord of the kings, namely the poets", he obtained from the king of Gauda a host of elephants caparisoned in gold and the gold-handed chowry. This clearly shows that he was looked upon as the poet-laureate of the Sena Court. The same verse is quoted in the Sadukti-karnamrta but with the second half entirely different. A traditional verse¹⁰ speaks of five, if not nine, gems of his court and they are enumerated as Govardhana, Sarana, Jayadeva, Umapati and Kaviraja. We know nothing of this Kaviraja which is obviously a title borne by many a poet. He cannot be identified with the well-known Kaviraja, author of the Raghava-pandaviya, whose patron was Kamadeva of the Kadamba dynasty (1.13). It has been suggested with greater probability that the Kaviraja refers to Dhoyi who is described by Jayadeva as Kaviksmapati and who styles himself similarly in his own Pavanaduta (verses 101, 103). Jayadeva describes him also as Srutidhara, an epithet over the interpretation of which as an intended compliment there has been much diversity of opinion. But that occurring in the Saduktikarnamrta tells us that Dhoyi attained in the Sena court to as much eminence as Vararuci did in the assembly of Vikramaditya by means of the quality of being a srutidhara. Vararuci was noted for this memory feat, and Dhoyi evidently seems to have excelled in that art. Verse 102 of the Pavanaduta says that, among many other things, he is longing for

(i) Vaidarbhariti or Vidharbha style of composition so far as the arrangements of words is concerned.

(ii) residence on the banks of the Ganges and

(iii) the office of an acarya of the kings.

Now with regard to the first item there can be no doubt that the Pavanaduta exhibits the Vaidharbha style almost to a perfection. As regards the second matter, as he was in the capital of the Sena kingdom he was naturally on the banks of the holy river. The third point, however, is not quite clear, for as the Pavanaduta was composed in honour of Laksmana Sena, as we shall shortly see, he was the protege of that Sena prince and when therefore he expresses his longing to be an acarya to kings, this can be taken to refer to the members of the Sena dynasty only and it is not at all impossible that he was an acarya to this royal family for three generations from Vijaya down to Laksmana. The last verse, viz. V.104, expresses the resolution of his mind to fix itself on Brahma by residing on the banks of the Ganges apparently in a temple of Siva. This shows that the Pavanaduta was the last of his compositions. It has been suggested by some scholars that Dhoyi Kaviksmapati is identical with Dhuyi or Dvayi who is mentioned in the Candraprabha as the ancestor of Vaidyas belonging to a branch of the Saktigotra. The title Kaviksmapati is equivalent to 'Kaviraja' the modern designation of the Vaidyas of Bengal. The story of the Pavanaduta in brief is this :- once upon a time king Laksmanasenadeva while on an expedition for world conquest went to the Sandal hill where there was a town of the Gandharvas. The daughter of the Gandharva king, Kuvalayavati by name seeing the charm, and beauty of the person of the king, at once fell in love with him. Then in order to communicate her love tidings to the king Laksmana, she prayed to the wind to be her messenger and deliver her tale of woe to the king who resided in Gauda. Then she describes the various countries and routes through which the bearer of her love message is to pass in order to reach Vijayapura, the capital of her beloved. The story ends with the final instruction by the lady to the messenger regarding the manner in which the news of her pangs and sufferings caused on account of her separation from the king, should be communicated to him. Dhoyi refers to several unnamed works composed by himself. This is rendered likely by the fact that more than twenty verses, not traceable in the poem are ascribed to him in the anthologies.

Umapatidhara

Nothing particularly is known about the residence and family history of the poet Umapatidhara. He most probably adorned the courts of three successive Sena kings from Vijaya to Laksmana. The name of Umapatidhara occurs as a composer of the Prasasti in the Deopara inscription of Vijayasena. This proves that he was the court poet of king Vijayasena. That he lived in the reign of King Laksmana Sena appears from the fact that Sridharasa, the compiler of the Saduktikarnamrta, quotes a verse of Umapatidhara in praise of his (Sridharadasa's) father Vatudasa in his anthology. Vatudasa was a friend and officer of Laksmana Sena. His principal poetical composition so far known to us is his Deopara-prasasti.¹¹ In fact, besides the Deopara-prasasti, we get about more than a hundred stray verses quoted in various anthologies. All of them are not of equal merit. It was such an excellent piece of poetical eminence that no less than four of these verses (Nos. 7, 23, 24, 30) occur in the Saduktikarnamrta (III. 49. 4; III. 17.5; III. 5. 5; III. 17. 4.) with Umapatidhara's name; while one verse ascribed to Umapatidhara in the anthology (1.72.4) is found in the Madhainagar copper-plate of Laksmanasena (V.2), the authorship of which, on this ground, has sometimes been credited to him. The Deopara inscription informs us that Umapatidhara lived during the reign of Vijaya Sena of the Sena dynasty (senanvaya) and refers to the author's "understanding purified by the study of words and their meanings". If any reliance can be placed on the tradition recorded by Merutunga in his Prabandha-cintamani that Umapatidhara was a minister of Laksmana Sena, then he lived in the successive reigns of Vijaya Sena, his son and grandson. In the Gitagovinda Jayadeva speaks about Umapatidhara as vacah pallavayatyumapatidharah which means Umapatidhara makes his words exaggerated i.e. he lengthened verses by addition of adjectives, compound words etc. In a few verses Umapatidhara has supplied us with some historical facts such as in these verses (III. 20.4; III. 26.4; V. 18.3) quoted in Sadukti-karnamrta reference is made to some unknown kings probably some Sena kings in connection with Pragjyotisa, Kasi Janapada and mlechha narendra. In another verses Umapatidhara mentions liberal gifts to a poet for a work named Candracudacarita composed under a prince named Canakya- candra, who is otherwise unknown but who is conjectured by Pischel to have been a vassal of Laksmana Sena.

Jayadeva

Of all the poets of the Sena court, Jayadeva is the only one who has gained all-India reputation and who is still read and loved by the scholars and the ordinary people alike. His name is a household word in Bengal and his influence in shaping the subsequent Bengali literature was not insignificant. He is practically a fore-runner of the Vaisnava literature of Bengal - a class of literature which is immensely popular and which has consoled and still consoles many a poor forlorn soul. Such is the immense hold of Jayadeva on the minds of the Bengali poets that even such a great and eminent poet as Rabindra Nath Tagore is not free from it. The characteristic sweetness and softness of language that are visible in the poems of Rabindranath are, it is believed, the outcome of his reading Jayadeva extensively. He has read the lyrics of Jayadeva so thoroughly that sometimes he quotes Jayadeva verbatim unconsciously. For instance, Jayadeva has, alikula-sankula-kusuma-samuhe nirakula- vakula-kalape (Gitagovinda V.29) and Rabindranath writes Nirakula phulabhare vakula vagana. It seems Jayadeva obtained this popularity far earlier. The manuscript copies of the Gitagovinda lie scattered all over India from Nepal and Kashmir downwards and no less than 37 commentaries of the Gitagovinda have so far been found the earliest known among them being the Rasika-priya by the powerful king of Udaipur, Kumbhakarna who belonged to the 15th century. It is a matter of great regret that very little is

known about Jayadeva authentically, Mithila, Orissa and Bengal, each has claimed him to be her own. M, Chakraborti has examined each of the traditions claiming Jayadeva to be an Oriya, a Maithili or a Bengali and he is of opinion that the tradition which says that he was a native of Bengal is the most reliable.¹² The name of Jayadeva's home which appears in the second line of III. 10 is variously read as Kenduivilva, Kenduvilla, Kendubilva, Kendubilla, Sinduivilva and Tinduivilva.¹³ The tradition of Bengal identifies it with modern Kenduli in the district of Birbhum. on the north bank of the river Ajaya where an annual fair in memory of the poet is still held on the 1st day of the month of Magha. Some of the manuscripts of the Gitagovinda give the name of his father as Bhojadeva, of his mother as Ramadevi (variants Radha, Varna) and his friend as Parasara. But as these passages are not found in such old commentaries as the Rasika-priya these are very doubtful. Such passages in the Gitagovinda as Padmavati- carana-carana-cakravorti (Birst half of 1.2) and Padmavati- ramana-Jayadeva-Kavibharati-bhanita-matisatana, etc., seem to corroborate the tradition.¹⁴ But as the old commentaries like the Rasikapriya do not support the reading we are not justified in asserting our own view in one way or the other. The posterior limit of Jayadeva's time is fixed by his verses being quoted in the Sadukti-karnamrta which was composed in 1206 A.D. The anterior limit is ascertained from the mention of Dhoyi and other poets in 1.4. In all probability he could not have flourished earlier than the reign of Laksmansena.

The Gitagovinda with its erotic emotionalism, has been claimed by the Caitanya sect as one of its sources of religious inspiration and Bengal Vaisnavism would regard the work not so much as a poetical composition of great beauty as an authoritative religious text, illustrating the refined subtleties of its theology and Rasa-sastra. This poem has been imitated in some later works like Abhinava Gitagovinda, Ramagitagovinda and such others. The Hindi Bhaktamal of Nabhadasa (edited and rewritten by Narayandasa in the middle of the 17th century) as well as the Sanskrit Bhaktamala by Candradatta based on Gitagovinda, records some legends regarding the life history of Jayadeva, So, there can be no doubt that the Gitagovinda, both in its emotional and literary aspects, occupies a distinctive place in the history of Sanskrit poetry.

Halayudha Misra and works ascribed to him.

Halayudha Misra was a brilliant luminary in the galaxy of talents that adorned the court of King Laksmansena of Bengal in the 12th century A.D. He was born in a wealthy family that took more pride in religious observances and Brahmanical practices than, in the possession of material prosperity. His father Dhananjaya of Vatsagotra married Ujjvala and became a Dharmadhyaksa or judge. Halayudha's residence is mentioned as possessing signs of both religious austerity and material prosperity. There were in his residence wooden implements, golden vessels, skins of antelopes, costly garment, fumes of sacrificial offerings and fragrance of burning incense. Halayudha, a versatile scholar equally at home in the different branches of learning, had acquired proficiency specially in Veda, Purana, Mimamsa and Dharma— sastra. He became a favourite of the reigning king, and received from him different assignments, one after another carrying honour and responsibility of varying degrees befitting his age.¹⁵ Appointed as a Raja-Pandita in his early career, Halayudha was given in his youth the respectable post of the Mahamahattaka.¹⁶ Later in life, he was entrusted with the office of Dharmadhikara, which he considered appropriate for his advanced years (yauvanasesayogva)

balye khyapitarajapanditapadah svetamsubimbojjvalac

chatrotsiktamahamahattakapadam dattva nave yauvane / yasmai yauvanas'esayogyamakhilaksmapanarayanah
srimallaksmansenadevanrpatirdharmadhikaram dadau //

Br., Opening Verse No. 12, p.2.

Besides mentioning here his last occupation as Dharmadhi- kara, Halayudha styles himself at different places of the Brahmanasarasva, Dharmadhyaksa, Mahadharmadhyaksa, Gauda - vasudhadhisa - dharmadhyaksa, Gaudendra-dharma-kosadhikarm, Dharmadhikrta and Gaudendra-mahadharmadhika'rin. Halayudha's father Dhananjaya is also called Dharmadhyaksa and Dharmadhi. karika. All these expressions in their contexts appear to refer to an office connected with certain religious affairs of the State and not to the post of a judge as is generally believed. The word dharmadhikara occurs in the Abhijnana- sakuntalam of Kalidasa (Act. I) where Dusyanta introduces himself to the girls in the hermitage as dharmadhikare niyuktah (employed in Dharmadhikara). One of his duties had been, as was represented by him, to ascertain whether the religious rites in the holy forest were free from obstacles. Thus Dharmadhikara was like a Directorate of Religion of the State, helping the king in his religious undertakings. Halayudha Halayudha as well as his brother Pasupati is referred to in the Brahmanasarasva as "Avasathika". This term may only be used in respect of one who keeps the domestic fire (Avasathya) burning with daily offerings. Their father Dhananjaya was also a regular sacrificer (Yajvan) and his family enjoyed royal patronage at least for two generations,¹⁷ adhered strictly to Vedic practices. Members of the family acquired also reputation for their literary activities. Halayudha's two elder brothers Pasupati and Isana wrote manuals on Sraddha and Ahnika respectively. The former had also made a great name by composing a work on Paka- Yajna, which became so popular that Halayudha did not attempt to write further on the subject.¹⁸

Halayudha is a voluminous writer. He wrote a large number of works including the Brahmana-sarvasva, in which he had explained all the vedic Mantras prescribed for recitation in the various Grhya rites. He informs us that besides the Brahmana-sarvasva, he wrote Mimamsa-sarvasva, Vaisnava-sarvasva, Saiva-sarvasva and Pandita-sarvasva. The last two works are quoted by Raghunandana, but none of these works appears to have come down to us. The Brahmana-sarvasva which had been printed, is a work of great repute in Bengal. Halayudha informs us that he wrote this work because he found that the Brahmans of Radha and Varendradid not study the Veda and therefore did not know the Vedic rites properly. Its main object is to supply a guide meant for the followers of Kanva Recension of the Vajasaneya Yajurveda, particularly the Radhiyas and the Varendras among them, to a knowledge of the meanings of the Vedic Mantras employed in the daily (Ahnika) rites and the periodical domestic (Grhya) ceremonies known as Samskaras. Accordingly it deals in forty sections with the various daily duties, such as the morning ablution, prayers, hospitality, the study of the Veda, and daily offerings to the Pitrs and then proceeds to the treatment of the periodical Acaras including the ten sacraments of a Brahman, 's life. As every such rite involves recitation of the Vedic Mantras, their explanation (Mantra-bhasya) forms the chief feature of the work. He acknowledges generously his indebtedness to Ubhata and Gunavisnu, but he appears to have made considerable use also of Chandogya-paris'ista of Katyayana and the Grhyasutra of Paraskara. Our Halayudha should be distinguished from several Halayudhas who wrote on Dharmasastra, as well as from the lexicographer, grammarian and prosodist Halayudha, who wrote the Abhidhana-ratna-mala and the Kavi-rahasva.

The another work of Halayudha is Mimamsa-sarvasva. A portion of a Mimamsa-sastra-sarvasva containing discussion on the first three Books of the Mimamsa-sutra of Jaimini has been published, but there is room for questioning Halayudha's authorship of the work.¹⁹

Halayudha's own remark in the Brahmana-sarvasva made in connection with the explanation of the Purusa-sukta (Brahmana-sarvasva, p.132) shows that the application of the same sukta in the worship of Visnu was a subject discussed in detail in Vaisnava-sarvasva.

“esa yadyapi Vaisnava-sarvasva eva tattadvisesena pratipadita tathapi purusasuktavyakaraprasafigadeta-diyamahatmyam punarihapi kimcidabhidhiyate”.

Passages from the Vaisnava-sarvasva, once at least along with Halayudha's name, have been quoted several times in Mahes'akavi's Acaracandrodaya or Madhava-prakasa.

The Saiva-sarvasva and the Pandita-sarvasva are quoted in the Smrti-tattvas of Raghunandana. The Orissa State Museum at Bhuvaneshvar possesses a complete Ms. of Halayudha's Pandita-sarvasva (I D H 12IB) and one Ms. of a work of the same title by an anonymous author. The Pandita-sarvasva deals miscellaneously with the usage of Varnas and Asramas, Tithi, Suddhi, time for Sraddha and other ceremonies and so forth; but it gives no name of the author. From the extracts given in the catalogue the question of authorship cannot be determined. The catalogue of Manuscripts in Mithila contains a description of a Ms. of Halayudha's Prayas'citt a-sarvasva in 145 folio.²⁰ The colophon of the Ms. indicates that the work forms a part of the author's Pandita-sarvasva – “iti panditasarvasvam pustakam padonamsamaptam”.

Besides these Sarvasvas, Raghunandana mentions a Samvatsarapradipa of HaTayudha. References to the name of the work are also met with in some other Smrtinibandhas of Bengal.²¹ Anonymous Mss. of a work of the same title are known to exist in different parts of the country. Internal evidence in one of suchl. definitely points to Halayudha being the author of the Samvatsara-pradipa. But the question still remained to be settled whether this Halayudha was the author of Brahmana-sarvasva.

Halayudha and his works have been utilised by later- writers from different parts of India. But a number of Halayudhas flourished at various times here and there. So the Halayudha-bhasya on the Sraddha-sutras mentioned in various works, particularly in the Sraddhakasika of Krsna- misra and the Sraddha-ganapati and the Samskara-ganapati of Ramakrsna may or may not be a composition of the author of the Brahmana-sarvasva. Although it is considered that the authors of both Sekasubhodaya and Brahmana-sarvasva are the same and one person, yet from the present study it has been revealed that it is not so. We can also conclude that these two works have not come from the pen of one and the same author Halayudha, the Dharmadhyaksa of Laksmasena.

Footnote

1. Mitra, Notice, 1.191.No – 278; H.P Sastri, Notices, and series, i, P -170.
2. M. Chakraborty believes (JASB, 1906, P-159) that this Udayana may be identical with the Udayanakavi who composed the Pragasti of Maghesvara temple at Bhuvaneshvara in Orissa.(EI. VI. 202).
3. Deopara Inscription of Vijaya Sena, IB – 111. PP. 43 FF. EI. 1. 305-315.
4. Journal of the Asiatic society of Bengal, 1906, P. 161.
5. Saduktikarnamrta, ed Ramavatasarma, Lahore, 1933, 1.54-V

6. Sarngadharapaddhati, ed. P. Peterson, Bombay, 1988. No – 466.
7. Ed. Kavyamala 1. Bombay 1886 (Reprinted 1895), with Vyangarthadiana. Commentary of Ananta Pandit, and also ed. Somanath Sarma, Dacea Samvat 1921.
8. The poem was first brought to notice by H.P. Sastri. (In Notices, and series, 1. Pt.2, PP.221-222, No-225),who gave an abstract of its contents in proc. ASB. July 1898. It was edited from a single Ms. By Manomohan Chakraborty in JASB.1905, PP. 53-71, re-edited by Chintaharan Chakraborty in SPS.,No-13, Calcutta 1926)
9. Whose high praise is recorded in five Varses (V.76.1-5) respectively of Five contemporary poets, Nathu ,Sancadhara, Vatala, lemapatidhra and Kaviraja Vyasa. The Colophon Speaks of Sridharadasa as Mahamandalika.
10. Subhasitavli of Vallabha-deva, ed.P. Peterson. Bombay 1886., Introduction to P-38.
“GovardhanasEa Sarano Jayadeva Umapatih /
Kavirajas Caratnani Samitau Laksmanasyaca”//
11. Deopara Inscription of Vijoya Sena, IB -111,PP. 46-56. SI -Vol. I. PP. 305-315;JASB,Vd XXXIV, Part-1, PP.128-54.
12. JASB.1906, PP. 163-65
13. Ibid. PP.163-5.
14. Ibid.P. 166.
15. “Avrttya Sadrasi niyasya vayasah Prapta Mahapatra” (Brahmana – Sarvasva,barse No.10. The spurious reading prapto mahamatyata for prapta Mahapatata printed in the So-called editions of the Brahmana-sarvasva has given rise to the notion that Halayudha was for sometime the chief minister of Laksmanasena . The notion,on the face of it, is probably wrong, because a chief minister relegated to a lower position could never remain Contented as Halayudha apparently was . The evidence of MSS. Also does not Support the reading Mahamayata .
16. i. Sdilpur Cooper-plate of Kesavasena, IB-111, P. 126.
ii. Madanpara Copper-plate of Visvarupasena, Ibid., P. 161.
iii. Gaya Inscription, SI. XII. P. 27
17. That Halayudha and his father Dhananjaya were Dharmadhyaksa or Dharmadhikarika of the king has already been shown. Bankim Chandra, the great Bengali writer, has depicted Pasupati as holding the office of Dharmadhikara and wielding extraordinary power in Laksmanasena is reign. Gauda deser Dharmadhikar Pasupati asadharan Vyakti. (Mrinalini, Vangiya Sahitya Parisat, B.S. 1345, P.46)
18. i. Bramana Sarvasva , opening varse No.24.P.5.
ii. Ibid, varse.No.43. P.7
19. Umesha Mishra, Journal of the Bihar and OrissaResearch Society, vol. XVII, XVIII.
20. Descriptive Catalogue of Manuscripts in Mithila, vol. I, P. 325, No.283.
21. Rc. Hazra, the Samvatsara – Pradipa, Indian Historical Quarterly, vol. XXI, PP. 49-55.

Abbreviation

EI – Epigraphic Indica

IB – Inscription of Benga

JASB – Journal of the Asiatic society of Bengal