

P A R T : I

A U T H O R

C H A P T E R : I

Macdonell rightly observes, " history is the weak spot in the Indian literature. It is in fact, non-existent. The total lack of the historical sense is so characteristic, that the whole cause of Sanskrit literature is earned by the shadow of the defect, suffering, as it does form an entire absence of exact chronology.¹" This seems true not only in the case of Bhāsa, Kālidāsa and others but also in the case of the later poets like Jagannātha, Venkaṭādhvarin and others. Only a few poets gave their account in some what details. Bāṇabhatta gave his life-sketch in his prose work Harṣacaritam. Daṇḍī gave his life-sketch in Avantīsundarīkathā. Bhavabhūti also gives account of his life in the introductory stanzas of his dramas. Likewise Venkaṭādhvarin gives a little account of his life which is somewhat helpful to trace his life-sketch. He does not follow Daṇḍī or Bāṇabhatta in this connection; that is why one ought to depend on the introductory stanzas and colophons to his works and the legends woven around his life or the references indicating his life found in his works².

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1. Macdonell A.A., A History of Sanskrit Literature, 1965, preface pp.8
 2. For introductory stanzas and colophons to his works Appendix- I 'Biographical account'

For the life-sketch of Venkaṭādhvarin one has to take help of the introductory stanzas and colophons to his works. Legends woven around the poet bear no historicity. From the introductory stanzas and the colophons to his works the life-sketch can be traced as under.

He hails from a very learned family of Ātreya go-
tra of Araśānīpāla, a village near Kāñcī or ~~Conj~~ Conjee-
varam. Among his ancestors the name of Śrīmad yatindra
Māhānāsika Praṇatārtiharācārya occurs in Ācāryapañcāśat,
Vidhitrayaparitrāna and Varadābhyudaya Campū. This Praṇa-
tārtiharācārya was a direct disciple of Rāmānujācārya (
11 th cent.A.D.), the founder of the spiritual monism
and Ramanuja cult in vaisnavism, and the author of Śrī-
bhāṣya. He earned the epithets like Māhānāsika and Vedā-
ntodayanaḥ from the authors of Bhāṣyas, and Kidāmbi acc-
āna from the followres of the Rāmānuja school³. Venkaṭeśa,
author of the Rāmacandrodaya and Śleṣayamakārnava bows
to this Praṇatārtiharācārya, as his ancestor and first
preacher of his Guru school in the benedictory stanzas
of Rāmacandrodaya⁴. The second name among his ancestors
which he often refers to, is Vādhamsāmbudācārya in al-
most all his works. His true name seems to be Rāmānujā-
cārya, the author of Nyāyakulīśa. As the colophon to

3. Vidhitrayapritrāna of Venkaṭādhvarin edited by K.
Sathakopācārya, 1954. pp.12 Introduction.

4. Rāmacandrodaya (DCS Adyar Library Catalogue vol.
IX 1952 pt. V D.3731) composed by Venkaṭeśa in
Saka 4736 corresponding to 1635 A.D.

यतीन्द्रकृतज्ञापत्रं तन्महानसकिकं करम् । आत्रेयप्रवणं वन्दे प्रजापतिद्विरं गुरुम् ॥१॥

his work Nyāyakulisa⁵ runs, he was a son of Padmanābhācārya, known as 'Kidāmbi Appulāra' of Atri gotra, native of Araśānipāla near Kāñcī, and maternal uncle of Vedāntadesika. He was also Guru of Vedāntadesika. He is said to have earned many epithets like 'Vādhamsāmbudācārya', 'Kidāmbi Appulāra' from the followers of the school, and 'Vācāmagocarah' being difficult to face in dialectics which shows his proficiency in different sciences, literature and philosophical works. Dr. Satyanarayana Singh describes him as the fourth descent from Rāmanuja.⁶ According to the colophon to Ācāryapañcāśat he was a 'naptr' grandson of Pranātārtihara. He was Simhāsanādhipati at Kāñcī. He was believed to be an incarnation of Garuda, a vehicle of Viṣṇu.⁷

Our celebrated poet Venkaṭādhvarin mentions the name of Srinivāsa alias Appayācārya, Appayārya or Appayadīkṣita, who performed many sacrifices like Vājapeya, Sāvapr̥sthā, Aptoryāma etc. He was a son of Tātācārya's sister. This Tātārya or Tātācārya was a preceptor of Karnāṭaka king Venkaṭa II, a king of Vijayanagara. Tātācārya was famous for uprooting the five schools of philosophy, hence he was known as Pañcamatabhañjana. He was also a chief (nāyaka) pandita at Kāñcī. Srinivāsa or Appayadīkṣita,

5. इत्यभिगोत्र प्रदीप श्रीपद्मनाभाचरिन्द (न) २४ वादिहस्ताभुदाभिधानरथ स्नाङ्गानि-
गामान्तमहा (रे) शिकमापुला चरिन्द..... अस्तोकाधरि कधि विदुन्मणि काञ्ची परा -
म्बु अरशापिपलधने का गृह्यर प्रतिष्ठा समुन्धित यत्रास्कश्रीवेड; कटा चरिन्दनेकयास -
प्राजितनरथ वाचामगोचरस्वधिरुदाडि; कर्क-थ शमाउ जास्व कृतिषु चयकुलीशे
शरीरपादो श्वादेशः ।

6. Vedāntadesika: A study. 1958 pp. 130.

7. For colophon: Appendix' Biographical account !

a nephew of Tātācārya, who might be a preceptor, was highly educated and was a pearl among the learneds (Vidvan-maṇi) and a jewel of his family.

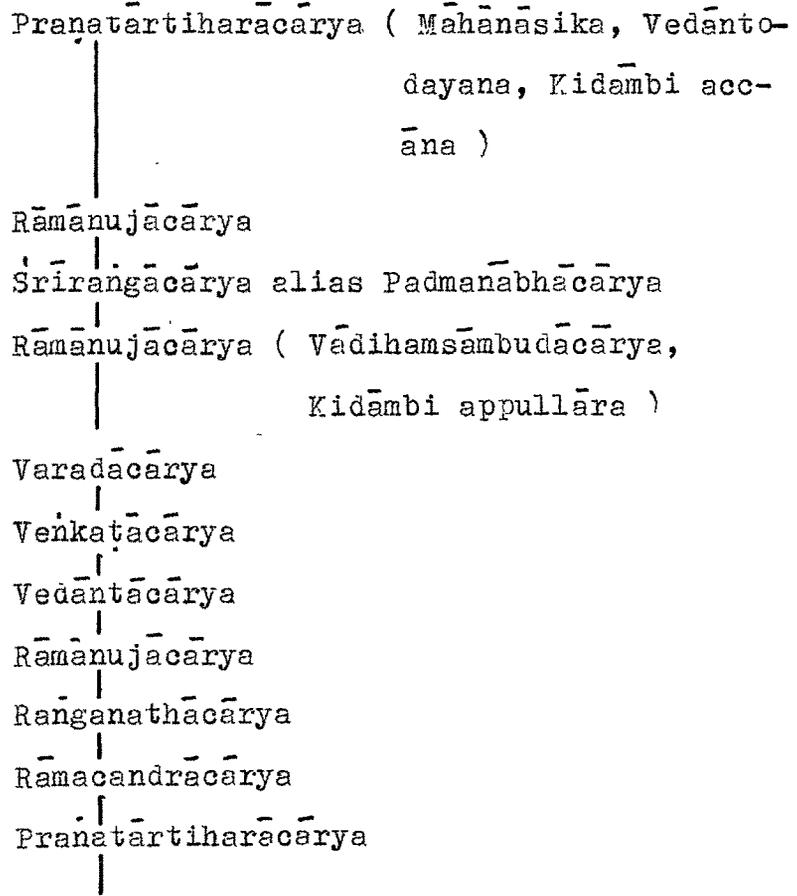
It is interesting to note that this Appayādīkṣita is other than the famous Appayādīkṣita of Bhāradvāja gotra and belonged to Śrīkanṭha school, an author of ~~Va-~~valayānanda, a rival of Tātācārya, and an ancestor of Nīlakanṭhadīkṣita, author of Nīlakanṭhavijaya Campū.

Our versatile poet learnt nyāya from his grand father Śrīnivācārya (Suvidita-nayasya).

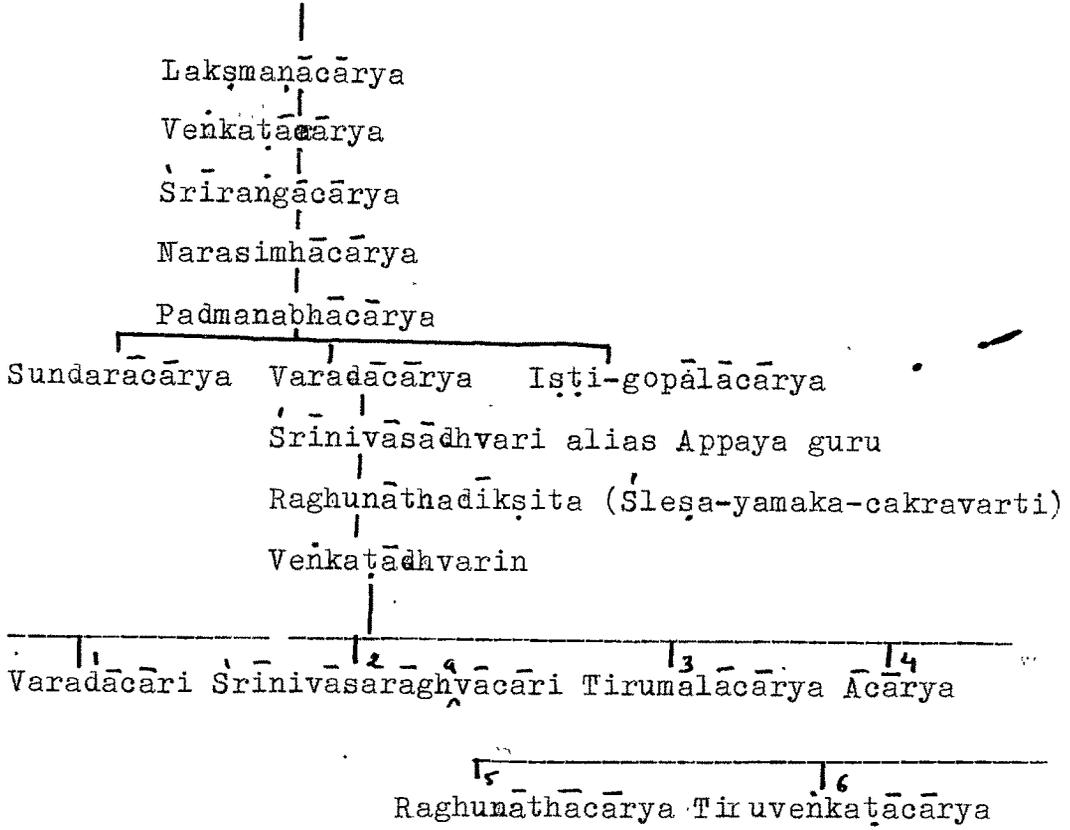
Raghunāthadīkṣita, the father of our celebrated author Venkaṭādhvarin was the son of Śrīnivāsācārya alias Appayārya, Appayācārya, or Appayadīkṣita. In most of the introductory stanzas and colophons Venkaṭādhvarin refers to him as a preceptor or Guru particularly in Yatiprativandanakhaṇḍanam (v.3). Raghunātha was known as Deśika, Ācārya, Ārya and Yajvan. Once in Subhāṣitakaustubham (v. I.1) the poet calls him a Sūri. He was well known for pun and alliteration, hence he is called Śleṣayamakacakra⁸avarti. He is said to be author of Jānakīrāghavam. He is also famous for performing many sacrifices like his father and earned the reputation as Adhvari or Yajvan. The

8. This information was supplied by Śrī N.Śrīnivāsa Rāghavācārya, a direct descent in the family of Varada, the ~~second~~ son of the second wife of Śrīnivāsādhvari.

title ' Deśika ' indicates a group of his followers who ever obeyed him. He is said to be a son of the third wife of Śrīnivāsādhvari.⁹ He married Sītāmbā through whom he begot a son named Venkaṭādhvarin. Venkaṭādhvarin also is said to have six sons named Varadācāri, Śrīnivāsarāghavācāri, Tirumalācārya, Ācārya, Rāghunathācārya, and Tiruveṅkaṭācārya. The last of these left no issue behind him.¹⁰ The names of the twelve generations are yet preserved. Here is a tree of geneology of our poet's ancestors :



9. The information supplied by Śrī Śrīnivāsarāghavācāri.
10. The tree of geneology supplied by Śrīnivāsarāghavā-
cāri.



Venkātādhvarin refers to only Pranātārtiharācārya, Vādhamsāmbudācārya, Srinivāsādhvari and Raghunāthadīkṣita, his father. Geneological tree from Pranātārtiharācārya to Vādhamsāmbudācārya whose sister was Totārambā, mother of Vedāntadesika is also referred to in Ācārya Campū.¹¹ Sri M. Krishnamachariar points out that Varada Ātreya, author of Anāṅgavijaya bhāṣa and a poem Kṛṣṇābhyudaya was the second son of Srinivāsādhvari.¹² This Annā Varadadesikārya was a first son of second wife of Srinivāsādhvari.¹³ Sri M. Krishnamachariar also opines that Venkātā

12. Ācāryavijaya Campū, Ācārya ~~Vijaya~~ vidyapeetham series-1, edited by S. Anatacari, 1964, New Delhi.
 12. M. Krishnamacharya, History of Classical Sanskrit Literature, pp. 702, fn. 21: DCS XXI.8342; TC VIII.3566.
 13. As information supplied by Srinivasareghavacari.

eśa Ātreya, author of Rāmayamakārnava (composed in Śaka 1578 or 1656 A.D.) and Rāmacandrodaya (composed in Kali year 4736 corresponding to 1635 A.D.) was also belonged to this learned family of Ātreya gotra of Araśāṅipāla. He was born in Kali year 4697 or 1596 A.D. at Araśāṅipāla, a native place of our poet Venkaṭādhvarin¹⁴. In the benedictory verses of Rāmacandrodaya the author propitiates and enumerates the names of Pranatārtiharācārya (v.1), Rāmānuja (yatiraja) (v.2), Padmanābha (v.3) and Rāmānuja (v.4)¹⁵ in the list of gurus corresponding to the pedigree of the geneological tree of our poet. The colophon to Rāmacandrodaya declares him to be grand son of Nṛsimhācārya and son of Śrīnivāsācārya¹⁶. This pedigree rightly corresponds to that of our poet from Nṛsimhācārya to Śrīnivāsādhvari. This leads us to the conclusion that Venkaṭeśa Ātreya was a son of Śrīnivāsādhvari, brother of Raghunātha and paternal uncle of Venkaṭādhvarin. Venkaṭeśa Ātreya claims to have learnt the various śāstras from Sītānātha, husband of Sītā i.e. Sītāmbā, wife of Raghunātha and mother of our poet. Thus he studied the various śāstras under his elder brother Raghunatha.¹⁷

14. M.Krishnamachariar, op.cit.para 336.

15. TC Vol.VI 2658,2664

16. नृसिंहदत्तपौत्रस्य पौत्रः कवीन्द्रस्तथा वेङ्कटेशाचमित्रः प्रसिद्धः।
स्वयं श्रीनिवासार्थस्त्रुतुः स्वकाव्यं लघुव्याख्यानार्थनाम्नेः कटेशः ॥

17. आत्रेयः श्रीनिवासाख्यस्य गुरुतनयः काव्यरत्नं व्यतानीत्
सीतानाम् प्रसादप्रकटितदिक्षणो रामचन्द्रोदयारव्याप्तः।
आसीतेशाभिषेकादुदितशुभिकर्षं विंशत्या यत्तु सर्गैः
तस्मिन्नाभाभिषेकाभ्युदयशुभिकक्षेत्रांश आसीत् सर्गः ॥

Life and personality:

Generally the events happened in the life of the Sanskrit poets are behind the curtain of darkness. Macdonell rightly remarks, " we usually know nothing at all, and only a few cases one or two general ¹⁸ facts." Consequently life-sketches of the poets are drawn with the help of the legends woven around. In the same way no account of our poet's early life or life is available, hence it is very difficult trace his life-sketch.

After completion of his study he might have joined as a court poet in the court of some king. Traditionally he is said to be the court poet of Pralayakaveri or Pulicate.¹⁹ According to the another tradition he is said to be patronized by a Mohamedan King at Delhi. If it is a fact, one can easily make out that the king of Pralayakaveri or Pulicate might be his patron in the beginning but later on the dissatisfied poet might have migrated to Delhi in the first quarter of seventeenth century A.D., when Mogul emperor Sahajahan was reigning. But the atmosphere of the Mogul court might have compelled him to leave his patron, as it was not in his nature to compose the literary works only to please the kings. This can be easily ascertained from his wo-

18. Macdonell, A.A., op.cit. pp.8,9.

19. M.Krishnamachariar, op.cit. para 529; For identification of Pralayakaveri : The Social & Political Life in the Vijayanagara Empire Vol.II (A.D.1346 to 1641) pp.78,79,399.

rks like Viś. and Lakṣmīśahasram where the poet condemned the poets and their literary activity for praising the kings.²⁰ He himself was an ardent devotee of Śrīnivāsa and Lakṣmī or Rāma and Sītā, and a ~~xx~~ staunch Vaisnavite. So he did believe in composing the poems in praise of gods and goddesses but not the kings.²¹ On account of his nature some incident might have annoyed him and compelled him to leave the court for ever to honour his own self-respect.

20. Viś.v. 250,429;
Lakṣmīśahasram:

v.10.^{ab} कृती वसुमतीपतीन कृतचतुरतयः सेवतां
दिशः स्फुरमटारयतां दिशतु धानुवादे दृशाम् ।

XIV.11^{cd} कुक्षीधुजां सभ्रति माननेन फलं सुधांशु प्रतिमा-
नने न ॥

XX.17.^{cd} गुष्टो यदि अतिपतिर्भीदि वा न उष्टः
किं नाम शौत्रिसखि पारिषदैर्धिवित्तसोः ॥

XXIV.9,10.^{ab, cd} अटित्वा दुर्देशान् सयसि च गरित्वा अतिधुजां
पठित्वा सेवोकीः फलमल्लद्ध्वा ऽ ति चपलः ।
निरनारप्रसन्दुदैर्निरेचयेना ऽऽ पादनाय
दुरासयधराधुजामलप्रपायनैः सेवनेः ॥
(10^{ab})

21. Ibid

As per tradition, woven around his life, he visited the court of Delhi, where the Mohamedan king rather Mogula emperor welcomed him but the poet was not satisfied with the donation. He used to leave the court murmuring ' what the king gave is only sufficient for vegetables and salt²². Later on the king recalled him and asked him what he uttered. The poet replied soon, " only the king of Delhi or the Lord of the universe can fulfill my desires, but the donations given by others are only for vegetables and salt"²³. The king pleased with his scholarship and ready-wittedness and satisfied him most.

The same legend is current about the life of the poet Panditarāja ~~Jaganna~~ Jagannātha, a court poet of Śāhajahāna and author of Gaṅgālaharī, Rasagaṅgādhara and other works. He was also a contemporary of our poet. It is also noteworthy that none of them refers to each other. It seems that this legend might have occurred in the later period. In my humble opinion the poet might not visited Delhi in his life, at least till he composed Viśvaguṇādarśa Campū on the following grounds:

- (1). A careful study of this Campu shows that the poet Venkaṭādhvarin is more interested in describing the sacred places of India and particularly of his own native land Dravida i.e. Tirupati to Kurukāgarī.

22. शाकाय वा स्थाल्वणाय वा स्यात् ।
 23. दिल्लीश्वरो वा जगदीश्वरो वा मनोरथोत्तरयितुं समर्थः ।
 अन्वेषणपात्रैः परित्यक्तानं शाकाय वा स्थाल्वणाय वा स्यात् ॥

(2) He had described the sacred places like Badarikāśrama, the holy river Ganges, Ayodhyā, Kāśī, Jagannātha, Gujarat, the river Yamunā, Mahārāṣṭra, divine places between the rivers Kṛṣṇā and Godāvāri in Āndhrapradeśa with the help of either the Tīrtha-māhātmyas or the information collected from the contact of the people belonged those countries. So he does not give the proper picture of the upper India. Lack of minute observation leads us to the above conclusion.

(3). He describes Āndhra country to be full of Yavanas or Muslim people, who were scattered all over India in that age. He appreciates the King of Āndhra for his donations.²⁴

(4). The people of Mahārāṣṭra rather brahmins of that regions protected the South India from the Mogul or Mohamedan invaders, otherwise they might have scattered from Setu to Himālaya. This historical fact is considered in the description of Mahārāṣṭra.²⁵

(5). The people of Gujarat, famous for merchandise since long, scattered in India and abroad. In his time the poet might have come into the contact with them either in Madras, Kāñcīpūram, Tanjore or Pralayakāverī or Pulicat. The general observation of the life and the commercial activity supplied enough matter for the description of Gujarat. It is noteworthy that the habits and hobbies of the Gujarati

24. Vis. v.157, pr.60, v.162.

25. Vis. v.144.

26

people and beauty of the Gujarātī ladies.

In Vis'. the description of Gujarat before Yamunā but after the description of Jagannāthakṣetra i.e. Jagannāthapurī does not look proper. In the description of Yamunā the poet describes the sports of Kṛṣṇa with the cowherd maids and Rādhā but not the river Yamunā. In other words the poet gives there the description of Vṛndāvana, the region of Mathurā.

A careful study of Vis'. will show the impropriety of the order of the visits i.e. Samudra or Bay of Bengal, Jagannāthakṣetra, Gujarat, Yamunā and Mahārāṣṭra. It was more proper to describe Gujarat on the way from Yamunā to Mahārāṣṭra and not on the way from Jagannāthakṣetra to the river of Yamunā.

It is also interesting to note that no pilgrim will forget to visit Dvārakā and Somanātha. Venkatādhvarin observes silence here. He describes the aerial car of Pradyumna, Ratī and Vidūṣaka flying from Godāvarī to Dvārakā via Benares which looks strange in Pradyumnānandīyam.²⁷ This is nothing but his ignorance of topography of Gujarat, Madhyapradeśa and Vṛndāvana which compels us to conclude the descriptions of the northern India are not the fruits of his own experience but of imaginations. So he might not have seen Delhi and patronised by the Mogul king at least before the composition of Vis'. and after the composition of Vis'. and Lakṣmīśahasram and Śrīnivāsaśahasram he seems to have passed his life in devotion of Varadarāja and Yathoktakāri at Kāñci.²⁸ The poet is said to

26. Vis'.pr.33;v.115;pr.34;v.116;pr.35;v.117;pr.36;v.118

have lived near the temple of Yathoktakāri or Setukṛt.²⁹ Moreover some references of Viś' and Lakṣmīsahasram show that he was annoyed with the kings. As a result of it he might have no more desire except to pass his life in devotion.

Another legend is also current about the poet. Once during his pilgrimage in northern India, he was called as an eye-witness in an issue of the quarrel of the two persons. Venkaṭādhvarin, though he was unaware of the regional language, represented the matter as happened in the court. The magistrate was astonished with the sharp memory of our poet.

This legend also seems to be developed in the later period. Such thing is also said to have happened in the case of Śrīharṣa, an author of Naiṣadhīyacaritam at Kāśmīra.

Both the legends hardly contain any historicity of his life.

One more legend is also current. He is said to have his vision for criticising bitterly the vices in Viś'. But later on he regained it by the grace of the goddess Lakṣmī,

27. 'काश्यातगरात्सहस्रम्.....' colophon to Viś'.

28. Vidhitrayaparitrāṇa ed. by K. Sathakopācārya, 1954: introduction p.11. The poet also composed Yathoktakāri-bhāṇa in praise of lord Yathoktakāri or Setukṛt.

29. Ibid.

and lord Śrīnivāsa with Lakṣmīsahasram and Śrīnivāsasahasram.³⁰ The motive behind the composition of Viś. must be to describe the merits of the universe and not the vices as one may imagin from the title. But unfortunately the poet gave virtues and vices in Viś. As a result of it he might have become a victim of the bitter criticism.

Veṅkaṭādhvarin seems to be a staunch vaisnavite but generous hearted. He lived the life according to the rules laid down by Dharmasāstra and the Vedic injunctions by observing daily duties, performing various sacrifices such as Atirātra, Vājapeya, Sārvapṛṣṭha, Aptoryāma etc., ~~and~~ discussing the religion and philosophy of Rāmānuja school with the scholars and praying god.

He considers Vedāntadeśika, a well-known exponent of Rāmānuja cult and author of many works as his ācārya or spiritual guide. His ambition seems to follow Vedāntadeśika in all possible respects whether it may be religious or literary. His nature was generous and everhelpful but not rigid. As he had been a court poet, he came into contact with many people belonging to different castes and creeds as a result of which he became somewhat flexible rather cosmopolitan and ^{not} orthodox. He was fascinated by the contemporary serving society and adopted modern views of others acquainted with new civilisation. He did

30. Introduction to Lakṣmīsahasram and introduction to Viś.

not look rigidly towards the rules of untouchability, performance of Sandhyā thrice a day, performance of all samskāras mechanically etc. He seems to be ever ready to adorn even a single virtue found in a most wicked person if he had. In one word we may call him a thorough gentleman or a godly person.

He seems to pass his time in discussing Bhāṣya, narrating kathās, visiting temples for propitiating the gods in different shrines with the offerings proper, taking baths in the holy water of the sacred rivers and tanks, and listening to the sports of god Visnu during the different incarnations.

Composition of Vis. and the creation of the two characters named Viśvāvasu and Kṛṣṇānu and their peculiar nature of appreciating virtues and criticising bitterly the vices tempt us to conclude that perhaps he might have passed through the mental conflict between good and bad, virtue and vice, old and new civilization rather the views of old and new generations. This will be sufficient to prove that though he was a staunch vaisnavite, he was not a blind follower of vaisnavism and intoxicated with the fanaticism. This the reason why he seems enough generous to describe or evaluate the virtues of Mleccha, Yavana, Hūṇa, Saivites, Kāpālikas, Vīraśaivas etc. He honours Dra-vidaveda and gāthās like Vedas.

He lived a long life (1590-1660 or more). His literary activity seems to be continued even in his old age rather end of his life. He is said to have power to compose hundred works within a night³¹. He claims to have

31. A colophon to Mīmāṃsāmakaranda DCS No. 300.p.111

composed hundred or one hundred and eight works³². Literature was interwoven with his life and breath. According to the traditional account he is said to be very fond of alliteration. Once somebody asked him when he would like to leave or give up the habit of creating alliteration now and then . He replied soon, "my breaths shall leave me but prās³³ or alliteration would not abandon till after a month³³."

It seems from the traditional account that in his last days, he would have suffered a lot physically. It is said that once his sons asked, " when shall you leave this world? " He answered, " I shall leave this world in Viśvāvasu samvatsarā³⁴." It is obvious from 'Bheje' that this legend is also a later creation.

His literary and religious activity made him well known among the scholars and common people by different names such as Venkaṭācārya, Venkaṭādhvari kavi, Venkaṭātr-eya, Ātreya Venkaṭācārya, Venkaṭārya mākhin, Venkaṭācārya-yajvan, Venkaṭācārya mahākavi, Ātreya Venkaṭayajvan etc. All these names can be ascertained from the introductory stanzas and colophons to his various works. These show that he might have good number of disciples and followers.

32.

A colophon to Mimamsamakaraṇḍa DCS No.300 p.111

33, श्वासं चोडादि प्रासमानास्तु प्रासं नोडादि ।

34. विद्यावसो वत्सर एव भेजे ।

Erudition:-

On account of the careful study of his works one would easily find that he was a prominent personality among the scholars and master of all sciences. He knew well all the various branches of Sanskrit literature, grammar, music, science of medicine, Veda, vedāṅga, smṛti, tantra, philosophical works on vedānta, sāmkhya, nyāya, pūrvamīmāṃsā, vaiśeṣika, yōga, kalpasūtra, dharmasāstra, astrology etc. He was a minute observer of the society, nature, and human nature. He had studied all the branches of knowledge as he was hailing from the very learned family, and same impression seems maintained from the study of his works like Vis'.

In the beginning of Vis' he proclaims to be well-versed in logic, philosophy, grammar and tantra³⁵. He was conversant with the purāṇas, history of the sacred divine places or Divyakṣetras, vaiṣṇava lore, the works of Rāmānuja and Vedāntadeśika, the gāthās of Saṭhakopamuni, Alwar saint and sacred books of Vīrasaivism. Moreover he was aware of the māhātmyas of the sacred places like Badarikāśrama, Kāśī, Jagannāthapurī, Śrīnivāsa (at Tirupati), Ekāṃreśvara etc. He might have studied well Rāmāyaṇa, Bhāgavata, Mahābhārata, Viṣṇupurāṇa etc. Now let us examine the fact with the illustrations.

35. Vis'. v.3; Mīmāṃsāmakaranda v.5; Śravaṇānandam v.I.1

Rāmāyana:

Generally every Indian knows the story of the Rāmāyana without studying it. But to Venkaṭādhvarin Rāma was the family deity. So he cannot be unaware of the Rāma's story. Such a scholar must have studied it well and read it often. Here in Vis. he dedicates two discourses namely Ayodhyāvarṇana and Setuvarṇana completely in praise of Rāma. He does not miss any opportunity to refer to or to describe about Rāma in discourses like Rāmānujavarṇana, Srīraṅgavarṇana or the descriptions of the shrines dedicated to Vīrarāghava, Vijayarāghava and his native place Arasāṅipāla. But in the description of Ayodhyā his unquenched thirst of describing the life of Rāma can easily be found out. He recites some verses (v.50-68) like a true and ardent devotee where he narrates some main events occurred in Rāma's life like the names of Viṣṇu in Viṣṇusaśranāma. Yet unsatisfied poet once again praises Rāma in the same manner in the verses 69 to 73 under the pretext of quoting the passage from the devotional poem of some poet. In Setuvarṇana also he does praise the Lord Rāma and his great achievement of building a bridge over the ocean. He describes the events taken place in the life of Rāma also in his drama Pradyumnānandīyam³⁶. This description may be based on the study of the Rāmāyana and not based on the general information. As Rāma was a family deity the members of the family might be reciting the Rāmāyana.

36. Pradyumnānandīyam, Act: V.

Bhāgavata:-

Being vaisnavite poet he is aware of Viṣṇu's incarnations as Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Nṛsimha, Vāmana, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Hayagrīva (v.19,75,301,302,303), Hari in Gajendramokṣa episode referred to (v.18), churning of the ocean (v.50, 107, 223), Gaṅgāvatarāṇa (v.75,304,327 and Gaṅgāvārṇana), Kṛṣṇa's sports with the cowherdmaids in bowers of Yamunā (v.123-126), mythological persons like Yayāti, Nala, Māndhātā, Nahuṣa, Puru etc. (v.29), theft of curds, butter etc. by Kṛṣṇa, destruction of the demons such as Kamsa, Hamsa (v.129,130), Mura (v.123,130), Bāṇa, Baka etc. (v.130), episode of Kṛṣṇa and Kuçaila or Sudāmā (v.149), depriving of Indra's pride (v.28) etc. referred to in Viś'. This would easily show his well acquaintance with Bhāgavatapurāṇa.

Mahābhārata and purāṇas:-

Indra-Durvāsā episode of Viṣṇupurāṇa (pr.176), Pāñcālīvastrapurāṇa episode (v.20), Kṛṣṇa's heroic deeds (v.157), reference to Kṛṣṇa as a messenger (v.342,343) and a charioteer of Arjuna i.e. Pārthasārathi will be sufficient to prove him conversant with the Mahābhārata and purāṇas. To him Vyāsa was the poet of the high order like Vālmiki (v.304).

Gītā:-

Aerial travel of Viśvāvasu and Kṛṣṇānu from north to south or from the path of sun to the southern end of India i.e. Kurukānagara and their returning to the northern

direction i.e. the path of sun; the idea of Aśvattha tree (v.346,436,491); entrance of warriors dead on the battle field in the heaven (v.164,374); reference to Gītā and Rāmānuja's bhāṣya thereon (228,334) etc. all tempt us to believe his proficiency in Gītā.

He might have studied the works of the modern poets such as Kālidāsa, Māgha, Bhāravi, Bāṇabhatta etc. whom he mentions as modern poets (v.549). There he reckons the names of Diṇḍima, Vedāntadeśika and Śaṭhakopamuni as the poets of the high order among the modern poets.

Among the poets mentioned above one can easily find the influence of Kālidāsa, Vedāntadeśika etc. on our poet Venkaṭādhvarin.³⁷

Though his literary activity is indebted to the poets mentioned above, his aptitude lies with logic, grammar, philosophy, astrology etc. most.

Philosophy:-

Though Vis. is meant for the descriptions of the various sacred places and temples, Venkaṭādhvarin could not keep silence as regards the philosophical aspects of different schools. As he belongs to the school of Rāmānuja vaisnavism, he always proclaims the philosophy of that school.³⁸ Likewise he refers to the some opponent sch-

37. Vide Venkaṭādhvarin and his predecessors.

38. Vide chapter on 'Religion'.

ools of philosophy such as Vedānta, Mādhva school, Sāṅkara school, Śaive, Pāśupata, Vīrasaiva or Liṅgāyata, Cārvāka, Bauddha, Jain, Nyāya vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya-yoga, Mīmāṃsā rather almost all the schools of philosophy.

Among the different schools of philosophy Veṅkaṭādhvarin has discussed much about Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā and Nyāya particularly and little of Sāṅkhya. He mentions only the names of Jain and Bauddha (v.367,538). Kṛṣṇānu has condemned, while Viśvāvasu has refuted the views cited by Kṛṣṇānu in the best possible manner.

Vedānta:-

Vedāntis do not accept the various means of proof particularly perception and believe the existance of the world illusory one³⁹. No means of proof is useful in describing Brahman which is said to be beyond senses, mind and speech⁴⁰. Brahman itself becomes Jīva, a soul who suffers worldly unhappiness (v.509). This Brahman is really omniscient and unchangeable. Its knowledge sets one free from

39. मिथ्यावादिनः प्रामाजिकार्थं द्वीकृत्याप्रामाजिकार्थं पुररीकुर्वन्ति। (६. ११२)
 च. सर्वं विकारजातं प्रायामात्रैः; द्वितीयकारणाभावाद्गुत्पन्नमिदं जगत्;
 इदं प्रपञ्चं नास्त्येव नोत्पन्नं नो स्थितं जगत् (Vidvānmacandrikā)

न तत्र चतुर्गच्छति, न वाग्गच्छति नो मनो नो विज्ञो न विजानीतो ;
 40. यथैतदनुशिष्यादन्वयेन तद्विदितादयो अविदितादपि ॥
 इति श्रुत्युक्तं पूर्वैर्वा ये नस्तद्व्याचक्षिरे। (केन
 नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लीयो न प्रेक्ष्य न बहुना श्रुतेन)। (

च. श्रुतः:-
 इन्द्रियाणि पराथाहुरिति श्रुतेः परं मनः।
 मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्वा बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥ (III. ५२)

the worldly bondage of rebirth⁴¹!

Vedāntis are least interested in the path of Karma or ritualism prescribed by Śṛti (pr.214, v. 510). They follow the path of Brahmakāṇḍa.

Śaṅkarācārya interpreted the Bādarāyaṇa's Brahmasūtra according to his theory of monism. He and his followers believe that

- (1) Brahman is qualitiless, omniscient, beyond speech and mind(v.512). So no means of proof can be helpful to prove it (v.508).
- (2) There is no distinction soul and Brahman. (v.509, 513).
- (3) The existence of the world is illusory one(v.514).
- (4) The path of knowledge is the only path for realization of Brahman (510).

It is noteworthy that Viśvāṅsu has not defended Vedāntis. He only argues that Vedāntis follow the path followed by their fore-fathers. So they should not be condemned.

In this discourse the poet has pointed out the distinction between the school of monism of Śaṅkarācārya and spiritual monism of Rāmaṇujācārya.

41. cf. अः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्य परमेश्वर इति प्राचीनः श्रुतिः; अतः II. २०; शास्त्रात् स देवः सर्व-
प्राज्ञापहानिः; अग्नेः कर्मज्ञेः जलमृत्पुत्रहाभिः; शास्त्रौ द्वावजायन्तीशावजा द्वेका-
भिरु-भोगार्थं दुक्ता । अनन्तक्राता विश्वरूपो ह्यकर्ता; द्वा सुपर्णा स उजा सरकायां
सप्तमं वृष्टिं परि वसवजातो । तद्योरन्यः पिप्लवं स्वाह्वत्थनमन्नन्वो अभिचा-
करीति etc. (पदार्थचन्द्रिका)

DATE

Our poet is enumerated in the list of the famous Campū⁴²-authors. One would not feel difficultly in fixing up the date of our poet. Generally he is said to have flourished in the seventeenth century A.D. Almost all the learned critics and the authors of history of Sanskrit literature put him in the middle of the seventeenth century A. D. Shri K.Sathakopacharya in his introduction to Vidhitrayaparitrāna, a work of our poet on Mīmāṃsā has put in the seveteenth century A.D. more exactly i.e. 1590 - 1660 A. D. Internal and external evidences also lead us to the same conclusion.

Internal evidences:

1. In the beginning of this Campū the poet refers to Tātācārya, a royal guru of Karnāṭa whose nephew was Śrī Appayārya or Appayācārya, father of Raghunātha and grandfather of our poet. This royal disciple of Tātārya or Tātācārya, Pañcamatebhañjana was Venkāṭa - I of Vijayanagara (1536 - 1614 A.D.).
2. Venkāṭadhvarin has made a reference to 'Pūna' (pr.

42. त्रिविक्रमश्च सोमनाथश्च हरिचन्द्रसाध्वि च ।
 भोजश्च सोमनाथश्चैव राजी तिरुमला इव च ॥
 नारायणस्तथा चासौ वेङ्कटाध्वरिसूर्यः ।
 शङ्करोऽपि च प्रख्याताः चम्पूकाव्ये विधीयते ॥

(quoted by Chandrashekhara Pandeya and Shantikumara

N. Vyasa in the 'Out line of Sanskrit literature
 (Samskrta Sahitya ki rūparekhā :Hindi), Meertha).

104, v.262,263,pr.105,v.264). The term 'Rūna' denoted the English or the Portuguese. Portuguese came in 1498 A.D. and were settled in South India. The English came in 1599 A.D. and established their colony at Madras in the first quarter of the seventeenth century A.D. So it is very clear that the poet refers to the English in the description of Cannapattana or Madras. Dr. V.Raghvan has ascertained the fact very nicely. He says, " In the eulogy of the English coming from Visvavasu's ^{mouth,} the feeling of security which people had after troublous Muslim times of wars is apparent. Since plunder such as the Mohamedan chiefs and their forces did were not the rule with the English, the poet mentions that the English did not forcibly ~~an~~ unlawfully rob others of their ~~xxxxxx~~ possessions. The reference to their administration of justice is to the choultry court and the Mayor's court of those days in the Fort, which has already in 1652 settled a caste dispute between the Chettis and Mayudus." This shows that the poet knew such court of law and justice existing.

2. The original name of Madras was Cannapattana. The poet describes it as Cannapattana where he describes the ~~was~~ temple of Triplicane or Pārthasārathi and Triplicane sacred tank. The description of Triplicane and reference

43. Dr.V.Raghvan, Notices of Madras in two Sanskrit works, Madras Tercentary Vol. (1939), pp. # 103.

to Huna are suggestive of the Fort area which was donated by the Nayakas. Dr. V. Raghvan says, " This designation Channapattam is found in the grant of 1644 relating to the endowment (by Nagapattam) or the Chenna Keshava perumala temple..... " ⁴⁴ The name Cannapattana also leads us to conclude the early composition of Vis. Pārthasārathi temple and Triplicane show the acquisition of that area by the English. It is also well known that in the history of the acquisition and growth of Triplicane the temple has played a very important part. ⁴⁵ The same description also plays vital part in fixing up the date of our poet.

The poet refers to the donations of the king in the description of Āndhradesā. But it is of no use, as the poet does not give any name.(v.157). The poet describes the brahmins and Mahārāstrian warriors recruited in military services who protected the whole world i.e. Bhārata (v. 97, 144). These references reflect the political condition which cannot be useful in fixing up the date of the poet.

In the description of Gañjipuri the poets refer to the kings engaged in wars. This reference is also not useful due to absence of the clear mention of the king (v.

44. Dr.V.Raghvan, op.cit., p.111.

45. V.Ranganathan Chetty, Triplicane and Triplicane temple from the records and traditions, p.I.

377-380).

4. In Pradyumnānandīyam the poet declares to have completed the work on the fifteenth day of Prauṣṭhapadi in Prajotpatti Samvatsara which is likely equal to 1571 A.D. according to Shri M. Krishnamachariar.⁴⁷ Firstly it is noteworthy that there is no name of Prajotpatti Samvatsara in the cycle of sixty Samvatsaras. Prajotpatti may be Prajapati in original. If it is so, as Prajapati is the fifth Samvatsara, it may be the year Śaka 1573 or 1632 A.D. The aerial travel of Pradyumna and Rati from South to north i.e. Dvārakā and some verses of Vis. found there lead us to the conclusion that this drama was succeeded to by Vis. This drama is said to have composed to be staged on the festival celebration of Śrinivāsa of Tirupati. In Vis. the poet in his message expresses his desire to expand the festival celebrations (annual). The last ~~three~~ verses reflect the Bharatavākyaś of the drama (v. 594 - 597). This also would be composition for ~~annual~~ the annual festival celebration. Thus Vis. might be composed after 1632 A.D. and before 1644 A.D.

External evidences:

Nīlakanṭha Dīkṣita, author of Nīlakanṭhavijayacampū

46. नवस्तब्धमिन्द्रायां नारकं वरेकराधरी ।
प्रजोत्पत्तौ प्रौष्ठपदां पौष्पान्तर्यामपूरयत् ॥

(DJ. XXI.8422)

47. M. Krishnamachariar, op.cit., p.545, fn.1.

was a contemporary of Venkaṭādhvarin. The literary activity of Nīlakaṅṭha Dīkṣita was coeval to that of our poet. Nīlakanṭhavijayacampū is composed in the Kali year 4738⁴³ or 1637 A.D. The name of Nīlakanṭha as a poet who participated in Samasyapūrṭi, is mentioned in Śrinivāsavilāsa-campū (Uttarabhāga II). This also will prove them belonged to the seventeenth century A.D.

It is well known that Venkaṭādhvarin belongs to the Ātreya family of Araśānipāla. Varada Ātreya and Ātreya Venkaṭeśa are also belonged to the same family. Venkaṭeśa Ātreya composed Rāmacandrodaya and Yamakārnava in the years Kali 4736 and 4797⁴⁹ respectively. It means that both the works were composed in 1635 and 1656 A.D. respectively. Varada and Venkaṭeśa are also contemporaries of our poet.

Traditionally he is said to have visited a the Mogul court at Delhi. But this can be before 1632 A.D. because in his later works like Vis. and Lakṣmīśahasram he does to like to please the kings by the literary compositions. Before the composition of Viśvagunādarśacampū also the event might not have occurred as he is unaware of the topography of North India.

48. अष्ट त्रिंशत्सुपरकृतसप्तशताधिकचतुःसहस्रेषु
कालवर्षेषु कालेषु प्रथितः किल गीतकण्ठविजयोऽथवा ॥

49. काव्यमङ्गलगुणशौकयुगाद्यैः परैः कृतोऽकृतः (I. 10)
कालवर्षेषु शौकमदरसाब्धिषु (4797) ... ॥
[DC. D. 37. 31]. (4736)
(DC. D. 37 20).

Veṅkaṭādhvarin has composed Yādevarāghaviyam. Cidambaram, son of Anantaśārāyaṇa and a protege of Venkaṭe - I (1536 - 1614 A.D.) has composed Kathātreyaī. Though it is very difficult to show who inspired whom, it may be presumed that Veṅkaṭādhvarin might have inspired to compose such a poem to show his superiority.

Like Cidambaram Samarapūṅgava Dīkṣita, author of Pīrthayātrāprabandha was also inspired by the poet. Samarapūṅgava Dīkṣita also seems to be early contemporary of our poet.

Veṅkaṭādhvarin is said to have passed away in the ⁵⁰Viśvāvasu Samvatsara which may correspond to Śaka 1587 or 1666 A.D.

Thus this discussion will show that the poet composed Yādevarāghaviya^{yā}, Śrīnivāsevilāsaṅgampū etc. to show his proficiency in Śāstras and poetic skill. This is the early period of the poet. This will help us in concluding that he was born in the last quarter of the sixteenth century A.D. So Shri K. Satyakopacharya is right in fixing his early date as 1590 A.D. Veṅkaṭādhvarin passed after enjoying pretty long life in 1666 A.D.

50. विष्वावसा वत्सर (५ शत) ।