

P R E F A C E

The Mānasollāsa or Abhilaṣitārtha-cintāmaṇī of the Western Cālukyan King, Bhūlokaṃalla Someśvara III (1127 A.D.-1138 A.D.) deals with a wide variety of subjects like science of polity, architecture, iconography, painting, gemmology, love of taming horses and elephants, various kinds of luxuries and pastimes current among the aristocracy in Ancient India, outdoor and indoor games, music and dance and a host of other interesting subjects. The Mānasollāsa is indeed a veritable mine of information that has interested many scholars, who are concerned with different branches of Indian culture. Having been a student of Bharatanāṭyam since the last decade, it was the chapter relating to dance called the Nṛtya Vinoda which attracted my attention and interest.

The Nṛtya Vinoda chapter occupies an important place in the large bulk of Ancient literature on Indian dance. It happens to be the first extant work, which shows marked deviations from the Mārgī tradition laid down by Bharata in the Nāṭyaśāstra and consequently it is the progenitor, which provided source material on Deśī tradition for subsequent mediaeval writers like Śārṅgadeva, Jāya Senāpati, Pārśvadeva and Basava Bhūpāla. Whereas the works of these later writers have been edited and even some translated and critically

analysed with the help of Nṛtya Vinoda, no independent and in-depth examination of the Nṛtya Vinoda itself has been made so far. Therefore it was felt necessary that Nṛtya Vinoda being the earlier and also a very influential work should be taken up for critical study.

In this thesis, the Nṛtya Vinoda has been translated into English and has also been critically interpreted, so that the views and ideas contained therein can be easily gauged by even those who are not familiar with Sanskrit. Further more, in order to highlight the noteworthy features of the Nṛtya Vinoda, a comparative study of this work with the Nāṭyaśāstra on the one side and with the Saṅgītaratnākara, Nṛttaratnāvalī, Saṅgīta-samayasāra and Śivatattvaratnākara on the other side has also been rendered.

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