

Yuddhavarṇanam – The Description of the War in *Vemabhūpālacaritam*

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Abstract

Vemabhūpālacaritam also known as *Vīranārāyaṇacaritam*, is a work from the world of Sanskrit prose literature. It is a prose romance of a poet from Āndhra, named Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa, who lived in 15th century A.D., under the Reddi king Vema of Koṇḍavidu. In this work, he narrates the exploits of Reddi king Vema *alias* Vīranārāyaṇa, the son of Pedda Komatīndra who ruled over Triliṅgas with its capital Addaṅkī.

Key Words: War, Yuddhavarṇanam, Vemabhūpālacaritam

Introduction

Vemabhūpālacaritam also known as *Vīranārāyaṇacaritam*, is a work from the world of Sanskrit prose literature. It is a prose romance of a poet from Āndhra, named Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa, who lived in 15th century A.D., under the Reddi king Vema of Koṇḍavidu¹. In this work, he narrates the exploits of Reddi king Vema *alias* Vīranārāyaṇa, the son of Pedda Komatīndra² who ruled over Triliṅgas³ with its capital Addaṅkī⁴.

¹ Koṇḍāidu is situated in Guntur district of the Indian state Andhra Pradesh. It is well known for its fort. (Wikipedia)

² श्रीमत्श्रवणकमलादवतीर्णो वर्णचतुर्थः । (p. 3) The Reddis belong to the fourth varṇa, i.e. śūdra. However, the title Komatī suggests that their allegiance to the trading community. Even today, the trading community in Andhra, Karnataka and some parts of Maharashtra use word Komatī to denote trading community. (Wikipedia)

³ Three liṅgas are situated on three mountains namely Kāleśvaram in telangana, Śrīśailam in Rayalaseema and Drākṣārāmam also known as Bhīmeśvaram in coastal Andhra. (Wikipedia)

About Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa

The colophon describes Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa as ‘*gadyakavisārvabhaumasya vatsakulatilakasya mahākaverabhinavabhaṭṭabāṇasya śrīvemabhūpāle*’ so this reveals that Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa designates himself as the supreme prose writer, ornament of Vatsa dynasty and most significant he calls himself modern Bāṇa (7th century A.D.) and his ambition is to be reckoned as foremost among the Sanskrit prose writers.

The contribution of Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa to the world of Sanskrit literature is as follows⁵

Dramas

- *Sṛṅgārabhūṣaṇabhāṇa*
- *Pārvatīpariṇayanāṭakam* (the authorship of this drama is disputed)
- *Kanakalekhākalyāṇam*,
- *Uṣāharaṇam*
- *Bāṇāsura vijayam*

Epics and *khaṇḍakāvya*s

⁴ Addanki is town in Prakasham district of the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. (Wikipedia)

⁵ Contribution of Andhra to Sanskrit Literature. p. 499-500

- *Nalābhyudayam*
- *Raghunāthacaritam*
- *Hamsasandēśaḥ*
- *Bṛhatkathāmañjari*

Lexicons

- *Śabdacandrikā*
- *Śabdaratnākara*
- *Bṛhadratnākara*

In the field of prose romance, Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa's ambition was to emulate Bāṇa of *Kādambārī* fame⁶. His resolve was to remove the deep rooted fame that, after Bāṇa, there was no poet capable of writing fine prose. The poet very proudly designates himself as Abhinava Bāṇa, vows that his composition will give immense joy to the scholars as there is harmonious blending of the subject of narration i.e. heroic exploitation of great king Vema and poet's style.⁷

The charm of *Vemabhūpālacaritam* lies mainly in the brilliant and picturesque descriptions with which it abounds. We have

⁶ बाणादन्ये कवयः काणाः खलु सरसगद्यसरणीषु ।
इति जगति रूढमयषो वामनबाणोऽपमार्ष्टी
वत्सकुलः ॥ (p. 2)

(Poets other than Bāṇa are lame on the path of excellent prose. This ill fame would be removed away by Vāmana Bāṇa of Vatsakula.)

⁷ कविरभिनवबाणः काव्यमत्यद्भूतार्थम्
भुवनमहितभूमानायको वेमभूपः ।
त्रिभुवनमहनीयख्यातिमानेष योगः प्रकटयति न
केषां पण्डितानां प्रहर्षः ॥ (p. 2)

(Which intellectuals would not express their joy after seeing this wonderful prose by the poet namely Abhinava Bāṇa, on the life of the king Vema having fame in the three worlds, the hero of the great world.)

a long series of detailed descriptions which casts a spell on the readers by their brightness.

Sanskrit poets are fond of drawing word pictures. In post-Kālidasa period, this tendency increased to such an extent that the poets started to dwell on descriptions, more than anything else in their works. Poet Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa is also fond of ornamentation. Like Bāṇa, very frequently, his descriptions become complicated and artificial. But his skill of depicting different phenomenon, in its varied aspects is classical. Unfortunately, this prose romance has not been much attended by the Sanskritists. In the present paper the description of the fierce battle between the king Vema and the king of Kaliṅga (name not given) has been analyzed from view of its contents and its stylistic features.

Yuddhavarṇanam

The description of the king Vema's fight with the king of Kaliṅga is the magnificent specimen of the Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa's depiction of heroic sentiment in chapter IV of *Vemabhūpālacaritam*. It runs as follows –

*tatastu tayoh
subhatabhūjakūṭakuṇḍalitaḥkodaṇḍamaṇḍala
niṣṭhyatādatānkāratarangitadiggajakarṇa
jvaram samajani janyam jagadajanyam ।
..... vasantakāntāramiva
prasṛmarānavapatrapādaparāgam,
ubhayorapi
sainyayorabhavadakhilajagadatankajanana
māyodhanam* |⁸ (p. 137 - 138)

⁸ ततस्तु तयोः

सुभटभुजकूटकुण्डलितकोदण्डमण्डलनिष्ठयूतचण्डटंकार
तरङ्गितदिग्गजकर्णज्वरं समजनि जन्यं जगदजन्यम् ।

The war occurred was terrible for the ears of the direction elephants by the twanging sound of multiple of bows of soldiers of both the parties. The drums of the war were sounding terrible like the sound of lightning clouds at the time of universal devastation. The clouds of the dust raised high on the surface of the earth on account of the sharp hooves of marching horses, obstructed the rays of the sun. Due to darkness, the sparks produced by the rubbing of the mases on the trunks of the war elephants, were looking like the glow-worms in the night. The necks of warriors being cut off and bleeding, the heads of elephants got attached to bodies of headless soldiers, were giving the glimpse of several incarnations of lord *Gaṇeśas* appearing on the battlefield. In the flood of

कल्पान्तघनघटारटनकटवः पूरितब्रह्माण्डकूटीकुक्षयः
कुलगिरिदरिप्रतिनिनादमेदस्विनः
संत्रासविसररसद्दिग्गजवृन्दबृन्हितमेदुराजजृम्भिरे
समरसंरम्भपटहर्भाकाराः ।
ततश्चटुलतुरगशफमुखशकलितधरणितलपरागनिकुरुम्ब
पिहितमिहिरकरजालम्,
परस्परकलहायमानकरिबलकरमुसलघट्टनस्फुल्लिनौः
सम्पाद्यमानरजोन्धकारखद्योतसंचारम्,
सरुधिरकण्ठच्छेदलग्नसकरकरिमस्तकैः
कबन्धैर्जन्यमानहेरम्बसहस्रविभ्रमम्,
अविरलशोणितपूरसंगतप्रतिबिम्बैर्महावीरैर्विडम्ब्यमान
रिपुरुधिरनदनिमग्नभृगुसुतविलासम्,
उद्वेलरक्ताणवपूरतरदिभचक्रक्रियमाणमातङ्गनक्रक्रमम्,
विक्रमोद्भूटसुभटहठताडितफलकरटितभयोच्चलितपिशित
गृध्रगृध्रमुखकृष्टाभिर्दन्तावलजठरसिरातन्तुसन्ततिभिः
स्वर्जिगमिषतां शूराणां
निरालम्बाम्बरमार्गगामिनामातन्यमानहस्तावलम्बरज्जु
सन्तानमिव हतानामनवधिकानां योधानामपर्याप्ततया
स्वर्गस्य
नाकान्तरकल्पनाविन्यस्यमानवास्तुरचनासूत्रमिव च
विभाव्यमानम्,
अलघुमणिभूषणरणितानुमीयमानसान्द्रजोन्धकारमध्य
वलमानशूरानुरागिसुराङ्गनागणम्, उभयोरपि
सैन्ययोरभवदखिलजगदातङ्कजननमायोधनम्॥

the blood the bodies of the elephants were floating and the crocodiles from the sea were also peeping out alternately since the war took place on sea shore. On account of continuous bloodshed on the battlefield, the river of the blood started flowing and due to the reflection of the warriors in it, it appeared as though they were imitating *Paraśurāma*⁹ – who gave offering of blood of *kṣhatryias*. The veins of the lever of the dead elephants were pulled out by vultures, which were greedy of the flesh. Warriors were trying to drive away those vultures. It was appearing as though the ropeway of veins was constructed for the warriors to ascend to the heaven in the supportless path of the sky. Those veins were also giving an impression of the measuring ropes used to create a parallel *vāstu* of heaven on the earth, as there was limited space available in heaven to accommodate the brave warriors, sacrificing their lives on the battlefield. The presence of the approaching nymphs who love brave people could be assumed in the dark; by the jingling sound of their ornaments studded with big gems. Intoxicated *Vetālas*, giving bits without rhythm, were under effect of drinking of plenty of liquor and blood with inconsistent dancing. It was creating miracle of *āgneyāstra* (fire missile) due to sparks of swords against each other by both the parties. Pearls in the heads of elephants scattered were looking like the puffed rice at the time of marriage of nymphs and

⁹ Rāma with an axe. A celebrated Brāhmaṇa warrior, the son of Jamadagni and the sixth incarnation of Viṣṇu. He is said to have rid the earth thrice seven times of the royal race. (Vaman Shivram Apte's Sanskrit English Dictionary. p. 317)

warriors. The swords were shining just like *Bālakhilyas* (thumb sized divine beings presiding the chariot of the sun) who preside the sun. Red colour spread in the war same as red colour of fresh foliage spread in spring forest, thus the war creating terror in the whole world occurred between the two armies.

*Mānādhikānāmāyudhikānām yudhi kā nāma
jīvikāganānā; yena
tarangavegavalitadhavalātapatrārbudabudb
udeṣu*

*Nirantarakabandhanṛttaniriatijavanaturaga
khuraśikharadalitadharaṇitalakalitanayanah
, tribhuvanakuṭīmaṭīkanta
cumbitacaturudanvadambavo dhūlayaḥ ||¹⁰
(p. 138)*

In the war of armed forces of great valour who would bother about the life? The warriors were fighting by keeping their legs on the bodies of the elephants which were floating in the water full of blood, where their ears looked like the leaves of lotus creeper. The hair on the heads of warriors, cut off from the bodies were looking like moss floating in water.

¹⁰साटोपसुभटपरिपाटीतपातितशाततरवारिदारुणदारुण
क्षरितवारणशोणितपारणप्रमुदितं भैरवं ररास कैरवं
यूथम् ।

कौन्तिकवृन्दनिरन्तरोत्तम्भितकुन्तशतप्रोतरिपुभटशिरः
शीर्णकचसटाचामरपवनेनवीराणां विजघटिरे
विक्रमश्रमग्रन्थयः।

चस्खालजानुद्वयसरुधिरशादपतितस्वपादसमुत्क्षेपणाय
आयस्यदश्वीयम् । निरन्तरकबन्धनृत्तनिरीक्षणाय
प्रतिक्षणमक्षिण्यक्षीणदर्पाःसमार्पिपन्नसृक्कणं कौणपाः ।
अतिजवनतुरगखुरशिखरदलितधरणितलकलितजनयः,
त्रिभुवनकुटमटीकन्त चुम्बितचतुरुदन्वदम्बवो धूलयः॥

In order to feast with the blood of elephants which were cut off by the sharp swords by great warriors, the herd of jackals assembled there with their howling noise. The vultures were hovering in circular manner by flapping massive wings lustful of fresh blood; creating shadow on dead bodies of enemy soldiers and whose life is about to depart. The group of lancers who had pierced the heads of the enemy soldiers, the long hair of which were acting like the *cāmaras*, fanning the brave warriors with gentle breezes, in order to remove their fatigue caused by terrible fight. The dead bodies still holding pride in their eyes to see dancing of headless bodies offered the droplets of the blood. The dust created by the rubbing of sharp hoops of the speedy horses, took resort of the three worlds and kissed the waters of the four oceans.

*Mathanasamayamandaraśikharitīkṣṇaluṭhan
atitīkṣākarmathakamaṭhaparivṛdhapṛṣṭhana
iṣṭhuryasadharmacarmamaṇḍalacaṇḍāsphāl
anarasitaḡhaṭitātankānkāravikramakrama
vedini, vijihmabhramadbhrūṇi
daṣṭhoṣṭhabhīṣaṇāni ripumukhāni
savismayamaikṣiṣṭa sakṣānsi ||¹¹ (p. 138-
139)*

¹¹मथनसमयमन्दरशिखरितीक्ष्णलुठनतितिक्षाकर्मठकठप
रिवृहपृष्ठनैष्ठुर्यसधर्मचर्ममण्डलचण्डास्फालनरसितघटिता
तङ्काङ्ककारविक्रमक्रमवेदिनि, क्रमेण च
परस्परकरकालायसमुसलघातमूर्च्छालदन्तिनि,
चर्मिर्वर्गनिर्मितमर्मप्रहारनिरुष्मधनुष्मति,
भल्लनिर्लूनाङ्गसविषादसादिनि,
जगदुदररिसुपांसुप्रकरे परिणमति
सकलजगदातङ्कारिणि संग्रामे,
निखिलन्हुवनविनाशपिशुनकीनाशनिटिलतटकुटिलभीष
णभृकुटिभङ्गशङ्काजननकर्मठं
कार्मुकमुग्ररिपुविग्रहनिग्रहव्यग्रो जग्राह नृपाग्रिमः।
धन्विना तेन मौर्व्या सार्धमार्तिमनीयत शत्रुलोकः ।

In a war where, huge leather shields as stout as the back of the divine tortoise that had tolerated the churning by the sharp edge of *Mandara* mountain, were hitting each other very forcefully, creating very sharp noise with terror, denoting valour of warriors, elephants fainted due to the attacks by mase, attacks by armours reduced the archers to death, the soldiers on the horse were having pain due to body got pierced by spears, clouds of the dust were desirous of spreading in the interiors of the world making it full of fear. King Vema, expert in seizing enemy bodies; held his bow creating doubt of crooked brow on the forehead of Yama; who is wicked in destroying three worlds. The moment he touched his terrible bow, the life of the enemy soldiers left speedily. Demons watched the faces of enemies which were terrible, with bitten lips, crooked eye brows, and closed eyes, on account of being cut off by spears of the king.

Stylistic Features

The whole description is comprised of only two sentences. The poet has employed *Gauḍī* style to suit the description of war. The *Gauḍī* style consists in letters expressing vigour, the compactness of structure (*gāḍhabandhatva*), the abundance of long compounds and high sounding conjunct consonants¹². The use of long and

intricate compounds employing harsh consonants bring out the vigour of the style.

According to Viśvanātha, author of *Sāhityadarpaṇa*, there are four varieties of prose style – *Muktaka*, *Vṛttagandhī*, *Cūrṇaka* and *Utkalikāprāyaḥ*. The poet has made a judicious use of these types to suit the situations and occasions. The poet is undoubtedly the master of language and other poetic skills.

Following are the observations regarding the *gadya* style -

Muktaka, *Cūrṇaka* and *Vṛttagandhī* are not employed at all in this description; however employment of these styles is seen at many places in this prose romance of *Vemabhūpālacaritam*. In *Utkalikāprāyaḥ*, compounds are used to its maximum level. Here, this style is utilized at its maximum level. The long compounds cover the pages. It is only after reading this long series of epithets, the reader arrives at the verb and only then he can make out the sense of that he has read.

Delineation of *Rasa*

Rasa is said to be the soul of the poetry. It has been emphasised by many rhetoricians.¹³

The *Vīra Rasa* (heroic) is the predominant *Rasa* in description of war and *Bhayānaka Rasa* (terrible) and *Bībhatsa Rasa* (disgust) have subordinate place.

The beating of the war drum itself gives the signal of war. The sparks were created due to rubbing of the mases against each other; the brave soldiers without caring for their lives, fight against the enemies with full

आशुगस्पृशि तस्मिन्नसव एवाशुगा बभुवुररिभूभृताम् ।
पार्थिवभल्लकृतानि मीलददृशि
विजिह्वभ्रमद्भूणिददोष्ठभीषणानि रिपुमुखानि
सविस्मयमैक्षिषत रक्षांसि ॥
¹² ओजः प्रकाशकैवर्णेर्वन्ध्रआडम्बरः पुनः ॥
समासबहुलगौडी वर्णैः शेषैः पुनर्द्वयोः ॥
(*Sāhityadarpaṇa*, IX.3)

¹³ न हि रसाद्दृते कश्चिदर्थः प्रवर्तते । (Bharata's
Nāṭyaśāstra. Vṛtti on VI. 31)

valour; the divine nymphs descending on earth to marry these brave soldiers, floating of elephants and crocodiles in the flood of blood, the dust created by the rubbing of sharp hooves of the speedy horses, took resort of the three worlds and kissed the waters of the four oceans, etc give rise to *Vīra rasa* (heroic sentiment).

The twanging sound of the stretched bow creating torments to the ears of guardian elephants, miracle of *āgneyāstra* due to sparks of swords against each other by both the parties, Pearls from the broken heads of elephants scattered were looking like the puffed rice, war creating terror in the world etc give rise to *Bhayānaka rasa* (terrible sentiment).

*Sātopasubhaṭaparipāṭipātitaśātataravāridār
uṇadāraṇakṣaritamvāraṇaṣoṇitapāraṇapramu
ditam bhairavam rarāsa phairavam yūtham |*
(p. 138)

Here one can observe the alliteration of ṭa and ṭha, use of sibilants (i.e. *uṣman-* śa, ṣa sa, ha) and harsh consonants which convey the awe-inspiring effect of war very efficiently.

The veins of lever of dead elephants pulled out by vultures, *Vetālas* dancing due to intoxication, heads of elephants attached to dead bodies of soldiers, etc give rise to the *Bībhatsa rasa* (disgustful sentiment).

Figures of speech

The poet has used *anuprāsa*, *utprekṣā* and *śleṣa* to large extent.

*Anuprāsa*¹⁴

Sātopasubhaṭaparipāṭipātitaśātataravāridār

¹⁴ अनुप्रासः शब्दसाम्यं वैषम्येऽपि स्वरस्य यत् |

*uṇadāraṇakṣaritamvāraṇaṣoṇitapāraṇapramu
ditam bhairavam rarāsa phairavam yūtham |*
(p. 138)¹⁵

Here the alliteration of ṭa, ta, ḍa, ṇa contribute to the expected effect to war description.

*Nikhilabhuvanavināśapiśunakīnāśaniṭilataṭa
kuṭilabhīṣaṇabhrukuṭibhaṅgaśaṅkājānanaka
rmaṭham kārṃmukam... |* (p. 139)¹⁶

Here the alliteration of the syllables of śa, ṭa, bha can be seen which adds on to the delineation of the *vīra rasa*.

*Utprekṣā*¹⁷

*khaḍgavidalitakarikumbhamuktamauktikapra
akarasampādyamānasurayuvatisubhaṭpariṇ
ayanavikīrṇalājaśankam,
vālakhilyasthānamiva
paricitabhāsvanmaṇḍalāgram,
śrvaḡalasthanamiva sannihitaḡvelam,
vasantakāntāramiva
prasṛmaranavapatrapādaparāgam....* (p.
137-138)

Here, the poet says that the pearls from the heads of elephants spread on the battlefield were creating doubt of puffed rice which were used on the occasion the wedding of the nymphs, the swords were shining just

छेको व्यञ्जनसंघस्य सकृतसाम्यमनेकधा ||
(*Sāhityadarpaṇa*, X.3.)

¹⁵ साटोपसुभटपरिपाटिपातितशाततरवारिदारुणदारणक्ष
रितवारणशोणितपारणप्रमुदितमं भैरवं ररास फैरवं
युथम् |

¹⁶ निखिलभुवनविनाशपिशुनकीनाशनिटिलतटकुटिलभी
षणभ्रुकुटिभङ्गशङ्काजननकर्मठं कार्मुकम् ... |

¹⁷ संभावनमथोत्प्रेक्ष्य प्रकृतस्य समेनयत् |
(*Kāvyaṇprakāśa*, X.4.)

like *Bālakhilyas*¹⁸ who preside the sun. Red colour spread in war same as red colour of fresh foliage spread in spring forest. The words *śaṅkam*, *iva*, etc are used here.

*Śleṣa*¹⁹

One of the features of the style of the poet is that he ends most of his descriptions with *śleṣa*. This description is also no exception to it. The ending paragraph of this *yuddhavarṇanam* is an excellent example of *śleṣa* –

*Tato narapatiḥ śradamiva śaraśatanicitām,
yakṣeśvaralakṣmīmiva puṇyajanopalālītām,
kauravasabhāmiva śakuniniṣevyām,
grīṣmāraṇyāśriyamiva
niḥśrṣanipatitapatrām, vaitaraṇīmiva
śoṇitapūrasantaradulbaṇajantudehām,
udagayanasthitimivaraveḥ
ujjitadhanurvyāpārām, pralayamahīmiva
rasātalapatitām,
pratyarthipārthivavāhinīmakarot |
Vividhaśoṇitanadiśoṇitamādipurūṣamṛditam
adhukaitābharudhirānukīrṇamiva arṇvārṇo
rarāja ||²⁰ (p. 139)*

¹⁸ *Bālakhilyas* are a class of divine personages of the size of a thumb and produced from the creator's body and said to preside the sun's chariot. Their number is said to be sixty thousand. (Vaman Shivram Apte's Sanskrit English Dictionary. p. 390)

¹⁹ वाच्यभेदेन भिन्ना यद् युगपद्भाषणस्पृशः | श्लिष्यन्ति
शब्दाः श्लेषसावक्षरादिभिरष्टधा ||

श्लेषः स वाक्ये एकस्मिन्यत्रानेकार्थता भवेत् ||
(*Kāvyaṇprakāśa*, X.10)

²⁰ ततो नरपतिः शरदमिव शरशतनिचिताम्,
यक्षेश्वरलक्ष्मीमिवपुण्यजनोपलालिताम्, कौरवसभामिव
शकुनिनिषेव्याम्, ग्रीष्मारण्यश्रियमिव
निःशेषनिपतितपत्राम्,
वैतरणीमिवशोणितपूरसंतरदुल्बणजन्तुदेहाम्,

Then, the king rendered the army of the enemy, full of *śaras* (arrows), like the autumn season which is full of *śara* grass. Just as Lakṣmi (wealth) of Kubera is protected by *puṇyajanas* (Yakṣas), the army was fondled by meritorious warriors. Just as the assembly of *kauravas* was resorted to by Śakuni, the army was rendered as the assembly of crows (*kauravas*) along with various birds. Just as during fall season, the dry leaves fall together in forests, similarly the battlefield was covered with the feather of the arrows. Like the bodies of various animals float in the river Vaitaraṇi in hell, dead bodies were floating in the blood river. Like the rising sun abandons zodiac sign of *Dhanu* in *Uttarāyaṇa*, the activities of enemy bows (*dhanu*) were siezed; like the earth in the deluge, the king shattered the enemy army. Waters of the ocean looked bloody just like the bloody river water when Madhu and Kaiṭabha were massacred by lord *Ādipurūṣa* (Viṣṇu), making their blood to flow. Here is a pun on the following words;

śaras – 1. Arrows 2. *śara* grass (type of grass).

puṇyajanas – 1. *Yakṣas* 2. Meritorious warriors.

Kauravas – 1. *Kauravas* in the *Mahābhārata* 2. Crows.

Śakuni – 1. Śakuni, maternal uncle of *Kauravas* 2. Birds.

उदगयन्स्थितिमिव रवेः उज्जितधनुर्व्यापाराम्,
प्रलयमहीमिव रसातलपतिताम्,
प्रत्यर्थिपार्थिववाहिनीमकरोत् ।

Patra – 1. Dry leaves 2. Feathers (of the arrow).

Dhanu – 1. Zodiac sign of *Dhanu* 2. Bow.

Rich vocabulary

The poet has wonderful vocabulary. He uses so many unusual words which have been rarely employed by other poets; e.g. *phairavam* – fox (p. 138), *Kīnāśa* – lord Yama (p. 139), *āsuga* – an arrow (p. 139), etc.

Power of Imaginations

Even in the terrible situation of the war, the poet shows his poetic genius. The power of observation and the comments upon it through his facile pen is worth reading.

The elephant heads were cut and were attached to the headless bodies of the warriors. The poet describes it as appearing like the thousands of the Herambas. (p. 137)

The sparks created due to hitting of mases on each other were appearing like glow worms. (p. 137)

The veins pulled out from the dead bodies of the elephants by the vultures were acting like bridges to climb towards the heaven for the soldiers killed in the war. (p. 137)

The poetic convention of nymphs getting married to brave warriors is well utilised saying that the jingling sound of the anklets indicated the approaching of the nymphs for the marriage with the brave people whom they love and the pearls in the heads of elephants scattered were looking like the puffed rice at the occasion of marriage of nymphs and warriors. (p. 137)

Demerits

Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa could not resist the detailed descriptions.

1. The descriptions are marvellous in themselves, but sometimes they halt the movement of the story.
2. The descriptions are often too lengthy and his imagination knows no end.
3. One has to read the text again and again to understand the meaning of the very lengthy sentences. The words used are very uncommon and one has to get the support of dictionary to understand them.
4. He uses *śleṣa* everywhere, which confuses the reader to arrive at exact meaning.

Concluding Remarks

Yuddhavarṇanam in *Vemabhūpālacaritam* observes the specific traits in the style of description. In some of his long descriptions, just like a painter, he draws a bare sketch, then he fills colours in it and finally uses finishing touch for his piece of art. Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa uses this style in his word pictures. The poet has employed the figures of speech suitable to the description of the warfare.

1. There is an upsurge of heroic sentiment blending completely with the topic of the war. In this regard, it may be said that poet has succeeded to certain extent in his mission of composing fine prose romance like his role model Bāṇabhaṭṭa.
2. Vāmana Bhaṭṭa Bāṇa gives realistic and detailed account of the scene by means of *anuprāsa*.
3. Then, *upamās* and *utprekṣās* are used to make thing more meaningful.

4. And, at the end, just to satisfy the lovers of the word play, *śleṣa*, is employed.
5. The weapons mentioned here are arrows, bows, spears, mases and shields and their proper utilization is depicted very effectively. The war animals like horses and elephants are mentioned which shows poet's knowledge of the traditional warfare.

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