

## **Abstract**

The Meghadūta undoubtedly occupies a spot among the principal works of Sanskrit kāvya literature, having historically enjoyed great popularity with Indian connoisseurs of kāvya as well as with modern Sanskrit scholars. A vast body of exegetical literature has been composed to accompany the poem and Mallinātha along with Vallabhadeva could perhaps be considered as the two commentators of most consequence. This thesis will deal with Mallinātha's commentarial contribution while drawing upon and trying to elucidate the basic theoretical principals of alaṃkāraśāstra. Firstly, it will introduce the theory behind Sanskrit poetic tropes termed alaṃkāras as presented by Daṇḍin and Bhāmaha and demonstrate the applicability of their literary theorems to selected stanzas from the Meghadūta. Subsequently, it will analyse Mallinātha's view regarding the amount of poetic complexity present in the Meghadūta. We can observe a contrast between Mallinātha who is eager to find instances of double meaning, or śleṣas, and the conventional approach to Kālidāsa inherited from early Indology slanted toward orientalism and viewing Kālidāsa as a poet of relative simplicity when compared to later Sanskrit authors. The thesis parses some of the most iconic alaṃkāras found throughout the Meghadūta and shows to what extent Mallinātha's interpretation is in accordance with the original text.

## **Key words**

Sanskrit literature, poetics, kāvya, alaṃkāra, Meghadūta, Kālidāsa, śleṣa, Mallinātha, Vallabhadeva, Bhāmaha, Daṇḍin