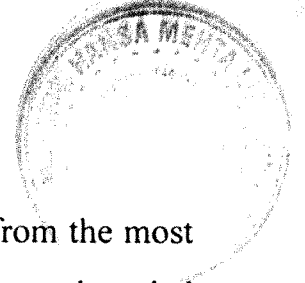


## PREFACE



Sanskrit has had a continuous history of literary output from the most ancient times to the present day. In this long process and varied growth Sanskrit has been developed by both classical and modern poets. It has grown into a national language with a unique pan-Indian character by enriching itself with many an element of value and beauty in the different periods of time. For a complete picture of Sanskrit literature as well as for full appreciation of it, it is necessary to make critical surveys of the Sanskrit literary works composed on particular trends and topics.

The standard histories of Sanskrit literature which have to cover a vast field and lay emphasis on the formative epochs and the efflorescence of the classical ages are constrained, naturally, to refer to the later productions only in an illustrative manner. The efforts of the later ages were however hardly insignificant, judged by quantity, quality or originality. An adequate appraisal of the latter phases of Sanskrit literature is also not easy to make, for the materials pertaining to these are scattered and not known. A series of intensive surveys of later Sanskrit literature would serve ultimately to give us a full view of the extensive literary development in Sanskrit in the post-classical age.

*Carita-kāvyas* are available in plenty in Sanskrit literature. This tradition is continuing since the time of Buddhaghosa. This line of poetry has attracted many prominent Sanskrit poets, who have composed *kāvyas* of different types such as *Mahākāvyas*,

*Khaṇḍkāvya*s and *Laghukāvya*s on the *Carita*s of divine persons or human beings.

We can see that many modern writers have also composed *Carita-kāvya*s in Sanskrit. A critical survey of all those works was necessary for bringing to light all those works, their authors and significant contributions of all those poets who survive in the form of their fame-body in the field of modern creative literature.

The present study brings a systematic account of the *Carita-kāvya*s in modern Sanskrit literature and the significant contribution of the poets. The significance of the study lies in the fact that it has brought to light the significant contributions of modern Sanskrit poets who have composed many important and valuable *Carita-kāvya*s and have enriched the creative field.

The survey mainly covers a period two hundred years i.e. eighteenth century to twentieth century. However, a systematic survey of the *caritakāvya*s of classical period is also given in the thesis as a background of the study starting from the *Buddhacarita*, a magnanimous epic poem on the life of Buddha composed by Aśvaghoṣa, who for the first time initiated the tradition of *carita-kāvya*s poem in classical Sanskrit literature. It is known that being influenced by Aśvaghoṣa, his successors composed a good number of *caritakāvya*s like *Vikramāṅkadeva-carita*, *Naiṣadhīya-carita*, *Śrīkaṇṭha-carita* etc., and contributed significantly to the field of biographical literature. But the present thesis has brought to light

that Sanskrit poets of modern period, have made valuable contributions to this tradition and enriched this field to the great extent. The modern poets have written *mahākāvyas*, *Khaṇḍakāvyas*, and *laghukāvyas* on the lives of Gods, Goddesses, kings, saints, sages, political and social leaders, Philosophers, Freedom fighters, and the noble women like Sita, Ahalya, Jhansisvari, Victoria, Saumitrisundari and others. More than two hundred poems have been brought to light. It is known from the study that there are many important works still remained unpublished. The present thesis contains the main aspects and the notable features of the *caritakavyas* and provided the essential information about the authors of all those poems. To the best of my knowledge, the present survey is attempted for the first time. It is both comprehensive and critical. Hence it tends to contribute towards the general advancement of knowledge.

I have fully drawn upon all the available literature both published and unpublished on the topic of my research in the preparation of the present thesis. All the sources, quotations and the references occurring in the present thesis have been thoroughly verified and traced to the original sources.

I have collected all the available *caritakāvya* in the original form, secondary research works, and the pertinent information about the poets. I have also carefully gone through all the available literature, reviewed and examined critically all the sources. I have tried to

express my own views in the light of the authentic, relevant and related research works.

The thesis is presented in the following eight chapters:

## CHAPTER –I

### INTRODUCTION

The present chapter contains an introduction to the *carita-kāvyas* in general. It focuses on the tradition of the *carita-kāvyas* and analyses the reasons of the significant growth of such poems in Sanskrit literature.

## CHAPTER –II

### SURVEY OF THE CARITA-KĀVYAS OF CLASSICAL PERIOD

The present chapter embodies a critical survey of the *carita-kāvyas* beginning from the *Buddha-carita* of Aśvaghōṣa in historical order. The salient features of the important *carita-kāvyas* like the *Vikramāṅkadeva-carita*, *Śrīkaṇṭha-carita*, *Naiṣadhiya-carita*, etc. are given as a background of the present study. The *mahākāvyas* or the epic poems of Jaina poets who have made significant contribution to

this tradition of Sanskrit poetry, has been also surveyed and their notable features are described.

### CHAPTER –III

#### CARITA-MAHĀKĀVYAS OF MODERN PERIOD

The present chapter contains the important features of the *mahākāvyas* such as *Kṣatrapati-caritam*, *Bhīṣma-caritam* *Rādhā-caritam* etc. of modern period i.e nineteenth century.

### CHAPTER –IV

#### CARITA-KHAṆḌAKĀVYAS OF MODERN PERIOD

The present chapter deals with *khaṇḍakāvyas* in the modern period of Sanskrit. All the available *khaṇḍakāvyas* are given place and their analyses have been made in the present chapter.

### CHAPTER-V

#### CARITA-LAGHUKĀVYAS OF MODERN PERIOD

The chapter deals with the minor poems composed on the lives of great persons and their salient features are presented.

## CHAPTER – VI

### CARITA-KĀVYAS ON WOMEN

The investigation has brought to light the fact that the Sanskrit poets have written some *mahākāvyas* on lives of celebrated women like Ahalya, Sita, Radha, Queen Victoria, Indira Gandhi, and Maharani Lakshmibai et al. The chapter comprises the remarkable features of all these poems in particular for their specialty and significance.

## CHAPTER – VII

### CARITA-KĀVYAS: A CRITIQUE

This chapter contains an appraisal of the poems surveyed in the thesis with a critical analysis of the salient features of them.

## CHAPTER – VIII

### CONCLUSION

This chapter contains the concluding remarks.

At this moment of delight, I feel the debt of my parents, Bhaskarbhai Purohit and Jasodaben who have extended all possible help and co-operation for completing my research work. I express my profound devotion and respect for them.

I take this opportunity to express my deep sense of gratitude to my teacher and guide Dr. Rabindra Kumar Panda, Reader, Department of Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit<sup>i</sup> for his guidance and help.

I am highly grateful to Prof. Dr. Jaydev Juni, Head, Department of Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit, The M.S. University of Baroda for his encouragements and constant inspirations for my academic progress.

My thanks are due to other teachers of the department.

I express a deep and heart-felt sense of gratitude to Dr. Sweta Prajapati, Research Officer, Oriental Institute, the M.S. University of Baroda for helping me at the time of collecting data from the institute library and enlightening me about some important research works.

I remember and thank all the persons who have directly or indirectly helped me.

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24-5-07