

CHAPTER – II

MODERN SANSKRIT MAHĀKĀVYAS

With the dawn of 19th Century, the rise of modernity in terms of genre, form, style, theme, language etc. is reflected in Sanskrit poetry. Therefore, from the beginning of 19th century or more effectively from second half of 19th century (after 1857 revolution) the modern period of Sanskrit literature began. After the revolution of 1857 there was stability at the political level in the country. This period of stability also gave an opportunity to the traditional Sanskrit scholars and the creator of Sanskrit to understand the European minds, their civilization and culture and its effect on Indian society. The Sanskrit composers understood the changed conditions of the country and they were presenting their time and society in their literary works. To our surprise the literature composed in this period is such a vast and vivid that it is near to impossible to furnish its complete and exhausted information. During the British rule it was wrongly assumed that the Sanskrit literature and the creativity in Sanskrit language has ceased and no new literature is created. However, the writers of Sanskrit became aware of political, social, cultural changes in the society and the world in 19th Century.

The rise in science and technology has also influenced the Sanskrit literature. Many writers of Sanskrit like Bhatt Mathuranath Shastri, Gajananda, Ramchandra, Kalamkar etc. created literature on technological civilization, many new poetry, translation and new types of literature were written in the beginning of 19th century. In this century many *Mahākāvyas* were written on the basis of mythological theme and at the same time on the modern theme. In post-independence period we find number of *Mahākāvyas* written on political leaders, glory of India etc. Pt. Batuknath Shastri, Raghvana, Ramkaran Sharma etc. poets have written on the contemporary social issues in their literature.

The poets like Godabarma Yuvraj, Sitarama Bhatta, Krushnavadhut, Navyachandi Das, Ramakrishna Kadamba, Goswami Laksshaminatha, Urvidatta Shastri, Ramnath Tarkaratna, Mandikal Ramnath Shastri, Shivkumar Shastri, Narayanachandra, Maheshchandra, Jivanath Sharma, Keral Verma, Panchanan Tarkaratna, Harinath Shastri, Swami Hiradas, Vindhyeswari

Prasad, etc. are the poets who have enriched the genre of the *Mahākāvya* in Sanskrit in 19th century to a great extent. This activity of creating epics in 19th century paved the way for the continuity of creativity of Sanskrit writers in the 20th and 21st century.

Radhavallabh Tripathi remarks: “The advent of the 20th century presents Sanskrit writers imbibe contemporary period and their literary works exhibiting their understanding of the changing situations of the country.”¹

The 20th century also has a galaxy of poets who contributed immensely to the field of epics. The literature of this century presents the true picture of the contemporary society. Therefore, variety of various themes are found in this literature. This can be authenticated by the following statement of Rahasbihari Dwivedi:

“इस अवधि का संस्कृत-साहित्य सामयिक परिस्थितियों से अत्यधिक प्रभावित और अधिकांशतः उसी पर आधारित भी है। प्राचीन संस्कृत- साहित्य की शायद ही कोई काव्यकृति ऐसी हो जो सामयिक परिस्थिति का इतना यथायथ रूप प्रस्तुत करती हो। इस काल का संस्कृत-साहित्य युगीन परिस्थितियों का प्रतिबिम्ब है।”²

In modern period the Sanskrit poets have written many *caritakāvyas* on mythological, historical, political and spiritual leaders. As a result, we got number of *Mahākāvyas* written on Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Śiva, Sītā etc., kings like Śivāji, Rāṇa Pratāpa and political leaders like Gāndhī, Nehru, Subhashchandra etc. Thus, *caritakāvyas* have become the synonym of *Mahākāvya*.

Keshavrav Mushalgaonkar rightly remarks: “महाकाव्यों का अन्तर्भाव चरित्रात्मक ग्रंथों में या चरित्रग्रंथों का अन्तर्भाव महाकाव्यों में होता है।.....यदि यह कहा जाय कि संस्कृत साहित्य में चरित्रातिरिक्त कोई महाकाव्य ही नहीं है तो कोई अतिशयोक्ति नहीं होगी।”³

In the following pages we will see some of the *Mahākāvyas* written in 20th century.

¹ Tripathi, Radhavallabha, *Kshamadevi Rao*, chapter I, p.13

² Dwivedi, Rahasvihari, *Sanskrit Mahākāvyaon kā Samālochanātmak-Adhyayan*, p.11

³ Mushalgaonkar, Keshavrav, *Adhunik Sanskrit Kāvya Paramparā*, p.51

2.1 Śrīrāmacaritābdhiratnam

Śrīrāmacaritābdhiratnam is a *Mahākāvya* based on the theme of life of Rāma. This is a work of early 20th century written by Nityānanda Śāstrī, a son of poet Madhava Kavindra of Dadhich family. This work was first published in 1933 from the Venkateshwar Press, Bombay. Its second edition was published in 1936 with Hindi translation and latest it was published in 2005 with English Translation. While translating poem in English Satyavrat Shastri remarks: “Being of the genre of *Citrakāvya*, it required of the translator a special skill to portray the original in all its varied ramifications. Very often the poet would indulge in double entendre with adjectives yielding more than one meaning going with the words they qualify.”⁴

This epic poem is comprised in 14 cantos. It is uniquely composed in the way that when we connect the first letter of first *carana* of every verse it becomes the *Rāmāyaṇa*. So, here the beauty of *Citrakāvya* is found here. Therefore, it is also called as *mahācitrakāvya*. Though it is based on Vālmiki’s *Rāmāyaṇa* we find number of episodes which occur in later Sanskrit epics and dramas and *Rāmacaritamānasa* of Tulsidas. These episodes are not described in original *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmiki. The poet has used *Upamā*, *Uddāṭṭa*, *Ekāvalī*, *Parisankhyā*, *Yamaka* etc figures of speech. The descriptions of towns, mountains, various seasons etc make the poetry elaborative and interesting. This epic has some unbelievable imaginations, difficult suggestive meanings and difficult words, which cannot be understood without its commentary. Various traditional metres used in this epic make the poetry rhythmic and interesting.

2.2 Satyāgrahgītā

Pandita Kshamarao has many written literary works in Sanskrit, English and Marathi. In her huge contribution to Sanskrit literature, she has contributed six *Mahākāvyas*. 1. *Satyāgrahgītā*, 2. *Uttarasatyāgrahgītā*, 3. *Swarājaviṇaya*, 4. *Śrī Tukārāmacaritam*, 5. *Śrī Rāmadāsacaritam*, *Śrī Jñāneśwaracaritam*.

Satyāgrahgītā was composed in 1932. Like *Bhagavadgītā* this epic has 18 *Sargas* and 1659 verses. *Dāṇḍīyātra* of Mahatma Gandhi was the motivational event for Kshamarao to

⁴ Shastri, Nityananda, *Śrīrāmacaritābdhiratna* (Eng.Tra. Shastri, Satyavrat), p.54

compose this epic. From Gandhi's agitation in South Africa till Gandhi Irvin understanding episodes are described by the poet. This epic was published in Paris and this is the only modern Sanskrit epic published in Europe. In the first five *sargas* the political imbalance in India is described. The cruelty of landlords was aptly described. The cruelty of Cornel Dyer is described by the poet with lot of courage. In the seventh *sarga* the riot between the Mopala of Malabar and Hindus is described. The eighth *sarga* describes the Symon commission and the agitation in the country. The later *sargas* described the cruelty of British rulers on Indians, *Dandiyatra*, imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi, arrival of Gandhi in Puna etc. are described. The philosophy of Gandhi and his actions are the main aim of the poet to reveal through this poetry.

2.3 Uttarastyāgrahgītā

This is a huge *mahākāvya* of 47 *sargas* and 1989 verses. It was published in 1948. It is an extension of *Satyāgrahgita* in 28 *Sargas*. The new spirit in the society that has emerged after *Dandiyatra* has been described. In the later *sargas* the issue of entry of untouchables in temple Champaranya Satyagrah, world-war, Jinnah's appeal to Muslims, quite India agitation and return of Gandhi in Sevagram had been described. In comparison to *Satyāgrahgītā* this poem appears a mature writing.

2.4 Swarājaviijaya

This epic deals with the freedom fight and the character of Gandhi as a political leader. This poem is also known as *Uttara-Jayasatyāgrahgītā*. It has 54 *sargas*. It was published in 1962. It is bigger than the prior two epics and the episodes are also much more elaborated. The poem begins with the failure of the discussion regarding the partition of India between Gandhi and Jinnah. The sorrow of Gandhi over the partition of India is very effectively described by the poet in the following verse.

अद्यत्वे भारते हन्त स्थानं मे न हि विद्यते ।
पञ्चविंशशतं वर्षाण्युत्सहे नैव जीवितुम् ॥
जीवेयं वत्सरौ प्रायो नाधिकं किल कामये ।
भारते विप्लवग्रस्ते कथं वा ध्रियतां वपुः ॥⁵ (४३. २१-२२)

⁵ Pandita, Kshamarao, *Swarājaviijaya*, p. 145

2.5 Tukārāmacaritam

Tukārāmacaritam a renowned poem about the life of Maharashtra's saint Tukārāma. It has nine sargas and 4835 verses. It was published in 1950 with English Translation. In this *mahākāvya* the poet has the genealogy of saint Tukarama, his childhood, his two marriages, his extreme poverty, his being looted by his villagers, his spiritual experiences, description of draught, his meeting with Shivaji Maharaja, increasing devotees of Tukarama, and finally the death of Tukarama. In this *mahākāvya* Upajāti metre is mainly used however in some places *Mālinī*, *Śārdūlavikrīdita*, *Viyoginī*, *Sragdharā* etc. metres are used as per the requirement of Rasa. In many verses we can experience the direct transcreation of *Abhaṅgas* of Tukārāma in Sanskrit.

For example:

मधुरवचनैः पद्यस्रग् या बुधेन विनिर्मिता

निखिलनिगमश्रेणीसारं बिभर्ति निबोध ताम् ॥⁶ (७.१२)

This poem painted a vivid picture of the hypocritical Hindu Society and its effects on the life of an ordinary person like Tukarama. Bhakti is the primary emotion depicted in this poem, while Karuṇa plays a secondary role. For the Sanskrit language of Pandita Kshamarao in the poem *Tukārāmacaritam*, M.R. Jaykar writes in its forward “Pandita Kshamarao’s publication will, it is hoped, strengthen the claim of the language to form a flexible and resilient medium for the expression of modern thought, despite its archaic antiquity”⁷

2.6 Rāmadāsacarita

The *Rāmadāsacarita* consists of 13 Sargas and 618 verses. It was published in 1953. In comparison to Śrī *Tukārāmacarita* this work is more mature in expression and elaboration. It describes the genealogy of saint Ramadasa, who is son of Renudevi and Suryajipant. It describes the childhood in a very effective manner. The education of Ramadasa, his parents’ efforts for his marriage, his escaping from marriage, his going to Pañcavaṭī through the path of Godavari, his learning of Vedas and other Shastras, Rāma’s appearance before Ramadasa, his visit to various

⁶ Pandita, Kshamarao, *Śrī Tukārāmacaritam with English Translation*, p.68

⁷ *Ibid*, p.i

pilgrimages and cities, attack of Muslims on Ramadasa, Meeting of Ramadasa and Shivaji etc. are described by the poet in a very lucid and effective manner. The entire *mahākāvya* is full of descriptions of miracles and divine events. But as opined by Radhavallabha Tripathi this poem could not describe the reality and its importance.⁸

2.7 Jñāneśvaracaritam

This is an epic poem of 8 sargas. It was published in 1953. This is the last and the most mature work of Kshamarao. Saint Jnaneshwar has very important position in the society of Maharashtra. He was born in brāhminā family. His ancestors were staying at the bank of river Godavari in Maharashtra. His childhood name was Vitthal. Vitthal left the home and met Ramananda. In this epic it is described how Vitthal, his wife Rukmani and three children were harassed by the then Maharastrīyan society. The pitiable life of Jñāneśvara and his brothers is described by the poet. The description of the journey towards Paithan is nicely described by the poet. And in the last three sargas the poet has described the public lectures of Jñāneśvara in Marathi. Jñāneśvara's journey to various pilgrimages, the composition of the work *Amṛtānubhava* and the description of *Samādhigrahaṇa* by Jñāneśvara. Like *Śrītukārāmacarita* and *Śrīrāmadāśacarita* this poem describes the miracles and divine incidents that occurred in the life of Jñāneśvara. The poet has utilized *Vaidarbhī* rīti and *Prasadagūṇa* to incorporate various figures of speech within the poem. Her use of Anuprāśh metre is unique.

2.8 Jittamalacaritam

Jittamalacaritam is a *mahākāvya* based on the theme of Bava Jitto, a public hero from Duggara. This poem was published in near about 1945.⁹ This poem is divided into eighth sargas with 450 verses. It is written by Pt. Sukadeva Shastri. He was born in 1893 in village Pati in Jammu. He was sent for higher education Raghunath Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya at Jammu. Later on, he went to Lahore Vishvavidyalaya for further study. He wrote five literary works in Sanskrit named *Śrījittamalacaritam*, *ŚrīNehruśatakam*, *Śrīhemaamarnath Kathā*, *Bhāratasahastranāma Stotram* and *Duggarastuti*. He also wrote two *Kāvyas* in *Dogarī* Language. Bava Jitto could not

⁸ Tripathi, Radhavallabha, *Sanskrit Sahitya Ka Samagra Itihasa*, Vol.IV, p.1772

⁹ Sen, Subhrajit, *Sanskrit Studies in the East*, Vol. I, p.381

become happy with his family more over the society also gave him suffering. He could not get his rights from the society and he could not trust the people of society. He was a devotee of Ma Durga. He sacrificed his life for not getting his complete for not getting his right in society. After his death also the king Vīrasinh did not favour him though he was Hindu. Natural calamity affected the life of people. People called a meeting and decided to install idols of Jittamal and Gauri. In Kartik Shukla of Samvat 1515 daily worshiped was performed. In the village named Zidi various buildings were built, every year people went there and got the result as per they desire. The importance of spiritual power was realized by the people of that place. Today also people travelled to this place as a pilgrimage and achieve their desired goals.

2.9 Duggarastuti Mahākāvya

Duggarastuti Mahākāvya is written by Pt. Sukadeva Shasri and published in near about 1950.¹⁰ He is a well-known poet of the Duggara Pradesh. *Duggarastuti* is a *mahākāvya* written in 13 cantos and 618 verses. In this *Mahākāvya*, he has given the vivid descriptions of ponds, lakes, hermitages, town, temple etc. He hasn't left any drawback in describing Duggara Desh. Jammu region is called as Duggara Desh because the Dogra people were lived there. During the period of the King Gulabsinh, the Jammu region called as Duggara. In the description of the Duggara Desh the poet comprises all the plants, fruits as well as foods of that region. No one has courage to write a glory of their own region Duggara Desh but writing this *mahākāvya* Pt. Sukadev Shastri proved that it is possible to create literature in Sankrit in the Duggara Desh.

The first canto explores the features of rivers like the Rāvī, Tāvī and Devika, among others. Because of these rivers that region is able to produce fruits, rice, potato etc. There is also the descriptions of Mānasara. The second canto describes the temples and pilgrimages of the Jammu region, i.e. Uttaravāhinī, Puramaṇḍala, Kāmeśvara temple, Sukarālā Devā temple, Śiva's temple Bilāvarā etc. The Kāmeśvara temple described as the place where people fulfil their desires. The third canto describes the famous towns of Jammu like Jammu Nagarī, Sāmbā Nagarī, Ranvīrasinha Purā, Akhanūra, Udhamapūra, Canainī, Rāmabana, Rājaurī, Riyasī, Kālākota etc.

The fourth canto deals with the different products of the three town: Kaṭhuā is situated on the bank of the river Ravi, and it produces Wheat, Corn and the different grains. Hīrānagar

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.383

produces Wheat, Corn, Millet, Sesame, Mustard etc. Viśvasthalī produces the beans like, cheakpeas, mustard, Sesame, Urad etc., vegetables like Onion, Ladies finger, Chillies, Potatoes, Spinach etc. it also produces herbs like Pipala, Nima, Baheda, Jamun etc. This place is also known as the place for art as well as medicine.

The fifth canto describes the sacrifices of the SuraVīras, glory of the women who are Satis. The region is also famous for the Sanskrit Scholars, astrologers as well as doctors etc. The sixth canto describes the place for pilgrimages, festivals as well as fairs like Vaiṣṇodevī Yātrā, Sukarālā Devī Melā, Puramaṇḍala Mela, Bāvā Jitto Melā etc. The seventh canto has the description of the people of four Varṇas and their works. It also describes women and the kings of the Duggara region. The Eighth canto describes the origin of the river Devikā as well as the strength of women etc.

The Ninth canto deals with the vivid Ākhyānas of Satī. The first is Śiva left Satī in his heart and the second one is Satī left his life in the Sacrifice of Daksha. The tenth canto deals with the transformation of Satī into Devika and Siva into Mahadeva. The eleventh canto describes the fruit of the good works which are doing in the pilgrimages and the fruits of bad works. Those who do good works get heavenly abide.

2.10 Gāndhīcaritam

Gāndhīcaritam is a *Mahākāvya* written by Shri Sadhusharan Mishra. It was published in 1962. Shri Jayaram Mishra is the poet of the father. He was Sanskrit scholar. *Gāndhīcaritam* is a *Mahākāvya* written by Shri Sadhusharan Mishra. Shri Jayaram Mishra is the poet of the father. He was Sanskrit scholar. It has 19 cantos. 1 to 17 sargas consist all the five junctures of the drama. In the 18 and 19 cantos, there are the description of death of Gandhi and the lamentation of people for Gandhi. This epic poem depicts the biographical sketch of Gandhi from his birth till his funeral rites. At the end of the poem the poet gives introduction of his own dynasty.

Prof. Satyavrat Shastri remarks: “श्रीगान्धिचरितमिति वैयाकरणानामुत्सवः कोषकृतां रसायनं साहित्यरसरसिकानां रसाप्लावः स्वदेशानुरागिणां च स्फूर्तिसिन्धुः।”¹¹

¹¹ Shastri, Satyavrat, *Shrigandhicharitasya Rachnashilpam*, p. 17

2.11 Kṣatrapaticaritam

This epic poem is written by Dr. Umashankar Tripathi of Uttar Pradesh. It was published in 1963. The poet was born on 1st January 1922 in Sigha village of Uttar Pradesh. He was born in the family having tradition of Sanskrit knowledge. Therefore, he was imbibed with Indian culture and love for Sanskrit language. His father Pt. Ramnareshmani Tripathi was versatile scholar of Sanskrit. *Kṣatrapaticaritam* is one of his best poems. The government of Uttar Pradesh gave award to this work in 1969. The activities of the nation, tradition, problems, cultural and social environment is the soul theme of this poem. Kshatrapati Shivaji is the hero of this poem. In India after many years for the first time in the leadership of Shivaji the public revolt against Mughals. Shivaji was famous for his love for the nation and he was a true freedom fighter. The poet has tried to bring forth these qualities of Shivaji artistically in this poem. The past of the entire nation and the present scenario got reflected clearly in this poem. In today's age of National Integration this effort of the poet is praiseworthy.

This poem is divided into 19 Sargas. In first sarga the poet describes the importance of Indian culture, Sanskrit language and the patriotic spirit. He also eulogies Vilmiki and Kālidāsa. In second Sarga the description of Himadrī and various other parts of India, their culture and the birth of Shivaji is described. The third and forth Sargas described about the childhood and young age of Shivaji and his promise before the Goddess for freedom of India. Fifth to nine sargas the mission of Afzalkhan to kill Shivaji and the death of Afzalkhan is described. The tenth sarga describes the attack of Sayistakhan on the forts of Śivājī, the counter attack of Śivājī with his army on Sayistakhan is described. The eleventh sarga describes the interesting story of bringing the milk of lioness for his Guru Samarth Ramdas. The sargas twelve to fifteen describe the Kshatrapati's visit to Agra, his imprisonment and intelligently coming back to his rule. In 16th Sarga victory over the Kondana fort by Shivaji is described. The seventeenth sarga contains the story of sending of the letter against the collection of tax by Shivaji to Aurangzeb. The eighteenth sarga describes the coronation of Kshatrapati Shivaji. The last sarga describes the good governance of Śivājī.

The characterization of various characters like Shivaji, Aurangzeb, Afzalkhan, Sayistakhan, Samarth Ramadas etc. speaks of the poetic talent of the poet. Vīra is the main

sentiment of this poem which is imbibed with the patriotic spirit. *Raudra, Hāsyā, Karuṇa, Śṛṅgāra, Adbhut, Bhayānaka, Bibhatsa* etc. are the subordinate sentiments of this poem. The poet has given many ancient and modern good sayings (Suktis) for easy understanding of his ideas. The use of appropriate metres and figures of speech according to various sentiments make this poem enjoyable. The descriptions of various festivals and businesses speak of the poet's connection with the society. Therefore, Rahas Vihari Dwivedi opines about this poem:

“इस प्रकार कल्पनासमेधित लोक-प्रख्यात कथावस्तु, उदात्त पात्रसृष्टि, अतिशय तीव्र रसव्यंजना, परमआवर्जक भाषाशिल्प, व्यापक राष्ट्रभाव, मर्मस्पर्शी युगबोध आदि महत्तम गुणों से समन्वित होने के कारण ‘क्षत्रपतिचरितम्’ अपने शिल्प का परम आदर्श और प्रशस्त महाकाव्य है।”¹²

However, Dr. Ramsuresh Pandey in his article bring forth some lacunas of the poet in the following words:

“कथानकस्य चयनं अपि सावधानतया कृतं तथापि ५-९ सर्गेषु अफजलखानाभियानम् १२-१५ सर्गेषु च क्षत्रपतेरागमनं नूनमितिहासमनुपातश्चातिशय्य वर्णितमस्ति । अनयोर्वर्णने कविः स्वसंकल्पादर्शयोर्विमुखः प्रतीयते । अदृष्टस्तलानां वर्णनेऽपि तेन कर्तव्यपूर्तिरिवाकारि।”¹³

2.12 Gaṅgāsāgarīyam

This epic is written by Viṣṇu dutta Shukla and published in 1964. He was born in 1895 in Unnao district of Uttar Pradesh. He took part in the Non-cooperation Movement in year 1921 in his student life. He has published ‘Sahayogi’, his own weekly publication. Sulochana Sati is his famous Hindi poem. He was not only famous Hindi writer but has also deep love for FSanskrit. The *Gaṅgāsagarīyam* is an allegorical *Mahākāvya*. It consists of nine cantos and 479 verses. Cantos named according to their subject matter.

The first canto gives only introduction of the *Mahākāvya*. It describes about the state of King Himavāna where queen was crying in the separation of her daughter Gaṅgā. The tears of the queen are symbol of Gaṅgā. The second canto depicts that the King Himvāna went to

¹² Dwivedi, Rahas Vihari, *Kshatrapaticharita Mahākāvya Ka Samalochnatmak Adhyayan*, p. 15

¹³ Pandey, Ramasuresh, ‘Kshatrapaticharita-Mimamsa’, *Arvachin Sanskritam*, Vol. I, p.10

Kailashpuri to get the boons from Lord Siva because he is childless. It has beautiful description of Kailaspuri as well as the divine power of Siva. The third canto describes Himvāna's invocation to Lord Siva. Siva being pleased with him gave him a boon of a girl child. But with a condition that his daughter will leave him very soon. And gave him water from his Jaṭā and asked to give it to his wife to drink. The fourth canto deals with the chanting of Mantras, drinking of water by the queen, desire of pregnant queen to wander near sea, in forest and mountain etc. and finally birth of Gaṅgā. The fifth canto depicts the childhood of Gaṅgā, her love for the monsoon, Himvāna's happiness having seen Gaṅgā's childish activities, his sadness after remembering the condition of Lord Siva, search of suitable husband for her daughter Gaṅgā etc. In sixth canto Sagar a son of king of Bangodadhi attracted by hearing the qualities of Gaṅgā and went to meet her. But unfortunately, he didn't reach to Gaṅgā so he sent Megha as his messenger of love. Here the mountain Himālaya, the river Gaṅgā, sea and cloud etc characters are personified as human. The poet has given the description of the union of the river Gaṅgā and sea in a very beautiful manner. During the description of the flooring of river Gaṅgā in India the poet has given the detailed and vivid description of various cities and pilgrimages. While describing the Himachal Pradesh the poet writes

जलप्रपातैस्सुपयोनदीभिर्वनैर्मनोज्ञोपवनैर्वनान्तेः ।

शोभायमानो हिमवत्प्रदेशः ईर्ष्यास्पदं स्यात् सुरपत्तनाय ॥¹⁴

2.13 Sītācaritam

This epic is written by Shri Rewa Prasad Dwivedi. It was published in 1968. The 6th revised edition of this poem was published in 1990 with the new title *Uttarsītācharitam*. The poet was born on 22nd September 1985 in Nadner Village of Madhya Pradesh situated on the bank of river Narmada. His father Pt. Narmada Prasad Dwivedi was veteran scholar of Sanskrit and Jyotish. His mother was Lakshamidevi. He lost his parents merely the age of eight. He got his education from Kashi Hindu Vishwavidyalaya and learnt Sahitya Shastra from Pt. Mahadev Shastri. He was conferred with D.Lit degree from Jabalpur University in 1974. He has to his credit many works mainly on Alamkāra Śāstra, on works of Kālidāsa and original Sanskrit poems and dramas.

From the coronation of Rāma till the submerge of Sītā in Abyss. The poem consists of 10 cantos and 694 verses. In the first sarga Rāma, Sītā and Lakshman after completing their stay in

¹⁴ Shukla, Vishnudatt, *Gaṅgāsāgarīyam*, p.23

the forest return back to Sāketa. They were greeted by their mothers and other relatives. Rāma was selected as a new king by all and his Shobhayatra was carried out in the city Ayodhyā. The second Sarga describes the governance by Rāma, happy moments of Rāma and pregnant Sītā, people's doubt regarding Sītā's character, the mental dilemma of Rāma and Sītā's proposal to depart for the forest is described. The third canto describes Rāma's extreme love towards Sītā, Lakshman's pathetic situation while driving the chariot of Sītā in the direction of forest. The fourth sarga describes Sītā's meeting with Urmila before going to forest is described. In the fifth sarga Sītā was greeted by the nature. The description of delivery of Sītā, Vālmīki's mental position on the change of natural elements at the time of Sītā's delivery. His confidence of the birth of great personalities and his extreme joy over the birth of Sītā's twins. The sixth sarga describes the Luv-Kuśa's intimacy with hermitage dwellers and forest plants. Sītā chooses Vālmīki as the Guru for her sons. The seventh sarga describes the acceptance of Luv-Kuśa as a student by Vālmīki, joy of Sītā by observing the qualities of Vālmīki as Ṛṣi-Muni and Kavi. The eighth sarga describes the study of Various Shastras by Luv-Kuśa, arrival of the sacrificial horse from the Aśvamegha Yajña of Rāma, war between Chandraketu and Luv-Kuśa, meeting of Rāma and Vālmīki. Arrival of Vaśiṣṭha, Janaka, Mothers of Rāma and the villagers, assembly, expression of joy by Vālmīki on organizing the Yajña and expression of sorrow by Vālmīki on Sītāparityāga, arrival of Sītā before all family members and their support to come back is described in the ninth sarga. In the last sarga the poet has described giving away Luv-Kuśa to Rāma by Vālmīki, Sītā's decision for Bhusamādhī and her ultimate separation from Rāma is described.

Though the theme is taken from the *Rāmāyaṇa* the poet has made certain changes in the theme to make the poem interesting. Dr. Krishnakant Shukla therefore remarks in his article:

“सीताचरिते कविः केवलमितिवृत्तमेव न निर्वाहयति । समकालीना राष्ट्रिय- समप्यास्तासां समाधानं च तत्र प्रस्तौति । समाजसेवा, स्वाधीनता, बालसमस्या, कृषिसमस्या, शिक्षानीतिः, छात्रा नुशासनम्, कुलपतिकर्तव्यम्, नारीजागरणम्, देश- निर्माणभावना, देशकर्णधारणामाचारसंहितेत्यादि विषयानवलम्ब्य तस्य विचारा नितान्तं मौलिका मार्मिकाश्च ।”¹⁵

¹⁵ Sukla, Krishnakanta, *Sītācarita Samikṣaṇam*, p.37

The poet has tried his best to enrich the poem by way of using 17 metres and figures of speeches. Rahas Vihari Dwivedi remarks about the poet's talent of using metres as:

“सीताचरितम् की छन्दोयोजना कवि की विविध वृत्तरचना की क्षमता से अधिक उचित अवसर पर उनके प्रयोग के औचित्य की दृष्टि से विशेष महत्वपूर्ण है। इस काव्य में छन्द कहीं-कहीं 'यथा नाम तथा गुण' के प्रतीक हैं। ये अपने परिवेश और अवरोहावरोहक्रम को भावों के परिवेश और अवरोहावरोहक्रम के साथ बदलते प्रस्तुत होते हैं।”¹⁶

The poet is no doubt a classical scholar and has composed the poem very strictly adhering to the norms of classical writings, but he has been successful in giving his theme a new trend which will definitely satisfy the modern Indian mind. The chief sentiment of the poem patriotism to the true sense of the term which has been blended with love for humanity irrespective of caste and creed.

2.14 Śivarājyodayam

This epic is written by Shridhar Bhaskar Varnekara. It was published in 1968. The poet was born in 1918 in Nagpur. He was a professor of Sanskrit in Nagpur University for many years. Besides his *Mahākāvya Śivarājyodayam* he has written two *Muktaka kāvyas*- *Mandormimala* and *Mandasmitam*, six *śataka kāvyas*-*Swātantryavīraśatakam*, *Jawāharataraṅgiṇī*, *Vātsalyarasayaṇam*, *Śrīrāmakṛṣṇaparamhaṁsiyam*, *Mātr̥bhūlaharīśatakam*, and *Satyāśatakam*. Three *Rāgabaddha kāvyas*- *Tīrthabhāratam*, *Śrī Rāmasangītikā*, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Sangītikā*, three *Gītā*- *Śrama Gītā*, *Saṅgha Gītā* and *Grāmagītāmṛtam*, four *Stotra kāvyas*- *Kālidāsa rahasyam*, *Adhyātmaśivāyanam*, *Prārthanāstotram*, *Śrīgajānanprārthanāstotram* and two dramas -*Vivekanandavijayam* and *Śivarājyabhiṣekam*. Among his creative writings Shivarajyodayam is the best epic poem. This epic poem consisting of 68 Sargas is a notable contribution of 20th Century. It is a voluminous *Mahākāvya* written in the line of Vālmīki, Vyāsa and Kalhaṇa. It contains the motivating biographical details of Saint Tukārāma, Rāmadāsa etc. and from the birth of Śivājī till his coronation as a king is described. The poet combined his genius with imaginations to deal with the subject matter and does not indulge in the verbal jugglery.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 153

The poet has used metres like *Anuṣṭubha*, *Indravajrā*, *Upendravajrā*, *Upajāti*, *Rathoddhatā*, *Drutavilambita*, *Vasantatilakā*, *Vaṃsastha*, *Śārdūlvikrīḍita*, *Mālinī*, *Mandākrāntā*, *Bhujāṅgaprāyata*, *Śālinī*, *Puṣpitāgrā*, *Śikharinī*, *Prṭhvī*, *Āryā*, *Saravati* etc. in this *Mahākāvya*.

Dr. Abhinava Shukla rightly says:

“श्रीशिवराज्योदयम् की छन्दोयोजना को देखकर हमें वर्णकर जी के छन्दोऽधिकार का सम्यक् ज्ञान होता है । उन्होंने जहाँ अनेक स्थलों पर क्षेमेन्द्र द्वारा निर्दिष्ट विविध छन्दों के प्रयोग का पालन किया है वहीं उससे कहीं आगे बढ़कर पारम्परिक छन्दों से नव-नूतन वर्ण्य विषयों के वर्णन में उनका प्रयोग किया है।”¹⁷

The *Alaṃkāras* like *Ślesh*, *Rupaka*, *Bhrāntimāna*, *Dīpaka*, *Prativastupamā*, *Ekāvalī*, *Saṃsṛṣṭi*, *Bhāvika*, *Swabhāvokti*, etc. are used in the poem. The poet has mainly used *Vaidarbhī Rīti* in this poem. *Mādhurya*, *Oja* and *Prasāda Guṇas* are found in this poem at appropriate place. His language is lucid and simple. He has borrowed some words as ‘Allah, Yedil’ etc. as it is from other language. He has also used some proverbs from hindi language. *Rāṣṭrabhakti* is the main sentiment of this poem. And *Śṛṅgāra*, *Vīra*, *Adbhuta*, *Bhayānaka*, *Karuṇa*, *Raudra* are subordinate sentiments. The characterization of various characters like Śivāji, his wife-Sai bai, Shambhuraj, Pantaji, Ramasinh, Tanaji, Raghunatha, Chhatrasal, Gagabhatta etc. and the characters at opposite side like Sultana Mohammad, Ali Adil Shah, Aurangjheb, Badi Begum, Afzalkhan, Shahjahan, Fatehkhan, Fazalkhan etc. are described in a very appropriate manner. In this poem the poet has mainly tried to describe how Shivaji has fought to establish the Sanatana Hindu Dharma which was destroyed by the Mughals.

“यत् स्वराष्ट्रस्य गौरवे भक्तिर्विराजते, यत्र धर्मत्राणस्य कृतेऽमोघं नीतिज्ञत्वं विभ्राजते, यत्र चादम्य उत्साहः क्रियाविधिज्ञत्वगदीर्घसूत्रत्वं, व्यसनवैमुख्यञ्च राजन्ते, यद् गुणेषु आदरधियं निदधाति, यद् द्रढसौहृदसौन्दर्यसंयुतं विद्यते, यच्च भवति कृतज्ञम् । महाकविर्वर्णकरः सर्वमिदं सम्यग् विभाव्य स्वदेशस्य स्वसमाजस्य, स्वमनीषिणां स्वतरुणानामग्रे शिवराज्योदयं महाकाव्यं समुत्थापयति।”¹⁸

¹⁷ Shukla, Abhinava, ‘Śrīśivarājyodayam’ mein *Saṅgitātmakatā*, p. 446

¹⁸ Shukla, Rameshchandra, ‘Sivarajyodaya- Samiksha’, *Arvachin Sanskritam*, Vol. I, 1979, p. 30

2.15 Tilakayaśorṇava

This is an important epic poem of modern period. Lokamanya Tilak is the hero of the poem. One of his disciples Padmabhushan Late Shri Madhavhari Ane is the poet of this poem. This poem is divided into 85 Tarangas and it has 12000 verses. This poem published in three volumes in 1969-1971. The poets of modern languages have not written any Mahākāvya of this size. This is perhaps the biggest Mahākāvya of this 20th Century. It has got a unique place in Sanskrit Literature due to its many qualities. The poet Shri Ane could describe the incidents of freedom fight with accuracy because he was the follower of Tilaka during freedom fight. The poet was born in Pune in Brāhmina family on 19th August 1880. Love for Sanskrit language and Indian culture is inherited by the poet from his family. He was conferred with D. Lit. degree and Padmavibhushan for his contribution to Sanskrit Literature. The life sketch of Lokamanya Shri Bala Gangadhar Tilaka is the base of this *Mahākāvya*.

The first volume contains 25 *tarangas*. It has the description of the beauty of Konkan region, death of forefathers of Tilaka in Panipat war, birth of Tilak, death of his mother and father, his marriage, arrival of businessman from Europe, beginning of British rule, awareness of Indian people for independence, meeting of Viṣṇu shastri with Tilaka, publication of Maratha and Keshari newspaper, death of Viṣṇu shastri, imprisonment of Tilaka and Agarkar, establishing Fergusson College, establishment of Indian congress, fifth conference of Congress in Mumbai, election of Tilaka as Secretary of congress, spread of plague in Pune and Mumbai, imprisonment of Tilaka for six months, description of Tanjavur library, arrival of Tilaka in Pune.

The second volume contains 26th to 41 *tarangas*. It has the description of the principal Raghunath of Fergusson College, editing of Kesharipatra by Tilaka, opposition of English newspaper, congress conference in Lucknow, appointment of Lord Curzon as the viceroy of India, fight between English and Dutch in Africa, war between Russia and Japan, spread of Tilaka's message in Vidarbha, printing of Vande Mataram Newspaper by Maharshi Arvind, conference of Congress in Varanasi, Tilaka's visit of Karnatak and Maharashtra, Conference of Congress in Surat, arrival of Arvind in Pune, conference in the leadership of Rabindranath Tagore, Tilaka's national mission for unity, efforts of Arvinda and Tilaka for strong agitation through public lectures and newspapers, Tilaka's imprisonment for six years in Mondale, death of wife of Tilaka, daily life of Tilaka in jail, his selfcontrol, his arrival in Punyapuri from Jail.

The third volume contains 42 to 85 tarangas. Welcome of Tilaka by the people of various places at Gaekwada, Tilaka's efforts to strengthen the Congress, declaration of war in Germany, effort of Viṣṇu sharma, Bala and Gopala for the unity among people of India, publication of Gita in Marathi language, publication of a book against Tilaka, formation of Swarajyasangha, Tilaka's lecture among various religious leaders, conference of Congress in Lucknow, support of Kolkata, Nagpur, Akola and Vidarbha to Tilaka, support of Mahatma Gandhi, Satyagrah of Gandhi in Africa and Champaranya, felicitation of Tilaka in London, death of Tilaka.

Vīra is the main Sentiments with patriotic spirit. *Karuṇa*, *Vātsalya*, *Bhakti* and *Adbhuta* etc are subordinate sentiments of this epic poem. For the language of poet Rahas Vihari Dwivedi remarks: “इस काव्य का भाषाशिल्प कालिदास-आदि अलंकृत शैली के कवियों से अनुप्राणित होकर भी वाल्मीकि और व्यास के अधिक निकट हैं। स्वाभाविक, सरल और जीवित-जागृत भाषा में काव्य का प्रणयन किया गया है। भावगाम्भीर्य के साथ भाषा का गाम्भीर्य भी देखने को मिलता है।”¹⁹

2.16 Swami Vivekānandacarita Mahākāvya

This *caritakāvya* is written by Trayambak Atmaram Bhandarkar. This is the first *Mahākāvya* written on the life of Swami Vivekanand in Sanskrit. It has 18 cantos and 1112 verses. It was published in 1972. Each canto has the word Shanti in its last verse. The poet has aptly described the greatness of the character of the Swami Vivekanand. The style and the language of this poet is like that of Bhāravi and Māgha. The main intention of this poem is to bring to light the *Sanātana Dharma* and the culture related to it in India. And therefore, the poet said:

या ज्ञानदिव्यतटिनी भरतस्य भूमेर्विष्णोः पदाज्जनिमवाप्य सहस्रधारम् ।

आशासु लोकनिवहेष्वनिशं भ्रमन्ती त्रिस्तोतसं जितवती ह्यवनीं प्रयाता ॥²⁰

The language of the poem is sweet and devoid of grammatical faults. The expressions directly denote the meanings and maintain the natural flow which is expected from a gifted poet. Pandita Bhandarkar rigorously adhered to the definitions of Mahākāvya provided by renowned

¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, Dwivedi, Rahas Vihari, p.319

²⁰ Bhandarkar, Trayambaka, *Vivekanandacarita*, p. 47

poets such as Viśvanātha. He has properly arranged the material of his epic with appropriate and suitable titles. This epic poem is a superb one and deserves a special place among the *Mahākāvyas* composed in the modern period of Sanskrit.

2.17 Lenināmṛtam

The author of the epic poem is Padma Shastri of Rajasthan. It was published in 1973. The poem is a biographical one composed on the life-history of V.I. Lenin (1870-1924) who was the leader of Bolshevik revolution. The dimension of the poem is confined to 15 cantos, which comprehensively contain the distinctive features of Communism, the biographical details of this great leader, the geography of Russia and also the friendly relations existing between Russia and India. It is a representative work of this century exclusively written on the philosophy of communism in Sanskrit language for the first time. The objective of the poet very clear in the introductory verse.

The subject-matter is divided into fifteen cantos: 1. Outlines of communism 2. Beauty of Russia 3. Birth of Lenin 4. His Student-life 5. Imprisonment of Lenin in Siberia 6. Birth of the doctrine of Bolshevik 7. People's revolution 8. Victory of Bolshevik group 9. Lenin's inter-group struggle 10. Downfall of Jāratāntra 11. Coming of Lenin to Petrograd 12. Failure of July revolution 13. Lenin's Sovereignty 14. Lenin's death 15. Russia-India relationship.

The characterization, delineation of sentiment, development of plot, the versified dialogues, the employment of dramatic techniques, development of patriotic spirit as per the need of the hour, poetic form that is given to a dry subject etc. are the sublime features of this mahākāvya. The style adopted by the poet is *Vaidarbhī*, which contains soft words, small compounds, lucid presentations and easy language. The poet has made use of appropriate metres necessary for proper expression of various sentiments. The judicious use of the metres along with proper delineation of emotions in an artistic manner no doubt enhances the merit of the poem. The poem has beautifully depicted the characters of all those persons who play a definite role in Russian politics and are associated with the hero of the long poem.

The poet has described the pathetic condition of Lenin's mother Mariya. The lotus like face of Mariya, became brilliant by the rays of the Sun-Lenin, when she came to know about the conception but that luster immediately vanished because of her drinking of the water of poverty-ocean. The poet brings a good imagery of Mariya's miserable condition in the verse. He identifies Lenin with sun and creates a very good metaphor though it is very common in Sanskrit.

Another feature of the poem which gives me pleasure is that the poet has brought into the real incidents like a historian in a natural way. In a verse the poet says that Lenin was a divine person' like an incarnation of Visnu. He came down to earth like the lord Kṛṣṇa to help the poor people suffering from severe poverty. As the main objective of the poet is to depict the noble character of this hero, he has taken care of the main things which have made his character so high, so noble and so outstanding. One of them is his supreme dedication for the country. The poet has depicted the work of his dedication in some verses.

There are very good *subhāṣitas* type of sayings in the poem. An example will be sufficient for us to understand our poet's mind. What he says is that a weak man does not achieve anything in this world. He cannot get pure fame. Without power one cannot even imagine of peace. In this great epic, the poet Padma Shastri depicts systematically and artistically the life and work of the hero Lenin. The main sentiment of the poem is *Vīra* (heroic), that is, *yuddhavīra*, one of the four varieties of *Vīra* rasa. Other sentiments like *Karuṇa*, *santa*, and *bhakti* are also delineated properly as subordinate ones in their proper contexts. The work fulfills all the requirements of a *Mahākāvya*. It is a sublime contribution to modern Sanskrit literature and in need of an analytical study for better understanding of the mind and art of Padma Shastri, a progressive poet of this century.

2.18 Śrī Bodhisattvacaritam

Śrī Bodhisattvacaritam is a *Mahākāvya* written by Dr. Satyavrata Shastri. He was born on 29th September 1930 in Lahore. he completed his shastri degree as well as master degree from Punjab Vishwavidyalaya. He also completed his *Vyakaraṇacārya* degree from the Varanasi. He has good command over the Sanskrit, English and Hindi languages.

Śrī Bodhisatvacaritam is a *Mahākāvya* written in 14 cantos. It was also published partly in the magazine “*Sanskrit Pratibhā*” in year 1962. Later on it was published in a book form in 1973. The first canto of this *Mahākāvya* is in the syllabus of Bachelors degree of Meruth Vishwavidyalaya.

In the first canto the Bodhisattva is presented as a generous merchant. Another merchant wants to go ahead on a commercial trip with the desire of getting greater profit by the same route that the Bodhisattva wanted to go. The Bodhisattva gives him permission to go first. He moves on bullock carts loaded with various merchandise, but on the way, the evil vampire chokes and makes the drinking water loaded for the desert fall. As a result, the merchant dies in agony along with his followers. Later, on the departure of the Bodhisattva from the same path, that evil demon tries to cheat him too, but he does not get trapped in his trap and earns success in business with his intelligence, honesty and hard work.

In the second canto the Bodhisattva appears in the form of Kashinaresh. He is adorned with noble qualities and is in search of such a person who can tell him his faults. For this purpose, he visits his vast kingdom in a chariot. He meets the king of Kosala in a narrow passage on the border of his kingdom. The charioteers of both the kings are ready to take their chariot first, but due to the narrowness of the way, only one chariot can pass. In the end it is agreed that the king who excels in moral qualities should go first. On comparison, both are proved to be equal but only one quality is found more in Bodhisattva, that is, he is generous and kind to the one who does wrong. That's why it is proved to be an officer to get out of the narrow path.

In the third canto also the Bodhisattva is present in the form of Kashi Naresh. In this also his rival is the king of Kosala. One of the adulterous ministers of the Bodhisattva who is in the form of Kashinaresh Shilvan is thrown out of the kingdom. He inspires the King of Kosalan to attack him by making him aware of the generosity and prosperity of Shilvan. Kosala king attacks and usurps even his kingdom. But Shilvan keeps on watching everything without reacting calmly, even when his rival orders him to be taken prisoner and taken to the cremation ground, he does not say anything.

The story of the third canto continues in the fourth canto. The decision of the dispute of two yakshas eating one dead body, wants to make Shilvan through the ministers Shilvan. With the

intervention of those yakshas, he has to get his snatched kingdom. The King of Kosala is impressed by his generosity, tolerance and kindness and apologizes. Shilvan forgives him.

In the fifth canto also, the Bodhisattva incarnates as Kashinaresh. Three persons are presented in his court as accused in the crime of theft. A woman comes to rescue them, who is one's sister, one's mother and one's wife. The king allows only one to be released, so the woman wants to release the brother. In this regard, she gives many tips from the side of Bhadrugarima. Impressed by this tactic of the woman, he leaves all three.

The sixth canto tells the story of a young monk who falls in love with a beautiful girl. His fellow monks inspire him to rise above worldly subject desires by telling him the inspiring story of the Bodhisattva who incarnated as Shivi, a resident of Arishtpur.

In the seventh, eighth and ninth cantos, the Bodhisattva has been described as Shivi, a resident of Arishtapur. The story of Unmadanti is given in the seventh canto. Unmadanti is a unique graceful child. Her father wants to give her in marriage to Maharaj Shivi. Shivi sends ministers to test her qualities, who get sexually attracted by the beauty of the frenzied beauty. She guesses this and does not consider them worthy of his test. On this matter, instead of the virtues of Shivi, the angry minister describes the bad qualities by speaking untruths. So, rejects him on their advice. Eventually she gets married to the king's general.

The eighth canto contains the relevant story of Unmadanti's previous birth. In her previous birth she was the daughter of a poor man. Due to the virtue of giving away her only property, a red saree, to a needy monk, she incarnates in the next life as a delightfully beautiful madman. Maharaj Shivi leaves for the city tour on the Kaumudi festival. His eyes fall on Unmadanti peeping down from the ventilation of his building. They get attracted to her beauty and also become lustful towards her. When the commander-in-chief came to know about this, he wanted to present his wife Unmadanti to the king by faking the knowledge of the king's attachment to the Kuldevi plant. A great deal of conflict arises in Maharaj Shivi's mind.

In the ninth canto there is a dialogue between the king and the general. Psychological struggle is expressed in this. The commander is ready to give his beloved wife to the king, and the king politely rejects the gift of the commander out of a strong desire to obey the religion. This dRāmatic dialogue has become very beautiful.

In the tenth and eleventh cantos, the Bodhisattva in the form of a monk mediates a settlement between the king and his wife. He reminds them of their previous birth story. When they were in the form of eunuch couple and the mere recollection of short-term separation made them distraught with separation pain for years.

In the twelfth canto there is a description of the Bodhisattva incarnated in the form of an innocent farmer. The sarga begins with the description of Kashinaresh Brahmadata. In his kingdom lives a religious farming family whose members are the farmer, his wife, son, daughter and a maidservant. The farmer's son dies of snake bite in the field. Even after seeing the death of the farmer's son, he is engaged in his work without any heSitation and sends a message to his wife to come to the field with all the members of the house. He asks in his message to bring lunch for only one person as his companion (his son) was dead. This was a unique example of superhuman restraint on the human mind. It was a challenge to the supreme position of Indra, the lord of the gods. Naturally, Indra reached the spot distraught and was surprised to see all the members of the farmer's family unaffected by the grief. The farming family accepts the incident of dear-death in a simple way.

In the thirteenth Canto, the Bodhisattva in the role of a beleaguered merchant goes to his friend Pilea (He had given half of his wealth when he was in distress) due to loss in business. But Pilea does not help his distressed friend. The Bodhisattva does not express malice at this ingratitude of the friend. This very conflict between the character of the Bodhisattva and the ungrateful friend Pilea is effectively described.

In the last fourteen cantos, the Bodhisattva is portrayed as a teacher. He wants his disciple Papak to change his sinful name to a good name. Assures about the randomness of names. He sends Papak to find a good name for himself but gives up the idea of changing the name after not finding meaning in all the names. It has been taught by this story that the name

has nothing to do with the character of a person, therefore only good character is important, it is not necessary to adopt a name of good character or virtue.

The story of '*Bodhisattvacaritam*' is not focused on the character development of any one hero. Therefore, it moves away from the concept of traditional epic setting. Its hero has multiple and different levels of personality, so the possibility of sandhis of a dRāma has ended in this epic. *Vīra* is the main sentiment of this poem. *Dharmavīra*, *Dayāvīra* and *Dānavīra* types of *Vīra* rasa are delineated in this poem. *Śṛṅgāra* and *Śānta* are the subordinate sentiments of the poem. The characters like *Bodhisattva*, Unmadanti, Brahmadutta, Papaka, Ahiparaka etc are the main characters. There are many subordinate characters like Pishach, Shilvan, Kaushal Naresh, his wife etc. Descriptions of natural elements and other required episodes are found in less number in this epic. The employment of various figures of speech and metres make this poem rich in literary qualities.

The specialty of this epic is that the sequence of events is visible in the stories at a rapid pace. An attempt has been made to give basically poetic expression to the stories by not modifying or changing them from poetic imagination. There is a predominance of chronicles in it. There is a lack of long descriptive episodes in between. Again and again the story begins with Brahmadatta of Kashi. Due to the speedy progress of the stories, the subtle development of the character's character and the continuity of the rasabhava have slowed down. At some places, the list of the qualities of the characters informs the reader about the sublime human qualities, where their reflection has been presented through the actions and statements of the characters, those parts have become somewhat interesting.

2.18 Śrīnārāyaṇavijayam

The *Śrīnārāyaṇavijayam* of K. BalaRāma Panicker belong to this category. This *Mahākāvya* was published in 1973. The epic does not follow the traditional principles of the *Mahākāvya* strictly as described by ancient rhetoricians. This epic mainly deals with the life-sketch of the saint. Narayanaguru is portrayed with all qualities and high level of dignity that is deserved by the holy persons. Nārāyaṇaguru's teachings, especially on the unity of all religious end, the botherhood of men, are clearly and emphatically described in various cantos of this poem.

Śrīnārāyaṇa's message – 'One community, one religion and one God for all' – has been nicely given and explained in canto XIX. This poem is significant due to the construction of the Goddess of learning's shrine, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi's visits, and Gurudeva's cemetery. The central emotion of this poem is 'Śanta' however it also captures the sorrow of devotees at the grave of their *Guru* in a state of '*Karuṇa*'. The poet has good knowledge of Vedānta. Therefore, he could analyse the teaching of the Gurudeva. The language of the poet is simple, lucid and devoid of difficult usages. Reading of this poem will be very much pleasing for the students with low knowledge of Sanskrit.

Prof. R.K. Panda opines about this poem “the *Mahākāvya* occupies an important place for its unique theme and its lucid presentation. Some of the verses are given to acquaint the readers with the style of the poet Panicker.”²¹

N.M. Kansara Remarks:

“In consonance with the predominant trend of simplicity and profundity in the life of the hero, the poet has adopted a style endowed with simplicity and lucidity, with an ornate touch when the situation demands.”²²

2.19 Kristubhāgavatam

In modern Sanskrit literature many literary works are written on Jesus Christ and Christianity also. The *Kristubhāgavatam* is one among such literary works. It is composed by P.C. Devassia of South India. For this magnificent poem the poet received Sahitya Academy award in 1980. This poem has many episodes, events and illustrations from the Hindu mythological works. The poet was grown in an environment of Sanskrit literature which is reflected in a poem of Jesus Christ in Sanskrit. His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Parecattil, the

²¹ दुरितशतमवाच्यं जातिजन्यं कठोरं
बहुजनपरिहीनारूपमालोक्य लोके ।
अपर इह न दृष्टस्त्वां विना दूयमानो
गुरुमवशजनानां रक्षणे जागरूकः ॥ XVII.11 ॥

Śrīnārāyaṇavijayam, pubd.by the Poet., Trivandrum. 1973, Second Part, p.64.

²² Kansara, Dr. N.M., On the Nārāyaṇa Vijayaḥ : A Sanskrit Biographical Epic,Edi. Vidyānivas Mishra, *Semushi*, Baldev Upadhyay Birth Centenary Volume, p. 78

Archbishop of Ernakulam also influenced the poet deeply as believes that India must have its root in the culture and the tradition of the land.

Though this is a *Mahākāvya* composed with all literary rules of an epic it is named as Bhagavatam by the poet as it deals with the Lord Jesus. It portrayed the sacred life of the founder of Christian religion in thirty-three cantos in 33 cantos and 1600 slokas. The brief canto-wise summary is as follow:

The poet strictly confirms literary principles of the epic but refrain himself from using too many alamkaras, metres and descriptions of various natural elements. A few commonly known figures only occur. He has mainly used *anuṣṭup* and *upajāti*, though he shows his capacity for other chandas too. The style of the poet is lucid and without verbal jargon endowed with *prasāda* and *saukumārya*.

The poet follows the Gospels and authentic biographers on Christ to describe the life sketch of Jesus Christ. He has tried to remain honest to the events described by the earlier biographers. He has also inserted some of his imaginative events without disturbing the original and true theme. To describe the love and betrothal of Mary and Joseph, the poet uses entire first two sargas. The tenth chapter is devoted to portray the childhood of Jesus. The death of John, the Baptist and the suicide of the betrayer Judas also cover the major portion of the poem. The miracles of Jesus are faithfully described in this poem. The unique element of this poem is the inclusion of apt analogies and comparisons with personalities and situations that are found in two Sanskrit epics, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*. It has *vaidarbhī* style. There are many *subhāṣita* in this poem. Prof. Unni rightly remarks: “All the important events in the life of Christ are described here in a chaste and lucid style of classical poets.”²³

Sulochana Devi in her article remarks:

“In writing the poem the author adopts the model of classical poets, but avoids pedantry and excessive ornaments. It is written in a simple and clear style. It is endowed with the *guṇas* of

²³ Unni, N.P. “Contribution of Kerala to Modern Sanskrit Literature”, *Devavāṇīsuvāsa* (Dr. Ramakanta Shukla Felicitation Volume), Part 11, p.595.

prasāda and *saukumārya*, characteristics of the *Vaidarbhī* style, The descriptions are brief but effective.”²⁴

C. Rajendran remarks about this epic: “Though the theme is novel, the author, with his fine mastery over the Sanskrit language, has been able to present the life of Christ in a style which is so natural that we would treat it at par with ancient *Mahākāvya*.”²⁵

Sweta Prajapati in her article remarks:

“The poet has successfully described most of the incidents that have occurred in the life of Jesus, including most of his miracles, parables and utterances in simple and graceful Sanskrit”²⁶

2.20 Viśvabhānuḥ

The *Viśvabhānuḥ* (the universal light) is an interesting epic poem composed on the life history of Swāmi Vivekānanda. P.K. Narayana Pillai of Kerala has composed this *Mahākāvya* successfully. This work came to light in 1977.²⁷ The hero of this poem is Swāmi Vivekānanda. The eminent poet has taken some liberties with the form, but they no way devalue his creative talent. The epic deals with truth about the greatness of the Indian Culture starting from the Vedic literature and the description of the noble character and life of Swāmiji. The course of action as said by Swāmi Vivekananda for the achieving the greatness will show the path for future prosperity of India. Except the fifth canto which consists of 555 verses in all, all the cantos other than the 16th and 21st contain 25 verses each. The practice of concluding verse in different metre is not found in this poem. In this poem composed with seven metres namely, *Anuṣṭup*, *Upajāti*, *Vasantatilakā*, *Vamśastha*, *Viyoginī*, *Pṛthvi*, no hard and fast rule is observed to change the metre in every canto. One verse is given here as specimen.²⁸

²⁴ Devi, Sulochana, *Historical Survey of Sanskrit Mahākāvyas*, p. 182

²⁵ Rajendran, C., “Sanskrit Kāvya of Post Independence Kerala”, *Post Independence Sanskrit Literature: A Critical Survey*, Prof. Dr. A.M. Prajapati Felicitation Volume, p.92

²⁶ .Prajapati, Sweta, “*Kristubhagavatam: A Sanskrit Epic on the Life of Jesus Christ*”, *A Marigold of Modern Sanskrit Literature*, p. 2

²⁷ Viśvabhānuḥ, printed at V.V. Research Institute Press, Hoshiarpur, 1977

²⁸ ज्ञानात्मनः पशुपतेः प्रियधामरत्नं

The poem is having quietude as the main sentiment. Prof. Pillai has composed one more *Mahākāvya* – *Dharmasāgara* which deals with the life of the great master Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Parāmahansa in 18 cantos. Prof. Pillai's *Mahākāvya* on the life history of Vivekananda is not first of its kind. Many modern poets have written on this theme. The most outstanding one is *Śrī-Svāmivivekānandacaritam*²⁹ written by Tryambaka Bhaskar Bhandarkar of Varanasi.

In twenty-one cantos, the poem *Viśvabhānu* describes the important incidents in the life of Svami Vivekananda. The author, Prof. P.K. Narayana Pillai got the inspiration to write this *Mahākāvya* while composing a hymn in praise of goddess Kanyakumari. The introductory part of the hymn contains a reference to Svami Vivekananda.

The title of the poem, *Viśvabhānu* can be explained as *Viśvasya bhānuḥ Viśvabhānuḥ*, meaning "the light of the Universe". The poem is significantly entitled because the hero of the poem, Vivekananda, illumined the whole world with his uncommon personality.

The author Prof. P.K. Narayana Pillai was born in December 25, 1910. He is an author of eminence in Sanskrit, Malayalam and English. He has worked as Professor and Principal in various institutions. The Government of Kerala appointed him as one-man commission to prepare a report to establish a Sanskrit University. He got several awards for his contribution to Sanskrit literature. His Sanskrit works include *Viśvabhānu*, *Sabarigiritirthajanam*, *Cidatmikastavah*, *Srivallabhasuprabhatam*, *Sonādriśastavah*, *Kanyakumarim Bhaje*, *Bhaja Rāmakrinam*, *Pita Duhitāc a*, *Mayaraditam*, the last two being translations from Malayalam.

The poem *Viśvabhānu* sums up the life and teachings of Vivekananda. The poet conceives the hero as having some divine grace in him. The life-story proper starts with the description of Durgacaran Datta. During the course of his visit to the temple at Kasi, he

वाराणसीमहिततीर्थमुपासनात् सः
यत्रादिशङ्करगुरुर्निखिलागमज्ञ-
श्चण्डालतः परमुपार्जयदात्मतत्त्वम् ॥
X.20. p.105

²⁹. Panda R.K. 'A Study of Alamkāras in the Swāmī Vivekanandacarita Mahākāvya', *Journal of Sukṛtindra Research Institute*, Vol. VIII, 2003, pp. 89-109.

happened to meet Sundari, his wife, lying unconscious, from whom he had parted for (ascetic purposes. He helped her to regain consciousness. Sundari was an ardent devotee of Lord Viśvanatha and her son was named Viśvanatha. Viśvanatha Datta marries Bhuvaneśvari. Vivekananda is born to them. His childhood and his extra ordinary qualities including the power of deep meditation are described subsequently. Vivekananda happens to learn about Rāmakṛṣṇa and they meet. In course of time. he accepts Rāmakṛṣṇa as his teacher. The teacher is pleased inturn and enjoins him to serve the world. Upon this Vivekananda dedicates himself to the well-being of his fellowmen. He starts a mission for this purpose and names it after his teacher as Rāmakṛṣṇa. He begins to propagate his master's message along with upaniṣadic lines.

There are four cantos dealing with Vivekānanda's religious wanderings. He proceeds to Vārāṇasī after visiting several places of pilgrimage. There he worships Viśvanātha, and engages in a discussion on spiritual matters with the scholars there. In Nainital he sees an aśvatha (banyan) tree, sits under it and loses himself in meditation. During his wanderings he meets Mangel Sing in Alwar and explains to him the principle behind idol-worship. He visits the ruler Khetri who accepts him as his preceptor. It is this king who gives him the name 'Vivekānanda'. In Poona he meets Tilak and, after discussing the future of India, they part. He arrives at Kanyākumāri, worships the goddess there and concludes the religious wanderings.

Vivekananda next decides to attend the world's parliament of religions in America since it would help him in (i) propagating Vedanta philosophy in the west, (ii) synthesising Eastern and Western thoughts, (iii) collecting funds for the uplift of the suffering masses in India. He visits several places in America, including Chicago. In his deliberations Vivekananda makes frequent references to stotras and *Bhagavadgītā*. He condemns the narrow outlook in religion and advocates Universal fraternity in the field of religion. He stresses the necessity of the philosophy of Vedanta in his talks in the west. He returns to India and works hard to train his disciples for the service of mankind. foror this purpose, he starts a number of muṭhas in the name of Rāmakṛṣṇa. He makes a number of arrangements for the proper conduct of these muṭṭs. The poem ends with a description of his samadhi at the age of forty.

The author of *Viśvabhānu* has to deal with an uncommon character. Vivekananda is a man of mighty enlightening powers. He is esteemed all over the world as a great religious

teacher. All these facts are seen well grasped by the author. As a result, the salient traits in the hero are vividly brought out.

As a child Vivekananda showed extra ordinary ability in studying literary works. He always became the leader among his play-mates. He watched and studied the world around him with keen interest. He could grasp the ideas contained in the books of great authors by merely glancing through them. Seeing the extra ordinary intellectual abilities the boy possessed, a European remarked, "I have not come across in any corner of the world a lad so talented and brilliant as Nara".

Vivekananda was inclined to a monastic life even from the early days of his life. The occasional visits made by monks to his house brought great happiness to him. He gave away small presents with great pleasure to the *sādhus* who visited his house. Vivekananda showed little interest in worldly affairs. Even though there was poverty in his house, he prayed only for power *Bhaja Rāmakṛṣṇam*, *Pitā Duhitā ca*, *Mayuradūtam*, the last two being translations from Malayalam.

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Vivekananda showed little interest in worldly affairs. Even- though there was poverty in his house, he prayed only for power of devotion and spiritual emancipation on one occasion. He was also very kind to his fellow-men. The knowledge Vivekananda possessed was unlimited. He was a philosopher in the main. The name Vivekananda itself was given to him by the king of Khetri as a token of recognition of his vast knowledge. Vivekananda advocated Universal fraternity in the field of religion since he believed that all reli- gions stood for the same goal. Even when his mind was set- firm in Brahman, he established several missions in different parts of the country under the name of his master for the spiri- tual uplift of his countrymen.

The author Prof. P.K. Narayana Pillai got the inspiration to write his *Mahākāvya* while composing a hymn in praise of goddess Kanyakumari. The introductory part of the hymn contains the following reference to Swāmi Vivekananda. It took him about a month to complete the hymn and during that period the image of the divine Mother and the environment of Her sacred temple stood clearly reflected in his mind. Once the hymn was completed his mind automatically moved on to the Rock memorial with its impressive and imposing status of the great patriot-monk. It was against this mental background that the author began to write the poem.

In this poem, Viśvabhānu the hero Vivekānanda is a man of renunciation belonging to the category of dharmakarunyaVīra (hero of duty and compassion). So the sentiment of this poem is Śānta which is developed from the sthāyībhāva, śama or tranquility. The poem Viśvabhānu contains figures of sound and sense which are unpremeditated. The poet uses figures of speech like Arthāntaranyāsa , ‘Upamā’ etc. The seven metres, viz., Anuṣṭubh, Upajāti, Vamśastha, Viyoginī, Puṣpitāgrā, Vasantatilakā and Pṛthvī are used by the author in composing his Mahākāvya. The style of the poem is quite natural and simple. The poet uses the Vaidarbhī and Gauḍī styles.

At the time of Vivekananda, the caste system was a ruling force in India. Most of the Indian people were illiterate. Yet they had a favourable attitude to spiritual renaissance. This gave Vivekananda sufficient confidence in his efforts to bring the people closer to the spiritual path.

2.21 Nehrucaritam

Nehrucaritam is a *Mahākāvya* written by Brahmanand Shukla. It was published in 1975. He was born in 1904 in Charthaval of Mujjaffarnagar in Uttarpradesh. His father's name was Shri Maidalal Shukla and the mother's name was Shrimati Tulsidevi. The other works of the poet are 1. *Shrigandhicharitam* 2. *Udbodhan* 3. *Maninigrah* 4. *Bharatsushama* 5. *Ashwasanam* 6. *Vastravatarah*. He has also translated and edited some of the works: 1. *Mṛcchakaṭikam* 2. *Uttarārāmacaritam* 3. *Savitryupākhyānam* 4. *Harṣacaritam*. *Nehrucaritam* is written in 18 cantos and 707 verses. The theme of the *Mahākāvya* is the life history of Nehru. It has

description from the birth of Nehru till his death. According to the tradition of Sanskrit *Mahākāvya* it starts with the *Maṅgalācaraṇa*. In the first canto many verses contain salutations to the deities. It also contains praise of good people and criticize of bad people. The second canto deal with the beauty of Kashmir and the description of Motilal Nehru, father of Nehru. The third canto describes Motilal gets the boon from the Yogiraja for having offspring. The fourth and fifth canto contains the birth and the different Sanskara's after the birth of Nehru. The sixth to 12 canto describes the study of Nehru in England, his journey and wealth of America, his journey of Patna, his father's description about the poor condition of subservient India before him, Nehru's belief in the equality of every religion, discussion about Nehru's marriage of his parents, acceptance of the marriage proposal by Kamla's parents, Nehru's marriage with Kamla etc. the thirteenth canto describes the birth of Indira, imprisonment of Nehru, disease of Kamla, death of parents of Nehru. The fourteenth canto describes the announcement of "Quite India Movement", the education of Indira, get independence etc. The 14th to 17th canto describes death of Mahatma Gandhi, partition of India, the works of the Nehru for the development of India, reformation of India etc. The 18th canto describes the death of Nehru and the lamentation of Indira on his father's death. The main sentiment of the poem is Vīra with the patriotism. Other subordinate sentiments of this epic poem are Bhakti, Karuṇa, Vatsalya etc. The language of the *Mahākāvya* is simple as well as lucid. The aLaṅkāras used in the *Mahākāvya* according to its subject matters like *Utprekṣā*, *Rupaka*, *Parisaṅkhyā*, 'Upamā', *Anuprāsa*, *Yamaka*, *Atiśayokti* etc. The metres used in this epic are *Anuṣṭbha*, *Upajāti*, *Drutavilambita*, *Indravajrā*, *Mālinī*, *Swāgata*, *Hariṇī*, *Viyogini* etc.

Dr. Rāmakant Shukla in his article enlisted the Suktis that occur in Nehrucharitam.³⁰

There is other two *Mahākāvyas* written on the life sketch of Nehru: 1. *Nehrūyaśasaurabham* by Goswami Balbhadra Shastri and 2. *Śrī Javāharjyoti Mahākāvyam* by Raghunath Prasad Chaturved.

2.22 Indirāgāndhīcaritam

This is a *Mahākāvya* written by Dr. Satyavrat Shastri. It was published in 1976. The *Mahākāvya* is divided into 25 cantos and each canto consists 25 verses. It has description of the birth of Indira and the chief incidents till 1976.

³⁰ Shukla, Ramakant, Shrinehrucharitam – Nehruyashahsaurabham- Mahākāvyayoh: Suktividhanm, pp. 39-50

The first canto deals with the description of the dwelling place of Motilal Nehru. The second canto describes the birth of his daughter Indira and appropriateness of her name as well as beauty of Indira. The third canto describes the thoughts of Indiragandhi regarding the freedom movement and she is influenced by John of Arc. The fourth canto deals with the how the thoughts of John Arc for freedom fight influenced Indira's mind. Even she plays games about the Independence of India. The 5th canto describes the suffering of Kamla, the tragedy of Jaliyanwala baug and sadness of Jawaharlal Nehru etc. The sixth canto describes the imprisonment of Jawaharlal Nehru and Motilal Nehru. The seventh canto deals with the Nehru's Letter for his daughter Indira from the prison. Here also the description is given the thought of Nehru regarding the proper education to her daughter Indira. The eighth canto describes Indira's efforts to be a member of Congress but she is rejected because of her age is only twelve and she is not yet able to be a member. The 9th to 24th canto deal with the Kamala's suffering of disease, Indira's visit of Switzerland with her mother, beauty of Switzerland, the meeting of Indira Gandhi and Firoz, beauty of Shantiniketan, Indira's arrival of Shantiniketan, death of Indira's mother Kamla, the imprisonment of Nehru during the death of his wife, Jawahar gives education to her daughter by writing letters from prison, the approval of Jawahar for the marriage of Indira and Firoz, union of Indira and Firoz, the picturesque description of beauty of Kashmir, the imprisonment of both Indira as well as Firoz near Prayag, partition of India and Pakistan, Nehru becomes the first Prime Minister of India, Indira follows the footsteps of his father like his shadow, the popularity among the people of Jawaharlal Nehru, the foundation of new Congress Party by Indira, the birth of Rajiv and marriage of the Rajiv and Sanjay, death of Firoz, Indira's starving to stop the explosion of Atomic Bomb, advice of Indira to people, the achievement of India by launching the Satellite Aryabhata etc. The 25th canto deals with program of Sanjay Gandhi. The significance of the last verse of the last canto is the poet writes it in Indira Metre. The poet uses the appropriate alamkaras and Chandas as well as Subhāṣītās according to the descriptions in this epic poem.

D.K. Borooah rightly remarks in the foreword of *Indirāgāndhīcaritam*: "The present work is composed in facile and mellifluous verses marked by spontaneity and sweetness. There

is enough of beautiful descriptive poetry in it to appeal to men of taste. It is the first comprehensive life account of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in Sanskrit verse.”³¹

2.23 Yaśodharāmahākāvyaṃ

This epic is written by Ogeti Parikshit Sharma. It consists of 20 cantos and 1070 verses. It deals with the emotions of Yaśodharā, the wife of the prince Siddhārtha. It was published in 1976. The helpless condition of Yaśodharā when her husband renounced the world suddenly and left her behind with her child Rāhula is main theme of this epic.

The author does not allow the poem to lose itself in mere pathos and frustration. It is a striking feature of its construction. Yaśodharā emerging from her sorrow with a new awakening and courage, deriving comfort from the lovable pranks of her beloved Rāhula, and the visit of the Buddha which crown her like within understanding and wisdom, are heartning touches making the sadness sweet. The epic is composed on established lines. The poet makes salutations at the outset, and gives an account of his family and personal life followed by a description of Himālaya and the river Rohini, before the thread of the epic narrative is taken in hand. The usual description of the rise and setting of the sun and the moon and of the seasons have their full play in this poem. In the same way, marriage, love-sports, pregnancy, birth of a child, it's growing up and other details come to be described in the approved manner of epic composition. Inevitable as the descriptive mode is, it has fortunately escaped staleness and ostentatious conformity to form by two redeeming features. Pandita Sarma is steeped in the poetry of the classical poets. His writing often echoes phrases and ideas from classical Sanskrit poetry. The description of Himālaya (canto I) is full of allusions to the two epics of Kālidāsa. The day-to-day occupations of the separated Yaśodhara remind one of Kālidāsa's Yakṣapatnī of Rāhula is reminiscent of Sarvadaman's sport MIX. 31). There are other such reminiscences (see III, 16, IV.7;20, XIV.15, XV.19) Such allusive mode of descriptions seems to add charm to the new writing. Further, the descriptions though conventionally arranged, are free from imitation and verbosity. The author himself is a musician and that has helped his descriptive style. The account of vernal sport (canto V) is interwoven with the technical names of musical melodies. The poet chooses, with a touch of poetic propriety, the metre Viyoginī to paint the picture of separated Yaśodharā (Canto XIII),

³¹ Shastri, Satyavrat, *Indiragandhicharitam*, p.viii

although most of the epic is written in *upajāti* metre. The sense of music of words and rhythm are sources of pleasure. Occasionally the poet come out with fresh ideas. Yaśodharā, for example, is described as solidified moonlight in a sustained metaphor (Canto III. 37), the young Gautama and Yaśodharā entwined in love-sport appear as targets of dvandavārthakāvya and as samāśasayyā (IV 26), the sacred thread on the chest is imagined as the dividing line marking the torn heart of Gautama (IX). Sometimes the author paraphrases well-known ideas (XIV) and introduces the new ones. The poet's eye moving in the old and the new world often brings freshness of perspective.

The poet's diction and style appear quite mature. Occasionally he cannot resist a pun or an oxymoron (I.1 10, II. 87, IV.54 and III.34). the poet is fond of some words like *yauvat*, *matalli*, *bambhara*, *sayā*, which are repeated. The simplicity and sweetness of his diction, the natural music of his verses and his ability for emotional delineation are sufficiently attractive. The role of *daiva* is nicely described by the poet who has glorified the importance of *grhasthadharma*³².

Prof. Rajendra Mishra brings a pertinent point to light. He observes: "Most of these works do not abide by the principles established by our rhetoricians like Bhāmahā, Dandin and Visvanatha. *Sītācaritam* and the *Jānakījīvanam*, although based on the traditional *Rāmāyaṇa*-theme, seem upto some extent, free from the archaic-style. Both of these *Mahākāvyas* do not accept Rāma as the hero. On the other dominant character, throughout the poem. Story also differs. According to *Sītācaritam*, for the sake of her husband's honor and royal dignity, she herself chooses the banishment. The composer of the poem Dr. Reva Prasad Dwivedi 'Sanatana' has tried to console the generous readers who feel mentally perturbed to see *devī* Sītā being banished and insulted by her own husband Rāma in public. Abhiraja Rajendra Mishra also in his *Jānakījīvanam*, tries to find the same solution. According to him, the washer-man begs for an excuse in the poem assembly of civilians, in the presence of Maharṣi Vasiṣṭha and lord Rāma forgives him for defaming empress of the Korala empire. Afterwards Sītā goes to the hermitage

³² . दैवं यदा यत् कुरुते च कस्मै न कोऽपि जानाति वसुन्धरायाम् ।
 नावश्च यान्त्येव धरातलेऽपि रसातले हा शकटानि यान्ति ॥ *Ibid.* X.38, p.72
 सर्वेषु धर्मेषु गृहस्थधर्मं सुखावहं श्रेष्ठतमं हि मन्ये ।
 तं तादृशं धर्मगुणं विहाय विरागमार्गे पतितोऽसि राजन् ॥ *Ibid.* XIV. 35, p.93.

of Maḥarṣi Vālmīki only to look after her twin sons Lava and Kuśa for a few days: In these *Mahākāvya*s, *tatraiko nāyakaḥ suraḥ* etc., fails because of their heroine dominant theme.”³³

We all know that the great works like the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmīki, the *Mahābhārata* of Vedavyāsa, the great Purāṇas and Upaniṣads have been used as the main sources of themes and their ideas are woven into literary creations by ancient and modern poets. The poems based on the *Rāmāyaṇa* are huge in number. The *Rāmāyaṇa* theme, has in a way exerted a more direct influence on subsequent poets, primarily because of its compactness and ethical basis. The *Mahābhārata* has also significantly helped in composing modern *Mahākāvya*s.

2.24 Keralodayaḥ

The *Keralodayaḥ* is considered to be one of the best epics of modern period. It was published in 1978 from Kerala. The poet has set a good model to be followed by the successors. It occupies a special place among the Sanskrit epics for a number of reasons that we will discuss in the following pages. The poem contains 21 cantos and nearly 2300 verses. The history of Kerala – State and its political, social and cultural aspects are described in this poem.

The legendary origin by Paraśurāma and the reunification of the land in the second half of the 20th century is the main theme of the poem. The poet has tried to make balance between fantasy and facts. The poet is an expert historian and therefore he could authentically describe the history, society, people, culture of Kerala state. His poetic talent brings to us the picturesque description of all facts. Thus, this unique work combines in itself a research thesis on the cultural history of Kerala, a Sanskrit *Mahākāvya* of the traditional type, and a modern literary work drawn on wide canvas written in the Sanskrit language. In this context the author’s statement given in the Author’s note is pertinent to note: “This was written in Sanskrit paradoxically enough, to reach a wider circle of readers, for Sanskrit is both a national and international scholars’ language even now, though it is not living language in the modern sense of the term. It is clear that an original work written in any other language has not get that

³³ . Mishra, Rajendra, Modern Sanskrit Poetry, in *Modern Sanskrit Literature: Tradition & Innovations*, Ed. By S.B. Raghunathacharya, p. 117-118.

advantage, for translation will definitely minimize its natural beauty. Classical Sanskrit language is used in modern poetry with a pertinent cause.

The poet himself says: “Though the classical framework is used, the aim has been to present regional life in all its varieties following blindly any old rule, method or set pattern.”³⁴

The poem is divided into five mañjarīs viz. *Svapnamañjarī*, *Smrtimañjarī*, *Aitihyamñjarī*, *Bodhamañjarī* and *Caritrāmañjarī*. The theme of the poem is as below:

Paraśurāma at the time of penance becomes lonely and grief-stricken. Brahmā advises him to throw off his axe. He does so. Immediately his heart and the world change. The Arabian sea appears in human form and give his daughter as a forestchild to the sage. The Paraśurāma story is retained, but relegated to the dream land.

The actual story of the land that called Chera in historical times, begins. Patirrupattu and other Sangham works are followed in historical details. King Udayan and Cheral and his wife Nalini come first Rule of their son Imaya Verampan and his successors their exploits. The chera history is continued. The famous Chenkuttuvan and his conquests the story of Chilappatikaram. The tragedy of Kovalam and Karṇa ki described. A curse falls on the Southern kingdoms. Chenkuttuvan builds a temple for Karṇa ki – Kuttuvan’s successors – Destruction at the hands of the Cholas. Story of the Eastern branch of the Cheras – Gradual decline of Chenkuttuvan’s western line – Cholas destroy Muchiri, their capital - End of the first Chera empire. The Aryan colonization of Kerala – Maurya Sarman of the Kadamba dynasty, social changes in the land. The second Chera Empire under the Kulasekharas, Sankaracarya – His deeds and sermons, His critical evaluation of human civilization. Kulaśekhara Alwar and CheRāman Perumal Nayanar-Sthanu Ravi and Tarisapalli Plates, Rāma Verma VikRāmaditya Varaguna and Paliyam Plates, the Jewish plates. Bhaskara Ravi accepts the throne. The Chera – Chola war begins. It’s various stages – Attacks of Rajendra etc. The Kerala Capital destroyed. Rāma Verma Kulasekhara changes his capital. His fresh attempts for freedom. The hundred years war ends and the Cholas routed. The effects of War. Muslims in South India – Malik Kafur-SangRāmadira Ravi Verma and his exploits. His mother Uma-gradual rise of the Zamorians. The Zamorians gain power, the

³⁴. By the poet, Trivandrum, Kerala, 1978, p.vii.

help of Muslims. The mammakam festival came under the control of the Zamorians after the defeat of Walluvanand. The Zamorians become supreme. Vassco Da Gama comes to Calicut. New phase in Kerala history. The Portuguese in Kerala. There is description on wars and treatises, general states of the land, feasts and festivals. The Dutch period. Its end- Martanda Verma of Venad. The British period begins.

The full command of Sanskrit language enables Prof. Ezhuthachan to depict precisely and correctly scenes and situations mirrored in his rich imagination. The ideas contain echoes of the classical thought. Simple statements are made very attractive and effective. There is originality even in the method of presenting ideas. The author K.N. Ezhuthachan prefers to interpret to history from the Marxian point of view. The problems of the labourers shouting for rights and privileges are described very nicely. This *Mahākāvya* is a piece of real poetry, which annexed the Sahitya Academi Award. The replay of Śakaracarkya in canto ninth when the latter offered him the kingdom shows the poet's sense of propriety. The substance of the Acarya's teaching is beautifully codified therein. The poet has introduced some alien word into Sanskrit with a view to making the ideas understandable. He has made use of some rare word meanings – which are already fixed on the particular senses. The poet depicts Cinema as the best leader in a satire manner.³⁵

Radhavallabha Tripathi remarks: “कवि कल्पना की रमणीयता व इतिहास की प्रमाणिकता दोनों इस महाकाव्यमें गलबाहीं करते हुए संचरण करती हैं। इसके साथ ही प्रगतिशील सोच और आधुनिक भावबोध का भी मणिकांचनयोग यहाँ हुआ है। यह पर्याप्त शोध व अनुशीलन कर के रचा गया काव्य है।”³⁶

The poet has also composed another *Mahākāvya*, that is, Srividyaadhirajaviya in 19 cantos, which purports to be a biography of Visyadhiraja alias Cattampiswami, a modern Srinarayanaguru.

³⁵शमं दमं च त्यजतः क्रमेण

विगर्हतोऽध्यात्मगुणांश्च सर्वान् ।

रराज लोकस्य वरिष्ठनेता

शृङ्गारनेता सिनिमाभिनेता ॥ *Ibid.* XXI.194, p.473

³⁶ Op.cit., Tripathi, Radhavallabha, p. 1811

2.25 Dhanañjayavijayam

The *Dhanañjayavijayam* of Rāma Subrahmaniar is an important *Mahākāvya* of 18 cantos. The poet has described the glorious exploits of Arjuna with all his noble qualities in this epic poem. The poem describes how Arjuna equipped himself for the great war *Mahābhārata*. In the *Gītā* the lord says at the time of *Mahābhārata* war that he incarnated as Gītā Dhanañjaya, the conqueror of wealth. The theme of this epic is borrowed from the *Vanaparva* of the *Mahābhārata*. The hero of this poem Arjuna fulfils all necessary qualities.

2.26 Navabhāratam

The *Navabhāratam* of Muttukulu Sridhara is an interesting historical poem. It was published in 1978. Its plot follows these historic events and their consequences. This piece of writing looks at and acknowledges the invaluable contributions of several influential figures in Indian history, like Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Subhas Chandra Bose and more. There are 18 cantos and 1185 verses. The verses are charming for their melodious rhythm and mellifluous flow. The poet has mainly depicted the situations of modern India. The verses of Sridhara contain beautiful figures of speech. The examples of *Tulyayogitā*, are noted in the footnote. Similarly, it is interesting to note that the poet has employed some rare metres like *Vasantamālikā*, *Kusumamañjarī* etc. This attempt is to be highly appreciated for the reason that the poet contributes to the preservation of the science of metres. It goes without saying that Chandasśāstra or Metrics in Sanskrit is a well-developed discipline. If the poets do not make use of them or if they confine to some selected simple metres then, the poet has well depicted the places and situations of modern India. It is perhaps the most comprehensive work on this theme in Sanskrit.

The poet has given a fine description of the London city in *Pañcacāmara* metre. He has brought out the realistic pictures of the farmers and their misery. Some words are used by the poet in unusual senses. *Navabhārata* of Mutukulam Sridhar is a historical *Mahākāvya* composed in eighteen cantos. It contains 1300 verses and treats the story of Jawaharlal Nehru against the background of the Indian freedom struggle. The work is written on the model of Raghuvamsa.

The poem is aptly called *Navabhārata* because it reflects the colourful new face of India.

Mutukulam Sridhar, the author of *Navabhārata*, was born in 1926, at Mutukulam village as the son of Nedum- pallil Vasudevan Pillai and Malimel Kilakkathil Gauri Ammā. At the age of sixteen he lost his father and was brought up by his grand-father Rāman Nair. After his primary education, the author approached Narayanan Asan, a disciple of Nilakantha Sarma, and studied Sanskrit from him. The Kaul family received a few villages as Jagir from the Mugal Emperor and settled down on the banks of the canal Nahar. Hence Raj Kaul's descendants came to be known as Nehrus. In course of time, they went to the banks of Jamuna and settled there. But after the decline of the Mugal Empire they fled to Agra.

The second canto describes the life of Motilal Nehru. The poet mentions about the social and political reformers and great literary figures such as Eluttachan, Melputtur, Cattami Svamikal, Śrīnārāyaṇa Guru, Motilal Nehru and others. The birth and education of the hero, Jawaharlal forms the main theme of the third canto. This canto also gives a beautiful description of the Atlantic Ocean and the city of London. The next two cantos contain the life of Gandhiji, his activities in South-Africa, his struggle for freedom, etc. Then follow Nehru's meeting with Gandhiji, marriage with Kamala, the birth of Indira Priyadarsini and so on.

The conference of the leaders of the freedom struggle of Amṛtsar, the Savadési and Boycott Movements, etc., form the subject-matter of the eighth canto. The ninth canto gives a vivid picture of the power-intoxicated British soldiers. In the tenth canto the author provides a description of Nehru's visit to Kerala. The first half of the eleventh canto contains a beautiful description of the city of Trivandrum. The remaining portion of the eleventh canto and the next four cantos give an account of Nehru's visits to Madras, Eastern India, Agra, Delhi, etc. In the fifteenth canto while describing the city of Delhi, the poet briefly narrates the *Mahābhārata* story.

The Illness and death of Kamala Nehru and Nehru's lamentation are the main theme of the sixteenth canto. The Second World war, the formation of the I.N.A. by Subash Candra Bose and his struggle for India's freedom with the help of Japan, the partition of the country into the Indian Union and Pakistan just before Independence, etc., are dealt with in the 17th canto. The appointment of Nehru as the prime minister of Independent India is the subject-matter of the last canto. The poem comes to an end with a *Patākāvandana* and *Patākāvarṇana*.

The subject-matter of the poem is India's freedom-struggle against the British supremacy in India. In presenting this theme, the poet also deals with the lives and services of prominent national heroes. Hence the author must have referred to the books relating to the history of India and the biographies of those heroes for the composition of the work. In the introductory part of the poem, the author pays his homage to his predecessors like Vālmīki, Vyāsa, Kālidāsa and others and thus he expresses his indebtedness to them. For instance, the *Navabhārata* begins with a description of Himalaya on the model of *Kumārasambhavam*. Again, the lamentation of Nehru over Kamala's death reminds us of Ajavilapa in the *Raghuvamśa*.

The poem deals with modern Indian history, its freedom struggle, the attainment of independence and the lives and services of prominent national heroes. Heroism is the predominant sentiment delineated in the poem. The sentiments of Pathos and devotion are delineated as accessories. Though there is no pedantry exhibited in the poem, the use of figures of speech is skilful. The poet's power of imagination is remarkable.

The author has employed more than twenty metres in his composition. Among them, Anustubha is the most common one. He employs it in cantos I, VI, VIII, XIV and XVII ones. *Kusumamañjarī*, *svāgata*, *prthvī*, etc., are the other metres utilised by him. The poem consists of sweet-sounding words and is free from difficult compounds. His verses are marked by perspicuity and clarity. His descriptions are sweet and lucid. A close examination of the poem will reveal the poet's extensive knowledge of the different systems of Indian philosophy.

2.27 Sītārāmāñjaneyam

The poet Brahmarshi Dhulipal Arkasomayaji has composed *Prasannañjaneyam* (or Hanumatsandesa) of 700 verses in *Mandākrāntā* metre. After its composition the poet wanted to write the *Mahākāvya* on the same theme. Later, on he composed the *kāvya Sītārāmāñjaneyam* of 15 sargas and 1000 verses in *mandakrānta* metre (*mandākrāntāśāhasrīkam*). In the present paper an attempt has been made to introduce this *kāvya* to the scholars by way of critical study. This work is published by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams, Tirupati in 1984.

Brahmarshi Dhulipal Arkasomayaji was born in 1984 in the Belicheru village near Rajamundri in Andhrapradesh near the bank of the river Godavari. His father's name is Bappavya and mother's name is Mangamamba. The entire family is devoted to studies of Vedas and lead the traditional Vedic life style. The poet has studied *Sāhityaśāstra* from Pappu Cainayasastrī and Tarkasastra from Calla Suryanarayanasastrī and Vedas from his elder brother. He did Ph.D. in Jyotiṣasātra. He has also written commentary on Bhaskaracārya's Siddhantasiromani.

The poet has incorporated in the story some important mantras spoken during the marriage ritual so as to help in comprehending their import. His knowledge of Hindu Astronomy is evidenced through various illustrations.

The poem consists of 15 sargas which are not given the titles. The number of verses in each Sarga is as follows:

(1) 42, (2) 61, (3) 60, (4) 49, (5) 58, (6) 62, (7) 53, (8) 55, (9) 109, (10) 103, (11) 53, (12) 41, (13) 70, (14) 69, (15) 36. The epic begins with Rāma's arrival in the forest and ends with the coronation of Rāma after returning to Ayodhyā .

The study of the entire Epic made it evident that the poet possesses incomparable poetic genius. *Karuṇa* is the main sentiment of this poem and *Vipralambhaśṛṅgāra*, *Vīra* and *Bhayānaka* are subordinate to it. Use of Mandākrāntā metre helps in realization of sentiments. Description of unhappiness and sad emotions of Rāma, Sītā and Hanumāna, remedies of their unhappiness, description of unsucess, and disappointments, description of efforts for achieving success etc. are nicely described in this poem. Description of nature elements is also found abundantly. His knowledge of Jyotisa and Purana is also interwoven. Use of various alamkāras like *Utprekṣā*, *Rupaka*, *Dīpaka*, *Atiśayokti*, 'Upamā' etc. to heighten the effect of the sentiment is praiseworthy. The poet also exhibited his knowledge of yoga in various places. The description of Sītā and various flowers and birds speak of the poetic talent of the poet. In many places we can see the influence of Kālidāsa 's *Meghadūta*. There are also number of good sayings incorporated in the poem. This poem is nothing but an abridged form of the *Sundarakāṇḍa* of the Rāmāyaṇa. Though poet belongs to the modern period influence of classical period is seen.

S. Rangnath rightly Says: “The virtue of the work is the mellifluous style, embellished in many ways. The flawless style, rhythmic diction and the spontaneous rhetoric have been galvanising attributes of the *Kāvya*.”³⁷

2.28 Pūrvabhāratam

The *Mahākāvya Pūrvabhāratam* is undoubtedly an appreciable attempt which shows poet’s concern for the true history of India. It was published in 1985. The work is composed in 21 cantos having 1444 verses written by KaVīratna Prabhudatta Swami of Meerut. This poem deals with the history of India beginning from the mythical Manu and ending with the invasion of Alexander and his encounter with Puru. The poet does not follow the history given by the modern historians, instead he depends mainly upon Indian tradition and literary evidences. In the epilogue of the *Mahākāvya* the poet says that the pure history of the Aryans has been misinterpreted and stained by the foreign writers. He has therefore written an epic poem to present the real history of the Aryans. The Indian mind that has always been seeking harmony and synthesis instead of harping on differences is aptly picturized in this poem in support of admitting the Buddha as an incarnation by the Hindu society. In direction, choice of words and figures of speech this poem stands remarkably distinct. The poem begins with the beautiful description of magnificent Himālaya and the Āryadeśa. The verses are full of mādhyagūṇa. they inject the feeling of curiosity and can easily bind the mind of a cultured reader. There are plenty of poetic figures which truly beautify the simple style of exaggeration and artificial description. The entire third canto is written in *Anuprāsa-Alaṅkāra*. There is a proper delineation of *Vīrarasa* and in some places we find even *karuṇa*. There is a proper delineation. Prabhudatta has composed another historical epic called *Mauryacandrodayam*. The *Mahākāvya* contains twenty cantos, and about 1100 verses. The poet has glorified the noble deeds of Chandragupta who is the hero of this great poem. The author deserves appreciation for giving us a historical epic, the composition of which just narrate the superficial material in high flown language. We understand that a poet however competent and powerful may be, has to study the life-history of the king and to remember the historical incidents chronologically and to make use of all the names of the persons, places, and incidents etc. in the poem. Among the biographical

³⁷ Rangnath, S., “Srimat Sitaramanjaneyam-Dr. D. Arka Somayaji-1984”, *Post Independent Sanskrit Epics*, p.46

poems we have a less number of historical poems which are more important for preserving the history and cultural records.

The epic is published in 1985. The poet deserves appreciation of selecting an untouched historical theme. The hero of this poem is Chandragupta Maurya. The poem is having *vīrarasa* as the main sentiment. But the poet has not been so much successful in making appropriate presentation of sentiments. However, the poet has given us a biography of Chandragupta (322-289 B.C.) in Sanskrit. A Sanskritist will be more interested to know the details about this king. The poet's concern for preserving the history for posterity is visible from the composition of the poem. So, the work has unique importance. The epic possesses some fascinating literary merit.

Besides above major *Mahākāvya*s of 20th Century there are number of other *Mahākāvya*s also which need to be mentioned here.

2.29 Śrīmatpratāparāṇayanam

This is a *Mahākāvya* written by Pt. Ogeti Parikshit Sharma of Maharashtra. It is published in 1989 from Pune. It is a *Mahākāvya* is written on the lines of traditional Sanskrit *Mahākāvya*s. The theme of the *Mahākāvya* is the epoch-making life history of the great Rajput hero Ranapratapa of Mevad who engaged himself in his life long battle with the Mughal emperor Akbar.

In this Epic there are 6 main sections as (१) मेवाड-काण्डम् (२) उदय-काण्डम् (३) अरण्य-काण्डम् (४) दिल्ली-काण्डम् (५) हल्दीघाट-काण्डम् (६) विजय-काण्डम् Each section of this epic has 8 to 17 cantos. Each canto consists of 35 to 100 verses. There are 80 cantos in total. This *Mahākāvya* consists of more than 4000 stanzas in 33 metres.

The first *Kāṇḍa* is preceded by a prologue containing eight topics, namely prayer to the God, benediction to the foregone poet preceptors, brief details of poet and his lineage, the national language of Bharat, the *raison d'être* for composing the poetry in Sanskrit, the account of the poet's literary creations, the attitude of poet towards poetry and the submission of the poet in justification of composing the life-story of Rana Pratapa. The account presented in versified

from though informative is not prosaic but contains beauty of its own. The last topic especially furnishes a clue to the section of the theme. The Mewad Kanda consists sixteen sargas extolling the majesty of Rajasthan with its heroes, heroines and heroic regions like Mewad and heroic castles like Chitod. The heroes Rawal, Rana Ratnasingh, Hammir, Kumbha, SangRāmasingh, Padmini, Meera and Panna.

The second *Kāṇḍa* with fourteen sargas begins with the picturesque description of the city of Udaypur. The topics that follow cover the personality of Rana Pratapa and Shaktisinha his younger brother. Then follows the description of Chetak, the beloved horse and the story picks up the momentum with them fraternal feud culminating in exilement of Pratapa to forest. It is followed by the incident of the coronation of Jagamalla in his place. The story takes turn with the marriage of Pratapa with a bride hailing from Andhra to be followed by the coronation of Pratapa. The poet spends a full Sarga detailing out the patriotic make up of Pratapa's personality.

The third *Kāṇḍa* extending over five hundred verses comprises eleven Sargas and begins with the description of the forest. The main-stay of the narrative of this *Kāṇḍa* is the prolonged residence of Pratāpa near the vast lake named Udayasagara. His friendship with the noble of the Bhilla tribe named Mahu is significant landmark in the forthcoming martial ventures of Rana Pratapa. The heroic deeds of Pratapa in this Canto are marked by the vanquishing of Asafkhan, Faridkhan, Abdulla, Kasimkhan, Firozkhan and Shabazkhan. In this Kanda the turn of the fate of Rana Pratapa pushes him to a forest refuge of torture and hardship. Pratapa is described here by the poet to have entered into meditative retrospection.

The fourth *Kāṇḍa* takes the readers to a venue away from that of Rana Pratapa. This *Kāṇḍa* begins with the character portrayal of the Mughal emperor Akbar and it ends with the details given by Mansingh, regarding the works of Rana Pratapa. The lavish side of the life of Akbar recorded in history especially his indulgence in womanizing sport is skilfully and appropriately described by the poet with proper placement needed for balancing the poetic treatment of his theme. The portrayal of Mansingh is contrasted by him with that of Pratapa. It is, however, an unfortunate development of the history of the Hindu Society of medieval India that Rana Pratapa is met with utter failure in materializing unity of Rajput power centres. This

pinching historical truth comes out as an effect of Pt. Sharma's poetic treatment of historical data contained in this Kanda.

This *Kāṇḍa* consists of seventeen Sargas extending over about one thousand verses. The historic battle of Haldighat where Chetak, the martial horse of Rāna Pratapa did his heroic feat and ultimately laid his life for the cause of his master and thereby the cause of the nation. The poet is often at his best in penning the battle, the aftermath of the battle and the pathetic culmination of Rana Pratapa's plight. He has effectively painted the pen-picture of the invincible Rana despite his physical setback at the hands of adverse fate. The sixth *Kāṇḍa* adverse fate haunting the Rāma offers him some solace in getting him the helping hand from Bhamasahi. Pratapa thereafter proceeds with his victory march and in his declining age coronates his son and addresses his followers with a message which proves to be last of his life. This is termed by the poet as victory and hence he named it *Vijaya Kāṇḍa*. The poet ends the *Mahākāvya* with the biography of the Pratapa and the last canto given the title of the goal of the life of Maharana Pratapa. Out of many creative writings of the poet the *Śrīmatpratāparāṇayanam* is an outcome of his culmination of poetic genius.

Dr. Prabhakar Apte in his forward writes: "This *Mahākāvya* would perhaps be unique in the sense that the life-sketch of Rana Pratapa covering major and minor incidents are perhaps not been covered by any other literary work in prose or poetry in any Indian or foreign language."³⁸

This *Mahākāvya* predominantly conveys the sentiment of Vīra which is ultimately delineates the patriotic feeling of the poet. Additionally, other emotions such as *Raudra*, *Karūṇa*, *Bhayānaka* and *Bībhatsa* are also present therein as subordinate sentiments. Various metres like *Anuṣṭubha*, *Indravajrā*, *Mālinī*, *Rathoddhatā*, *pañcacāmara* etc are used to enrich the *Mahākāvya*.

Dr. M.D. Paradkara rightly remarks: "प्रस्तुत महाकाव्य की दूसरी अनूठी विशेषता है इस महाकाव्य में प्रयुक्त तैंतीस छन्दों में प्रणीत ४२३३ श्लोकों की। 'नानावृत्तमयः सर्गः' महाकाव्य की एक विशेषता रही जिसकी पूर्ति करने में पं. ओगेटि शर्माने वृत्तोंपर अपने प्रभुत्व का परिचय दिया है।"³⁹

³⁸ Sharma, Pt. Ogeti Parikshit, *Śrīmatpratāparāṇāyanam Mahākāvya*, Forward, xxxiii

The unique feature of this *Mahākāvya* is the use of various classical *Ragas* in the poem.

Dr. Chandra Kishor Goswami in forword to this poem rightly remarks: “इस काव्य में महाकवि पं. ओगेटि परीक्षित शर्मा संगीतशास्त्र का सुप्रसिद्ध रागों का नामोलेखन भी संदर्भानुसार करके इस काव्य को रागरञ्जित बनाया है।”⁴⁰

2.30 Śrī Daśameśacaritam

Śrī Daśameśacaritam is a *Mahākāvya* written by Acharya Shridhar Prasad Baluni in year 1999. It is a *Mahākāvya* written on the biographical sketch of the tenth and last Guru of Sikha Sect, Guru Govindsinh. It has also the narration of the history of establishment of the Sikha Sect.

Śrī Daśameśacaritam is a *Mahākāvya* divided into 21 cantos. Its title seems that it is written on the subject of astrology but when we read it our delusion is disappeared regarding the subject. This *Mahākāvya* depicts the history of Śikha sect. It narrates the ten Gurus of the Śikha sect as well as their work. The first one is the Guru Nānaka. He was born in the Śekhūpur (now in Pakistana). He became famous by his preaching. Both the Hindus and Muslims have devotion in him. There after his disciple Guru Angadadev became the second Guru. After him the Amaradasa became the third Guru of the Śikha sect and he allows women to seat in the Sangata and he gave the preaching of equality. The fourth Guru was Rāmadasaji. He continued the tradition of preaching and established the Amṛtasara Town. Arjundeva became the fifth Guru and he edited the all preaching of his Gurus and made a Ādigrantha called as *Gurugrantha Sāhibā*. He also created his own book Sukhamani. He spent his life in the protection of the Śikha Sect and he left his life in the prison of Badshah Khushru. Thereafter Hargovindaji became the sixth Guru. He thought on the cruelty of the Mughal Badshah and gave preaching in his pilgrimages to his disciples regarding how to wield weapons. The seventh Guru Hariraya gave the throne to his son HariKṛṣṇa Ray as eighth guru but very soon he came to know about his death and Guru Tega Bahadur became the ninth Guru. Thereafter Guru Tega Bahadur made Kartara Puri as his centre of Śikha Sect. During the travelling for the publicity of the Śikha Sect he got Guru Govindaray as his son later who known as Guru Govindsinh. The entity of Guru

³⁹ *Ibid.* 11

⁴⁰ *Ibid.* xxvii

Govindsinh and his disciples famous as Khalasa Sect. They have to fight with many Muslims and Hindu Kings but they did not leave their religion. In the war Guru Govindsinh lost his two sons also. In short span of life of 33 years he lived successful life as teacher, as religious preceptor, as protector of religion etc.

After giving the brief history of Śikha Sect, the poet has given the life sketch of Guru Govindsinh. Initial name of Guru Govindsinh is Govind Ray. His mother's name was Gujari Devi. When he was born his father Guru Tega Bahadur on the religion travelling. when he returned from the journey, he became happy to see his son and naming him as Govind Rāya. Because of his amazing activities in the childhood, he became famous from his childhood. After some time, Guru Tegabahadur called him Patana to Anandpur. There he became well-versed on Astra and Sastras as per the requirement of the time. The protection of the self-respect of Hindu is become the main goal of his life. Guru Tega Bahadur is killed by Aurangajheba. He performed his father's funeral ceremony. He accepted the throne of his father and he engrossed himself in the message of the Śikha sect among the people. He married with a girl named Jeet Kaur. He performed both the religious and household duties well. He is becoming famous among the kings. Some of the kings become happy because of his fame and some of them become jealous. King Nāhana invited him in the Ponta-Nagara. Guru Govindsinh accepted his invitation and started to live there. He gave religious preaching place to place and established *Khālasā* Sect.

As per the tradition of Sanskrit literature the *Mahākāvya* begins with the benedictory stanza. But with the benediction it also suggests the subject matter of the *Mahākāvya*. The name of the canto has also given as per the subject matter described in the cantos. The hero of the poem is also chosen as per the characteristics of the *Mahākāvyas*. The prominent sentiment of this *Mahākāvya* is *Vīra* and *Raudra*, *Śānta* and *Vipralambha* are subsidiary sentiments to it. As per the requirement vivid descriptions of Garden, seasons and cities are there. But they are not fulfilling the characteristics of the *Mahākāvya*. Instead of the sports of childhood the morning of child Govind Raya starts with the Guruvani and his afternoon in the learning of swords etc. The descriptions of birth of son and marriage etc. are described in very less words. Many of the cantos are based on the description of war. The metres are used in the *Mahākāvya* are *Anuṣṭubha*, *Indravajrā*, *Upendravajrā*, *Vamśastha*, *Bhujāṅgaprayāta* and *Aparājitā* etc. The language of the *Mahākāvya* is simple and lucid. It is free from compound words as well as

drāmatic junctures (Sandhis). Though this work lacks in some characteristics of the *Mahākāvya* yet it is considered as *Mahākāvya* considering other important features.
