

## Alankar Shastra in Bhasha Kala, Historical study of Harsacharita through Cultural, Social, Economic, Religious, Political, Administrative and Geographical conditions

Ajeet Kumar

PhD Scholar, Department of History, University of Delhi,

Email Id: -yoajeet9999@gmail.com

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### Abstract: -

Harshacharita written by Bana Bhatta is a ākhyāyikā which is divided into eight [ucchvāsas] (chapters). In the first two and a half ucchvāsas (chapter) Bana has only written his biography and in other chapters the character and other aspects of Emperor Harshavardhana have been described. I have mentioned through my paper about Harsha character, despite being fictional, has a historical side of the society of that time. He Only gives his own description but no historical characters have been mentioned. But the importance of language is seen historically. In the first ucchvāsas, the poems of the poets of the northern region mostly are seen Shalesh Pradhan. Western region poets focus on the arth matra. The poets of the southern region are perfect in utpreksha. And in the poem of the poets of the Gond region akshar matra are found in abundance. In the language arts of the time, Alankar Shastra has tried to make a historical study of Harsha character through cultural, social, economic, religious, political, administrative and Geographical conditions.

**Keywords** —ākhyāyikā, ucchvāsas, Harshacharita.

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### Introduction: -

The Harshacharita is a very important historical source to better understand the history of early medieval North India early 7th century. Harshacharita can also be called a royal biography<sup>1</sup> of that time in which there is a description of the rule of King Harsha Vardhan which extended from Thaneshwar and Kannauj to Magadha and Orissa. Bana has described his autobiography and his own lineage and the superiority of the brahmins in the first two and a half Sigh. He Only gives his own description but no historical characters have been mentioned. But the importance of language is seen historically<sup>2</sup>. In the first ucchvāsas, the poems of

the poets of the northern region mostly are seen Shalesh Pradhan. Western region poets focus on the arth matra. The poets of the southern region are perfect in utpreksha. And in the poem of the poets of the Gond region akshar matra are found in abundance. Bana himself was also a Brahmin, so his religious and ideological leanings are clearly visible in his writings. Bana has described the character of Harshavardhana in rest of chapters, the initial part of the genealogy given in Harshacharita appears to be mythical but, in the latter, there is also historicity. The selection of the events of the life story is literary, the description in Harshacharita has also been used in the ornate

<sup>1</sup>Upinder singh, A history of Ancient and Early Medieval India, From the stone age of the 12<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>2</sup>In the first ucchvāsas, the poems of the poets of the northern region mostly are seen Shalesh Pradhan. Western region poets focus on the arth matra. The poets of the southern region are perfect in utpreksha. And in the poem of the poets of the Gond

region akshar matra are found in abundance. (प्रथम उच्छवासमें उत्तरी क्षेत्र के कवियोंकी रचना श्लेष प्रधान होती हैं। पश्चिम क्षेत्र कवि अर्थ मात्रा पर ध्यान देते हैं। दक्षिण क्षेत्र के कवि उत्प्रेक्षा करने में निपुण हैं। और गोंड क्षेत्र के कवियों की रचना में अक्षर मात्रा प्रचुर्य रहता है।)

language. The language used is full of exaggeration and praise which mainly comes from the society itself. Bana was a court poet, so it can also be said that it is natural for the language to be such ornamental, that Bana is also described the image of an ideal society and the qualities of an ideal ruler through Harsha for his protection. At the same time, it is also seen that Banahas presented Harsh Vardhan as a hero in his writings, the main reason for this is that Banawas patronized by Harsha like other royal apologies of that time. A long explanation is available in the Harshacharita, there is a huge store of words in Baan's dictionary<sup>3</sup>. For example, Mitra for Surya, Divaskar, Dinkar, Anshumali, Savita etc. Hasti for elephant Ibh, Varan, Gaja, Matang etc. Words like snake etc. have been used. He has used many synonyms expressing the same meaning. The date sequence is not mentioned in any event in the composition of the Bana, although there is a mention of astrological calculations<sup>4</sup>. In the fourth ucchvāsasthere is a mention of the birth of Harshavardhana on the Dwadashi of Krishna Paksha in Kritika Nakshatra of the month of Jetha. The names of many historical characters are also not mentioned, making it clear that Bana focused mainly on Harsha<sup>5</sup>. The name of Gaudadhipi who killed Raja Vardhana is not mentioned in the sixth ucchvāsas. Not on other characters of that time, which were related to war and other activities, although there is no exaggeration that Harṣacharita is a biography of

<sup>3</sup>Mitra for Surya, Divaskar, Dinkar, Anshumali, Savita etc. Hasti for elephant Ibh, Varan, Gaja, Matang etc. Words like snake etc. have been used. (सूर्य के लिए मित्र, दिवसकर, दिनकर, अंशुमाली, सविता आदि. हाथी के लिए हस्ती, इभ, वारण, गज, मातंग आदि. नाग आदि शब्दों का प्रयोग किया गया है.)

<sup>4</sup>In the fourth ucchvāsasthere is a mention of the birth of Harshavardhana on the Dwadashi of Krishna Paksha in Kritika Nakshatra of the month of Jetha. (चौथे उच्छवास में जेठ महीने के कृतिका नक्षत्र में कृष्ण पक्ष की द्वादशी के दिन हर्षवर्धन के जन्म का उल्लेख है.)

<sup>5</sup>The name of Gaudadhipi who killed Raja Vardhana is not mentioned in the sixth ucchvāsas. (छठे उच्छवास में राज वर्धन को मारने वाले गौड़ाधिपि का नाम उल्लेख नहीं किया गया है.)

Harsha but I believe that the way Baan described his autobiography, he called himself 'Vatsyayan' and by linking it to the lineage of 'Kubera' and Baan had studied Vedas, Puranas, Ramayana, Mahabharata very well, it seems that he is proving his legitimacy religiously. When the Bana meet Harsh, they praise him and compare Harsh's body with the characters of Mahabharata, two incidents can be inferred from this sentence, the first is Bana pleasing Harsh as a mighty hero Secondly, it is also seen that Bana is getting Harsha to praise himself that he is an intelligent Brahmin. For these reasons, despite the less historical importance of Harsha Charita, there are helpful texts for the study of cultural, social, economic, political, religious, rhetoric, language, and natural conditions of Harsha's contemporary era.

### **Historical study of Harṣacharita through Alankar Shastra in language arts: -**

Even if we do not believe in the concept of feudalism in the early-medieval times of Bana Bhatta's Harṣacharita globally, it can be said that the literary work which was eloquent in the condition of the medieval states in 7th century. Ornaments, scriptures and words have been introduced into buildings of pomp, which were introduced in Western societies as well. It has been propounded by some researchers that the feudalistic trend was also present in the early medieval due to which the court poets had to speak rhetoric and ornate languages because most of what was being used by them in writing was not real as they claimed. They were mostly in symbolic form, for example, RS Sharma<sup>6</sup> says that due to the change in the feudal tendencies of the state, Sanskrit prose and poetry also changed accordingly and emerged, similar metaphors (characters), imaginary and characteristics, which adorned the people. Capturing reality from the clutches of language made it very difficult.

It does not mean at all that through this article the existence of feudalism can be changed through the

<sup>6</sup> R.S. Sharma, Poorva Madhya Kaleen Bharat Ka Samanti Samaj aur Sanskriti, p-32

changing trend of cultural literature, but through this article I am trying to tell that through language from ancient to new history the beginning of the writing trend, whether it was the West or the East in the early medieval society from the early medieval, was a continuation of them whatever literature was written around that time, maximum use of rhetoric / curvature was made, although it was only a general statement, that what should remain in our mind and should focused on important changes in the history of literary writing, new changes could be seen in the literary sources of early medieval times and at the same time it is also seen that the old trends did not disappear completely rather, it is also seen in the writing of new styles. The existence of the biography of Bana Bhatt in the Harṣacharita of admiring and historical elements is a wise amalgamation of new ornamental scriptures and history in the flow of Puranic traditions.

Before I describe about Alankar Shastra which is in Harṣacharita, before I describe about its cultural, social, economic, religious and political aspects, before that we should know what exactly Alankar Shastra is and how it is related to historicity.

Why is Alankar Shastra important for literary writing and what were the motives behind that? It was able to reveal the situation at that time? So, my question is whether the biography of Harṣacharita through Alankar Shastra can really help us to understand the history? If we come to its focal point, then it is clear that, if we talk about historical and semi-historical understanding, then it is seen in ancient and early medieval Indian society, if we talk about facts, then understanding and awareness of Indian historiography. Which is also seen in the form of diversity. Literature was presented orally and written, which also reflects historical consciousness and through oral they were also kept alive by folk tales which are seen later in writing, although it also has its critical side. That this biography was written by the state poets in Sanskrit and also shows historicity in the writing, but the focus was not focused on giving accurate historical details, it seems to be preserved only in the form of historical details. Because in this only

incomplete information about the time of period and characters is received, so it can also be said that in today's time, what is called history is not seen in Harṣacharita. Bana only gave information that was important for the time from a mentor's point of view.

Through this biography, the myths, legends, ideas, religious perspectives of that time were embellished through language, but this does not mean that it must have been structured only around Alankar Shastra. As Romila Thapar<sup>7</sup> says in her own words, it is only the basic information related to the contemporary event cycle around which the structure of appreciation was built and as a beautiful state language that ranges from linguistic properties to complex symbols for classical learning and typically represent.

### **Historical study of Harṣacharita from cultural, social, economic, religious point of view: -**

Bana has very closely depicted the social and cultural aspects in the Harṣacharita, Bana has a different point of view regarding the nature of poetry, his writings show that at this time the compositions were being stolen. In the illustration, both men and women are depicted with subtlety. He also describes plowing, rice and wheat crops, sugarcane plantations, bales of grain ready to go to the threshing floor, low-ranking servants in the army, Chandalas, descriptions of horses, elephants. Bana has condemned the cooks of his time, Bana has also mentioned the birth anniversary and for Rajya Vardhan and Harsh Vardhan, the guardian was appointed for them in childhood, while through the description of the marriage of Rajya Shree we get to know about the social life of that time. and also get information about the cultural aspect.

Bana also talks about the matrimonial program that Rajya Shree's marriage was fixed with Grihavarman Maukhari and described the women involved in the marriage for the marriage program and folk songs have been described in the

<sup>7</sup> Romila Thapar, Past Before Us, P.475

marriage, in this folk song by taking the name of the bride and groom. Songs are being sung and abusing the bride and groom is also mentioned in this concert, which is an important part of the culture even today in wedding concerts.

We also get the description of craftsmen making new earthen pots, new clothes for marriage and its dyeing and printing. The work of flowers, leaves etc. has been mentioned on the clothes, through these events, the social and cultural conditions of that time are felt, which even in today's time we see marriage programs in rural areas of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh during marriage. In this way Bana has very beautifully described the contemporary festival culture in his literature by which we can understand the importance of historical aspects.

In the depiction of human beauty in Harṣacharita, where the male beauty of men and at some places the depiction of fierce beauty has been presented, women are shown as gentle beauty, from the first chapter to the last chapter, the image of the woman was engraved. In it, one can take patriarchal values and social references to illustrate the two conflicting characters of the courtesan and the rajkanya/wife, which were part of urban life, although the poem discusses both the common prostitute and the courtesan where another Rajyashri, she was expected to appear very modest, serious and shy in her conduct,<sup>8</sup> First ucchvāsas- When Savitri is ready to curse husband then Saraswati asked you to control your anger because even after having zero intellect Brahmins are acceptable to us only because of caste. - Savitri spoke to the old gentleman it is very pretentious to

<sup>8</sup>First ucchvāsas- When Savitri is ready to curse husband then Saraswati asked you to control your anger because even after having zero intellect Brahmins are acceptable to us only because of caste. - Savitri spoke to the old gentleman it is very pretentious to speak at the first initiative of Arya, easy-going shameless women, especially those who are free enchanted maidens like wild antelope. (प्रथम उच्छवास- जब प्रति शाप देने के लिए सावित्री तैयार हो गई तो सरस्वती ने सखी तू अपने क्रोध को समेट ले, संस्कार शून्य बुद्धि होने पर भी जाति के कारण ही ब्राह्मण हमारे मान्य हैं।-सावित्री वृद्ध सज्जन से बोली आर्य सहज लज्जाशील नारियों का पहले पहल बोल बैठना बड़ी धृष्टता है विशेषकर तो उनका जो वन्य मृगी की भांति मुक्त मुग्ध कुलकुमारियां हैं।)

speaking at the first initiative of Arya, easy-going shameless women, especially those who are free enchanted maidens like wild antelope. while courtesans could freely socialize with men<sup>9</sup>, In the fourth ucchvāsas there is a description of a drunken old Vaishya woman who puts her hand around her neck. and attend meetings, banquets and festivals with them. On the other hand, both had a limit in selecting men for courtship. The courtesans were reflecting the new norms of female brilliance and sexuality, but the courtesans were denied social status due to their conduct and nature, the woman is sometimes depicted as the mother of the brave, but her Children<sup>10</sup>, For example in the fourth ucchvāsas, tell the fourth Arya son, it is only used to increase the girls like Dharaye, in the kanyadan their father is the proof. they had no authority over their own bodies, such textures and limitations seem to be central to a patriarchal society. The practice of sati, dowry system, purdah system etc, prevalent in this period, get to see a very poignant depiction of the practices.

In the composition of the arrow the importance of religious mythological quotes, supernatural power and superstitions, sorcery, sorcery, inauspicious, blinking of eyes etc. In the Harṣacharita we also learn about trade, Bana mentions the import of good-bred horses from Persia and Iran, various kinds of clothing and gems, jewellery, and in the first half of the seventh century, Indians from abroad. The relationship with which it happened is also briefly described.

### **Historical study of Harṣacharita through political, administrative and natural conditions: -**

<sup>9</sup>In the fourth ucchvāsas there is a description of a drunken old Vaishya woman who puts her hand around her neck. (चतुर्थ उच्छवास में मतवाली बूढ़ी वैश्य स्त्री का वर्णन है जो सामान तो के गले में हाथ डाल देती है।)

<sup>10</sup>In the fourth ucchvāsas, tell the fourth son Arya son, it is only used to increase the girls like Dharaye, in the kanyadan their father is the proof. (चतुर्थ उच्छवास आर्य पुत्र बताएं केवल धराए की भांति कन्याओं को बढ़ाने मात्र के उपयोग में आती है कन्यादान में तो उनके पिता ही प्रमाण है।)

We do not get information about Harsha's administrative system in this, but according to the description of the arrow, the official positions and traditions of the Gupta period were continued even in this period, the arrow has mentioned the forest guard, Sarvapallipati officers<sup>11</sup>, For example Mahasandhi, Vighrahadhikrat, Gajasadhanadhikrat, Baladhikrato, Patipati, Chet, Shat etc. From this we get to know about the administrative officers of that time, as was the system in the Gupta period, the same was implemented in the time of Harsha. The practice of different religions<sup>12</sup>, for example in the second ucchvāsas Buddhists, Jains, Shaivites, sannyasis, brahmacharis were shown coming to Harsha's darshan. Even in the seventh ucchvāsas when Harsha goes to Vidyaanchal to find Rajyashree so there Bhagwat, Kapil, Jain, Buddhist, Lokayatik, Kanad etc. Shown at the same place. different breeds of horses<sup>13</sup>, for example in the second ucchvāsas there is mention of horses from Vanayuz, Kamboj, Bharadwaj and parsik. which have come from different places. Different types of clothes<sup>14</sup> (Sisthan, Pinga, Satula, Kuchkam, Kuparsak etc.), gems, gems and

ornaments are mentioned<sup>15</sup> (Choodamani, Pushparagamani, Markatmani, Padmaragmani, Indraneelamani etc). This probably reflects the internal and external trade of that period. Superstition and Tantric activities have been depicted, some diseases<sup>16</sup> (herpes, leprosy etc.) of that period have been mentioned, Baan has presented a very poignant depiction of the evil practices of Sati, dowry system, purdah system etc. The seventh chapter gives information that people were forcibly caught and made to work, while the army marched, agriculture was destroyed, the soldiers want to complain about the atrocities of the officers. But it is not possible for the villagers to reach the emperor. The depiction of the primitive living conditions of the wild countryside has also been done by arrows.

Deep fraternity is shown between Harsha and Rajya Vardhana, while the struggle for succession is also visible and the contemporary political scenario is also known through Hunas invasions, conflicts with Malwa and Gauda rulers etc.

Geographical area is also mentioned in this, the arrow has beautifully described the scenes of summer etc. in the natural depiction, day and night, afternoon and evening, and has also described the river Ganges and natural beauty very well, only the gentle side of nature. No, but the fierce tumultuous side has also been mentioned adequately, which is seen in the form of historical description of the natural beauty of that time. The naturalistic depictions are a testament to his meticulous observation and the power of his imagination. Bana has depicted the scenes of summer, in natural depictions, scenes of morning, evening, and river Ganges. Therefore, in the beginning of this illustration, he has used the word 'Kremen', he has presented the nature as sympathetic to the human spirit and human companion.

## Conclusion: -

<sup>11</sup> Mahasandhi Vighrahadhikrat, Gajasadhanadhikrat, Baladhikrato, Patipati, Chet, Shat etc. (महासंधि विग्रहाधिकृत, गजसाधनाधिकरत, बलाधिकृतो, पाटीपतियो, चेत, शाट आदि।)

<sup>12</sup> In the second ucchvāsas Buddhists, Jains, Shaivites, sannyasis, brahmacharis were shown coming to Harsha's darshan. Even in the seventh ucchvāsas when Harsha goes to Vidyaanchal to find Rajyashree so there Bhagwat, Kapil, Jain, Buddhist, Lokayatik, Kanad etc. Shown at the same place. (द्वितीय उच्छवास में बौद्ध, जैन, शैव, सन्यासी, ब्रह्मचारी, हर्ष के दर्शन के लिए आते हुए दर्शाए गए थे। सप्तम उच्छवास में भी जब हर्ष राज्यश्री को खोजने विद्यांचल जाते हैं, तो वह भागवत, कपिल, जैन, बौद्ध, लोकायतिक, कणाद आदि एक ही स्थान पर दिखाए गए हैं।)

<sup>13</sup> In the second ucchvāsas there is mention of horses from Vanayuz, Kamboj, Bharadwaj and parsik. (द्वितीय उच्छवास में वनायूज, कंबोज, भारद्वाज, पारसिक से आए आदि घोड़ों का उल्लेख है।)

<sup>14</sup> Sisthan, Pinga, Satula, Kuchkam, Kuparsak etc. (स्वस्थान, पिंगा, सतूला, कुचक, कुपार्सक आदि।)

<sup>15</sup> Choodamani, Pushparagamani, Markatmani, Padmaragmani, Indraneelamani etc. (चूडामणि, पुष्परागमणि, मरकतमणि, पदमरागमणि, इन्द्रनीलमणि आदि।)

<sup>16</sup> Herpes, leprosy etc. (दाद रोग, कुष्ठ रोग आदि।)



The Harṣacharita is a historical source for understanding early medieval history before the seventh century, but the early exhalations of the Harṣacharita seem to be fanciful with the arrows exaggerating themselves. Starting the book with his autobiography, and linking himself with the lineage of 'Vatsyayan' and 'Kuber' means to tell one's own lineage. Describing the superiority of brahmins it appears from this that how much dominance of brahmins is there. He is trying to show in this. In the writings of Bana, the focus is more on Harsha than on the date of order. The Bana has a different view on the nature of poetry which shows that during this period the writings of that period were being stolen by shuffling the words. Therefore, while studying the Harṣacharita, we should give focus on what kind of sources Bana is using while writing the Harṣacharita. However, despite all this Harṣacharita is a historical ākhyāyikā to understand the society of that time because through Harṣacharita it shows the style of language of that time especially Alankar Shastra, matrimonial customs, nature of caste system, status of women, depiction of natural beauty, religious outlook, political, administrative Reveals perspective.

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