10) Mahīpālakathā :

The Mahīpālakathā is an important work written by Vīradevagaṇi in the 15th Cen.A.D. It deals with the influence of *navakāramantra,* worship of the goddess Caṇḍī, devotion of controller deity, worship of Yakṣa and Kuladevī, creation of Jinabhavana, tossing of flowers by Gods after one's obtainment of absolute knowledge etc.

Besides these works, the Mūlaśuddhiprakaraṇa, Narmadāsundarīkathā, Malayasundarīkathā, Jinadattākhyāna, Añjanāsundarīkathā, Pratyekabuddhakathā etc. are other works of story literature in Prakrit.

Didactic Story Literature

The preaching of religious principles occupies a central place in the didactic stories of Prakrit literature. The Jain Ācāryas in order to spread their religion among common people have authored the didactic stories in Prakrit. These stories pertain to preach the Jain values of control, conduct, donation, penance, abandonment and renunciation.

The theory of Karman, being important in the Jain religion, finds description in these stories. So also the other related topics like the theory of rebirth, pleasant result of a good *karma* and painful result of a bad *karma* , obtainment of various births by beings. The dissociation of *karma* through absence of fault and endurance of *pariṣahas* is found elaborately described through the traditional stories. The stories render the preaching indirectly but in proper words. Following are the important didactic stories in Prakrit -

1)   **Upadeśamālā :**

The Upadeśamālā was composed by Dharmadāsagaṇi. It is a garland of preaching. In it, the statements of *jina* are woven together like the flowers in a garland. The Upadeśamālā predominantly includes the teaching of renunciation.

The text contains four *viśrāmas*. The first *viśrāma* includes the stories of Raṇasimha, Candanabālā, Bharata etc. The second *viśrāma* includes those of Mṛgāvatī, Jambūsvāmī, Vasudeva etc. The third *viśrāma* tells the stories of Śālibhadra, Metāryamuni, king Pradeśī etc; while the fourth *viśrāma* tells those of Śailakācārya, Puṇḍarīka, Kaṇḍarīka etc.

The Dharmopadeśamāla and others are the other works imitating the Upadeśamālā.

2)   Upadeśapada :

The Upadeśapada is authored by the famous Jain Ācārya Haribhadrasūri. The text includes 1039 *gāthās*. These *gāthās* appear as if an index to various Prakrit stories. Municandra has further elaborated the stories.

3)   Dharmopadeśamālāvivaraṇa :

The Dharmopadeśamālā and the Vivaraṇa on it belonging to the 9th Cen. A.D. were composed by Jayasimhasūri. It is a blender of prose and poetry. At the end of each story, the salutation is offered to *śrutadevī* (goddess of knowledge) and it is stated that the dissolution of *karma* comes as a fruit of listening and narrating of this text. The Dharmopadeśamālāvivaraṇa includes fine descriptions of nature, question-answers, completion of metrical foot, deviation style. Besides being purely didactic in nature, the text reflects upon the contemporary social state also. The story of Dhana *sārthavāha* has reference to the merit of gift while that of *śīlavrata* has reference to the merit of vow of conduct.

4) **Saṁvegaraṅgaśālā :**

The author of the Saṁvegaraṅgaśālā is Jinacandrasūri belonging to the 11ᵗʰ Cen. A.D. It describes the *saṁvegabhāva.*

5) **Bhavabhāvanā :**

The Bhavabhāvanā was authored by Hemacandrasūri in the 12ᵗʰ Cen. A.D. It contains 531 *gāthās.* The text describes 12 famous reflections of transitoriness, helplessness etc.

6) **Śīlopadeśamālā :**

The Śīlopadeśamālā composed by Jayakīrti pertains to the observance of celibacy. It belongs to the 14ᵗʰ Cen. A.D. and contains 116 *gāthās.*

7) **Upadeśamālāprakaraṇa :**

This is an important work of Hemacandrasūri. It includes 20 *adhikāras* viz. *abhayapradāna*, *jñāna, dāna, śīla, tapa* etc. It describes the means of dissolution of *karma* through use of analogies in accordance with knowledge used in scriptures. It includes many popular and religious tales related with the Jain principles.

Besides the above mentioned works, following are the other important works belonging to the didactic type of Prakrit literature -

1) Vivekamañjarī   2) Upadeśakandalī

3) Upadeśaratnākara   4) Vardhamānadeśanā

5) Antaraṅgaprabodha   6) Antaraṅgasaṁdhi

7) Hitopadeśāmṛta etc.

In the Śvetāmbara Āgama literature very few works are found which purely devote to philosophy. It is the general

tendency of the Śvetāmbara Āgamas to explain the theories by means of narrations, stories, dialogues and analogies.

The same tendency is reflected in various didactic treatises by Śvetāmbara Ācāryas in their literature written in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī. In that, the stories are woven around different personalities to reveal various technical ideas like perfection, knowledge, gift, conduct, penance, control, renunciation, reflection, absence of fault, *samiti, gupti, pariṣahas* etc.

Many personalities and events are repeated in the whole of the literature. Same personality can be used again by the same Ācārya to underline a different topic. This can be described as an attempt to emphasis the theories on the mind of common people through the means of entertainment. While doing this the influence of regional dialects is evident in the vocabulary of this literature. The regional believes and traditions are also reflected in the stories. Mūladeva, Dhanyasārthavāha, Kṛtapuṇya, Śālibhadra, Āryā Candanabālā, Mṛgāvatī are the personalities common to all the didactic treatises. Preaching being the chief objective, literary merits and employment of *rasa* naturally become secondary in this literature. The stories appear to be technical and stereotype in nature.

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Chapter 5

Carita-Kāvya in Prakrit

(3rd Cen. A.D.- 16th Cen. A.D.)

The Jain sages have a good number of biographical works besides the narratives. They are referred to as *carita-kāvyas*. At the same time when the brahminical *purāṇas* were being produced, the Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata and Harivaṁśapurāṇa were gaining popularity, the Jain sages also started writing biographies of lord Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and of the Tīrthaṅkaras and other celebrated personalities. The Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacarita is the famous work which includes biographies of 63 *ślāghā* (or *śalākā*) Puruṣas. Traditionally there are 63 illustrative personalities in the tradition of Jainas. They are called as *ślāghā* or *śalākāpuruṣas.* They include : 24 Tīrthaṅkaras, 12 Cakravartīs, 9 Vāsudevas, 9 Baladevas and 9 Prativāsudevas. The Caupannamahāpurisacariya of Śīlāṅka written in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī (9th Cen.A.D.) deals with 54 among them, excluding 9 Prativāsudevas. In the Kalpasūtra one finds biographies of Ṛṣabhadeva, Ariṣṭanemi, Pārśvanātha and Mahāvīra. The Vasudevahiṇḍi of Saṁghadāsagaṇi and Dharmadāsagaṇi also contains biographies of different Tīrthaṅkaras. In the Prakrit biographical literature, one also finds popular works describing Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. The Jñātādharmakathā, Antakṛddaśā, and the Sukhabodhā commentary on the Uttarādhyayana include stories of Kṛṣṇa. Vimalasūri has written the Paumacariya which is a biography of Rāma.

All these above mentioned biographies are poetries written in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī.

The biographical literature in Prakrit can be divided into 3 groups as follows :

1) Purāṇic biographies : Padmacarita, Kṛṣṇacarita

2) Biographies of the Tīrthaṅkaras : Pārśvanāthacarita, Supārśvanāthacarita, Mahāvīracarita etc.

3) Biographies of eminent personalities : Kūrmāputracarita, Surasundarīcarita etc.

Peculiar features of the biographical literature in Prakrit :

The biographical poetries in Prakrit are based on religious themes; to bring it out adequately they abound in the use of similies, metaphors, alliterations, pun and many other figures of speech and meanings. In order to make them more interesting and also to create *rasa*, the authors employ narratives and stories. These stories and narratives are interlinked in a series through the means of dialogues and questions-answers. Various metres are aptly used befitting to the subject matter of description. The biographies include many references to socio-cultural elements prevalent at respective times. A curious reader also finds information about the different philosophical disciplines and religious methods of worship current in that time.

Here follows an outline of some of the important biographies -

Paumacariya

In the Indian literature, the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki assumes a status of source treatise. Its position is indeed unique. The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki has inspired hundreds of other Rāmāyaṇas in the Hindu tradition. There would be hardly any modern Indian language in which the Rāmāyaṇa is not retold. The Sanskrit and Prakrit Rāmāyaṇas written by Jain sages number nearly 15. Besides them, the other minor biographies based on the Jain

Rāmāyaṇas are no less than thirty. The Jain Rāmāyaṇas were being continuously written during 3rd to 17th Cen. A.D.

The epic Paumacariya written in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī by Vimalasūri, probably a *yāpanīya* sage stands as an *ādikāvya* (foremost poetry) in the Jain tradition of Rāmāyaṇa. He himself has noted the 1st Cen.A.D. as the period of its compilation. There is a controversy among scholars about its date, but generally 3rd Cen.A.D. is regarded as the earliest date.

Adequate information about the biography of Vimalsūri is not available. It is popularly known that Vijaya Ācārya, born of Nāila-family happened to be his teacher, Vijaya Ācārya himself was a pupil to Ācārya Rāhu.

This information is obtained from the colophon of the Paumacariya. Vimalasūri referes to his work as *purāṇa.* The word 'Pauma' in the title stands for 'Padma' meaning Lord Rāma. This is a biography of Lord Rāma. According to the Jain traditions, Rāma (Padma), Lakṣmaṇa and Rāvaṇa are respectively the eighth *baladeva, vāsudeva* and *prativāsudeva.* This epic is divided into 118 sections. First 35 sections are called as *uddeśas* and the remaining sections are called as *parva*s. It includes total number of 8651 *gāthās.*

In the Paumacariya, the author Vimalasūri has written the story of Rāma in the fashion of Jain tradition. The events and their sequence are exactly like in the Vālmīki-Rāmāyaṇa. The difference lies in the names of some personalities and places. The apparently improbable and incredible elements in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa are supported by logical principles and the theory of *karman.* The plot of the Rāmāyaṇa story is improvised to amount

to the rationalism. Vimalasūri tried to eliminate the improbable elements of Rāmāyaṇa like the flesh eating by demons, long sleep of six months by Kumbhakarṇa, Rāvaṇa possessing ten mouths etc. in his Paumacariya.

The *rākṣasas* and *vānaras* are regarded as belonging to human races, strictly speaking they are *vidyādharas* (i.e. possessing various lores). Meghavāhana reduced the Laṅkā and other islands to ashes *(rakṣā),* hence his linage is called as *rākṣasa*. Rāvaṇa's mother had put a garland of nine jewels into his neck. These nine prestigious jewels reflected Rāvaṇa's mouth. Therefore his father called him as Daśānana (possessing ten mouths). He appears to be the protagonist in this Rāmāyaṇa.

Kumbhakarṇa is described as being a respectable personality. Māruti is named as Hanumāna on account of his being born in the town Hanuruhapura. He did not physically moved the mountain Droṇa, but brought the lady physician Viśalyā to examine the wounded Lakṣmaṇa. In this Rāmāyaṇa, Sītā is not taking birth from the ploughing of land but is actually a daughter of Janaka and Videhā. Vimalasūri's attitude towards Kaikeyī is very sympathetic. In his Rāmāyaṇa, she does not become responsible for Rāma's exile into forest. Neither Daśaratha abandons his life lamenting the separation from his son Rāma, but accepts the vow and observes penance. Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Rāvaṇa respectively possessed 8000, 16000 and 100 wives. The killing of Rāvaṇa was carried by Lakṣmaṇa.

Lakṣmaṇa finally fell into hell because he killed Rāvaṇa, Kaikeyī, Sītā and other ladies are described as taking the vow of a Jain nun. In this way, Vimalasūri has eliminated the incredible elements of Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa in his Paumacariya.

Stylistic peculiarities of the Paumacariya :

The poetry is chiefly composed in *gāthā* or *āryā* metre. But occasionally other metres like *gīti, gāhinī, indravajrā, upajāti, vasantatilakā* are also found. The Paumacariya being elaborate and extensive reflects largely on the contemporary culture. The poetry in general is remarkable for the apt employment of *arthāntaranyāsa* and small *subhāṣitas* e.g. नक्खेण जं विलुप्पइ तस्स य परसूण किं कज्जं । = the work which can be done by a nail what is the use of an axe for it, जायस्स धुवं मरणं = death is certain of a born; भिच्चस्स जीवियाओ कुक्कु रजीयं वरं हवइ = it is better to live as a dog that living as a servant; सलिले मंथिज्जंते सुट्ठु वि न य होइ नवणीयं = butter cannot be obtain at all by churning water.

The text of Paumacariya was published by Prakrit Grantha Pariṣada in 1962. It is in two volumes, and contain exhaustive introduction to the text.

Other noteworthy Caritas in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī -

1) **Jambūcarita** :

The Jambūcarita was written by Guṇapālamuni in the 11th Cen.A.D. It describes the life of Jambūsvāmī. Jambūsvāmī is believed to be the last sage possessing absolute knowledge *(kevalin)* in the Jain tradition. Sudharmāsvāmī retold the preaching of Mahāvīra to Jambūsvāmī. Hence all the Ardhamāgadhī *aṅga* canons are found in the form of the dialogues between Sudharmā and Jambū.

2) **Surasundarīcarita** :

The Surasundarīcarita was written by Dhaneśvarasūri in 11th Cen.A.D. in simple Prakrit *gāthās*. This biography is actually a

story of love relationship between Surasundarī and Makaraketu. The work is entitled after the heroine Surasundarī. The main plot of the story is brief and simple but the work is enlarged with miscellaneous additions. The use of Apabhraṁśa and minor regional dialects make this work interesting from the linguistic point of view.

3) **Ratnacūḍarājacarita :**

Ācārya Nemicandra alias Devendragaṇi has authored the Ratnacūḍarājacarita. It is a prose written in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī. It is predominantly a religious story and bears similarities with the Jñātādharmakathā, an Āgama text. It brings out the importance of the worship of *vītarāga* (i.e. *jina*) and Right faith (*samyaktva*) In the text Gauatama *gaṇadhara* narrates the story of Ratnacūḍa to the king Śreṇika.

Ācārya Nemicandra, the author of this work wrote the famous commentary Sukhabodhā on the Uttarādhyayanasūtra. He also has authored Ākhyānamaṇikośa, a collection of narratives. All his writings in prose bear influence of Sanskrit. He has made a profound use of *subhāṣitas* or *sūktis.*

4) **Mahāvīracarita :**

The Mahāvīracarita is written in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī by Guṇacandragaṇi . It belongs to the 11th Cen. A.D. The text consists of 8 *prastāvas.* The first four *prastāvas* describe the earlier births of Mahāvīra and the latter four describe the present birth of Mahāvīra. The text contains 12025 verses. The style is marked by profound use of long compounds and figures of speech. It certainly shows the influence of Sanskrit poetry. The sixth *prastāva* has become more interesting due to the picturesque description of the joint wandering of Mahāvīra and Gośālaka.

5) Pārśvanāthacarita :

The Pārśvanāthacarita was written by Guṇacandragaṇi alias Devabhadrasūri in the 12th Cen.A.D. in Bhadocha. It contains five *prastāvas* and describes the life of Pārśvanātha, the 23rd Tīrthaṅkara. The first *prastāva* deals with the previous 3 births of Pārśvanātha. In the first birth he happened to be Marubhūti a son of a priest. Kamaṭha was in enmity with him due to several reasons. The second *prastāva* describes his some other earlier births. In the third *prastāva*, Marubhūti is described as being born in the royal family of Aśvasena, the king of Vārāṇasī. He becomes son to Aśvasena and is named as Pārśvanātha. The fourth *prastāva* deals with his obtainment of the absolute knowledge. The fifth and final *prastāva* includes the *samavaśaraṇa* and preaching of Pārśvanātha.

6) Supārśvanāthacarita:

The Supārśvanāthacarita was written by Lakṣmaṇagaṇi. It describes the life of Supārśvanātha the seventh Tīrthaṅkara. The poetry was written in the year of king Kumārapāla's assent to the royal throne, i.e. in the 12th Cen. A.D. The poetry includes 8000 *gāthās*. It has occasional employment of Sanskrit and Apabhraṁśa also. The initial *prastāvas* describe the previous births of Sūpārśvanātha while the latter ones describe his present birth.

7) Sudarśanācarita:

Devendrasūri the disciple of Jagaccandrasūri wrote Sudarśanācarita in the 13th Cen. A.D. It is a poetry in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī. It includes eight *adhikāras* viz. Dhanapāla, Sudarśanā, Vijayakumāra etc. The 8 *adhikāras* are divided into total 16 *uddeśas*. The poetry includes more than 4000 *gāthās*. The

composition is rather difficult in nature and many long metres like the *śārdūlavikrīḍita* etc. are very often employed in the poetry. Besides this, Sanskrit quiz and puzzles are also often used.

It is not a typical love story but a religious story describing how the heroine Sudarśanā becomes a female ascetic. Sudarśanā is a daughter of a merchant. The upbringing and especially the formal education of Sudarśanā is quite remarkable. The geographical references of Bharukaccha, Simhaladvīpa, Jālandhara and Raivataka are quite curious.

8)   Kṛṣṇacarita:

In the Prakrit literature, along with Rāma we find many works describing the life of Kṛṣṇa also. Devendrasūri, the author of Sudarśanācarita has also written many other poetries describing the life of Kṛṣṇa in Prakrit. Devendrasūri belongs to the famous Tapāgacca. The Kṛṣṇacarita describes many important events related to the life of Kṛṣṇa like the previous birth of *vasudeva,* birth of Kaṁsa, wandering of *vasudeva,* birth of Kṛṣṇa, series of Pāṇḍavas, previous births of Draupadī, episode of Rājīmatī-Nemīnātha and destruction of the city Dvārakā by Dvīpāyana, vow of Pāṇḍavas, Kṛṣṇa's leaving the mortal world and approaching the third hell, declaration of his being born as a Tīrthankara named Amama etc.

9)   Kūrmāputracarita :

According to the scholars the authorship of the Kūrmāputracarita lies with Jinamāṇikya and his disciple Anantahaṁsa. It belongs to the 16th Cen.A.D. The poetry describes the life of Kūrmāputra. It consists of 198 *gāthās.* They deal with the purification of passions. Kūrmāputra obtains the absolute knowledge though he holds a status of a householder *(śrāvaka).*

The poetry also incidentally refers to the Jain principles of rareness of human birth, non-violence, cessation of *karma*, abandonment of negligence *(pramāda)* etc.

Besides the above mentioned treatises, the Maṇipaticarita, Pṛthvīcandracarita, Sanatkumāracarita, Candraprabhacarita, Mallināthacarita etc. are the important biographical poetries in Prakrit.

Stotra Literature in Prakrit

A fairly large number of *stotras* are written in Prakrit. Some of the important *stotras* in Prakrit are as follows: Ṛṣabhapañcāśikā and Vīrastuti of Dhanapāla, Ajitaśāntistava of Nandiṣeṇa, Upasargaharastotra of Bhadrabāhu, Bhayaharastotra of Mānatuṅga, Pañcanamaskārastotra and Ghaṇṭākarṇastotra.

Besides this, there are some collections of *stotras*. The Jaina Stotra-Saṁdoha is a collection of Jain *stotras* in two volumes. It includes the Jain *stotras* beginning from the Śvetāmbara Āgamas upto the medieval *stotras* written in the 15-16th Cen.A.D. The text was published by Prācīna Sāhitya Uddhāra Granthāvali in 1936. It is followed by many other publications of *stotras* till the present date.

If compared with the Sanskrit *stotras*, the Prakrit *stotras* of the Jain Ācāryas are much less in number. The Jain *storas,* in general pertain to the reflections on principles and purification of the soul rather than the praise of gods. There are ample Jain *stotras* written in Sanskrit, Apabhraṁśa, Gujrati, Rajasthani, Hindi, Kannada etc.

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Chapter 6

Poetry Literature in Prakrit

(1ˢᵗ Cen. A.D. to 18ᵗʰ Cen. A.D.)

The poetry seems to occupy a place of prominence over the prose in the Indian literature. Like Sanskrit, in the Prakrit literature also poetries abound over the prose in number. The Prakrit poetries are remarkable for many poetic qualities. The epic-like and biographical poetries in Prakrit of didactic nature are dealt with in the preceding chapters. They are chiefly written to preach the religious principles. The poetries in Mahārāṣṭrī Prakrit written by non-Jainas are not so much of religious nature. Rather than preaching the religious principles and describing biographies of ascetic personalities, this poetry gives importance to the popular themes. The poets of these compositions are mostly non-Jain scholars. They tried to make them more worthy of singing. In the poetry literature of Mahārāṣṭrī includes various genres like the *muktaka kāvya, anthologies, epic* and *khaṇḍakāvya.*

Here follows an introduction to the major poetries in Mahārāṣṭrī Prakrit -

Gāhāsattasaī

The Gāthāsaptaśatī occupies a foremost place in the Prakrit poetries due to its fulfillment of poetic qualities, *rasas* and a variety of description. The scholars fix its date during 1ˢᵗ to 3ʳᵈ Cen.A.D. The Gāthāsaptaśatī is a *muktaka* kind of poetry manifesting the poetic abilities of the common people of Mahārāṣṭra. It marks the peculiarities of the contemporary socio–cultural conditions in Mahārāṣṭra. It is enumerated among the world classics.

Anecdote about the Gāthāsaptaśatī :

It is generally believed that the Gāthāsaptaśatī was written during the period of the king Hāla of the Sātavāhana dynasty. Ancient Pratiṣṭhāna (i.e. Paiṭṭhāṇa or Paiṭhaṇa) was the capital of the king Hāla Sātavāhana. He is hailed in the history for his expansion of the kingdom, well administration and bravery. Along with these qualities he also became famous for his love of the Prakrit languages and poetry.

According to the famous account of Guṇāḍhya, king Hāla Sātavāhana disregarded the Prakrit stories composed by the poet Guṇāḍhya in Paiśācī Prakrit. Subsequently, the disappointed poet started throwing those into the fire after retelling them to the birds and animals in the forest who quietly listened to him. Incidentally, the king Hāla reached there. He was wonderstruck to see the influence of Guṇāḍhya's stories on the other beings. He repented his previous act and prevented the poet from burning the remaining stories and accepted them. These stories latter on came to be known as Vaḍḍakahā (Bṛhatkathā). The Vaḍḍakahā was eventually lost. But the Kathāsaritsāgara, its Sanskrit version gained a particular importance in the narrative literature of ancient India.

With the incident of Guṇāḍhya, the king Hāla Sātavāhana revealed the poetic competence and intellectual abilities resorted to the Prakrit languages. He started collecting the *muktaka* poetries in Prakrit from the people of his kingdom. Per poetry, he offered one golden coin. After going through the whole collection carefully, he selected 700 best *gāthās* among them and divided them into 7 parts. Each part came to be known as *śataka* (century) and the whole text as Gāthāsaptaśatī (seven hundred *gāthās*).

The Gāthāsaptaśatī, thus becomes the first ever compilation of the *muktaka* poetry. One may leave apart the portion of anecdote. But the account of Hāla's collection of verses from the people of his kingdom is referred to in the third *gāthā* of the first *śataka* of the text. A verse reads :

सत्त सताइं कइवच्छलेण कोडीअ मज्झआरम्मि ।

हालेण विरइआइं सालंकाराण गाहाणं ॥

It means : The king Hāla who was fond of poets compiled the 700 *gāthās* decorated with figures of speech out of a collection of one crore of them.

Contribution of several poets :

The Gāthāsaptaśatī is not written by a single poet. It is a collection of poetries written by a number of poets and poetesses. The author of almost every verse is mentioned at the end of it. Some of the important poets are : रइराअ, मिअंग, हाल, पवरसेन, केसव, गुणढ्र, अणिरुद्ध etc. while, the poetesses are : रेवा, ससिप्पहा, रोहा, etc. The metre employed in the poetries is generally *gāthā*. The Prakrit *gāthā* is identical with the Sanskrit *āryā*.

The predominance of *śṛṅgārarasa* (pathos of love) is common to all the *gāthās*. Both its types as the love in union and love in separation are equally reflected in the *gāthās*. The sentiment of love thus reflects itself in multitude in the *gāthās*. All the eight types of Sanskrit heroines find representation in these *gāthās*. The agonies of mistress anxious of meeting the beloved, the one whose husband is abroad, and the one separated are vividly put in the poetry. Besides the predominant *śṛṅgāra*, other *rasas* of *vīra* (bravery) and *hāsya* (laughter) are also represented occasionally in the Gāthāsapaśatī. It has succeeded in the fulfilment of *rasas* over the Sanskrit poetries. The examples of *rasas* and figures of

speech quoted in the Sanskrit treatises on rhetories are mostly taken from the Gāthāsaptaśatī. Several of the *gāthās* add beautiful descriptions of the nature. They abound in desribing the ways of worldly behaviour.

Because the compiler did not put any parameter while dividing the *gāthās* into seven sections, the text appears loose in nature. The skill of compilation that is evident in the Vajjālagga is wanting in the Gāthāsaptaśatī. The Gāthāsaptaśatī was first translated into German by Weber. Besides this, it is available in English, French and many Indian languages. Fourteen commentaries are recorded on the text but presently two among them are printed, the one of Gadādhara and the other of Pītāmbara.

Cultural Importance :

The Gāthāsaptaśatī belongs to the *muktaka* kind of poetry. It has proved to be a source to know the social and cultural state prevailing at that time. It refers to several names of places, forests, pleasure gardens, flora and fauna. It depicts the city life and rural life. The mentions of deities and personalities from *purāṇas* are remarkable here. References are made to temples and idol worship, various vows, rituals and blind believes. Through the description of various celebrations and games, the text throws light on the evenful social life of that time. Indeed the Gāthāsaptaśatī stands as incomparable in the Indian literature.

Vajjālagga

The Vajjālagga is another important collection of *muktaka* poetry in Prakrit. The poetries are collected by Jayavallabha who happened to be a Jain sage. Some scholars believe that Jayavallabha is not the name of author but of the text. The

Vajjālagga does not emphasize religious principles despite of being collected by a Jain sage. The poetry stands next to the Gāthāsaptaśatī in the poetic qualities and fulfilment of *rasas*. It appears in the 13th Cen.A.D., much after the Gāthāsaptaśatī. Some of the *gāthās* of the later are included in the Vajjālagga. The scholars have described its language as Jain Mahārāṣṭrī.

The available *gāthās* are collected under separate titles in the text. They form different sections which are called as *vrajyās* or *paddhatis*. Since the *vrajyās* are tied together in the text it is called as Vrajyālagna (tie of *vrajyās*). The poets of different *muktakas* are not mentioned in the collection. There are 795 *gāthās* divided into 95 *paddhatis*.

In the beginning of the collection, the compiler notes the peculiarities of the Prakrit poetry, features of Prakrit *gāthās* that distinguish them from the Sanskrit ones. This is found under the *gāthāpaddhati*.

A variety of subjects of description can be rightly called as a peculiarity of the Vajjālagga. Anything in the nature or society could find a topic in the poetry here. The *gāthās* pertaining to a particular topic may include contradictory descriptions e.g. while describing a female, the *gāthās* refer to her virtues and vices, include her praise and blemish. Along with the traditional topics like the praise of a noble and censure of a vice, natural objects of description also find place in the *gāthās*. They form separate *paddhatis* in the text e.g. the sunrise and sunset, beauty of the moon, mountains, rivers, trees and creepers, elephant, lion, flowers of different kinds etc. The *paddhatis* consisting of *gāthās* that deal with human occupations describe a foreteller, writer, physician etc. The other *paddhatis* of *śṛṅgārarasa* describe love

making, prostitutes, *pravasita, satī* and *asatī*. The poets also describe the abstract topics of luck, poverty, old age etc.

Ratnadevagaṇi tries to bring out the direct meanings along with the indirect vulgar senses of the *gāthās* in his commentary on the Vajjālagga. The work is edited with preface, notes and english translation by Prof. Madhav Sadashiv Patwardhan. It got published from Ahamdabad in 1969 by the Prakrit Text Society.

Here follows some of the important quotations from the Vajjālagga -

i) Regarding the worldly manners the poet says, "One should respect his own well being, if possible that of the others also. But if a conflict arises between the two, the respect should be given to own well being".

ii) Commenting on a beggar the poet says, "God has made the beggar smaller than a grass or cotton. (One questions) Then, whey the wind does not carry him? (poet answers) the wind is afraid that the beggar might ask him for something."

iii) Reflecting upon a good friend the poet says, "A good friend should be like a black blanket because it is the only thing that does not shade off its colour even after repeatedly washed."

iv) At a different place it is said that, "A friend should be like a male doll painted on the wall, because, he never turns his back to you."

v) Describing the mutability of the world the poet says,

को एत्थ सया सुहिओ ? कस्स व लच्छी ? थिराइ पेम्माइँ ?

कस्स व न होइ खलणं ? भण को हु न खंडिअं विहिणा ?

"Who is always happy? With whom stays the wealth forever? Whose love is permanent? Who does not fall? Who is not destroyed by destiny?"

In general, the poetry is full of similies, metaphors, puns, analogies and *rasas*. Due to the variety of descriptions and a different perspective at the objects the Vajjālagga has gained importance similar with the Gāthāsaptaśatī.

Gāhāsāhassī :

The Gāthāsāhasrī is written by Samayasundaragaṇi in the 17th Cen. A. D. It contains 1000 *gāthās* on various subjects.

Prakrit Epics

1) Setubandha :

A good number of Mahākāvyas are to be found written in the Mahārāṣṭrī Prakrit. The Setubandha written by Pravarasena remains as the most celebrated among them. It belongs to the 5th Cen. A.D. It is also known as Rāvaṇavadha or Daśamukhavadha. The poetry chiefly describes two important accounts of the Rāmāyaṇa viz. the building of the bridge over the ocean (Setubandha) and the killing of Rāvaṇa. The source of the poetry is the Yuddhakāṇḍa of the the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa. It is marked for its copious descriptions and long compounds. Daṇḍī while referring to the Mahārāṣṭrī in his Kāvyādarśa (1.14) says :

<div align="center">

महाराष्ट्राश्रयां भाषां प्रकृष्टं प्राकृतं विदु : ।

सागरः सूक्तिरत्नानां सेतुबन्धादि यन्मयम् ॥

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(The Prakrit language resorted to Maharashtra is the best among Prakrits. It is an ocean of the jewels in the form of verses and the Setubandha etc. are written in that.). Daṇḍī describes the highest place of Mahārāṣṭrī among the Prakrits with a particular reference to the Setubandha.

2)   Gauḍavaho :

The Gauḍavadha is another important epic written in the Mahārāṣṭrī Prakrit. It belongs to the 8th Cen. A.D. The Gauḍavadha is a eulogy composed in *āryā* metre. As suggested by the title, the poem deals with how the king Yaśovarmā of Kānyakubja killed the king of Gauḍa country. But the actual account of this killing is over in a single *gāthā.* The elaborate descriptions of miracles and credible references to the geography are the strong points of this poem. The long praise of various Gods in the beginning and also the account of Parvatapakṣaśātana (wing-cutting of mountains by Indra) are worth reading in original.

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Chapter 7
Dramatic Prakrits and Saṭṭakas

(1ˢᵗ Cen. A.D.-18ᵗʰ Cen. A.D.)

A) Prakrits used in the Sanskrit Dramas

The Drama is regarded as a general means of entertainment of people. It is largely enjoyed by the common people of the society. Hence it is natural that the language used in dramas is expected to be familiar with their day-to-day speech. It is with this particular purpose that the Sanskrit Dramatists have used Prakrit languages in almost half of their dramatic dialogues. Vidūṣaka, the comedian in Sanskrit dramas also speaks Prakrit languages. The readers and teachers of Sanskrit dramas have always ignored Prakrits used in these dramas. While studying the Sanskrit dramas, they relay on the Sanskrit adaptations (*chāyā*) of Prakrit portions in these dramas. The peculiarities of Prakrits used in Sanskrit dramas demand independent attention. The information of Prakrit as furnished from the commentaries on Sanskrit dramas does not seem to be adequate.

'Prakrits' prescribed by Bharata :

Bharata in his Nāṭyaśāstra (17.31.43) has prescribed the use of Sanskrit for a noble hero, queen, *gaṇikā* and a learned *brahmin* etc. in the drama. The *vidūṣaka,* lay-man, ascetic, monk, *cakradhara*, sage, child, woman, born of a low caste and person of a third gender are prescribed to use Prakrit languages in dramas.

The Nāṭyaśāstra mentions different Prakrit languages for different kinds of characters. But this information lacks uniformity. The heroine and her mates speak Śaurasenī in dramas, while the *vidūṣaka* etc. speak Prācyā (eastern variety of

Śauraseni), *dhūrta* (cheat) speaks the Āvantijā (i.e. a dialect of Śauraseni originating in Ujjain). The *ceṭa,* prince and the *śreṣṭhī* employ Ardhamāgadhī. While the persons dwelling in the inner apartments of kings, diggers of the well, horse-keepers, and the hero fallen in calamity do speak Māgadhī. The warriors, guardians of city and the gamblers employ Dākṣiṇātyā (southern) i.e. Vaidarbhī. The Udīcyās i.e. northern and the Khasas speak Bālhīkī language. Bharata mentions the Śākārī, Ābhīrī, Cāṇḍālī, Śābarī, Drāviḍī and Āndhrī as Vibhāṣās (sub-dialects).

These linguistic prescriptions of Bharata, however, are not strictly followed in the Sanskrit dramas. It is observed that in those dramas, the men of higher class, supreme queen, daughters of ministers and prostitutes speak Sanskrit, while females, *vidūṣaka, śreṣṭhī,* servants, attendants etc. belonging to the lower class resort to Prakrit languages. This means, that Prakrit languages were the languages of ordinary people; while Sanskrit was that of the learned, priests and kings. The ladies normally used Śauraseni. The lower characters also used Śauraseni while the extremely lowest characters used Paiśācī and Māgadhī.

Gradually Prakrit languages also became literary languages. The learned poets started studying Prakrit grammars and composed Prakrit poetries.

Dramas of Aśvaghoṣa :

Aśvaghoṣa (1st Cen. A.D.) happened to be the first dramatist to introduce Prakrit languages in the dramas. The scholars have found his Śāriputraprakrakaraṇa in its complete form and two others as incomplete. A.B.Kieth in his Sanskrit Dramas has specially referred to the dramas of Aśvaghoṣa and given notes on the Prakrit languages used in them. Aśvaghoṣa has employed

Śaurasenī, Māgadhī, Ardhamāgadhī and Prācyā in his dramas. This employment of Prakrit languages in the dramas has a particular importance in the historical study of both the language and literature.

Dramas of Bhāsa :

Bhāsa, as a successor of Aśvaghoṣa, composed a number of plays in the 3rd Cen. A.D. The collection of his dramas and one act plays is known as the Bhāsanāṭakacakra. Dr.C.R.Deodhar edited 13 plays of Bhāsa viz. the Svapnavāsavadatta, Cārudatta, Pratimā, Karṇabhāra etc. in 1937. With the outcoming of this edition, the scholars started studying Prakrit usages in them with an independent attention.

The Prakrit employed by Bhāsa is generally Śaurasenī. The Prakrit used by Aśvaghoṣa, no doubt, is more ancient in form.

Mṛcchakaṭika of Śūdraka :

The Mṛcchakaṭika was written by Śūdraka in 5th Cen. A.D. This work is a slightly modified version of Bhāsa's Cārudatta. The Mṛcchakaṭika is technically described as a *'prakaraṇa'*. It consists of ten acts. The Mṛcchakaṭika truly reflects on the contemporary social affairs. The use of Prakrit languages is comparatively more than Sanskrit in this drama.

It depicts many varieties of Prakrit languages. The drama includes a total of 30 characters. The *naṭī, dāsī,* Vasantasenā, her mother, *ceṭī, dāsa,* Karṇapūraka, wife of Cārudatta, Śodhanaka and *śreṣṭhī* are the eleven characters speaking Śaurasenī here. Vīraka and Candanaka use Āvantī. The Vidūṣaka speaks Prācyā, while Saṁvāhaka, Sthāvaraka, Kumbhīlaka, Vardhamānaka, Bhikṣu and Rohasena are the six people speaking Māgadhī in the play. The antagonist Śakāra speaks Śākārī, both the Caṇḍālas

speak Cāṇḍālī, gambler Māthuras converse with each other in the Ḍhākkī variety of Prakrit.

The hero, Viṭa, Āryaka and Śarvilaka speak Sanskrit. The above mentioned information is obtained from Pṛthvīdhara's commentary on the drama. He does not seem to have noticed the Mahārāṣṭrī. The Ḍhākkī according to the modern conventions is named as Ṭakkī or Ṭākkī. It is possible to say that the Śaurasenī and Māgadhī are predominant in the Mṛcchakaṭika.

The Mṛcchakaṭika of Śūdraka has proved to be the source information to know which people in the society used which dialects in the 5th Cen. A.D. It has attracted attention of the scholars studying Prakrit languages.

Dramas of Kālidāsa :

Kālidāsa (4th Cen. A.D.) the famous Sanskrit dramatist and poet has employed several Prakrit languages in his dramas. It can be observed that Kālidāsa generally prefers Śaurasenī for prose and Mahārāṣṭrī for the verses in his dramas. Śyālaka in his drama does not speak Śākārī or Māgadhī but speaks Śaurasenī. The ladies and children in Kālidāsa's dramas also resort to Mahārāṣṭrī. The royal persons, fishermen etc. use Māgadhī, Śakuntalā, the celebrated heroine of Kālidāsa speaks Mahārāṣṭrī. The Prakrit verses of Kālidāsa are marked with long compounds and show the influence of Sanskrit on them.

Dramas of Śrīharṣa :

Śrīharṣa happened to be the king of Kānyakubja during 6th-7th Cen.A.D. Three important *nāṭikās,* viz. the Priyadarśikā, Ratnāvali and Nāgānanda are ascribed to his name. Śrīharṣa has profusely used Prakrit languages in these three dramas. Male characters are less in number in his *nāṭikās,* the female characters

and the *vidūṣaka* speak Prakrit languages. Besides Mahārāṣṭrī Śrīharṣa also employs Śaurasenī in his dramatic verses. He must have studied Prakrit grammar very meticulously. But in general it can be said that his Prakrit loses the peculiar style of spoken form and remains more artificial in nature. It is only to satisfy the norms of dramaturgy that his characters converse with each other in Mahārāṣṭrī and Śaurasenī.

Dramas of Bhavabhūti :

The Sanskrit dramatist Bhavabhūti belongs to the 9th Cen. A.D. He became famous in the Sanskrit literature by writing three important dramas viz. the Mahāvīracarita, Mālatīmādhava and the Uttararāmacarita. These are predominantly Sanskrit plays. Bhavabhūti has employed Śaurasenī in them, but that too keeping Sanskrit as ideal before him. The Prakrit usages recorded by the grammarians like Vararuci are found employed in Bhavabhūti's plays.

Mudrārākṣasa of Viśākhadatta :

Viśākhadatta, the author of Mudrārākṣasa flourished in the 9th Cen. A.D. Although he has used Śaurasenī, Mahārāṣṭrī and Māgadhī in the Mudrārākṣasa, the drama is predominantly a Sanskrit drama.

Besides the above mentioned works, the Lalitavigraharāja, Adbhutadarpaṇa, Līlāvatī etc. are the other dramatic works to include Prakrit languages in dialogues.

B)   Saṭṭakas

The Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata does not mention the *nāṭikā* and *saṭṭaka* as the kinds of *rūpaka.* But Abhinavagupta (10th Cen. A.D.) in his commentary on the Nāṭyaśāstra provides definitions

of the *toṭaka, saṭṭaka* and the *rāsaka.* He regards *saṭṭaka* to be equal to the *nāṭikā.*

According to the Kāvyānuśāsana of Hemacandra the Saṭṭaka consists of a single language, unlike the *nāṭikā* which includes both Sanskrit and Prakrit.

- The *aṅka* (act) is called as *yavanikāntara* in the *saṭṭaka.*

- The *saṭṭaka* is a sub-type of *nāṭikā* and is based on dance.

- The *saṭṭaka* is exclusively in Prakrit.

- The *rasa* of *adbhuta* (miracle) is predominant in the *saṭṭaka* and the *rasa* of *raudra* (terror) is absent here.

- The title of a *saṭṭaka* bears the name of the heroine.

Rājaśekhara has referred to *saṭṭaka* as Prākṛtabandha *(pāuabandha).* It is enacted through dance *(saṭṭaam naccidavvam).* The Karpūramañjarī is a famous *saṭṭaka* in Prakrit. The dramatists of Prakrit have written a few other *saṭṭakas* following the Karpūramañjarī. The Prakrit *saṭṭakas* are as follows -

1) Karpūramañjarī (Kappūramañjarī) of Rājaśekhara (9th Cen. A.D.)

2) Rambhāmañjarī of Nayanacandra (14th Cen. A.D.)

3) Ānandasundarī of Ghanaśyāma (17th Cen. A.D.)

4) Vilāsavatī (Vilāsavaī) of Mārkaṇḍeya (17th Cen. A.D.)

5) Candralekhā (Candaleha) of Rudradāsa (17th Cen. A.D.)

6) Śṛṅgāramañjarī (Siṅgāramañjarī) of Viśveśvara (18th Cen. A.D.)

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Chapter 8

Treatises on the Prakrit Vyākaraṇa, Chandas, Kośas and Poetics

(8th Cen. A.D. - 18th Cen. A.D.)

A) Treatises on Prakrit Vyākaraṇa

In order to protect the sacred texts of the Vedas, six ancilliary sciences flourished in the tradition of Sanskrit language. They came to be known as Vedāṅgas (limbs of the Vedas). Vyākaraṇa (grammar) was one of them. It was studied to remove the corruptions and thus protect the purity of the sacred language. But this did not happen in case of Prakrit languages which were basically meant for speaking among ordinary people. There was a lack of grammatical treatises of Prakrit languages in the earlier stage to guide its usages. The Prakrit Vyākaraṇas are comparatively later to that of Sanskrit. Caṇḍa (3rd - 4th Cen. A.D.), Vararuci (6th Cen. A.D.) and Hemacandra (11th Cen. A.D.) are the prominent grammarians of the Prakrit languages. Some scholars regard Vararuci to be prior to Caṇḍa.

The learned *brahmins* adopted Sanskrit language. By disregarding the Prakrit languages as the language of *mlecchas*, they abandoned the listening to and writing in these languages. The Prakrit languages failed to obtain a well knit form which Sanskrit could get through the Śikṣās and Vyākaraṇa. Among a few Prakrit grammars, the Prakrit Vyākaraṇa of Vararuci is most complete and reliable. However, it does not reflect on the dramas of Aśvaghoṣa, Dammapada written in Kharoṣṭrī and Jain Āgamas in Ardhamāgadhī. It takes into account Paiśācī despite the fact that no work written in Paiśācī is available.

Here follows an introduction to some of the major treatises explaining the grammatical rules of Prakrit languages -

Prākṛtaprakāśa :

The Prākṛtaprakāśa was written by Vararuci. It consists of 12 *paricchedas*. The first nine *paricchedas* describe the characteristics of the Mahārāṣṭrī which was regarded as a common form of Prakrit. The tenth and eleventh *paricchedas* describe Paiśācī and Māgadhī respectively. The twelfth and final *pariccheda* deals with Śaurasenī Prakrit.

Prākṛtalakṣaṇa :

The Prākṛtalakṣaṇa was written by Caṇḍa. It describes the Prakrit languages in three *pādas*. Apabhraṁśa, Paiśācī, Māgadhī and Śaurasenī are mentioned each in a single separate *sutras* and their similaritites and differences are brought out.

Prākṛtakāmadhenu :

The author of Prākṛtakāmadhenu in Laṅkeśvava. The text is also known as Prākṛtalaṅkeśvararāvaṇa. It makes reference to Apabhraṁśa by mentainoning the replacement of *a* by *u* (e.g. *gṛha=gharu*). It seems that this small treatise containing 34 *sūtras* is an abridged form of a bigger Prakrit Vyākaraṇa.

Sankṣiptasāra :

The Saṁkṣiptasāra was written by Kramadīśvara. It describes both Sanskrit and Prakrit languages. The first 7 *adhyāyas* deal with Sanskrit, while the 8th and final deals with Prakrit languages.

Prākṛtānuśāsana :

Puruṣottama is the author of the Prākṛtānuśāsana. It describes the peculiarities of Prakrit languages in 20 *adhyāyas*. First few *adhyāyas* deal with the general nature of Prakrit, and the later

adhyāyas describe the Mahārāṣṭrī, Śaurasenī and Prācyā. The
Vibhāṣās like Śākārī, Cāṇḍālī also find inclusion after Āvantī and
Māgadhī in the Prākṛtānuśāsana.

Prākṛtakalpataru :

The Prākṛtakalpaturu was written by Rāmaśarmā in the 17th Cen.
A.D.

Prākṛtasārasarvasva :

The Prākṛtasārasarvasva was written by Mārkaṇḍeya. It
has proved to be an important source to know the linguistic
information of the Mahārāṣṭrī, Śaurasenī, Māgadhī and other
Prakrit languages.

Siddhahemaśabdānuśāsana :

The Siddhahemaśabdānuśāsana was composed by Ācārya
Hemacandra, who was also known as *kalikālasarvajña*. The
eighth *adhyāya* of the text consists of Prakrit grammar. The text
being offered in honour of the king Siddha and written by Hema
comes to be known as 'Siddhahema'. The 8th *adhyāya* of the
Siddhahemaśabdānuśāsana includes four *pādas*. The first three
pādas and a portion of 4th *pāda* deal with the characteristics of
Prakrit in general (i.e. Ārṣa-Prakṛta according to Hemacandra).

The remaining portion the 4th *pāda* pertains to describe
Śaurasenī, Māgadhī, Paiśācī, Cūlikāpaiśācī and Apabhraṁśa. It
predominantly notes the substitutions of the verbal roots
(dhātvādeśas).

Besides the above mentioned treatises on the Prakrit
grammar, there is a significant number of other works on the
Prakrit grammar. Some of these are the Prākṛtaśabdānuśāsana of
Trivikrama, the Prākṛtarūpāvatara of Siṁharāja, the

Śaḍbhāṣācandrikā of Lakṣmīdhara, the Prākṛtamaṇidīpa and the Prākṛtānanda of Appayadīkṣita.

European scholars of recent centuries have studied the grammar of Prakrit languages with a new approach of modern linguistics. The Prakrit grammar written by Pischel, a German scholar, is still regarded as an authentic source of information on the subject. "An Introduction to Ardhamāgadhī" authored by A.M.Ghatage renders to the readers a meticulous description of the grammar of Ardhamāgadhī.

B) Treatises on the Chandas (Prosody)

The knowledge of Chandas (prosody) is regarded as an essential quality of a poet. We find a number of Prakrit treatises devoted to the prosody.

1) The Vṛttajātisamuccaya is an important ancient work on prosody written in Prakrit. It was written by Virahāṅka during 6th-8th Cen. A.D. The text is in the form of verses and describes various metres based on the *mātrās* and *akṣaragaṇas*.

2) The Gāthālakṣaṇa is another ancient composition on the prosody. It is ascribed to Nanditāḍhya who lived in the 10th Cen. A.D. He was the follower of Jain religion.

3) The Svayaṁbhūchanda was written by the great poet Svayaṁbhū. It presents various metres of the Apabhraṁśa. The text is divided into 8 *adhyāyas*. First few pages of the text are not available today. The characteristic features of Apabhraṁśa metres are discussed in *adhyāyas* 4 to 8 of the text. Svayaṁbhū quotes 206 verses of different poets as examples of metres. Many of them naturally come from his Paumacariu. Hemacandra in his Chandonuśāsana takes copious material from Svayambhū.

4) The Chandonuśāsana was written by *kalikālasarvajña*
   Hemacandra in the 12th Cen. A.D. The text is divided into 8
   adhyāyas. The first 3 *adhyāyas* and a former part of the 4th
   adhyāya deal with metres of Sanskrit. The later half of the 4th
   adhyāya describes the Prakrit metres. Adhyāyas 5 to 7 of the text
   are devoted to the description of Apabhraṁśa metres.

5) The Kavidarpaṇa is another important work on the Prakrit
   prosody of an unknown author. It describes three types of metres
   as - i) based on *mātrās* ii) based on syllables and iii) based on both
   mātrās and syllables. Jinaprabha has utilized the Kavidarpaṇa
   while identifying the metres in the Ajitaśāntistava.

6) The Prākṛtapaingala belongs to the 14th Cen.A.D. In the beginning
   of the text the author has remembered Pingalanāga who
   happened to be the promulgator of the prosody. The text does not
   deal with Avahaṭṭha as the eastern Apabhraṁśa, but with a
   developed form of Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa. Six commentaries are
   available on the Prākṛtapaiṅgala. Those by Ravikara and
   Lakṣmīnātha Bhaṭṭa are famous among them.

   The text of Prākṛtapaingala consists of two *prakaraṇas*
   viz. 1) Mātrāvṛttaprakaraṇa 2) Varṇavṛttaprakaraṇa. The
   Mātrārvṛttaprakaraṇa includes the metres used by the bards or
   bhāṭa poets. This means that the approach of the author is more
   practical than being a theoretical. For the same reason, most of
   the metres deal by Svayambhū, Hemacandra and Rājaśekhara
   are missing here. Instead of them, the author of Prākṛtapaiṅgala
   includes familiar metres like the Raḍḍā, Chappaya, Kuṇḍalīyā
   etc. The Varṇavṛttaprakaraṇa of the text deals with the metres
   based on syllables like the Sundarī, Durmila, Kirīṭa, Tribhaṅgī
   etc.

7) The Chandakośa was written by Ratnaśekharasūri in the 14ᵗʰ Cen. A.D. It describes the metres of Apabhraṁśa.

8) The Chandolakṣaṇa is another work on the Prakrit prosody based on a selected material. It is based the commentary by Jainaprabha on the Ajitaśāntistava of Nandiṣeṇa. Nandiṣeṇa has employed 25 different metres in his Ajitaśāntistava. The Chandolakṣaṇa pertains to explain them.

C) Prakrit Kośas

The grammar and lexicons *(kośas)* both are equally important for the study of language. In the tradition of Prakrit languages lexicography is comparatively later to writing of grammar.

Here follows an introduction to some important *kośas* of Prakrit languages.

1) Pāiyalacchīnāmamālā :

The Pāiyalacchīnāmamālā was compiled by Dhanapāla in the 10ᵗʰ Cen. A.D. The author wrote this *kośa* for his younger sister Sundarī in the city of Dhārā. It is the earliest among the available works of the Prakrit lexicography and hence can be compared the Amarakośa in the Sanskrit tradition. It is the only lexicon of Prakrit. The text includes 998 Prakrit words accompanied by their synonyms.

2) Deśīnāmamālā :

The Deśīnāmamālā was compiled by *kalikālasarvajña* Ācārya Hemacandra in the 12ᵗʰ Cen. A.D. Hemacandra has collected 3978 *deśī* (of regional origin) words. The text is divided into eight *vargas* and includes 783 *gāthās*. As regards the collected words Hemacandra says: "The *deśī* words that are not derived by grammatical rules, not listed in the Sanskrit *kośas*, neither such as accountable by the suggestive power

(*lakṣaṇāśakti*) of the word are incorporated in this *kośa*. These Prakrit words are such as they are handed down from the time immemorial".

Hemacandra further explains that these *deśī* words are famous in the regional languages. It is impossible to collect all the *deśī* words because they are infinite, hence   only selective words are listed which had come traditionally from the time immemorable. Although Hemacandra has referred to them as *deśī* or *deśya,* at least twenty percent of them show similarity with Sanskrit words, hence can be called as *tatsama* (similar with Sanskrit).

The Deśīnāmamālā is particularly important for the historical study of the northern group of   NIA languages. It also includes words from languages of the Dravidian family. Hemacandra in his Sanskrit commentary on this *kośa* refers to many lexicographers including Dhanapāla and Śilāṅkācārya the commentator on Āgamas.

Hemacandra does not list the words in their alphabetical order. They are taken by him as they fit in the form of *gāthā.* The text is composed in verses but the poetic qualities of *rasa* etc. are obviously lacking here. If looked from the point of poetry, it appears artificial in nature.

Modern Prakrit Lexicography

The Modern Prakrit lexicography can be viewed from the beginning of the 20th Cen. A.D. The features that distinguish it from the earlier lexicography are chiefly the alphabetical arrangement of the items and quotations from the literature.

Here follows description of some of the modern Prakrit Dictionaries.

1)   **Abhidhānarājendra - kośa :**

The Abhidhānarājendra - kośa appeared in the 20th Cen. A.D. It marks the beginning of modern Prakrit Dictionaries. This gigantic dictionary in seven volumes was compiled by Rājendrasūri (also known as Vijayarājendrasūri) in 15 years of incessant efforts. Indeed with the inclusion of 60,000 words the Abhidhānarājendra becomes comprehensive in nature. Nearly twenty percent of its entry words are Sanskrit. The entry words are arranged in the strict alphabetical order; meaning is given in Sanskrit. The article on the vocable also includes quotations from the literature. Many a times long passages from original texts are given. Important words from the commentarial literature on the Āgamas also find inclusion in the Abhidhānarājendra. This has proved it to be an important tool of research on the Jain Āgamas.

The *kośa* is based on a selection of important words. The preface to each volume is full of scholarly information. It gives the reader the paradigmatic forms of many important nouns, pronouns and verbs. The present dictionary is however, limited to Ardhamāgadhī and Jain Mahārāṣṭrī. It is believed that the compiler Rājendramuni was a *śatāvadhānī* scholar meaning a person who could apprehend hundred subjets simultaneously. He wrote this dictionary only with his power of memorization.

2)   **Ardhamāgadhī-kośa :**

Munī Ratnacandra, who was also a *śatāvadhānī* scholar, compiled the Ardhamāgadhī-kośa in the 20th Cen. A.D. It is divided into 6 volumes. This can be called as a multilingual dictionary. The words of Ardhamāgadhī are supplied with meanings in Sanskrit, Gujarati, Hindi and English. The dictionary also gives grammatical description of the entry words

and deals with compounds as well as simple words. It is restricted to Ardhamāgadhī alone.

3)   Alpaparicita-saiddhāntika-kośa:

The Alpaparicita-saiddhāntika-kośa was complied by *mandiramārgī* muni śrī Sāgarānanda in the 20th Cen. A.D. As the title suggests the dictionary deals with the philosophical and technical terms oftenly used in Jainism. They are both Sanskrit and Prakrit. The entry words are listed in alphabetical order. The dictionary chiefly includes words from the Ardhamāgadhī and ancient Jain Mahārāṣṭrī. The dictionary gives exact meanings of the Ardhamāgadhī words of Āgamas as they are described in the Sanskrit commentaries on the Āgamas. Meanings of the words are given in Sanskrit. They are frequently supported by the quotations from literature. The extraction from the Bṛhatkalpabhāṣya and Nīśithcūrṇi are the important features of this dictionary.

4)   Paia-sadda-mahaṇṇavo :

The Paia-sadda-mahaṇṇavo was compiled by Paṇḍita Haragovindadāsa Trikamacanda Seth in the 20th Cen. A.D. The compiler was a professor of Sanakrit-Prakrit and Gujarati languages in the Kolkata University. The Paia-sadda-mahaṇṇavo is an autcome of his incessant hard work of 14 long years. The present dictionary was first published by the Prakrit-Text Society. The first edition was followed by succeeding two others proving its popularity and usefulness. Dr.K.R.Candra published the shorter version of the dictionary in 1987.

5)   The critical Prakrit Dictionary of BORI :

The ambitious project of compiling a Critical Prakrit Dictionary was undertaken by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research

Institute, Pune, jointly with the Sanmati Tirtha a Research Institute devoted to the study of Prakrit and Jainism. The project was started in 1986 under the General Editorship of veteran linguist Dr.A.M.Ghatage. The plan of the dictionary includes nearly one lack words of Prakrit languages. The minimum corpus of the reference books deals with nearly 500 texts from Ardhamāgadhī, Jain Mahārāṣṭrī, Jain Śaurasenī, Mahārāṣṭrī, Māgadhī, Śaurasenī and Apabhraṁśa. The meanings of the words are given in English. They are further supported by quotations from the Prakrit literature with exact reference to page and line. The quotations are arranged chronologically. Presently, three volumes of the dictionary are published. When completed, it will be the most comprehensive dictionary of the Prakrit languages.

D) Treatises on Poetics

The knowledge of poetics is considered to be as an essential quality of a poet. It adds excellence to his poetry. The Sanskrit tradition of poetics *(kāvyaśāstra)* has become rich with a number of treatises like the Kāvyādarśa of Daṇḍī, Kāvyaprakāśa of Mammaṭa, Sāhityadarpaṇa of Viśvanātha etc. to name a few. These treatises discuss in details the nature of poetry, poetic merits and demerits, style of a poetry, various figures *(alaṅkāras)* based on words and meanings etc. The Sanskrit treatises on poetics very frequently refer to Prakrit poetries.

Daṇḍi in his Kāvyādarśa describes various *alaṅkāras.* Rudraṭa compiled the Kāvyalaṅkārasūtra, which is an important work on rhetorics. Ānandavardhana in his Dhvanyāloka regards *dhvani* (suggested meaning) as the soul of poetry. Dhanañjaya is

the writer of Daśarūpaka. It is actually based on Bharata's Nātyaśāstra. The Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa is another important work on poetics by Bhoja. The Alaṅkārasarvasa by Ruyyaka must be mentioned here for its scholarly description of the *alaṅkāras*. The Kāvyānuśāsana of Hemacandra and the Rasagaṅgādhara of Jagannātha also stand as important works in the tradition of poetics.

All these writers of Sanskrit poetics have referred to various Prakrit languages in their description of *alaṅkāras.* They very frequently quote Prakrit verses as examples from various Prakrit poetries like the Gāthāsaptaśatī, Setubandha, Gaudavaho, Ratnāvalī, Karpūramañjarī etc. These references are evident of the large amount of Prakrit poetry popular in those days. Many of the verses quoted in these works are not attested in the Prakrit literature available today.

The Prakrit languages referred to in the treatises on rhetorics :

Daṇḍī in his Kāvyādarśa mentions four languages viz. Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhraṁśa and Miśra. He refers to Guṇāḍhya's language of the Bṛahatkathā as 'a language of Piśācas i.e. spirits'. Rudraṭa in his Kāvyālaṅkāra makes mention of six languages as Sanskrit, Prakrit, Māgadhī, Paiśācī, Śauraseṇī and Apabhraṁśa spoken in peculiar regions. Dhanañjaya, Bhoja and Viśvanātha have also discussed Prakrit languages. Viśvanātha in his Sāhityadarpaṇa mentions 16 different regional languages.

It can be said that although there is no independent treatise on poetics written solely in Prakrit, Sanskrit treatises on poetics highly depend on material from Prakrit poetries.

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Chapter 9

Śāstra-Literature and Epigraphy in Prakrit

(1ˢᵗ Cen. A.D. – 14ᵗʰ Cen. A.D.)

A) Śāstra-Literature

The origin and development of Śāstra-literature, i.e. works dealing with particular technical disciplines can be seen in the tradition of Prakrit languages, besides their vast amount of scriptures and narratives. Both the Jain and non-Jain scholars have contributed to Prakrit *śāstras*. They have written treatises on *arthaśāstra, rājanīti* (royal conduct), astronomy-astrology, palmistry, and also on *mantra, tantra* etc. The knowledge of worldly affairs was essential even to a mendicant. The Jain ascetics had to resort to many sciences like the astronomy, medicine, *tantra* etc. for the sake of religion and public welfare. Bhadrabāhu, Kālaka, Khapuṭa, Vajra are some of the Jain monks who resorted to different *tantras* when their religion and *saṁgha* ran under troubles.

Here follows an introduction to the Śastra literature in Prakrit languages -

1) **Arthaśāstra** :

In the ancient tradition of India the *dharma* (duty), *artha* (wealth) and *kāma* (desire) and *mokṣa* (liberation) were regarded as the aims of a human being *(puruṣārthas)*. The development of *arthaśāstra* is related to the First three aims. Bṛhaspati is regarded as the promoter of the *arthaśāstra*. We get copious references to the *kauṭilīya arthaśāstra* in Prakrit literature. The life account of Kauṭilya as reflected in Prakrit literature is very interesting as well as valuable.

2)   Nimittaśāstra   (science of omens and signs) :

The *nimittaśāstra* the science of omens and signs bears a particular importance in the tradition of Jain religion. The knowledge of omens is included in the 72 arts. Omens are mentioned along with the *vidyā, mantra* (formula) and *cūrṇa* etc.

Maṅkhalī Gośālaka was the great scholar of the *nimittaśśāstra.* Besides him, Bhadrabāhu was also hailed as a *nimittavetta,* i.e. knower of the omens. He composed the *upasargaharstotra* to protect his *saṁgha* from the troubles created by *vyantaradeva.*

The ancient tradition of Jain religion believes in eight great omens, viz. (1) earthly omens (like the earth - quake etc.) (2) dreams (3) Aṅga etc. It is also believed that the knowledge of past, present and future can be obtained through the Cūḍāmaṇi discipline of *nimittaśāstra.*

3)   Aṅgavijjā :

The Aṅgavidyā is a treatise on the predictions or results of different omens and signs. The eight fundamentals of omens or signs are 1. Aṅga 2. Svara (voice) 3. Lakṣaṇa (marks) 4. Vyañjana 5. Svapna (dream) 6. Chikkā (hiccough) 7. Bhauma (related to earth) 8. Antarikṣa (space). These eight fundamentals are the sources to know the past and future. The Aṅgavidyā is considered to be supreme among these eight fundamentals. The Aṅgavidyā was written by ancient Ācāryas. The text is extensive in nature. It was indeed an encyclopaedia of cultural information in those early days. Dr.Hiralal Jain has published the Aṅgavidyā. His edition includes an elaborate preface to the text. The text itself

has become very difficult to understand because of its technical vocabulary. Traditionally the Aṅgavidyā is regarded as one of the miscellaneous works *prakīrṇaka* - the last part of Āgamas.

4)   **Joṇipāhuḍa** :

The Joṇipāhuḍa is another important work dealing with the science of omens. It was written by Ācārya Dharasena. According to the Dhavalā, a commenatary on it. The text descritbes the powers of various *mantra.*

The palm-leaf manuscript of this text is presered in the manuscript collection of BORI.

Other Minor Works :

- The Joisakaraṇḍaga written by ancient Ācarya is devoted to the description of Jain astronomy and mathematics.

- In the Vardhamānavidyākalpa of Jyotiṣkaraṇḍaka ascribed to Jinaprabhasūri is devoted to the praise of Vardhamāna in 17 *gathas.*

- The Jyotiṣasāra of the text includes 4 *dvāras.* The Dinaśuddhidvāra describes the siddhiyoga pertaining to the week day, month day, constellation etc. The Ahivavahāradvāra of the text deals with the description of house, positions, rise and decay of planets. The Gaṇitadvāra and the Lagnadvāra are the remaining two *dvāras.*

- The Vivāhapaṭala is referred to in order to mark the time of the first house.

- The Lagnaśuddhi written by Haribhadra describes the auspicious 1st house of the horoscope.

- The Dinaśuddhi is another work on the astronomy authored by Ratnaśekhara dealing with the purity of planets like the Sun, Moon, Mars, Jupiter etc. and also of the month day, first house, hour, quarters, and constellations.

- The Karalakṣaṇa is the work devoted to the general palmistry.

- The Riṣṭasamuccaya pertains to the description of bad omens like breaking of fingers, stiffness of eyes, fading of the body etc.

- The Arghakāṇḍa is an independent work describing the benefits from purchase and sell of certain objects.

- The Ratnaparīkṣā is a work on gemology. It gives detailed account of the origin, place, size, colour, creed, and value of various gems.

- The Dravyaparīkṣā can be called as text on numismatics. It deals with the evaluation and weight of coins.

- The Dhātūtpatti is metallurgy describing the characteristics of various metals like copper, brass, lead etc.

- The Gṛhavāstuprakaraṇa of the Vāstusāra deals with characteristics of land.

- The Jyotiṣasāra deals with the auspicious and inauspicious days, auspicious hour, and purity of day.

If compared with the other types of literature, the scientific literature in Prakrit is very small in size. Neither has it not been sufficiently studied by scholars. Most of these works are lying unpublished. Those published have become rare. Excepting the Aṅgavijjā, Riṭṭhasamuccaya, Vatthusāra and Rayaṇaparīkkhā, others can hardly be called as books. They are very small and better be considered as monographs.

Prakrit Epigraphy

Epigraphy is not only an independent type of literature but is also treated as a source of history. Prakrit was largely employed in ancient epigraphies despite the fact that Sanskrit was the chief language of literature. It is because the inscriptions were meant for the common people of the society. They preferred regional languages to any standard variety.

The scholars of archaeology study Prakrit languages for the same reason. The epigraphies are found written in two ancient scripts of *brāhmī* and *kharoṣṭhī*. The inscriptions carved on the rocks remain thousand of years, while those written on the palm leaves are subject to mutilation. The inscriptions of king Aśoka are the ancient inscriptions of India. The local varieties of Prakrit languages are used in Aśokan inscriptions.

1) **Aśokan Inscriptions :**

The inscriptions of king Aśoka are the ancient inscriptions of India. King Aśoka, twelve years after his ascend to the throne (269 B.C.) started erecting his capitals on the borders of his royal territory. A large number of Aśokan capitals are thus found in several parts of India. These capitals bore his inscriptions. The inscriptions of Aśoka are unique in nature. They are not in praise of any person. Aśoka's purpose was to enlighten the common people of the religion based on humanity.

These inscriptions include various instructions given by Aśoka for the wellbeing of his subject. The scripts employed by Aśoka in his inscriptions were *brāhmī* and *kharoṣṭhī*. Śahābājagaḍī, Manaseharā are in *kharoṣṭhī*. Giranāra, Sopārā, Kālasī, Dhaulī, Jaugaḍa and Irāguḍī inscriptions are in *brāhmī*. These Capital inscriptions are found in Ṭopārā. Meraṭha, Kośāmbī, Rāmapuravā and Lauriyā. Besides this small inscriptions are also found in places like Kaliṅga, Tarāi etc.

Through his inscriptions Aśoka did not preach any particular religion as such but tried to preach the humanity in general with values of non-violence, moral conduct and love to mankind. He did not give rise to a new religion out of it. Moral conduct and service to people was the sole nature of his administration. It has been fully reflected in his inscriptions.

Places selected for inscriptions :

The inscriptions of king Aśoka are predominantly found in the vicinity of dwelling places of people, on the roads of trade, at water saloons, pilgrimages etc. It was obviously with a view to easily inform people of his religious instructions. In the inscription entitled *"jīvadayā-paśuyāga-māṁsabhakṣaṇa-niṣedha,"* king Aśoka instructs on the purity of food and drink in order to bring the non-violence into actual practice.

From the other one entitled as "lokopayogī-kārya", his friendly relations with adjacent countries and kings become evident. The *"dharmapracāra and pañcavārṣika-yojanā"* describes the chief duties of human beings. This inscription reflects on his administrative skills.

2)   **Hāthīgumphā -inscription :**

The inscription of king Khāravela is found in Hāthīgumphā located in the caves of Udayagiri near Bhuvaneswara in Orissa. The language of the script is very close to Pāli. It is believed to be carved in the 1ˢᵗ Cen. B.C. The inscription describes some important events in the 13 years of Khāravela's rule. This is the only inscription of Khāravela among those available which makes specific reference to his dynasty and the years of rule. The inscription of Hāthīgumphā stands as next to Aśoka's inscription in chronology. It reflects on the contemporary social and political affairs. The king Khāravela brought the statue of Jina from Nanda and installed them in Hāthīgumphā. This is the ancient reference to iconography available from inscriptions.

Peculiarities of Hāthīgumphā Inscription :

- Employment of the *brāhmī* script

- Use of vowels - *a*, *ā*, *i*, *e* and *o*

- Absence of conjuncts

- Anusvāra replaced by homogenous nasal

- Prakrit language with Sanskrit influence

- Mention of king Khāravela at the end

3) Nāśika-Inscription :

The inscription found in the caves of Nāśika was carved by Vāsiṣṭhiputra Pulumādī in 149 A.D. It gives historical information about the name of the king, his dynasty of Sātakarṇī, the kings under his subjugation, expansion of his kingdom etc. The inscription includes a praise of king Pulumādī at the end which tends to be exaggerative in nature.

Collections of Prakrit Inscriptions

The Prakrit epigraphy is certainly an important source of ancient Indian history. E.Gerino the distinguished French scholar has published the *Riporter de Epigraphi Jain* in 1908. This is an important collection of Prakrit inscriptions which includes the Prakrit inscriptions from 242 B. C. to 1866 A. D.

The Jaina - Śilālekha - Saṁgraha is another collection of Prakrit inscriptions compiled by a group of scholars.

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Chapter 10

Apabhraṁśa Literature

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Introduction :

The word Apabhraṁśa is first found used by Patañjali in his Mahābhāṣya (3rd Cen. B.C.). He says --

"एकस्यैव शब्दस्य बहवो ऽ पभ्रंशा : । तद् यथा गौरित्यस्य गावी, गोणी, गोता, गोपोतालिकेत्येवमादयोऽपभ्रंशाः।।" (Mahābhāṣya 1.1.1).

It is evident that by Apabhraṁśas Patañjali and his predecessors refer to grammatically incorrect or corrupt forms of Sanskrit.

Language is like an ever flowing stream of a river. It is liable to changes. Over a period of centuries or some times of a decade also, a language experiences changes in terms of pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. It has been observed that as the time progresses, a language abandons complexities and assumes simplicity, new innovations take place in its grammar, its vocabulary expands. Important linguistic changes in Prakrit languages can be marked from the beginning of the 10th Cen. A.D. These changes pertain to Māgadhī, Śaurasenī and Mahārāṣṭrī also. New group of languges immerged out of these three varieties of Prakrit. These groups came to be known as Apabhraṁśas or Apabhraṣṭas (Avahaṭṭha). The Jain Ācāryas (especially the Digambaras) have contributed a vast amount to the Apabhraṁśa literature in its very early stage. They wrote many *purāṇas*, biographies and *khaṇḍakāvyas.*

Peculiarities of the Apabhraṁśa Poetry :

1.   The prominence of vowel *u* is a chief perculiarity of Apabhraṁśa languages e.g. जिण > जिणु ; आयर >आयरु.

2. –ह,–हं,–हु and –हे are employed as suffixes of cases e.g. आयहो, जिणहु, नयणहं.

3. Short vowel is replaced by a long and a long one is replaced by a short e.g. अंजणा > अंजण ; धण्णा > धण.

4. The indeclinables कवणु, इत्तए, इत्तु etc. are copiously used.

5. The conjuncts like वृ, प्र, म्व are retained.

6. Letter ण can appear in the word in initial position e.g. णयण

7. The *sandhi, kaḍavaka* and *paṅkti* is the common mode of reference in Apabhraṁśa *kāvyas.*

8. The *aḍillā, ghattā* etc. are the new *metres* of composition.

9. The onomatopoeic words are used e.g. झलझल, गुलगुल, टलटल etc.

Different theories regarding the Apabhraṁśas :

1. In the beginning, the word Apabhraṁśa meant the language of people other than learned or *śiṣṭas.* It meant the corrupt utterances which were not derivable from the Pāṇinian system of grammar.

2. In the times of Bharata the word Apabhraṁśa was employed in the sense of *vibhraṣṭa śabda* (corrupted, defiled or degenerated). That time the Apabhraṁśa started in its seed forms. The Apabhraṁśa words were employed in the languages like Śābarī-Ābhīrī etc. mostly the tribal languages. The Apabhraṁśa did not find inclusion in the literary language.

3. In the sixth century A.D. the word Apabhraṁśa came into vogue as a literary language. It was being employed in the works on grammar and rhetorics. It was accepted by the poeticians like Bhāmaha and Daṇḍī.

4. In the ninth century A.D. the term Apabhraṁśa was used in the wider sense to refer to the general spoken forms of the ordinary people. It was not restricted now to cover merely the Śābarī - Ābhīrī. By that time it was in use on a wider geography beginning

from Surāṣṭra to Magadha. The Apabhraṁśa also had regional variations.

5. In the eleventh century A.D. the Apabhraṁśa assumed a more comprehensive nature. The scholars of rhetorics, grammar and literature commonly accepted that it was not a single language of that time but referred to many regional variations in languages.

    The Prākṛtacandrikā and Prākṛtasarvasva enumerate 27 varieties of Apabhraṁśas.

    The Apabhraṁśa languages originated in different places of India. Most of the new IA. languages like Marathi etc. find their origin in various Apabhraṁśas prevalent during 5th to 10th Cen. A.D. This can be put in the following way -

- Marathi and Konkani from the Mahārāṣṭrī Apabhraṁśa.

- Bengali, Oriya and Assamese were originated from the Māgadhī Apabhraṁśa.

- Hindi was from the Ardhamāgadhī Apabhraṁśa.

- Bundeli and Vrajabhasha from Śaursenī Apabhraṁśa.

- Rajasthani, Malavi, Mevadi, Marvadi, Jayapuri and Gujrati were originated from the Nāgara Apabhraṁśa.

- Panjabi from Ṭākkī Apabhraṁśa.

- Sindhi from Vrācāḍa Apabhraṁśa.

- Kashmiri from Paiśācī Apabhraṁśa.

Apabhraṁśa and Hindi :

    The new IA developed from regional Apabhraṁśas. The close relation between Hindi and Apabhraṁśa can be illustrated from the following instances:

1) The procope is a common feature in Apabhraṁśa and Hindi. e.g.

    In Apabhraṁśa - अपि > पि / वि ; अरण्ण > रण्ण

    In Hindi - अभ्यंतर > भीतर ; अपि > भी ; अरु > रु

2) Compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel when a conjunct is simplified. e.g.

In Apabhraṁśa - निस्सरंति > णीसरंति ; तस्स > तासु ; निस्सास > नीसास

In Hindi - अद्य > आज ; कर्म > काम ; हस्त > हाथ

3) Maintenance of one consonant of the cluster and shortening of the preceding vowel. e.g.

In Apabhraṁśa - उन्मुक्त > उम्मुक्क > उमुक्क ; उच्छ्वास > ऊसास

In Hindi - उत्साह > उच्छाह > उछाह ; समुद्र > समुद् > समुद

4) 'Metri-causa' lenthening or shortening of the preceding vowel, e.g.

In Apabhraṁśa - सरस्वती > सरसइ ; माला > माल ; हुअ > हुआ ; मारिअ > मारिआ

In Hindi - हाथा, फूला, विरोधू, हारू, कवित्त, सवैया

5) The Apabhraṁśa quotations are used in Hindi by replacing the *tatsama* words (Similar to Apabhraṁśa) in place of *tadbhava* (of Apabhraṁśa origin) words. e.g. an Apabhraṁśa verse from Yogasāra (105) reads -

सो सिव संकरु विण्हु सो, सो रुद्रवि सो बुद्ध ।

सो जिणु ईसरु बंभु सो, सो अणंतु सो सिद्ध ॥

This is read in Hindi as -

सो शिव शंकर विष्णु सो, सो रुद्रउ सो बुद्ध ।

सो जिन ईश्वर ब्रह्म सो, सो अणंतु सो सिद्ध ॥

The close similarities between Apabhraṁśa and Hindi could be thus observed.

Brief introduction to the Apabhraṁśa literature :

The scholars of historical linguistics generally place the origin and development of the Apabhraṁśa languages during the 5th to 10th Cen.A.D. The Apabhraṁśa literature becomes available from the 8th Cen.A.D. The period of 9th to 13th Cen.A.D. has been described as the golden age of Apabhraṁśa literature. Svayambhū is the first poet of

Apabhraṁśa. He has been followed by a series of eminent poets like Puṣpadanta, Dhahila, Dhanapāla, Nayanandi, Kanakāmara etc.

The Apabhraṁśa literature is found in the *purāṇas* and Caritas of Jains, in the religious *padas,* poetries and *dohās* of the Buddhas; in the Sanskrit and Prakrit works like the Kumārapālapratibodha, Prabandhacintāmaṇi etc. in the examples includes in the grammatical works; and in various poetries. However no epigraphies are found written in Apabhraṁśa. Besides the Hindus, Jains, Bauddhas and Muslims have also contributed to the Apabhraṁśa litrerature. Abdul Rehaman is famous for his Sandeśarāsaka. The Jain Ācāryas composed a variety of literature in Sanskrit prose and dramas Apabhraṁśa.

The Apabhraṁśa literature was chiefly prompted by religious intentions. It consists of the *purāṇas,* and Caritas, metaphoric poetries, *sandhikāvyas, rāsa* poetries and *stotras.* The secular writings are less in Apabhraṁśa. Besides the narratives there are many metaphorical poetries like the Jīva-manaḥ-karaṇa-saṁlāpa-kathā etc. The Apabhraṁśa *stotras* chiefly pertain to the praise of Jain Tīrthaṅkaras, *purāṇic* personalities, preceptors, etc. The *cūnarī, carcarī, kulaka* are the other types of Apabhraṁśa literature.

The works referred to above are *mahākāvyas, khaṇḍakāvyas* or *muktakas.* The Apabhraṁśa literature also includes a good amount of didactic poetries like the Sāvayadhammadohā, Rasāyanarāsa, Bhāvanāsandhi etc.

The poetries of Apabhraṁśa predominantly mark the poetic *rasas* of *śṛṅgāra, vīra* and *śānta.* The *śṛṅgāra rasa* is depicted in the description of beauty, the *vīrarasa* in the description of wars, while the *śānta* is evident in the descriptions of the mutability of the world etc.

It can be observed that the Apabhraṁśa poets are deviating from the conventional norms in their descriptions. They chiefly describe the events that are directly experienced. In order to make the language more lucid the poets of Apabhraṁśa intentionally employ idiomatic words or group of words, employ different metres.

A) Epics in Apabhraṁśa

The epics in Apabhraṁśa follow the path already paved by the earlier epics of Sanskrit and Prakrit. They are similar to Sanskrit-Prakrit epics in their style of describing the events. The Apabhraṁśa epics include usual descriptions such as the lives of great personalities, the nature, dawns and evenings, Sun rise and Sun sets etc. They are hence regarded as the Prabhandhakāvyas. Many *purāṇas* and biographies of Apabhraṁśa are appreciated as the masterpieces in the literature. The *sargas* (cantos) of Sanskrit poetries are called as *sandhis* and further divided into *kaḍavakas* in Apabhraṁśa.

The religious motives behind the Apabhraṁsa writings are always evident. Svayambhū (10th Cen. A.D.) was the famous religious poet of Apabhraṁśa. He wrote three poetries viz. the Paumacariu (Padmacarita), Riṭṭhanemicariu (Harivaṁśapurāṇa) and Svayambhūchanda.

1) Paumacariu :

In the Paumacariu Svayambhū has described the story of Rāma according to Jain tradition. The text is divided into five *kāṇḍas* as the Vidyādharakāṇḍa, Ayodhyākāṇḍa, Sundarakāṇḍa, Yuddhakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa. In the beginning the poet describes the creation, the origin of *kulakaras* and life of

Ṛṣabhadeva. This is followed by the description of the Ikṣvāku dynasty. The poetry is marked for its elaborated descriptions and religious notes.Though the Paumacariu is based on the Rāmāyaṇas of Vimalasūri and Raviṣeṇa, it excels all in poetic values.

2) **Riṭṭhanemicariu or Harivaṁśapurāṇa :**

The Riṭṭhanemicariu consists of four *kāṇḍas* viz. the Yādavakāṇḍa, Kurukāṇḍa, Yuddhakāṇḍa and the Uttarakāṇḍa. The first Yādavakāṇḍa deals with the birth of Kṛṣṇa, his childhood, various trainings, and enmities with others. The Yuddhakāṇḍa describes the battle between Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas, while the Uttarakāṇḍa the victory of Pāṇḍavas.

3) **Mahāpurāṇa** :

The Mahāpurāṇa or the Tisaṭṭhi-mahāpurisa-guṇālaṅkāra was composed by Puṣpadanta in the 10ᵗʰ Cen. A.D. It is divided into three *khaṇḍas*.

Digambaras regard that the 11 Ardhamāgadhī cannons are not the authoritative words of Lord Mahāvīra. According to Digambaras the religious literature of Jainas is divided into four *anuyogas* viz. the *prathamānuyoga,* karaṇānuyoga, *caraṇānuyoga,* and the *dravyānuyoga.* The *prathamānuyoga* includes the biographies and narrations related to the Tīrthaṅkara and other great personalities. The Mahāpurāṇa is an important part of *prathamānuyoga.*

In the Jain literature the *purāṇas* indicates ancient accounts. The Mahāpurāṇa describes biographies of 64 great personalities (also called as *ślāghā* or *śalākā-puruṣas*). They include 24 Tirthaṅkaras, 12 Cakravatīs, 9 Vāsudevas and 9 Baladevas.

The Mahāpurāṇa was narrated by Gautama a disciple of

Bhagavān Mahāvīra upon the request of king Śreṇika. In the first *khaṇḍa* of the poetry Gautama describes the biographies of Ṛṣabhadeva the first Tīrthaṅkara and of Bharata the first *cakravartī*. In the second *khaṇḍa* he moves on to the description of 20 Tīrthaṅkaras, 8 Baladevas, 8 Vāsudevas, and 10 Cakravartīs. This *khaṇḍa* later on came to be known as the Padmapurāṇa in the tradition. In the Mahāpurāṇa, Gautama has answered many questions raised by king Śreṇika regarding the Rāmāyaṇa.

The third *khaṇḍa* of the Mahāpurāṇa deals with the account of Mahābhārata. This is also known as the Harivaṁśapurāṇa. The last portion of this *khaṇḍa* includes accounts of Pārśvanātha, Mahāvīra, Jambūsvāmī etc. It ends with the description of the Mahāvīra-*nirvāṇa* episode.

The accounts of 63 great personalities given in the Mahāpurāṇa are highly extensive. They deal with their earlier births and many other events. The poet has inter mixed the chief the descriptions of 63 great personalities with the accounts of Rāmāyaṇā and Mahābhārata. Occasional descriptions of nature, supernatural events and miracles are found in the poetry. It also exhibits the poetic *rasas* of *vīra, śṛṅgāra* and *śānta.* They stories pertain to the devotion of *jina.*

4) **Bhavisayattakahā :**

The Bhaviṣyadattakathā was written by Dhanapāla (11th Cen. A.D.). It is based on a popular account of Bhaviṣyadatta who happened to be a son of a trader. The text is divided into three *khaṇḍas.* The first *khaṇḍa* describes the wealth of Bhaviṣyadatta. The second *khaṇḍa* deals with his participation in the battle between Kururāja and Takṣaśilārāja and the subsequent victory.

The third *khaṇḍa* describes the previous and furure births of Bhaviṣyadatta.

In the Bhaviṣyadattakathā, Dhanapāla has tried to bring out importance of observance of the vow *śrutapañcamī*. A tale in the text begins with the importance of this vow and ends also in the recollection of it.

The title Harivaṁśapurāṇa is very common in the Apabhraṁśa literature. Several authors have named their works as Harivaṁśapurāṇa.

B) Religious Khaṇḍakāvyas in Apabhraṁśa

The epics or *mahākāvyas* pertain to the full biography of a hero while the *khaṇḍakāvyas* restrict themselves to a particular part of his life. Both the types of poetry include beautiful descriptions. The biographies in Apabhraṁśa fall under the *khaṇḍakāvyas.* They are chiefly written to focus a particular incidence in the lives of the great personalities.

Besides a good number of religious ones, we find many other *khaṇḍakāvyas* in Apabhraṁśa that deal with popular subjects. Such poetries pertain to the description of worldly events, adventures and qualities of kings etc. They provide historical accounts. It is possible to view three different types of Apabhraṁśa *khaṇḍakāvyas.*

1) Purely religious one which deals with the biographies of great religious personalities.
2) Non -religious dealing with worldly subjects.
3) Non-religious dealing with the accounts of kings etc., carrying historical nature.

The first kind of *khaṇḍakāvyas* are large in number. Some of

them are - The Nāyakumāracariu, Jasaharacariu, Jambusamicariu, Sundasaṇacariu, Karaṇḍakacariu, Pāsacariu, Pāsaṇāhacariu, Candappahacariu etc.

The Sandeśarāsaka, Kīrtilatā etc. belong to the non-religious kind of Apabhraṁśa *khaṇḍakāvyas.*

The *muktaka* poetry in Apabhraṁśa can also be classified as religious and non- religious. The religious *muktaka* poetries of Jains can be seen as being spiritual or worldly. The Bauddha *muktakas* written in Apabhraṁśa pertain to the religious dogmas and include refutation and establishment of views.

The non- religious *muktakas* are full of poetic *rasas* like the *śṛngāra*, *vīra* etc. The Yogasāra, Pāhuḍadohā, Sāvayadhammadohā are some of the important *muktakas* in Apabhraṁśa by Jainas. While the Rāgabhairavī, Rāgapaṭamañjarī, Rāgaśabarī are the instances of *dohās* by Bauddha writers.

The Mayaṇaparājayacariu, Mayaṇajujjha are the metaphorical poetries in Apabhraṁśa.

The Apabhraṁśa literature also includes stories like the Dharmaparīkṣā, Sthūlibhadrakathā, Kathākośa etc. They are of religious kind. They were chiefly written to preach the importance of different religious vows, worships, donations, conduct etc.

Besides the above mentioned *mahākāvyas, khaṇḍakāvyas, muktakas,* metaphoric poetries and stories, the Apabhraṁśa literature is rich in other types of compositions like the *rāsa, carcarī, stotra, phāga* etc.

The Apabhraṁśa literature continued till the 18th Cen. A.D. The

literature available after that tends to belong to the present spoken languages of India. The history of modern IA languages like Hindi, Marathi, Bengali begins after the Apabhraṁśa literature.

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Chapter 11

General Observations

Introduction :

A brief outline of Prakrit Literature was drawn in the preceding ten chapters of this book. The present and final chapter of the book will deal with the peculiarities of the Prakrit literature and its contribution to the general Indian literature. Some of the points included in the chapter are partly discussed in the earlier chapters. They are put here by way of summing up. The limitations of the Prakrit literature will also be pointed out here, which, it is hoped, will make the picture more balanced.

A) The contribution of Prakrit literature to the Indian literature

The ancient Indian literature consists of three languages viz. Sanskrit, Pāli and Prakrit. The literature in each of these languages has its own peculiarities. Here an attempt is made to point out the contribution of Prakrit literature.

1) Prakrit in the Sanskrit plays :

The famous Sanskrit poets like Bhāsa, Kalidāsa and Bhavabhūti etc. have profusely included Prakrit dialogues in their dramas. It can be marked that 40 to 50 percent of the total dialogues in their plays are written in different Prakrit languages. It will be interesting to search why the Sanskrit playwrights needed to employ Prakrit languages in their plays.

The drama is a most popular means of entertainment. It is of a common interest of all kinds of people. Sanskrit was generally the language of learned people *(śiṣṭas)*. It can be also referred as Jñānabhāṣā (language of knowledge). On the other hand, the

ordinary people, ladies and children generally used various Prakrit languages in their daily conversations. The Sanskrit dramatists hence have employed Prakrit dialogues in their plays. The Māgadhī, Mahārāṣṭrī and Śaurasenī are frequently found employed in the dramatic dialogues. The poetries in Sanskrit dramas are always composed in Mahārāṣṭrī. The spoken Prakrit dialects like Śākārī, Ābhirī and Cāṇḍālī are aptly used by Śūdraka in his Mṛcchakaṭika which is based on a social theme.

The *vidūṣaka* in Sanskrit dramas always speaks Prakrit languages and directly delivers the comic element to the audience. It seems that Prakrit languages were a means to make Sanskrit dramas more interesting and intimate to the common people. The soap operas or farcical dramas of the recent age are very close in nature to the ancient *saṭṭakas*, *prahasanas* and *bhāṇas* of the Prakrit poets.

2)   The religious preaching of Mahāvīra in Ardhamāgadhī :

Bhagavān Mahāvīra was the 24th Tīrthaṅkara in the tradition of Jainas. He used Ardhamāgadhī to preach religious sermons to the disciples. These preaching later on came to be known as Mahāvīravāṇī in the Jain tradition. Mahāvīra belonged to the *śramaṇa* tradition which was a non –*vedic* one. All the Tīrthaṅkaras of the *śramaṇa* tradition preferred to preach their sermons in the language of common people. The religious sermons of Mahāvīra were later on collected by his chief disciples i.e. *gaṇadharas*. These Āgamas were preserved in the oral tradition by Jain Ācāryas nearly for 1000 years after the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra. Then they become available in written

form. These 45 Āgamas constitute an independent and elaborative literature of Ardhamāgadhī including stories, analogies and a variety of subjects like philosophy, geography, astrology, moral conduct etc. These Āgamas became a source of many other works of the Prakrit literature to follow.

Sanskrit was the sacred language of the Vedic religion prevalent at the time of Mahāvīra. The ladies and *śūdra*s were prevented from using Sanskrit. As a result, then the 70% to 80% of the population of society was deprived of religious teaching. Mahāvīra on the other had started preaching his religious sermons in Ardhamāgadhī which was a language of communication of the general people in the society. His preachings attracted a large group of society which subsequently turned to the Jain religion. Mahāvīra proved the fact that a religion taught in people's language becomes effective. The Ācārāṅga, Uttarādhyayana and the Ṛṣibhāṣita are very close to the Vedic Upaniṣadas in their style and content. The historical study of Prakrit literature begins with the Jain Āgamas in Ardhamāgadhī.

The Buddhism is another branch of the *śramaṇa* or non-*vedic* religious tradition of India. Gautama Buddha, its pioneer, resorted to Pāli language for his religious preachings. His religious sermons were later on collected in the form of Tripiṭakas. Pāli is generally treated as independent from the Prakrit group of languages. The Pāli literature, hence does not find inclusion into the general Prakrit literature. But no doubt, the literature in Ardhamāgadhī and Pāli together forms a large gallery of the Indian literature.

3)   Contribution of Jaina's to the Prakrit languages :

The Mahāvīravāṇī (preaching of Mahāvīra) in Ardhamāgadhī is always regarded as sacred and honourable in the tradition of Jainas. The later Jain Ācāryas, hence not adopted Ardhamāgadhī as a language of their compositions. Occasionally they utilized local languages also.

The Jain Ācāryas as they used to travel from place to place following their religious instructions, were able to master many local languages prevalent at that time in different parts of India. The Śvetāmbara Ācāryas thus produced their literature in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī. It is full of didactic works, biographies, *khaṇḍakāvyas*, epics, *campūs,* and *subhāṣitas* etc. The literature of Jain Mahārāṣṭrī existing between the 4th Cen.A.D. up to the 11th Cen.A.D. stands as a remarkable event in the history of Indian literature. The followers of Jainism were very strict in preserving the works of their Ācāryas in the form of manuscripts. These manuscripts are today preserved in the institutional libraries of Jaisalmer, Patan, Karanja, Nagaura and Pune. The followers of Mahāvīra, tried to maintain Prakrit as their language of religion for centuries after Mahāvīra. Their literature in Jain Mahārāṣṭrī is indeed a mirror of contemporary society and culture.

The Ācāryas of the Digambara sect of Jainas on the other hand stock to Jain Śaurasenī for their literature. It helped them in maintaining their distinct religious identity. The available treatises written in Jain Śaurasenī by the Digambaras are nearly 20 to 25. Ācārya Umāsvāti wrote the Tattvārthasūtra in the 4th -5th Cen.A.D. It was written in Sanskrit with a view to enter into the main stream of the *dārśanikas* (philosophers). Many other

Ācāryas followed Umāsvāti and continued the stream of Sanskrit writing up to the 11th Cen.A.D. But Siddhāntacakravartī Nemicandra once again revived Jain Śaurasenī for religious writings.

The stream of Jain literature once again turned to Prakrit languages sometimes in the 10th Cen.A.D. But over a period of 8 to 10 centuries almost all the regional languages had undergone changes. Hence the Digambara Ācāryas, when they decided to write in Prakrit, had to resort to the Apabhraṁśa languages prevalent at that time. They produced *purāṇas,* biographies, poetries and other didactic treatises in Apabhraṁśa alone. The Apabhraṁśa literature experienced a blooming in this period. Nearly a hundred Apabhraṁśa treatises belonging to this period are available today for scholars to study and many others are still in the form of unpublished manuscripts.

The Jain religion which was going away from the common people was once again brought near to them because of Digambaras the efforts of to deliver it in Apabhraṁśa, the language of common people. They made it a customary for the new students of religion to read the Apabhraṁśa literature called as *kathānuyoga* in the beginning of their study.

The contribution of Jain Ācāryas to the Prakrit languages can be analyzed in two ways as based on languages of Jain Mahārāṣṭrī , Jain Śaurasenī and Apabhraṁśa, and from the variety of literature ranging from epic to *muktaka* poetries.

4)   **The society and culture reflected in the Prakrit literature:**

The Prakrit languages were closely associated with the common people of the society hence the literature of Prakrit

depicted a different picture of society and culture from the literature of Sanskrit. It is a comprehensive picture of social and cultural aspects of all the people, not merely of the *nāgara* or elite class. The heroes and heroines in the Prakrit literature belong to the ordinary class of the society e.g. goldsmiths, coppersmiths, potters, fishermen, merchants etc. This literature represent the festivals, vows, delights, celebrations, functions, pilgrims, food offerings, customs and beliefs of the ordinary people of the society. The Prakrit literature also throws alight on the ill practices beliefs, costumes, good and bad omens of the society. Indeed it has drawn a realistic and not an idealistic picture of society.

The poetic *rasas* of *śṛṅgāra, karuṇa* and *śānta* are very effectively manifested in the Prakrit poetries, so also the *hāsyarasa* through the conversations by *vidūṣaka.* The Mahārāṣṭrī is regarded as more appropriate for the description of the *śṛṅgāra rasa,* while the *karuṇa* and the *śānta rasa* are manifested more easily in the Jain Mahārāṣṭrī. The critics of Sanskrit poetry were also influenced by the revelation of *rasas* in the Prakrit poetry. It is evident from the various Prakrit quotations used by them in their treatises on the poetics. Almost three thousands Prakrit *gāthās* are located by scholars which are incorporated in the texts of poetics.

5)   The influence of Prakrit on Sanskrit :

It has been already seen that some of the grammatical features and the lexical items of Prakrit language bear close similarities with the Vedic language. In the due course of time Sanskrit can be observed as directly borrowing the lexical items from the Prakrit languages either as they are or with little

changes. Such words as borrowed from Prakrit (to be referred as *prākṛtodbhava*) are specially studied by the scholars of linguistics. Here follows some examples : तितउ, आवुत्त, खुर, गुग्गुल, छुरिका, किसल, घोडय. etc.

It can be seen that the Prakrit literature generally dealt with the traditions and customs of ordinary people, it gave a way to the emotions of common people. The Prakrit languages continued changing according to time and place and remained always as lively.

B)   Limitations of Prakrit Literature

The distinct place of Prakrit literature in the Indian literature has been highlighted so far. For any judgement or observation to be fair, it is desired that both the merits and limitations of the subject be equally included in it. The importance of Sanskrit and the limitations of Prakrit, both are evident from the fact that Sanskrit continued to be a language of knowledge in India for thousands of years and its literature being ten times greater to that of the Prakrit languages. Here follows a consideration of some of the limitations of Prakrit languages. -

1)   The Prakrit languages always changed according to the regions and peculiarities of individual pronunciation. No Prakrit language can be regarded as a common spoken language of people of India in any given time. Sanskrit was a language of learned people and gained a status of *Jñānabhāṣā* (language of knowledge) all the time and in all the parts of India. It was learnt by students from their teachers in a formal manner of Pāṭhaśālās (traditional schools) with a great accuracy of pronunciation and

strict adherence to grammatical purity. As a result many treatises of fundamental nature standing as lighthouses are to be found as written in Sanskrit. The contribution of Sanskrit writers to various fields of knowledge like mathematics, architecture, astrology, medicine, music, *arthaśāstra* etc. is indeed incomparable. The Prakrit languages did not enjoy this status.

2)   The Prakrit literature written in the beginning stage of its type was very close to the spoken forms of common people, but later on, especially in the Prakrit works of Sanskrit poets, an influence of Sanskrit could not be prevented. The scholars can easily observe the difference between natural and artificial Prakrits.

It can be said that Sanskrit and Prakrit both the streams of languages have their own independent features. Sanskrit manifests a super form of intellect with composition of *śāstras,* while Prakrit depicts a picture of every day life of a common people. The Prakrit languages also gained a status of religious languages because of their acceptance by Mahāvīra and Buddha for religious sermons.

C)   Knowledge-language and spoken-language of Indians

Sanskrit was a language of knowledge of Indian in the ancient times. Knowledge was imparted from one generation to another by the *gurus* (teachers) at their own homes, which came to be known as *gurukulas* (teacher's home). The traditional education system of India was changed by the British during their rule here in the 18th Cen.A.D. Then India started gaining the knowledge of modern science, trade, and economics

developing in various parts of the world. Modern schools and colleges giving formal educations were soon ready to take the place of traditional *gurukulas* in Indian. As a result of it, English assumed a status of knowledge-language instead of Sanskrit in India during the British rule. It became a vehicle of advanced knowledge of science and technology. But, in this modern age also, local varieties of Prakrit continued to produce literature. But still the common people continued writings in their own vernacular Prakrits which gave a way to their emotions.

A question is frequently asked that, 'why the Prakrit languages were lost in the course of time ? ' This question represent the ignorance of nature of Prakrit languages. All the Prakrit languages like Ardhamāgadhī, Śaurasenī, Mahārāṣṭrī etc. experienced changes and gave birth to various Apabhraṁśa languages. The regional languages which developed during 1000-1500 Cen. A.D. in various parts of Indian were commonly referred as Apabhraṁśas. The Jainas, particularly the Digambaras contributed greatly to the developments of Apabhraṁśas. The *rāso* literature in Hindi is a Śaurasenī variety of Apabhraṁśa while the literature of Mahānubhavas and the Jñāneśvarī are the examples of Mahārāṣṭrī Apabhraṁśa.

It can be observed that the new regional languages of India started producing their literature after the 15[th]Cen.A.D. Their sub varieties like Kashmiri, Panjabi, Gujrati, Rajasthani, varieties of Hindi as Bhojapuri, Bundelakhandi etc, Assamees, Bengali, Oria, Marathi and its varieties as Ahirani, Konkani, all these languages started producing their independent literature from the 18th Cen.A.D. The streams and currents of modern Prakrit

literature are flowing powerfully, enriching the Indian literature in a very remarkable way.

In the present age, English is gaining an increasing importance as a language of knowledge in India, while on the other hand a commendable literature and art is still being produced in the regional languages. But, none of present regional languages can truly be a knowledge language of entire India. However, Hindi, being a national language can assume this status to a certain extent. During the recent decades, it can be observed, that almost all the regional languages of India are experiencing new issues of identity. Conscious efforts are made to translate the valuable literature in them into English or other languages. Many writings in regional languages tend to become eligible for prestigious international awards.

The modern regional languages of India are the descendents of the earlier Prakrit languages. The stream of Prakrit languages is not lost, will neither be lost. It is an ever lasting stream changing according to time and place.

As a conclusion to the present outline of the Prakrit literature it can be said that despite a shift of status of knowledge language from Sanskrit to English, the importance of regional languages has remained the same in all the times in India.

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List of Reference Books

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