Chapter One

A Critical Introduction
The Art of Translation

Lord Shri Krishna states in the Bhagavadgita, “Whenever righteousness is on the decline, the unrighteousness is in the ascendant, then I body Myself forth. For the protection of the virtuous, for the extirpation of evil-doers, and for establishing 'Dharma' (righteousness) on a firm footing, I am born from age to age.” Shri Krishna states here the principle of restoration of cosmic balance by divine incarnations. When 'Adharma' dominates a divine incarnation protects and encourages the righteous. And this is also the main theme of the Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam.

If there had not been the tradition of translation the world would never have come across the philosophy of the Bhagavadgita or Rabindranath Tagore’s the Gitanjali would never have brought international honour to our country. Mahatma Gandhji’s My Experiments with Truth is translated in almost all the languages of the world. So is the case of most of the sacred and religious books in the world. These examples show the importance and the necessity of the art of translation.

The art of translation is as old as literature itself. It has a prominent and paramount part to play in the modern world. Translation has served as a writing school for many prominent writers. Translation of religious works has played an important role in history. Translators, including monks who spread Buddhist texts in East Asia and the early modern European translators of the Bible, in the course of their work have shaped the very languages into which they have been translated.
Literary translation, as the name implies, is the translation of literature or other artistic texts. It is the interpreting of the meaning of a text and the subsequent production of an equivalent text, likewise called a "translation," that communicates the same message in another language. It involves the process of change into another language retaining the sense which is indeed the basic objective. Exactness and clarity are the most important characteristics of a translation. What is central to the process of the translation is the search for right word in the correct perspective. The main aim of the translator in translating any work of art is to successfully recapture the tone and texture of the original.

Literary translation is a very challenging activity. The first and very basic issue which arises is that of language competency, because not only a sound but an excellent command of both languages is required. Since meaning is the main goal in translation there is not much difficulty in non-literary translations. But the difficulty arises when we are engaged in the translation of literature. It is not easy to find the equivalent textual and literary material of the source language in the target language. The greatest problem of the translator is that of sustaining the right mood, tone, purpose, feeling and sense of the original writer.

It is clear that no translation can be the exact equivalent of the message of the original text. The establishment of equivalence between the source language text and the target language text becomes the central problem of translation. It consists in producing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent to the message of the source language first in meaning and then in style. Moreover, a translator should have inwardness with both the languages and should have adequate knowledge of both the languages.

While translating the Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam I have tried to preserve the spirit of the original text keeping in mind that a reader can at least enjoy the content of the text if not the form.
II  Translation of a Sanskrit Text

In a multilingual country like India, translation has always occupied an honoured place in our literary culture. Translations from Sanskrit into other languages have a long history. On account of its storehouse of intellectual literature, Sanskrit has been a donor language for translations into Asian, Indian and European languages, including English. The Vedas, the Upanishads, the Purans, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the works of Kalidas, Bhas, Bharavi, and many more have been translated in English.

It is believed that Sanskrit is the oldest and the richest language, the one language of the world, the mother of all other languages of the world. Grammar of Panini stands supreme among the grammar of the world. It stands as one of the most splendid achievements of human invention and industry.

Besides, Sanskrit is the symbol of Indian culture and civilization. Sanskrit is the fountain — source of almost all the Indian languages. It is a brazen truth to say that Sanskrit is the blessed mother from whose womb have sprung almost all the Indian languages. Basically Sanskrit is a very simple language. It is used in daily prayers, household ceremonies and on occasions of offerings and rituals. The study of the Sanskrit language and literature inspires seriousness, creates the habit of hard work, instills truth in tongue and inculcate discipline. Not only this, it trains memory, clarifies pronunciation and enriches vocabulary.

I happened to meet a great Sanskrit scholar and poet Goswami Hariraiji Maharaj at Jamnagar. I was so much impressed by his knowledge, scholarship and contribution in the field of Sanskrit literature and language that I decided to translate his great epic in Sanskrit the Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam, a work of national repute.

Different scholars and translators have viewed translation from different angles. Some translators insist on word for word translation, others advocate free translation. Some translators insist on the form and style of the source
language to be retained in the target language, while some others advocate only transmitting the sense across the language.

While translating the *Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam* I have tried to preserve the spirit of the original text. When I thought of doing this translation, I felt it would be easy to translate. But when I started it, I realised that it was not an easy job. Number of problems came up. The main problem was the translation of cultural words and cultural references. The cultural background of an Indian language is totally different from that of English language.

Certain typical words of the source language also create a problem in translation. Other main problem that I came across was translating the similes and other figures of speeches. It was very difficult for me to understand the form and style and conventions of Sanskrit Mahakavya at the same time. In the third, fourteenth and sixteenth canto it was very difficult to derive the hidden meaning of the 'shringar ras'.

In order to overcome all the difficulties, for me the best source was the scholarly guidance of my guide who happens to be a great lover and scholar of Sanskrit language and literature. For me the work became slightly easier as Shri Goswami Hariraiji inspired me and helped in explaining the hidden meanings and other conventions. Very frankly and freely I discussed the chapters pertaining to the shringar ras. He explained me the complete meaning of the third chapter and that was a booster dose for me. Afterwards I could do the translation work at my own.

Lord Krishna gives darshan to all the Gopikas which they never thought of, that made them motionless since they never thought that they would be granted Love by their Lord! They lost their consciousness and went into 'Yog nidra' - the sleep induced by the spiritual union with the Lord. This is considered the Final stage of Yog which is the consummation of the Spiritual Love! Not the physical love. Though Lord Krishna was far away from them they could win Him to themselves with the strength of their astute Yog which is the communion of the individual self (soul) with the Universal Self (soul), which is otherwise known
as jeevatma merging with Paramatma. The physical meaning, i.e. outward meaning should not be considered here, since it is metaphysical meaning that is important in the context of Bhakti yog - the union of individual soul with the Universal Soul through Bhakti.

I am quite contented and happy at this juncture in doing this translation work and I am sure that other students will also attempt the translation work from Sanskrit to English. This attempt will certainly give a direction to other students.

III Goswami Hariraiji and His Contribution to Sanskrit Literature

Goswami Hariraiji Maharaj is a retired principal of Government Sanskrit Pathshala, Jamnagar. He has achieved distinction and wielded considerable influence in each of the fields he worked. National recognition of his genius came with many awards and distinctions.

Being a Pushtimargiya Vaishnav, his poetry elevates and uplifts us. He has himself lived a life of purity and austerity, thus his poetry bears the unmistakable stamp of the nobility of his character. He is a moralist - a teacher and preacher. His outlook on life is coloured by moral and virtuous thoughts. He
believes in the triumphs of virtue and good life. He hates evil and low thoughts. He believes that man can achieve success and glory in his life by treading the path of virtue, goodness and temperate life. The soul message of this epic *Jarasandhavadha* is 'where there is righteousness there is victory'.

Lord Krishna rightly says, “Jarasandha should certainly be slain and fully deserves it. He has unjustly cast eighty-six princes in prison. He has planned to immolate a hundred kings and is waiting to lay hold of fourteen more. If Bhima and Arjuna agree, I shall accompany them and together we will slay that king by stratagem and set free the imprisoned princes.” (Mahabharata, C. Rajagopalachari : 86)

Goswami Hariraiji belongs to the glorious tradition of Shri Vaishnavism. He is a spiritual leader of the highest order, leading thousands of its followers by carrying forward the values and principles, as propounded and promoted by Lord Shri Krishna. Goswami Hariraiji was born at Champaseni in Jodhpur district, Rajasthan on 22nd May, 1950 Jyeshtha Sud Pancham, Vikram Samvat 2007, according to Hindu calendar. His father was Goswami Vrajbhushanalji and mother Smt. Vrajlata Vahui. His father was an Ayurvedacharya and a great Sanskrit scholar.

Goswami Shri Hariraiji is a great scholar of Vedant, Sahitya, Nyaya, Falit Jyotish and Vyakaran. Basically he is a teacher and poet at heart. He relishes teaching and delivers lectures for students, teachers, trainees and even research scholars. He is a profound scholar and a prolific writer. He is an eminent poet and littérateur of contemporary times. His contribution to Sanskrit literature is so massive that it would take several volumes to compile it.

His works branch off into several directions and thus give a glimpse of his versatility. His publications include collections of poems, four epic poems, books on Literary Criticism, gazals, books on Vedant Dharm Shastras etc. His important literary works are as follows –
He has dedicated himself to the cause of Sanskrit and 'Samskaras'. Even during his professional career he never gave up his love for poetry and there is hardly any form of metrical poetry which did not draw his attention. His deep understanding of human relations, the subtlety and delicacy of love, is reflected in his compositions. He is one of the leading poets of the modern age who has added new dimensions both to its form and content.

He is one of the few individuals who have maintained a uniform high standard in all fields of his working. He is a good teacher, a professional scholar, an excellent poet and is well known for his gentle nature and balanced personality. ‘Bhagwad Sewa’ and ‘Nam Sewa’ as he says, is the sole aim of his life.

Goswamiji was a precocious child and sparkled as a child prodigy reciting with utmost ease, even difficult hymns. His grasping and retention capacity of
any topic were superb. He indulged in knowledge seeking and dissemination even as a child and actively participated by discussing, singing, reciting in festivals and functions.

He delivers his lectures in Sanskrit, Gujarati and Hindi on very complex subjects like Shrimad Bhagvatji, Ramayanasara, Vishnutatva, Bhagavad-Gita and other scriptures. He embarked on profound philosophical discussions on issues like Way of life, the Purpose of Creation, Soul and its Mystery etc. In his school life also, he was more interested in offering lectures rather than listening. In the year 1992, during the ‘Pushti Siddhant Charcha Sabha’ at Mumbai, there were delightful and stormy sessions, which received much appreciation and applauds and he was honoured by the title of “Pushti Siddhant Samraxon Shiromani”.

He delivers his lectures on variety of subjects like: Sanskrit, Gujarati and Hindi literature, Vaishnavism - Karma, Gnana and Bhakti Yog, Indian Music, Patanjali and Krishna, Essence of Indian Philosophy, the Vedas, the Upanishads and their Message, Purusha Suktha, Narayana Suktha, Shri Suktha, Vishnu Sahasra Nama, Sankhya Yog – Gita, Shrimad Valmiki Ramayana etc. He is a limitless reservoir of wisdom and knowledge – ancient as well as contemporary – that is far beyond the capacity of any normal human being.

He is a bridge between ‘Para’ and ‘Apara Vidya’, materialism and spirituality, abstract theories and hard facts, tradition and modernity, old and new, east and west, 'maya' and reality, mundane and profound. In fact, in this world of duality, he can connect the opposites in theory and practice. He can interpret the most intricate and complex situations and explain the unknown in understandable language to the layman.

All, who interact with him or listen to him, including scholars and experts, have unanimously exclaimed that it is humanly impossible to acquire such knowledge, but derived only from divine sources. Goswamiji is actively involved in the development, progress and spreading of the principles of the International
Pushtimargiya Vaishnav Parishad of Shri Vallabhacharya Gurukul of Junagadh. He is an active member of the 'Vishva Hindu Parishad' and he is the prime mover of the various programmes of the Parishad in Jamnagar. At personal level, he aims at the betterment of the entire humanity with special focus on the upliftment of the weaker and marginalised sections of the society.

He is involved in activities like conducting of youth training camps, women empowerment programmes, medical camps, especially eye camps, blood donation camps, cattle camps, renaissance of ancient art and cultural forums. Goswami Shri Hariraiji has established the religious Charitable organisation, for the propagation of Vaishnavism and for revival of lapsed temple rituals and festivals. He has also established Moti Haveli Pathshala at Jamnagar. He played a very vital role in the construction of the Vaishnav Community Hall and in the renovation of the Moti Haveli at Jamnagar. His contribution in re-habilitating the people of Dhutarpur village in the Kutch district after the devastating earthquake, is really unique.

Goswamiji has won several awards and has been conferred several titles. Recognizing his greatness, uniqueness, infinite potential and contribution in the field of Sanskrit literature he was honoured by the Rajasthan Sanskrit Academy by a very prestigious award the ‘Magh Puraskar’ in 1983. In the same year i.e. in 1983 the Uttar Pradesh Sanskrit Academy awarded him another prestigious award the ‘Kalidas Puraskar’ for his great epic Jarasandhavadha. Goswamiji’s such a great success and achievement was celebrated with great splendor, amidst rituals, recitations and cultural concerts by his devotees.

The Bhagvat Vidyapeeth Ahmedabad has also conferred the highest honour, the title ‘Mahakavi’ in 1984. In 1989 the Maharaja Mewad Foundation Udaipur, Rajasthan, felicitated him by the ‘Harit Puraskar’.

As a spiritual leader Goswamiji’s compassion, outlook, concerns and activities have always been boundless, transcending the narrow boundaries of caste, creed, status, region or religion. In spite of being a staunch and chaste
Vaishnavite, he believes in inter-religious harmony without losing religious dignity. He is a messenger and promoter of peace. Goswamij is a great connoisseur of music, dance, drama and other art forms, including folk variety. He is a good singer, composer, and a gifted poet in many languages. One thing worth-mentioning about Goswamiji is his love for Indian classical music. He is the follower of the Champaseni tradition (gharana) and literally teaches the students to keep this tradition alive and at the same time for the progress and development of this gharana. Apart from skills like drawing, painting etc, he has deep interest in Vedic Mathematics and Logics.

IV  Story of the Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam

The Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam is a great epic written in Sanskrit by a contemporary poet Goswami Hariraiji. The story of the Jarasandhavadha is based on the Mahabharata, the Harivansha Puran and the Bhagvat Puran. Originally the Mahabharata and the Purans are written by Ved Vyasji in Sanskrit. Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam is an epic in the true sense. It maintains all the traits and possesses all characteristics that an epic normally contains. Hariraiji created the epic, Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam, which relates to the story of Krishna’s vanquishing of the Magadha King, Jarasandha.

The Mahabharata and the Ramayana are two gems in Indian literature. Both these epics are the bases of Indian culture and Sumeru mountain of gold of the Sanskrit literature. The Mahabharata holds the place of pride and it is the most popular epic after the Ramayana. The Mahabharata has a great literary importance. It is like an ocean which carries out all types of compositions pertaining to all kinds of knowledge. Indeed it is a beautiful poetic work on the one hand and a code of conduct on the other. It is really a specimen of literary art, exercising a tremendous influence on different forms of subsequent literary compositions in Sanskrit.
Yudhishtira intended to perform the Rajsuya sacrifice. Therefore he sought the advice of Shri Krishna. Krishna informed him that without killing Jarasandha, he could not perform the 'Rajsuya Yajna'. Jarasandha had conquered many kings and held them in subjection. The wicked Kansa, Shishupal and many others were afraid of his prowess and were submissive to him. Even Lord Krishna could not defeat him. Yudhishthira wanted to know about the strength and prowess of Jarasandha. Shri Krishna narrated the story of Jarasandha.

Jarasandha was the king of Magadha. His father, Brihadratha was a valourous, mighty and matchlessly powerful ruler of Magadha. He had the army of three 'Akshauhinis' of soldiers. He married the two beautiful twin-daughters of the king of Kashi. He was fortunate that in the company of his two wives he passed away his youth in the enjoyment of his wealth. But it was his misfortune that no son was born to him to further his line. Brihadratha and his queens were very god fearing and religious minded so they performed many yajnas and other rites to get a son.

One day the Chandakaushika Rishi, the son of Kakshivana of the Gautama race, came to his city. The king knew about the miraculous power of the sage and thus in the company of his wives went to greet him with the intention to get blessings from him. They gratified the Rishi with presents of Jewels. He was pleased with their 'bhakti'. The Rishi gave a mango fruit to the king as the means of his obtaining a son. The king gave that fruit to his two wives. The queens divided the fruit into two equal parts and ate the mango. That resulted in happiness and joy for all the members of the family.

Sometime later when the proper season came, each of the two queens delivered two fragmentary bodies having one eye, one arm, one leg, half a stomach, half a face, and half an anus. Seeing the fragmentary bodies, the queens trembled much. They were stunned to see the half parts of the human body. The two sisters finally decided to throw away the fragments of the body. Once again a very unusual instance took place. A 'Rakshas' woman, whose name was Jara found the fragments lying there. She was also surprised to see
this unusual thing. She took those parts in her hand and united the fragments to make them easier to carry.

As soon as the fragments were united, they formed into a heroic child of one body which was as hard and strong as the thunderbolt. Even Jara was unable to carry that child. The child roared as terribly as the clouds charged with rains. The king, the queens and others came out to see what the matter was. When Jara saw the helpless, disappointed and the sad queens and also the king at the same time, she hands over the child to the king.

Having obtained the child, the king and the queens were filled with joy. The occasion was celebrated in a grand manner. As the fragments of the body of the child were united by Jara, he was named Jarasandha. The child was growing day by day like the moon in the white-fortnight. Sometime later, the Rishi Chandakaushika came again to the kingdom of Magadha. The Rishi made prophecy that Jarasandha would grow in prosperity and no king would be able to equal him in prowess. The weapons hurled upon him even by the celestials will not be able to make any impression on him. He will seize the growing prosperity of all the kings. All the kings will remain obedient to him.

Under his father’s able guidance he killed a monster named Rishabh ‘Rakshas’ who was a menace to the state. Thus the king of Magadha finally summoned all his friends and relatives, and declared Jarasandha as the king of Magadha. When Jarasandha was installed as the king he brought numerous kings under his sway by his valour. After his father and mother had retired into the forest, as told by Kaushika, the king Jarasandha literally ruled over the whole world. He was married to the daughter of Kashi Naresh. He was blessed with two daughters and a son named Sahdeva. His daughters were married to Kansa whom Lord Krishna killed. Sometime after, when the king Kansa was killed by Vasudeva (Krishna), an enmity arose between him and Krishna. Jarasandha decided to kill Lord Krishna.

Shri Krishna was sure that all the celestials and the ‘Asuras’ were incapable to vanquish Jarasandha in battle. Therefore, he decided to defeat him in a single combat. Lord Krishna’s plan was that they three (he along with Arjuna
and Bhima) could collectively kill Jarasandha. They decided to go secretly to that king, as he was sure that the king would be engaged in a single combat with one of them. From the fear of disgrace, from covetousness, and from the pride of strength of arms, he would certainly challenge Bhima to a single combat. Bhima would surely bring about the fatal fall of the king (Jarasandha). Yudhishthira could visualise that Jarasandha was already killed, that the kings kept prisoner by him had already been liberated and that the Rajasuya sacrifice was already accomplished by him. Looking to the prowess of these three even the people also considered that Jarasandha was already killed.

Finally they reached the great city of Magadha standing in all its beauty. They entered the city of Magadha. On Chaityaka hill Jarasandh, under the guidance of Brihadratha, had killed a cannibal, called Rishabha. Three drums were made from the skin of that monster. He then kept these drums in his city. They were such that, if once played upon, their sound lasted for one full month. The brothers broke down the Chaityaka, ever charming to all the people, at the place where these drums, covered with celestial flowers, sent forth their continuous sound. Attacking with their powerful arms that immovable, huge, high, old and famous peak, ever worshipped with perfumes and garlands, those heroes broke it down. They then with joyful hearts entered the city. At that very time the Brahmins saw many evil omens which they duly reported to Jarasandha.

Lord Krishna, Bhima and Arjun entered the city in the guise of Snataka Brahmins in order to fight with Jarasandha. They kept their weapons outside the city. Jarasandha received his visitors with proper ceremonies. Seeing the strange attire of his guests, Jarasandha was astonished, but he waited upon them with all respect. Jarasandha was sure that they were not the Brahmins. How could he believe the people adorned with flowers and with hands that bear the marks of the bow-string and also who broke the strong drums as Brahmins? Jarasandha was astonished to see such Brahmins and said that he did not recollect that he had done them any injury. When he had never done them any harm, they should not consider him, as their enemy.
Lord Krishna reminded him that he had done cruel deed by making the Kshatriyas of the world captive and put in the prison. After persecuting them, he would offer them as sacrifices to Rudra. Having done this cruel wrong how can a person consider himself innocent? Lord Krishna is the protector of the whole world. He practices virtue and he knew protecting virtue. Lord Krishna tells him on the face that they are desirous of helping all distressed people. They will liberate all the captive monarchs.

Thus he challenged Jarasandha for a single combat. He informed him that they were certainly not the Brahmins. On the other hand Jarasandha was also a brave king he did not agree to liberate the kings captured for the purpose of the sacrifice. He was ready to fight with troops or alone against one. Finally it was decided that he would fight with Bhimasen. The fight began on the first day of the month of Kartika, and those two heroes fought on continuously without food, and without intermission of day or night till the thirteenth day. Roaring like clouds, they grasped and struck each other like two mad elephants fighting with their trunks. Becoming angry at each other's blow they dragged and pushed each other, and they fought on, looking fiercely at each other like two angry lions.

Thousands of citizens, consisting of Brahmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and 'Sevakas', and also women and even old men, came out and assembled there to witness the fight. The sound they made by the slapping of arms, by the seizing of each other's necks, and by the grasping of each other's legs became so loud that it resembled the roar of thunder or the noise of a falling cliff. Both of them were foremost of strong and powerful men, and both took great delight in such fights. Each was eager to vanquish the other, and each was on the alert to take advantage of the slightest carelessness of the other. It was on the night of the fourteenth day, the Magadha king stopped from fatigue. Bhima was determined to kill him. Bhima mustered all his strength and courage with the desire of vanquishing the unvanquished Jarasandha.

Bhima raised up the strong Jarasandha and whirled him high one hundred times, Bhima pressed his knee against Jarasandha's backbone and broke his body into two parts. Having thus killed him, he roared aloud. The roar of Bhima,
mingled with that of Jarasandha while he was being broken by Bhima's knee, raised such a loud roar that it struck fear into the heart of every creature. The people of Magadha became dumb with fear; and even many women were prematurely delivered due to the roars of Bhima and Jarasandha. Hearing the roars of Bhima, the people of Magadha thought that the Himalayas were coming down on the earth.

Thus they liberated all the captive kings. Seeing Krishna there the people of Magadha became very much astonished. The captive kings were grateful to Lord Krishna and were prepared to do anything for him. They were all prepared whole heartedly to take part in the Rajsuya Yajna, performed by Yudhishthira. Sahadeva, the son of Jarasandha, who was always against his father's wrong deeds, worshipped Lord Krishna. Krishna instated Sahadeva the son of Jarasandha on the throne of Magadha.

Krishna, accompanied by the two Pandavas - Bhima and Arjuna, arrived at Indraprastha and went to Yudhishthira. Yudhishthira was informed that the powerful Jarasandha was killed by Bhima and all the kings, confined at Girivraja, were liberated. Yudhishthira worshipped Krishna as he deserved and he embraced Bhima and Arjuna in joy. Having obtained victory through the agency of his brothers by the death of Jarasandha, Ajatashatru (Yudhishthira) passed his time with his brothers in great merriment. Krishna took leave of Yudhishthira, Kunti, Draupadi, Subhadra, Bhimasena, Arjuna, and the twins Nakula and Sahadeva and he started for his own city (Dwarika).

Whatever is consistent with 'Dharma, Artha and Kama' continued at that time to be properly performed by king Yudhishthira in the exercise of his duties in protecting his subjects.
First Canto:

The "Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam" commences with prayers to Nara, Narayana and the holy river Yamunaji. According to the classical conventions the poet in the beginning invokes the supreme commander of the world Lord Krishna and the mother Yamunaji to keep him in his great task of writing this epic. He considers himself as the most humble servant of Lord Shri Krishna and prays to keep the benevolent hand upon his head to bestow all round development.

अभिनवजलदर्शयामः श्रयामधूकुटिवशीकृतशयामः।
श्रयामम चामशयाममनशिमकरणकुश्क्षणं शरणमैस्म।
श्रयामशयामे सरिम्यात्ययुमुने त्वज्जनारुम्यम।
श्रीकरं श्रीकरं मूर्धनि सर्वसत्वादृश्ये निषेषि मे।
श्रीवल्लभं शरणयम् श्रीकृष्णस्य जगद्गुरुं तातम।
श्रीमद्भागवतामुत्तरसाधवनश्च प्रथुः नौच्।

(JM-1)

It is followed by the arrival of Devarshi Narada, who has come from the heaven to the earth. He has come to Lord Shri Krishna who offers him hospitality according to the custom. In this canto the poet has presented the complete description of Shri Krishna who happens to be the Mahanayak of this epic. Lord Krishna is creator of the universe, the form of the universe, the primary cause of the three worlds, the transformation of the worlds and the destroyer of the worlds.

जगद्विधातुजगदेकरुपिणी जगन्निदानाय जगत्परस्य च।
Second Canto:

This canto presents the apprehensions of people about Narada’s arrival, description of Narada, description of his welcome by Shri Krishna, the reason for his arrival and explanation by Narada on the justification of killing Jarasandha by recalling the incidents of his previous birth, acceptance message and finally Narada’s departure. In this canto Naradaji reminds Shri Krishna that he is the supreme controller of the world but despite this there are treacherous rulers like Jarasandha who do not believe in the supremacy of Lord Krishna. Such a ruler on the earth is a curse. It is a fact that some on earth do not believe in god’s supremacy and inscrutability. Naradji says,

"Despite your being endowed with endless capacity you do follow the path of morality and you exhibit endless actions and miracles which show that you are too great to be comprehended by the ordinary, strange to the demons, but fascinating to the intellectuals of the earth". (JM-15)

He reminds him that thousands of lives are taken in the sacrifice in the name of God -

That is why Jarasandha is fit to be killed in the battle field. So Bhima being a man of stupendous strength (Mahabali) can take up the task of killing Jarasandha since nobody else is capable of taking up the task.
Third canto:

The ladies of Indraprastha, separated from their dear One (Krishna), could not suffer the pangs of separation anymore. The intensity of their love for their Lord is described here in exaggerated terms- ‘ati shayokti alankara’ is used. The Gopikas are the beloveds of Gopala (Krishna) in the spiritual sense of the term, whereas they have already been married to their husbands in the physical sense of the term. The spiritual sense of the marriage does not apply here. They were wedded to Krishna, in the spiritual sense, which entails their union - the union of individual self with the Universal Self, with each other.

Having been attracted to their Metaphysical Love, the Lord appeared before them in all His actions (leelas), and embraced them all and allowed them all to drink the ambrosia of His lips which made them shed the tears of joy which they tried their best to hide! The attainment of the unattainable communion with Paramatman, which is the wish of the Gopikas, is expressed here.
The ambrosia from the lips of Hari was allowed to be drunk by the beautiful bodied - ananga Gopies, who had the privilege of embracing the God of Love (ananga-bodiless) which bestowed the support of the Lord on them, which made them motionless since they never thought that they would be granted love by their Lord! They lost their consciousness and went into 'Yognidra' - the sleep induced by the spiritual union with the Lord. This is considered the final stage of Yog which is the consummation of the Spiritual Love. As this is not physical, only psychological, should not be taken in physical sense. It is the Union of individual Self with the Universal Self - is presented in this canto.

Fourth Canto:

Yudhishtira intended to perform the Rajsuya Sacrifice. Therefore he sought the advice of Shri Krishna. Krishna reaches Indraprastha to guide Yudhishtira and discusses all important and relevant matters regarding performing the Rajsuya Yajna and how to kill Jarasandha. Krishna informed him that without killing Jarasandha he could not perform the Rajsuya Yajna. He conquered many kings and held them in subjection.

Lord Shri Krishna tells him that the son of Brihadrath who is born of the grace of the sage is haughty and sunk with power. He has turned blind due to the royal power of the kingdom Magadha. Jarasandha, the vain, haughty knowing no fear, with uncontrollable behaviour is an expert in dual combat. He does not accept the superiority of any other king. Therefore Lord Krishna reminds Yudhishtira that his first duty is to conquer and tame that royal tiger who has a large and mighty army and makes even the most powerful king uneasy and restless -

\[ \text{परम्पुरहद्वसूतुर्भगधारीशा मुनिप्रभावभव:} \]
\[ \text{युवाः कविवेकी मितरं राजमदान्यो घुच्चज्ञरासन्न:} \]
\[ \text{स कलु खलो हतशतुः स्वच्छन्दो इत्योध्मूर्धर्ण्यः} \]
\[ \text{अभिमानी त्वम दृष्टं क्षणमायमबीकरोति मम मित्रे} \]
\[ \text{प्रथमं स राजसिंहो जेयों जेयो जयी जरासन्न:} \]
The wicked Kansa, Shishupal and many others were afraid of his prowess and were submissive to him. Even Lord Krishna could not defeat him. Yudhishtira wanted to know about the strength and prowess of Jarasandha. When Shri Krishna narrated the story of Jarasandha, Yudhishtira says,

"All the same your behaviour is appropriate looking to the occasion. But do you think that this dual approach is applicable to me? Therefore O Lord, though you want me to perform the Rajsu Yajna, I consider this time is inappropriate for such an act." (JM-44)

This is what Arjun said to Shri Krishna in the *Mahabharata*. Exactly this thought is conveyed by Yudhishtira too. In the *Gita* Arjun uttered these words to Lord Shri Krishna in the context of war and Yudhisthir repeats these words with reference to Jarashandha's murder. Noticing that Yudhishtira was disturbed at the advice of Shri Krishna, Shri Krishna said,

"Dear friend, don't remain in suspense about the performance or the non-performance of the Yajna. The Yajna has to be performed anyhow I shall look after it. Actually the performance of the Vedic Yajna is a part of Dharma. Once if just for a moment it strikes your mind that you have to perform it and you resolve it. It is irreligious and sinful".

Thus Lord Shri Krishna advises Yudhishtira to perform the Yajna. Finally they decided to kill Jarasandha. Looking to this point the sarg is very important.
Fifth Canto:

This canto presents the description of Krishna’s departure to Dwarka and when he leaves this place he observes the grandeur of Indraprastha. It was in this Indraprastha that the royal palace of Dharmaraja Yudhishthira was situated. The domes and the minarets of the palace made of gold and touching the sky high red flags fluttering in the sky. Indraprastha was noted for its palaces and pinnacles. These buildings served as the resting place for birds flying across the sky when tired.

Resounding with the chants of sacred verses of the Vedas by pandits, rising fumes from the continuous stoking of the fire, which causes the destruction of sins of living creatures, were the effervescent features that Lord Krishna saw in the Palace, while going to Dwarka, where with the gathering of the saints, noble men and worshipful erudite people, the Palace was assuming sacredness like pilgrim centers. There the Lord saw Brahmins well versed in scriptures and scholars having knowledge of sacred religious oblations and people strictly adhering to the rituals in performing the yajna.

Sixth Canto:

In this 'sarg' the poet has presented the glory of Brihadratha who was the heroic lord of Magadha. He married the two beautiful twin-daughters of the king of Kashi. But no son was born to him to perpetuate his line; though he performed many auspicious rites and 'homas'. This canto also presents how Jarasandha
was born by the boon of the illustrious Rishi Chandakaushika, the son of Kakshivana of the Gautama race.

The two queens delivered two fragmentary bodies having one eye, one arm, one leg, half a stomach, half a face, and half an anus. Seeing the fragmentary bodies, the queens decided to throw away the fragments of the body. A 'Rakshas' woman, whose name was Jara found the fragments lying there. She took those parts in her hand and united the fragments to make them easier to carry. As soon as the fragments were united, they formed into a heroic child of one body which was as hard and strong as the thunderbolt. Thus the name - Jarasandha was kept -

काले सजीवं समविस्थूतं दूढङ्काथा धीविवक्षोधिकोरोदरननम्।
गात्रस्य खण्डद्रयमभजायत पल्लीद्रयादस्य महीमृतः शिशोः॥

(JM-63)

Seventh Canto:

In this canto it is described how Rishabh Rakshas was killed by Jarasandha under the guidance of Brihadratha. The brutality of the night walker is highlighted in this 'sarg'. The royal wrath of Jarasandha is described quite fitting to a hero. Thus he proved his valour, courage and might. He received recognition of his subjects and the world outside for his valour in killing the ferocious demon.

We have symbolic description of nature to associate the night for sinful activities with the nightwalker's wrath. The demon, the bull among the kings, was roused to the utmost wrath which he expressed by stamping his feet heavily which sounded like the cyclone which shook the palaces and ordinary houses alike like the blind without any discrimination. He drank human blood like a thirsty person who drinks water in excess. The wrath of the demon is described here.
Jarasandha was married to the princess of Kashi Naresh. A son was born to him whose name was Sahadev. Finally the king Brihadratha, along with hundreds of Brahmins, appointed his son, the prince with utmost pleasure and dedicated the self sufficient kingdom unto him. And then he, with his two wives, left for the forest to spend the rest of his life in penance.

**Eighth Canto:**

It describes the state of affairs of Jarasandha, the birth and marriage of his daughters, Kansa's 'vadh' by Shri Krishna, Jarasandha's vow to kill Krishna. After the installation of Jarasandha as the king of Magadha, he brought numerous kings under his sway by his valour. As told by Kaushika, the king Jarasandha received the boons and ruled the kingdom after obtaining the sovereignty of the whole world.
Jarasandha's twin daughters were married to Kansa the king of Kashi who was killed by Lord Krishna. His heart was burning with sorrow, his mind distraught by the widowhood of his two daughters, angrily made a promise that he would kill Krishna the murderer of Kansa. He delegated the burden of the administration to his ministers, and went to the Chaitya Mountain accompanied by some Brahmins to get the blessings of Lord Shiva. Thus Jarasandha, the enemy of Vishnu, blinded by his ego performed for one year the hard vow of Shiva. Finally Shiva was well pleased and appeared there and Shiva gave him the desired boon and disappeared from there.

The proud Jarasandha, who accomplished fulfillment in the worship of Shiva, having received the desired boon from the lord of the gods, had become unconquerable even to the great foes, and carried a tremendous radiance. The king of Magadha waited for an opportunity to defeat Krishna, the cause of widowhood of his daughters.

लवङ्गसिन्धुहराबाधने सत्युद्धतो देवदेवाद्येष्टव्य लघुवा चरम्।
दुर्जयः सन् द्विषद्धिर्हुमोहधिमुचि मागज्जन्द्रः प्रचण्डं स तेजो दभो।
कृष्णं जेतुं महाशङ्खं पुन्योषोंधव्यकारणम्।
तस्यावर्षसरं योगं चिवरीण्य मग्धाऴिपः। (JM-88)

Ninth Canto:

This sarg is full of events. It presents - as per the advice of Narada Jarasandha’s attack on Mathura, fight with Shri Krishna, defeat, again fight, again defeat, Sahdev advises his father to bow down to Shri Krishna, Jarasandh’s anger, once again decides to fight with Shri Krishna, appointment of Shalva to prepare the scheme to defeat Shri Krishna.

Jarasandha considering himself as unconquerable in the three worlds. He was blinded by pride and rejecting the strength of all other kings as useless,
behaved improperly everywhere. Very interesting thing is this that the same Rishi Naradaji who prompted Lord Krishna to kill Jarasandha, now comes to Jarasandha and advices him to fight against Krishna.

तस्मादिहाय नाचिरेण पुष्यांशिनिन्दा
युद्ध विषेहि मगधिन्यदि शक्षितशसि II
शुरास: शुभमन्ति न विकल्प्य महात्सवः॥ जयो हि
यत्पौरवस्य निकष्णा निकम्य भवन्ति॥ (JM-91)

Tenth Canto:

As per the planning of Shalva, Kalyavan’s attack, destruction of Krit by Muchkund with the help of Shri Krishna, Jarasandha’s attack, the descriptions of the marching of the army, for the safety of Bhrahmins Shri Krishna’s tactful escape (flee) from the battlefield as a defeated person, Shri Krishna reaches Dwarika secretly - are the incidents described in this canto.

Jarasandha threatened his companions that he was preparing his army to fight Krishna again, and for any reason if he was unable to defeat Krishna in the battle, then he would definitely destroy all the rulers and Brahmins at the same time. On listening to the scaring announcement, even the people of the town were trembling. After fully discussing among them, Brahmins in trepidation told the King,

"Hey Lord! The auspicious time has come and now you can go to war with complete confidence. The enemy will certainly run away after the defeat and there is no doubt that the victory will be yours." (JM-102)

Thus the king, who was a devout of Shiva, worshipped lord Shiva with many Bilva leaves as per prescribed rites and upon serving the scholars, left with his great army. It is well-known that Lord Krishna who is popular as 'Ranchhod' ran away from the battlefield just to protect the Brahmins on the earth. The Lord
of the Universe is amazingly playful and due to his phantasm over the entire world, Shri Krishna dodged the wicked Jarasandha’s attempts to catch him.

Eleventh Canto:

Looking to the theme of this epic this canto is also very important. As per the advice of his friend Paundraka Jarasandha decided to perform the Naramedha Yajna.

In Learning from his friend about his enemy’s welfare, Jarasandha summoned the King of Chedi (Shishupala) to discuss the situation along with Dantavakra, the king of Kashi and Paundraka. Thereafter, the King of Chedi, learning Jarasandha’s fury and on being invited to meet him, rushed to Magadha along with his ministers. Paundrak, advises the ruler of Magadha to please Lord Shiva, he should start the Naramedha Yajna (a sacrifice involving killing of a human being). To follow the norms of Naramedha Yajna, Magadha King arrested several innocent kings quickly and put them in the prison. Once again Sahadeva’s objection to perform this Narmaheda Sacrifice is presented here. Sahadeva tells his father,

"Hey insensitive! My dear father! You told me that you have decided to perform the Naramedha Yajna—by killing innocent people for the act, will you be able to live peacefully even in Heaven? Unfortunately, even those like me and pious Brahmins, who always obey your orders, are not happy at heart to approve of your act (Naramedha Yajna). Thus, by your cruel act (Naramedha Yajna) you
are committing a great sin by hurting the sentiments of the minor kings, Brahmins and your subjects. So, father, if you want your welfare on this earth, then give up this cruel act and start making peaceful prayer to Lord Shiva.”

(JM - 118)

Twelfth Canto:

This canto presents the mental state of the kings imprisoned by Jarasandha. The kings lodged in the prison, spent their miserably unbearable time counting on their fingers. Gripped in fear with the Naramedha Yajna day fast approaching, those kings suddenly thought that it was wiser to fall at the feet of the unerring, immutable, eternally divine Krishna, who is also known as Jagadeesh (lord of the Universe). Thus the devotees appealed to the Lord who burns down the forests of distress and reciprocates the affection of his devotees and who is the concentration of their meditation. Thus bowing to the Chakradhari Vishnu, all the kings having complete faith that they will be released from the bondage - is described in the 'sarg'.

Thirteenth Canto:

This canto presents the description of imprisoned kings, their imbalanced state of mind, their request to the guards to carry their message to Jarasandha to have mercy on them, Jarasandha's anger and displeasure, Naradji's arrival, his advice to Jarasandha, as per the advice of Naradji Jarasandha's worshiping of all captive kings by the Brahmans, the captive kings send a letter to Lord Krishna to release them from the prison, finally the Brahman reaches Dwarika secretly, all these instances are described in this 'sarg'.

Fourteenth Canto:
The Brahmin arrived in the city of Dwarika unaffected by any other faith in the Almighty. The description of Dwarikanagar, the people of Dwarika, the ladies, their jewelry and dress everything is described in a very beautiful way. As the city, Dwarika was protected by Achyuta Himself, it looked very beautiful and pleasing to the eye even from a distance.

It gave to the humans of the world as good a result as their good deeds and on the whole a pleasant view to the viewers and thus happiness to all. There are the descriptions of lakes full of crystal clear water, gardens, which were replete with fully blown flowers, beautiful trees, the panoramic view of the city, the ladies of Dwarika and in the end their yearning for water sports.

**Fifteenth Canto:**

This 'sarg' describes that one of the servants sent by the Pandavas quickly approached Shri Krishna. Hearing this Shri Krishna entrusting his ministers with the work responsibilities left blissfully for the Pandavapura. Krishna saw the markets filled with abundance of grains, hundreds of houses, dwelled by elite people, blissfully watching mountains, trees, forests and ponds which were pleasing to heart. It also describes the Jalvihar of Shri Krishna. In the morning Lord Krishna reaches Hastinapur.

**Sixteenth Canto:**

The 'sarg' presents Lord Krishna's arrival to Hastinapur. He did not give much importance to his welcome and entered the town. Then hearing that Krishna has come, the urban ladies afflicted by cupid, as if to drink the
sweetness of the countenance of the beloved, came out of the houses quickly. Leaving aside their own work, the ladies those were hit by the cupid on their vital parts, stayed on the sides of the palaces drinking Krishna with their sight as if the Chakoris to the moon. Shri Krishna had discussion with Yudhishthira for Rajsuya Yajna, final decision for 'Digvjay', decision to take Bhima and Arjun with him to Magadh is described in this 'sarg'.

Where the lord of the worlds Krishna himself appears continually there variety of troops of army and abundance of weapons are of no use. Where there are Krishna, Arjuna and Bhima like three fires, who eradicate enemy and are prepared to kill the enemy, there every desired thing is achieved -

\begin{quote}
यत्र मित्र जगतां पति: स्वयं कृष्ण एव सतां विराजते।
तत्र सैन्यनिकौरवेनकै: किम्महास्विनिचै: प्रयोजनम॥
यत्र शत्रुहनासार्थमुखता: पावकतज्रयमिवोद्वृतापरा:।
अच्छुताज्जुनवृकोदरा: भटास्त्र सिद्धमरिच्छ मनीषितम॥
\end{quote}

(JM - 174)

Seventeenth Canto:

The description of Lord Krishna, Bhima and Arjuna is presented very beautifully. These trio like trio of fire that is brilliant with flames, as if ready to burn entirely the huge race of crying evil people. Crossing the boundaries, they entered the boundary of Magadha. From the peak of the mountain, Gorath, saw at a distance, city named Girivraja. They went by walking to the mountain Chaityaka keeping the chariot safely with charioteer on the mountain of Gorath, all the three the mightiest of the three worlds, went by walking to the mountain Chaityaka.

Going there, they who tormented the enemies saw a trio of drums that was situated on the slope of the peak, made up of skin of the armour of demon. Then the three overwhelmed with anger, making big sound, forcefully broke
down that trio of drum, placed on the mountain, that was made owing to the order of Brihadratha. These three Brahmins sensed Jarasandha’s intent to disturb the peace and Jarasandha also realized the possibility of disturbance to peace due to the entry of these three Brahmins, as informed by the Brahmins of the kingdom and secret intelligence information. King Jarasandha was a bit upset with the entry of these unexpected guest Brahmins in the kingdom, on which issue, a debate had ensued between learned men and astrologers and the destruction of the drums.

They entered the city, their meeting with Jarasandha, long discussion is described in the 'sarg'. This canto is very important as Lord Krishna reveals the secrets of birth and death of Jarasandha to Bhima and how to vanquish Jarasandha—whose body was unshatterable even by a fatal weapon. Earlier, due to the efforts of his father and as a consequence the effect of powerful Muni’s split fruit and seed, this child was born in the night to two mothers in two portions. Wandering in the night, a female demon named Jara with an accursed form, used her magic powers to bind the two sections of the strong body like Vajra, of this wicked child.

This child, with the effect of Kaushika Rishi’s speech, was joined (Sandhi) into one body by the female demon Jara, from his own two sections, was thus came to be known as Jarasandha, a name given by his father. Lord Shri Krishna tells Bhima,

"O! Accomplished wrestler Bhima, you may definitely and very easily succeed in attacking Jarasandha, who has a strong body like a fatal weapon, by choosing to hit him suddenly on the mark found in the middle part of his body. It is not correct to think that by attacking in a deceptive manner the terrorizing King Jarasandha, we will be committing a betrayal. Because, with the death of a terrorist ruler like this, lives of thousands of people could be saved and it will actually be a good deed". (JM - 186)
Thus, lord Krishna explained to Bhima and Arjuna about adopting such tactics as per the norms of governing fighting the enemy and destroying him, which contained the remedy for all ill effects.

**Eighteenth Canto:**

This 'sarg' describes that the brothers in the meantime, unarmed and with their bare arms as their only weapons, entered the city in the guise of Snataka Brahmins in order to fight with Jarasandha. Jarasandha received his visitors with proper ceremonies. Jarasandha was sure that they were not the Brahmins as they broke the strong drums as Brahmins. Lord Krishna reminded him that he had done cruel deed by making the Kshatriyas of the world captive and put in the prison. Lord Krishna tells him on the face that they are desirous of helping all distressed people. They will liberate all the captive monarchs. Thus he challenged Jarasandha for a single combat.

Lord Shri Krishna informed him that they were certainly not the Brahmins. On the other hand Jarasandha was also a brave king he did not agree to liberate the kings collected for the purpose of the sacrifice. He was ready to fight with troops or alone against one. Finally it was decided that he would fight with Bhimasena. Description of the 'Vishkanya', Shalva planned to kill Bhim with the help of this 'Vishkanya' is beautifully presented in this 'sarg'.

**Nineteenth Canto:**

This sarg presents the complete description of the meeting of Bhima and the Vishkanya disguised as a beautiful young maid, in the garden, Bhima having seen that beautiful young maid in that secluded place, indulged in the amorous play, becoming forgetful of his younger-brotherhood to Dharma, kinship with Krishna, recollecting repeatedly the cupid alone, then saw Hari appearing himself before him in reddish hue of the sun. Lord Krishna reminded him of the wanton lady being sent by the foe for thinning his excellent might. Finally he was saved by Lord Krishna.
From the artistic point of view this canto is very interesting. It presents the ability of the poet to form the `Padmabandha`, `Gadabandha`, `Murajbandha`, `Shulbandha`, `Venubandha`, `Vajrabandha` and `Chakrabandha`. The following verse, which is arranged in `Chakrabandha` shows as follows -

"Hariraya Jarasandhavadham Kavyam"

| सद्राज्ञयमीहः स्वम्भाषामभि यदेवेवस्ययोभोधः क्रमं |
| मुग्धारातिः रिण्युपाततमन तं काम्माविश्वितम् |
| मध्येर्प्रसृति रागमूद्रमसां भव्यं निरोधं हरे- |
| रेकानं सरसं मुहुः सुमसो मन्दस्मतं मेनिरे II (JM - 216) |

**Twentieth Canto:**

This 'sarg' presents the complete description of the duel between Jarasandha and Bhima. The fight began on the first day of the month of Kartika, and those two heroes fought on continuously without food, and without intermission of day or night till the thirteenth day. It was on the night of the fourteenth day, the Magadha king stopped from fatigue. Bhima was determined to kill him. That foremost of all strong men, Bhima, mustered all his strength and courage with the desire of vanquishing the unvanquished Jarasandha.

Bhima raised up the strong Jarasandha and whirled him high one hundred times. He seized him firmly, lifted one of his legs upright at once with hands, Bhima twisted it as though a wet cloth, which made every limb of him frail. He (Bhima) threw him like an uprooted tree. Bhima did split them into pieces. Bhima pressed his knee against Jarasandha's backbone and broke his body and threw away those two halves in the air, two miles afar and thus killed him.

| निंक्षिप्यं तं दृश्य इव भगनमध्बिषं पार्षिन्यं निघाय समगिनः ककुन्दरे: I |
| किर्भन् पदद्वयमपि नूमस्यमुवक्ष्कीसः प्रभज्जनज्ञको बष्मः ह II |
| ततं पदद वत परिवर्त्य लीलया रिपु वली तदुस्स चोरस्य च फानम् I |

37
Thus they liberated the friends the captive kings. Krishna installed the son of Jarasandha on the throne of Magadha. The Epic ends its version with the death of Jarasandha.

VI

The Great Tradition of Sanskrit Mahakavya

The Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam has been considered as a great epic in Sanskrit. The poet, a worshiper of Lord Shri Krishna, describes in detail how Jarasandha was killed and Yudhishthira performed the Rajsuya Yajna under the able guidance of Shri Krishna who happens to be the Mahanayak of this 'Mahakavya'. It has all the requirements of a Mahakavya as prescribed by the Sanskrit scholars.

In the tradition of Lakshana Granthas, the role of Acharya Bhamah is very significant in the subject concerning critical appreciation of a Mahakavya, and who is next only to Acharya Bharata. The later Acharyas accepted the characteristics prescribed by him with slight modifications here and there. Specifying the characteristics of a Mahakavya, Acharya Bhamah wrote that epic is divided into cantos, its subject is profound with its hero being great or characterized by quiet gallantry and loftiness of conduct. Its language is witty, its story is devoid of unnecessary elements or matter and in spite of being rhetorical, it is based on morality.
In addition to the description of mantra, messenger, marching, war and the rising of hero in the end, it also contains beautiful description of seasons, rising of moon, garden and mountains. Even though Mahakavya contains all these things described above, it is neither complex nor inexplicable. It always contains meaningful message. It has all the five divisions of drama and stages of work. Such poetry depicts the nature of people and contains all poetic sentiments.

The definition given by Dandin who belonged to the sixth century is simple and concise -

सर्वबन्धो महाकाव्यमुख्यते तस्य लक्षणम्।
आशीर्वदनस्त्यावस्तुनिर्देशो वाचि तन्मुखः॥
इति यहासकथासूत्रमितर्भ्य सदाश्रयम्।
चतुर्गांवलात्यं चतुरोदातनायकः॥

रणा वैलुत्तुच्छाकरोदयवणः।
उदाहारसतिलक्ष्रीडामघुपानरतोत्सवः॥
विप्रलमैवचाहेऽन्तु कुमारोदयवणः।
मन्त्रदूतप्रयाणाजनायकाध्युद्यैरपै॥
अलंकृतमसंकिष्टं रसभावनिर्नयतम्।
सर्गरूपितिस्तीतः श्रवणवतः: सुसंगधिभि:॥
सर्ब्रूत्र स्ववृत्तान्तरूपेत स्वलक्षणम्।
काव्यं कल्याणसत्यायि जायते सदलत्रृति॥

(Kumarsambhava of Kalidasa. M.R. Kale. Intro. ii)

According to Dandin, Mahakavya is a creation divided in cantos. It contains words of benediction, praise or greetings and outline of the story at the beginning. The subject of an epic is historical or based on the real story of a gentleman. It contains the description of sublime, virtuous, clever hero’s attainment of four human pursuit’s viz. Virtue, Wealth, Sensual pleasures and Salvation. It contains the description of a city, ocean, mountain, season, moon-
rise, sun-rise, and garden, messenger, marching and rising of the hero. It includes dalliance, intoxication, and enjoyment of love, separation, marriage and birth of a son. It has mantra, messenger, marching and rising of the hero.

The *Mahakavya* is enriched with rhetoric, extensive and aesthetic and emotional content. The Cantos should not be comprehensive; story must contain interesting events and should include elements like description of twilight, there must be a change of meter at the end of the Canto. The *Mahakavya* containing the above characteristics serves the popular interest and has lasting effect till the end of an era.

*Mahakavya* contains a productive or non-productive poetic story. It may contain interludes (intermediary stories), whose objective is to give boost to the main story. *Mahakavya* is divided into Cantos and contains a story full of dramatic elements. It depicts the entire life and it contains a heroic deed or any important incident. The poet builds up the story based on this incident with rhetoric description, illustration of Nature and different worldly and divine depictions. The mundane descriptions include that of Nature, garden and city, while the divine includes description of Gods and heaven. The hero of a *Mahakavya* is born as a Brahmin, is meritorious, a warrior, desirous of conquering the whole world, a great valiant. He is powerful, sagacious, tactful King. *Mahakavya* will have a villain and description about his lineage. It depicts victory of the hero and defeat of the villain.

The attainment of four human pursuit’s viz. Virtue, Wealth, Sensual pleasures and Salvation is dealt as an objective and *Mahakavya* contains all poetic sentiments. The speciality of Acharya Rudrat is the usage of aesthetic sentiments. In *Mahakavya*, along with the praise of hero’s lineage, beautiful depiction of his city is included. Epic contains divine and natural elements; it may not contain unnatural incidents involving humans.

According to Acharya Bhamah the important elements of an Epic are – (1) Division into Cantos (2) Great and profound subject (3) Sublime hero (4) Interpretation of four classes (5) Rising of the hero (6) The element of
righteousness (7) Drama’s characteristic-Five divisions (8) Inclusion of nature of people and various sentiments (9) Prosperity-Description of Moonrise, Seasons etc. Generally we find all these elements in the Sanskrit Mahakavyas.

The history of Sanskrit literature has a great tradition of the 'Mahakavya'. Besides the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, the best written epics are the *Kumarsambhava* and the *Raghuvaṃśa* by Kaalidas, the *Buddhacharita* and the *Saunadernanda* by Ashvagosh, the *Kiratharjuniyam* by Bharvi, the *Ravanavadha* by Bhatti, the *Shishupalavadha* by Magh and Shri Harsh’s the *Naishadhchharit*.

The above mentioned poetic works have been considered as great epics having all or most of the characteristics of an epic. It should be borne in mind that these - elaborate rules were evolved after a minute examination of all available specimens. The works of early poets like Kaalidasa will not therefore be found to conform strictly to the definition given above, nor is it necessary that they should do so, provided they follow the broad lines laid down.

These epics open with a verse or verses expressive of a salutation to a deity, or a blessing conferred on the readers, or a hinting of the subject-matter. The subject chosen by the poets of these epics is profound, with its hero being great or characterized by quiet gallantry and loftiness of conduct. The object of these compositions is the attainment of the four aims of human pursuit—i.e., Virtue, Wealth, Sensual pleasures and Salvation. The hero is either a divine personage or a kshatriya of noble descent and possessed of the qualities of a 'Dhirodatta' Hero. In the Raghuvamasha it has for its theme a number of Heroes, but they are all Kshatriya princes sprung from the same race.

In addition to the description of *mantra*, messenger, marching, war and the rising of hero in the end, the poems also contain beautiful description of seasons, rising of moon, garden and mountains. They also describe, at more or less length, such incidents and topics as twilight, the rise of the sun and the moon, the night, the evening, darkness, the day, morning, noon, hunting, mountains, seasons, forests, oceans, the union and separation of lovers, ages,
heaven, cities, sacrifices, battles, invasions, marriage—ceremonies, advice, the birth of a son.

It is very difficult to present the characteristics even of a few important epics or to discuss at length the significant traits of these epics. In order to understand the great tradition of the Sanskrit epics I restrict my discussion to the limit of five important epics and that too in brief.

The *Kumarsambhava* by Kalidasa: Kalidas has been considered as the greatest poet and dramatist in the Sanskrit Literature. He is indisputably the greatest master-mind in Sanskrit poetry. The *Kumarsambhava* has been acclaimed as one of the best epics written in Sanskrit. M.R. Kale writes in *Kumarsambhava of Kalidasa*, "The *Kumarsambhava* or 'the poem descriptive of the birth of Kumara', has all the requirements of a Mahakavya and is classed as such by Sanskritists. The hero of this poem is a divine being, and one of the Dhirodatta class." (KK - xxvii)

This epic contains seventeen cantos (sarg) and each canto is named after the most important event described in it. Each canto contains minimum forty six 'shlokas'. Sixth 'sarg' has ninety five shlokas. The hero is Lord Shiva who possesses all the qualities of a 'Dhirodatta Nayak'. It contains words of benediction and outline of the story at the beginning.

The epic begins with the description of the Himalayan mountains and goes on to the marriage of Shiva Paarvati, birth of Kumar, the killing of the demon Tarkasur which are described in an interesting and beautiful style. The poem concludes with an account of the destruction of the demon Taraka, the object for which the god of war was born. The purity and splendour of the Himalayan mountains and the beauty of the forest with the advent of spring, (king of seasons) deep meditation of Shankar, Rati's weeping, the meditation of Paarvati, newly married family, children’s mischief and war description is fascinating.
Shiva and Parfait's marriage was not only for the enjoyment of love or sexual passion. The treatment of love described in ‘Kumarsambhava’ is of a different class. Till the time of Kalians, all poetry depicted that men were attracted towards women, but for the first time in Kumarsambhava, the poet has depicted a woman trying to attract and allure man. The poet has proved that love does not depend on physical beauty. When Paarvati’s incomparable beauty and arrogance of Kaamdev could not distract Shiva’s attention. Through Paarvati’s deep meditation Shiva became her slave.

According to Doctor Keith the Kumarsambhava has a lot of diversity, bright imagination and enlightened feelings and moves interestingly towards modern thinking. In the poetry, a beautiful diffusion of feelings and imagination is present. The dominant theme in this poem is the ‘Essence of Beauty.’ Incidents and deceptions are beautifully described. In this epic the loftiness of feelings and weeping of Rati after the death of her beloved Kaamdev, are very heart wrenching.

Maurice Winternitz writes in the History of Indian Literature, "The thoughtful fervour, the splendour of images and the choice of expression do make us feel that we are enjoying here a genuine composition of Kalidas". (HIL - 59)

Traditionally Kalidasa is known as a poet of the ‘essence of beauty.’ In the essence of beauty he describes incidences and co-incidences very well and in the ‘Kumarasambhava,’ the minute details of Paarvati’s gracefulness, while meditating in the rain has been interestingly described. Though Kalidas has intelligent artistry over women’s beauty, yet his essence of beauty is within the limits of decency and sobriety. The poet has compared the close relationship of Shiva- Parfait with that of the ocean and Baghirathi. He has shown their compliance with each other. He is a man of a few but measurable words. Through Narada, Parfait took the name of Shankar in the form of her husband, the poet describes very beautifully Paarvati’s innate shyness, decency and
happiness. To express a story in few words we come to understand the artistic knowledge of Kilians.

A.A. MacDonell writes, "The Kumara-Sambhava, or the 'Birth of the War-god,' consists, when complete, of seventeen cantos. The first seven are entirely devoted to the courtship and wedding of the god Siva and of Parvati, daughter of Himalaya, the parents of the youthful god. This fact in itself indicates that description is the prevailing characteristic of the poem. It abounds in that poetical miniature painting in which lies the chief literary strength of the Indian. Affording the poet free scope for the indulgence of his rich and original imaginative powers, it is conspicuous for wealth of illustration".

(Origin and Development of Sanskrit Literature. 222)

The Raghuvansha Mahakavyam is also a very popular Sanskrit epic written by Kalidasa. The story of the 'Raghuvansham' is taken from the story of Valmiki's the Ramayan. Kalidas has very clearly shown his gratitude towards him. But at every step, changes in this poetry, proves the poet's efficiency. This epic contains nineteen cantos (sarg) and each canto is named after the most important event described in it. Except eighteenth and nineteenth canto each canto contains minimum seventy 'shlokas'. Twelfth canto contains one hundred and three 'shlokas'. The hero, Lord Rama possesses all the qualities of a 'Dhirodatta Nayak' but it has more than one hero. It contains words of benediction and outline of the story at the beginning. Kalidas begins the epic with the prayer of Lord Shiva.

Maurice Winternitz writes in the History of Indian Literature, ”Another great epic of Kalidas is the Raghuvamsa, "The History of the Family of Raghu", in which the poet describes the life and achievements of Rama and also those of his predecessors and successors. The first nine cantos are devoted to the four immediate predecessors of Rama, Dilipa, Raghu, Aja and Dasharatha; then in cantos X-XVI he describes, fairly in agreement with the Ramayana, the career of Rama, Kalidasa does not conceal the fact that he found his inspirations in the great epic of Valmiki. However, he does not let himself off into a competition with the adikavi. He has narrated the actual Rama-tale very briefly, so briefly that the
Dilip Singh’s dialogue, Indumathi’s Swayamvar (ceremony of selection of bridegroom by a princess) the cries of Aja, and the air travel of Ram and Sita, and Sita’s helplessness when sending messages to Rama are some of the episodes which leave indelible marks on the hearts of all. Ajas’ inconsolable weeping due to Indumati’s death is very popular in Sanskrit Literature. In the example, the forsaking of Sita by the agitated Rama is brought forth by using the beautiful imagery (Vipralabh Shringar). The separation of lovers in the war episode of Rahgu, Aja and Rama, he brings out the essence of bravery well. After denouncing worldly pleasures, Vashisht and Vaalmiki accept the hermitage in a very peaceful manner. Besides that, he has brought forth the essences of fear, sorrow, strangeness, humour and affection and they are placed correctly.

Being enamoured by his comparisons, the critics conferred the title of 'Deepshikha Kalidas' (the line of lamps). In like manner, in the ‘Raghuvansham’ the poet has compared pregnant, defeated and sad Sita with the last phase of the moon. Kalidas’ comparisons are taken from all the different fields of sacred literature, spiritual, grammatical and poetical books and from nature.

In his poems Kalidas has not presented women as a beauty object. She is every thing to man and not just a companion in holy rights. Just as a yajna is incomplete without ‘dakshina’ in the same way a man is incomplete without his wife.

Maurice Winternitz writes, "The fact that both of the epics of Kalidasa belong to the most famous productions of court-poetry is proved..... The epics of Kalidasa surpass all later epics in matter of simplicity of language and scrupulous avoidance of subtlety." (HIL - 67)
The *Buddhacharita*: The ‘Buddhacharita’ is a beautiful piece of art by Ashvaghosha. In this piece of work, the image of the poet and poetic perfection is predetermined. When compared to other epics it is evident here that the genius and the grace are very admirable.

This epic is divided into two parts and each part contains fourteen cantos. In all it contains twenty-eight cantos (sarg) and each canto is named after the most important event described in it. Except tenth and seventeenth canto each canto contains minimum fifty 'shlokas'. Twelfth canto contains one hundred and twenty 'shlokas'. The hero of this epic is Lord Buddha. The first canto presents the birth of Lord Buddha.

Sometimes the description is very heart piercing. Women are attracting Siddharth. Kamdev is trying to attract him with lust, but Siddharth remains very steady. Through Nand’s baptism in the Buddha’s religion, uncertain psychological condition and the shaving of his head, the poet has described his psychological condition very minutely.

Like the *Ramayan* and the *Mahabharata*, there is an elegant coordination of proprietary and sweetness and his descriptions are guiding, lively and natural and there is a very effective description of instability of youth and life. Like feelings, the modulation of language also has made this epic musical. Affected by the teaching of a great person like Buddha, Nand’s condition has become like a monk. Like Kalidas, Ashvaghosh has analysed human psychology very beautifully.

The epic ‘*Buddhacharita*’ depends upon the holy Baudhha granth the *Lalit Vistar*, but the description in that subject is professional and compact. The first five chapters depict Buddha’s enlightenment and leaving his house, the 6th and 7th chapters are about his leaving to the forest for meditation, the 8th chapter is about the weeping of Yashoda and in the 9th chapter the search for Buddha is depicted. In the 10th chapter after obtaining the knowledge of truth, Siddharth’s departure to Magadha and the 11th chapter deals with the abuse of lust, in the 12 chapter he goes to Maharishi Aradh who teaches him the spiritual knowledge. In
the chapter 13th Kamdev tries to distract Buddha from his meditation and gets defeated. In the 14th chapter Buddha receives complete enlightenment.

The poet has experimented with the ornamentation of words and their meanings, similarity, comparison, inspiration, attitudes and playing of words, arrangement of double meaning words in their proper places. In every verse the ornamentation and its meaning is very systematic and his verses are natural and applicable at all times. In Buddha’s philosophy Ashvaghosha has taken the help of vivid poetry in the place of complicated and uninteresting principles because he has openly accepted that beautiful poetry has easy access to the human heart.

The *Shishupalavadham*: This epic is composed by Magha. There are twenty chapters (sargs) in the *Shishupalavadha* and it is counted in trio (*Kirath, Shishupalavadha* and *Naishdhcharit*). The plot is taken from the seventy-fourth chapter of the tenth 'Skandh' of the *Shrimadbhagvat* and from the thirty third chapter to forty fourth chapter of the *Sabhaparva* of the *Mahabharata*. Goswami Hariraiji has followed the model of the *Shishupalavadham* by Magh.

This epic contains twenty cantos (sarg) and each canto is named after the most important event described in it. Each canto contains minimum sixty eight 'shlokas'. Nineteenth canto contains one hundred and twenty 'shlokas'. The hero, Lord Shri Krishna possesses all the qualities of a 'Dhirodatta Nayak'. It contains words of benediction and outline of the story at the beginning.

The medium of presentation has been decorated with the description of enmity / rivalry between Krishna and Shishupal and the killing of Shishupal by Krishna, that the poetry has taken an incomparable position in the Sanskrit literature. The supreme sage Narada has prompted Krishna to kill Shishupal by narrating about his terrorism in his previous birth. Balram and other Yadavas get ready to engage in war immediately, but on the advice of Uddhav, Krishna along with his soldiers starts to take part in Yudhishthir’s royal religious ceremony - the Rajsuya yajna.
On the way they halt at the Raivathak Mountain. The poet has described in detail about the Raivathak Mountain, sunset, moonrise and sensuous acts of Yadavas in the night, water games, cocktail parties etc. Yudhishthira is paying his respects to Krishna while paying homage before reaching Indraprastha. Shishupal is opposing this act and got ready to fight. There is a battle between both the regimes and in the end Krishna beheads Shishupal with the 'Sudharshan Chakra'. After his death, the light from Shishupal's body merges with Krishna.

In the *Shishupalavadha* by Magh and Bharvi’s *Kiratharjunaiyam*, there is a lot of resemblance in both the epics. For instance plots have been taken from the Mahabharata. Both start with the word ‘shree’. The first chapter is filled with dialogues about politics. In the first epic there is dialogue between Kirath and Yudhishthira and in the second one, between Narada and Krishna. In the second chapter they talk about politics. In the Kirath, great sage Vyas is guiding the Pandavas and in the *Shishupalavadha*, Narada is guiding.

In both, the description of seasons, mountains, flower admiration, water games, morning beauty, dusk, moonrise, camping, wine and cocktail parties has been vividly expressed. In the 10th chapter of *Kirath*, the Apsaras (heavenly bodies) try to attract Arjuna and in the *Shishupalavadham* in the 13th chapter, the description of women attracting Krishna is almost similar. In the 15th chapter of Bharvi and the 10th chapter of Magh, the use of picture poems shows their perfection. In the *Kirath*, Shiva takes the form of Kirath and sends messengers to insult Arjuna, while in the *Shishupalavadha*, Shishupal sends messengers to insult Krishna. In the end in the Kirath there is a fight between Shiva and Arjuna and in the *Shishupalavadha* the fight is between Krishna and Shishupal.

Maurice Winternitz writes, “The *Kiratarjuniya* served as model for Magha's epic the *Shishupalavadha*, that is likewise esteemed as one of the most important pieces of poetry.... Magha attempts to surpass his model Bharavi in each one the devices and affectations of subtlety. Like Bharavi in canto IV of the *Kiratarjuniya*, Magha tries to show his skill in metrics in canto IV of the *Shishupalavadha*. Whilst Bharavi has used only 19 different types of metres,
Magha uses 23 of them. Again like canto XV that is devoted to the description of the battle and shows artificiality, alliteration and play of words at the most in the *Kiratarjuniya*, Magha introduces in his canto XIX, that is devoted to the description of the battle, more and more similar complicated devices.

"Here we find verses that give a second meaning when read from 'below, of which the syllables which read according to different devices form all sorts of figures in zigzag way, in a circle etc., and verses in which only particular consonants occur,... He too has drawn his material from the *Mahabharata*, and that from the section on the slay of Shishupala by Krisna. The poet, however, is not entirely dependant upon the legend as he finds it in the *Mahabharata*. His main interest lies in descriptions and sketches, that get into motion with predilection towards the erotic domain... Like a good poet, on both, word and meaning... In the matter of selection of his similes Magha tries to be as much original as possible. Magha is also a master of play of words and in the use of expressions having two meanings."

(HIL - 73,74)

The *Kirath Arjunaniyam* : After Ashvaghosh and Kalidas, Bharivi’s name occurs in the list of epic composers. After Kalidas, the tradition of epics took a new turn where the artistic aspect was more dominating than the feelings.

Morris Winternitz writes," In Indian manuals of poetics he is always included among the greatest poets. His epic *Kiratarjuniya*, according to the unanimous verdict of the Indians, belongs to the best type of classical poetry. The theme of the 18 cantos of the epic consists of the story of the battle of the hero Arjuna with the god Siva, who assumed the form of a Kirata. But the narration is not if any importance whatsoever. The real importance of the poem lies in interlaced descriptions, magnificent metaphors and similes and mastery in handling of the language, that reaches its highest point notably in canto XV."

(HIL - 71)

In the *Kiratha Arjunaniyam* the saint Vyas told Arjuna to leave for Indrakil Mountains to obtain Pashupath weapons. Heavenly beings also could not
distract him. In the end Shiva takes the form of Kirath and to test Arjun he fights with him on the top. In the end he feels happy with his bravery and courage and gives him the Pashupath weapons. Though the episode of the poem is very limited it extends to Chapter 18th.

All the qualities of an epic are shown in the *Kiratharjunyiam* by describing seasons, mountains the sunrise and sunset, dusk, moonrise, marital love and alcoholism, playing in the water, flower admiration, wars etc. In spite of all the descriptions, the story moves forward smoothly. Because of these qualities the *Kiratha Arjunyiam* has got its own special place in Sanskrit Literature. The essence of bravery dominates the poem. Draupadhi, Bhima, Arjuna episodes are filled with expressions of bravery. In the *Kiratha Arjunyiam*, the maturation of war is at its highest peak. In the whole Sanskrit Literature such vigorous and violent poems are not found.

Bharvi’s characterisation is also very beautiful and effective and every actor posses special qualities. Burning in the fire of degradation, inspiring for the war Draupadhi, Bhima hating the petition, poet Yudhishthira, fearless Arjun meditating and immoral Duriyodhan etc. are unforgettable characters.

In the *Kirath Arjunyam* the dialogues are unparalleled. Conversation between Draupadhi and Yudhishthir, Bhima and Yudhishthira, and Indra and Arjuna, Pashupath and Arjuna are very predominant. While describing the helpless condition of Yudhishthira and his brothers and prompting her husband by making use the tactful words (Draupadhi) Not only are her statements argumental or worth discussing but at the same time, they also express the feelings of anger, helpless condition, self esteem, psychological esteem of the woman and moral duty. She reproaches Yudhishthira. Bhima’s speech indicates his self respect, bravery and self confidence, but the whole atmosphere changes because of Yudhishthira’s sober and courageous statement.

Like Kalidas, Bharvi’s language is not that easy, sweet and blissful, but very firm, effective and full of serious meaning along with sweetness and vigour. Because of that his language is compared to a coconut whose outer shell is hard
but the inside is sweet. Large compound sentences are not used but the grammatical laws are followed.

Bharvi has used 13 different stanzas very cleverly in his poems. (Vanshith) is his most favorite stanza. All scholars have agreed that Vansithya is useful in describing politics. Likewise, (Kiratarjuniya) epic, because of its famous quality, has a special place in the Sanskrit literature. It is included in trio - Kiratarjuniyam, Shishupalavadha and Naishghcharit.

Vii Epics of the other languages

In the same way when we take into consideration the epics of other languages including English, we find common characteristics in them. The earliest epics were Homer’s the Iliad and the Odyssey, and Virgil’s the Aeneid. These Greek and Latin epic poems belonged to antiquity. They have been considered as the best examples of the epic in European literature. The Iliad and the Odyssey by the ancient Greek poet Homer have served as models to all later Epic poets. Then came the medieval Italian poet Dante’s epic poem called The Divine Comedy, Spenser’s The Faerie Queen, appeared in the sixteenth century and later came Milton’s famous epic the Paradise Lost.

William Henry Hudson writes, "One great epic of art occupies a place of capital importance of literary history, not only on account of its own splendid qualities, but also because, itself fashioned closely on the Homeric poems, it became in its turn a chief model for other workers in the epic field-the Aeneid. In Paradise Lost English poetry possesses one of the supreme masterpieces of epic literature; while for other examples of the same class reference may be made to Tasso’s Gerusalemme Libera, the Lusiadas of Camoens, and on a much smaller scale, Arnold’s ‘episode’, or epic fragment, Sohrab and Rustum."
The literary epic naturally resembles the primitive epic, on which it is ultimately based, in various fundamental characteristics. Its subject-matter is of the old heroic and mythical kind; it makes free use of supernatural; it follows the same structural plan and reproduces many traditional details of composition; while, greatly it necessarily differs in style, it often adopts the formulas, fixed epithets, and stereo typed phrases and locutions, which are among the marked feature of the early type."

(An Introduction to the study of Literature - 107)

An epic is a long narrative poem, exalted in style and heroic in theme, which relates the story of an event or a series of events. The theme of an epic is stated in the first few lines, accompanied by a prayer to the Heavenly Muse. Generally an epic is divided into cantos or books or chapters, usually twelve in number. The action of the epic is often controlled by supernatural agents. It contains a number of thrilling episodes such as battles, duels, wanderings, ordeals, adventures and many more things. The language of the epic is dignified and frequently exalted. Use of epic or expanded similes is another characteristic of an epic.

The epic traditionally begins with the announcement of the theme or subject matter either combined with or followed by an invocation to a heavenly power. The statement of the theme is technically called the “proposition,” and the prayer the “invocation.” Virgil’s the *Aeneid*, which is an imitation of Homer’s the *Iliad*, and Milton’s the *Paradise Lost*, which follows the *Aeneid*, both begin with a clearly defined proposition and invocation. Thus the *Iliad* in the translation by E. V. Rieu opens:

"The wrath of Achilles is my theme, that fatal wrath which, in fulfillment of the will of Zeus, brought the Achaeans so much suffering and sent the gallant souls of many noblemen to Hades, leaving their bodies as carrion for the dogs and passing birds. Let us begin, goddess of song, with the angry parting that took place…….."  

(*Iliad- 23*)
Similarly, Milton begins the *Paradise Lost* with an invocation to the heavenly muse to sing -

Of Man’s First Disobedience, and the Fruit
Of that Forbidden Tree whose mortal tast
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden,.....

(PL - 62)

..... and announces the motive of the *Paradise Lost* as to "assert Eternal Providence,/ And justify the wayes of God to men". Milton believes in the justice of the Almighty. The poet asks the heavenly muse to help him in this,

....Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all Temples th’ upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know’st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss
And mad’st it pregnant: What in me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the highth of this great Argument
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the wayes of God to men.

(PL- 62)

In an epic the hero is a figure of great national or international importance. The action of an epic relates to a hero, a man of stature and significance. In the course of the story the hero performs many notable deeds. In the *Iliad* the hero is the great Greek warrior Achilles, in the *Aeneid* he is Aeneas himself, in the *Paradise Lost* the hero is Adam who incorporates in himself the entire race of man. In these epics the main characters are represented as heroes of immense stature and strength. They represent the cultural ideals.

The subject of an epic is a great event or a series of exploits of a distinguished figure. The story itself deals with an event of significance for a nation, or, indeed, for all mankind. *The Iliad* deals with the story of the Trojan
War and *The Odyssey* with the journeys of Odysseus after the Trojan War. In the very beginning of the story the poets makes his stand very clear that he tells us the story of a great hero,

"Tell me, Muse, the story of that resourceful man who was driven to wander far and wide after he had sacked the holy citadel of Troy. He saw the cities of many people and he learnt their ways…… Tell us this story, goddess daughter of Zeus, beginning at whatever point you will." (*Odyssey*-3)

Peter V. Jones has very superbly expressed his views regarding the content and story of the Odyssey, "The *Odyssey* - the return of Odysseus from Troy to reclaim his threatened home on Ithaca - is a superb story, rich in character, adventure and incident, reconciling reality with fantasy, the heroic with the humble, the intimate with the divine, and making the household, rather than the battlefield, the centre of its world." (*Od*.xi)

In the *Aeneid*, Aeneas' journeys and adventures culminate in the settling in Italy of the immediate ancestors of the founders of Rome; and in the *Paradise Lost*, the fall of man is central to the poem.

In the same way the setting in an epic is ample in scale, sometimes worldwide, or even larger. Odysseus wanders over the Mediterranean basin and in book XI he descends into the underworld. The scope of the *Paradise Lost* is cosmic, for it includes heaven, earth and hell. The epics also present some kind of athletic contest or 'games'. Homer tells us how Achilles arranged a day of athletic competitions in honour of his friend, Patroclus, In the *Aeneid*, Virgil introduces the games like archery and boxing. In book II of the *Paradise Lost* even fallen angels arrange an athletic meeting.

The action of the epic is often controlled by supernatural agents. In Homer and Virgil these are the classical gods and goddesses. In these great actions the gods and other supernatural beings themselves take an interest and an active part. The gods of Olympus in Homer, and Christ and the angels are introduced in the *Paradise Lost*. Supernatural forces interest themselves in the action and
intervene at times. The supernatural and magical element is always prominent in these epics.

The Epic is divided into books, usually twelve in number, though the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* have twenty-four books each. The reduced number was first adopted by Virgil, who was followed in this by later European writers. Spenser's the *Faerie Queene* was planned in twelve books, though never completed, and the *Paradise Lost* was raised to that number from the original ten. The language of the poem is, of course, noble and exalted, as to befit the words and deeds of gods and heroes; it is in "the grand style" and makes no attempt to resemble common speech. The epic poet adopts a style, dignified and elaborate, suitable to his theme.

There is another convention adopted by almost all epic poets is the use of Homeric Simile. Here the epic poet shows the simile between two objects and this simile is shown to such an extent that this simile becomes a little descriptive poem. It is an elaborated comparison; it is longer, and more detailed than a simple metaphor. Homeric Simile is used to heighten the theme of an epic to grandeur. A standard simile is a comparison using "like" or "as." An epic or Homeric simile is a more involved, ornate comparison, extended in great detail.

R.J. Rees writes, "The so-called 'Homeric simile': an ordinary simile might describe a young man as 'tall and dark and straight, like a young cypress tree', but a Homeric simile enlarges the comparison so that it becomes a little 'poem-within-a-poem' ". (EL-28) The best example can be seen in the *Paradise Lost* by Milton, where he describes Satan's heavy shield and spear in an epic style -

```
the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb
Through Optic glass the Tuscan Artist views
At ev'n ing from the Top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new Lands,
Rivers, or Mountains, in her spotty Globe.
His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine
```
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand,
He walkt with, to support uneasie steps
Over the burning Marle, not like those steps........ (PL -70..)

R.J. Rees writes, "In Paradise Lost Milton (1608-74) created the one undoubtedly great English epic-great in the sense that it can be compared with almost all the great epics of classical and post-classical Europe (though not, I think, with Virgil or Homer). All through his life Milton felt that he was, in a sense, a man chosen by God to write the great English poem." (EL - 30)

Thus we can say that as compared to the Sanskrit epic the above mentioned epics share most of the features of the Sanskrit epic.

Viii  The Jarasandhavadha Mahkavyam

as an Epic

The Sanskrit epic shares most of the features of Greek or English epics. On the basis of above discussed characteristics of an epic now we can judge the Jarasandhavadha as an epic. Certainly the Jarasandhavadha by Goswami Shri Hariraiji is a great epic and it has all the characteristics of a Sanskrit epic.

When compared to Shishupalvadha Mahakavyam by Magh, a great poet in Sanskrit literature, we come to the conclusion that Goswamiji has followed the model of Magh. He himself writes, "In this poem, let the knower of principles of poetics, who are not spiteful, look for my creative genius without any barrier, for I have followed Magha".

काव्योऽस्मन् काव्यतत्त्वज्ञात्स्यतामयंसूचिभि: ।
प्रतिमासनवरोपेण श्रीमाणोऽनुसूतो मया ॥

(JM - 228)
Rishi Kaundinyaji, who is considered to be an authority in Sanskrit poetics, was overjoyed when he read the *Jarasandhavadha* and praised this work like anything. Looking to the beauty of the 'kavya sausthva' he expresses the feelings of sublimity -

पठित्वां मल काव्यमेलतसमग्र
परानन्दकाण्डं गतं मानसं मे ।
अभिमान्यलेखे न शख्सोम्यतोऽधः यतो
मोदमग्नो न जानाति कष्ठित् ॥

(Intro.- JM)

Kaundinyaji has very categorically described the abilities and qualities of this great poet. He writes that in Goswamiji's poetry, decorated style of imaginary, cleverness and the poetic perfection is shown, in the same way as they are found in detail in Dandi, Kalidas, Bharvi, Bhas, Banbhatt and Magh. Often it is observed that there is inclusion of all three qualities, such as similes of Kalidas and Bharvi's meaningful esteem and Dandi's grace of words.

अहो दण्डी नून चतुरपदविन्याससकरणात्
सदर्थांभानाद्यो भुवनवितथो भारविरयम् ॥
अथास्ते माण्डः किं पदंगुणरसालकृतिवशाट्
स्युरेबं सततां: पठनसतविन्द्रसूरतये ॥
काव्येःसिमान् कालिदासो भवति सुमनसं चित्रागामी न शान्ती
भासो हर्षोऽथ बाणो नवनमयगतो जायते पणिडतानाम् ॥
शाली भव्यसुणद्वया सरसपदयुता रीतिरास्ते तिर्मया
सत्व संज्ञितत्व बुद्धवा सहदयसुजनाः धन्यवाचं वदेयुः ॥

(Intro.- JM)

With this background, we can say that Goswamiji has followed the principles of an epic in the *Jarasandhavadha*. To judge the *Jarasandhavadha* as
an epic first of all we take into consideration the definition of an epic given by Acharya Visvanatha which is more detailed, since he lived in the fifteenth century, had all the famous Mahakavyas before him, including even the later specimens -

(Kumarsambhava of Kalidasa. M.R. Kale. Intro. ii-iii)
Looking to the above described characteristics by Sanskrit scholars we can say that the *Jarsandhavadha* contains almost all the characteristics of an epic. It contains words of benediction, praise, greetings and prayer of Lord Krishna and pious river mother Yamuna followed by brief introduction of contents and characters appearing in the story. It possesses the outline of the story at the beginning. The subject is historical and based on the story of the great Pandavas of the *Mahabharata*, Shri Krishna and Jarasandha.

It depicts the entire life and contains a heroic deed. The poet builds up the story based on this incident with rhetoric description, illustration of nature and different worldly and divine depictions. The mundane descriptions include that of nature, garden and city, while the divine includes description of Gods and heaven. It contains the description of the sublime and virtuous. It contains the description of a city, ocean, mountain, season, moon-rise, sun-rise, and garden, messenger, marching and rising of the hero. It includes dalliance, intoxication, and enjoyment of love, separation, marriage of Jarasandha and birth of the children. It has mantra, messenger, marching and rising of the hero. This *Mahakavya* is enriched with rhetoric, extensive and aesthetic and emotional content. The story contains interesting events and includes elements like description of twilight, containing the above characteristics serves the popular interest and has lasting effect.

**Canto (Sarg)**

The concept of a 'Canto' (Sarg) in a *Mahakavya* (an Epic) is found from the *Ramayana* itself. This characteristic division of an epic into cantos was accepted by all the Acharyas (the founders of a school of literary thoughts). The *Jarsandhavadha* is an epic divided in Cantos contains the description of the sublime and great characters and it is very vast in size. It is divided into twenty 'Sargs' (Canto) which are neither too long nor too short. It has one thousand six hundred ninety two 'shlokas'. Each canto has a minimum of sixty shlokas and maximum of one hundred and thirty eight shlokas. They are composed in the same metre, and change only at the end; sometimes as a variety the poet has
used a number of metres. The contents of the next canto are indicated at the end of the preceding one.

Each canto is named after the most important event described in it or the cantos are named after the plot, or the hero, or in accordance with its own contents. For bringing the dramatic element in the epic and to retain the continuity of emotions, Vishwanath said that it is necessary to give hint at the end of a chapter about what is going to happen in the next chapter, the poet has followed the device in this epic.

Acharyas like Bhamah, Dandi, Rudrat, Hemachandra, who were there before Vishwanath Kaviraja, had not specified the number of Cantos. Vishwanath Kaviraja limited this and prescribed that epic must necessarily have minimum eight Cantos. As for the length of a canto, Dandi and Acharya Hemachandra are of the same opinion that it should neither be too elaborate nor too brief because, if it is elaborate it may pose a problem for planning the divisions and if it is too short then the emotions may not find place properly. The same thing was said by Vishwanath that the cantos should neither be too long, nor they should be too short. Looking to this the poet Hariraiji has followed the rules established by the scholars. In the nineteenth canto maximum one hundred and thirty eight 'shlokas' are there and the twelfth canto possesses sixty 'shlokas'.

The basis of the Plot :

Goswamiji has presented his version of the plot of the *Jarasandhavadha* based on the *Mahabharata, Shrimad Bhagwat* and the *Harivansha Puran*. The main event of the story is based on the story given under the *Sabha Parva* (second parva), chapter thirteen *Rajasuyarambha Parva* - Arrival of Krishna - to chapter twenty four - *Jarasandhavadha Parva* of the *Mahabharata*. This contains preparation for Rajasuya Yajna, Yudhishthira taking initiation of Rajasuya Yajna under Shri Krishna’s guidance.
The above story forms the chapters beginning from 50 to 73 of Dasham Skandh based on the Bhagwat Purana. We have already seen the story given under these chapters, which is not found in the Mahabharata. In the Mahabharata the references of Kalyavan, Muchkunda, Pondrak, Shalva are not given in the Sabhaparva. This version of the story is described under Chapter 10 of the Bhagwat Mahapurana, which contains mention of Jarasandha.

Its subject is profound with its hero being great and characterized by quiet gallantry and loftiness of conduct. Its language is witty, its story is devoid of unnecessary elements and matter and in spite of being rhetoric, it is based on morality. Naradji comes to Lord Krishna and tells him that Jarasandha has made hundreds of Kings as captives and they will be sacrificed in the name of the Narmedha Yajna. Yudhisthira has the desire of performing Rajasuya sacrifice but Krishna's only enemy lives on the earth in Magadha—he is King Jarasandha who is fearless and independent. He has conquered countries by winning the battles independently. As he is very proud of his own prowess and prosperity therefore must be killed.

Thus it contains meaningful message. Yudhishthira wants to perform the Rajsuya Yajna but without killing Jarasandha it can't be performed. Naradji is firm and reminds Lord Krishna of this. Shri Krishna rightly says, "Hence the sacrifice of the son of Dharma should be accomplished properly. The king of Magadha, who is dishonest, should be killed deceitfully."
Yudhishthir is sure and of the firm opinion that where the Lord of the three worlds Krishna himself appears continually there variety of troops of army and abundance of weapons are of no use. Where there are Krishna, Arjuna and Bhima like three fires, who eradicate enemy and are prepared to kill the enemy, there every desired thing is achieved.

The Jarasandhavadha has all the five divisions of drama and stages of work. It depicts the nature of people and contains all poetic sentiments. The subject is historical and based on the real story of the Mahabharata. It contains the description of sublime, virtuous, clever hero’s attainment of four human pursuit’s viz. virtue, wealth, sensual pleasures and salvation. This Mahakavya, containing the above characteristics serves the popular interest and has lasting effect. The poet has taken care of combining series of events and other activities and due to its balance, aesthetic pleasure also emerges in balanced proportion and appropriately.

**High Intention on the Part of the Poet:**

Acharyas have accepted that the aim of an epic should be to accomplish the four basic objectives of human existence, such as discharge of duty, acquisition of wealth, gratification and final emancipation. Bhamah, Dandi, Rudrat and Hemchandra and all Acharyas accept these human pursuits as the Epic’s objective, while Vishwanath accepted any one of them as the objective. As against this, Rudrat considers that a brief poem can explore any one objective, but a complete Epic should contain all the four objectives. Generally, in any poetry, it is essential that all these four objectives are present, but
according to Dandi it is compulsory in case of an epic and it appears appropriate, since attainment of objectives embody the dignity of life.

Hariraiji is a spiritual leader of the highest order, leading thousands of its followers by carrying forward the values and principles, as propounded and promoted by Lord Shri Krishna. Goswamiji is of this opinion that by attaining these four objectives, the beauty of a poetry is automatically enhanced i.e. both, (a) the four basic objectives and (b) pleasure, complement each other. The aim of the poet is to underline the philosophy that ‘Where there is truth, there is Victory’ and this is the soul message of this epic.

He believes in the triumphs of virtue and good life. He hates evil and low thoughts. He believes that man can achieve success and glory in his life by treading the path of virtue, goodness and temperate life. Naradji reminds Lord Krishna to wage war against Jarasandha, the king of Magadha who stands as a king with bad intentions and a disobedient and haughty headed ruler. He also reminds how thousand of lives are taken in the sacrifice in the name of God.

The aim of the poet is to present his complete devotion towards lord Krishna - 'bhakti' towards Shri Krishna - he is the supreme commander of the world. Goswamiji writes,

"He who is of dark complexion, splendid like a dark cloud, who has borne entire universe, the earth, of high shoulders, whose mind is engrossed only in his
devotee, the only shelter for the unprotected (shelter-less), the unparalleled one in effecting deliverance for beings from sorrow, perhaps He who did bestow compassion upon a mortal like me a receptacle of wrongs, He who is eternal, veracious, immutable, His lovely form be shining in my mind constantly."

No one can attain happiness or contentment by turning away from the duty and principles. If a man runs away from these, he does not imbibe humanity. The central theme of creation is the human being and nobody can be better than him. Therefore, humanity cannot be acquired by shunning duty and principles. For that, it is necessary to discover truth and to control temptations. There is a close inter linkage between what has been said so far and these two philosophies, which easily integrate into oneself to pursue the main objective of life.

Lord Krishna reminds Yudhishtira that Jarasandha has turned blind due to the royal power of the kingdom of Magadha. Jarasandha, the vain, haughty knowing no fear, with uncontrollable behaviour is an expert in dual combat. He does not accept his superiority even for a minute. Therefore his first duty is to conquer and tame that royal tiger who has a large and mighty army and makes even the most powerful king uneasy and restless.
Art of Characterization:

The hero of an epic should be characterised by gallantry and loftiness of conduct, should have great lineage, warrior or god. Acharyas have differing perceptions about the hero. But all have acknowledged that essentially a hero should be brave and valiant, belonging to a great lineage. According to Rudrat, he can be from trivarna (brabmin, warrior, businessman) and Acharya Dandi said anyone who is brave and valiant. As per Vishwanath any king or many kings belonging to the same clan or great lineage can be the hero of an epic.

The hero of this great epic is none other than Lord Shri Krishna whom the poet Goswami Hariraiji calls as 'Mahanayak'. He is the real 'Dhiroddatta' hero of the Jarasandhvadha. He is self controlled, exalted, magnanimous, exceedingly grave, forbearing, not boastful, resolute and whose high spirit is concealed. He is faithful to his promise. The character of Krishna has been taken as an ideal. Throughout his life He did nothing for his own sake but for justice he worked constantly.

The hero of this Mahakavya Lord Shri Krishna is meritorious, a warrior conquering the whole world not for his own sake but to eradicate the unrighteousness from the whole world, a great valiant and a king of all kings. He is powerful, sagacious, tactful, a divine personage, possessed of the qualities of a 'Dhiroddatta' Hero. Yudhishthira thought that the Rajasuya sacrifice should not be commenced pursuant to his own resolution only.

Carefully bearing on his shoulder the weight of affairs, he (Yudhishthira) thought of Krishna Janardana as the fittest person to decide the matter. Knowing Krishna to be the foremost of all persons, the possessor of immeasurable; energy, the mighty-armed, (hero), Yudhishthira thought that there could be
nothing unknown to him nothing unachievable by him and nothing that he could
not bear. He knows everything by which it may be accomplished. There is none
else in the world but only Lord Krishna who can settle all doubts. He is above all
motives; he has conquered anger and desire. The poet describes Lord Krishna as-

चमच्चमतकार्यचित्कार्यसौर्यभायेः प्रभाभूरितभराक्रृतीः।
भमद्यमद्यानद्यद्यनोद्धतिवधूतसौत्त्वर्जजियश्चकृतित्वम्॥
मनोयिणः सच्छरणाहृणक्षणप्रधारणाकारणकौतिन्यातिम्॥
रचाणणूयचेयरणुत्तकवारणणांवप्यताविततिपरवीजस्॥
असरक्षोक्ष्यप्रतिरुपरुषिकमप्रवर्णवेदीर्पदितागुणीकृतित्वम्॥

यज्ञवाल्यः वज्जिनीवज्ज्ञज्ञविनिम्नद्राहरेवविरिकृतित्वम्॥
(JM-6)

After hero, planning the role of a villain becomes important. In the
absence of a villain, the importance of heroes’ character doesn’t remain
spectacular and no significant incident of conflict takes place. In reality, struggle
and progress are interdependent. Thus a Mahakavya must have a villain and the
description about his lineage. It should depict the victory of the hero and defeat
of the villain. Dandi has suggested a few methods for the exaltation of hero’s
character. Verbally agreeing with what is said by Acharya Dandi, Rudrata insists
that the villain should be as powerful and meritorious as a hero.

The villain of this epic is Jarasandha, who is powerful and meritorious as
a hero. In different activities and arts he was given training to rule ever since he
was young. He was expert in all arts to be called as the ‘Master artist of all arts’.
He was highly wonderful and extremely skillful in giving unexpected blows to
his foes, he became an unforeseen expert in duel fighter and established himself
as the greatest warrior. He was considered the strongest man in the world. He
had unusual and unparalleled prowess and sagacity in politics.
Apart from hero and a villain, other characters are also given a place in a Mahakavya, but no Acharya has clearly mentioned about the same. Only reference available is ‘Mantra doota prayan and Vivahaisch kumarodaya vaman’ varmaniya yathayogyam etc. which means a minister, helper, messenger, army, and queens, male and female servants are necessary for a Mahakavya, otherwise how can someone describe water-sports and other festivities. While there is a discussion available on the nature and conduct of characters etc., still no one has made any mention about heroines.

Goswamiji’s description of the characters reflects his ethereal touch. The main characters like Krishna, Yudhishtira, Bhima, Arjuna, other Pandavas, Jarasandha, Shishupal, Brihadratha, Naradji and others are real and sublime. Each exemplifies with its own individual characteristics. It will be rare to find characterization manifesting different traits of these characters.

Yudhishtira being ever devoted to virtue, his tributary chiefs always waited upon him to render good service on the six occasions (of war, treaty etc.); and the traders and merchants of different classes paid him their dues taxes livable on their respective trades. Thus the kingdom grew in prosperity. The prosperity of the kingdom increased even by greatly voluptuous and luxurious persons. The king possessed every accomplishment and he bore every thing in patience. His sway extended over all. From Brahmins to peasants, were all more attached to him than to their own parents.
This poetic work consists of Shri Krishna, Yudhishthiar, Jarasandha, Shishupala, Uddhava, Balaram, Bhima, Arjun etc., where hero is Shri Krishna and Jarasandha the villain. The epic highlights the tolerance and looks of Shri Krishna through the praises showered by Narada and others. However, the villain’s description is evident from the intemperate behavior and abusive language used by him. But instead of concentrating on the development of various characters or hero, the poet has mainly paid attention to descriptions, which went to the extent that female characters have found no importance.

Description of Activities and Situations:

Since it is essential for a Mahakavya to include all scenes, nature’s different forms and behaviour, Acharyas have laid stress on the description of (their impacts and situations) activities and circumstances. Despite the main incident lacking an easy flow of narration, poet displays his skill with ornamental descriptions. But in the books composed by the ancient sages, these things come out naturally and are arranged in a justifiable manner, which are of social and cultural significance. In the Jarasandhavadha, along with the praise of hero’s lineage, beautiful depiction of his city is included. This epic contains divine and natural elements; it also contains unnatural incidents involving humans. For the description of Nature ‘Sandhya, Suryendu, Pradosh dhwanta vasarah ’, etc. and life activities, Vishwanath had repeated the same things said earlier by other Acharyas.

The Jarasandhavadha describes, at more or less length, such incidents and topics as twilight, the rise of the sun and the moon, the night, the evening, darkness, the day, morning, noon, hunting, mountains, seasons, forests, oceans, the union and separation of lovers, sages, heaven, cities, sacrifices, battles, invasions, marriage-ceremonies, advice, the birth of a son and many more things. The description of nature like - night, dusk, dawn, afternoon, forest, sun, moon, ocean, mountain etc are described systematically, in its entirety and rhetorically.
The description of beautiful gardens, lakes and prosperity of Dwarika is presented in detail and beautifully. There was plenty of water in Dwarika since there were innumerable lakes in and around the city. The water of which was crystal clear and the pools filled with water provided the impression of being the sea by itself.


निर्मलप्रचुरदुस्तरोदकपूर्पृरितमहासरिद्राणः।
संभ्रातपरिमिततामुखुम्भसामागेरण परिवेशितं पुनः।।
उच्छलज्जलवदच्छनिर्वाहीरबीचनिचयोचितप्तवे।।
सर्वतः सरससारसावलीसेवितेरुच्छ सरसीशतेरुतम्।।
फुल्लितोषवनरामणीयं मन्तपपत्तिकुलकृतियतेरितम्।।
रम्यसान्ददतरवृक्षवेषितगुलिमनीभिरभिमितः शुशोभितम्।।

(JM-140-141)

The stanzas above are replete with the description of life-sustaining water which is the symbol of life itself in Dwarika, the city bubbling with life and prosperity. The stanza presents the flora and fauna of Dwarika, the city created by the Almighty Himself. After all, there was God’s plenty!

Different activities and situations of life like love, marriage, union-separation, discussions, public affairs, counsel, messenger, consignment, soldiers, expedition, strategic placement of forces, war, victory for the hero, sacrifice etc. are presented at length in this epic.

In this, by visualizing the important objects on the way, the poet has tried to create animated scene as if they also unfolded along the path of the travelers. The description seemed like a lively presentation of the sights they had witnessed. Jarasandhavadha is replete with such simple descriptions. It contains vivid description of some aspects of Nature. Since poet’s mind is totally immersed visualizing these scenes in their true splendor, such descriptions exemplify their harmony.
At some places, human nature is compared with the nature as such which gives an impression of synergy of both (nature’s activities and human life). Apart from these scenes, the Jarasandhavadha contains the ideal depiction of the nature, but the same is done at appropriate places, which have come out in a very natural style. The descriptive style of the poet is very effective. The creative description of the nature’s beauty adorned by forests and mountains and the glorification of Gomantaka mountain is very realistic. Descriptions of war scenes are very lively and visually strong. There is no repetitiveness anywhere. Though it has envisioned all manifestations of war, yet its emotional core is peace and not valour.

As said earlier, the battle description of Jarasandhavadha is as per the traditions of historical poems, like the portents of defeat through bad omens, readiness for the attack, journey for the battle, strategic plans and positioning of the weapons, elephants, horses, soldiers, slaying of fighters, rising smoke, assuming the witch and devils, gods watching the battle, showering of flower petals, ending of battle at sunset, animals and birds entering the battlefield. When Bhima finally killed Jarasandha at that time he was rained upon with flowers by a band of celestials.

**Supernatural Elements**

Ancient Prabandh Kavyas contained divine and supernatural elements in abundance. They were found aplenty even in the epic poems, which were based on these contents. From ancient times, the basis of poems written by human beings was God and Religion. Since the human heart has the natural tendency for mythological beliefs and curiosity, we find divine and supernatural elements abundantly in this work.

Rudrat accepted these elements, but said that these acts should necessarily have propriety, humans cannot perform supernatural acts, therefore to accomplish divine functions it is necessary to use mountains, crossing the ocean, roaming an entire world (divine power), celestial musicians, God, and celestial damsels. Vishwanath just said that epic can have God as its hero and it should contain the description of sages and heaven. Anandwardhan also said
that human kings etc. should not be made to perform divinely tasks like crossing the ocean, because they being improper tend to be uninteresting.

In Jarasandhvadham supernatural elements are used in plenty. The very birth of Jarasandha is the best example of supernaturalism. Due to the efforts of Brihadratha and as a consequence the effect of powerful Muni’s split fruit and seed, Jarasandha was born in the night to two mothers in two portions. Wandering in the night, a female demon named Jara with an accursed form, used her magic powers to bind the two sections of the strong body like Vajra, of this wicked child. He (the child), with the effect of Kaushika Rishi’s speech, was joined (Sandhi) into one body by the female demon Jara. Immediately after this she disappeared. The epic is full of supernatural elements.

**Style and Language**

Goswamiji is the poet of high standard and his poetry is an example of his excellence. He has got a very strong hold on the language. He is perfect in using the words in both easy and difficult styles. Somewhere there is a beautiful balance of bliss and sweetness. Sometimes there is beauty of poems like Kalidas and sometimes grandeur and esteem of Bharvi’s style and in some places the use of grammar is like Bhatti. In some places it is highly creative and in some places the emotions dominate. Though the words are very meaningful, they are very sweet. Kaundinya Rishi rightly says -

काव्य सदृशार्थीतिमाविमलं सदृशस्तत्त्वान्तिः
सर्वेषां मनसं प्रकर्षणपरं संजायते सर्वथा ।
ज्ञात्वैतद हरिराय एष निपुणं साहित्यशास्त्रे धृवं
काव्यं गृह्मितवान् जरासुतवर्धं नामात्मवस्तुष्टे ॥

(JM-Introduction)

Except for two Acharyas viz. Bhamah and Rudrat, everyone else has elaborated on metre. Acharyas like Dandi, Hemachandra, Vishwanath etc. have expressed their views on metre. As per Dandi, audible verses should be used in
Mahakavyas, i.e., the reader should enjoy while reading or listening. But this characteristic rule is applicable not only to epics but to any type of poetry. Only one type of metre should be used in an entire Canto and at the end a different metre should be used. Thereafter, repeating Dandi’s criterion Vishwanath said that in certain epics Cantos with different metres may be found.

With regard to figures of speech, Bhamah, Dandi, Hemachandra etc. are of a clear opinion that Mahakavya should compulsorily contain figure of speech. Bhamah by using the term Saalankaram and Dandi using Alankritam, have expressed the same fact. By saying Vagvaidagdhya Pradhane Api the writer of Agnipurana has approved this element. Hemachandra clarified that epic should contain difficult picturesque Cantos i.e., figure of speech like Yamaka, Shlesha etc. should be used, but Acharya Rudrat and Vishwanath have not discussed about figure of speech.

In the Jarasandhvadha the poet has made the usage of figure of speech as a medium of expressing eloquence. They are arranged in a very natural manner. In this epic, figures of speech appear with the natural flow of story, emotions and sentiments. We can say that ‘figure of speech’ has become one of the main characteristics of this epic. Goswamiji is capable of arranging the figure of speech at its proper place. Sometimes he is solely immersed in it to the extent that he does not bother about the flow of sentiments and keeps enjoying it.

Nineteenth canto of this epic presents the ability of the poet to form the 'Padmabandha', 'Gadabandha', 'Murajbandha', 'Shulbandha', 'Venubandha', 'Vajrabandha' and 'Chakrabandha'. The beauty here lies in the mystery that we get a new creation - this verse, which is arranged in ‘Chakrabandha’ shows as follows -

“Hariraya Jarasandhavadham Kavyam”

सदार्जन्यामि स्वमध्यामि यद्वेंस्यस्याध्य क्षमं
Acharyas have deliberated on the subject of language to a lesser extent. A few Acharyas have indicated the language related characteristics for poetry and epics. Accepting the importance of talent amongst other motives like the world, education (lexicography, dictionary, metre, art etc.) and chapter (knowledge of objective, perseverance) training on the art of poetry (understanding), Dandi laid special emphasis on labour and effort. In ‘Kavya Mimamsa’ he considered a great poet to be someone who possessed ten characteristics.

As a result of that a great poet shall necessarily have command over language. Bhamah just indicated that rustic words and meanings should not be used in Mahakavya i.e., it should not be Nativyakhyeyam – incomprehensible, the language must be simple and easy to understand. The same was approved by Acharya Hemachandra, who accepted ‘Samasta Lokaranjakatvam’ (one which pleases everyone) as a characteristic of a great poem.

This epic has the quality of universal understanding. The language used by Goswamiji contains lucidity to certain extent. Goswamiji is a powerful poet. He is the master of imaginative creation and partial towards paying more attention to the beauty of expressions. Though Goswamiji’s heart was totally immersed with poetic content, he remained under the grip of conventions. Usage of meaning based various figure of speech like Upma, Utpreksha, Rupaka, Atishayokti, Sahokti, Samasokti, Tulyayogita, Kavyaling, Virodha etc. Word-based figure of speech includes Anuprasa, in Yamaka chitrakavya, samudra, Chakrabandha, Murajbandha, Ardhabramaka, Gaumutrikabandha, Sarvatobhadra and usage of Shlesha is also found.
Goswamiji has used the phrase for it 'Bahuvidh Ras Evam Chhanda'. Mahakavi Harsha has used the 'Vaidharbhi Riti' in the same way Goswamiji has used the 'Panchali Riti'. Here the emphases is on the words 'Vidharbh' and 'Draupdi' -

शन्यासिस पाज्ज्यालि गुणोच्च्यैस्त्वया प्रश्नकृतोऽसौ हरिरायतायते ।
हरिज्जयार्थ व्यपादिश्य मार्तिं स्वयं जरासन्ध्यवचं चकार ह ॥ (JM -226)

He writes, "Having subordinated the aspect of (poetic) sentiment, to make it taste differently, this work is composed by me exerting, by arrangement of verses in various new shapes, in every respect; that is meant strictly for the knower of principles of poetics, not again for the bad-hearted who tend to lay hand on deficiencies, may bees become discernable not the mad monkeys."

गौणीकृत्य रसं श्लोचन्दिर्घये चिरेत्रः प्रयत्नमया
बन्धूपारं दियं स्वयं बहुविकारवांशने: सर्वत्र ॥
तत्तत्तविदं युद्ध हि न पुनर्सिद्धम्पत्रां दुर्दंदाम्
पेदजा: भ्रमर: भवन्त्युदस्तन नैवोल्कटा: मर्कटा: ॥ (JM -228)

While Acharyas have explored certain elements of style for Mahakavya to a greater extent, they left few of them. There may be many reasons for not deliberating on certain elements like the grace and profundity of style, the importance of Mahakavya. Generally, Acharyas have not considered those elements, about which others have spoken and which are popularly accepted or it does not come under their purview, but even then subtle mention do find place.

As in the case of intellect in Mahakavya, while speaking about the importance of subject, Vaman had indicated 'Kramasiddhistayoh Straguttamsavat' (explaining the relation between a garland and Uttans, a crest with a peacock feather, he said that only after accomplishing the art of weaving a garland that one attains expertise in molding a crest. Likewise, only after
perfectiong the art of free verse that a poet can accomplish creating an epic. In this matter Goswamiji is far ahead of the contemporary poets.

**Rasa (Aesthetic pleasure) and Emotional Expressions**

Right from Bharatmuni up to Vishwanatha, all have laid emphasis on the arrangement of Rasa (enjoyment) in an epic. Bhamah by saying ‘Rasaischkalai prithak’, Dandi by saying ‘Rasa-bhavanirantaram’ and Acharya Rudrat by saying ‘Sarve rasa, samagraikarasayuktah’ expressed its necessity. In clear terms, Acharya Kuntaka also established importance of aesthetic pleasure in contextual-craft and fiction-craft. In his opinion, the voice of a poet, whose creations are full of references to aesthetic sentiments, does not sustain only with the support of story. Anandavardhana has held Rasa to be the ultimate of an epic.

It means that essentially an epic should contain all emotions, but Vishwanatha said any one amongst Shringara (expressing love), Veera (expressing heroism) and Shanta (expressing confidence and security) is necessary. In the epics of later period, the composition of Rasa remained mechanical, as per Lakshana Granthas (Books prescribing Characteristic features for poetry). They did have balanced usage in terms of series of events, activities and aesthetic and emotional expressions. The poet says, "My mind creeper blissfully holding onto the best of trees, Krishna the ornament of Vraja, with the grace of Hari as well as by good fortune that association with the good has made me wholly succulent from within indeed like a mango, here that Hariraya and his work be known to discerning people."

गोस्वामिन्यभूषण्य तस्मां काच्चवकसादादारे:  
काचित्सदिविनया मती ब्रजलता सामोदमालिश्विने ||  
तत्सद्योगवे:भवदसमयस्वान्तो रसालो हि चः  

75
The dominant emotion of Jarasandhvadha is Veera (heroic) and Shringara (love) is its subsidiary, but which overlaps the main emotion due to its elaborate description. Along with them other emotions are also beautifully expressed. Description of Roudra (rage) in the battlefield description, emotions like Bhayankara (terrible), and Adbhuta (astonishment) can also be seen. In this poetry, Veera Rasa (emotion of heroism) is dealt with profound expression.

At many places the epic contains the strong influence of the battle scene descriptions like marching of the army, the shining swords in the battle, trumpeting of the elephants, intense duel, stream of blood, other animals and the dead bodies of soldiers. Besides this, the description of Raudra Rasa of the soldiers before entering the battlefield has been brought out beautifully.

Goswamji's penchant for Shringara Rasa is reflected in its extensive use. This has undermined the aesthetic content of Shringara Rasa by exuding more of libidinous influence. The description in Chapter 3, 14, 16 is as per Nayikabhed (the study of female characters). In fact, Jarasandhavadha contains beautiful depiction of arousal of emotions, but the pictures of auxiliary sentiments of love are presented in different way.

Goswamiji is such a poet who gives the complete credit to Lord Krishna who is his source of inspiration and under his guidance he could compose this work. He writes,

"Indra and Brahma in a fine, clean attire, to go near him (Krishna) even for a moment, situating on their horse and swan respectively, deeply engaged like Panini in formulating his aphorisms; Bowing to him alone the highest being Hari, who is the source of joy, the delight (son) of Nanda, poem namely 'Jarasandhavadha' is completed by me, deftly who is his servant."

काव्याच तद्विशेषच भवे पुनः क्षणन्याचतुर्विकविसंधोषुपासैि यत्।
आलोच्यां न तदनुविभवबंधैर्न सा त्रिति: स्वयमुपरीक्ष्या हि या॥

76
The poet of Veer Ras, Goswami Hariraiji is so confident and conscious of his poetic merits that he makes his stand very clear in the work itself and he is absolutely right in making this statement -

"The work and its author who is I: sometimes, somewhere the poetic convention has overlooked by me. Let that not be pondered over by men of wisdom who are free from envy. It is admitted the breaking of poetic convention has happened, but by myself (itself)."

When we take into consideration the remarks of Shri Gopaldas Gajja, a poet and scholar at the same time, it becomes very easy for us to understand the viewpoint of our poet -
Rishi Kaundinyaji has very categorically described the abilities and qualities of this great poet. Because of his extraordinary control on grammar, his language has become glorious. Goswamiji’s unlimited knowledge indicates his deep study and serious emotions. Because of these qualities Jarasandhavadha has got its own special place in the Sanskrit Literature. Kaundinyaji praises the poetic qualities of the poet and expresses his feelings that the glory of the poet and the Jarasandhavadha Mahakavyam will remain in this world for ever -

प्रत्येकस्मिन् सर्गं प्रासरस्तेषोपमालंकरः ।
रीतिहि धान्तं स्वप्रसत्यिन्द्र कार्यम् ॥
हरिरायेण सद्भाषाभावालश्चार्मणि ।
जरासाधवस्य काव्यं जगत्यं जयतार्चितस्मि ॥

(JM - Introduction)

I hope that this translation would help the scholars of epic to do further research into the epics in Indian languages and thus prepare a proper ground for a comparative study of Indian and Western epics. This translation will thus facilitate the researchers of poetry in general and epics in particular.