CHAPTER II

- BIOGRAPHY OF THE PAST i.e. PRE-ERA OF Sanskrit Literature

As in Europe, in India too, efforts at writing biography were made in Sanskrit and Pali languages, though these did not turn out to be pure and complete biographies. It is true that the biographies are the creation of the medieval period of Assam and Bengal. But the poets of the ancient period also wrote the stories on donation and devotion of the kings who patronised them. These were called "Rajacaritas". So it proves that the writing of biography in India is not a new thing.

As the oldest Indian, and, at the same time, the oldest Indo-European literary monument, a prominent place in the history of world literature is due to the Veda. Veda means knowledge - the knowledge par excellence. The main aim of Veda was the worship of god. The oldest and the most important of all the works of Vedic literature is the Rgveda Samhita, usually called simply the 'Rgveda'. In some sūktas of Rgveda and Atharvaveda, adoration of the kings and the gods are noticed. "The Rgveda consists of hymns addressed to the gods, hymns of praise and prayer. Most of the gods were originally personifications of natural phenomena"¹. In the various parvas of Asvamedha yajña, the performance of the same about the

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¹ John Mckenzie, "Hindu Ethics" - P-2
different kings were sung through the medium of praising. These praising songs stood as evidence that they used to praise highly the kings and the gods. The Vedic scholars did not care to write much about their worldly activities of the contemporary persons. The Indians were the silent spectators of all these. For this, various philosophers and sastras were responsible. As a result, they were not moved by the worldly affairs. They believed in the unreality of the world and their motto was the attainment of perfection. The doctrine of Māyā repudiates the reality of the world. Even the later scholars like Śaṅkarācārya regard the world as Māyā and put forward several arguments in support of the thesis. The real must be exempted from all changes. This view of the Hindu dharma and Hindu philosophy was responsible for the very scanty proper biographical literature of the Vedic ages.

But whatever we noticed in the hymns and songs of the Rgveda, we see gods, as it were, arising before our eyes. Many of the hymns are not addressed to a sun-god, nor to a moon-god, nor to a fire-god, nor to a god of the heavens, but the shining Sun itself, the gleaming moon in the nocturnal sky, the flowing waters of clouds and of rivers— all these natural phenomena are, as such, glorified, worshipped and invoked. Only gradually the songs of the Rgveda is accomplished in the transformation of these natural phenomena into mythological
figures, into gods and goddesses such as Sūrya (Sun), Soma (Moon), Agni (Fire), Vāyu (Wind) etc.  

These songs are of incalculable value to us as evidence of the oldest religious faith of the Aryan Indians. They deserve a prominent place in the world literature. The poets of the songs stand on a more familiar footing with the gods whom they honour in song. Indra can be designated as the actual national god of the Vedic Indians. His enormous strength is described again and again. The Vedic singers dwell on the battles of Indra with the demons, especially the battle of Indra with Vṛtra is celebrated by songs in numerous songs. The great deed of Indra is thus described in a song of Rgveda:

"I will proclaim the manly deeds of Indra,  
The first that he performed, the lightning-wielder.  
He slew the serpent, then discharged the waters,  
And cleft the caverns of the lofty mountains".

For the Vedic singers, Indra was a powerful champion. This warlike national god is much more suitable than anyother to be the chief of gods. In the Rgveda, almost every god is praised as the first and highest of all gods, this is a sort of flattery. Indra is also celebrated in another song which may here be given in the translation of A.A. Macdonell:

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2 Mamrice Winternitz, "History of Indian Literature" Vol. I, p-75  
3 "Rgveda" I, 32
"He who just born as chief god full of spirit
Went far beyond the other gods in wisdom:
Before whose majesty and mighty manhood
The two worlds trembled: he, O men, is Indra."

Another poet addresses the god Agni with the following words:

"If thou wert mortal, Agni, and I the immortal one,
Thou son of strength, like Mitra, to whom we sacrifice,
Thee would I not expose to curse, good God!
My worshipper should not suffer poverty, neglect, or harm."

The majority of the numerous songs in the Rgveda are dedicated to Agni. In the whole of the Rgveda, Agni is called "the son of strength". The Creator Prajapati is also praised as the preserver of the world and as the one god. Majority of these hymns are either sacrificial chants or sacrificial songs or prayers. Some of the poems like the dialogue hymns of the Rgveda are of frequent occurrences in Indian literature.

There are also some hymns in the Rgveda, which are called Dānastutis "Songs of praise to Generosity". There are about forty such hymns.

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4 "Hymns from the Rgveda", pp. 48 ff.
6 Ibid., X, 121.
7 Only one hymn (Rgveda I, 126) is entirely a Dānastuti.
Some of them are songs of victory, in which the god Indra is praised, because he has helped some king to achieve a victory over his enemies. There is one hymn in the Rgveda which is, in the higher sense, a Dānastuti, a "Praise of Generosity". It is the hymn which strikes a moralizing note and is quite foreign to the Rgveda. These hymns, songs and poems of Rgveda are only a fragmentary portion of a poetic literature of which the greater part is lost. We find similar semi-epic and semi-dramatic poems in the Mahābhārata, in the Purāṇas and especially in Buddhist literature. All these poems are nothing else but ancient ballads of the same kind as are found also in the literature of many other peoples.

**BIOGRAPHICAL WORKS IN SANSKRIT LITERATURE**

We have just seen that the first traces of epic poetry in India have been found in the Vedic literature i.e., in the Rgveda, in the Ākhyanas, Itihāsas and Purāṇas. The "songs in praise of men" (gāthā nārāsamsī) are often mentioned beside the Itihāsas and Purāṇas. These songs are connected on the one hand with the Dānastutis of the Rgveda and on the other hand, they are the direct precursors of the actual Heroic Epic itself for their glorious deeds. Gradually these songs developed into epic poems of considerable length i.e. heroic songs centering around one hero or one great event.

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8 Rgveda X, 117
In the 1st century, whatever the biographies we have found, can be termed as Brāhīta or Ākhyāyikā. We have also speeches and utterances of Yājñavalkya and other sages which also form a bulk of Sanskrit literature of pre-historic era. Among the Sanskrit literature, we can boast of the great Sanskrit epic - the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, which are considered by most of the critics as unparalleled in history. But inspite of having such rich literature, we cannot trace out biography of equal importance.

The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki made the composition of the carita easier. When he got his poetic power, then at the request of Brahmā he heard the story from Nārada and Nārada told to the people,

"Raghubara caritaṁ munipraṇītaṁ
Daśaśīrasa badhaṁ nīśāmayadvam".9

(Listen to the biography of Rāmacandra, who will kill the ten-headed Rāvaṇa, written by the sage)

It is a true popular epic. It has become the property of the whole Indian people and has influenced the thought and poetry of the nation for centuries. From the ancient period, it was termed as "Ādikāvyā". It is difficult to ascertain the actual period of its composition. The Rāmāyaṇa has taken its present shape after adding two chapters (1st and 7th) and several verses

9 "Rāmāyana," Adi kāṇḍa, 2nd canto, sloka 43.
with the original epic. As an epic, the Rāmāyaṇa is very far removed from the Veda, and even the Rāma legend is only bound to Vedic literature by very slender threads. Though the songs of this epic were very old, it is probable that the original Rāmāyaṇa was composed in the third century B.C. by Vālmīki on the basis of ancient ballads. In the later period, the influence of the Rāmāyaṇa was very clear. Following this path, Asvaghoṣa came and compiled his kāvyā 'Buddha Carita'. Kālidāsa and Bhavabhūti also took the help in their writings from the Rāmāyaṇa.

"Mahābhārata" means 'the great narrative of the battle of the Bhāratas.' The Bhāratas are already mentioned in the Rgveda as a warlike tribe and in the Brāhmaṇas, we encounter Bharata, the son of Duḥṣanta and Śakuntalā. The Mahābhārata comprises the detailed description of the Bharat dynasty but it is not only the heroic poem of the battle of the Bhāratas, but at the same time also a repertory of the whole of the old bard poetry. It was too much of a popular book, too much the property of extensive circles of the people, in particular of the warrior caste, for it even to have become an actual Brahmanical work or the property of any one Vedic School.

In this epic, we find the most remarkable of all literary productions, side by side and intermingled, warlike heroic songs with highly coloured descriptions of bloody battle scenes, pious
priestly poetry, religion and law, and mild ascetic poetry full of edifying wisdom and full of overflowing love towards man and beast. So, the Indians themselves regard this epic as a work of poetic art (Kāvya), but also at the same time as a manual (Saṣṭra) of morality.

The Mahābhārata as a whole is a literary monster. It represents a whole literature rather than one single and unified work. The political and religious development which is reflected in those songs of the Mahābhārata which refer to the great fight—the passing of the supremacy from the Kauravas to the Pāṇḍavas, and the deification of Kṛṣṇa—thus already presupposes a long period of time, and it is unthinkable that even these songs only, which form the nucleus of the work, should originate with one single poet. Thus what we can term the actual epic, as it has come down to us, is certainly not the work of one poet. With regard to its language, style and metre, too, the various parts of the Mahābhārata show absolutely no uniformity.

BIOLOGICAL WORKS IN PĀLI LITERATURE

Pāli is an archaic (old) Prākrit. It is a compromise of various dialects. In this Pāli literature, there is no connected life-story of the Buddha until we come to the,

(1) Nidāna-Kathā: It is a biography of Lord Buddha. It consists of three sections:

11 The text is to be found in Fānsboll's edition of the Jātaka, Vol.I, pp 1-94
(a) Dürenidāna - The story of the "beginnings in the remote past", from the existence of the later Buddha as Sumedha at the time of the Buddha Dīpankara down to his re-birth in the heaven of the Tusita gods.

(b) Avidürenidāna - The story of the "beginnings in the not very remote past". It begins with the descent of Buddha from the heaven of the Tusita gods and ends with the attainment of Bodhi.

(c) Santikenidāna - The story of the "beginnings in the present", which relates the events from the enlightenment of Buddha down to the story of the magnificent donation of the merchant Anāthapiṇḍika.

The first section of it is connected with the Buddha vaṁsa and the Cariyāpiṭaka. At all events the Nidāna - Kathā represents an earlier phase in the development of the Buddha legend than the Lalitavistara and similar Sanskrit works, even if the latter must be ascribed to an earlier time.\

(2) Buddha-Carita: Asvaghōsa, the greatest poet of the Buddhists, created his magnificent epic Buddha-Carita, "life of the Buddha". This was the first complete biography of Buddha. I-šings says that "this extensive work.... relates the Tathāgata's chief doctrines and works during his life, from the period when he was still in the royal palace till his last hour under the avenue of

12 Maurice Winternitz, op.cit., Vol II, P.189
Sāla trees. The Buddha-Carita calls itself a Mahākāvya or "great poem." It was composed in the so-called kāvya Rāmāyaṇa. We find here a well-planned artistic arrangement of the material. It possesses all the characteristics of a Mahākāvya in a prominent manner.

Its topic is the biography of a great sage, its hero is Kṣatriya of a noble family, its chapters have been named after their respective topics. In the 13th sarga, there is a vivid description of the war between the Prince Siddhārtha and Māra (the evil one). The main rasa is Sānta. The poet finely described the birth of Gautama,

"Yasya Prasūtāu Girirajakīla
Vātāhatā Nauriva Bhūscacāla.
Sacandana Cotpalapadmagarbha
Papāta Vṛṣṭirgaganā-danabhrat." 14

(When Gautama Buddha was born, the earth, though fastened to the Himalayas, the king of mountains, trembled with joy and excitement like a ship driven by the wind; and from the cloudy sky, a shower fell, scented with sandalwood, and resplendent with blue and pink lotuses).

13 Ibid., P. 258
14 Asvaghosa, "Buddha Carita", canto I, V-21
The Book of Āśvaghoṣa was an artistic creation. To attain supremacy in selecting the story, he accepted utmost efforts though he could not avoid the usual norms or tendency of Sanskrit literature. It deals with the greater theme of the life of the Buddha. Winternitz also says that Āśvaghoṣa is always more of a poet than a monk, at least in the Buddha Carita.

For this world renowned Kāvya, Āśvaghoṣa was famous. It was by far his first and best work. There is no doubt that the original Buddha-Carita had as many as twenty-eight cantos of which the Tibetan translation is the only preserved one in the original form. It had also English and Chinese translation.

(3) Saundarananda. The second well-known work of Āśvaghoṣa is Saundarananda Kāvya. It belongs to the same class of ornate court poetry. This work, too, is connected with the life-story of the Buddha, with beautiful poetic and philosophical treatise of everlasting value, dealing with the conversion of Saundarananda, the handsome step-brother of Lord Buddha, to Buddhism. It consists of eighteen Sargas or Cantos.

In this Kāvya, we see how Nanda pays a visit to the Lord and informs him about his success and how he has been able to dissociate himself from all mundane phenomena.

15 A.B. Keith, "A History of Sanskrit Literature" P. 58
16 Maurice Winternitz, op.cit., Vol.II,P.260
17 By Kṣitindra-bhadra (7th-8th century) - 28 cantos
"Matrīstanīm Vyañjana Vārūśānām
Saddharmadugdham Pratibhānasyaṃga
Tavāsmī Gām Sādhu Niṣīya

Tṛptastṛṣeva Gāmuttamavatsavarṇah

(Most Excellent one! I have drunk like a calf from the cow of Thy speech— with nipples of benevolence, beautiful dewlap of clear expression, milk of good law or the Noble Truths, and horns of imagination. And all my desires have been fulfilled; just as a calf's thirst is quenched).

Both in the Buddha Carita and the Saundarāṇananda, there are abundant allusions to Brahmanical legends and epic narratives, which serve to confirm the tradition that Āśvaghoṣa was of Brahman family.

(4) Śāriputra-Prakaraṇa: The third great work of Āśvaghoṣa is Śāriputra-Prakaraṇa. It gives the life-stories of two of the most celebrated disciples of Lord Buddha—Śāriputra and Maudgalāyana. They were greatly moved by Buddha's majestic personality and finally they are converted to Buddhism by Lord Buddha himself. Buddha-Carita, Saundarāṇananda and Śāriputra-Prakaraṇa contain a great deal of supernatural elements, yet they claim to be biographical literature. In Buddha-Carita, Āśvaghoṣa is indebted to Vālmīki. In comparison with Buddha-Carita, the style and manner of Saundarāṇananda is very easy. But as a 'itibṛtta', it is not so famous.

18 Āśvaghoṣa, "Saundarāṇananda" canto XVIII, V-11
(5) **Bālacarita and Čārudatta**: Bhāsa's Bālacarita is a drama of five acts, which deals with Kṛśna's birth and his childhood activities. He also wrote Čārudatta, a drama of four acts, about the life-story of Čārudatta and the dancer Basantasena.

(6) **Sūdramadha, Sūdrakacarita and Bikrānta Sūdraka**: These three biographies were written about Sūdraka. He was a Brahman and in his later life, he became a king of Ujyaini. From his drama Mṛchakatika also, we get something about his life.

(7) **Mṛchakatika**: It was written by Sūdraka. It consists of ten acts. It deals with the story of Brahmin Čārudatta and the dancer Basantasena. It is in many respects the most human of all the Sanskrit plays. The chief value of this drama lies in the graphic picture it presents of a very interesting phase of everyday life in ancient India.

(8) **Kumārasambhava and Raghuvamśa**: These two are Kālidāsa's famous works. Kumārasambhava deals with the birth-story of Kārtika—the son of Śiva. It consists of seventeenth cantos. The subject is unquestionably a daring one. The poem begins with a brilliant piece of description of the Himalaya, the abode of Śiva.

The Raghuvamśa, though inferior in some slight degree to the Kumārasambhava, may rightly be ranked as the finest Indian
specimen of the Mahākavya as defined by writers on poetries. It consists of twenty-nine cantos. Here we get the stories of twenty-nine kings of Raghu dynasty. The Raghuvamsa is true to the type, for the central figure is Rama, though in accord with the title the poem first sketches the history of the dynasty of the Sun-born kings, descendants of the Ikṣvāku, whose name occurs in the Rgveda, and whose family is renowned in the epic and the Purāṇas. It is supposed that Kalidāsa has not adopted the Rāmāyaṇa as the basis of Raghuvamsa.

(9) Rāvana-vadha: Bhatti's Rāvana-vadha or Bhatti-Kāvya is a famous kāvyā of twenty-two cantos. These twenty-two cantos are again divided into four chapters (Kāṇḍas). Here the poet describes the birth of Rāmacandra, rescue of Sītādevi from Rāvana, his return from Lāṅka etc.

(10) Śīśupālavadha: In Magha's Śīśupālavadha, we find the life-story of Śīśupāla - the son of Domaghoṣa - the King of Chedi. The poet has shown us that this Śīśupāla, in his former state of existence was Rāvana and Hiranyakasipu. Magha has collected this from Visnupurāṇa19 and Bhagavata Purāṇa20. In the last three cantos, we find the vivid description of the fight between Kṛṣṇa and Śīśupāla.

19 "Visnupurāṇa" - 4,14,12,13
20 "Bhāgavata-Purāṇa" - 7,1,38; 3,15,16
(11) **Naiśadhiya carita**: Śrīharṣa's Naiśadhiya carita is a Mahākāvyya. It has twenty-two cantos. It is based on the story of Nala and Damayanti of Mahābhārata. According to A.B. Keith, "The Naiśadhiya unquestionably has a definite interest in the history of Sanskrit literature, for it exhibits the application to the charming episode of the Mahābhārata ...."\(^1\) It possessed a high degree of skill in the difficult art of playing on words.

(12) **Uttarāṃ carita; Mahāvira carita and Mālati-mādhava**: Bhavabhūti's Uttarāṃcarita is a drama of seven acts. It deals with the story of Rāma i.e. the later part of his life. Mahāviracarita is also a drama of seven acts, which deals with the story of Rāma before he went to the forest. His Mālatimādhava is a general love-story of Mālati—the daughter of the minister of Ujyayinī and Mādhava—the son of a minister of another country. The poet has shown us how they two were united with the help of the Buddhist medicants. It consists of ten acts.

(13) **Harsacarita**: Bāṇa's Harsacarita has auto-biographical and biographical materials. Because Bāṇa relates in chapter-I the descent of his family and his own life to the end of his rash youth. It is a famous work in Sanskrit prose literature. It is more a poem or history than a work on history. It ranks as an Akhyāyikā and infact it has been adopted as the model of that

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\(^1\) "A History of Sanskrit Literature" - P.140
form by later writers on poetics such as Rājaśekhara. Here the author does not make it clear certain points presented by him, that is, why Rājyasrī's husband was murdered, who were the poets under Hārṣa's patronage etc. But it should be remembered that this kāvya is not an authentic history. The sum-total of the story, lavishly embellished as it is, is no more than an incident in Hārṣa's career. It also cannot be said that the picture is either full or satisfactory from the historical point of view. Many points in the narrative, especially the position, action and identity of the Mālava and the Gaurā Kings are left obscure; and the gorgeously descriptive and ornamental style leaves little room for the poor thread of actual history. As a biography of a king, it has some literary value. But historically we can say that the work is of minimal value, though in our paucity of actual records it is something even to have this.

(14) Daśakumāracarita: Daṇḍin's best work is Daśakumāracarita. It is divided into two parts—Pūrbapīṭhikā and Uttarapīṭhikā. It is a blending of an Ākhyāyikā and Kathā. The great skill, the mastery of vocabulary and the considerable imagination diplayed in it earned much applause. Here we get the stories of ten Princes, Rajabhāna and his nine companions. Previously it was known as Avantisundarīkathā. Daṇḍin is perfectly capable of simple easy narrative. His date is a problem which is still in controversy. Prof. Wilson says that he flourished in the later part of the 11th century.

22 Ibid., P. 319
23 M.R.Kale, "Daśakumāracarita of Daṇḍin" Introduction, P. XXI
(15) **Rāmapālacarita**: Sandhyākar Nandīn's celebrated work *Rāmacarita* has been ably edited by competent scholars. It is a mine of information regarding the Pāla King of Bengal. Here also we get the story of Rāmacandra and the king of Gauṭā - Rāmapāladeva. This biography has some historical importance.

(16) **Nayasahasāṅka Carita**: This work of Padmagupta (also known as Parimal Kālidāsa) deals with the story of prince Sāsīprabhā and the king of Sindhu, Navasāhasāṅka. It consists of eighteen cantos. We cannot call it a biography because it has got no historical case.

(17) **Vikramāṅka Carita**: In Bilhaṇa's work, we get the life-story of King Vikramaditya and his predecessors. This is an epic of eighteen cantos. The poet here gives the description of the battle fought between Colarāja and Cālukyarāja - Vikramaditya, the sixth. The date of this work appears to fall before 1088, because it passes in silence the great expedition of the king of the south which took place then because it mentions as prince, not the king Harṣadeva of Kashmir who became the king only in that year.

(18) **Rājatarāṅgini**: Among the Sanskrit kāvyas based on historical facts, Kalhaṇa's *Rājatarāṅgini* is the best of all. Here, we get the detailed history of the Kashmir dynasty and also about the king Lalitaditya Muktāpi etc. This kāvyā was started in

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24 Debipada Bhattacharyee, "Bānglā Carit Sāhitya", P. 21
1149 A.D. it has a great historical importance, yet the biographer followed supernatural hearsay, Purānic tales and many unhistorical materials in describing the history of the past.

Taking the tales of Rāmacandra, there are many caritas, as "Abhinava Rāghava", "Jāmadagnājaya", "Kundamāla" of Bīranāga, Raghuvilāsa" of Rāmacanda etc. Among the minor poets, we get Rājasēkharā's "Bālarāmāyaṇa" (10 acts) and "Karpūrcarita" of Vatsarāja (one act play). The female poet Bijukā wrote "Kaumudī Mahotsab" - the story of Kalyāṇavarmanā, the king of Pataliputra. Rāmacandra Dikṣit wrote "Jānakiparīṇoy", Jāyśiṅha Sūrī wrote "Hammīr Madamardana" etc.

Among these biographies, the Buddhacarita of Āśvaghoṣa has a great literary value. In this epic, the poet is indebted to the Rāmāyaṇa. But Saundarāṇanda is a Kāvyā and Śāriputra Prakaraṇa is a drama. The whole of Saundarāṇanda has been found but only a few chapters of Śāriputra has yet been discovered in Middle Asia.

Though these three Kāvyas contain a great deal of supernatural elements, yet they claim to be biographical literatures. In comparison with Buddha-carita the style and manner of Saundarāṇanda is very easy. But as an "Itibṛttā", it is not so famous. We also find no elements of history in "Avadānasātaka" and "Divyāvadāna" written by the Buddhists.
BIOGRAPHICAL LITERATURE FROM JAINA SOURCE

Just as we have received the oldest Sanskrit biographical literature from Buddhist sources, so also we have received some old biographical Sanskrit literature from Jaina sources. The Jainas composed their biographies in Prākṛt. and Apabhṛṣṭa languages also. In their stories, we observe that there are also purely Jīnestic legends, some of which read like historical or biographical accounts.

(1) Mahāpurāṇa: It is the most notable literature in the big voluminous Purāṇa type literature. We find here sixty-three chapters of Mahāpurāṇa and as such the book is named "Trṣaṣṭisūlaka - carita". These sixtythree Mahāpurāṇas are:

(a) Twenty-four Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras,
(b) Their contemporary twelve Rājacakravorties,
(c) Twenty-seven heroes - Baladeva, Bāsudeva and Pratibāsudeva etc.

The first portion named "Ādipurāṇa" and the second portion is "Uttarapurāṇa". The entire portion of "Ādipurāṇa" is written by Jinasena and the rest and the entire of "Uttarapurāṇa" is written by Guṇabhadra - the disciple of Jinasena.

(2) Biography of Mahāvīra: Hēmacandra in the 12th century wrote

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25 Maurice Winternitz, op. cit., P. 509
the biography of Mahāvīra in the 10th parvan of his vast Trṣaṣṭisalākāpuruṣa carita. The work enjoys the greatest reputation among the Śvetāmbara Jainas. This work was written at the desire of king Kumārapāla between 1160 and 1172 A.D. The language of this work which the author himself describes as a Mahākāvyya, is simple and unaffected. It's Xth parvan entitled Mahāvīra carita, is of greater significance. It contains the life-story of Mahāvīra.

(3) Kumārapāla carita: Hemacandra's another carita in Prākṛt language is Kumārapāla carita (28 chapters). The main aim of this Kāvyya was to propagate Jainism. Twenty chapters of this carita were written in Sanskrit and eight chapters were written in Prākṛt. So this kavya is also called Dyaśraya Kāvyā. As a historical epic, this is very famous.

(4) Mahāvīra Caritam: Guṇacandra wrote Mahāvīra-caritam in 1082 A.D. in the Prākṛt language. Another Mahāvīra Caritam was written by Śīlavacārya in 868 A.D. Debendragaṇin also wrote one Mahāvīra Caritam in 1085 A.D.

(5) Nemināthacarita: In the 11th century we have a Neminātha carita in Sanskrit by Śūrācārya and one by Maladhāri Hemacandra. In the year 1159 A.D., Haribhadra - a pupil of Jinaśandra completed his 'Nemināthacarita' in Apabhramśa. The life-story of Neminātha is also treated by the poet Vāgbhaṭa in his Ne- Nirvāṇa - a Mahākāvyya in 15 Cantos.
(6) **Parśvabhyudāya**: This is a poetical life-story of Parśvanātha by Jinasena, who wrote Ādipurāṇa in the 9th century. The number of poetical life-stories of Parśvanātha (the predecessor of Mahāvīra is very great. This carita by Bhavadeva Sūrī (who probably wrote it in 1255 A.D.) tells with an exceptional wealth of detail not only the life-story of this saint in his last incarnation but also his previous nine existences. Other Parśvanātha caritas are written by Vādirāja (1025 A.D.), by Māṇikyacandra (1217 A.D.) by Sakalakīrti (15th A.D.) by Padmasundara (1565 A.D.) and by Udayavīra Gaṇin.

(7) **Sāntinātha carita**: Māṇikyacandra and Sakalakīrti also wrote Sāntinātha carita - the life-stories of the sixteenth Tīrthaṅkaras. A Sāntinātha carita in Sanskrit verses was written by Devasūrī in 1282 A.D. and another was written by Munībhadra. Devacandra wrote another Sāntinātha carita in 1103 A.D.

(8) **Paumcaru**: Svayambhu's Paumcaru-Rāmakathā is a carita in Apabhramśa language. If Ādipurāṇa can be called the 'Mahābhārata of Jaina Apabhramśa', then Paumcaru is the Rāmāyaṇa of Jaina Apabhramśa.

(9) **Jaśaharacarī**: This carita is based on the life of Jaśaharā, the favourite king of the Jainas. Its language is also Apabhramśa. It was written by Puṣpadanta in four divisions and in gāthā-rhythm, The poet himself calls it as a 'Mahākāvyā'.

(10) **Nāyakumāracariu:** This carita relates the life-story of Nāyakumāra. This was also written by Puspādanta in Apabhramśa.

(11) **Karakandacariu:** The sage Kanakāmar wrote this carita in the later part of the 11th century. In this carita, the life-story of the sage Karakanda has been described. Karakanda was worshipped by both the Jainas and the Buddhists.

(12) **Bhaṭṭiyayattakathā:** Dhanapāla's this work is totally influenced by Apabhramśa. Some of the stories in this work can be compared with the tales of Arabians. In both Bhāṭṭiyayattakathā and Karakandacariu we find the reflection of the then society in simple poetic language. In Bhāṭṭiyayattakathā, the writer has spoken highly of the Pancāmabhūtā. He has also shown how Bhāṭṭiyadatta got back his wife from all odd circumstances.

(13) **Tīrthakalpa:** This is a historical epic, written in both Sanskrit and Prākṛt languages by Jina-pravasūri. Here we find the description of different sacred places and the names of the founders of those places. There are sixty-three stories, and among them thirty-six stories are written in Māhārāṣṭrī Prākṛt.

(14) **Rāvanabaha or Setubandha:** This carita was written by Prabarsena in the 6th century A.D. There are 15 Sargas in this carita. Here we find the life-story of Rāmacandra from his
searching to Sītā till the killing of Rāvana. This was also written in Māhārāṣṭrī Prākṛt.

(15) Sumatinātha caritra was written in the Prākṛt language by Somaprabhācārya.

(16) Gaūravaha: This work was written in the 3th century A.D. by Bāppairāya, the president of the king of Kanauj Yaśodavarmanā. Here the real historical materials are absent but the poet has given the description of himself.

(17) Rāmacaritra: In the year 1596 A.D. Devavijayagaṇin, a pupil of Rājavijaya Sūrī, wrote this in prose. The author himself says that he is following Hemacandra's Rāmāyaṇa.

(18) Kīrtikaumudī by Someśvar, Sukṛta, Samkīrtana by Arisinha, Basanta Vilasa by Ramacandra Suri and Hammīr Mahākāvya by Nāyacandra Sūri are the other Jaina caritas.

(19) Sudarśana carita: Nayāhandī has written this carita in 1044 A.D. in Apabhramśa. This Sudarśana was a renowned religious leader. So this carita has described all the traits of his character.

26 Ibid., P. 495
(20) **Surasundarīcīriam:** It occupies a high esteem in the Prākṛt epics. It was written by Dhaneśvara in the later part of 11th century.

(21) **Mehesaracariu:** Singhasena wrote this in apabhramśa in the year 1439 A.D. He was also famous in the name of Raidhū.

(22) **Jīvandharacarita:** Singhasena, in the name of Raidhū, wrote this carita.

(23) **Śrīpālacaritra:** Ratnasēkharasūri wrote this carita.

(24) **Arjunacarita:** Ānandavardhan, the court poet of AvantīVarman (855 - 84 A.D.) wrote this epic.

(25) **Kṛṣṇacarita:** Umāpatidhar was the minister of the king Laksmaṇasena of Gauḍa. He wrote this carita which is based on the life of Kṛṣṇa.

(26) **Śrīkaṇṭhacarita:** Māṅkha was the poet of Kashmir. He wrote this in 12th century A.D. It consists of twenty-five chapters. In it, we find the descriptions of how Tripurāsura was defeated by Śiva.

(27) **Haricaritakāvya:** Caturbhujā wrote this carita in thirteen chapters in the year 1493 A.D.
Adināthacaritaṃ: Vardhamāna wrote this in 1103 A.D.

Besides these, Sántisūri’s “Prthvīcandrācaritam” (1104)
Debabhadra’s “Pārvanātha-caritam” (1108), Śrīcandra’s “Munisubhrata-
svāmīcaritam” (1135), Lākṣaṃgaṇīn’s “Supāśānahacaritam” (1143),
“Candraprabhācarita” and “Mallinātha-carita” are note worthy.

Among these Jaina writings, Trṣaṭīśālakāpuruṣa
(Mahāpurāṇa – 9th c.) observes special mention. It has been
completely written by Jinasena and the rest is written by his
disciple Gunaṇabhadra. Among these caritas, Vimalasūri’s Paumcariu
is a Jaina Rāmāyaṇa.

The Mahābhārata has also been repeatedly adapted
by the Jainas. The earliest work of this nature is Jinasena’s
“Harivamsa Parva” in sixty-six chapters. In this work, the legends
of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are told. The legend of Rṣabha, the first
Jīna is connected with the story of Kṛṣṇa, we have also the
legend of Nemi, the causin of Kṛṣṇa.

In about 1200 A.D., the Maladhārin Devaprabhā Sūrī
wrote a “Pāṇḍava carita” in 18th Sargas, in which the contents
of 18th Parvans of the Mahābhārata are given in a concise form,
though remodelled in many of its details. A “Pāṇḍava Purāṇa”
which is also known as “Jaina Mahābhārata” was written by
Subhācandra in 1551 A.D. Another “Jaina Mahābhārata” is Dhabalgiri’s

27 Published in the Km 93, Bombay 1911, Earlier edition in
Caritra Samgraha in Ahmedabad, 1884.
"Harivamsa parvan" (10th to 11th century A.D.). All these life-stories are purely legendary.

If we go to judge the literary values of this part of Jaina literature, then we observe that most of the kavyas were written for the purpose of propagating the religious views. According to Dr. S.N. Sarma - "In the Buddha and Jaina literature too, the biographies of the great men were full of exaggerated events and were shown as the incarnations of god and all in all in the world".

In Hemacandra's famous work "Triśaṭisalākāpurusacarita" also, we find that the main purpose of the work is, however, instruction and edification, for as the author himself says "to sing in praise of the pious, leads to liberation". But it is true that though the writers based on the lives of the Tīrthaṅkaras, yet they were successful to propagate their main views. Their another purpose was to fulfil the welfare of the society.

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28 "Carit Sāhitya," P. 90.