

Historiography of Professor V.S.Pathak

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Academic Journey of Professor V.S.Pathak

Born in 1926, in Hoshangabad; M.P., on the bank of sacred Narmadā as the son of a leading lawyer, Professor V.S.Pathak passed Intermediate examination in 1946 from the Central Hindu College with first class first and obtained Bachelor's degree in 1948 and M.A. degree in 1950, both from B.H.U. standing first class first in both the examinations. In 1950 he became a Research Assistant under R.C.Majumdar. In 1956 he was awarded Ph.D. degree by the same University and in 1962 by the University of London under Professor A.L.Basham. He was UNESCO Professor, El Colegio de Mexico in 1963-64; Professor and Head of the Department of Ancient History, Archaeology and Culture, University of Gorakhpur, from 1965 to 1986; Visiting Professor, Rani Durgavati University, Jabalpur, 1988-89; Visiting Professor, Banaras Hindu University, 1989-90, and Sanskrit University, Varanasi, 1990-91. In Feb. 1992 he became the Vice-Chancellor of Gorakhpur University and remained on this post till Dec. 94.

Professor Pathak was Sectional President of the Indian History Congress in 1974, President of the Numismatic Society of India in 1981, President of the Ancient India Section of the All India Oriental Conference in 1984, and President of the Epigraphical Society of India, in 1985. In 1984 he visited USSR at the invitation of the Soviet Academy of Sciences.

In 1995 Professor Pathak was felicitated with a two-volume festschrift edited by A.M.Shastri, Devendra Handa and C.S.Gupta. It was brought out from New Delhi.

Apart from about sixty research papers, Forewords, etc. Professor Pathak has published half a dozen works which include *Ancient Historians of India* (1966); *History of Śaiva Cults in Northern India from Inscriptions* (Varanasi, 1962); *Smārta Religious Tradition* (Meerut, 1987); *Bhāgavata Makaranda* (Gorakhpur, 1988); *Jabalpur : The Origin and Significance of the Name* (Jabalpur, 1989) and *Deśa Kā Abhidhāna* (Gorakhpur, 1990). Three of his monographs are to be shortly published (*The Kuṣāṇa Onomastics, The Semantics of Ārya and Its Historical Implications, and The Antiquity of the Śramaṇa Tradition*).

Presently V.S.Pathak is engaged in the Proto-Vedic studies for which he has devised a new method. According to him, *homo-vocalis*, 'the speaking man', and *homo technicus*, 'the tool making man', are two different aspects of Homo Sapiens. Since the evidence in the form of tools has been left behind by the early *homo technicus*, this aspect has been duly investigated whereas the words spoken just vanish away leaving no trace. But as there were tool traditions, so there were word traditions which were later preserved in writing. The *Veda* and the *Avestā*, the two early works of the Aryans, contain a corpus of words which may be traced back to Indo-Iranian antiquity.

Approach to History

In recent years Pathak has been throwing new light on ancient Indian History and culture, and also on the history and culture of other countries with the help of semantic studies of words. In his 'Semantic Studies of Numismatic Terms' (*JNSI*, XLIII, Pt. I, pp. 1-18) and in his article 'Āhata : A Semantic Study' (*ibid.*, XLIV, pp. 97.107) he gave, as it were, a new direction to the numismatic studies in India by tracing the etymology and semantic evolution of the numismatic terms *mudrā*, *rūpa*, *sikkā*, *viśvarūpa*, *śatamāna*, *āhata*, etc. In his Presidential Address to the Epigraphical Society of India he threw light on the semantics of the terms *lipi*, *dipi*, *lekha*, etc. In his Presidential Address to Gorakhpur Session of Bhāratīya Itihāsa Saṁkalana Samiti of Uttar Pradesh (1984), he discussed the semantics of the terms 'civitas', 'civilization', '*sevyah*', and '*sakhā-hakhā*', clarifying their original import, evolution of their meaning and inter-relationship. Next year, in 1985, he elaborated this theme in his Presidential Address to the All India Oriental Conference, XXXII Session, held at Ahmedabad. His semantic studies often illumined many a till now unknown cultural facets. Using his background of semantic studies he explains his concept of history and civilization thus :

Thus evolution of the concept of civilization on the basis of cities was peculiar to the Roman society. *Polis-agrios* bi-partition is the hall-mark of the early Greeks and *varṇa-kṛṣṭi* demarcation was the stamp of early India. Is it, therefore, historically sound to apply the Roman frame-work of the *rusticita* and *civicita* for the development of other societies? It is, in other words, historically justified to call those Vedic Indians barbaric or semi-barbaric in the sense of uncivilized of the Roman context, who, so far as the available evidence goes, not only shared but also sired the pristine concept of *sevā*, which ultimately resulted into the *civics* of the civilization? The Morgan-Childe terminology in Indian context is as inapt as is the rhetorical question of Cicero- "*Quae barbaria India Vastior aut agrestior?*" It should be seriously considered whether such terms as barbarism, civilization, urbanization and rural

regression which have acquired their meanings in the association of European history require re-interpretation or alternatively replaced by such terms as may express Indian values and cultural context with clarity and definition.

"It is not a little unfortunate that under the impact of the modern concept of history, which is pre-eminently European, the traditional forms and norms of history in the orient, especially in India, have been totally rejected and entirely neglected. Sprouted in the Graeco-Roman tradition and developed in the hot house of the 18th century European Enlightenment, it blossomed forth under the impact of positivism and objectivity of experimental science. *Itihāsa*-tradition, on the other hand, originated in India and grew in Indian philosophico-cultural context.

"History develops in close juxtaposition and with constant interactions of associated scheme of ideas" and values. Torn out of its cultural context, modern histories of ancient India assume the complexion of either catalogues of events or the mental autobiographies of modern historians. Like the beautiful damsel Vāk of the Ṛgvedic imagery, the works of *Itihāsa* tradition will reveal their mystery only to the discerning lover in the bridal chamber of the Vedic-Agamic culture : others may stand and stare but will fail to perceive the endearing charms of the captivating form. It is true that the ancient concept cannot be re-incarnated in modern times. It is neither attainable nor desirable. My only submission is that Indian intellectual personality has a distinctive profile which has been greatly veiled under the shadow of the mental thralldom of the west. From the later half of the 20th century new winds of change are blowing over the orient. Can we change our attitude towards history which consciously or unconsciously, knowingly or unwittingly reflects the western models, and develop as a historian an independent personality of our own?

V.S.Pathak has explained his approach to political history while commenting on the theme paper of Professor S.R.Goyal published in the *Political History in a Changing World* (eds. G.C.Pande et al, Meerut, 1992, pp. 81-88). According to him with the advent of independence, imperialism and nationalism—the major motivations and inspirations for the study of ancient-Indian history—withered away, leaving a vacuum in the field. The vacuum thus created was filled by the representatives of the two super powers, the Marxists and American scholars. American scholars addressed themselves to the study of social context of economic development, an aspect which had a great appeal to the politicians and administrators engaged in the economic construction of the country. The sociology of change and development at 'the macro-level' involved them in such problems as modernity and tradition or continuity and change. But it is at the 'micro-level', which is primarily concerned with the village structure, that their influence is clearly felt. On the basis of field data, they tried to

evolve a conceptual and theoretical framework for the study of rural structure and local political power. They evolved three major concepts for explaining the social change —'status', 'hierarchy' and 'elite'. These concepts, in fact, proposed as substitutes for the Marxist theory of class struggle are generally creeping in historical writings, though no sustained attempt at explaining the historical events over a period of time has been published so far. "I sincerely feel", he observes, "that we have to move cautiously. We should not accept these concepts unless they are properly processed and tested."

While commenting on the lead-paper of S.R.Goyal, Pathak disagrees with the latter and argues : It is not wholly true that the interest in 'kings and heroes' has declined. The Basilaes, the Caesars, the *Kshayathiya Vazrakas*, *Shahanshahs* and the Highnesses or the *Mahārājādhirājas* are re-incarnated as Presidents, Prime Ministers, Military Dictators or the Dictators of the Proletariat status. Many of them enjoyed or enjoy autocratic powers like any emperor of the past... We have got to define the values of democracy and secularism in the context of our national tradition. We have to review our tradition which is thus expressed by the medieval saint Chaṇḍīdāsa :

Sabār upare mānuṣa satya

Tāhār upare nāi.

He also cautions that the ambition of having the knowledge of factors controlling human actions may degenerate into a Nietzsche-like craving for playing the role of a Superman 'the magnificent brute avidly rampant for soil and victory' and for controlling the persons of "slave mentality". Then what is the aim of historical research? "I would say that *it is the integral perception of man by man as a man.*"

Contribution to Numismatic Studies

V.S.Pathak's contribution to numismatic studies is exceptional. Though he has not produced any monograph on numismatics, he has written numerous papers on numismatic problems some of which are of great significance and deserve special mention. For example, in order to solve the problem of the Chandragupta-Kumāradevī type of gold coins he suggested (*JNSI XIX*, ii, pp. 135-42) that they depict the *Vaivāhika* or *Kalyāṇasundara* form in which the wife is represented not to the left, but to the right of her husband, as we find on these coins. Therefore these coins seem to have been designed to commemorate the marriage of Chandragupta I and Kumāradevī. In other words, they are not their joint issues indicative of their joint-rule, but commemorative medals issued to commemorate their marriage. They were, according

to Pathak, issued by Samudragupta who was a *dvyāmuṣyāyaṇa*. He was a natural son of Chandragupta I and a subsidiary son (of the *dauhitra* category) of his maternal grandfather, the father of Kumāradevī, the Licchavī princes. He, therefore, introduces himself as *Chandraguptasya Licchavī-dauhitrasya mahādevyām = kumāradevyām-utpann-asya*. Thus the legends on Chandragupta-kumāradevī type of coins are a numismatic version of this line. The obverse legends *Chandraguptaḥ* and *Kumāradevī-Śrī* and the device of marriage-scene may together be taken as meaning *Chandraguptasya Kumāradevyāmutpannasya* while the reverse legend *Licchavayaḥ* in this association may be construed as *Licchavīnām-dauhitraśya*.

V.S.Pathak's suggestion was further elaborated by S.R.Goyal who reconstructed the history of this period on its basis. In a paper published in *JRAS*, in 1972, Thomas R.Trautmann described it as 'Pathak-Goyal hypothesis'. It has been accepted *mutatis mutandis* by P.L.Gupta, B.P.Sinha and V.C.Pande (For references see my *Recent Historiography of Ancient India*, p. 276).

In the 1988 issue of *JNSI* (No. L, pp. 75-78) Pathak critically examined a Kuṣāṇa coin bearing the Bactrian legend CANDANOY BAGO in the Kushāṇa-Greek characters on the obverse, and the Sanskrit legend *candra deva* in Kuṣāṇa-Brāhmī letters on the reverse which was reported from Karatepe near Jermez on the Oxus in the vicinity of ancient Bactra. On its basis he has suggested that *candra* and *candana* were the distinguishing appellatives added to the name Kaniṣka in Khotan to avoid confusion arising from the Khotanese word *kanaiṣka* which means 'the smallest'. This provided the ground for the mythological accretion in the form of the identification of Kaniṣka with *candra*, the Moon-god on one hand, and the assumption of the *virūda* of *candana* by Kaniṣka on the other.

Pathak has given a new dimension to ancient Indian history by his semantic study of ancient terms. For example in his Presidential Address to the 68th Annual Conference of the Numismatic Society of India (published in *JNSI*, XLIII, i, 1981, pp. 1-18) he undertook a semantic and etymological study of some numismatic terms such as *mudrā*, *rūpa*, *sikkā*, *niṣka*, *viśvarūpa*, *śatamāna*, *karṣā*, *paṇa*, *āhata* and *ṭaṅka*. As he claims, from his study a few interesting facts emerge which throw light on the origin of Indian coinage as well. According to his study, "In the second millennium B.C., there was a cultural intercourse between India and the Semitic countries as revealed by *mudrā-muzra* and *nsc-niṣka* series of words, and this contact was

responsible for the introduction of the pre-numismatic stage when gold ornaments became the symbols of value and status.

"*Śatamāna* takes us to the next pre-numismatic phase when a well defined system of weights had come into existence. With *śatamāna* assuming a definite shape and weight, the stage was set for the appearance of *numisma*.

"A study of the root *paṇa*, to sell, indicates the development of mercantile economy which served as a catalytic agent for the induction of the numismatic age. Again *kārṣā* reveals India's contact with the Semitic countries. *Kārṣā* and *paṇa* envisage a new standard of weights. *Rūpya* emphasize the growing popularity of silver. *Rūpa*, in its third stage of semantic development, had acquired the meaning of a design carrying the authoritative sanction. It heralded the appearance of *numisma* on the scene. Around this time or a little later, *siktā* seems to have migrated to Syria and in the course of development became a *sikkā*.

"*Āhata* indicates the continuity of the method of casting and *ṭaṅka* introduces a new method of coinage, to wit, punching, which subsequently developed into die-striking."

Next year, in 1982 Pathak published another paper '*Āhata : A Semantic Study*' (*JNSI*, XLIV, Pt. i and ii, 1982, pp. 97-107) in which the semantics and morphology of the term *āhata*, which were treated in brief in his Presidential Address of 1981, were discussed in detail.

V.S.Pathak's wide and deep knowledge of the history and culture of Iran, Central Asia and adjoining regions enabled him to produce two masterly research articles entitled 'Motifs on Gupta Coins and Sassanian Wares' I and II, published respectively in the *Numismatic Digest*, Vol. 10, 1986, pp. 81-90 and Vol. 12-13, 1988-89, pp. 40-62. In these papers he points out that the Gupta gold coins show a striking resemblance with kindred scenes on the coins of the Kuṣāṇas the silver wares and seals of the Sassanians, and the metal-work of the Sogdians. The Kuṣāṇa influence, were pointed out and discussed by several scholars, but the Sassanian-Sogdian parallels which are far more interesting and instructive have escaped their attention probably because the Sassanian silver wares published in periodicals and monographs are not easily available in India, and probably because scholars of Sassanian silver work were not much interested in the contemporary Indian numismatics.

Pathak has mainly discussed three common motifs—the ring, the three round

objects, and the tiger-lion-hunting on the Sassanian silver wares or gems and the Gupta coins. Firstly, this indicates the Gupta-Sassanian contacts. These motifs, according to him, furnish evidence for the specific relationship between the early Gupta monarchs and the Sassanian rulers.

The ring motif is found not only on the Gupta coins but in the Gupta literature also. The story of the *Abhijñāna-Śākuntalam* revolves around the signet-ring. Evidently, the signet-ring betokens the contract marriage, as current in Central Asia. The motif was borrowed, and this was done with the specific purpose of blazoning out to the world at large the contract of Chandragupta I with Kumāradevī, the Licchavī princess. It is, in this light, Pathak thinks that we have to interpret the legend *Licchavayah* on the reverse of the coins and the epithet *Licchavidauhitra* in inscriptions. On accepting these reconstructions, we shall be left with no other option except to agree with Allan and others that Chandragupta I-Kumāradevī type of coins were issued by Samudragupta.

The three round objects seen on the Cakra-Vikrama coins of Chandragupta II and a decorated ellipsoid in chalcedony of Sassanian origin suggest the influence of the Gupta over the Sessanian art.

Lastly, the tiger-hunting and the lion-hunting may respectively be interpreted with the penetration of the Gupta power in Bactria and Iran.

Epigraphical Studies

V.S.Pathak has not only culled religious data from early medieval inscriptions, he has written two very important papers (in collaboration with V.B.Rao) dealing with two important inscriptions. One of them is a review-article entitled 'Menander and the Reh Inscription' (*The Indian Historical Review*, XI, Nos. 1-2, July 1984-Jan. 85, pp. 117-26) based on G.R.Sharma's *Reh Inscription of Menander and the Indo-Greek Invasion of the Gaṅgā Valley*. (Allahabad, 1984). The Reh inscription is a short epigraph found at Rehona small pillar resembling a *Śivaliṅga*, a derelict mound in Fatehpur district of Uttar Pradesh. By way of interpreting the epigraph, G.R.Sharma subjects to a critical scrutiny a vast mass of archaeological, literary, numismatic and inscriptional evidence. The book is divided into four main sections dealing with the Reh Inscription, the archaeological data for the extent, nature and date of the invasion, the literary evidence pertaining to the *Yavana* attack and Menander and his militant march in the heartland of the country as reflected in literature. This fragmentary inscription contains three complete lines and the top portion of a fourth. The text of the three lines is :

1. *mahārajasa rājarājasa*
2. *mahāntasa trātārasa dhāmmī*
3. *kasa jayarntasa ca apra.*

This part of the inscription is quite legible. But difficulty arises thereafter. The fourth line has been restored by G.R.Sharma as : (*jitasa*) *Minānanda (de?) rasa*. But according to VSP the reading *apra (jitasa)* is doubtful. He restores it as *apracasa*. The second section containing the archaeological evidence for the Indo-Greek invasion of the Gaṅgā valley (pp. 12-44) unfolds a grim and woeful tale of death, devastation, incineration and slaughter. On the circumstantial evidence, Pathak feels, Menander stands accused. The third section (pp. 45-51) discusses the testimony of the Purāṇas for the catastrophic effects of the *Yavana* invasion. Here, however, one treads on a risky ground. As the account of the Purāṇas other than the *Yuga* relates to the rule of the outlandish (*mleccha*) kings including the *Yavanas* and in the tangled mass of data containing elements from various periods of foreign rule, it is almost impossible to isolate the part concerning the *Yavanas*. One wonders whether every excavated site in the Gaṅgā valley, which has yielded the evidence of conflagration, was visited by "the cruel and valiant *Yavanas*". The fourth section (pp. 52-67) which is devoted to the literary data pertaining to Menander falls into three parts : (i) Western classical sources, (ii) Sanskrit, Pali and Tibetan texts, and (iii) the Hathigumpha inscription of Khāravela. Summarizing the evidence, G.R.Sharma wrote :

From the above discussion, it is evident that Milinda and Mahānāga of the *Milindapañho*, Kardama of the *Yuga Purāṇa*, Kardama, the king of Vāhli in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Puṣpanidra, king of Vāhlika in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Alisannibha of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Yakṣa Kṛmiśa of the *Divyāvadāna (Aśokāvadāna)*, Kālayavana of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* and the *Harivaṁśa*, Yavana of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Mahāyakṣa of the *Ārya-mañjuśrī-mūlakalpa*, King Minar of Tārānātha's *History of Buddhism in India*, Mahendra or Menendra of Abhayanandi's *Mahāvṛtti* on *Jainendra Vyākaraṇa* of Devanandī—all stand for Menander, the Indo-Greek king who invaded Northern India and shattered the Śuṅga empire of Puṣyamitra (pp. 64-65).

However, the reading of Yavandarāja, according to V.S.Pathak, in the Hathigumpha inscription is very much doubtful, despite the almost unanimous opinion of the modern epigraphists. The fifth section (pp. 68-98) is devoted to "Fresh Appraisal and Reconstruction" and the sixth section (pp. 99-103) outlines "Conclusions". The work of G.R.Sharma, in the opinion of V.S.Pathak, has unsettled a number of theories

regarding the Greek rule in India, generally considered as finally established. It has also provided a new perspective, a novel orientation and an alternative reconstruction. The importance of the work primarily lies in restructuring history by deftly dovetailing the archaeological data extensively with epigraphic and literary sources.

Another article which Pathak wrote with V.B.Rao is on the identification of King Candra of the Meharauli Pillar Inscription. As against the dominant view among historians and epigraphists. S.R.Goyal, in his lead paper published in *King Candra and the Meharauli Pillar* (eds. M.C.Joshi et al, Meerut, 1989) proposed his identification with Samudragupta, V.S.Pathak and V.B.Rao in their reaction-paper reiterated King Candra's identification with Candragupta II. To prove their contention they have pressed into service some short graffities found on the rocks of Hunza published by A.H.Dani in his *The Sacred Rock of Hunza*. In two of them Hariṣeṇa and Candra Śrī Deva Vikramādi(tya) have been mentioned. On the grounds mainly palaeographical, Dani is disinclined to identify this Harishena with the famous author of the inscription of Samudragupta from Allahabad, and Vikramāditya with Candragupta II. B.N.Mukherjee, on the other hand, identified them with the Gupta personages. There are, however, Pathak and Rao feel a few pieces of evidence which support the identification of this Vikramāditya with Candragupta II and thus confirm the fact of his glorious expedition to Bactria and the neighbouring region. But these small epigraphs, which speak of a certain Candra Śrī Deva Vikramāditya, clearly mention 143 as his date which, if converted into the Gupta era, would assign Candragupta II to 462-63 A.D., an obvious impossibility. Therefore, S.R.Goyal is of the opinion that Candra Śrī Deva Vikramāditya was in all probability a local king of the Hunza region who flourished much later, his date 143 probably referable to the Harṣa era.

Contribution to Religious Studies

V.S.Pathak has contributed tremendously to the religious history of ancient India.¹ Many of his articles on numismatics and epigraphy throw light on ancient Indian religions, for his Ph.D. degree which he earned in 1956 dealt with religious condition of North India in early medieval period as known from inscriptions. He has published a portion of it as his *History of Śaiva Cults in Northern India from Inscriptions* (Varanasi, 1962).

But the book which gave him greater fame as a historian of religions is his *Smārta Religious Tradition* (Meerut, 1987). In this work VSP has given an exhaustive

account of the epigraphical data on the Smārta religious tradition of Northern India (600-1200 A.D.). Divided into five chapters the work deals with the emergence, systematisation and standardisation of the Smārta movement which, on the one hand, emphasised the purity and discipline of the ancient and original faith and, on the other, accepted the challenge and demand of a new age by introducing a number of fresh features such as the *Pūrta dharma*, *Pañca-devopāsanā*, *Tīrthas*, Vows and Festivals.

The early medieval period, is remarkable as it witnessed the disintegration of old traditions, the decline of the age-old *varṇāśrama* organization and the birth of new social values and diversities in the form of regional castes and sub-castes as well as the emergence of various types of modern Indian languages such as the Apabhramśa, Māgadhī, Ardhamāgadhī, etc. The Smṛtis of the period adumbrated ideals and values which exerted tremendous influence on the life of the people of northern India, transcending all geographical and linguistic barriers. All this has been graphically portrayed and critically discussed by Pathak.

According to V.S.Pathak, the texts on *dharma* which appeared first as Dharmasūtras and subsequently as Dharmaśāstras achieved, in the course of time, a status of supreme importance in the regulation of Hindu life. The Dharmaśāstras became the repositories of *dharma* and have been defined as part of the large body of traditional literature which is denoted as Smṛti (that which is remembered) as compared with Śruti (that which is heard) or the Vedic literature proper. The distinction of Śruti and Smṛti is basic to Hindu literature and *dharma*. Smṛti stands for all orthodox non-Vedic works and Manu (II.10) equates Dharmaśāstra with Smṛti and Veda with Śruti. Though treated as a refinement and extension of the Vedic teaching, the Smṛtis were actually products of diverse times and places, introducing many later features in Hindu society. They extended, modified and sometimes even reversed older practices in favour of the more recent customs; and yet the Smṛti writers did not regard themselves as innovators, because their efforts was not initiatory in character; and the theory of the Vedic authority of all Smṛti laws was never abandoned. Thus, in the early medieval period the Smṛti formed the main stream down which flowed Sanskrit thought in the whole of northern India.

History as Biography

However, the most well-known contribution of V.S.Pathak to Indological studies relates to the *carita* works of the early medieval age. About more than a century ago

Carlyle propounded that "the history of what man has accomplished in this world is at the bottom the History of Great Men". Unfortunately, the school of heroic history exaggerated the significance of the role of great men in human history and emphasised that the history of a nation is only the sum of their biographies. Such a view of historical explanation is clearly false and has been rightly rejected by determinists of every type—the Spencerians, the Hegelians and the Marxists. However, it cannot be denied that great rulers and other leaders have played a significant role in the destinies of their respective societies. Therefore, the biographical approach to history has always attracted the attention of scholars. Indeed, the biographies of great men may be looked upon as paved roads which may help the student of history to enter and explore the dense jungle of the age which he wishes to study. And if travelling along these roads makes it easier for one to feel the pulse of an age, what is wrong about it?

In India the early period of Indology beginning from 1784 to 1834 was marked in general with trends of literary antiquarianism, philology and Vedic studies.² During this period, some attempts were made by Sir William Jones, Captain Francis Wilford and H.H.Wilson to reconstruct India's hoary past with the help of literary sources.³ But unfortunately, during this period only one historical narrative, the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, was known from abridged translations and summaries in Persian. From 1834, the year of the decipherment of the Brāhmī script by Prinsep, started the second period of Indological studies. During this period, archaeological discoveries and the positive concepts in historical writing, as developed by Ranke and Mommsen, influenced historians of early India, with the result that the trend in historical writing changed considerably. Now, the attention of Indologists was diverted from literature to inscriptions, coins and archeological monuments, and ancient literary works seemingly lost their attraction as source of history. It was in these unfavourable circumstances that some literary biographies of the early medieval period were discovered.⁴ But influenced by the tendency of the time, the historians fought shy of utilising fully the material from these works for the reconstruction of political history of the period. As Mommsen discarded chronicles in favour of Roman antiquities, so the modern historians of early medieval India either neglected these works, or studied them within the framework of archaeological data.⁵ The study of the *Harṣacarita* of Bāṇa as a source of political history by U.N.Ghoshal, contained in his *The Beginnings of Indian Historiography and Other Essays* is a good example of this approach.⁶

V.S.Pathak's Methodology for the Study of Carita Literature

The first scholar, who underlined the significance of historical biographies composed in early medieval India and who suggested a *scientific* approach for their study, is V.S.Pathak. His work entitled *Ancient Historians of India* (first published in 1966) is probably the maiden attempt in this direction. He believes that the application of techniques of studying archaeological material on these biographies has created a pseudoscopic view making it difficult to realise their real value. It was, of course, he opines, in consonance with the principles of historical criticism, when in interpreting the data from the literary works the historian tried to determine the prejudices and predilections of their authors and tried to eliminate them in historical reconstruction. But, when the historian neglected to consider the medieval methods of historical organisation and inference, based upon the concepts of the past expressed or implied in them, he destroyed the very context which alone could make meaningful the story recorded in these biographies. It is often forgotten that literary works are only indirect sources of history as the past in them is reflected through the personality of their authors. V.S.Pathak, therefore, rightly emphasises that without understanding the contemporary idea of history, and the method of historical organisation the meaning of these historical biographies cannot become clear, and by indiscriminate selection of statements from various places made in these works without processing them properly, one cannot reconstruct true history. Explaining his view he states :

The proper study of history from these works will simultaneously involve two processes—the understanding of the historian's idea of history in the ontological perspective of the ancient world in which he lived and from which his ideas derived their contents, and its translation according to current concepts and terminology. On the other hand, for reconstructing history from ancient archaeological remains, the question of understanding the ancient idea of history does not arise. Thus, if in the indirect source constituted by literary works the subjective element as ideas and forms provide the framework for appreciating the recorded story, in the direct source comprising the archaeological remains, the subjective element is either conspicuous by its absence or is redundant and hence to be suppressed. The application of archaeological techniques on the study of literary works, or the study of literary works within the framework of archaeological remains is sure to bring distortion.⁷

Here a few words regarding Pathak's method and approach for the study of ancient Indian *itihāsa* tradition would not be out of place. He opines that in ancient times, *itihāsa* meant "ancient events arranged in an intelligible pattern to illustrate the

truths of the moral, aesthetic, worldly and spiritual spheres". In its broader sense it includes all forms of historical composition. But in the early medieval court tradition the meaning of *itihāsa* was narrowed down to an account of events culminating into the achievement of royal glory by the king. Further, because of the romantic spirit of the age, the early medieval poet-historians represented the abstract idea of royal glory in the form of a beautiful princess symbolising the goddess of Royal Fortune, mentioned variously as *Rājya-śrī*, *Nṛpa-śrī* or *Sāmrajya-lakṣmī*, whose love the king wins after overcoming numerous difficulties. From the fourth century A.D. this motif of royal glory became widely prevalent. In different forms it occurs in numerous historical works. Inscriptions of the Guptas, the Pālas, the Pratihāras, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and others make frequent use of this motif. According to Pathak, in such historical narratives, the process of the achievement of royal glory by king is invariably developed in five stages—the beginning (*prārambha*), the efforts (*prayatna*), the hope of achieving the end (*prāptyāśa*), the certainty of achievement (*niyatāpti*), and the achievement (*phalāgama*). These stages provide an ordered sequence in the story. However, for the writers of such works notionally the end (*phala*) of the story was the real starting point.

Observes Pathak :

In this reverse process his (poet-historian's) endeavour is not so much to develop gradually the consequences of a given initial situation as to arrange antecedent events in such a way that they necessarily culminate into the known outcome. Further, since a man can hardly grasp and describe life in all its multifarious aspects, the historian selects only that series of events through which he can explain the end in question.⁸

He further writes :

In the reverse process of constructing the history of the past, the concern of the historian is not so much to bring out the consequences which would inevitably follow if a person with certain given qualities were placed in the initial situation as to divine in his character those qualities which make the known outcome appear rational and inevitable. Therefore, besides conditioning the treatment of antecedent events, the end (*phalāgama*) also influences the characterisation.⁹

However, in his attempt to weave a coherent story such poet-historian usually inadvertently left several loose ends which ultimately give a lie to the central tale exposing the motive of the author. Such discrepancies, Pathak argues, become to the modern historian as important, if not more, as the coherent picture itself, for they often reveal a story which is usually more in consonance with archaeological sources. Pathak

has applied this method to several early medieval works including the *Harṣacarita* of Bāṇa, *Vikramāṅkadevacarita* of Bilhaṇa and *Vikramāṅkābhyudaya* of Someśvara III and has concluded that when a younger prince violated the law of primogeniture and forcibly occupied the ancestral throne, his court-poets usually tried to justify his conduct by arguing, *mutatis mutandis*, that :

1. their patron was destined by fate to succeed his father;
2. their patron was favoured and selected by his father for succession;
3. the elder brother himself declined to ascend the paternal throne or proved extremely cruel and vicious when he became king so that his young brother, the hero or the poem, had to dethrone him for the welfare of the people and to save the fair name of his royal family; and
4. sometimes the hero had to dethrone his elder brother at the express command of god.

In his *Harṣacarita* court-poet Bāṇa, who aimed at describing the achievement of universal sovereignty (*rājya-śrī*), by Harṣa personified in latter's sister Rājya-śrī,¹⁰ not only concocts the story that Lakṣmī had herself favoured Puṣyabhūti, the founder of the Vardhana royal house, with the boon that a Chakravartin ruler named Harṣa will be born in his family, but also puts in the mouth of Prabhākaravardhana a speech which suggests that the dying king wanted his second son Harṣa to succeed him. Bāṇa also makes Rājyavardhana to offer the crown to Harṣa and deliberately neglects to mention that Rājyavardhana did ascend the throne—a fact which is revealed to us by the epigraphic evidence. From this Pathak concludes that :

The story which emerges from these discrepancies naturally runs in the opposite direction, cutting across the central tale of the *Harṣacarita* at its vital points. If the latter portrays the noble character of Harṣa with such an exuberance of pious and affectionate colours that is assumes an aerial nebulosity, the former casts dark shadows of doubt about his intentions towards Rājya. If the central story suggests that there was a noble struggle between Rājya and Harṣa, both of whom wanted the other to ascend the throne, the tale of anomalous fragments may be construed to indicate that attempts were made of enthrone Harṣa by superseding Rājya. One can even bring oneself to believe in the correctness of the account of the over-powering affection of Prabhākara towards, Harṣa, to the exclusion of Rājya. But the author outsteps all bounds when he neglects to mention the accession of Rājya to the throne of Thanesar. The little epigraphic evidence gives a clear verdict against his part of Bāṇa's story...

Anyway, in order to construct a stereoscopic version of this drama, one has to understand the implications of both the central tale and the story of discrepancies.¹¹

Similarly, in his *Vikramāṅkadevacarita*, Bilhaṇa, who wanted to justify the dethronement of Someśvara II Bhuvanaikamalla by Vikramāditya VI, the younger brother of the latter and the patron of the former, states that Vikramāditya VI was born to Someśvara I Āhavamalla (after the latter became king) as a favour of Śiva and was destined to succeed his father to bring back the goddess of royal glory from beyond the seas. However, facts gleaned from inscriptions prove that Someśvara II was born to Someśvara I more than a decade before the latter ascended the throne. Bilhaṇa also states that Someśvara-I ignored the claim of his eldest son Someśvara II Bhuvanaikamalla and offered his royal throne willingly to his more virtuous but younger son Vikramāditya-VI (which Vikramāditya very magnanimously declined), a claim which is falsified by the epigraph evidence.¹² Bilhaṇa also states that after becoming king Someśvara-II proved to be extremely cruel and vicious so much so that the family fortune—the Cālukya Lakṣmī—was endangered. Thereupon, the divine voice of Lord Śiva himself ordered Vikramāditya-VI to remove Someśvara-II from the throne.

Someśvara-III Bhūlokamalla, the son and successor of Vikramāditya-VI and the author of the *Vikramāṅkābhyudaya* goes a step further when he not only omits to mention the fact that Bhuvanaikamalla was invested with heir-apparency by Āhavamalla, but positively claims that Vikramāditya-VI was appointed as heir-apparent when he (Vikramāditya VI) was only sixteen years old. These discrepancies prove that the authors of these works deliberately suppressed or transmuted those facts which did not fit in with the avowed purpose of their works.

Impact of Pathak's Approach on Other Historians

Thus, Pathak's methodology of interpreting biographies of early medieval period gave a new direction to the writing of a more meaningful and scientific history of this period. Since then several scholars have accepted and followed Pathak's suggestions, specially with regard to the *Harṣacarita* of Bāṇa and have applied this methodology for the study of other Sanskrit texts also. For example, in 1967 Professor V.S.Pathak's pupil S.R.Goyal published his Doctoral thesis entitled *A History of the Imperial Guptas* in which he pointed out the discrepancies in the archaeological data and the literary tradition regarding the historicity of Rāmagupta.¹³ He very aptly says :

According to the literary tradition when Rāmagupta agreed to surrender Dhruvadevī to the Śaka invader, Chandragupta-II was merely a prince (*kumāra*). This definitely implies that at that time Rāmagupta was an imperial suzerain claiming his sway over the whole of the empire. But the archaeological data militate against this conclusion. For, the Gupta epigraphs quite frequently use the phrase *tatparigrihīta* to describe the relationship of Chandragupta II with his father Samudragupta. It implies a claim on the part of the former to the effect that he ascended the throne with the approval of the latter. It renders suspect *Devī Chandragupta's* description of Chandragupta II as merely a *kumāra*. Further, the coins attributed to Rāmagupta are found significantly in eastern Malwa only, indicating thereby that his authority was confined roughly to that area. It is against his description as the imperial ruler in the *Devī Chandragupta*.

To solve the problem created by the discrepancy in our sources Goyal adopts the methodology of Pathak, for like the *Carita* narratives, historical dramas such as the *Devī Chandragupta* are also based on the known events (*khyāta itivṛtta*). He points out :

The fact that the story of the *Devī Chandragupta* is not consonant with the testimony of the archaeological sources assumes a new significance and the possibility that Viśākha also suppressed or transmuted those facts which were not in harmony with the purpose of his drama, becomes worthy of serious consideration. It is quite likely that after the demise of Samudragupta, Chandragupta II violated the law of primogeniture and somehow became the master of almost the whole of the empire while Rāmagupta, the elder brother of the latter, who may have been the governor of eastern Malwa during the life-time of Samudragupta, could impose his authority only on that province; but Viśākha, who wanted to whitewash the misdeed of his master, gave a different colour to the whole episode by showing that Chandragupta II had accepted the accession of Rāmagupta, and that it was the misdeeds of the latter that forced Chandragupta to capture power in his own hands.¹⁴

The statement of the Gupta epigraphs that Chandragupta-II was 'accepted' by Samudragupta is not necessarily against the claim of Viśākha. It may be that in the now lost portion of the drama Viśākha had shown that king Samudragupta wanted his younger son Chandragupta II to succeed him, but the latter, like Vikramāditya VI of Chālukya dynasty, very magnanimously declined the offer.¹⁵

But Chandragupta II had not only violated the law of primogeniture, he had also married the widow of his elder brother murdered by him. It might be worthwhile to cite Goyal at some length on this point :

Viśākha rose to the occasion and put forward an ingenious plea in the defence of Chandragupta II. In his drama he portrayed Rāmagupta not as a cruel, wicked or avaricious person; instead, he made him an impotent and cowardly husband who had shamelessly agreed to hand over his queen Dhruvadevī to the enemy king. In contrast to him was prince

Chandragupta II, the hero of the drama, who had "charm and beauty to match (his) youth", a very lion "at the very sight of whom the herds of deers flee away", and the matchless hero who did not ever hesitate to endanger his own life in order to save the prestige of his dynasty and of the queen. Thus, Viśākha killed two birds with one stone; by the skilful characterisation of the hero and the villain he furnished a plausible excuse for the legitimate supersession of the latter by the former and also for the spontaneous love of the heroine for the hero ultimately leading to their marriage.¹⁶

Another device by which Bilhaṇa sought to justify the supersession of Someśvara-II by Vikramāditya VI is the plea of divine pre-ordination and command... Whether Viśākha also employed this motif in his drama or not, is not known. However, the Chakravikrama type coins of Chandragupta II depose significant evidence in this connection. It is quite possible that these coins, on the obverse of which he is shown as receiving three symbols of the universal sovereignty from Lord Cakrapuruṣa, were issued to publicize the idea that he achieved royal status as a result of the divine favour.¹⁷

According to Goyal, the device of depicting the dethroned elder brother as cruel and unworthy of royalty was used even in the early medieval epigraphs. For example, when the Rāṣṭrakūṭa ruler Govinda-II was overthrown by his younger brother Dhruva, the latter claimed that his fight against his elder brother was not so much to gain the throne for himself, as to retain it for the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. The later rulers of the family elaborated this claim by characterising Govinda-II as a wicked ruler. The fact of the matter, however, is that Govinda-II was indeed a great warrior and cavalry leader. He had great confidence in Dhruva and had entrusted practically the whole administration in the hands of the latter. But Dhruva exploited this confidence and usurped the throne for himself. At a latter date king Kṛṣṇa-III, another ruler of the dynasty, employed this device to organise a successful revolt against his cousin Govinda IV. He also made the claim that the vicious life and lascivious ways of Govinda IV had alienated the sympathy of his subjects and feudatories.¹⁸

The impact of Pathak on D.Devahuti, whose *Harṣa : A Political Study* was published in 1970, that is, four years later than the work of Pathak, is also significant, though strangely she does not quote him anywhere. She accepts the possibility of Harṣa's indirect link with the conspiracy culminating in the assassination of Rājyavardhana. She observes :

From the time of the fatal illness of Prabhākaravardhana, Bāṇa begins to prepare his readers for Harṣa's succession in preference to Rājyavardhana.

According to Harṣa's inscriptions. Hsüan-tsang's account, and the *Mañju-śrī-mūla-kalpa*,

Rājyavardhana succeeded Prabhākaravardhana, but the fact remains unsupported by Bāṇa's biography of Harṣa. One wonders why, if Rājyavardhana inherited the throne, he does not state so explicitly; rather by implication he indicates the contrary...

Mention of Rājyavardhana as the heir-apparent is conspicuous by its absence in the last two speeches of the ailing king. Surprisingly, no regret is expressed at his absence, no inquiries made after him of Harṣa, who had been the last to see his brother, no advice given to the younger son to serve the elder loyally on the latter's accession to the throne. The king is in fact shown as bequeathing his title to Harṣa, at least verbally.¹⁹

According to Devahuti, the impression created by the dying speech of Prabhākara is confirmed by later description. Bāṇa refers to Harṣa's fears regarding his brother's aversion to the throne which prove true when in the presence of all the kings Rājya unnaturally renounces sovereignty in order to retire to hermitage and asks Harṣa to succeed to the throne and Harṣa suffers this 'mental agony' 'in silence' without uttering a word. But when the news of the murder of Grahavarman comes and Rājya decides to go to Kanauj to punish the enemy, Harṣa is shown protesting 'aloud' at not being permitted to join the campaign. On these developments Devahuti's observations are similar to those of Pathak :

In spite of the speech attributed to Prabhākaravardhana virtually bidding Harṣa to succeed him, it is difficult to see why the king would want to suppress the rightful claim of his eldest son to the throne. That he entrusted Rājyavardhana with the responsible task of tackling the Hūṇas is a proof of his faith in the ability of the elder prince.

Why did not Harṣa make known to Rājyavardhana, and to all witness present, his great mental anguish at being offered the throne which should fittingly have been occupied by his brother? Why did he not reject the proposal even once, in an effort to persuade Rājyavardhana to act in the traditional way? On the other hand, why did he choose to speak out and protest at being left behind when his brother wished to set out for Kanauj with *Bhaṇḍi* and ten thousand cavalry to take revenge on the king of Mālava?²⁰

And her conclusion is also similar to that of Pathak :

It is hard to escape the conclusion that the unusual twists in the story, from the time of Prabhākaravardhana's illness to the time of Rājyavardhana's death, however cleverly manipulated, were rendered inevitable because of some episode uncomplimentary to the author's hero.²¹

In 1972 was published *An Introduction to Indian Historiography* by A.K.Warder. The work, not very strikingly original,²² bears an obvious impact of V.S.Pathak, though it does not refer to Pathak's work in its analysis of medieval biographical literature. For example, explaining Bāṇa's technique he states :

Bāṇa's approach is not to record an apparently random series of events as they happened, but instead to show a particular objective being attained by his hero, with the events which necessarily led up to it. Harṣa is to become emperor, though this would hardly have been expected at the time of his birth, since he was the younger son of a mere feudatory of the Maukhari emperor. However, it had been granted as a boon to Puṣyabhūti, his ancestor, by the Goddess Fortune (Śrī) herself, that he would found a line of king, one of whom, named Harṣa, would become emperor and she would be his attendant. Now in both historical and fictitious stories in *kāvya* literature the union of the hero with a particular woman at the end frequently symbolises his attainment of his ultimate objective. Sovereignty being symbolised as the Goddess Fortune, or Royal Fortune (Rājyaśrī) specifically, either union with the Goddess or with an earthly woman representing her in some way may be used to show a hero attaining it. In the *Harṣacarita* Fortune is represented by the hero's sister, because she marries the Maukhari emperor, thus consolidating the alliance between the imperial and vassal families.²³

...He (that is Bāṇa) ends his narrative with the meeting of Harṣa with Rājyaśrī, his unfortunate sister and Royal Fortune. In this way and perhaps not departing too far from historical truth as modern readers would see it, Bāṇa explains to his readers that Harṣa legitimately succeeded to the empire, which was his real purpose.²⁴

Elsewhere he writes that the relationship between two brothers in a royal family, when the law of primogeniture was violated, was always a serious problem for the contemporary historians. On the *Harṣacarita* he observes :

In the case of Bāṇa's hero there would appear to be no justification required, since the elder brother fell when attacking enemies and not a civil war, yet Bāṇa shows himself sensitive on the subject. Perhaps there were some disagreeable facts which he was concealing and Harṣa's attitude to his elder brother had really been less exemplary than Bāṇa makes out in his sometimes awkward account of the event before their father's death.²⁵

About Bilhaṇa's *Vikramāṅkadevacarita* also his conclusion is similar to that of Pathak :

Explaining the accounts of Vikramāditya, Bilhaṇa says that the middle one of the three sons of Āhavamalla was given to him by the favour of Śiva in order to bring back Fortune even from the other side of the ocean, as Rāma had (II.53). Āhavamalla in due course wanted to make Vikramāditya heir-apparent, but the young hero declined, thinking it improper when his brother Someśvara was the elder (III. 27ff.). Someśvara-II, therefore succeeded his father as king, but ruled badly, becoming an arrogant tyrant and alienating the affections of the people (IV.110)..

..Finally, Śiva appeared to Vikramāditya in his sleep and commanded him not to hesitate but to destroy the evildoers (VI. 63-65)... in obedience to the angry voice of Śiva, suddenly

heard but unseen, Someśvara II was imprisoned (VI. 93). Vikramāditya was then consecrated king. Thus, the poet represents the elder brother in an evil light and Vikramāditya as magnanimous, acting eventually only in self-defence and in obedience to divine commands. This account is probably falsified considerably, through it seems to follow the main events on the surface...²⁶

About *Vikramāṅkābhyudaya* of Someśvara III also Warder follows Pathak very closely :

Someśvara-III further simplified the events leading to his father's becoming emperor, having him directly installed as heir-apparent by Āhavamalla. The divine providence determining the good and bad characters of the three sons is further stressed.²⁷

In 1976, S.R.Goyal applied the approach of V.S.Pathak to the study of the problem of royal succession in the *Rāmāyaṇa*²⁸ attributed to Vālmīki. The central theme of this work is undoubtedly the succession of Rāma to the throne of Ayodhyā. In its present form this work presents quite a compact and well-knit story in which the character of Rāma is portrayed on so noble a design that even after divesting it of divine elements it retains its idealism and almost superhuman qualities. But from the historical point of view Rāma was a human king of the Vedic age. Therefore, the original story of Rāma must have been more human. As is well-known and has been stated in the *Rāmāyaṇa* itself, the story of Rāma originated and developed among the kings of the Ikṣvāku dynasty. It was natural, therefore, for the *sūtas*, who composed the original *gāthās*, to present the story of Rāma in such a manner as to make him an embodiment of all the kingly virtues. Later on, when these *gāthās* were collected, collated and rendered into a *mahākāvya* by some poet, probably Vālmīki, the character of Rāma was portrayed in the best possible colours because as the hero of an epic he could not have been depicted as doing anything which was less than just and true. And subsequently, after he acquired the status of an *avatāra*, (a fact which led to many other alterations and additions in the *Rāmāyaṇa*), nobody could think of casting even an aspersion on his conduct.²⁹ Here, using the technique of Pathak, Goyal has tried to peel off the numerous outer and inner layers in which the Rāma legend is wrapped up so that we may get at the true course of events. After explaining Pathak's technique he observes :

Pathak has applied this method to several early medieval works. We propose to apply it to the accession of Rāma to the throne of Ayodhyā so that we may know the true course of events by divesting this story as well as the personalities of Rāma and other main characters

of the miraculous, fabulous, incredible and mythological elements and later accretions which were added apparently to explain the contradictions product by the deliberate transmutation and sublimation of a purely human story to a divine plane. The author or rather authors of the *Rāmāyaṇa* certainly tried to remove such contradictions and make their story compact and homogenous. Nevertheless, they inadvertently left many a loose end, in it—anomalous fragments that are neither integrated with the core of the story nor are required by it. They are more or less refractory snippets of the main story which apparently defied the attempts of the author of the Epic to harmonise them with the rest, but by striking discordant notes they help us in removing the various layers of transmutations and interpolations by which the author of the Epic had sought to conceal the wordly atmosphere of jealousy, greed and ambition which dominated the royal family of Ayodhyā... woven carefully, these anomalous fragments present an intelligible, even if somewhat incomplete, pattern which cuts the central tale at its vital points.³⁰

In 1986, Mahesh Chandra Joshi, a pupil of S.R.Goyal, published his Doctoral thesis entitled *Princes and Polity in Ancient India* in which he has followed the methodology of Pathak, He also opines that :

The story that emerges by the analysis of the literary symbols used by Bāṇa and the 'refractory snippets' scattered over the body of the text, is entirely different and opposed to the one narrated in the text.³¹

In 1986, Goyal also produced his own study of the reign of Harṣa³² in which he has followed the methodology of Pathak for the analysis of the *Harṣacarita*. His conclusions are similar to those of Pathak; only on some points he is more explicit and emphatic. He believes that Bāṇa wrote his *Harṣacarita* in order to absolve Harṣa of the charge of having some hand in the assassination of Rājyavardhana. He also believes that the story that emerges from the analysis of the literary symbols used by Bāṇa (such as his hero Harṣa was born to rule, Rājyavardhana II had a dislike for the throne and Prabhākaravardhana wanted Harṣa as his successor) and the 'refractory snippets' scattered over the body of the text, is entirely different from the one narrated in the central tale. Additionally, the non-allusion to certain significant events by Bāṇa (such as the coronation of Rājyavardhana) and the death of Rājyavardhana under admittedly suspicious circumstances create doubts against Harṣa. The use of the revealing similies by Bāṇa that foretell the death of the elder prince Rājyavardhana and Harṣa's suggestive dreams on the eve of the elder princes' departure for Kanauj strengthen these doubts. Goyal has also rightly pointed out, and that too for the first time, that Bāṇa has also referred to the rumours that the fame of Harṣa was sullied by

the stain of the accusation that, like Indra, he was implicated in the murder of his elder brother.³³

From the above analysis it is obvious-that V.S.Pathak's methodology for studying the *Harṣacarita* and other early medieval court-biographies has made a great impact on the attitude of modern historians. It is hoped that further new work will be done with this approach to enliven the presently much maligned discipline of political history of ancient and early medieval India.³⁴

This paper was written shortly before the demise of Professor V.S.Pathak on 19 December, 2003.

References

1. For V.S.Pathak's paper 'Prayāga in Inscriptions', cf. *JUPHS*, New Series, Vol. VI, ii, 1958, pp. 31-34. See also his 'Religious Sealings from Jajghat', *JNSI*, XIX, ii, 1957, pp. 168-79.
2. Cf. Rocher, Rosane, 'The Beginning of Indological Studies', *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Volume III, Parts, 1-2, 1969-70, pp. 1-16.
3. Cf. Jones, Williams, *Asiatic Researches*, IV, 1979, pp. 1-17; Wilford, Francis, *ibid.*, V, 1798, pp. 241-96; Wilson, H.H., *Select Specimens of the Theatre of the Hindus*, 1827.
4. In 1859, Fitz Edward Hall announced the discovery of the three manuscripts of the *Harṣacharita* in his edition of the *Vāsavadattā* (Preface, Calcutta, p.12). Two years later, Bhau Daji discovered another manuscript (*JBBRAS*, X, pp. 38-45). It was first published with arbitrary emendations and numerous corrupt readings by Jibanand in 1876. Another work of the same category, the *Vikramāṅkadevacharita*, was published in 1875.
5. Cf. Pathak, V.S., 'Biographies in Early Medieval Sanskrit Literature (with special reference to the *Harṣacarita*)', *Bhāratī*, Varanasi, 1963-64 pp. 65 ff.
6. Published in 1944. Its revised and enlarged edition entitled *Studies in Indian History and Culture* was published in 1957.
7. Pathak, in *Bhāratī*, *op.cit*, p.66.
8. Pathak, V.S., *Ancient Historians of India*, Bombay, 1966, p.45.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 47-48.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
12. From the epigraphs we learn that Someśvara II was declared heir-apparent in 1049 while Vikramāditya was assigned a responsible office as late as 1055. As the latter ascended the throne in 1076 and ruled for at least 50 years, it is highly unlikely that he had become a major before 1055. Therefore, the story that he was offered heir-apparency earlier than Someśvara II should be regarded as purely a product of Bilhaṇa's imagination.
13. Goyal, S.R., *A History of the Imperial Guptas*, Allahabad, 1967, pp. 227-28.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 231.
15. *Ibid.*, n. 2.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 234-35.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 236, n. 1.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 232-33.
19. Devahuti, D., *Harṣa : A Political Study*, 2nd ed., 1983, pp. 79-80.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 82
21. *Ibid.*
22. Reviewing A.K.Warder's work D.N.Jha comments : "The work under review is spread over 22 short chapters, the first two of which form an introduction on Indian civilisation (pp. 1-9) and the Brāhmaṇical tradition of its origin (pp. 10-15). The remaining ones merely present an introductory survey of the indigenous literature relevant to the history of India up to the period of the Marāṭhās and do not go deep into the problem of the development of historiographical pattern in various categories of Indian literature... Throughout the work analysis has been a casuality. No attention has been paid to the general social context of Indian historical literature. Nor has any attempt been made to expose the prejudices of its writers. The author's claim that his is 'a pioneering work introducing an unknown subject to modern readers and offering mostly original research and tentative, even revolutionary, conclusions' (p. viii) sounds presumptuous. For there is nothing strikingly 'original' or 'revolutionary' about his conclusions." (*The Indian Historical Review*, March 1975, Volume I, No. 1, pp. 120-21).
23. Warder, A.K., *An Introduction to Indian Historiography*, Bombay, 1972, p. 39.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
28. Cf. Goyal, S.R., 'Legitimacy of Rāma's Succession in the *Vālmīkīya Rāmāyaṇa*' *Journal of Ganganath Jha Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha*, Allahabad, Vol. XXXII, Parts 1-4, 1976, pp. 323-42; also see his 'Succession Problem in the *Vālmīkīya Rāmāyaṇa*' in *Facets of Indian Civilization : Essays in Honour of Professor B.B.Lal*, Vol. III, New Delhi, 1997, pp. 744-65.
29. Goyal, in *Facets of Indian Civilization*, *op.cit.*, p. 746.
30. *Ibid.*
31. Joshi, Mahesh Chandra, *Princes and Polity in Ancient India*, Meerut, 1986, p. 116.
32. Goyal S.R., *Harṣa Śīlāditya*, Meerut, 1986; cf. also his *Harṣa and Buddhism*, Meerut, 1986.
33. *Harṣacharita*, p. 204.
34. For a new awareness in political writings of ancient India see my paper 'Political History : The Loss of Innocence', in Pande, G.C., Gupta, S.K. and Goyal, Shankar (eds.), *Political History in a Changing World*, Jodhpur, 1992, pp. 290-99.