

BANABHATTA: A HISTORIAN OF ANCIENT INDIA(PART-2)

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LIFE OF BANABHATTA

Banabhatta's visit to different places reached king Harsha ears and the king had formed a wrong notion about him on the basis of the information of those wicked persons. He was summoned to the court through *Krisna* (a brother of king). As neither Banabhatta nor his family had ever been in contact with the royal court, he, first, hesitated, but at last decided to go to the royal court. When he reached the royal court, the king treated him with scant respect and called him '*a wanton*'. Banabhatta in a spirited reply told the king that it was unfair to judge him like that. He was a Brahmana, born into well known family of those who had performed the Soma sacrifices, had studied the vedas with their auxiliary branches and various *Sastra*.

LIFE OF BANABHATTA

He was a married man and there could be no question of his been wanton. King Harsha became satisfied with his reply and changed his mind in Banabhatta's favour. Within a few days of his stay in court, Harsha was so much impressed by his genius that he became his trusted friend. After enjoying the royal favour, Banabhatta returned to his native place, Pritikuta. He was greeted with cordial welcome by his friend and relatives. Once he was requested by his cousin *Syamala* to narrate an account of the life of king Harsha. He agreed and created the work *Harshacharita*.

WORKS OF BANABHATTA

The Harshacharita and Kadambari are the two celebrated prose works of Banabhatta.

Harshacharita

- ❖ A historical romance
- ❖ Clearly mentioned his authorship
- ❖ Divided into different *ucchvasas* which furnishes some account of the life of Harsha
- ❖ This work begins with an autobiography where he has given an account of his early life and his sojourn at the royal court of Harsha.
- ❖ Narrated the chief incidents in the life of Harsha

WORKS OF BANABHATTA

- ❖ This work contains a few references of the conquest of king Harsha.
- ❖ Harshacharita is very important for the study of ancient Indian history as it contains a lot of information on the state of ancient Indian society, social and religious observances, military organization and so on.

(To be continued)

