

CHAPTER - 2

ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND WRITINGS ON BHANUBHAKTA

There is always the need of a fresh study and research of a topic already investigated. This explains why an attempt has been ventured upon to study previous research studies and writings on Bhanubhakta literature. I have attempted a holistic study of the subject in all its spheres in the perspective of different writers. Moreover, we should analyze the previous writings on Bhanubhakta literature so that we can make our present study the best.

2.1 Writings of the Nepali writers

We know very well that Sri Motirām Bhatta (1867 – 1897), Sri Brahma Samsar, Smt. Bisnumāyā Devi, Sri Lekhnath Poudyal (1885-1965), Sri Baburām Ācharya (1888 – 1971), Sri Sūrya Vikram Jñavāli (b. 1889 –), Sri Dharanīdhar Sharma Koirala (1893 – 1980, Sam 1949 – Sam 2039), Dr. Parasmani Pradhan (1898 – 1986) of Kalimpong, Sri Puskar Samsar, Sri Balakrishna Sam (1902 – 1981, Sam 1959 – Sam 2038), Sri Lakshmi Prasad Deokota (1909 – 1959, Sam 1966 – Sam 2016), Sri Siddhicharan Sreshtha (b. 1912 – , b. Sam 1969 –), Sri Hridayachandra Simha Pradhan (1915 – 1959, Sam 1972 – Sam 2016), Sri Dillirām Timsinā (b. 1923 –), Sri Bhaichand Pradhan (b. 1927 –) of Kalimpong, Dr. (Mrs.) Kamala Smkriyana (b. 1930 –) of Darjeeling, Dr. (Mrs.) Lakkhidevi Sundas of Darjeeling, Sri Mrigendra Samsar, Dr. Jagat Chhetri (1936 – 1998), Dr. Kumar Pradhan (b. 1937 –) of Kurseong, Sri Īśvar Baral, Sri Balachandra Sharma, Sri Dīnanāth Sapkota, Sri Machachhindra Pradhan, Sri Muktināth Āchārya, Sri Kamal Diksīt, Sri Agam Simha Giri, Sri Indra Bahādur Rai, Sri Rājnarayan Pradhan, Prof. Gokul Sinha, Smt. Sūryakalā Thāpa and many other scholars are well known for their writings on Bhanubhakta literature.

It is well known to everyone from the hill areas that the most significant literary figure during the last decades of the nineteenth century is Sri Motirām Bhatta. He is the first biographer of Ādikavi Bhānubhakta.

“Kavi Bhānubhaktako Jivāncharita” written by Sri Motirām Bhatta has been considered as an authentic book on Bhānubhakta’s life and works. It has been published in Sām 1948 (A. D. 1881) from Bharat Jivan Press, Benares. This book, which is the source of many valuable information about the poet Bhanubhakta, has been considered unanimously as the most reliable and suggestive book by all the eminent scholars in Nepali literature. From this book we realize that Bhanubhakta lived in a family of great intellectual disposition. He was essentially a man of religion and a devotee of Sri Rām-Chandra like his grandfather Sri Krishna Ācharya, who earned great reputation throughout Tanhūn (in Nepal) by maintaining his livelihood with good food and depending on vast cultivated land being engaged in religious activities.

Motirām Bhatta’s book gives us another information. We know very well that Bhanubhakta had deep reverence for Sanskrit language and literature. His grandfather, being himself well-versed in Sanskrit language and literature, was the chief source of Bhanubhakta’s inspiration and taught him Sanskrit. To quote Sri Motirām Bhatta, “Sanskrita vidyāmāpani asal hun. Kinabhane Bhanubhaktalāi inaile tālim garekā hun.”¹

Motirām Bhatta’s book further adds that there were many poets in Gorkhālī before Bhanubhakta, but the poet Bhanubhakta is the Ādikavi amongst all other poets who were expert in writing poems in Nepali language, being well-conversant with the inner meanings also. To quote him, “Gorkhā bhasamā hunā to dherai nāmkā Kavi Bhānubhakta bhanda paile bhaye tara kavitāko marmā

jani bhasapadya lekhe kaviharuma Adikavi Bhanubhaktanai hun."²

According to Motiram Bhatta, Sri Krishna Acharya took over the charge of instructing and teaching of Bhanubhakta, the only son of Dhananjaya, when the boy needed so. At the age of eighteen, he became very careful about writing and reading. To quote Sri Bhatta, "Dhananjoyjika ekai putra hunale bada yatnasath palan posan gari i chhoru Bhanubhaktalai jab padhna sakne umerka bhae Sri Krishna ka talimma rakhi diye; 18 varsaka avasthamā lekhpadmā husiyar bhaye."³

The poet Bhanubhakta was fully aware of the Sanskrit proverb – "Kirtiyasya sa jivati" that means a man becomes immortal only by his valuable deeds. The noble thinking how he would be famous in this world pervaded Bhanubhakta's mind. All the wealth and other assets were confined within the four walls of his residence cf. "Je dhan ra chijharu chhan gharbhitranai chhan."⁴ He thought within himself "Dhikkara ho makana basnu na rakhi kirti."⁵ That means "fie on me to live without earning fame." And, consequently, Bhanubhakta chose to compose the Rāmāyana. He aspired after translating the story of Sri Rāmachandra who is the great hero of Raghuvamśa. He wanted to compose a Rāmāyana of his own. And, accordingly, he started to translate, in the form of Ślokas, the Sanskrit Adhyātma Rāmāyana in Nepali language so that it would be easier to understand for those who are ignorant in Sanskrit language and he himself would also be well-established. In the words of Sri Motiram Bhatta, "Raghuvamśa-kulatilak Sri Rāmachandrako kathā bhasā ślokmā banaye ta Sanskrit na janyāharuko pani uddhar hunya thiyo, mero pani nam chalne chha bhani Adhyātma-Rāmāyanko tarjuna bhasā ślokmā garna lage."⁶

Sri Motirām Bhatta further adds that the couplets, composed by the poet Bhanubhakta during the period from Sam 1898 to Sam 1905 remain untraced. In his own language, "Kavi Bhanubhakta Sam Vikrami 1898 dekhi 1905 Samma vaneka phutkar kavitako pattā chhai na."⁷

Sri Bhatta concludes his short but suggestive book with five verses composed in Sanskrit Śārdūla metre, wherein he has expressed the view that he had written the life history of the poet Bhanubhakta. Anybody interested in Nepali language will be well acquainted with the name, birthplace, works, and the nature of the poet Bhanubhakta, who was deeply engrossed with the composition of the poems. In support of my writing, I am quoting two lines from the concluding verse, composed by Sri Motirām Bhatta, who has praised Bhanubhakta through versification, at the completion of his famous book entitled "Kavi Bhanubhaktako Jivancharitra":

**"Af no nām rahos bhanera kavita garna mahā mandiyā
Inko nām ra dhām kām ra svabhāv jasta thiya lekhiā"**⁸

A separate and original critical study entitled "Kavi Bhanubhakta" written by Major General Brahma Śamsēr was published in Sam 1995 (A. D. 1938). Sri Suryavikram Jñavāli opines that in this book the writer (Major General Śamsēr) has discussed the bright as well as the dark sides of the poet's human, natural qualities while praising his homely poetic genius, instead of taking him for an all-round greatman. So, Brahma Śamsēr's works should not be forgotten in the assessment of Bhanubhakta's literary works.

It is to be noted that Sri Baburām Āchārya made valuable contributions to the literature of Bhanubhakta. In Sam 2002 (A.D. 1945) "Tulanatmak

Sundarkānda” edited by Sri Bāburām Āchārya and in Saṁ 2003 (A.D. 1946) another book “Purānā Kavi Ra Kavita” edited by the same author have been published. According to Prof. Gokul Sinhā, though in proper place mention has been made of the poets who preceeded and succeeded Bhanubhakta in this book Purānā Kavi Ra Kavita, yet this is the most essential book on the study of Bhanubhakta literature till today. Because, perhaps, this is the most comprehensive book on Bhanubhakta’s poetic achievement. To quote him, “Yahi nai ājasamma sabaibhanda upayogi pustak bhayeko chha? Bhanubhaktiya adhyayanlai. Yadyapiyasmā Bhanubhakta aghi ra pachhika arū kaviharuko ullekh yatha sthanbhayetapani samagra pustak Bhanubhaktalenai aplavita chha.”

In the book Tulanātmak Sundarkānda, the writer Sri Bāburām Āchārya made a comparison between Sundarkānda of Raghunāth Bhatta’s Rāmāyana and that of Bhanubhakta’s Rāmāyana. It should be kept in mind that, before the translation made by the poet Bhanubhakta, the poet Raghunāth Bhatta (1811 – 1851) also composed a Rāmāyana in Nepali language, which also is based on the Sanskrit Adhyātma Rāmāyana. But, unfortunately, only his Sundarkānda survives. He used many Sanskritised words in his works which were not well-considered by some critics who favoured simple and lucid language only. Like the poet Bhanubhakta, Jātiya Chhandas had been discarded by the poet Raghunāth also. Instead of that he used some of the classical Sanskrit metres such as Indravajrā, Upendravajrā, Mandākranā, Mallinī, Rathodhdhata, Vasantatilakā, Sārdulavikrīditam, Shikharinī, Sragdharā, Svāgatā etc.

To highlight the contrast between the two poets I am citing one example from the Sundarkānda of Raghunāth’s Rāmāyana as well as one example from

the Sundarkānda of Bhānubhakta's Rāmāyana. In search of Sita, Hanumān was ready to cross the vast sea. While describing the scene, the poet Raghunāth writes in Sanskrit Malini metre :

**"Agamabala lagaya sindhu gokkhur banaya
Asuradala jalaya merukaya banaya
Sumati guna calaya dhanya ti pheri aya
Kapipati Kahalaya Ramko Prema Paya."**

Verse-I: Sundarkānda 1st canto

Loosely translated, this means:

"Unthinkable strength he put, the sea cow-hoof hollow he made,
The demons he burnt, his body a mountain, he made.
Good fame Sumati earned, thanks back he came,
Kapipati he was called, Rāma's love he earned."

Whereas the poet Bhānubhakta depicts the above mentioned scene as follows in Sārdūla metre:

**"Tarchhū Ksar samudra aja sahajai bhanya irada dhari
Sri Rāmaka charanārbinda manale atyanto chintan gari
Bhanchhan virharulāi ta him Hanumān hevirohārtari
Sītājikana bhētdachhū ma ahīe jānchhū bado beg gari."**

Sundarkanda Verse - I

Loosely translated, this means:

"Determined to cross the saline sea anon
Thinking of Sri Rāma's feet in deep meditation
O heroes' said Hanumān, to braves there crossing the sea
Surely shall I meet Sita, I go now with all speed"

According to Sri Bāburām Āchārya, there is neither lucidity nor simplicity in Raghunāth's Rāmāyana. But in it we find such a special style that is quite

different from that of Bhanubhakta's Ramayana. In his words – "Bhanubhaktako Sundarkānda jasto sajilo ra rasilo yo Sundarkanda chhaina. Taipani yas Sundarkāndamā Kaviko ek viśesprakārkosaili pāin chha, jo Bhanubhaktako saili dekhi bilkul bhinna chha."¹⁰

Sri Baburām Āchārya very sincerely observes that Bhanubhakta, after going through the poems of his predecessor poets like Vidyāramyakesari and Sri Vasanta Sharma, used two words "aba " and "āja" in his writings profusely. But it is assumed that the poet Raghunāth had not gone through the poems of his predecessor poets and, as such, he has used only the vowels which are generally used in Sanskrit language. To quote Sri Ācharya, "Bhānubhaktale āphūbandā pahileko Vidyāramyakesari yā Vasanta kavikā kavitā padheka hunale uniharūko anukarangari āfnā Kavitamā 'aba' 'āja', yo dui shabda prayog prasasta garekā chhan. Tara Raghunāthle ti purānā kavikā kavitā sāyad padheka thienan, yesai karanle Sanskrita bhāsamā vyavahār hune garekā svarvarnamātra vyavahār garekā chhan."¹¹

In this connection, it will not be irrelevant to quote some lines from Dr. Kumar Pradhan's "A history of Nepali Literature" which runs thus – "Raghunāth had a fine poetic sensibility, a good sense of wit, humour, irony, and knowledge of Sanskrit prosody. He is different from Bhānubhakta in his diction. If Bhānubhakta is facile, Raghunāth's language is terse."¹²

Another great and devoted writer of Bhānubhakta literature is Sri Sūrya Vikram Jñavāli (Alt. Gewali), B.A., B.T., Ex-Head Master, Govt. High School, Darjeeling. Sri Jñavāli is the chief exponent of Bhanubhakta literature. In the

words of Prof. Gokul Sinha, he is a worshipper of Bhanubhakta literature: "Sūrya Vikram Bhānubhaktakā Tapasvī hun."¹³ Whenever we read Bhanubhakta's Rāmāyana, we should also remember Sri Jñavālī's great contributions to the development of this literature. In Sam 2026 (A.D. 1969) on 29th Āśādhā, "Bhānubhaktako Rāmāyana" edited by Sri Jñavālī was published from Nepali Sahitya Sammelan, Darjeeling. While writing on the life of Bhanubhakta in the Introductory Section to this Rāmāyana, the editor Sri Jñavālī opines that after going through the contents of the Rāmāyana and other poems, composed by Bhānubhakta it appears to us that he was a magnanimous man, full of humour and a keen sense of justice. "His patriotism leaves a very deep impression on our minds. He wished well of all and desired that all should progress and be happy. This shows that he was a kind-hearted man of a peaceful nature who loved everyone. The services which Bhanubhakta who was God-fearing, patriotic and a lover of his mother-tongue, rendered to the cause of the development of the Nepali nation, have given him an important place among the makers of the Nepali nation."

In this connection, it will not be beside the mark to mention that Sri Jñavālī has also prepared a glossary that appeared towards the end of the book and which should help the reader to understand the exact meaning of the more difficult and rarely used words used by Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyana.

On 29th Āśādhā, Sam 2026, a corrected and revised edition of Bhānubhakta Smārak Grantha was published by Nepali Sahitya Sammelan, Darjeeling (mrityu bhayeko shatavarṣa pugeko upalakshamā prakāśita) on the occasion of centenary of his death. For the first part of the editor was Sri Sūrya Vikram Jñavālī and for the 2nd part editors were Sri Tuisī Bahādur Chhetri and Sri Jagat Chhetri. Many eminent writers and famous poets have contributed their

articles to this Smārak Grantha. In this Grantha in the article "Nepali Jātīvakā Vikāshma Bhānubhaktako Sthān", Sri Jñavālī is of the opinion that the slabs laid for building the house of Nepali Community have been plastered by the literary works of Bhānubhakta. To quote him, "Nepali jatirvarūpī gharkā thap thap rakhiēkā int aba Bhānubhaktā Sahityakā Vajralepane jorina āye."¹⁴

According to Sri Jñavālī, each line written by Bhānubhakta is a unique asset to the Nepali literature. "Bhānubhaktale lekheko pratyek pām̄ti Nepālī Sahityakā atulaniya sampatti ho."¹⁵ Sri Jñavālī further adds that though the poet Bhānubhakta is no more with us, but he has brightened our world of literature by his literary works. Today, many thousands of people including women, got the opportunity and help of understanding their own duty in life after going through the poems composed by the poet Bhānubhakta and after accepting his valuable teachings incorporated through his writings.

In the opinion of Sri Jñavālī – Bhānubhakta is the "Pole Star" in the firmament of Nepali literature, the ever-lasting flame of fire (which is not to be extinguished) and what more, he is the Moon-Light which illuminates the heart of every human being. To quote him, "Bhānubhaktā Nepālī Sahityakā Dhruvatarā hun, Kahilai nanibhne agnishikhā hun au mānismatrako hridayāi shāntashital pārne chandrajyotsnā hun."¹⁶

In Sam 2009 (A.D. 1952) Bhānubhaktā Granthāvalī was published, edited by Dr. Parasmani Pradhan (A.D. 1952) from his own press (Bhārati Kāryālay, Darjeeling). It is a collection of all the works of the poet Bhānubhakta that can be entitled as Bhānubhaktā omnibus. In the language of Prof. Gokul Sinha, "Nepali Sahityamā kasaiko kunai complete work chha bhane tyo

Bhānubhaktako Granthavali nai ho.¹⁷ If there is any complete work made by somebody in Nepali literature it is the Bhānubhakta Granthāvalī. But Prof. Sinhā is of the opinion that there is speciality of its own in the field of Bhānubhakta Granthāvalī which is modern and scientific.

Balakrishna Sam's (1902 – 1981) contributions to the development of Bhanubhakta literature is noteworthy. In Sam 2010 (A.D. 1953) he composed one drama entitled 'Bhakta Bhānubhakta' which consists of five acts. The author made Bhanubhakta as the hero of his drama.

The writer composed this drama in order to depict the life history of Bhanubhakta, who used to keep himself engaged with the composition of the Rāmāyana, even ignoring his daily meals sometimes. While writing the Introduction to the book 'Bhakta Bhānubhakta', Sri Jñavālī opines that this is the only historical drama of our honourable dramatist Sri Balakrishna Sam who can be regarded as the shining star in the firmament of Nepali literature. To quote him, "Nepālī Sāhityakāsmā prakāsamān naksatra Sri Balakrishna Sam Mahodayko yo ekmatra aitihasik natak Bhakta Bhānubhakta."¹⁸

Lakshmi Prasad Deokota's contribution to the literature of Bhanubhakta is also remarkable. According to him, the poet Bhanubhakta is the greatest figure (Sarbasreshtha Purusa) in the history of the Nepali literature because he entered into the hearts of his countrymen very deeply. In a word, he was unique. He was the ideal of the Nepali people. That is why it has been rightly remarked by Sri Deokota that, while judging the history of Nepali literature, we do not take into consideration other writings as influential and most favourite as we consider the Rāmāyana of the poet Bhanubhakta. To quote him, "Nepali Sāhityakā itihās

herdā hamīkai tyatiko prabhābkārī ra sarvapriya rachanāharū arū jachdaina jattiko Bhanubhakta Kaviko Nepali Rāmāyana.¹⁹

According to Sri Deokota, Bhanubhakta composed the Rāmāyana when the Nepali language had not developed fully. There were no aims and objectives of the language. The grammar was also not developed and when the word "Nepali Literature" was considered to be a mere farce (upahās) to the educated self-conceited (ahammāni) pandits. His simple and lucid language influenced the hearts of the common mass. He was a real Bhrāhmin and respected by every Nepali people. Uni Sachchā Brāhmin thiye ra unlai sab Nepāliko Gharmā Satkar chha.²⁰

Hridaychandra Simha Pradhan's (1915 – 1981) book Bhanubhakta – Ek Samīkshā is a critical work on Bhanubhakta. It is a very good work on Nepali poetry. Sri Pradhan was realist with progressive outlook. In the above mentioned book he has discussed Bhanubhakta's language, style and speciality in the translation. He is of the opinion that in fact the poet Bhanubhakta was a good translator rather than a writer cf. "Bhanubhakta vāstavmā lekhak bhandā pani badtā anuvādak hun."²¹ He further opines that no writing in prose written by Bhanubhakta is available till today. Because he is the composer of poems only. But he (Mr. Pradhan) has mentioned the recent publication of a letter which had been written in prose by the poet Bhanubhakta to his son Ramānāth. The letter published by Nepali Bhāṣā Prakāśan Samity and includes Nepali prose collection, 3rd part, had been obtained from Sri Balakrishna Som. Mr. Pradhan is of the opinion that this was the only letter of Bhanubhakta written in prose till today. To quote him, "Gadyako nāumā Bhanubhaktako lekhāi ahilesamma bas tyahi eutā chitthi ho."²²

Bhāichānd Pradhan's Ādikavi Bhanubhakta Āchārya written in Sam 2009 i.e. in the year 1952 which has been regarded as a critical study (ālochanātmak grantha) is an important contribution to the study of Bhanubhakta literature. In this book the writer has discussed elaborately why did the poet Bhanubhakta select classical Sanskrit metres in his writings. He has also mentioned the names of some of the Sanskrit metres used by the poet Bhanubhakta in his writings.

In lucid and simple language, Sri Pradhan has also endeavoured to discuss critically, the language of the poet, necessity of Rama's character, comparison between Gosvāmi Tulsidāsa and Ādikavi Bhanubhakta along with the critical appreciation of other three works viz., Bhaktamālā, Badhūshikshā and Prāsnotari. Sri Pradhan who is more known as a poet has good command over languages especially in Nepali, Hindi and Sanskrit. From a thorough study of his book "Ādikavi Bhanubhakta Āchārya" we come to know that all the family members of Bhanubhakta were devoted to Sri Rāmachandra deeply. Sri Krishna Āchārya was not only his grand father but also his preceptor. Hence we may come to the conclusion that Bhanubhakta composed the Rāmāyana being influenced by his family members. In support of my writing I may quote some words from the abovementioned book written by Mr. Pradhan – "Rāmāyana lekhanamā Bhānubhaktamāthi Pārivārik Prabhāv pani dherai nai pareko chha. Tinko parivārko jammai sadasya Rāmbhakta thie, Srikrishna Āchārya thinkā pitāmahamātra hoinan, guru pani thie evam tini ananya Rāmbhakta thie."²³

A well-known writer, critic and historian, Dr. Kumar Pradhan obtained the Bhanubhakta Puraskar for his original work, "Pahilo Pahar" in the year 1983. Dr. Pradhan has also published many learned articles in Nepali journals.

In his famous book "A History of Nepali Literature", published by Sahitya Academy (New Delhi – 110001), he has discussed different aspects of Bhanubhakta's life along with his contemporaries, such as vasanta-Sharma (1803 – 1890) and Raghunāth Bhatta (1811 – 1851). In this book he has discussed in short the works of the poet Bhanubhakta. He has also made comparison between Bhanubhakta and Raghunāth. In his opinion, Bhanubhakta is marked for lucid narration where as Raghunāth's imaginary is powerful. He added that Raghunāth was not inferior but he was a different kind of poet. According to him the poet Raghunāth was essentially a poet but not an ascetic.

Dr. Pradhan is of the opinion that "Adhyātma Rāmāyana is not considered to be a great literary work in Sanskrit language but it serves as the mouth-piece of numerous valuable teachings of Bhakti based on the Vedantic philosophy. To quote him – "Adhyātma Rāmāyana Sanskritako Kunai mahān sāhityik grantha hoina. Yasko pramukh dhyeya Vedānta Darsānko ādhārmā bhaktivādako prachār ho."²⁴

In the book "Bhanubhaktako kṛti Adhyayanharū", Dr. Pradhan has discussed elaborately and clearly when and why the poet Bhanubhakta has employed different Sanskrit metres in his Rāmāyana.

According to Dr Pradhan the study of Bhanubhakta's Rāmāyana reveals to the readers the picture of Nepali poet who is simple, clear and lucid by virtue of his application of the language and for adopting idioms (tukkāś). "Rāmāyānko adhyayanle tyahakā bhāṣa ra tukkāko prayogvāta euta soumya, svachcha, saras, Nepali kaviko chitra pāthakko manmā janmanchha."²⁵

As per comments made by Dr. Kumar Pradhan in order to introduce variety in the application of metres without using only one metre in the main body of the epic as in the case of Sanskrit Adhyātma Rāmāyana after omitting and shortening some stories and descriptions of the original. Bhanubhakta, composed the Rāmāyana with small change. In his words "Mūl Adhyātma Rāmāyanama jhai prāyah eutai chhanda anavarata na chalāi chhandako vaichitra dekhāudai mūlko kathā ra varnanmā kehi tyāgi, kehi chhotyāi, kehi thapi sasānā parivartanharū gardai chetansrashtā bhaer Bhānubhaktale Rāmāyana rachekā chhan."²⁶

While praising Bhanubhakta it has been rightly remarked by Dr. Kumar Pradhan that, "Indeed, he (Bhanubhakta) marks the highest peak in the early literary landscape. The poetic tradition which culminated in him was carried on by numerous poets."²⁷

Dr. Pradhan also opines that Bhanubhakta had a special characteristic in his application of metres. To quote him, "Bhānubhaktamā chhanda parivartanko eutā vishistha vaichitrya chha."²⁸

Balachandra Sharma who has been regarded to be a noted historian wrote historical criticism which includes a book, entitled "Bhānubhakta". He discussed about the age of the poet Bhanubhakta along with a proper understanding of his works. Sri Balachandra Sharma, M.A., was the Education Minister of Nepal.

According to Balachandra Sharma, the time when Bhanubhakta started his writing, was the most critical period in the history of Nepal. "Bhānubhaktale

jun bakhat lekhanī uṭhāye tyo Nepālko ādhunik itihāsmā sabbhandā san̄katāpanna samay thiyo.²⁹ Sri Sharma, in his book "Bhānubhakta", explained the difference between Bhānubhakta's Rāmāyana and Adhyātma Rāmāyana after quoting Sanskrit slokas from the original. It is evident from his writings that Sri Sharma was well-versed in Sanskrit language and literature also.

According to Sri Sharma, Bhānubhakta's Rāmāyana became innovative in great extent, cf. "Bhānubhakṭiṭya Rāmāyanlāi dheraijaso moulikatāko Sugandha prodān garekā chha."³⁰

Dr. Tulsī Bahādur Chhetri is the first Indian to do Ph. D in Nepali literature. Dr. Chhetri's poems are published in many periodicals. He is well-conversant with the use of both vārn̄ik and mātr̄ik metres. Though his reputation as a poet is well-known but his contribution to the development of the literature of the poet Bhanubhakta is not remarkable. His Kama-Kuntī (Ādhunik Nepali Khandakāvya) for which he was awarded Sāhitya Academy Puraskār (New Delhi-110001) in the year 1989, is well-known to all.

However, in "Bhānubhakta Smārak Grantha", published by Nepali Sahitya Sammelan, Darjeeling, Sam̄ 2026, Dr. Chhetri, in his article Bhānuprativāko Unmesh, comments that in the wonderful world, some poets are blessed with the in-born talent which is mysterious. According to Dr. Chhetri, Bhanubhakta also possessed this type of talent. His writings reveal that he was poet, a successful poet, but he was not a visionary – "Tinī Kavi thiye, yathārthamā kavi, tara tinī kunai mantradr̄ṣṭa rishi thienon."³¹ Dr. Chhetri further adds that during the time of Bhanubhakta, the paṇḍits used to learn

Sanskrit language. Those who were well-versed in Sanskrit language, were recognised and honoured as paṇḍits and those learned paṇḍits used to compose poems in Sanskrit language, whereas the paṇḍits who used to compose poems in Nepali language used to be looked down upon. "Tyas velāko paṇḍitharū Sanskrita bhāṣā padhdathe, Sanskrita bhāṣā jānnāle nai paṇḍit bhai sammanita hunthe au tiniharū Sanskrita bhāṣāmā nai kavita rachdathe, yadyapi janasādhāranāi tyo vyākhyā garī sanāinthyo - Nepali bhāṣāmā, paṇḍitko tārīph garinthyo Nepali bhāṣāmā. Paṇḍitharū bhane Nepali Bhāṣāmā kavita lekhnu heya samjhanthe. Bhāṣāko yasto avasthā thiyo."³²

Mrigendra Samsar, ex-Director General of Public Instruction, Nepal, though obtained a very high post, Sri Mrigendra Samsar dedicated some time of his life to the development and enrichment of Bhanubhakta literature. He is of the opinion that though the poet Bhanubhakta had enough knowledge in Sanskrit language, yet due to his keen attraction to his vernacular, he composed the Rāmāyana in Nepali language. He is of the opinion that appreciation or worship of any great man is not considered to be a personal service but it should be taken as a national or state duty. "Kunai mahāpuruṣko prashamsā na upāsānā vyaktigata sevā hoina, Jātiya tathā Rāshtriya sevā ho."³³ Therefore, if we appreciate the poet Bhanubhakta who is learned and well-conversant in metres, we should take it to be a service to the Nepali nation, as well as Nepali Rāshtra or State. To quote him, "Ek Tanahūkā Brāhman, ek jñānavridhha, chhandamagna kaviko kadar hoina Nepali Jātimātrako, Nepali Rāshtramātrako ādar gariēko samjhanchhu."³⁴

Bahādur Rājā, elder brother of
Pushkar Samsar (Sri Pushkar Jung, Sri Bālakrishna Sam) was a

lexicographer, a grammarian and a short-story writer. His writings regarding Bhanubhakta literature are also worth mentioning. In the article "Bhānubhakta Kavi Tathā Ādarsha Padyānuvādak", he is of the opinion that though he had translated the Adhyātma Rāmāyana, yet there are many evidences of his greatness in his translation. To quote him, "Unle Adhyātma Rāmāyana anuvādmātra garekā hana tā pani unko anuvādmā mahatvakā dherai kurā chhan."³⁵ He further adds that besides the versified translation of the Adhyātma Rāmāyana, made by Bhanubhakta, he had composed many poems, he had possessed enough poetic talent that can be proved by his Rāmāyana and also by the biography of the poet written by Sri Motirām Bhatta. To quote him, "Bhanubhaktale Adhyātma Rāmāyanko ślokaṅvaddhā anuvādvāhek moulik kavitā jyādai thorai racheko dekhinchha, tāpani unmā kavivashakti yathestha thiyo bhanne unko Rāmāyan ra Motirām Bhattale lekheko unko jīvan charitratvāta dekhinchha."³⁶

Pandit Kaviraj Naranāth Āchārya in his book "Ādikavi Bhānubhakta Āchāryako Sachchā Jīvancharitra" published by Sanjha Pustak Prakashan, Darjeeling, discussed elaborately about Chhandas, Alamkāras, Bhāsā and Sāilī (style) used by Bhanubhakta. He also discussed about the knowledge of Sanskrit language and literature of Bhanubhakta along with a criticism of Sanskrit translation of Bhaktamālā. Bhanu's birth, his boyhood, his marriage, his stay in Varanasi and acquiring knowledge in Sanskrit along with a short criticism of his personality and works, have also been furnished in this Jīvancharitra very carefully and intelligently. While discussing metres used by Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyana, Sri Āchārya mentions about eight kinds of metres. But he has omitted the name of the metre Sragdharā which, too, has been used by Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyana. So far as Bhanu's style of writing is concerned,

Pandit Naranāth Āchārya comments that "Bhānubhakta atyanta sajb, svābhābik prvāśālī ra rasabhābapūrṇa bhaṣāko prayog garni sāilī chha."³⁷

This means that Bhanubhakta's application of language is very lively, natural, progressive and full of sentimental elements. Bhanubhakta's application of alliteration is also praiseworthy. He is proficient in Antanuprāsh. According to Naranāth Āchārya, easy and natural application of Upamā has been used by the poet in many places. This type of uses of Atishayokti, Utprekshā and Rūpaka are also found in some verses. In the language of Pandit Naranāth, "Kavile upamāko sahaj, svābhābik prayog dherai nai garekā-chhan. Atishayokti utprekshā ra rūpakko pani katakati testo prayog pāinchha."³⁸

Dillirām Timsinā who was well-versed in Sanskrit language and literature knew many languages. He had profound knowledge in Nepali language as well as in Sanskrit language and literature. His book Chhanda Ra Alamkāra is both famous and helpful to the researchers and for the readers.

In the article Bhānubhaktakā Chhandakā Prabhāb published in Bhanubhakta Smārak Grantha, Sri Timsinā has mentioned the names of the cl. Skt. metres used by Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyana. Sri Timsinā opines that Ādikavi Bhanubhakta has used Sanskrit metres in his translated works viz Rāmāyana and Prasnottarī as well as in his original works viz Badhūshikshā and Bhaktamālā. To quote him – "Ādikavi Bhānubhakta Achāryale āfnā Rāmāyan ra Prasnottarmālāmā tathā āfnā moulik rachanā Badhūshikshā ra Bhaktamālāmā, Samet Sanskritakai Chhanda prayog garekā chhan."³⁹ Sri Timsinā holds the view that among the nine classical Skt. metres used by Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyana, the metre Śardulavikrīditam has become famous as well as popular with the Nepali Community. Moreover, now it has already been included in the

category of Nepali Jāṭiya Chhanda. "Ajh yo ta Sanskrita chhanda na rahera Nepali Jāṭiya Chhanda nai bhayeko chha bhane pani hunchha."⁴⁰ He also opines that many poets in Nepali literature like Kavishiramani Lekhnāth. Mahākavi Lakshmiprasād and many others have been influenced by the application of Skt. metres by Ādikavi Bhānubhakta Āchārya. Sri Timsinā concludes his article with the comment that "Yassarj Bhanubhaktakā chhandale Nepali junajivankā Sāhityamā Vyāpakruple prabhāb pāreko chha."⁴¹ That means in this way the metres applied by Bhanubhakta have influenced greatly the literature of the life of the Nepali people.

Dr. Jagat Chhetri's contribution to the study on the literature of Bhanubhakta is also noteworthy. In the article "Nepali Bhāṣā Ra Bhānubhakta" published in Bhānubhakta Smārak Grantha, he is of the opinion that in spite of Bhanubhakta's varieties of literary works, it is the Rāmāyana which made him Ādikavi. Really his Rāmāyana is of a high standard. It is famous not because that it is simply a religious book, but because the Rāmāyana, inducted unity to Nepali language, to the Nepali Jāti, and Nepali literature. It helped to preach knowledge between the illiterate and educated mass, it helped to develop national feeling and revived national awakening also. It has added religious fervour and purity too. To quote Dr. Chhetri – "Yadyaopi Bhānubhaktale anek arū Kritiharū chhādirākhēkā chhan, tāpani Rāmāyanle nai Bhānulaī Ādikavi banāyo. Bhānuko Rāmāyanpani sanchchai uchchakotiko chha. Dhārmik Pustak mātrai bhaer yo uchch garieko hoina, tara Rāmāyanle Nepali Bhāṣā, Jāṭira Sāhityalāi ekatā diyo, nirākshar bīch akshar jnānko prachār garyo, rāstrīyo bhāvanā jagāyo jāgriti diyo, dhārmik jhukāv diyo ra pavitratā dio."⁴²

Dr. Chhetri is of the opinion that the imagination of the vast land like Nepal of Prithvinārāyan Shah, would not have been fulfilled without Bhānu. To quote him, "Prithvinārāyanko Bishāl Nepālko Kalpanā Bhānubinā adhurai rahane thiyo."⁴³ He further adds that, in fact, due to the works of the poet Bhanubhakta, the dream, dreamt by Prithvinārāyan, has become a reality. To quote him "Phalataḥ Prithvinārāyanko sapana bīpanāmā pariṇata bhayo."⁴⁴ But the pen of Bhānu has been proved to be much more stronger and powerful than the arms of Prithvinārāyana. "Prithvinārāyanko astra-shastrabhandā Bhānuko Kalam dherai baliyo ra tejilo pramāṇita baneko chha."⁴⁵

In our study it will be profitable to take into account the critical studies on Bhanubhakta by some eminent women critics like Smt. Bishnumāyā Devi, Dr. (Mrs.) Kamalā Sāmkrityāyana, Dr. (Mrs.) Lakkhidevī Sundās and Smt. Sūryakalā Thāpā.

Smt. Bishnumāyā Devi, who is Bhanubhakta's grand-daughter, published Bhānubhakta Monimālā in Sarī 1998 (A.D. 1941). It includes Bhānubhakta's Rāmāyana along with some other couplets and stanzas. Inclusion of some other notable slokas composed by her father, Ramanāth added extra charm to her book which had influenced the heart of the readers greatly within a very short time.

Dr. (Mrs.) Kamalā Sāmkrityāyana (wife of Sri Rāḥul Sāmkrityāyana) made a comparative study between Bhanubhakta and Tulsidasa and obtained her Ph.D degree from the University of Agra in the year 1959. Her article "Kavi Bhānubhaktako Rāmāyanamā Advaitayad" which has been published in Bhanubhakta Smarak Grantha is a valuable contribution to the literature of

Bhanubhakta who had tried to propagate philosophical teachings on Ātmavāda and Bhaktivāda through different verses of his Rāmāyana. In her article Dr. (Mrs.) Sāmkrityāyana has mentioned the slokas in the Rāmāyana where the poet Bhanubhakta had expressed the greatness of Advaita Vedanta through Sri Ramachandra who gave teachings to Tārā. Because Tārā was lamenting seriously for the sudden death of her beloved and mighty husband Bālī, brother of Sugrīb. The slokas are 65, 66, 67, 68, 69 and 71 in Kishkindhyakānda. In the language of Dr. (Mrs.) Sāmkrityāyana – "Rāmāyanko Kishkindhyakāndamā Bālīko mrityupachhi Rāmle Bālīpatnī Shokātura Tārālai diekā upadeshha rūko prasaṅgamā pani Bhanubhaktale Advaita Brahmajñānkai mahimālai pratipādit garekā chhan. Yi up adeshharu sloka 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70 and 71 ma varnit chhan."⁴⁶ Dr. (Mrs.) Sāmkrityāyana further adds that "It is known to everybody that the source of Bhanubhakta's Rāmāyana is the 'Adhyātma Rāmāyana'. Bhanubhakta was well conversant with the knowledge of advaita Vedanta or with the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta of Sri Śaṅkarāchārya, as revealed in this Rāmāyana. To quote her, "Yo ta sabailai vidit chha ki hamrā Mahakavi Bhanubhaktako Rāmāyanko ādhār pani 'Adhyātma Rāmāyan' nai ho. Bhanubhaktalāi pani yas Rāmāyanmā pratipādit Advaitavād vā Śaṅkarko Advaita Vedanta Darshanko sukṣmā jñān thiyo."⁴⁷

Dr. (Mrs.) Lakkhidevi Sundās of Darjeeling is well-known for her remarkable contribution to the Nepal literature. Her article "Bhanubhakta Ra Nārī" published in "Bhanubhakta Vishesāṅka" has been highly appreciated. In this article she felt that Bhanubhakta's women are meant for karma and are meant for performing duties ("Thinko nārī Karmale Bādhiēka chhin, kartabyale bādhiēka chhin"⁴⁸).

In the opinion of Dr. (Mrs.) Sundas, the picture of women, as drawn in the literature of Bhanubhakta, is based on the social structure and tradition of his time. Far from being an object of enjoyment, women are portrayed as ideals of sacrifice, service and idealism.

Thus, the woman in his literature resembles the lamp of fortune of the house. To quote her, "Nārī prati Bhānubhaktako drīṣṭikon tyas samayko Nepali Samāj ra Nepali nārī ra Nepali buhārīko rūpmā ādharita chha. Kaviko drīṣṭikonmā nārīlai manarañjanko vastu athavā nārī heya vastu dekhdainau tara dekhchhau - tyāg - sevā ra ādarsako rūpmā nārī - gharko Lakshinko Vatti nārī."⁴⁹

Smt. Suryakalā Thāpā, ex-Principal, Rāmkrishṇa B.Ed. College, Darjeeling, as well as the Nepali translator of the book "Rāmkaṭhā Rasabāhinī" expressed her heartfelt feelings on the literary works of the Ādikavi Bhanubhakta saying that Bhanubhakta possessed poetic talent in great extent of "Kavitvashakti Bhānubhaktmā jathesṭha thiyo."⁵⁰ She also holds the view that "we cannot designate the writers as the lovers of imagination only. But the creation of literature of the well-known writers can make the whole society conscious. The poet Bhanubhakta also has inducted the spirit of that type of consciousness into the family of Nepali people. To quote her, "Sāhityakārīlai hāmī keval kalpanāvilāsīmātra bhanna sakdainau Uttam sāhityikko sāhitya sriṣṭile sampūrṇa sampūrṇa samājīlai chetanshil banāidina sakchha. Bhanubhaktale tyastai chetanāko prān Nepali Sāmsarmā Samchārīta garer gae."⁵¹

Thus we find that the noteworthy contributions of the above mentioned female scholars to the literature of Bhanubhakta are worth mentioning.

Among writers on the study of Bhanubhakta literature we must remember the versified compositions of the famous poets (in Nepali literature) like Kavishiromani Lekhnāth, Sri Siddhicharan Shreṣṭha, Dharaniddhar Sharmā Koirāla, Dinānth Sāpkoṭa, Kavyālamkāra Kavishekhar, (Benares) and many others.

We cannot forget the poetic contribution of the poet Lekhnāth Poudyāl (1885-1965 A.D.) who preferred Sanskrit literature rather than western one. He has paid his humble homage to Bhanubhakta by composing different stanzas with application of Sanskrit metres. He eulogised Bhanubhakta through many beautiful stanzas in Sanskrit metres. One of these stanzas composed in Sragdharā metre runs thus :-

**"Bhāshāko divya shailimay dridha jagmā Rāmko sachcharitra,
Pakkī gāro banāi upar gajurmā bhakti rākhi pavitra,
Hāmro sāhityako yo Mahalakana Khadā garnamā agraganya,
Utsāhī Bhānubhakta priya kavivar hun lokasampūjyo dhanya."**

The celebrated and great poet Bhanubhakta, being devoted to the good character of Sri Ramachandra and giving him top priority, became pioneer in this world to build the wall of the palace of our literature after making it strong and permanent by his strong style of the divine language.

One of the stanzas of the poem Bhānubhaktapraṭi composed by Sri Siddhicharan Shreṣṭha is very appealing and charming which runs as follows:

**“Kun Mantra garī, kun jādu chhari kaviji timile janatāma,
Nava jivanko srota saralata bahai diyo kavitamāi ”**

By what spell and by what magic, Oh, the honourable poet, you have revived the dying common people through your verses ?

The poet Dharanīdhar Sharmā Koirāla (1893-1980) who is very famous for translating the Srimadbhāgavadgeetā and the Rāmageetā (5th Canto of the 7th Book i.e. Uttarkānda) in Nepali language, addressed Bhānubhakta as “Nepāl-Kokil”. He praised the poet highly in Sanskrit Vasantatilaka metre.

The verse runs thus :-

**“He Bhānubhakta, anurakta chha jātiasārā,
Timrā sudhāsari mithāpadi vākyadhārā,
Timrā mitho-madhur kābyakalanimitha,
Ajnma desh rahanechha kritarthachitta.”**

Oh, the poet Bhānubhakta, the whole community is devoted to you after going through your nector-like sweet language. Our country is grateful to you for your sweet and lucid style.

Six writers like Sri Machhhidra Pradhan, Sri Narā Gurung, Dr Indrabahādur Rāi, Agam Singh Girī, Sri Rāj Nārāyan Pradhan and Dr Kumar Pradhan tried their best to discuss critically Bhānubhakta's works such as Sphutarachanā, Prasnottari, Bhaktamālā, Badhūshikshā and the Rāmāyana along with a criticism of Bhanubhakta in the book Bhanubhakata kriti Adhyayanharṇ a publication of Bhānubhakta centenary, from Nepali Sahitya Prarishad, Darjeeling. In this book the name of the predecessor poets of

Bhanubhakta have also been mentioned.

According to Sri Narā Gurung, Bhanubhakta's talent in Kāvya has been clearly and greatly manifested in his couplets and stanzas "Tinko pratibhājyādajaso sphutarachanāharumā mukharita bhayeko chha."⁵²

Sri Agam Singh Giri is of the opinion that Bhānubhakta has expressed his self and upalatable feelings of the thought and disillusionment of his own heart by nice expression after composing Bhaktamālā which consists of twenty two (22) verses in Sanskrit Shikharinī metre. To quote him, "Bhānubhaktale Shikharinī chhandamā leker unleāfnā hridaykā vyathā vikalatā, chinatā ra pidakā nunilā anubhūtiharū atyantai sundar ra māṅglik dhaṅgamā abhivyakta garekā chhan."⁵³

In the book Bhānubhaktaka Kriti-Adhyanharū Sri Giri mentioned that Bhānubhakta did not use the metre Anuṣṭup at all in his Rāmāyana through this metre has been used widely in Sanskrit Adhyātma Rāmāyana. But, in his Rāmāyana, we find the excellent application of nine classical Sanskrit metres. To quote him, "Bhānubhaktiya Rāmāyanmā hamī pāu chhau prāchin Sanskrita nau Chhandaharūkā chamatkārpūrna prayog."⁵⁴

In the abovementioned book Sri Giri opines that the poetic style as well as love for sentiments (rasas) of Bhānubhakta can be understood from his application of the different metres. To quote him, "Bhānubhaktako Kāvya may shilpakāritā ra rasapriyatā chhandakā chhanotbāta spaṣṭa rūpmā bujhnasakchhan."⁵⁵

Moreover, proper application of different metres after keeping in view of the diverse incidents, conditions and circumstances was the speciality of this (Bhānubhakta's) kāvyā. In the language of Sri Girī, "Ghaṭanā, sthiti, avasthāharūkā vaibhinnalāi dir̥ṣṭimā rākhera vibhinna chhandaharūko samayānukul prayog garna saknu unko kāvyagata visheshatā ho."⁵⁶

We want to conclude this section with the comment of Sri Rāj Nārāyan Pradhan, who, while making a critical study of Bhānubhakta's Badhūshikshā, comments that Bhanubhakta had exhibited his competence in the Rāmāyaṇa after changing metres in different places, like that he had also changed the metres in different stanzas in Badhūshikshā. To quote him "Thaū̃ thaū̃mā chhanda parivartan garne Bhānubhaktako Shailī ho ra Rāmāyananmā tyasarĩ nai chhanda parivartan garnamā āfnā sip dekhāekā chhan. Tyasarĩ nai tinte yo Badhūshikshāmā pani chhanda parivartan garekā chhan."⁵⁷

From the writings of the abovementioned researchers, experts, critics including some women, and poets in Nepali literature, it is clear to us that most of them had praised the poet Bhānubhakta highly because of his proper and skilful application of the Sanskrit metres in his Rāmāyaṇa and other writings. In this connection, it is to be noted that, Sanskrit, which has got significant contribution to the structural fabric of many languages, though neglected in modern age, is as sweet as nectar till today (of "Amritam madhuram samyak, Sanskritam hi tatadhikam") that means, nector is sweet but Sanskrit is more than that. Moreover, vast stock of knowledge is preserved in our ancient texts.

The abovementioned writings further reveal the fact that during the time

of Bhānubhakta, Sanskrit knowing writers and poets were honoured as Pandits. In a word, during that time, it was the Sanskrit language which became popular. And as such the poet Bhanubhakta including his predecessor poets like Vidyāran̄yakesarī and Vasanta Sharmā and his follower poets such as Lekhnāth, Lakshmi Prasād Deokotā, Dharanīdhar Sharma, Dr. Tulsī Bahādur Chhetri and many others became famous mainly due to the application of Sanskrit metres in their kāvyas and couplets which became appealing and charming for the intellectual power scientific methods and musical quality of Sanskrit metres.

2.2 Writings of the writers other than the Nepalese

Apart from the writings of the Nepali writers on the literature of Bhanubhakta, there are some writers who have also contributed to this literature. Among such writers and commentators Sri Phanindra Nath Bose, Samvat 1986 (i.e., 1929 A.D.) just after Motiram Bhatta, claims praises for his critical analysis regarding the poetic genius of Bhanubhakta. His article entitled "Nepali Kavi Bhanubhakta" in Bengali language was published in the Prabasi Patrika (the then well-known patrika in Bengali language) in Bengali Samvat 1336 in the month of Sravana. According to him, Bhanubhakta is the first and the foremost (Prathama and Pradhana) poet in Nepali literature. In his opinion, Bhanubhakta became famous after translating the Sanskrit Adhyatma Ramayana into Nepali language. He further adds that Bhanubhakta's Ramayana is very favourite with the masses in Nepal. Just as the Mahabharata of Kashiram Das and the Ramayana of Pandit Krittibas Ojha in Bengal, as well as the Ramayana of Goswami Tulsidasa in Uttarbharat are very famous to the people, like that the Ramayana of the poet Bhanubhakta is very popular in Nepal.

Sri Bose opines that it is very rare to find a man in Nepal who is not acquainted with the Ramayana of Bhanubhakta. That is why the verses of the Ramayana are chanted everyday by the people from village to village in different parts of Nepal. He further adds that during the time of Bhanubhakta, the learned Brahmins (the so-called Pandits) used to write everything in Sanskrit language. Sanskrit at that time occupied the most important status and Nepali had not attained the status that it enjoys now-a-days.

Sri Bose concludes his article with the opinion that the poet Bhanubhakta

has changed the tradition in writing in Sanskrit language by composing his Rāmāyana in Nepali language. He has performed this work due to his deep love for his vernacular. This points to his patriotic zeal too. As a result, just as Vālmiki's fame became everlasting so also the poet Bhanubhakta obtained gratitude from the Nepalese after composing the Rāmāyana in Nepali language. In this connection, it is worthy to be mentioned that Bhanubhakta became successful only because he knew Sanskrit language and literature as the Sanskrit literature constitutes the vast account of knowledge.

Dr. Bhajan Gopal Sanyal of St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling (now retired) has translated Bhanubhakta's Rāmāyana into Bengali language for the first time, which is also famous and useful for the non-Nepali students and researchers. His book entitled "Bhanubhakta Rāmāyana" has been published by him and financed by the Department of Information and Cultural Affairs, Government of West Bengal, in the year 1988. Really, this is a great "contribution to add to the richness of Bengali language and literature" as mentioned by His Excellency Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Deb, Kathmundo, Nepal, on December 25 in the year 1987, in his letter addressed to Dr. Sanyal.

Thus we find that Dr. Sanyal may be regarded as the most remarkable person in the field of translation. While sending best wishes to Dr. Sanyal on March 25, 1986, Sri Jyoti Basu, Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal, was of the opinion that "this translation will be very attractive to the people well-versed in Bengali language and literature. I also desire that this type of work will act as a strong instrument in creating unity among different people of cultural, ethnic and lingual groups."⁵⁸

Dr. Sanyal's book contains a very good introduction that deals with the environment of Bhanubhakta's time as well as his life and works. An image of

the life of the Nepali people as revealed in Bhanubhakta's kāvyā along with a discussion on Sanskrit Adhyātma Rāmāyana and Bhanubhakta's Rāmāyana – have been critically and thoroughly discussed by the author.

Dr. Bhajan Gopal Sanyal also made a comparative study between the Rāmāyana of Bhanubhakta and that of Krittibās Ojhā, under the guidance of Dr. Tulsi Bahādur Chhetri, the then Head of the Department of Nepali language and literature in the University of North Bengal. As a result, he had obtained his Ph.D. degree from the above said University.

Sri K. M. Munshi, ex-Governor of Uttar Pradesh, has written a very good introduction to the Rāmāyana of Bhanubhakta edited by Sri S. B. Jñavālī, in which he had explained the greatness of the Rāmāyana as general along with an account of the life history of Bhanubhakta. According to him, "To millions of people in India even today the mere name of Rāma brings solace and strength. The popularity of the story of Rāma is not confined to the borders of India; The Rāmāyana is well known in greater India as well."⁵⁹ His Excellency Sri Munshi further adds that "Like Tulsidāsa, Bhanubhakta has used homely language and employed Arabic and Persian words then current in the vernaculars; the aim of both was to reach the masses; and both were equally successful."⁶⁰

Moreover, he is of the opinion that "by providing a cultural and linguistic source of unity for the various classes of people, Bhanubhakta has rendered a unique service to Nepal; by composing the Rāmāyana he created a great binding force. Nepali language became standardized to develop into common language."⁶¹ Thus we find that it has been rightly remarked by His Excellency, Sri Munshi, "Bhanubhakta is rightly regarded as the father of modern Nepali language and literature and a great national hero." Sri Munshi further adds that Bhanubhakta's Rāmāyana offered us the fundamental unity of modern

Indian languages, gave us the unity of religious and literary inspiration which have maintained cultural homogeneity. Thus though Nepal is a country which is politically independent, yet "in social, religious, cultural and literary matters, it forms with India a single unit."⁶²

Sri Munshi concluded his introduction to Bhanubhakta's Rāmāyana with the following words – "I trust that the publication of this work will not only help Nepal but the rest of India after appreciating this fundamental homogeneity."⁶³

His Excellency Sri Harendra Kumar Mukhopadhyaya, ex-Governor of West Bengal, also wrote a very significant preface to the Rāmāyana of Bhanubhakta edited by Sri Sūrya Vikram (S.B.) Jñavāli (alt. Gyewali). He praised the Rāmāyana highly by regarding it as the only high-class specimen in Nepali poetry after mentioning it to be valued as a scripture.

His Excellency Sri Kailās Nāth Kāṭju, ex-Governor of West Bengal, remarked that "the poet Bhanubhakta is not only a poet of Nepal and Nepalese but he is a poet of India and Indians."

It is assumed that apart from the Indians, many learned and interested people, English or Russian, might have written something on Bhanubhakta's literature whose writings are yet to be assessed.

A full study of those writings has not been completed. In the words of Prof. Gokul Sinhā, "Yi bahak Angreji, Russeli, pravr̥ti vidvān harulepani yi adikavi upar niscay lekheka hunan, tinko adhyayan banki nai chha."⁶⁴

We want to conclude this section with the remark of Sri Rājnarāyan

Pradhan, ex-Secretary, Nepali Sahitya Parishad, Darjeeling, who, while writing the introduction to the book "Bhānubhakta Kṛti Adhyayanharū", remarked that "the complete study of the works of Bhanubhakta has not been yet done till now. For this reason, our plan is to make an assessment of Bhanubhakta through his works and as such this is the main purpose of publishing this book. Hence the principal aim of this book is to make a plan of proper assessment of Bhanubhakta through his works". To quote the original passage, "Ājhasamma unkā kṛtiharūko samucit adhyayan bhāeko chhaina. Yasāile Bhanubhaktalāi unkā kṛtiharūmā herne hāmro yojanā ho ra yas pustakā mūl uddes̄yapani. Samyak samikṣāmā unkā kṛtiharūko mūlyāñkan garne hāmro abhilaksha ho."⁶⁵

2.3 A Brief Summary Indicating areas of disagreement in findings

Inconsistency and confusion prevail in the spectrum of Nepali literature regarding the exact number of metres used by Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyana. It would be nearer the truth to conclude that the actual number of metres used by the poet in his Rāmāyana, as we have observed by scanning is exactly nine (9).

After going through the pages of different books of different writers, it is clear to us that the exact number of Sanskrit metres used by the poet Bhanubhakta in his Ramayana is not known to each and every writer. Most probably they have not scanned all the verses of the Rāmāyana. And, as such, areas of disagreement in findings are prominent.

After a thorough scanning of all the verses used by Bhanubhakta it is clear to us that he has used nine classical Sanskrit metres in this epic.

Now let us indicate areas of disagreement in findings. Among such writers or scholars we can mention the names of His Excellency Sri K. M. Munshi (Ex-Governor of Uttar Pradesh), Dr. Bhajan Gopal Sanyal, Sri Dilirām Timsinā, Dr. Kumar Pradhan, and Naranāth Āchārya. His Excellency Sri K.M.Munshi, while introducing Bhanubhakta's Rāmāyana edited by Sri S. B. Jñavālī in the year 1954, writes that "the poet has used classical Sanskrit (=cl. Skt.) metres like Indravajrā, Upajāti, Drutavilambitam, Vasantatilaka, Mālīnī, Mandākṛāntā, Shikharīnī, Śardūlavikṛīditam and Sragdhara."⁶⁶

In the above mentioned sentence made by his Excellency Sri Munshi, we find the names of nine cl. Skt metres used by Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyana. But the name of the metre Svāgatā (which has been used in sloka no. 153 in Sundarkānda) has been totally omitted by him whereas he has added the name of Mandākṛantā metre which has not been used by the poet anywhere of his Rāmāyana.

Dr. Bhajan Gopal Sanyal, while introducing Bhanubhakta's Kāvya mentions that Bhanubhakta has used different metres like Vasnatatilakā, Shikharinī, totaka, Indravajrā, Upendravajrā, Upajāti, Sārdūla, Mālinī, Sragdharā, Svāgatā and Drutavilambitam in his Rāmāyana. Here we find that Dr. Sanyal has added the name of the metre Totaka by mistake which has not been used by the poet in his Rāmāyana.

Again, Dr. Kumar Pradhan in his book "A History of Nepali Literature" in page 39 mentions that "In the seven cantos that contain a total number of 1319 stanzas he has used eight different classical metres namely, Sārdūla, Shikharinī, Sragdharā, Indravajrā, Mālinī, Vasantatilakam, Svāgatā and Drutavilambitam with equal ease". But Dr. Pradhan has forgotten to include here the name of the metre Upajāti used by the poet Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyana in Sl. No. 102 under Ayodhyākānda.

In the above mentioned remark made by Dr. Pradhan, we find that instead of mentioning nine which is the actual number of metres used by Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyana, Dr. Pradhan has mentioned the total number of metres used by the poet in his Rāmāyana as eight. So here also we find that the disagreements in findings are prominent.

Lecturer of the Banaras Hindu University, who was also well-versed in Sanskrit language and literature, writes in *Bhānubhakta-Smāraḥ Grantha*, that, among the nine classical Sanskrit metres, viz., *Indravajrā*, *Upajāti*, *Drutavilambitam*, *Mālinī*, *Mandākrāntā*, *Shikharinī*, *Śārdūla*, and *Sragdharā*, the metre *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* has become more famous and widely used to Nepali community. To quote him, "Unle *Rāmāyanmā* prayog garekā *Indravajrā*, *Upajāti*, *Drutavilambitam*, *Vasantatilakam*, *Mālinī*, *Mandākrāntā*, *Shikharinī*, *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* and *Sragdharā* yī nau chhandaharūmadhye, *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* chāhi Nepali samājmā oudhinai nāmi ra prachaliita bhayeko chha."⁶⁷ Here we find that the name of the metre *Mandākrāntā* has been mentioned by Sri Timsinā whereas the metre *Svāgatā* has been totally omitted by him. Hence here also we find that the disagreement in findings is apparent.

While mentioning the names of the Chhandas along with *Alamkāras Bhāṣā* and *Sailī* (Style) used by *Bhānubhakta* in his *Rāmāyana*, *Pandit Kavirāj Naranāth Āchārya*, in his book "*Ādikavi Bhānubhakta Ācharyako Sachchā Jivancharitra*" in chapter ten, section D (of *Bhānubhakta* prayog garekā chhanda, alamkāra, bhāṣā ra sailī – p.146) mentioned the name of the metre *Śārdūlavikrīḍitam* as the principal one: "*Bhānubhaktale* prayog garekā vrittaharūmadhye *Śārdūlavikrīḍita* pramukh chha."⁶⁸ In his opinion it is the metre *Shikharinī* used by *Bhānubhakta* in his *Rāmāyana* which has been employed in a very charming manner. To quote him, "*Bhānubhakta Rāmāyanmā* paine arko atyanta manoharūpmā prayukta vritta shikharinī ho."⁶⁹

Sri Āchārya further adds that the other metres used by *Bhānubhakta* in his *Rāmāyana* are – *Vasantatilakā*, *Mālinī*, *Svāgatā*,

Drutavilambita, Upajāti and Indravajrā. To quote him, "Bhānule Rāmāyaṇmā prayog garekā arū vritta Vasantatilakā, Mālinī, Svāgatā, Drutavilambita, Upajāti ra Indravajrā hun."⁷⁰

Thus it is clear to us that Sri Ācharya has forgotten to add the name of the metre Sragdharā used by Bhanubhakta in his Rāmāyaṇa. Therefore, here also we find area of disagreement in findings.

2.4 Agreement in Findings in short

After going through the different chapters and articles on the Sanskrit metres used by Bhānubhakta written by different writers and critics like Dr. Kumar Pradhan, Sri Naranāth Āchārya, Sri Dīlirām Timsinā, Sri Bhaichand Pradhan and Sri Premdās Upreti 'Pīdit', we come to know that Bhānubhakta used different classical Sanskrit metres in his Rāmāyana. But none of the above mentioned writers could mention the actual names of the metres used by Bhānubhakta in his Rāmāyana. Only in one specific place we find agreement in findings. We want to explain it in short.

Dr. Pārasmani Pradhān, who, while discussing varieties of metres in his book Bhāsā-Prabesh-Vyākaraṇa in page No.134, mentions that Nepali Jātiya Kavi, Late Bhānubhakta Āchārya has employed the following nine Sanskrit metres in his writing. The name of the metres are as follows:

1. Śārdulavikrīditam
2. Shikharinī
3. Mālīnī
4. Svāgata
5. Drutabilamvita
6. Indravajrā
7. Upendravajrā
8. Vasantatilakā and
9. Sragdhara