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BHASA AND THE AUTHORSHIP OF  
THE THIRTEEN TRIVANDRUM  
PLAYS

BY  
HIRANANDA SASTRI, M.A., M.O.L.

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## FOREWORD.

The perusal of a drama named *Āscharyachūdāmani* by Śaktibhadra, sent to me by Mr. K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar, Assistant Superintendent for Epigraphy, and its similarity with the thirteen Trivandrum plays led me to study the authorship of the latter, which have been hitherto ascribed to Bhāsa, known as one of the oldest and most renowned playwrights of India. The present paper is the result of that study, which demolishes the structure fondly built by the distinguished discoverer and editor of these plays and his followers.

It is a painful task to destroy the cherished theory of another, but it appeared to me that the misleading arguments hitherto advanced in favour of Bhāsa's authorship required exposition, and I regret this could not be done without giving prominence to the destructive method, which is generally unpleasant. I admit the value of the contributions which various scholars have made towards the solution of this very difficult problem, and I do not claim that my thesis finally settles the question. I have merely hinted at the source of these plays with the hope that it will evoke a further analysis of the situation, leading to the discovery of the real author.

I am extremely grateful to Sir John Marshall, Kt., C.I.E., M.A., Litt. D., F.S.A., Director General of Archæology in India, whose keen interest for augmenting the cause of Oriental learning and kind appreciation of my humble labours have induced him to publish this thesis as a memoir in the Archæological series. I am no less indebted to Dr. Sten Konow of Kristiania (OSLO) and to my life-long friend Rai Bahadur Hiralal of the Central Provinces, both of whom read over my paper and offered valuable criticism which enabled me to revise a part of it so as to strengthen the arguments put forward by me.

HĪRANANDA ŚĀSTRĪ.

FRENHILL, THE NILGIRIS :

*The 8th November 1924.*





## BHASA AND THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE THIRTEEN TRIVANDRUM PLAYS.

IN 1912 Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstri of Trivandrum announced the discovery of thirteen plays which were 'neither seen nor heard of before!' He edited them very carefully and published them in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series, which called forth high commendation from Sanskrit scholars not only in India but in Europe and America as well. Although the Mss. mentioned no author, he ascribed them to Bhāsa, the renowned ancient playwright of India and gave his reasons which satisfied many Sanskritists, who accepted his theory, except a few like Dr. Barnett in Europe and Mr. Bhaṭṭanātha Svāmī in India. The latter raised a discordant voice, but their opposition was lost in the whirlwind of approbation of a novelty, which at once struck the imagination rather than the discretion of the discoverer's followers. Dr. V. S. Sukthankar has very recently given an exhaustive bibliography in one of his articles entitled "*Studies in Bhāsa*" in the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*,<sup>1</sup> where he has mentioned all that had so far appeared on the subject both in favour of and against the view first propounded by the editor and discoverer of the plays. All this time I was myself a believer in the Bhāsa theory, and it was only this year that my faith was rudely shaken by the perusal of a drama named *Āścharyachūḍāmaṇi*, written by Śaktibhadra (said to have been a contemporary of Śaṅkarāchārya, the great philosopher of India). This drama, which was partly published some years ago at Calicut with a Sanskrit commentary and is fairly well known in the Kerala country, exhibited so marked a resemblance to some of the thirteen plays which have been attributed to Bhāsa that I was led to examine the various points raised in support of the Bhāsa theory. This investigation has convinced me that the theory is impregnated with a defect which Sanskritists call *ativyāpti*. It is, therefore, untenable. The question is not only important from a literary point of view, but it has a special bearing on archaeological studies as well. I am, therefore, tempted to traverse what may be called a beaten track and place the result of my investigation before scholars with the hope that it will tend to remove the delusion that has been working upon us for the long period of twelve years.

<sup>1</sup> 1922-23, pp 231a.

At the outset I propose to give a summary of what has been adduced in favour of the Bhāsa theory as the *pūrva-paksha* and thereafter to examine it in the light of my study of the whole problem. Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī's arguments form the basis and the mainstay of this view, the language question and sundry other points being adduced as additional supports. His chief reasons are the following :—

I. All the 13 plays show a close resemblance to one another in the language employed and the method of expressing the ideas.

- (a) They, as a rule, begin with the stage direction **नान्द्यन्ते ततः प्रविशति सूत्रधारः** and then introduce the *maṅgala-śloka* or benedictory stanza.
- (b) Instead of the word *prastāvanā* they use the term *sthāpanā*.
- (c) The *nāṭakas*, written by Kālidāsa and other dramatists of a later date mention in the prologue, according to the canons of Bharata, the author of the play and some of his works in terms of praise. The Trivandrum plays do not exhibit this feature.
- (d) The *Bharatavākya*m or closing sentence in these plays is written in a way which is different from that of similar stanzas found in other dramas.

These facts would show that the author of the Trivandrum plays was one and the same, and he lived prior to the writers like Kālidāsa, who had to follow certain canonical injunctions with regard to their compositions, which did not come into force during his time.

II. Vāmana, Daṇḍin, Bhāmaha and other rhetoricians have quoted these plays which, therefore, must have been written prior to the time when these authorities flourished.

III. Tradition ascribes the authorship of a play named *Śvapnavāsavadattā* to Bhāsa. One of these plays bears that appellation. Therefore, it must be the work of Bhāsa. Again, as all these plays closely resemble each other, in all probability, they were written by one and the same author, that is to say, because one of them, namely, *Śvapnavāsavadattā* was composed by Bhāsa, the rest must have also been written by him.

IV. These plays are characterised by an intensity of *rasa* or sentiment, a marvelously exquisite flow of language and an all-round grace of poetical elegance such as is to be met with in the works of ancient *ṛishis* like Vālmīki and Vyāsa. Therefore, their author also was a similar *ṛishi* and an ancient writer, who lived long before Kālidāsa and other playwrights, when Sanskrit was a spoken language.

V. The author of these plays has used archaic forms of words which are not in accordance with the aphorisms of Pāṇini and are, therefore, *apaprayogas* or solecisms. Notwithstanding this fact, Kālidāsa and other standard writers imitated him, adapting his language and ideas, for they looked upon him as a *ṛishi*. Therefore, he preceded not only these writers but even Pāṇini, the great grammarian. Moreover, Kālidāsa speaks of Bhāsa as an ancient writer. Obviously, therefore, the Trivandrum plays, which were composed by Bhāsa, must have been written long before Kālidāsa.

VI. In the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya<sup>1</sup> a verse is found which must be a quotation from the *Pratijñānāṭikā* or *Pratijñāyaugandharāyaṇa*, where it occurs in the fourth

<sup>1</sup> Adhika. 10, Adhyāya 3.

Therefore, the author of this play and, consequently, of the whole series must have lived before Kauṭilya, the great politician of ancient India.

Dr. F. W. Thomas in his note, which appeared in the *Journal<sup>1</sup> of the Royal Asiatic Society* some two years ago, has supplemented these arguments to some extent. His arguments may be summed up like this :—(i) Bhāsa is an ancient writer. As we learn from authorities like Bāṇa or Rājaśekhara, he composed several plays (*nāṭakachakra*). One of them was named *Svapnavāsavadattā*. If the Trivandrum play of this designation is not the work of Bhāsa, the author has “plagiarised” the title. The known facts, however, show that this is an impossibility in as much as Sanskrit *nāṭakas* have distinct titles even if they are plagiaristic, e.g., the *Mahānāṭaka*, the *Chārudatta* or the *Mṛichchhakaṭikā*. So in all probability this is the very play which was composed by Bhāsa himself. (ii) The Trivandrum *Vāsavadattā* was in the ninth century a famous play, which was quoted by Vāmana in the *Kāvyaśāstrakārasūtracṛitti*. A work of this name is mentioned by Abhinavagupta in his *Bharatanāṭyavedavivṛiti* and in the *Dhvanyālokalochana*. Yet we are never told that there were two famous dramas of this name. This circumstance also would point towards the same conclusion. (iii) The Trivandrum plays were famous in the seventh century A. D., perhaps even before, as Bhāmaha refers to the *Pratiññāyauḡandharāyaṇa*. Abhinavagupta names the *Daridrachārudatta* and Vāmana quotes not only the *Svapnavāsavadattā*, but the *Pratiññāyauḡandharāyaṇa* and the *Chārudatta* also. If the author of these works is not Bhāsa, he is quite unknown. It is hardly likely that he suppressed his own name with a view to father his works upon Bhāsa. (iv) All these plays are not only similar in structure, style and matter worthy of a master-mind, like that of Bhāsa, but impress us by their freshness and vigour evincing a direct derivation from the ‘epics’. This fact combined with the circumstance that a good deal of borrowing from these plays is to be seen in the works of Kālidāsa would lead to the inference that their author lived long before the latter.

Besides these arguments, much has been made of the Prākṛit of these dramas to support the Bhāsa theory. Dr. Wilhelm Printz in his pamphlet, named *Bhāsa's Prākṛit<sup>2</sup>*, has worked out this point in detail. So also Drs. Sukthankar and Banerji as well as other scholars in their respective contributions. Instances like those of the accusative plural masculine in *āni* found in the edicts of Aśoka and the plays of Aśvaghosha have been elicited from these dramas as unmistakable evidences of their high antiquity. Yet another argument is brought forward in favour of the theory. It is this. The first few acts of the famous play called *Mṛichchhakaṭikā* and one of the Trivandrum plays, namely *Chārudatta*, closely resemble each other and are almost identical. Dr. Georg Morgenstierne has very carefully worked out this point and brought out all the identical passages of these two plays in his *Über das Verhältnis zwischen Cārudatta und Mṛichchakaṭikā*. His comparison leads us to the conclusion, which is rather irresistible, that one must be the copy of the other. Those who are committed to the Bhāsa theory hold that the *Mṛichchhakaṭikā* is only an amplification or adaptation of the *Chārudatta*. According to these scholars Kālidāsa only borrowed ideas and

Leipzig 1921.

<sup>1</sup> 1922; pp. 79-83.

<sup>2</sup> Frankfurt, A. M. 1921.

expressions from some of the Trivandrum plays, but the author of the *Mṛichchhakatikā* incorporated entire acts of one of these dramas into his work and credited them to himself. The *Mṛichchhakatikā* is a fairly old *nāṭaka*. The *Chārudatta* which forms the basis of it, must be considerably older and so it must be the work of Bhāsa. Further, some of the scholars holding this view quote from the *Harshucharita*<sup>1</sup> the following verse in support of the theory—

सुत्रधारकृतारम्भैर्नाटकैर्वहुभूमिकैः ।

सयताकैर्यशो लेभे भासो देवकुलेरिव ॥

“ Bhāsa gained as much splendour by his plays with introductions spoken by the manager, full of various characters, and furnished with startling episodes, as he would have done by the erection of temples, created by architects, adorned with several stories, and decorated with banners.”<sup>2</sup>

They say that the epithets applied to Bhāsa here and in other Sanskrit works can be very fittingly used for the author of the Trivandrum plays. Jayadeva in the *Prasannarāghava* speaks of Bhāsa as the “ laugh of poetry ” (*Bhāso hāsaḥ*). Vākpati in his *Gauḍavaho* calls him “ friend of fire ” (*Jalaṇa-mitte*), on which Dr. A. Berriedale Keith seems to lay great stress in his work “ *The Sanskrit Drama in its Origin, Development, Theory and Practice*”, which has very recently come out.<sup>3</sup> In the Chapter which he has devoted to Bhāsa he seems to have merely repeated what has been adduced by other scholars in support of the hypothesis without adding anything new, except a few rather dogmatic assertions or sweeping remarks against the opponents. To him the arguments and evidence brought forward so far to disprove Bhāsa’s authorship are all inconclusive and inadequate.

The above arguments have been very recently supplemented by Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstri by a contribution to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, where he claims a final triumph for his pet theory (see pp. 668-9 of the October No. for 1924). In that note, he extracts some passages from the *Bhāvaprakāśa* and the *Śrīngāraprakāśa*, which mention the *Svapnavāsavadattā* by name and one of them quotes a verse चिरप्रसुप्तः etc. which is actually found in the Trivandrum *Svapnanāṭaka*. He is so elated with these discoveries that he exclaims :—“ Had I obtained these before, there would not have been the slightest discussion over my view that Bhāsa was the author of this *Svapnavāsavadattā* (meaning the Trivandrum *Svapnanāṭakam*). Luckily my opinion has now been vindicated.” This is, I believe, the sum total of what has been said and argued in favour of the Bhāsa theory.

Let us now see how far these arguments can hold good. The first point requiring consideration is the circumstance that the Trivandrum plays begin with the entry of a *sūtradhāra* and, therefore, on the authority of Bāṇa, should be attributed to Bhāsa. This argument will at once lose its force when we find that in Southern India, at least there are several *nāṭakas* which similarly begin with the entry of a *sūtradhāra* or stage-director but were certainly not written by Bhāsa. One of such works, as was pointed out by Dr. Barnett long ago<sup>4</sup>, is the *Mattavilāsaprahasana*, a highly interesting farce

<sup>1</sup> I. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Translation by Cowell & Thomas, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Oxford, Clarendon Press 1924.

<sup>4</sup> *J. R. A. S.* 1919, pp. 233-4.

which was composed by the Pallava king Mahendravidikrama, the son and successor of Simhavishnu, who flourished in the first quarter of the 7th century A. D. The second play showing the same characteristics is the *Āscharyachūḍāmaṇi* of Śaktibhadra, which has been mentioned above. The third drama coming under this category is the *Kalyāṇasaugandhikā* of Nilakaṇṭha.<sup>1</sup> Other dramas showing the same feature are the *Tapatisamvarana* and the *Subhadrādhanañjaya*, both of which were written by Kulaśekharavarmman, a Kerala king of about the 11th century A. D. We further notice that these dramas use the term *sthāpanā* instead of *prastāvanā*. Other instances will be supplied by the *Padmaprābhṛitaka* of Sūdraka, the *Dhūrtaviṭasamvāda* of Īśvaradatta, the *Ubhayābhisārikā* of Vararuchi, and the *Pādatāḍitaka* of Śyāmilaka which have already been published. Moreover, we find that the *Āscharyachūḍāmaṇi*<sup>2</sup> introduces itself with the words<sup>3</sup> *aye kinnu khalu mayi vijñāpanavyagra śabda iva śrūyate* etc., just as some of the Trivandrum plays do.<sup>4</sup> These facts conclusively show that it is wrong to draw conclusions from the way in which the prologues of some of these plays were written. As some of the works I have mentioned were probably composed in the South, it would appear likely that this was only a *śailī* or habit of the *dākṣiṇātyas* or southerners of the period. No stress could, therefore, be laid on it in the matter of ascribing certain works to a special author, in view of different writers having adopted the same mode of starting their plays with the words *नान्यन्ते* etc. The view held by Dr. Banerji that it was Bhāsa who introduced the change for the first time and, therefore, Bāṇa characterized his works as begun by a *sūtradhāra* can hardly commend itself, when we remember what Viśvanātha has stated about the point in the *Sāhityadarpaṇa*. He says<sup>5</sup> that in ancient manuscripts the *nāndī* verses, like *Vedānteshu*<sup>6</sup> etc., are found written after the words *nāndyante sūtradhārah*. This clearly demonstrates that it was only a method of writing. Viśvanātha must have seen old manuscript copies of the *Vikramorvaśī* and other plays where the benedictory verses were

<sup>1</sup> The weakness of the argument, I fancy, has been recognised by Dr. Keith who, while reviewing Dr. Morgens-tieras's work entitled "*Über das Verhältnis zwischen Cārudatta und Mṛichchakatikā*" in the *Indian Antiquary*, (Vol. LII, 1923, page 60), says that it would certainly be a *non sequitur* to conclude that the Trivandrum plays are Bhāsa's, simply because they are begun by the *sūtradhāra*. Though he has modified this remark by saying that owing to this decidedly noteworthy fact the plays are eligible to be considered as Bhāsa's, I think the *atīvyāpti* which I have shown vitiates the argument.

<sup>2</sup> In the third session of the All India Oriental Conference held at Madras two more dramas were announced which display the same features, but were written by other authors. They are entitled *Dānaka* and *Traivikrama* (see *Summary of Papers*, page III).

<sup>3</sup> Mr. K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar tells me that he noticed this similarity more than two years ago and worked it out in a paper that has not yet come out. Messrs. A. Krishna Pisharoti and K. Rama Pisharoti have also recently noted it in their article entitled "Bhāsa's works—are they genuine?" where they have printed the whole of the prologue and announced their intention of bringing out an edition of this interesting play very soon.

<sup>4</sup> The *Ubhayābhisārikā* of Vararuchi also gives them.

<sup>5</sup> Ch. VI. pp. 279-80, Bombay N. S. 1922—

इत एव प्राक्कनपुस्तकेषु 'नान्यन्ते सूत्रधारः' इत्यनन्तरमेव 'वेदानेषु' इत्यादिप्राक्कलिष्वनं दृश्यते। यच्च इयात् 'नान्यन्ते' सूत्रधार इति लिखितं तस्यादमभिप्रायः नान्यन्ते सूत्रधार इदं प्रयोजितवान् इतः प्रचति मया नाटकमुपादीयत इति कवेरभिप्रायः सूचित इति।

<sup>6</sup> The first benedictory stanza of the *Vikramorvaśī*.

placed after this phrase, or to use the expression of Bāṇa, which began with the *sūtra-dhāra*. He further says that the insertion of these words after the *nāndī* means that the *nāṭaka* proper would start thenceforth. Thus, according to Viśvanātha (who though not very old is yet considered to be an authority on *sāhitya*), the use of these words before or after the *nāndī* becomes immaterial as indicating a peculiarity of any particular author. It is true that we are not in possession of the original manuscripts, but only of comparatively late copies of these plays, still Viśvanātha's evidence is there, and we have no reason to disbelieve it. In this connection it may be remarked that *nāndī* is not an absolutely necessary commencement, as some plays start without it. Śivarāma in his commentary<sup>1</sup> on the *Nāgānanda* has expressly said so in the words **केचित् तामप्यतीत्य नान्द्यन्त इत्येवारभन्ते**. That this is so is illustrated by the play called *Pradyumnābhyaudaya* which was composed by King Ravivarman of Quilon, who, according to Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī,<sup>2</sup> flourished about 1265 A. D. Another instance of this kind will be furnished by one of the Trivandrum plays itself, namely, the *Chārudatta*, which has no *nāndī* at all. It would appear that the actors had some liberty in chanting benedictory verses and starting a play. This is, perhaps, what Viśvanātha meant when he remarked—

*Sāhityadarpana*,  
p. 279.

उक्तप्रकारायाश्च नान्द्या रङ्गद्वाराव्ययमं नटैरेव कर्त्तव्यतया न महर्षिणा निर्देशः कृतः ।

The question of conformity to the *Bharata-vākyaṃ* I would similarly attribute to practice or *saili* only. The Trivandrum plays themselves are not uniform in structure with regard to the canons laid down in the *Bharatanāṭyaśāstra*. I doubt if the author of these dramas was totally unaware<sup>3</sup> of this *śāstra*, judging from the words of the *vidūshaka* addressed to the *cheṭi* in one of these plays called *Avimāraka*, though *Bharata* is not named there.

Nor will the other points raised in this connection such as the omission of the author's name, the description of certain scenes not allowed by *Bharata* and the absence of the *Bharata-vākyaṃ* help us in upholding the theory. The mention of the author or his praise in the introduction is what is called *prarochanā* which is meant to attract the audience. If an author has to make his reputation, he may not mention his name till his fame has been established, or he may be taking some liberty with regard to these points in not following *Bharata* for some local reasons, such as the taste of the time, *etc.* In any case these are not the only plays which possess these characteristics. There are others which have now been published and display similar features. Of the four *Bhāṇas* mentioned above only the *Pādatūḍitaka* gives the name of the author in the *sthāpanā*, not the rest. I am further supported by another old work that has recently been brought to our notice. It is a *Prahasana* entitled *Bhagavadajjuka* which has lately been published in the pages<sup>4</sup> of the *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* by Professor A. P. Banerji. We are not quite sure of its authorship or time. According to a stanza found on one of the manuscripts of this work in the Madras Oriental Manuscripts Library, it is an old composition by a poet called

<sup>1</sup> T. S. S. No. LIX, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Introduction to the *Pradyumnābhyaudaya*, p. viii, T. S. S. No. VIII.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Sten Konow thinks that there cannot be any doubt that the author of the *Avimāraka* knew *Bharata*, a clear reference to his work being found on p. 16 of that play.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. X (1924), Parts I and II, pp. i—xxiii.

Bodhāyana.<sup>1</sup> The Māmandur inscription of Mahendravarman I, a good edition of which has recently come out in one of the publications<sup>2</sup> of the Indian Archæological Department, mentions it, though unfortunately the line where the name occurs is very badly mutilated. The name of Vyāsa comes before and that of the *Mattavilāsa* shortly after it, the intervening *aksharas* having been obliterated. The *Mattavilāsaprahasana*, as already stated, is the work of the accomplished Pallava ruler Mahendravarman. Why both these farces should be named rather one after the other, we have now no means to ascertain. But it appears to me that the *Bhagavadajjuka* was an earlier composition and the *Mattavilāsa* was modelled after it. The former exposes the preceptors of the yoga practices, ridicules the followers of the Sāṅkhya system, the physicians and the grammarians of the time as well as the followers of the Buddha. Still, its author does not appear to be very severe in his sarcasms, and the persons he has introduced are not so degenerate as they are shown in the latter work, namely, the *Mattavilāsa*. At any rate the Buddhist monk is not so low as he is in the latter. Sāṅdilya of the *Bhagavadajjuka* praises Buddha specially for his punctilious care of food—

‘बाहारप्यमादो सव्यप्यमादोत्ति चिन्तयन्तस्म णमो भववदो बुद्धस्म’

and his behaviour towards the lifeless body of the courtesan, or the words<sup>3</sup>—

... एदाणि तान्मफलपोषाणि काले अचन्दणाणलित्तानि अणधोमुहाणि तत्तहोदोए  
यणाणि, अघस्सस्म मम जीवन्तिए ण आसादिदाणि ।

cannot reflect creditably on his personal conduct or the followers of the great Tathāgata of that period. But compare him with the Sākyabhikshu of the *Mattavilāsa*, who, while extolling the “great teacher” of the age for allowing the *bhikshu-saṅgha* or community of friars to indulge in various comforts or luxurious ways of life wants full liberty with women and wine as well. The former exhibits a little restraint, but the latter does not. This contrast is marked and would show how low the followers of the Buddha must have fallen, when the Pallava king wrote his farce. The piece itself does not name its author. Nor does it mention the time when it was written. The Bodhāyana of the manuscripts spoken of above is, for the present, an unknown writer. Therefore, to draw any inference regarding his time we have to depend on the internal evidence only. The fact that the farce is mentioned in the Māmandur inscription would show that it cannot be later than the end of the 6th or the commencement of the 7th century of the Christian era, or the time of Mahendravarman<sup>4</sup> who flourished about

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Sarasvati of the Madras Epigraphical office was good enough to send me the following two verses one of which he found written on a manuscript of the *Bhagavadajjuka* and the other on that of its commentary in the Oriental Manuscripts Library at Madras. Both would show that the farce was composed by a Kavi called Bodhāyana. In one of these verses it is called *prataṣa* or old. They respectively run as follows :—

- (1) बोधायनकविरचितं बोधायतनं विमुक्तिशास्त्राणाम् । प्रहसनरत्नं प्रथं भवतु मुदं भगवदङ्गुलीयं नः ॥  
(2) बोधायनकविरचिते विख्याते भगवदङ्गुलीयकामिदिते । अभिनेट्टितिममोरे विमदानुपुना करोमि यथावार्त्तं ॥

The name of the commentator, too, seems to be unknown.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. XLIV I. S., *South Indian Inscriptions (Texts)*, Vol. IV, No. 136, plate III, line 6. In the transcript given here *m* has been put in place of *bh* evidently by an oversight.

<sup>3</sup> Page XVI.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. A. P. Banerji would take it to the 2nd century A. D. (*J. B. O. R. S.*, Vol. X, p. 90) but remembering the time when the *Mattavilāsa* was written, I doubt if we can take it back so far on the evidence of “religious animosity” or even archaic forms.



600 to 625 A. D. Further, it would appear that it was in all probability written after the *Mṛichchhakatikā*. The latter drama like this farce shows no disrespect towards Buddhism, although it is clearly a Brahmanical composition. The names of some of the *dramatis personæ* in this farce appear to have been taken from the *Mṛichchhakatikā*. The *ajjukā* or courtesan in it, for instance, is called Vasantasenā after the heroine of this drama, so also her servants.

That the *Mattavilāsaprahasana* was written by Mahendravarman is too well known to be proved. In any case the *Bhagavadajjuka* can very well be relegated to a period prior to that of Bāṇa. It begins with the *sūtradhāra* and does not mention the author either in the introduction or elsewhere. Its introduction is called *sthāpanā* and not *prastāvanā*, and it has no general prayer or the *Bharata-vākyam*, such as we see in later dramas. It uses old Prākṛit forms as is shown below. In addition to all this it has introduced a scene which is not permitted to be staged—I mean the death of the *Ajjukā*—by Bharata or the rhetoricians who followed his canons. Besides this, the ten species of plays enunciated in this piece are, to some extent, different from those mentioned by these rhetoricians. The *Vārehāmṛiga* and also the *Utsrishṭikā*, as Prof. Banerji has already noticed, do not appear to be known to them. Viśvanātha gives *Ullāpya* as one of the eighteen *uparūpakas* or minor dramas counting the *Nāṭaka* and the *Prakarāṇa* among the ten varieties of a *rūpaka* or drama. The *Bhagavadajjuka* names *Sallāpa* along with the *Prahasana* among the ten species which it considers to have come out of the *Nāṭaka* and the *Prakarāṇa* form of the drama. This would show that the author of the farce followed the laws of dramaturgy, which were somewhat different from those laid down in the current *Nāṭyaśāstra* of Bharata. In other words he followed a different school or system current in his time. That he could not have lived before Bharata is clear from the play itself, as I have remarked already. Besides, the non-observance of Bharata's rules does not necessarily indicate that the writer was older than one who observed those rules.

As to the argument based on the *Bharata-vākyam*, I might add that the Trivandrum plays are not uniform in this respect. Some of them have colophons or closing stanzas which are different from those in the rest. The so-called *Scapnanāṭaka* and the *Bālacharita* have *imām sāgaraparyantām*, etc., the *Pratiññāyauḡandharūyaṇa*, the *Avimāraka* and the *Abhishekanāṭaka* have *bhavantvarajaso gāvah*, etc., with *imām-āpi mahim*, etc., at the end. Three of these plays, namely, the *Karṇabhāra*, the *Chārudatta* and the play of the "unknown" name have no *Bharata-vākyam* at all. Besides, it is to be observed that the customary or usual phrase with which a Sanskrit *nāṭaka* would close is to be seen in some of these plays. The *Bālacharita*, for instance, has

दामोदरः—देवर्षे ! परितृष्टोऽस्मि । किं ते भूयः प्रियमुपहरामि । . . . .

भरतवाक्यं etc.

The *Avimāraka* has—

नारदः — कुन्तिभोज ! किमन्यत् ते प्रियमुपहरामि ।

कुन्तिभोजः — भगवान् यदि मे प्रसन्नः किमतः परमहमिच्छामि ।

भरतवाक्यं—भवन्स्वरजसो गावः etc.

and so on, showing that some of these plays have got a *Bharata-vākya*. Here it would be interesting to point out that the four *Bhāṣas* (*Chaturbhāṣī*) spoken of above, exhibit practically the same feature. The *Padmaprābhṛitaka* of Sūdraka and the *Pādatā-ḍitaka* of Śyāmīlaka have no *Bharatavākyaṃ*. The *Dhūrtaviṣasamvāda* of Īśvara-datta and the *Ubhayābhisārikā* of Vararuchi end in stanzas which are not dissimilar to some of the concluding verses of the Trivandrum *nāṭakas*, for the former has

इमामपि महो पातु राजा सागरमेखलाम् ॥

and the latter प्रीतिं प्राप्नोतु सर्वा चितिमधिकगुणां पालयन्नो नरेन्द्रः ॥

Therefore, the arguments adduced to prove that these plays were written before the *Bharatanāṭyaśāstra*<sup>1</sup> was composed fall flat on the ground having no force in them.

The second argument, which is, apparently, the mainstay of the Bhāsa theory seems to be the title of one of these plays. Although some of the manuscripts consulted by Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī gave the name of *Svapnanāṭakam* to the drama, yet it was rather presumed that the real designation was *Svapnavāsavadattā*. It has now been clearly shown that it is so because Bhojadeva in the 11th century and Śāradātanaya in the 12th century knew this *nāṭaka* by that name. Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī in his note which he has contributed to the last October number of the *Royal Asiatic Society's Journal*<sup>2</sup> (pp. 668-869) feels so jubilant over this discovery of his that he would now dispense with all the arguments as unnecessary and consider the question as finally settled. Dr. Thomas too has placed much reliance on this designation as noticed before. The futility of such a reasoning would be clear, if we remember what Professor Sylvain Lévi has stated in his highly interesting article which appeared last year in the *Journal Asiatique* and to which attention has now been drawn by Dr. Barnett in his note in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.<sup>3</sup> Rāmachandra and Guṇachandra in their *Nāṭyadarpaṇa* quote a verse from a *Svapnavāsavadattā* ascribed by them to Bhāsa, and describe the situation in which it occurs, "but neither of these can be traced in the Trivandrum play. Sāgaranandin in his *Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa* quotes a passage from a *Svapnavāsavadattā*, which does not agree with the Trivandrum text." Further, as I have shown below and as is recognised by Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī himself, Abhinavagupta quotes a verse in his commentary on the *Dhvanyāloka*, namely, *Dhvan-yālokalochana* from a *Svapnavāsavadattā*, which is not to be found in the Trivandrum *nāṭaka* of that name. It will be too much to expect from imagination that all these ancient authors were "grievously mistaken" in attributing their quotations to Bhāsa or the *Svapnavāsavadattā*. Obviously therefore, the Trivandrum play cannot be the *Svapnavāsavadattā* of Bhāsa and there must have been at least two dramas of that name. That one and the same name was given by Sanskrit authors to different works is demonstrated by the fact that there were at least two *Kalyāṇasaugandhikas*<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Some, however (see above, p. 13, foot note), hold that Bharata is older and the writer of the Trivandrum plays knew his *śāstra*. If it is so, the arguments based on the prologues or the concluding stanzas of these plays would be self-contradictory, and the circumstance that these dramas introduce scenes which are not allowed by Bharata will only support my view that their writer followed a different school or canon.

<sup>2</sup> 1924, p. 656.

<sup>3</sup> Barnett, *ibid*, p. 656. While correcting the proofs I found that this interesting point has been further investigated by Drs. V. S. Sukthankar (*J. B. B. R. A. S.*, 1925, pp. 126 ff) and L. D. Barnett (*J. R. A. S.*, 1925, p. 99), and Mr. C. R. Devadhar (*Annals of the Bhandarkar Institute*, 1924-25, part I, pp. 55 ff.). Dr. F.W. Thomas (*J. R. A. S.*, 1925, pp. 100-4) has endeavoured to meet the argument of Prof. Lévi but I do not think has succeeded in doing it.

and two *Bālācharitas*.<sup>1</sup> In this connection it looks interesting to observe that Śaktibhadra, who according to tradition was a contemporary of Śaṅkarāchārya the Great, composed a "kāvyā" which was called *Unmādavāsavadattā* and has not yet been found out. The term *unmāda* and *svapna* are almost synonymous. The name "Kāvya" is applied to both the *driśya* and *śravya* compositions. On this consideration one is tempted to think of the probable identity of the Trivandrum play with the work of Śaktibhadra, especially when he remembers that some of these *nāṭakas* admittedly bear more than one appellation and the fact that the manuscripts of the *Āścharyachūdāmani* are found along with those of some of the Trivandrum *nāṭakas*, as a reference to the catalogue of manuscripts in the Madras Library would show.<sup>2</sup>

To give some details in regard to what I have stated above, I may refer to Sarvānanda, an author of about the 12th century A. D., who in his commentary on the *Nāmalingānuśāsana* of Amarasiṅha gives clear evidence of Bhāsa's *Svapnavāsavadattā* being different from the Trivandrum play. This has already been noticed by Bhattanātha Svāmī,<sup>3</sup> who has given a very interesting quotation from a work called *Tāpasavatsarāja* in support of this inference. Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī, too, has recognised this evidence. He has, however, tried to explain it away by proposing another reading. Sarvānanda<sup>4</sup> says:—

त्रिविधः शुङ्गारो धर्मार्थकामभिन्नः । तत्राद्यो यथा नन्दयन्त्र्यां ब्राह्मणभोजनम् । द्वितीयः  
स्वदिशमात्मसात्कर्तुमुदयनस्य पद्मावतीपरिणयोऽर्थशुङ्गारः । तृतीयः स्वप्नवासवदत्ते तस्यैव वामव-  
दत्तापरिणयः कामशुङ्गारः ।

'The marriage of Padmāvati is an instance of *arthaśringāra* or selfish love, but that of Vāsavadattā as described in the *Svapnavāsavadattā* is a case of *kāmaśringāra*.' Now, the *Svapnavāsavadattā* of the Trivandrum series does not give an account of Vatsarāja's marriage with Vāsavadattā. Surely, then, the *Svapnavāsavadattā* referred to by Sarvānanda must have been a different work altogether. Here it might be said that Abhinavagupta's mention of the play in the words क्वचित् क्रोडा यथा स्वप्नवासवदत्तायां will favour the identification of the Trivandrum drama with the ancient *Svapnavāsavadattā* for, in the Trivandrum *nāṭaka* we do find Padmāvati sporting with a ball although there is not much of *krīḍā* in it. But this fact has to be considered along with others. The Trivandrum drama could have been written after the real *Svapnavāsavadattā* of Bhāsa, which is still to be found out. The story being the same there could be several versions of it, and an incident might have been described in some or all of them. On the other hand, it seems to be pretty certain that according to Abhinavagupta himself the Trivandrum play cannot be the *Svapnavāsavadattā*<sup>5</sup> to which he has referred, for it does not contain the quotation which he expressly states as taken from the latter. To illustrate the remark made by Ānandavardhana in the *Dhvanyāloka* that authors sometimes pay more attention to figures than to *rasa* or the sentiment in the composition—दृश्यन्ते च कवयोऽलङ्कारनिबन्धनैकरसा

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī, Introduction to the *Svapnavāsavadattā* p. xxiv.

<sup>2</sup> See Nos. 12492-12493.

<sup>3</sup> *Ind. Ant.* 1916, pp. 189-195.

<sup>4</sup> T. S. S. No. XXXVIII, p. 1. 147.

<sup>5</sup> In the same way the *Daridrachārudatta* alluded to by Abhinavagupta may not necessarily be the *Chārudatta* of the Trivandrum series.

अनपेक्षितरसाः प्रवन्धेषु— he in his *Dhvanyālokalochana*<sup>1</sup> quotes the *Scapnavāsavadattā* as  
यथा स्वप्नवासवदत्ताख्ये नाटके

संवितपद्मकपाटं नयनद्वारं स्वरूपतडनेन ? । उद्घाट्य सा प्रविष्टा हृदयमृहं मे नृपतनूजा ॥

But this verse, as has already been recognised by the editor and other scholars, does not occur in the Trivandrum play at all. One would make bold to say that it could not have occurred there, as it suits neither the *Vāsavadattā* nor the *Padmāvati* of that drama. Apparently, as Bhaṭṭanātha Svāmī has already remarked, it speaks of love which sprang up all at once at the first sight of a lady. *Vāsavadattā* as introduced in the Trivandrum play was wedded long before and *Padmāvati* was only offered to Vatsarāja, who did not woo her at all. This is shown by the answer which the nurse gave to *Vāsavadattā*<sup>2</sup>—

वासव — अटये ! सखं एव तेन वरिदा ।

धात्री — णहि णहि ! अणणपपोअणेण इह आअदस्स अमिजणविज्जाणवधोरुवं पेक्खिअ सखं एव सच्चाराण दिस्सा ।

This negative evidence is too strong to be lightly passed over and would go a long way to contradict the Bhāsa theory. Dr. Thomas in his note, alluded to above, says that the verse is found in the *Kāvyaṅvūsāna* of Hemachandra, with obviously correct opening *svaṅchīta*. But even in this form it is not to be met with in the play. Were it actually found there, I am afraid, that alone would not suffice for proving its authorship by Bhāsa. It could have stood there as a mere quotation from the ancient Bhāsa and as such it would merely show the Trivandrum drama as a later production.

I may note here that in summarising the *pūrva-paksha* I have referred to Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī's new discoveries under No. 6 or miscellaneous arguments, because they came to my notice at a late stage. They really form part of the second argument and I ought to have dealt with them there. Keeping in view what has already been stated by Professor Sylvain Lévi in his learned article "*Deux Nouveaux Traités de Dramaturgie Indienne*" in the *Journal Asiatique*<sup>3</sup> referred to above, I really wonder why so much importance has been given to the references found in the *Bhāvaprakāśa* and the *Śrīngāraprakāśa*. After all what do these references show? I doubt if they prove anything beyond this, that to the authors of the above-mentioned works, viz., Śāradātanaya and Bhojadeva, who according to Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī, flourished in the 12th and 11th centuries A. D. respectively, the Trivandrum play was known, as it is now, under the name of *Scapnavāsavadattā*. But how would it follow that the play was written by Bhāsa or that Bhāsa was the author of all the thirteen Trivandrum plays? I am glad that Dr. Barnett has already drawn the attention of scholars to Professor Lévi's article in his note which appears simultaneously<sup>4</sup> with that of Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī and I need not dilate on it here. I repeat what I have said above that the *Nāṭyadarpaṇa* of Rāmachandra and Guṇachandra and the *Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratnakośa* of Sāgaranandin make it quite clear that there must have been at least two plays of the name of *Scapnavāsavadattā*. Thus, the one by Bhāsa was different from the Trivandrum play. To me the 'adamantine' rock of Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī appears to

<sup>1</sup> P. 152, 3rd *Udyota*.

<sup>2</sup> P. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Oct.-Deer. 1912-3, pp. 193 ff. I am indebted to Dr. Sten Konow for his kindly drawing my attention to this important article.

<sup>4</sup> P. 656.

disintegrate faster than his old stones. Even without attributing plagiarism to the author of the Trivandrum plays one can easily explain the occurrence of identical *ślokas* in the works of two different authors. Pithy and telling utterances often assume the form of *subhāshitas* whose frequent use tends to cause an oblivion of their authors, rendering them a common property, which anybody might use as he liked. If the renowned Bhāsa's sporadic pieces acquired that merit, it would be no wonder to find them repeated in later works. In the matter of characters, too, it is an easy thing for a later writer to borrow from an earlier one. Thus the mere coincidence of a few characters would not warrant the conclusion that of such works the author was one and the same.

*Daridrachārudatta* is no doubt mentioned by Abhinavagupta, but how are we to assume the identity of it with the *Chārudatta* of the Trivandrum series, when none of the known manuscripts of the play give that name to it? That Vāmana quoted the verse *Śarachchhaśānka-gaureṇa*, etc., which occurs in the fourth act of the Trivandrum play, or the passage *yo bhārtripiṇḍasya kṛite na yudhyet*, which is the fourth *pāda* of a certain *śloka* in the *Pratijñāyugandharāyaṇa*, or the verse *yāsām balir-bhavati*, etc., which is to be found in the piece called *Chārudatta* and that a part of the stanza *limpatīva tamoṅgāni*,<sup>1</sup> etc., occurring in the *Bālacharita* and the *Chārudatta* of the Trivandrum series, is to be found in the *Kāvyaḍarśa* of Daṇḍin, can only show the priority of these works to Vāmana or Daṇḍin, of course taking it for granted that these quotations are from these very works. They cannot demonstrate the authorship of the works, as these authorities do not ascribe them to Bhāsa. Most of these quotations are proverbial in nature, and it goes without saying that in ancient India there was a large stock of current sentences and stanzas on which different authors could draw without incurring the charge of plagiarism.

In the same way I doubt if any special importance can be given to what Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī calls Bhāmaha's review in the *Kāvyaḍaṅkāra* or *Bhāmahaḍaṅkāra*. The story of Vatsarāja has been a very popular theme and several ancient Sanskrit writers have written it in their own ways. Bhāmaha makes no mention of Bhāsa or any other *kavi*, while illustrating the rhetorical blemish called *Nyāya-virodha*. Why to think of a particular poet then? The verse—

इतीऽनेन मम भ्राता मम पुत्रः पिता मम ।

मातुलो भागिनेयश्च रुषा संख्यचेतसः ॥ *Bhāmahaḍaṅkāra*, IV, 44.

no doubt has the same meaning, which a sentence in the play named *Pratijñāyugandharāyaṇa* has, at least partly,<sup>2</sup> but on what grounds are we to suppose that Bhāmaha was rendering the Prākṛit speech into Sanskrit? Why not think of another work which gave it in Sanskrit? Or let us take it for granted that he had the Trivandrum play or its author in view when he said—

नमोऽस्तु तेभ्यो विद्वद्भ्यो येऽभिप्रायं कवेरिमम् ।

शास्त्रलोकावपास्यैव नयन्ति नयवेदिनः ॥ IV. 46.

<sup>1</sup> We should remember that this stanza is ascribed either to Vikramāditya or to both Menṭha and Vikramāditya but not to Bhāsa in any of the known anthologies.

<sup>2</sup> Hamsaka's speech, p. 13, rather differs, for it has—

अथैव मम भ्राता इदी, अथैव मम पिता,

अथैव मम सुदी मम वयस्य पि ।

The inference which can be safely drawn under these circumstances is that he must be posterior to, if not a contemporary of that author, for contemporary writers are often found criticising each other. Bhāmaha cannot be so old as some scholars believe him to be. I doubt if he can be far removed from Daṇḍin. He might have been his contemporary or lived shortly before him. The *Kāvyaḍarśa* itself would lead us to such an inference for, while enunciating the *doshas* in a composition, it mentions only ten out of the eleven named by Bhāmaha<sup>1</sup> and does not consider the eleventh to be a *dosha* necessarily, remarking<sup>2</sup> that it is difficult to see if it is a blemish at all. There can be no doubt that Daṇḍin is criticising Bhāmaha unless, of course, both of these rhetoricians took the two verses *apārtham* etc., from some older work. Both the works, namely, the *Kāvyaḍarśa* and the *Kāvyaḍarśa*, are inter-connected and must have been composed probably about the same time or in the 6th if not the 7th century A.D.

Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī has endeavoured to carry the Trivandrum plays to about the 4th century B.C. on the supposition that one of them, namely, the *Pratijñāyauḡandharāyaṇa*, has been quoted by Chāṇakya in his now well-known work, the *Arthasūtra*. The stanza *navam śarāvam*, like the other one, *i.e.*, *yān yajña-saṅghais-tapasā* etc., has apparently, a proverbial or sententious tenor, and must be regarded as a *subhāshita*. Chāṇakya quoted it along with a *Vedic* sentence showing thereby that he regarded it as equally authoritative. There is nothing to show that it is not a quotation in the Trivandrum play even<sup>3</sup> if it is taken to be Bhāsa's. Let us suppose for the sake of argument that all these sayings were composed by Bhāsa himself. Can their occurrence in these works prove that they were written by Bhāsa? I doubt if it can. Take the case of a work whose author is known to us without any doubt. I mean the farce called *Mattavilāsaprahasana*. This contains the verse<sup>4</sup> (with a slight change)—

पेया सुरा प्रियतमामुखमोक्षणीयं  
 ग्राह्यः स्वभावललितो विकटश्च वेपः ।  
 वेनेदमीदृशमदृश्यत मोक्षवर्त्म  
 दीर्घायुरस्तु भगवान्म पिनाकपाणिः ॥

which, on the authority of Somadeva's *Yaśastilaka*,<sup>5</sup> was composed by Bhasa. Will this fact ascribe the authorship of the farce to Bhāsa? Fortunately, we know its author! Let us take another instance. The *sūtras* of Chāṇakya<sup>6</sup> contain two aphorisms—

न समाधिः स्त्रीषु लोकज्ञता च ।      and  
 दारिद्र्यं खलु पुरुषस्य जीवितं मरणम् ।

<sup>1</sup> IV, 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> III, 125-127.

<sup>3</sup> Here it will be interesting to make mention of the important pronouncement made by Mr. Fāmakrishṇa Kavi in the third session of the All-India Oriental Conference at Madras, 1924 (see *Summary of papers*, page iv), that this verse has been identified as a quotation from the *Maṇṣūti*.

<sup>4</sup> P. 7, V. 7.

<sup>5</sup> P. Peterson's 2nd report, p. 46, referred to in the introduction of the *Subhāshitāvalī* of Vallabhadeva Bombay, E. S. P., p. 82.

<sup>6</sup> K. Shāma Śāstrī's revised (1919) edition of the *Kauṣīlyam Arthasūtram*, p. 433, nos. 361 and 257.

One of these is found in the *Āscharyachūdāmaṇi* of Śaktibhadra and the other in the *Chārudatta* of the Trivandrum series. Possibly they may be quotations from the *Arthaśāstra* and analogy would lead us to surmise that the stanza *navam śarāvam, etc.*, was similarly quoted from the same work. Slight discrepancies in these quotations when compared with the published texts are immaterial<sup>1</sup> for, as a rule, such proverbial sayings are usually quoted from memory.<sup>2</sup>

The question of similarity in structure may further be examined here to see how far the identity of expressions or words can be relied upon in settling the authorship of a work. First, I shall compare the *Āscharyachūdāmaṇi* with some of the Trivandrum plays. How it resembles the latter so far as its prelude is concerned I have shown above.

*Abhishekanāṭaka.*

Pages 20-21.

नेपथ्यं.

जयतु देवः । जयतु लङ्केश्वरः । जयतु स्वामी  
जयतु महाराजः । दशनाडिकाः पूर्णाः । अतिक्रामति  
स्नानवेला । इत इतो महाराजः ।

निष्क्रान्तः सपरिवारः

(Page 20)

रावणः—ननु देवि । इ ह इ, अहो पति-  
व्रतायास्तेजः ।

(Page 15)

ततः प्रविशति हनुमान् अङ्गुलीयकहस्तः

हनु०—अहो रावणभवनस्य विन्ध्यासः ।

(Page 18)

Rāvaṇa while thinking of Sītā talks of the moon in both the plays.

(Page 22)

Sītā feels abashed (*vrīḍitā*) as she does in the *Āscharyachūdāmaṇi*.

(Page 23)

सीता—भद्र कष्टं तुम्हेहि अय्यउत्तम सङ्गमां  
जादो ।

हनु०—भवति अयतां

सीता—अहो अशरणा क्व इत्यरा etc.

*Āscharyachūdāmaṇi.*

Act V under identical circumstances has—

नेपथ्यं.

जयतु स्वामी, जयतु लङ्केश्वरः, जयतु भद्रमुखः,  
जयतु, दशनाडिकाः पूर्णाः । अतिक्रामति  
स्नानवेला—इत इतो महाराजः ।  
निष्क्रान्तो रावणस्यपरिवारः ।

Act V.

रावणः—ननु देवि ।

चारित्र्यं तव किमिदं पतिव्रतायाः ।

Act VI.

ततः प्रविशति हनुमान् अङ्गुलीयकहस्तः

हनु०—अहो रावणनगरस्य परा लक्ष्मीः ।

सीता—कदमेण उपायेण अय्यउत्तेण संसर्गो  
जादो ।

हनु०—शृणोतु स्वामिनो ।

सीता—अहो अशरणा क्व इत्यरा etc.

<sup>1</sup> The *sūtra* न समाधिः etc., as published by Mr. Shāma Śāstri, has लोकाग्रता च but Śaktibhadra gives लोकाग्रः. The other sentence in the published text reads 'दारिद्र्यं खलु पुरुषस्य जीवितं मरणं' but in the *Chārudatta* it stands as दारिद्र्यं खलु नाम मनस्विनः पुरुषस्य लोकाग्रं मरणम् ।

<sup>2</sup> In this connection it will not be out of place to say that the stanza प्ररभ्यते विप्रमद्य नौचे; etc., is to be found in the *Mudrārākshasa*, but in the *Dakṣarūpavaloka* it has been ascribed to Bhartṛihari. Could we, then, ascribe the *Mudrārākshasa* to Bhartṛihari?

- (Page 24) Act VI.  
सीता— ... अय्यउत्तो जह सोअपरवसो ण  
होई, तह मे उत्तन्तं भणेहि । सीता— अय्यउत्तो जह सोअपरवसो ण  
होई, तह मे पवुत्तं तह भणेहि ।
- (Page 54) Act V.  
सीता— ...सव्वदा इस्सरा सन्तिं करन्तु । सीता—सव्वदा इस्सरा सन्तिं करन्तु ।
- (Page 69) रामः—हत्वा रावणमाहवे etc. रामः—हत्वा बालिनमाहवे etc.
- (Page 70) Act VII.  
लक्ष्मणः—आचर्यमाचर्यम् । लक्ष्मणः—आचर्यमाचर्यम् ।  
रामः—लक्ष्मण ! अस्याः पतिव्रतायाश्चन्द्र- रामः—लक्ष्मण ! अस्याः पतिव्रतायाश्चन्द्र-  
मनुतिष्ठ । मनुतिष्ठ ।  
लक्ष्मणः—यदाज्ञापयत्यार्यः । लक्ष्मणः—यदाज्ञापयत्यार्यः ।
- (Page 72) नेपथ्ये दिव्यगन्धर्वा गायन्ति नेपथ्ये दिव्यगन्धर्वा गायन्ति ।  
The *gāna* is identical in ideas in both.
- (Page 72) वाटं प्रथमः कल्पः and अहो तु खलु are very common words.  
रामः—जानतापि च वेदेद्याः etc., etc. रामः - The verse—  
शङ्कितामि मया देवि ! धर्मशीलापि जानको ।  
विश्वस्यन्ते कथं शेषा योषितः प्रोषिताः प्रियैः ॥  
is not dissimilar in idea.
- (Page 75) Act VII.  
अग्निः—भद्रमुख । किं ते भूयः प्रियसुपहरामि । नारदः—भद्रमुख । किं ते भूयः प्रियसुप-  
हरामि ।  
रामः—किमतः परमहमिच्छामि— रामः— किमतः परमहमिच्छामि—  
भरतवाक्यम् भरतवाक्यम्

*Pratiññāyāngandharāyaṇa and Āścharyachūḍāmaṇi*

*Pratiññā°.*

*Āścharya°.*

(Page 18)

Act II.

प्रतीहारी—वत्तिस्सं

सीता—वत्तिस्सं

(M. M. Gaṇapati Śāstrī renders it<sup>1</sup> by अहोश्यामि and the meaning fits in the speech of Sītā as well.)

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Act III.

भर्तृपिण्डस्य कृते न युध्येत्

अहो बलवान् भर्तृपिण्डः

<sup>1</sup> The root seems to be the same which we find in the Western Panjābi as in the verse *ch jāḍāde ghatta ke karān kamālī pō girā mere ghattē pharānī nī* of the *Hir* of Wārāshāh, p. 213 (Lahore ed.).



(Pages 63, 65)

Act VII

उमौ—उस्मरह उस्मरह अय्या ! उस्मरह उस्मरह उस्मरह अय्या उस्मरह ।

Closing sentences भद्रमुख etc., are similar in both.

*Avimāra**Āscharyachūdāmaṇi*

(Page 13)

जयतु स्वामी, जयतु महाराजः । दश(ना)क्रिकाः जयतु स्वामी, जयतु लङ्केश्वरः . . . . . दश-  
पूर्णाः । ... अतिक्रामति स्नानवेला । नाडिकाः पूर्णाः । अतिक्रामति स्नानवेला ।

*Pratimānātaka* and *Āscharyachūdāmaṇi*

(Page 85)

सीता—अय्यउत्त परित्ताआहि परित्ताआहि । सीता—अय्यउत्त परित्ताआहि परित्ताआहि

(Page 86)

सीता—सत्तोसि सीता—सत्तोसि

(Page 87)

Compare the description of Jaṭāyu's beak in both and तिष्ठेदानीम्

(Page 86)

रावणः—हृहृह । अही पतिव्रतायास्तेजः । रावणः—चारित्रं तव किं पतिव्रतायाः etc.

(Page 99)

Deiŕence of Kaikeyī is similar in both—(Act I in the *Āscharyachūdāmaṇi*)

The Trivandrum *Svapnavāsavadattā* and the *Āscharyachūdāmaṇi*

- i. The speech of the *sūtradhāra* in both is rather identical.
- ii. The use of the word कम्ब in the first stanza of the Trivandrum play and not far from about the commencement of the *Āscharyachūdāmaṇi*.
- iii. The *Svapnavāsavadattā* (pp. 1-2) and the *Āscharyachūdāmaṇi* (Act VII) give उस्मरह उस्मरह अय्या उस्मरह ।
- iv. On page 10 of the former and in Act III of the latter we have—

ब्रह्मचारी - अय कस्मिन् प्रदेशे विद्यमयिष्ये । अभितस्तपोवनेन भवितव्यं तयाहि ।

and ऋषिकुमारः—क नु खलु तीर्थयात्रायाम् विगमयामि—अत्रासन्नेन आयमेण भवितव्यं तयाहि ।

respectively.

- v. Similarly, वामवदन्ता—अहो अकरुणा खु इस्मरा in the one (pp. 27 and 62) and सीता—अहो अकरुणा खु इस्मरा etc. (Act IV) in the other.

vi. वाटम् । प्रथमः कल्पः is very common.

These are a few instances which I have picked up from the play of Śaktibhadra and some Trivandrum *nāṭakas*. I am sure more will be found out. Arguing like Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstri, can we not ascribe the Trivandrum plays to Śaktibhadra, ignoring for argument's sake the mention of his name in the prologue? The argument based on the merits or the intensity of *rāsa* and the exquisite flow of language in these plays cannot prove the authorship of Bhāsa, though it can show that their writer was a dramatist of a high order. At the same time one has to remember that the question of

the merit of a work is sometimes a matter of opinion as is so very nicely shown in the case of Milton, who preferred his *Paradise Regained* to the *Paradise Lost*, although the latter is usually considered to be far superior to the former. Had it not been so, could the immortal *Śākuntala* or the *Uttaravāmacharita* be considered inferior to these plays? The merits for which the Trivandrum dramas are considered as older than Kālidāsa have not been pointed out to us. What is stated on the other hand is that the author of the Trivandrum dramas has drawn his material directly from the epics and there are expressions in those plays which are found in the works of Kālidāsa, who must have taken them from those plays. It appears that while bringing in such an argument the supporters of the Bhāsa theory are to a large extent influenced by the supposition that these works are Bhāsa's and that an ancient work must be of great merit. Comparatively modern writers have also drawn their material directly from the epics. Indian writers who select mythical or say divine subjects have to draw the material from these sources, and for the matter of that we cannot say that Kālidāsa did not do so. Writers like Kshemendra did the same thing. The author of the *Āscharyachūḍāmani*, alluded to above, must have done so. Why to talk of these old writers? If I write a piece now and get my material from the Vedas, my composition cannot be relegated to the hoary past on that account. This sort of reasoning does not carry conviction home. Similarity of ideas or expressions does not necessarily indicate indebtedness of one author to another. There is no reason why a person cannot argue as does another quite independently. Similar ideas and expressions are no doubt found in the works of Kālidāsa and these plays, still, it does not stand to reason to say that Kālidāsa derived them from these works or any other author either out of respect or otherwise. It is said that Kālidāsa has himself praised Bhāsa and might have used his works as a grateful tribute to his genius. I doubt if it can be considered to be a tribute at all, when we remember how Indian poets compare "borrowing" to eating *vāntam*. To mention the name of a predecessor in respectful terms does not necessarily imply borrowing. An original writer will shun such a course and a poet of the type of Kālidāsa whether he hailed from India, Europe or elsewhere could not have had recourse to such a practice. We should not forget at the same time that the priority of the Trivandrum pieces to Kālidāsa is yet to be established, and one can very well argue in the opposite way, viz., that the author of these works was indebted to Kālidāsa. For my own part I will not attach any great weight to the similarity of this kind in such cases. Identical expressions or similar ideas are to be met with in the Vedas and the Bible leaving aside the Rāmāyaṇa and the Iliad, but I doubt if we could go so far as to consider the latter to be indebted to the former or *vice versā* in any way. While human heart remains unaltered it is the brain that develops. This is, I think, the reason why a poet who writes from the core of his heart remains ever fresh and up-to-date, whatever be his age. The outpourings of a true heart will not much differ whoever the writer may be. Accordingly, we have to consider the question of the age of a work irrespective of such resemblances.

Much capital has been made out of the so-called archaisms or solecisms (*ārsha-prayogas*), noticed in the Trivandrum *nāṭakas*. It is said that many archaic forms, which are found in these plays and are mostly tabulated in the form of an appendix attached to the *Pratimānāṭaka*, violate the rules of Pāṇini, and, therefore these

*nāṭakas* must have come into existence before the great grammarian lived. Likewise, it is affirmed that the Prākṛit of these plays is archaic and, consequently, they must have been composed during a very remote antiquity. Some of the defenders of the Bhāsa theory place these works before, while others after Aśvaghoṣa. Let us now examine how far this argument holds good. The occurrence of irregular or *apāṇiniya* forms can afford no proof of the age of a work. Students of Indian epigraphy are aware of numerous documents which contain such forms but undoubtedly belong to a very late period. *Ārsha* forms are found not only in the *Rāmāyaṇa* or the *Mahābhārata*, but in the epics which are certainly not so old; nay, we find them in the works<sup>1</sup> of Kālidāsa as well as other Sanskrit writers. Such forms, we know, have mostly been explained by Śaraṇadeva in his very learned work entitled *Durghaṭavṛitti*.<sup>2</sup> Mallinātha has also endeavoured to justify such formations by bringing them under Pāṇini's rules. Even Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī himself has done so at least in one instance, I mean in the use of *lyap* in *gṛihya chāpam kareṇa*.<sup>3</sup> We know of cases where writers have deliberately flouted Pāṇini. For instance, the locative plural of *pumān* is *pumsu* according to Pāṇini, but Anubhūtiśvarūpāchārya in his grammar named *Sārasvatam* makes it *pumkshu*. The same is the case with the word *viśrāma* which is not unoften used for *viśrama*. I need not multiply examples here, when they are so well collected in the *Durghaṭavṛitti*. Some of the manuscripts are less scrupulously preserved than others and we are not in possession of the original manuscripts of the plays. At times wrong forms are used by ignorant copyists and sometimes more familiar forms are substituted in place of old and unfamiliar ones. We have also to remember that the extant books on Prākṛit grammar are comparatively late works, and the rules laid down in them can only be used with the utmost caution for determining the age of any work with their aid. Grammar can very well be considered to be a good criterion for judging the age of a composition, but wrong or ungrammatical formations cannot. Poetic license is no criterion of age. Nor does it reflect well on the writer. Unless these archaic formations noticed in the Trivandrum plays are proved to be in agreement with the rules of grammar written before Pāṇini, their occurrence will form no ground for testifying to their antiquity, nor will they suffice to prove the authorship of Bhāsa. This is how the first part of the argument stands.

Now let us examine the second on the use of old Prākṛit forms. I agree with Dr. Barnett in thinking that the Southern tradition presents *nāṭakas* in a condition showing Prākṛit forms which are more archaic than those found in the Northern tradition. Let us work out this assertion in detail here.

Scholars like Printz,<sup>4</sup> V. Lesny,<sup>5</sup> V. S. Sukthankar<sup>6</sup> and others opine that the Prākṛit used in these plays exhibits old forms which are met with in ancient works both inscriptional and literary; but not in comparatively late compositions like the works

<sup>1</sup> For example, in *Raghuvamśā*, XIX-23, and *Kumārāsambhava*, I. 35.

<sup>2</sup> T. S. S. No. VI.

<sup>3</sup> *Dūtaghaṭakācha*, T. S. S. No. XXII, p. 59.

<sup>4</sup> W. Printz: *Bhāsa's Prākṛit* (Frankfurt A. M., 1921).

<sup>5</sup> *Die Entwicklungsstufe des Prākṛits in Bhāsa's Dramen und das Zeitalter Bhāsa's in the Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 72 Band. Leipzig, 1918, pp. 203 ff.

<sup>6</sup> *American Or. Jour.*, 40, 1920, pp. 248 ff.

of Kālidāsa and others. Therefore, it must be older and, consequently, these plays which are partly couched in it must be assigned to a great age, at any rate to the early centuries of the Christian era, if not to a still earlier epoch. These are some of the archaisms in the Prākṛit of these plays as noticed by them.

i. *Amhāam* (*asmākam*); ii. *ḍissa* (*ḍriśya*); iii. *vaam*(*vayam*); iv. use of the root *arh* without the *svarabhakti* or epenthetic vowel; v. *ahaka* (*aham*, later *hake*, *hage* and *aham*); vi. *āma* as affirmative particle; vii. *karia* (*kṛivā*, later *kadua*); viii. *kissa*, *kiśśa* (*kasya* but used in ablative sense for *kasmāt*); ix. *khu* (*khalu*); x. *tava* (*tava*, later *tuha*, etc.); xi. *tuvam* (*tvam*, later *tuvam*).

It will look rather strange in the eyes of those scholars if I said that almost all these old forms are to be seen in the *Āscharyachūḍāmaṇi* of Śaktibhadra. I am sorry the book has not yet been fully published.<sup>1</sup> I can, therefore, only refer to the pages of the copy which I had an occasion to examine. But that will hardly be more useful than my assertion that these forms are to be seen in this play as well.<sup>2</sup> Should we, then, on the strength of this fact, assign the play to the same period to which the Trivandrum *nāṭakas* have been ascribed? Though the date of Śaktibhadra is not definitely known, still I doubt if any scholar would think of placing him in that period or some centuries before the Christian era! Let us leave him alone for the present till his date is determined and see the *Prākṛit* in the works whose authorship and time are known without any doubt. I take up the plays which have been published in the very Trivandrum series and under the editorship of Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī himself. In addition to those I have just now noted, the chief peculiarities of the Trivandrum plays as far as their Prākṛit is concerned are<sup>3</sup> perhaps these: (1) usual dropping of *k*, *g*, *ch*, *ḡ*, *t*, *d*, *p*, *b*, *v*, and *y* between vowels and occasional retention; (2) occasional change of *y* into *ḡ* but usual retention of it; (3) shortening of the vowel and doubling of the consonant in *evam*, etc.; (4) change of *ry* into *yy* in contrast with Kālidāsa's changing it into *ḡḡ*, and so on. If we examine the Prākṛit of these plays with that of the *Pradyumnābhyudaya*,<sup>4</sup> the *Subhadrādhanañjaya*,<sup>5</sup> the *Tapatīsamvarana*,<sup>6</sup> the *Nāgānanda*<sup>7</sup> or the *Mattavilāsaprahasana* as published in the south we shall find Prākṛit forms in them which display the same features. The *Pradyumnābhyudaya* supplies several instances of (1), as do the other plays which I have just named, and I need not refer to them. For (2), see *Pradyumnābhyudaya*, p. 2, *Subhadrādhanañjaya*, pp. 60, 70, *Tapatīsamvarana*, pp. 36, 14, 33, 67, *Nāgānanda*, p. 13, *Mattavilāsa*, pp. 1, 3, etc. For (3) com-

<sup>1</sup> For manuscripts of this play see the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras*, pp. 8380-82. It is particularly noteworthy that the manuscripts of this play are found along with some of those of the 13 Trivandrum plays as has been noted above.

<sup>2</sup> Archaic forms are used especially in the speech of Śūrpanakhā and also Sītā. In addition to *amhāam* we have *tumhāam* and *tumhehi*. The play gives *arhadī* and uses *aham* itself several times in the speech of Śūrpanakhā and Sītā. One of the supporters of the Bhāsa theory, namely, M. M. Haraprasād Shāstrī (see Introduction to the *Pratimānāṭaka*), says that this word *āma* is never used by later poets but is found only in old Pāli. This affirmative particle not only occurs in the *Āscharyachūḍāmaṇi*, but other plays as well, as I have shown below. Besides, is it not the very particle which we hear in Tamil every day? The play gives *tuvam* and also *tuvam*. The two forms *vaam* and *karia* I have not seen in the *Āscharyachūḍāmaṇi*, but similar forms occur in the *Subhadrādhanañjaya* and the *Tapatīsamvarana* etc. as shown in the sequel.

<sup>3</sup> A. Banerji Śāstrī, *J. R. A. S.*, 1921, p. 372.

<sup>4</sup> T. S. S. No. VIII.

<sup>5</sup> T. S. S. No. XI.

<sup>6</sup> T. S. S. No. XII.

<sup>7</sup> T. S. S. No. LIX.

pare *Pradyumnā*°, pp. 10 and 33, *Subhadrā*°, pp. 15; 145, *Tapatī*°, pp. 14, 61, *Nāgā*°, pp. 24, 24, 28, 71, etc., and *Mattavi*°, p. 2. For (4) see *Pradyumnā*°, p. 13, *Subhadrā*°, p. 70, *Tapatī*°, p. 3, *Nāgā*°, p. 13, and *Matta*°, pp. 1, 3.

Some other old forms in these plays may also be mentioned here. For *khu* see *Pradyumnā*°, pp. 10, 11, 24, *Subhadrā*°, pp. 63, 170, etc., *Tapatī*°, pp. 8, 33, 39, etc., *Nāgā*°, pp. 24, 34, etc., and *Matta*°, pp. 2, 6, 9, etc. For forms like *kissa* see *Subhadrā*°, pp. 17, 63, 83, 97, 131, 135, *Tapatī*°, pp. 9, 47, 74, etc., *Nāgā*°, pp. 66, 71, 88, and *Matta*°, p. 27. For *āma* see *Pradyumnā*°, p. 33, *Subhadrā*°, p. 57, *Tapatī*°, p. 104, etc. For *amhāam* see *Subhadrā*°, pp. 33, 34, *Matta*°, pp. 9, 19, 24. For forms like *karia* see *Tapatī*°, pp. 42, 8, 103, *Subhadrā*°, p. 168, *Nāgā*°, pp. 88, 124. For *mhi* see *Subhadrā*°, p. 34; *Nāgā*°, p. 80, *Matta*°, p. 28. For *aham* and *ahake* see *Pradyumnā*°, p. 3, *Tapatī*°, pp. 8, 55, 143, *Nāgā*°, p. 71.

I may go on multiplying instances, but the result will be the same. The occurrence of these forms will not prove that these works, too, should be relegated to such a high antiquity<sup>1</sup>. They were all written after Kālidāsa, whatever be their exact date.

Yet another work may be put up to show the hollowness of this argument. It is the *Bhagavadajjuka* which has been referred to above. Here, too, we observe similar old Prākṛit forms. To mention a few of the typical ones as selected by some of the supporters of the Bhāsa theory. This piece uses both *amhāam* and *amhānam*. The former form occurs in the speech of the Vaidya who went to treat the courtesan (page xxii) and the latter in that of Śāṅḍilya (p. iiiii). So also *tuvam* (p. viii) and *tumam* (p. xvi) and *kissa* used in the sense of *kasmāt* (p. iv). *Khu* is usually put for *khalu* without reduplication. The play gives *tava* and *tuvam* for the later forms *tujjha* or *tumha* and *tuman* as at pages v, and viii, and employs both *evam* (p. v) and *evvam* (p. viii). Likewise we have *aham* for *ahakam* and *ahake*, and so on. Both old and later forms are used in this work, still it cannot be relegated to the epoch to which the Trivandrum plays are ascribed by most of the adherents of the Bhāsa theory.

A special notice appears to be called for regarding the use of some accusative plurals in *āni* belonging to *a*-stems on which Dr. Thomas<sup>2</sup> has laid so much stress. I need only refer to the note of Dr. L. D. Barnett in the October (1924) issue of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*<sup>3</sup> without recapitulating what he has stated there. Forms like *kusumāni* or *devāni* occurring in certain compositions cannot prove that the latter were written before or about the time of Aśoka, for they are to be met with in the works which were decidedly written later. I have already shown in connection with the use of other forms how unsafe it is to adduce them as evidences of great age. All these *nāṭakas*, leaving aside, for the present, the *Bhagavadajjuka*, were written after Kālidāsa, whatever their exact date may be. Their Prākṛit also contains earlier or archaic forms but they are comparatively late compositions. Therefore, to assign the Trivandrum *nāṭakas* to such a high antiquity as the 3rd or 4th century B.C. to 3rd or 4th century A. D. on the evidence of some old Prākṛit<sup>4</sup> formations would be unreason-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Barnett, *J. R. A. S.*, 1921, pp. 587-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 1924, p. 449 f.

<sup>3</sup> p. 655.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Sukthankar, in his very informing notes which he has recently contributed to the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1925, April issue), has, I now find, thoroughly examined the whole of the Prākṛit question and appears to have admitted (page 132), quite in a genuine scholarly spirit, I would say, that in this respect, at least, his expectations have not been realized.

able. Thus, the argument based on the archaic forms of Sanskrit as well as Prakṛit also falls to the ground.

After examining these main points so often adduced in favour of the Bhāsa theory, let us now consider another important assertion in this connection. The defenders of this theory hold that the *Mṛichchhakatikā* depends on the Trivandrum play named *Chārudatta* and is only an amplification of it. They seem to have taken it for granted that it is so. One would wonder if they are led to this belief by the consideration of the small size of the *Chārudatta* as compared with that of the *Mṛichchhakatikā*. That both these plays are connected with each other cannot be denied. The four acts of which the Trivandrum play consists are practically identical with the first few acts of the *Mṛichchhakatikā*. There can be no doubt that the author of the one has copied or taken them from the other. The *Chārudatta* is believed to be the source, and to make the author of the *Mṛichchhakatikā* the borrower, it is affirmed that the Trivandrum edition of the *Chārudatta* presents only an incomplete text of the play, the continuation<sup>1</sup> of which still lies hidden somewhere, possibly in the south. It is further declared that some of the incidents mentioned in the *Mṛichchhakatikā* are not connected with the real plot and are to be treated as mere cumbersome narratives. This practically means that the author of the *Mṛichchhakatikā* quietly incorporated the whole of the play or the four acts of it ascribing the same to himself. The first question which a curious mind would ask in such a case would be how is it that a poet who was capable of composing six more acts failed to re-write in his own words the first four acts of the play. One would further ask if there is a parallel case in the world showing a plagiarism of this sort.<sup>2</sup> We know of sayings like *Kavir-vāntam samaśnute*, but cannot forget what Bhāmaha has said<sup>3</sup>—

मुख्यस्तावदयं न्यायी यत्स्वशक्त्या प्रवर्तते ।

अन्ये सारस्वता नाम सन्त्यन्योक्तानुवादिनः ॥

Poets or poetasters may borrow consciously or unconsciously from other writers, but they would hesitate to insert bodily the work of another in their own compositions, if they are worth the name, for they can express the story or the ideas in their own words as far as possible. In the *Mṛichchhakatikā*, however, there is no *anyoktānuvāda* or translation, but wholesale incorporation. The prologue of this play speaks of the author in terms of high praise for, it says that he was the foremost of Vedic scholars and a pious man. Could *tapas* allow of such acts? Well, it may be said that he did not plagiarise, but, as Dr. Charpentier has stated in his note on the Hindu drama,<sup>4</sup> only added the last five *āṅkas*, or at least the greater part of them “exhibiting the efficacy of righteous conduct, villainy of law, the temperament of the wicked and the inevitable-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Sukthankar in his article in the *Journal of the Mythic Society of Bangalore*, Vol. IX, 1919, pp. 188 ff., has worked out this point at some length and tried to show that the *Chārudatta* is an incomplete play, and so it is!

<sup>2</sup> Here I am reminded of Washington Irving's reverie given in his *Sketch Book* regarding the art of book-making. Are we to think that, as Bhāsa's works were unknown at the time, the writer of the *Mṛichchhakatikā* appropriated his work to himself with no fear of detection?

<sup>3</sup> See Introduction to *Pratimānātaka*, p. xvi.

<sup>4</sup> *J. R. A. S.* 1923, 99, 602, 6.

ness of fate." In support of guesses like these it is added that a courteous poet, who would not accuse king Śūdraka of plagiarism—a thing scarcely consistent with the high praise bestowed upon him—could, perhaps, not tell us in a clearer way what did, in reality, belong to him and what did not. If it were a fact, the case would be an unique one! Authors, as far as I am aware, have continued the works of other writers, but have not appropriated them to themselves. The *Kādambarī* and the *Daśakumāracharita* were in all probability continued only in the name of the original authors. That the *Chārudatta* is only a part of a "fuller" work from which it has been culled out will become clear if we examine it closely and compare it with the *Mṛichchhakatikā*. It has no *nāndī* nor a *Bharata-vākyaṃ*. Besides, we do not find in it the words like *ayi kinnu khalu*, etc., which form the chief characteristics of the Trivandrum plays. In construction it does not seem to be identical with the rest. On what grounds then has it been ascribed to Bhāsa? The circumstance that a manuscript of the piece was found along with the other plays cannot prove it, though, apparently, it has gone a long way to influence the view. In my opinion the *Chārudatta* and the *Mṛichchhakatikā* are not different works, and the former is only a part of the latter just as the *Mantrāṅka-nāṭaka*<sup>1</sup> is a part of the *Pratiññāyugandharāyaṇa* of this very series although the Chākyars consider it to be a distinct drama. Differences to be noticed in it are rather immaterial, and are attributable to local causes. I would call the *Chārudatta* a different recension of the first few acts of the *Mṛichchhakatikā*. To write down the name of the hero and the heroine or call them *nāyaka* and *ganikā* matters little, as far as the actual representation on the stage is concerned. Sometimes, as in the case of Jīmūtavāhana in the *Nāgānanda*, only *Nāyaka* is put down in place of the name of the hero. The difference in the names of Śarvilaka and Sajjalaka does not count for much. It is not impossible that the change is due to an error on the part of some copyist. The omission of the servants' names (*Karṇapūraka* and *Radanikā*) makes no difference at all. Śūdraka as a playwright or rather *kavi* must have been very popular in the south. In the *sthāpanā* of the *Tapatīsamvaraṇa* of Kulaśekhavararman he is named first of all the *mahākavīs* as *ayyaSuddaa-Kālidāsa-Harisa-Dandī-ppamuhāṇam mahākāṇam aṇṇadamasya*, etc. The *Mṛichchhakatikā* is undoubtedly one of the best *nāṭakas* we know of. Naturally it must have been selected for the stage. The whole being a long piece, only a part of it was selected for occasional performances. That the *Mṛichchhakatikā* was tampered with we are quite certain. On the authority of an ancient commentary, Wilson pointed out long ago that from the words *esā ajja Chāludattassa* to the remark *dishtyā jīvita-suhridvarga āryah* of Śarvilaka in the last act of this drama the whole text was incorporated by Nilakantha.<sup>2</sup> That this is so is borne out by the verse—

यस्योदयभयतः कविनोचितपात्रमेलनं न कृतम् ।  
सुन्दरयुक्तिभिरचयदाचन्दनोक्ति नोलकण्ठस्य तत् ॥

which, as interpreted by Professor Sylvain Lévi, would account for the interpolation also. The original author was anxious to see his drama staged fully before the sun had risen,

<sup>1</sup> Cf. M. M. Ganapati Ś-śtr. *Pratimā*. Introduction, p. XI.

<sup>2</sup> This was noted by me long ago in my notes on the *Mṛichchhakatikā* (N. S. Press, Bombay, 1902, pages 119-120). Dr. Morgenstierne has also noticed it recently in his work referred to above.

but Nilakantha was anxious to bring about a happy union of all the *dramatis personæ*. Likewise, the person who culled the *Chārudatta* from the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* had to see that it would be acted at such and such time and during such an interval. Therefore, he selected that part alone which to all purposes was complete in itself. The heroine starts to meet her lover and with this act the first part of the story would terminate. Both the lovers felt diffident, one because of his poverty and the other on account of her low status. Despite all this, their desire is accomplished; one goes to meet the other who has got the news and is ready to receive her. Even in the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* what follows Vasantasenā's starting is the tediously interrupting conversation she had with the *viṭa* and an ordinary exchange of a few sentences after which the lovers retired. That the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* has undergone a change we have just now seen. The probability, then, would be that it has got scenes which were added afterwards "to secure<sup>1</sup> to the play a greater popularity with the public." Perhaps, the whole of the gamblers' scene in the second act and certainly the scene showing Dhūtā insisting on self-immolation in the tenth act are instances of such interpolations. The *Chārudatta* was in all probability taken out when the play was perhaps free from such interpolations. This is, possibly, the reason why we notice some difference in the quotations by Vāmana in the *Kāvya-lankārasūtravṛitti*. One of these quotations is found in both the *Chārudatta* and the *Mṛichchhakatīkā*, though it agrees rather with the version of the former. The other quotation is found in the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* only, for the *Chārudatta* does not contain the gamblers' scene at all. In the same way if a quotation is taken from the episode of Dhūtā in the last act of the *Mṛichchhakatīkā*, we will not find it in any of the copies of the drama written before Nilakantha, who was responsible for the above noted interpolation. All the same the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* will be there.

Here we should remember that Vāmana has referred to Śūdraka as the author of the *Mṛichchhakatīkā*<sup>2</sup> and has quoted from his work. While saying—

शूद्रकादिरचितेषु प्रबन्धेषु भूयान् प्रपञ्चो दृश्यते ।

he does not refer to Bhāsa. Had a work of Bhāsa, as the *Chārudatta* is supposed to be, existed in his time, in all probability he would have referred to it in preference to that of Śūdraka, for it was original. But he has not. This fact will indicate that, at the time Vāmana lived, the writer of the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* was regarded to be an original writer and not a plagiarist. I am not here concerned with the question of the authorship<sup>3</sup> of this *prakarana*. What I say in this connection is that the piece called *Chārudatta* need not be the work of a writer who is different from that of the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* on the reasons so far advanced, nor can Bhāsa be its author. That the story did not end with the fourth act of the *Chārudatta*

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Charpentier, *J. R. A. S.*, 1923, p. 602.

<sup>2</sup> Bhaṭṭanātha Svāmī; *Indian Antiquary* 1916, pp. 189 ff.

<sup>3</sup> I believe in the South Indian origin of the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* and that Śūdraka was possibly a southerner. Still, I do not think that he could be a *Rāja Komaṭi*. The tradition connecting him with the *Komaṭi* caste does not appear to be very trustworthy. The *Kanyakāpurāna* where it is recorded and which is considered to be the chief work of the *Komaṭis* is not an ancient work. It probably belongs to the 10th or the 11th century A.D. and the *Vishṇucarita* connected with it was, apparently, the Chola king Rājendra, the patron of Nannayabhaṭṭa, the author of the Telugu *Bhāratam* who flourished about the 11th century A. D. In this connection see Dr. Charpentier's note "The author and date of the *Mṛichchhakatīkā*", in *J. R. A. S.* 1923, pp. 593 ff.



seems to be certain. It is equally so, that it continued in the *Mṛichchhakatīkā*. To think of the existence of a continuation of the *Chārudatta* in some manuscript which is lying hidden somewhere, as some of these scholars do, seems to be unnecessary and futile.

Dr. Keith in his review of Dr. Morgenstierne's work, referred to above, seems to favour the view that the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* represents a working over of the *Chārudatta*<sup>1</sup> and that the *Chārudatta* is not a shortened version of it. He goes a step further and says that Bhāsa probably left his work, namely *Chārudatta*, incomplete, and some unknown author who worked it up in the form of the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* found out a device of ascribing the work to Śūdraka to secure for it a measure of attention which would not have been accorded to it, had it appeared under his true name. Does not the learned Doctor while making this conjecture "demand too much from probability"? Apparently, this speculation is based on the belief that Śūdraka as the author of the play had no historical reality. It is true that the figure of Śūdraka in Sanskrit literature has a legendary character, but does it follow that the Śūdraka of the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* must also be a mythical person? On the other hand, the way in which he is described would show that he must have been an historical character of flesh and bones, "who suffered from diseases like catarrh and was cured by the mercy of Śiva." His identity, however, has not yet been established.

To think of some unknown writer who "worked up" the *Chārudatta* and ascribed the whole piece to a mythical ruler is to demand too much from imagination. It does not carry conviction home. There is hardly any necessity of creating further myths to show the high standard of self-abnegation. That the author of the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* was a writer of a very high order is proved by the play itself. In fact, it is the latter portion where the author is found in his full vigour and which makes him a dramatist of an uncommon genius. It is there that the master-piece of the play, namely, *Sams-thānaka* is fully delineated and the action fully developed. If comparison is to be drawn, this portion, it seems to me, is far superior to the first four acts which make up the *Chārudatta*, even if we take it for granted that they were composed by the ancient Bhāsa himself. Why would such a writer think of merging his personality into that of a fabulous or semi-mythical individual as Śūdraka? Why did he not, if he was a selfless writer, ascribe the work to Bhāsa himself? The name of Bhāsa would have secured greater fame and more attention than that of Śūdraka if that alone was the object. There is no reason why we should disbelieve the statement made in the prologue as to its authorship. While putting forth such assumptions, we take it for granted that the *Chārudatta* was written by the ancient Bhāsa and that as the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* came afterwards, it must have been based on it. We are influenced, I am afraid, by this supposition. If we consider the Trivandrum plays irrespective of the Bhāsa theory, it will, I make bold to say, at once appear to be a part of the fuller play, i.e., the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* and neither a shortened version nor a basis of it. This view will obviate the vain hope expressed by some of the supporters of the Bhāsa theory, that the continuation of the Trivandrum play will<sup>2</sup> come out some day and support their hypothesis.

<sup>1</sup> *Ind. Ant.*, 1923, pp. 59-60.

<sup>2</sup> There is no need of testing the points brought forward to show that the *Chārudatta* is an incomplete play for I admit that it is so as compared with the *Mṛichchhakatīkā* of which it is only a part.

As to the question who patronised the author of the Trivandrum plays, I doubt if it can be finally solved under the existing circumstances. That there was some royal patron of the poet cannot be denied. Had there been none the use of the word *Rājasimha* in the concluding stanza would become useless. *Rājasimha* seems to be the surname or an epithet of the king who patronised the author. The term is<sup>1</sup> such as can be very appropriately used for any ruler. The same is the case with the word *Rājā* of the *Dhūrtaviṣasamvāda* of Īśvaradatta and *Narendra* of the *Ubhayābhīsārikā* of Vararuchi, alluded to above. Scholars differ as to the identity of the *Rājasimha* whom the author of the plays had in mind. Dr. Barnett finds the Pāṇḍya Tēṅ-māraṅ Rājasimha I, while Dr. Sten Konow recognises the Western Kshatrapa named Rudrasimha (*Cir.* 181-196 A.D.) in him. Possibly, there were two patrons. One was called *Rājasimha* and the other Upendra, for both these terms occur in the concluding verses. It is not impossible that these epithets are meant for the two Pallava chiefs, namely, Simhavishṇu (*Cir.* 590 A. D.) and Narasimhavarman Rājasimha I (*Cir.* 646 A. D.). The *Mattavilāsaprahasana* was composed by a Pallava king and closely resembles these plays. It does not appear to be unreasonable to assume that these plays, too, were written under similar conditions. The stanza—

इमामुदीर्णवनीलवस्त्रां  
नरेन्द्रो नः पृथिवीं प्रशास्तु ।<sup>2</sup>

would rather countenance such a hypothesis. But, as Dr. Keith has already remarked, such identifications ought to be treated as mere guesses, and nothing more. The identity will remain obscure, for the author himself wanted to keep it so, otherwise he would have given us the proper name of the patron. Here, I think, it will not be out of place to consider what Mr. K. P. Jayaswal has thought of this patron and the age of the plays. His opinion is based on the idea of "one umbrella empire extending from the Himālayas to the Vindhya and up to the ocean" found in these plays in verses like *imām sāgara-paryantām*,<sup>3</sup> etc. He thinks that such ideas cannot go back further than the days of Chandragupta Maurya and could not be remembered later than the rise of the Āndhrabhṛityas or the Kushāṇas. Such a conception, he opines, must refer to a period somewhere between 325 B. C. and the end of the 1st century B. C. In support of this opinion, he adduces the words "our sovereign", "sovereign lion" and the terms Upendra and Nārāyaṇa used in these plays. In the latter name he recognises the Kāṇva-Nārāyaṇa.<sup>4</sup> A glance at the passage in the *Dūtavākyaṇi*, on which so much reliance is placed, will show that there is no mention of the "Bārhadrathas" at all, the person intended being Jarāsandha, the son of Bṛihadratha. If Nārāyaṇa or Upendra were the patron, the vilification by Duryodhana will be out of place, for no patron will tolerate his being rebuked in any garb. The words Upendra and Nārāyaṇa do

<sup>1</sup> A somewhat similar case is represented by the *Dhūrtaviṣasamvāda* of Īśvaradatta, which has already been published. In the concluding stanza of this *Bhāṣa*, which is likewise not a *Bharatacākyam*, we find इमानपि नदीं पादु राजा सागरमेखलाम्. Curiously enough like the Trivandrum *Seṣṣarāśvādattū* this piece also, as has been stated by the editors Messrs. Rāmakṛishṇa and Rāmanāth, in the introduction to the *Chaturbhāṣi*, is mentioned by Bhojadeva in his *Śiṅgārapratāsa*.

<sup>2</sup> *Avimāraḥ*.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote above where we have *Sāgaramekhalām* instead.

<sup>4</sup> *T. S. S. No. XXII, p. 30.*

lot refer to any mortal, but the chief god of the Hindu triad, as the benedictory stanzas in some of these plays, e.g., the *Ūrubhaṅga* or the *Madhyamavyāyoga* will clearly show. No reliance can be placed on ideas like "one umbrella rule", for they are little less than poetic embellishments. Students of Indian epigraphy and numismatics know that even ordinary petty chieftains are very often described as overlords and emperors of the world من شاه عالم از دهلی تابالم in charters as well as coins. Such expressions need not be taken in a literal sense. In the same way, it seems to me, the mention, in these plays, of an empire bounded by the Himavat and the Vindhya need not necessarily show a political orientation. To reason from the known to the unknown we may take a few of the South Indian kings. Venkaṭa I is described as ruling over the whole earth from the Setu to the Himavat.<sup>1</sup> Some of the Pāṇḍya kings are<sup>2</sup> said to have engraved the pair of fish on the topmost rock of the lord of mountains or the Himālaya. Sundara-Pāṇḍya is said to have conquered Koṅkaṇa, Kośala, Magadha, Kaliṅga and above all China<sup>3</sup> also. Why multiply instances. These expressions are not to be taken very seriously. Even if we do, the case of Rājendra Choḷa would show that such expressions could well be applied to a southerner also, after keeping a margin for a poet's hyperboles. Besides, we have to remember that if an author from the south wants to describe an ancient event which took place in the north or has to praise his patron in the north, he will naturally keep himself within the limits of the north. A good geographer from the south, who is conversant with the past history of India, or who is well versed in the epics and other literature of the country, can very well describe events which took place long before he was born. Bearing all this in mind, I do not consider it necessary to think of any special empire of the Mauryas, the Kushāṇas, the Guptas, or others. Nor does it appear to be necessary to think of the royal statues discovered at Mathurā, while reading of the *Pratimāgriha* or Valhalla in the *Pratimānāṭaka* for, in the south itself there must have been such *grihas* in olden days. This may very reasonably be surmised from the portrait statues, which are still to be seen at Mahābalipuram or the Seven Pagodas. The Varāha cave there has got a seated figure of Simhavishṇu flanked by his queens on one side and the standing figure of his son Mahendravarman and his queens on the other. That they are the portrait figures (*pratimās*) of the Pallava kings of these names is indubitably proved by the labels so clearly written above them in the old Pallava-grantha characters which read<sup>4</sup> *Śrī-Simhaviṣṇu-Pōttādhirājan* and *Śrī-Mahēndra-Pōttādhirājan*, respectively. A writer from the south, who knows of such *pratimās*, or one might say—*pratimāgrihas*—in his own province, need not think of the portrait statues of the Kushāṇas, the Śaiśunāgas or other dynasties. Thus, we see that the argument of the *pratimāgrihas* cannot counteract the proposition that the *Pratimānāṭaka* was written in or after the sixth century of the Christian era by a South Indian writer. That he was acquainted with the Mathurā country will not make the author a *māthura* or for the matter of that, a northerner. That the *Pratimānāṭaka* cannot be such an old work as the followers of the Bhāsa theory take it to be, we shall see presently.

<sup>1</sup> See Padmaneri or Vellaṅguḍi grants, *Ep. Ind.* Vol. XVI, pp. 291 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See Velvikūḍi grant of Neḷuṅḷaḍaiyaṅ, *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XVII, pp. 291 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. IV, p. 108, No. 372.

<sup>4</sup> *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, Madras (1922-23)*, i. 94.

There are some other minor arguments raised in support of the Bhāsa theory which may be examined here briefly. Some scholars are of opinion that the Trivandrum plays make mention of an observatory at Ujjain, the Venuvana, the Nāgavana, the old Rājagriha and Pātaliputra when it was just founded and, therefore, must be very old. I doubt if any importance can be attached to such an argument. One may write a book to-day mentioning all these places in a similar manner, yet, I wonder if we will ascribe such a work to a heavy antiquity on that account. The traditional epithet of Bhāsa like *Jalana-mitte*, "friend of fire" *Bhāso hāsaḥ* "laugh of poetry" and *purāṇa* "the ancient", cannot prove that Bhāsa was the author of the Trivandrum plays. These can be applied to other writers as well. Bhāsa alone is not the friend of fire. Śakti-bhadra has introduced fire into his play. So also Śrīharsha. The tradition making Bhāsa the friend of fire is preserved in the *Prithvirājaviḃaya*.<sup>2</sup> In that case Bhāsa would become the writer of the *Scapnavāsavadattā* as well as the *Vishṇudharmottara*,<sup>3</sup> in that both these works were regarded to be of exceptional merit and believed to have withstood the ordeal of fire.<sup>4</sup> I have already given my view regarding the *Scapnavāsavadattā* of the Trivandrum series. It cannot be the *Scapnavāsavadattā* of Bhāsa, which is still an untraced work. As to the other book, I am inclined to identify it with the *Vishṇudharmottarīya* which is so well known in Kashmir and has been published at the Venkatesvara Press of Bombay.<sup>5</sup> As the question of its identity is not connected with the present paper there is no need of my discussing it here.

I doubt if due importance has been attached to the evidence of the anthologies against the Bhāsa theory. Some twelve stanzas are ascribed to Bhāsa in these collections, and it is very remarkable that none of these is to be found in any of the thirteen plays which have been attributed to this ancient writer. These anthologies may not always be accurate in their ascriptions, but it is not insignificant that not even one stanza out of these twelve should be found there, if they were written by Bhāsa at all. Leaving aside the anthologies, we find that even the verse *peyā surā*,<sup>6</sup> etc., which Somu deva in his *Yaśastilaka* ascribes to Bhāsa, does not occur in any of these thirteen *nā-takas*. On the other hand, it is found in the *Mattavilāsaprahasana*, as stated above, where, apparently, it occurs as a *subhāshita*.<sup>7</sup> This negative evidence, I think, also goes against the Bhāsa theory.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Banerji, *J. R. A. S.* 1921, p. 379.

<sup>2</sup> *Ind. Ant.* 1913, pp. 52-53.

<sup>3</sup> Rājasekhara's *Sāktimuktāvali*—

भासनाटकचक्रैपिच्छेकेः चित्रे परीक्षितम् ।

सप्रवासवदभ्य दादकोऽस्मिन् पावकः ॥

*Prithvirājaviḃaya*.

भासस्य काव्यं खलु विश्वधर्मान्

सीदन्त्यानमान् पारदवग्नुमीच ।

<sup>4</sup> There is no necessity of believing in the transference of tradition suggested by Mr. D. R. Bhandarkar in *Ind. Ant.* 1913, p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Bühler in his exhaustive article on it (*Ind. Ant.*, Vol. xix, pp. 382 ff.) has shown that it is an old work which was extant about 500 A. D.

<sup>6</sup> See above, page 13.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Thomas (*J. R. A. S.* 1922, p. 82) says that one of these verses ascribed to Bhāsa was identified by Ganapati Sāstrī in his edition of the *Mattavilāsa*, which is similar in structure to Bhāsa's works though I have not been able to find out that verse.

As to the *Pratimānāṭaka*, the mention of Medhātithi throws a doubt on its antiquity. It is said that this Medhātithi was some Vedic *rishi*, and to support the assumption it is stated that mention is made of the *Bārhaspatyam*, but the name of Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* is not to be seen in this play. I think the futility of this point will become clear, if the speech of Rāvaṇa, where these names occur, is carefully analysed. Rāvaṇa is represented to be a braggart. He forgets the very *Śāstras* of which he pretends to be the master, while praising himself. Further, while recommending some objects to Rāma for the performance of the *Śrāddha* rites he does not follow the *Dharma-śāstra*. Fearing that Rāma may find him out, he mixes up the authorities, and to confuse Rāma brings in cows, Vārdhrāṇas, and "golden" deer somehow. The existing law books do not support him. The *Vishṇusmṛiti* recommends a cow for only a partial satisfaction,<sup>1</sup> but the *Manusmṛiti* does not. Vārdhrāṇas is a cattle not a bird,<sup>2</sup> as recommended for the *Śrāddha* rites. The bird of this name may do for a *bali-dāna*<sup>3</sup> only. What Rāvaṇa says is not supported by the *śāstra* he brags to be conversant with. The author makes him say so to show how hypocritical he is, and brings in Mārīcha in the form of a deer quite ingeniously to make Rāma leave the cottage and pursue the false deer. The talk of antique *śāstras* is to impress his importance upon Rāma. Kauṭilya, as a reference to Chapter II of the *Arthaśāstra* will show, knew of the *arthaśāstras*, viz., the *Mānava*, the *Bārhaspatya* and the *Auśanasa*. Rāvaṇa had already talked of the first, so he named the second and omitted the third purposely to hide his real character, as the School of *Uśanas* is meant for the *Rākshasas*. He did not mention Kauṭilya for his "crooked policy" as he was a Brāhmaṇa of a high character! Besides, there is no reason to assume that all the works he talked of really existed. At least, all are not known to us. I doubt if we know of the *Nyāya-śāstra* of Medhātithi, for instance. This argument is further vitiated by the verse—

उग्रना वेद यच्छास्त्रं यच्च वेद बृहस्पतिः ।

स्वभावादेव तत्सर्वं श्लोबुद्धौ संप्रतिष्ठितम् ॥

which is found in the *Hitopadeśa*. There is no mention here of Kauṭilya. Does it follow that the *Hitopadeśa* was written before Kauṭilya? Certainly not. I doubt if any importance could be attached to *argumentum ex silentio* or to the mention of more ancient names in such cases. As Medhātithi is spoken of in the *Pratimā*<sup>o</sup>, so are the *śramaṇas* in some of these *nāṭakas*, for instance, in the *Pratiṣṭhā*<sup>o</sup>, the *Avimāraka* or the *Chārudatta*. They appear certainly as Buddhist monks, and to explain away their mention in these plays by saying that Brahmanic treatises like the *Vaikhānasa-dharmapraśna*<sup>4</sup> also talk of them, cannot hold good, for the latter speak of them as ascetics practising penance and not as the followers of Buddha. This and other similar arguments, occasionally advanced in support of the Bhāsa theory, do not require serious consideration and may be passed over.

*Conclusion.*—Thus, I think, I have examined here all the main arguments which have been brought forward in support of the Bhāsa theory and shown how hollow they

<sup>1</sup> *S. B. E.* LXXX, p. 249.

<sup>2</sup> Kullūka on *Manu*, III, 271.

<sup>3</sup> See *Kālikīpurāṇa* quoted in the *Sabdakalpadruma* under the word.

<sup>4</sup> Introduction to *Pratimā*, p. XXXI.

are. They can by no means prove that Bhāsa was the real author of the thirteen Trivandrum plays. Arguing like the adherents of the Bhāsa theory one can ascribe these plays to Śaktibhadra, whose work entitled *Āścharyachūdāmaṇi*, as shown above, not only exhibits a close resemblance with them, but possesses most of the characteristics which are believed to be their distinguishing features, besides being a fairly old composition. I do not mean to say that they were actually written by Śaktibhadra or any of the authors of the works with which I have compared them in regard to their Prākṛit or other points. What I hold and have tried to demonstrate here is that none of the arguments, adduced so far whether by the originator of the Bhāsa theory or by his supporters in India and abroad, will suffice, singly or collectively, to prove that Bhāsa, the ancient playwright, was their author. All these arguments are *ativyāpta* or wide of the mark, for they can equally well be applied to other plays, whose authors are known without any doubt. Their examination shows that we are still far from having solved the question about Bhāsa or the authorship of the Trivandrum plays, which must consequently be treated as an open one. The Trivandrum plays cannot be the work of Bhāsa. We must still hope for some lucky chance that may bring to light the real "*nāṭakachakra*" of Bhāsa so highly spoken of by writers like Rājasimha, Bāṇa or Kālidāsa, the immortal poet of India. So the Bhāsa theory has been a very pleasant illusion all this time, and I shall feel amply rewarded if what I have stated in these pages goes to disillusion its adherents, as it has done in my own case.



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