BHASA AND THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE THIRTEEN TRIVANDRUM PLAYS

BY

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FOREWORD.

The perusal of a drama named Aścharyachāḍāmaṇi by Saktibhadra, 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 Bāsa, 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 Bāsa’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 Archaeology 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 Archaeological 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.

Hīrānanda Sāstrī.

FRENHILL, THE NILGIRIS:
The 8th November 1924.
BHASA AND THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE
THIRTEEN TRIVANDRUM PLAYS.

IN 1912 Mr. Ganapati Sastri 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 Ame-
rica as well. Although the MSS. mentioned no author, he ascribed them to Bhūsa,
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.
Bhaṭṭaṇātha Svāmī in India. The latter raised a discordant voice, but their opposi-
tion 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 Bhūsa' in the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the
Royal Asiatic Society,¹ 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 Bhūsa theory,
and it was only this year that my faith was rudely shaken by the perusal of a drama
named Āścharyachūḍāmaṇī, written by Saktibhadra (said to have been a contem-
porary of Saṅkarāchāryya, 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 Bhūsa that
I was led to examine the various points raised in support of the Bhūsa theory.
This investigation has convinced me that the theory is impregnated with a defect
which Sanskritists call aticāpti. 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.

¹ 1922-23, pp 2318.
At the outset I propose to give a summary of what has been adduced in favour of the Bhāsa theory as the pūrva-pākāha and thereafter to examine it in the light of my study of the whole problem. Mr. Gaṅapatī Sāstri’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 नायनमेति: प्रविष्टिः सुविधाः and then introduce the maṅgula-āloka or benedictory stanza.

(b) Instead of the word prastāvanā they use the term sīhāpanā.

(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 Bhāratavākyam 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, Bhamaha 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 Svapnavasavadattā 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, Svapnavasavadattā 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 marvellously exquisite flow of language and an all-round grace of poetical elegance such as is to be met with in the works of ancient rishi like Vālmiki and Vyāsa. Therefore, their author also was a similar rishi 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 rishi. 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 Arthasastra of Kauṭilya1 a verse is found which must be a quotation from the Pratijñānāti or Pratijñāyaungandharāyaṇa, where it occurs in the fourth

1 Adhika. 10, Adhyāya 3.
Therefore, the author of this play and, consequently, of the whole series must have lived before Kautilya, the great politician of ancient India.

Dr. F. W. Thomas in his note, which appeared in the Journal 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 Svapnavāsa-vadhūtā. If the Trivandrum play of this designation is not the work of Bhāsa, the author has “plagiarized” 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 Mrīchchhakaṭākā. 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 Kāvyalankāra-stāvatraśṛ Samantha. A work of this name is mentioned by Abhinavagupta in his Bharatamācchāvatāsūri and in the Dhanvāntramālochana. 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 Prativīṇāyugandharāyaṇa. Abhinavagupta names the Daridrācchārudatta and Vāmana quotes not only the Svapnavāsa-vadhūtā, but the Prativīṇāyugandharāyaṇa 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 further his works upon Bhāsa. (iv) All these plays are not only similar in structure, style and manner 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 Prākrit of these dramas to support the Bhāsa theory. Dr. Wilhelm Printz in his pamphlet, named Bhāsa’s Prākrit, 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 āṇī 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 Mrīchchhakaṭākā 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 Čārudatta und Mrīchchakaṭākā. 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 Mrīchchhakaṭākā is only an amplification or adaptation of the Chārudatta. According to these scholars Kālidāsa only borrowed ideas and
expressions from some of the Trivandrum plays, but the author of the Mrichchhakātika incorporated entire acts of one of these dramas into his work and credited them to himself. The Mrichchhakātika is a fairly old nāṭaka. The Chārūdta 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 Harshacharita1 the following verse in support of the theory—

```
शुचिपालसरम्मैनौटकेकैहुमृतसः
सप्तादशोवीणो नमः सामो दैवकन्यरि
```

"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."2

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 Prasannarāgavaca speaks of Bhāsa as the "laugh of poetry" (Bhāsa hāsah). Vākpati in his Gauḍavacaha 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.3 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 Bhāvaprabhā and the Śrīnāra prakāsha, which mention the Svapnavāsavadattā by name and one of them quotes a verse चिरमायसं; etc. which is actually found in the Trivandrum Svapnavāsaka. 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 Svapnāṣā kām). 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 śūtradhāra and, therefore, on the authority of Bāga, 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 śūtradhāra or stage-director but were certainly not written by Bhāsa. One of such works, as was pointed out by Dr. Barnett long ago, is the Mallaśīlāspraḥasana, a highly interesting farce

1 I. 13.
2 Translation by Cowell & Thomas, p. 3.
which was composed by the Pallava king Mahendravikrama, the son and successor of Śrīhavishnu, who flourished in the first quarter of the 7th century A.D. The second play showing the same characteristics is the Āścharyacūdāmanī of Śaktidevācāra, which has been mentioned above. The third drama coming under this category is the Kalyaṇasugandhiśka of Nilakaṇṭha. Other dramas showing the same feature are the Tapatīśvaravatā and the Subhadrādhanaśyāja, both of which were written by Kulasekharavarman, a Kerala king of about the 11th century A.D. We further notice that these dramas use the term sthāpanā instead of prastāvānā. Other instances will be supplied by the Padmaprabhārākta of Śūraka, the Dhārtarṣastavāda of Iśvaradatta, the Udbhayābhisārīkā of Vararuci, and the Padatarakala of Śyāmlakā which have already been published. Moreover, we find that the Āścharyacūdāmanī introduces itself with the words aye kīmau khalu mayi vijnāpanayagre śabda iev ālayate etc., just as some of the Trivandrum plays do. 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 śāli or habit of the dākshināyabhas 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 nāyakānā 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 sūtrakāra can hardly commend itself, when we remember what Viśvanātha has stated about the point in the Sāhityadarpana. He says that in ancient manuscripts the nāndi verses, like Vedāntaśūrya etc., are found written before the words nāndyante sūtrakāraḥ. This clearly demonstrates that it was only a method of writing. Viśvanātha must have seen old manuscript copies of the Viṣṇurveda and other plays where the benedictory verses were

1 The weakness of the argument, I fancy, has been recognized by Dr. Keith who, while reviewing Dr. Morgenroth's work entitled "Über das Verhältniss zwischen Ākṣara und Mṛtiṣkharṣaölā in the Indian Antiquity," (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 sūtrakāra. 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 aurokāpi which I have shown vitiates the argument.

2 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 Dānapala and Trīṇikrama (see Summary of Papers, page III).

3 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.

4 The Udbhayābhisārīkā of Vararuci also gives them.

5 Ch. VI. pp. 579-80, Bombay N. S. 1829—

6 The first benedictory stanzas of the Viṣṇurveda.
placed after this phrase, or to use the expression of Bana, 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. Sivarāma in his commentary¹ on the Nāgānanda has expressly said so in the words वैचित्र्यम् तामयानीयान्त नायक महेश्वरभरती. That this is so is illustrated by the play called Pradyumṇābhīṣekādaya which was composed by King Ravivarman of Quilon, who, according to Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstrī,² flourished about 1265 A.D. Another instance of this kind will be furnished by one of the Trivandrum plays itself, namely, the Chārūdatta, 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—

उपर्याय प्रकाश कथा रश्दाराजद्वयम् मन्त्री वहन्यत्य न महेश्वर निर्देशः सतः।

The question of conformity to the Bharata-vākyam I would similarly attribute to practice or saṅīl 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 unaware³ of this śāstra, judging from the words of the vidūshaka addressed to the cheti in one of these plays called Avimāraṇa, 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-vākyam help us in upholding the theory. The mention of the author or his praise in the introduction is what is called pravarchana 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 Bhānas mentioned above only the Pādatādiṇaka gives the name of the author in the sthapāna, not the rest. I am further supported by another old work that has recently been brought to our notice. It is a Prahasana entitled Bhagyavatjukula which has lately been published in the pages⁴ 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

¹ T. S. S. No. LXIX, p. 2.
² Introduction to the Pradyumṇābhīṣekādaya, p. viii, T. S. S. No. VIII.
³ Dr. Sten Konow thinks that there cannot be any doubt that the author of the Avimāraṇa knew Bharata, a clear reference to his work being found on p. 16 of that play.
⁴ Vol. X (1924), Parts I and II, pp. i—xxii.
Bodhāyana. The Māmándur inscription of Mahendravarman I, a good edition of which has recently come out in one of the publications of the Indian Archaeological 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 akṣaras having been obliterated. The Mattavilāsaparṇaśrama, 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 Bhagavadājījika 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. Sāṅjīlyya of the Bhagavadājījika praises Buddha specially for his punctilious care of food—

'वाक्यमाधि वस्मधि च मुनि भवन्तर्कणुव्यस्ता' and his behaviour towards the lifeless body of the courtesan, or the words—

'...द्वारथि तत्परत्वः पाणिं च वचन्त्समवालिताति श्रवणसुनाथि तत्तापदीये यधा, धर्महर्ष सम जीवनत्यं व पाणातिद्विति'

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-sanīgha 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 Māmándur 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 Mahendravikrama who flourished about

1 Mr. Sarasvatī 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 Bhagavadājījika 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 versets it is called pratwa or old. They respectively run as follows:—

(1) श्रवणसुनाथि श्रवणसुनाथि श्रवणसुनाथि श्रवणसुनाथि | प्रत्येकः पदं भ्रमकृत्यं महत्स्थिति न: |
(2) श्रवणसुनाथि श्रवणसुनाथि श्रवणसुनाथि श्रवणसुनाथि | चापिते स्वत्वाचेति श्रवणसुनाथि करोऽसि द्वारिधीनि |

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

2 Vol. XLIV 1 S., South Indian Inscriptions (Texta), Vol. IV, No. 136, plate III, line 6. In the transcript given here m has been put in place of Bb evidently by an oversight.

3 Page XVI.

4 Mr. A. F. Burney 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 628 A.D. Further, it would appear that it was in all probability written after the *Mrichchhakāśikā*. The latter drama like this farce shows no disrespect towards Buddhism, although it is clearly a Brahmanical composition. The names of some of the *drāmasā persona* in this farce appear to have been taken from the *Mrichchhaka-śikā*. The *ajjukā* or courtesan in it, for instance, is called Vasantasenā after the heroine of this drama, so also her servants.

That the *Mattavilāsaprakāśana* was written by Mahendravarman is too well known to be proved. In any case the *Bhāgavatojījuka* 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 *Pṛkṛti* 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 *Vṛ̣ḍhāmṛiga* and also the *Uṣṇishṭikā*, as Prof. Banerji has already noticed, do not appear to be known to them. Viśvanātha gives *Ullāpya* as one of the eighteen *uparāpaka* or minor dramas counting the *Nāṭaka* and the *Prakarana* among the ten varieties of a *rūpaka* or drama. The *Bhāgavatojījuka* names *Sāllāpya* along with the *Prakāśana* among the ten species which it considers to have come out of the *Nāṭaka* and the *Prakarana* 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 *Śvapnavātaka* and the *Bālocharita* have *imām sāgaraparāyantām*, etc., the *Pratijnāyauganāharavya*, the *Āvināraka* and the *Abhishekāntaka* have *bhavantuvaśajā tāmāvah*, etc., with *imān api mahām*, etc., at the end. Three of these plays, namely, the *Karnabhāra*, the *Chā-rudatta* 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 *Bālocharita*, for instance, has

**Bhashoḥ—**

**वालोचारित्रक**

कि ते भृजः: प्रियसूप्यसरसः। . . . .

**भ्रतावक्षः**

The *Āvināraka* has—

**नारयाणः—**

कुमारभागीष्ठ | किमैष्ठ: ते प्रियसूप्यसरसः।

कुमारभागीष्ठ:—भगवान् वांदे प्रस्वः: किस्म: परम्परमिच्छाः

**भ्रतावक्षः—भवत्यांजली सद्यः:**

etc.
and so on, showing that some of these plays have got a Bharata-vākyā. Here it would be interesting to point out that the four Bhāyas (Chaturbhūya) spoken of above, exhibit practically the same feature. The Padmajrāhrtaka of Śrūdraka and the Pādolā-
ūtaka of Śyāmilaka have no Bharatavākyā. The Dhūrtovisamvāda of Īśvaram-
datta and the Udbhayabhisārika of Varuarchi end in stanzas which are not dissimilar to some of the concluding verses of the Trivandrum nāṭaka, for the former has

and the latter प्रोति प्रारंभाः सर्वे वित्तिषयिकयुग्याः पालयाः नरंद्रः।

Therefore, the arguments adduced to prove that these plays were written before the Bharatamātyaśāstra¹ 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. Gaṅapati Śāstri gave the name of Svēpakālam to the drama, yet it was rather presumed that the real designation was Svēpakāsamandattā. It has now been clearly shown that it is so because Bhojadeva in the 11th century and Śrāṅgātana in the 12th century knew this nāṭaka by that name. Mr. Gaṅapati Śāstri in his note which he has contributed to the last October number of the Royal Asiatic Society’s Journal² (pp. 668-669) 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.³ Rāmāchandra and Gunachandra in their Nāṭyadarpaṇa quote a verse from a Svēpakāsamandattā ascribed by them to Bhāsa, and describe the situation in which it occurs, “but neither of these can be traced in the Trivandrum play. Śāgaramandin in his Nāṭakalahavaranatākosa quotes a passage from a Svēpakāsamandattā, which does not agree with the Trivandrum text.” Further, as I have shown below and as is recognised by Mr. Gaṅapati Śāstri himself, Abhinavagupta quotes a verse in his commentary on the Dhvanyāloka, namely, Dhvanyāloka-lokalocharaka from a Svēpakāsamandattā, 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 Svēpakāsamandattā. Obviously therefore, the Trivandrum play cannot be the Svēpakāsamandattā 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 Kalyāṇa-saṅganhikas⁴

¹ Some, however (see above, p. 13, foot note), hold that Bharata is older and the writer of the Trivandrum plays knew his āśтра. 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.

² 1924, p. 658.

³ Barnett, ibid, p. 656. While correcting the proofs I found that this interesting point has been further investigated by Drs. V. S. Sukthankar (J. R. A. S., 1925, pp. 120 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 he succeeded in doing it.³
and two Bāla-charitās.¹ In this connection it looks interesting to observe that Śakti-
bhadra, who according to tradition was a contemporary of Śaṅkarāchārya the Great,
composed a “kṣaya” which was called Unmādarāsvadattā and has not yet been
found out. The term unmāda and svapna are almost synonymous. The name
“Kṣaya” is applied to both the dṛṣṭiya and śavṛya compositions. On this consider-
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 nātakas
admittedly bear more than one appellation and the fact that the manuscripts of the
Āścharyatādīśaṇī are found along with those of some of the Trivandrum nātakas,
as a reference to the catalogue of manuscripts in the Madras Library would show.²

To give some details in regard to what I have stated above, I may refer to
Śarvāṇanda, an author of about the 12th century A.D., who in his commentary on the
Nāmalīnīśūlasana of Amarasiṣṭha gives clear evidence of Bhāsa’s Svapnavāsavat-
dattā being different from the Trivandrum play. This has already been noticed by
Bhaṭṭanātha Śvāmi,³ who has given a very interesting quotation from a work called
Tāpasavāsīvarāja in support of this inference. Mr. Gaṇapati Āśṭrī, too, has recognised
this evidence. He has, however, tried to explain it away by proposing another reading.
Śarvāṇanda⁴ says:—

विवेकः गुरुरो धमस्वकामिनः। तत्तार्थो द्वरा नम्बर्णलो ब्राह्मणभोजनम्। विषयः
स्वाधिकारसारसमुदयनाद्विता भवत्तानेतपयोभिन्यः। समूहः स्वप्नावसवदात्ते
तःताथारः वामधंस्वयः।

‘The marriage of Padmāvatī is an instance of arthāśriya or selfish love, but that of
Vāsavadattā as described in the Svapnavāsavatā is a case of kāmaśriya.’ Now,
the Svapnavāsavatā of the Trivandrum series does not give an account of Vatsarāja’s
marriage with Vāsavadattā. Surely, then, the Svapnavāsavatā referred to by Sar-
vāṇanda must have been a different work altogether. Here it might be said that
Abhinavagupta’s mention of the play in the words बर्तन्तः कोद्य वर्षप्राप्तवत्ताय
will favour the identification of the Trivandrum drama with the ancient Svapnavā-
savadattā for, in the Trivandrum nātaka we do find Padmāvatī 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 Svapnavāsavatā 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 Svap-
navāsavatā 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 Ananda-
vardhana in the Dhvanyāloka that authors sometimes pay more attention to figures
than to rasa or the sentiment in the composition—

¹ Mr. Gaṇapati Āśṭrī, Introduction to the Svapnavāsavatā p. xxiv.
² See Nos. 12492-12493.
⁴ T. S. S. No. XXXVIII, p. 1. 147.
⁵ In the same way the Daridradhāravatā alluded to by Abhinavagupta may not necessarily be the Chārvn-
datta of the Trivandrum series.
BHĀSA AND THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE THIRTEEN TRIVANDRUM PLAYS.

चन्द्रेश्चन्द्रे—he in his Dhanyālokachana1 quotes the Ścānapravasavadattā as यथा सत्तरटमदसाही नाटके संबन्धशास्त्रविद्वान नामदासाही सहायतनभिन्न। उद्दाहरण सा प्रतियो इद्यमध्ये में उपयुक्त।

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 Padmāvatī of that drama. Apparently, as Bhaṭṭanāthī Svāmī has already remarked, it speaks of love which sprang up all at once in the first sight of a lady. Vāsavadattā as introduced in the Trivandrum play was wedded long before and Padmāvatī was only offered to Vatsarāja, who did not woo her at all. This is shown by the answer which the nurse gave to Vāsavadattā—

वामक — वामकः / सर्व एव तीष बिरुद्दा।
धारी — बंधते पति। भवाप्रपोषण इस चापद्राम परिशिष्टविविधबन्धीतः पर्यच्च सर्व एवसन्धाराधन दिखा।

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 Kācyānukāsana of Hemachandra, with obviously correct opening evamāchita. 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-pakṣa I have referred to Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstri'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 Tristes de Dramaturgie Indienne" in the Journal Asiatique2 referred to above, I really wonder why so much importance has been given to the references found in the Bhāvaprakāśa and the Śringāraprakāśa. 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., Śāradātanayya and Bhojadeva, who according to Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstri, flourished in the 12th and 11th centuries A. D. respectively, the Trivandrum play was known, as it is now, under the name of Ścānapravasavadattā. 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 simultaneously3 with that of Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstri and I need not dilate on it here. I repeat what I have said above that the Nāṭyadarpana of Rāmchandra and Gunachandra and the Nāṭyaśāstraśastraṇaśa of Sāgaranandin make it quite clear that there must have been at least two plays of the name of Ścānapravasavadattā. Thus, the one by Bhāsa was different from the Trivandrum play. To me the 'adamantine' rock of Mr. Gaṇapati Śāstri appears to

1 P. 132, 3rd Udyoga.
2 P. 23.
3 Oct.-Dec., 1912-3, pp. 183 ff. I am indebted to Dr. Sten Konow for his kindly drawing my attention to this important article.
4 P. 156.
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 suhīdāhitas 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.

Daridrachārudatā is no doubt mentioned by Abhinavagupta, but how are we to assume the identity of it with the Chārudatā of the Trivandrum series, when none of the known manuscripts of the play give that name to it? That Vāmana quoted the verse Saradhāḥānāka-gaureṇa, etc., which occurs in the fourth act of the Trivandrum play, or the passage yo bhartripindassya kṛita na yuddhyeta, which is the fourth pada of a certain śloka in the Pratijñāyani-vandharaṇyaya, or the verse yasam baṅir-bhavati, etc., which is to be found in the piece called Chārudatā and that a part of the stanza limpatisa tombajāti, etc., occurring in the Bālaśaritā and the Chārudatā of the Trivandrum series, is to be found in the Kāvyadarśa 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 Sāstri calls Bhāmaha’s review in the Kāvyadānakā or Bhāmatānakā. The story of Vatsaraṇa 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—

चन्द्रिन्ति मम भानता मम पुवः पिता मम।
मातृतनो मातिरङ्गेष्य कर्म संयुक्तेष्यम। || Bhāmatānakā, IV, 44.

no doubt has the same meaning, which a sentence in the play named Pratijñāyani-vandharaṇyaya has, at least partly, but on what grounds are we to suppose that Bhāmaha was rendering the Prākrit 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—

नमोत्पति तेन्तो विद्वद्भि वेदिप्रायवं प्रेमिमस्त।
मातिरङ्गसम्पाद्य नवंति नवेदित्व: || IV, 46.

1 We should remember that this stanza is ascribed either to Vikramāditya or to both Meṇtha and Vikramāditya but not to Bhāsa in any of the known anthologies.
2 Haṁsa’s speech, p. 13, rather differs, for it has—

चन्द्रिन्ति मम पुवः पिता मम।
मातृतनो मातिरङ्गेष्य कर्म संयुक्तेष्यम। ||
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 contradicting each other. Bharamaha cannot be so old as some scholars believe him to be. I doubt if he can be far removed from Danjén. He might have been his contemporary or lived shortly before him. The Kavyādāraśa itself would lead us to such an inference for, while enunciating the dosha in a composition, it mentions only ten out of the eleven named by Bharamaha and does not consider the eleventh to be a dosha necessarily, remarking that it is difficult to see if it is a blemish at all. There can be no doubt that Danjén is criticising Bharamaha unless, of course, both of these rhetoricians took the two verses apāratham etc., from some older work. Both the works, namely, the Kavyādaśkāra and the Kavyādāraśa, 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. Ganapati Śastri has endeavoured to carry the Trivandrum plays to about the 4th century B.C. on the supposition that one of them, namely, the Pratijñāyugandharāyaṇa, has been quoted by Chāṇakya in his now well-known work, the Arthaśāstra. The stanza navambaravam, like the other one, i.e., yān yaṣā-saṅghāsa-lapāśa etc., has apparently, a proverbial or sententious tenor, and must be regarded as a sūkhaṇḍha 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 if it is taken to be Bharasa’s. Let us suppose for the sake of argument that all these sayings were composed by Bharasa himself. Can their occurrence in these works prove that they were written by Bharasa? I doubt it it can. Take the case of a work whose author is known to us without any doubt. I mean the farce called Mattavisvānaprabhavan. This contains the verse1 (with a slight change)—

वेयासुरा प्रवतमास्वा भासो\nभास: स्बा वरिऻ्यासं विकत्रय वेयः।
वेददीयमास्वा स्वत्वबन्यः
द्विविश्वकर्मण: भगवान् विनानवप्य:।

which, on the authority of Somadeva’s Yākṣṭilaka, was composed by Bharasa. Will this fact ascribe the authorship of the farce to Bharasa? Fortunately, we know its author! Let us take another instance. The sūtras of Chāṇakya contain two aphorisms—

न समाधि: स्वयं विनानवप्यः।

and

दारिद्र्य: खत्रु प्रवत्त्य विनानवप्यः।

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1 IV. 12.
2 Ill. 225-227.
3 Here it will be interesting to make mention of the important pronouncement made by Mr. Bāmakhāna Kari 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 Manusū..
4 P. 7, V. 7.
5 P. Peterson’s 2nd report, p. 46, referred to in the introduction of the Subhāśīkātālī of Vallabhadeva Bombay, E. S. P., p. 82.
6 K. Shāma Śastri’s revised (1919) edition of the Kavīśākṣam Anukāśāstram, p. 43, nos. 261 and 257.
One of these is found in the Āścharyachūḍāmaṇi of Śaktibhadra and the other in the Chārudatta of the Trividrum series. Possibly they may be quotations from the Arthaśāstra and analogy would lead us to surmise that the stanza navam śardvān, etc., was similarly quoted from the same work. Slight discrepancies in these quotations when compared with the published texts are immaterial¹ for, as a rule, such proverbial sayings are usually quoted from memory.²

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 Āścharyachūḍāmaṇi with some of the Trividrum plays. How it resembles the latter so far as its prelude is concerned I have shown above.

Abhishekānāyaka.

Pages 20-21.

Act V under identical circumstances has—

Page 20

रावणः—नन्दु दीवि। प ४ ५, चखो पयः। ब्राह्मणसूजः।

Page 15

लल: प्रवित्तिः चनूमान्। चक्योत्कचः।

Page 18

रावणः—नन्दु दीवि। चखो पयः। ब्राह्मणसूजः।

Act V.

Page 15

चनूमान्। चक्योत्कचः।

Act VI.

चनूमान्। चक्योत्कचः।

Rāvana while thinking of Śiśā talks of the moon in both the plays.

Page 22

Śiśā feels abashed (विद्धिता) as she does in the Āścharyachūḍāmaṇi.

Page 23:

भोता—भद्रो चन्द्रिष्टी पच्याित्तम सखाम।

भोता—कंडमेण उषाेछि चचाित्तम सखाम।

भोता—कंडमेण उषाेछि चचाित्तम।

भोता—सखाम।

भोता—सखाम।

1 The vaśita वाशिता; etc., as published by Mr. Śāntu Śāstri, has the word व बलिका but Śaktibhadra gives विप्रकाष्ठ. The other sentence in the published text reads डशिता वाशि वाशिता मिष्ठि म्येन but in the Chārudatta it stands as डशिता वाशि वाशिता मिष्ठिम्येन. The word मिष्ठिम्येन has been inserted here.

2 In this connection it will not be out of place to say that the stanza प्रवित्तिः चनूमान्। पच्याित्तम। etc., is to be found in the Mudrārakṣas, but in the Dvākarṭaṇḍoka it has been ascribed to Bhārtṛśri. Could we, then, ascribe the Mudrārakṣas to Bhārtṛśri?
Act VI.

Act V.

Act VII.

The gāna is identical in ideas in both.

बाट प्रथम: कथा: and शही तु खलु are very common words.

Act. — The verse—

Pratijñāyaṃandharāyaṇa and Āchāryachāḍāmāni

Pratijñā2. Āchārya2.

(M. M. Gaṇapati Śāstri renders it1 by श्रीयोगिम and the meaning fits in the speech of Sītā as well.)

Act II.

Act III.

1 The root seems to be the same which we find in the Western Panjāhi as in the verse करकहो भिगदे गधाते गधाते गधाते of the Bṛ of Wārānhā, p. 213 (Lahore ed.).
Act VII

Closing sentences मन्त्रम् etc., are similar in both.

Avimāraka

Ascharyachādāmaṇi

Pratīmānąṭaka and Ascharyachādāmaṇi

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

रावण:—चचल्ल। चचली पतित्रतायायस्तेः। रावण:—चचलन तव च चचलतितायः etc.

Defence of Kāliyā is similar in both—(Act I in the Ascharyachādāmaṇi)

The Trivandrum Soopnarasavudattā and the Ascharyachādāmaṇi

i. The speech of the sūtračāra in both is rather identical.

ii. The use of the word नवन in the first stanza of the Trivandrum play and not far from about the commencement of the Ascharyachādāmaṇi.

iii. The Soopnarasavudattā (pp. 1-2) and the Ascharyachādāmaṇi (Act VII) give उत्तरक उत्तरक भया उत्तरक.

iv. On page 10 of the former and in Act III of the latter we have—

ब्रजवासी—चय बालवनू प्रदेश विक्रमाविषे। चरित्काथायायाम भविष्यत्वम् तनाविषे।

and अभिकुमार:—क तु छलु तीर्थायाचाय बिगमवाभि:। ब्याधान्त धाममेण अभित्वं तनाविषे।

respectively.

v. Similarly, वायव्यदुः—छलो बंकरणा छु छहरा in the one (pp. 27 and 62) and सोता—छलो बंकरणा छु छहरा etc. (Act IV) in the other.

vi. बालम्। पयम्। कल्य: 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. Ganapati Sāstri, 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 rasa 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 *Silāvatotara* or the *Uttararimācharita* 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 Bhaṭa theory are to a large extent influenced
by the supposition that these works are Bhaṭa'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 Keshendrā did the same thing. The author
of the *Āśchāryachāḍāmani*, 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 composi-
tion 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 re-
spect or otherwise. It is said that Kālidāsa has himself praised Bhaṭa 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
vāṇīm. To mention the name of a predecessor in respectful terms does not neces-
sarily 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 Rāmāyana 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 versa* 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 (ārśhā-
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 appen-
dix attached to the *Pratimāntaka*, violate the rules of Pāṇini, and therefore these
nātakas must have come into existence before the great grammarian lived. Likewise, it is affirmed that the Prākrit 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 Aśvaghosha. Let us now examine how far this argument holds good. The occurrence of irregular or upānīya 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. Arsha forms are found not only in the Rāmayana or the Mahābhārata, but in the epics which are certainly not so old; nay, we find them in the works of Kālidāsa as well as other Sanskrit writers. Such forms, we know, have mostly been explained by Saranadeva in his very learned work entitled Durghataśriti. Malharītha has also endeavoured to justify such formations by bringing them under Pāṇini’s rules. Even Mr. Ganapati Śastry himself has done so at least in one instance, I mean in the use of ṭap in gṛihya chāpam kareṇa. We know of cases where writers have deliberately flouted Pāṇini. For instance, the locative plural of pumān is pumāsu according to Pāṇini, but Anubhūtisvarupāchārya in his grammar named Sarasvatam makes it pumāsu. The same is the case with the word viśrāma which is not so often used for viśrāma. I need not multiply examples here, when they are so well collected in the Durghataśriti. 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 Prākrit 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 Prākrit forms. I agree with Dr. Barnett in thinking that the Southern tradition presents nātakas in a condition showing Prākrit forms which are more archaic than those found in the Northern tradition. Let us work out this assertion in detail here.

Scholars like Printz,1 V. Lesny,2 V. S. Sukthankar3 and others opine that the Prākrit used in these plays exhibits old forms which are met with in ancient works both inscriptive and literary; but not in comparatively late compositions like the works

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1 For example, in Raghunātaka, XIX. 23, and Kumārovasūbhāsa, 1. 35.
2 T. S. S. No. VI.
3 Dīnottākottaku, T. S. S. No. XXII, p. 59.
4 W. Printz: Bhāsa’s Prākrit (Frankfurt A. M., 1921).
of Kalidasa 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 Prakrit of these plays as noticed by them.

i. Amhāram (asminākam); ii. dessa (āriyā); iii. vagam (vayam); iv. use of the root arc without the svarabhakti or openthetic vowel; v. ahaka (aham, later hakē, hage and ahamb); vi. āna as affirmative particle; vii. kari (kritā, later kādha); viii. kisa, kıkka (kasga but used in ablative sense for kasmaiō); ix. kha (khalu); x. tavā (tave, later tuā, etc.); xi. tawam (tave, later tuawam).

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 Ācharyachādāmanī of Śaktibhadra. I am sorry the book has not yet been fully published. 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.

1 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 Prakrit 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 Śastry himself. In addition to these I have just now noted, the chief peculiarities of the Trivandrum plays as far as their Prakrit is concerned are perhaps these: (1) usual dropping of k, g, ch, j, t, d, p, b, v, and y between vowels and occasional retention; (2) occasional change of y into j 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 Kalidasa's changing it into jj, and so on. If we examine the Prakrit of these plays with that of the Pradyumna-bhyudaya, the Subhadradhanañjaya, the Tapatśisamvaraṇa, the Nāgāsāntaka or the Mattavilāsaprathaṇa as published in the south we shall find Prakrit forms in them which display the same features. The Pradyumna-bhyudaya 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 Pradyumna-bhyudaya, p. 2, Subhadradhanañjaya, pp. 60, 70, Tapatśisamvaraṇa, pp. 36, 14, 33, 67, Nāgāsāntaka, p. 13, Mattavilāsā, pp. 1, 3, etc. For (3) com-

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1 For manuscripts of this play see the Descriptive Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Govt. Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras, pp. 838-82. 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.

2 Archais forms are used especially in the speech of Sarpanakha and also Sīṭ. In addition to mādham we have tāmādham and tumāhī. The play gives orhadī and uses ahra many times in the speech of Sarpanakha and Sīṭ. One of the supporters of the Bāṣa theory, namely, M.M. Haraprasad Śastry (see Introduction to the Pratīkādīkā), says that this word āna is never used by later poets but is found only in old Bāṣa. This affirmative particle not only occurs in the Ācharyachādāmanī, 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 āvam and also tāvam. The two forms āvam and āvam I have not seen in the Ācharyachādāmanī, but similar forms occur in the Subhadradhanañjaya and the Tapatśisamvaraṇa etc. as shown in the sequel.

4 T. S. S. No. VIII.
5 T. S. S. No. XL
6 T. S. S. No. XII.
7 T. S. S. No. LIX

Some other old forms in these plays may also be mentioned here. For khu see Pradyumna, pp. 10, 11, 24, Subhadra, pp. 63, 170, etc., Tapati, pp. 8, 33, 39, etc., Naga, pp. 24, 34, etc., and Matri, pp. 2, 6, 9, etc. For forms like kissa see Subhadra, pp. 17, 63, 83, 97, 131, 135, Tapati, pp. 9, 47, 74, etc., Naga, pp. 66, 71, 88, and Matri, p. 27. For ama see Pradyumna, p. 33, Subhadra, p. 57, Tapati, p. 104, etc. For amhām see Subhadra, pp. 33, 34, Matri, pp. 9, 19, 24. For forms like kariu see Tapati, pp. 42, 8, 103, Subhadra, p. 168, Naga, pp. 88, 124. For mhi see Subhadra, p. 24; Naga, p. 80, Matri, p. 28. For ahām and ahake see Pradyumna, p. 3, Tapati, pp. 8, 55, 143, Naga, 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. 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 Bhagavatārjukag which has been referred to above. Here, too, we observe similar old Prākrit forms. To mention a few of the typical ones as selected by some of the supporters of the Bhāsa theory. This piece uses both amhām and amhānam. The former form occurs in the speech of the Vaidya who went to treat the courtesan (page xxi) and the latter in that of Śāṇḍilya (p. iii). So also tvam (p. viii) and tuman (p. xvi) and kissa used in the sense of kasmī (p. iv). Khu is usually put for kho without reduplication. The play gives tua and tvam for the later forms tujha or tumha and tuman as at pages v, and viii, and employs both evam (p. v) and evam (p. viii). Likewise we have ahām for ahakām 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 ānī belonging to a-stems on which Dr. Thomas 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 without recapitulating what he has stated there. Forms like kusuma or devī 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 nātakas, leaving aside, for the present, the Bhagavatārjukag, were written after Kālidāsa, whatever their exact date may be. Their Prākrit also contains earlier or archaic forms but they are comparatively late compositions. Therefore, to assign the Trivandrum nātakas 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 Prākrit formations would be unreason-

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2 Ibid. 1924, p. 440 l.
3 p. 655.
4 Dr. Sukthankar, in his very informing note 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 Prākrit question and appears to have admitted (page 133), 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 Prākrit 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 Mrichchhakātikā 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 Mrichchhakātikā. 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 Mrichchhakātikā. 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 Mrichchhakātikā the borrower, it is affirmed that the Trivandrum edition of the Chārudatta presents only an incomplete text of the play, the continuation of which still lies hidden somewhere, possibly in the south. It is further declared that some of the incidents mentioned in the Mrichchhakātikā are not connected with the real plot and are to be treated as mere cumbersome narratives. This practically means that the author of the Mrichchhakātikā 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. We know of sayings like Kavir-vāntam samaśnute, but cannot forget what Bhāmaha has said—

 gamerādhya yathā yathājñāna prabhānti ।
 gamyā vāyatrata nam samadarśīnāvādādha ॥

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 Mrichchhakātikā, however, there is no anyokānāvāda 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, only added the last five askas, 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-

1 Dr. Sukthankar in his article in the Journal of the Mythic Society of Banjore, Vol. IX, 1910, 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!

2 Here I am reminded of Washington Irving’s reverie given in his Sketch Book regarding the art of bookmaking. Are we to think that, as Bhāsa’s works were unknown at the time, the writer of the Mrichchhakātikā appropriated his work to himself with no fear of detection?

3 See Introduction to Pratimāntaka, p. xvi.

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 Kādambari and the Daśakumāra-charita 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 Mṛichekhakatikā. It has no nāndi nor a Bharatavākyam. Besides, we do not find in it the words like oyi kimnu khulu, 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 Bhāṣa? 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 Mṛichekhakatikā are not different works, and the former is only a part of the latter just as the Mantrānka-nāṭaka1 is a part of the Pratijñāvyugandharāyaṇa 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 Mṛichekhakatikā. To write down the name of the hero and the heroine or call them nāṭaka and ganiṭka matters little, as far as the actual representation on the stage is concerned. Sometimes, as in the case of Jīmūtavāhana in the Nāgānanda, only Nāṭaka is put down in place of the name of the hero. The difference in the names of Śārvilaka and Sujīlajaka 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 Rādanikā) makes no difference at all. Śūdraka as a playright or rather kavi must have been very popular in the south. In the sthāpanā of the Tapatiśamvaraṇa of Kulaśekharavarmā he is named first of all the mahākaviś as ayyaSuddha-Kālīśa-Harīsa-Dandī-ppamūhānaṇ mahākaviṇaṇ ayyadamaṇya, etc. The Mṛichekhakatikā 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 Mṛichekhakatikā was tampered with we are quite certain. On the authority of an ancient commentary, Wilson pointed out long ago that from the words esa aja Chārudattasena to the remark diṣṭaḥ diṣṭa-suḥridvargya āryah of Śārvilakā in the last act of this drama the whole text was incorporated by Nīlakantha.2 That this is so is borne out by the verse—

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,

1 Cf. M. M. Ganapati Sāstry Pratiṃbā. Introduction, p. XI.
2 This was noted by me long again in my notes on the Mṛichekhakatikā (N. S. Press, Bombay, 1902, pages 119-120). Dr. Morgenstierne has also noticed it recently in his work referent to above.
but Nilakantha was anxious to bring about a happy union of all the *dramatis personæ*. Likewise, the person who called the Charudatta from the Mricchhakatikā 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 Mricchhakatikā what follows Vasantasenā’s starting is the tediously interrupting conversation she had with the viśa and an ordinary exchange of a few sentences after which the lovers retired. That the Mricchhakatikā 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 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 Dūtā insisting on self-immolation in the tenth act are instances of such interpolations. The Charudatta 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 Kālayānākāramsastavāriti. One of these quotations is found in both the Charudatta and the Mricchhakatikā, though it agrees rather with the version of the former. The other quotation is found in the Mricchhakatikā only, for the Charudatta does not contain the gamblers’ scene at all. In the same way if a quotation is taken from the episode of Dūtā in the last act of the Mricchhakatikā, 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 Mricchhakatikā will be there.

Here we should remember that Vāmana has referred to Śūdraka as the author of the Mricchhakatikā and has quoted from his work. While saying—

*मुक्तादितरतिविद्य प्रामाण्य भूगतानः प्रवशो हः*  

he does not refer to Bhāsa. Had a work of Bhāsa, as the Charudatta 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 Mricchhakatikā was regarded to be an original writer and not a plagiarist. I am not here concerned with the question of the authorship of this prakarana. What I say in this connection is that the piece called Charudatta need not be the work of a writer who is different from that of the Mricchhakatikā on the reasons so far advanced, nor can Bhāsa be its author. That the story did not end with the fourth act of the Charudatta

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2 Būtānātha Svāmī; *Indian Antiquity* 1916, pp. 150 ff.
3 I believe in the South Indian origin of the Mricchhakatikā and that Śūdraka was possibly a southerner. Still, I do not think that he could be a Bāja Kusūtī. The tradition connecting him with the Kusūti caste does not appear to be very trustworthy. The Kamasūtrakāmya where it is recorded and which is considered to be the chief work of the Kusūtī is not an ancient work. It probably belongs to the 10th or the 11th century A.D. and the Vaiśnavārādhana connected with it was, apparently, the Chola king Rājendra, the patron of Nānayakānanda, the author of the Telugu Bhārata who flourished about the 11th century A.D. In this connection see Dr. Charpentier’s note, "The author and date of the Mricchhakatikā", in *J. R. A. S.*, 1923, pp. 593 ff.
seems to be certain. It is equally so, that it continued in the Mrichchhakātukā. 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 Mrichchhakātukā represents a working over of the Chārudatta and that the Chārudatta is not a shortened version of it. He goes a step further and says that Bāsa probably left his work, namely Chārudatta, incomplete, and some unknown author who worked it up in the form of the Mrichchhakātukā 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 Mrichchhakātukā 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 Mrichchhakātukā 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, Samsūthānaka 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 Bāsa 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 Bāsa himself? The name of Bāsa 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 Bāsa and that as the Mrichchhakātukā 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 Bāsa theory, it will, I make bold to say, at once appear to be a part of the fuller play, i.e., the Mrichchhakātukā 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 Bāsa theory, that the continuation of the Trivandrum play will come out some day and support their hypothesis.

1 Ind. Ant., 1923, pp. 59-60.
2 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 Mrichchhakātukā 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 Rājasinihā in the concluding stanza would become useless. Rājasinihā seems to be the surname or an epithet of the king who patronised the author. The term is such as can be very appropriately used for any ruler. The same is the case with the word Rājā of the Dhārataiasamvedā of Īśvaradatta and Nārendrā of the Udbhayodbhisirīhā of Varanuehi, alluded to above. Scholars differ as to the identity of the Rājasinihā whom the author of the plays had in mind. Dr. Barnett finds the Pāṇḍya Tejrājan Rājasinihā I, while Dr. Sten Konow recognises the Western Kisahatapa named Rudrasinihā (Cir. 181-196 A.D.) in him. Possibly, there were two patrons. One was called Rājasinihā 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, Simhavishnu (Cir. 590 A.D.) and Narasimhavarman Rājasinihā I (Cir. 646 A.D.). The Mattavilasaaprabhāsana 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—

रमासुदिशाणार्येनिनवनसम
नरे वरो न: दृष्यया प्राणसु।

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 Himalayas to the Vindhyas and up to the ocean” found in these plays in verses like imān sāgara-pariyantam, 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 Andhra-Hydras or the Kṣapās. 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 adds one of the words “our sovereign”, “sovereign lion” and the terms Upendra and Nārāyana used in these plays. In the latter name he recognises the Kārya-Nārāyana. A glance at the passage in the Dātāvāyaṇam, on which so much reliance is placed, will show that there is no mention of the “Bhradratha” at all, the person intended being Jarasandha, the son of Bhradratha. If Nārāyana 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 Nārāyana do

1 A somewhat similar case is represented by the Dhārataiasamvedā of Īśvaradatta, which has already been published. In the concluding stanza of this Bhāṣa, which is likewise not a Bharatavyāyaṇam, we find श्रामणर्य सही शान्ति शान्ति. Cursory enough like the Trivandrum Śapavāmāmāṇi this piece also, as has been stated by the editors Mesara, Rāmakrishna and Rāmanath, in the introduction to the Chaturbhoti, is mentioned by Bhoja deva in his Śyāmabharati.

2 Avinirnayī.

3 See footnote above where we have Sāgaramahādām instead.

4 T. S. S. No. XXII, p. 50.
not refer to any mortal, but the chief god of the Hindu triad, as the benedictory stanzas in some of these plays, e.g., the *Urdhavaṭī* or the *Madhyamavāgya* 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 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 Vindhyas 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 Satavahana to the Himavat. Some of the Pandyas' kings are said to have engraved the pair of fish on the topmost rock of the lord of mountains or the Himalayas. Sundara-Pandyas is said to have conquered Konkan, Kosala, Magadha, Kalinga and above all China also. Why multiply instances. These expressions are not to be taken very seriously. Even if we do, the case of Rājendra Chola 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 Kushānas, 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 Valhallā in the *Pratimānātaka* for, in the south itself there must have been such grīhas 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 Vāraha cave there has got a seated figure of Simhāvishṇu 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 Śrī-Simhāvishṇu-Pottādhirajā and Śrī-Mahendrā-Pottādhirajā, respectively. A writer from the south, who knows of such pratimās, or one might say—pratimāgrīhas—in his own province, need not think of the portrait statues of the Kushānas, the Śaismāgas or other dynasties. Thus, we see that the argument of the pratimāgrīhas cannot counteract the proposition that the *Pratimānātaka* 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 *Pratimānātaka* cannot be such an old work as the followers of the Bhāsa theory take it to be, we shall see presently.

4 *Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy*, Madras (1922-23), i. 94.
There are some other minor arguments raised in support of the Bhāṣa 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 Nagavana, 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 heary antiquity on that account. The traditional epithet of Bhāṣa like Jalana-mitra, "friend of fire" Bhāso hāsah "laugh of poetry" and purāṇa "the ancient", cannot prove that Bhāṣa was the author of the Trivandrum plays. These can be applied to other writers as well. Bhāṣa alone is not the friend of fire. Śaktibhadra has introduced fire into his play. So also Śrihari. The tradition making Bhāṣa the friend of fire is preserved in the Prithvīrājavijaya. In that case Bhāṣa would become the writer of the Svapnavasavadattā as well as the Vishnuharmottara, in that both these works were regarded to be of exceptional merit and believed to have withstood the ordeal of fire. I have already given my view regarding the Svapnavasavadattā of the Trivandrum series. It cannot be the Svapnavasavadattā of Bhāṣa, which is still an untraced work. As to the other book, I am inclined to identify it with the Vishnuharmottarīya which is so well known in Kashmir and has been published at the Veṅkaṭāvara Press of Bombay. 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 Bhāṣa theory. Some twelve stanzas are ascribed to Bhāṣa 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 Bhāṣa at all. Leaving aside the anthologies, we find that even the verse pṛyā surā, etc., which Somadeva in his Yāsastilaka ascribes to Bhāṣa, does not occur in any of these thirteen nātalas. On the other hand, it is found in the Moṭavilāsaprakāśana, as stated above, where, apparently, it occurs as a subhāṣita. This negative evidence, I think, also goes against the Bhāṣa theory.

1 Dr. Banerji, J. R. A. S. 1921, p. 379.
2 Ind. Ant. 1913, pp. 52-53.
3 Rāṣṭrakutā's Sāktirājāvijaya—

Svapnālakṣaṇa, Kālapani

Prithvīrājavijaya.

4 There is no necessity of believing in the transference of tradition suggested by Mr. D. R. Bhandarkar in Ind. Ant. 1913, p. 55.
5 Bühler in his exhaustive article on it (Ind. Ant., Vol. xix, pp. 358 ff.) has shown that it is an old work which was extant about 300 A. D.
6 See above, page 13.
7 Dr. Thomas (J. R. A. S. 1922, p. 82) says that one of these verses ascribed to Bhāṣa was identified by Ganapati Śastri in his edition of the Moṭavilāsa, which is similar in structure to Bhāṣa's works though I have not been able to find out that verse.
As to the \textit{Pratimāṇâtaka}, 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 \textit{Bāhrapatsyam}, but the name of Kautūliya's \textit{Arthasastra} is not to be seen in this play. I think the futility of this point will become clear, if the speech of Rāvana, where these names occur, is carefully analysed. Rāvana is represented to be a braggart. He forgets the very \textit{sāstras} 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 \textit{Dharma-sāstra}. Fearing that Rāma may find him out, he mixes up the authorities, and to confuse Rāma brings in cows, Vādrhrānas, and "golden" deer somehow. The existing law books do not support him. The \textit{Vishnu-sūrya} recommends a cow for only a partial satisfaction,\textsuperscript{1} but the \textit{Manusmṛiti} does not. Vādrhrānas is a cattle not a bird,\textsuperscript{2} as recommended for the Śrāddha rites. The bird of this name may do for a \textit{bali-dāna}\textsuperscript{3} only. What Rāvana says is not supported by the \textit{sāstra} he brags to be conversant with. The author makes him say so to show how hypocritical he is, and brings in Mārīchi in the form of a deer quite ingeniously to make Rāma leave the cottage and pursue the false deer. The talk of antique \textit{sāstras} is to impress his importance upon Rāma. Kautūliya, as a reference to Chapter II of the \textit{Arthasastra} will show, knew of the \textit{artha-sāstras}, viz., the \textit{Mānav}, the \textit{Bāhrapatsy} and the \textit{Aśvāsana}. Rāvana 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 \textit{Uśanas} is meant for the Rākṣasas. He did not mention Kautūliya 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 \textit{Nyāya-sāstra} of Medhātithi, for instance. This argument is further vitiated by the verse—

\begin{quote}

\textbf{उर्मना वेद वर्णाश्च वयं भद्र वृष्णमिति।}

\textbf{श्वामवांश्य ततवें करोधो संग्रामितिहितम्॥}
\end{quote}

which is found in the \textit{Hitopadeśa}. There is no mention here of Kautūliya. Does it follow that the \textit{Hitopadeśa} was written before Kautūliya? Certainly not. I doubt if any importance could be attached to argumentum \textit{ex silentio} or to the mention of more ancient names in such cases. As Medhātithi is spoken of in the \textit{Pratimāna},\textsuperscript{4} so are the \textit{śramaṇas} in some of these \textit{nātyakas}, for instance, in the \textit{Pratijñā}, the \textit{Avimāraka} or the \textit{Chārudatta}. They appear certainly as Buddhist monks, and to explain away their mention in these plays by saying that Brahmanic treatises like the \textit{Vaikhānasa-dharmapraśna}\textsuperscript{5} 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.

\textbf{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

\begin{footnotes}
\item[3] See \textit{Kālīkīpurāṇa} quoted in the \textit{Subakalpadrūma} under the word.
\item[4] Introduction to \textit{Pratimāna}, p. XXXI.
\end{footnotes}
care. 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 Śakti Bhadra, whose work entitled Āścharyachādānami, 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 Śakti Bhadra or any of the authors of the works with which I have compared them in regard to their Prākrit 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 atityāpta 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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