SECTION I

INTRODUCTORY
CHAPTER I
The Work and Its Author

Bhattikavya ranks as a Mahakavya in Sanskrit literature. It is specially known for its peculiar character of a double purpose.

The Title of the work

As regards the title of the Mahakavya, the colophons of the MSS. generally entitle it Bhattikavya.

As regards the commentaries on the work, Jayamangala, which is perhaps the oldest commentary on the Mahakavya, refers to the title of the book as Bhattikavya at the end of each canto, but in the colophon of the concluding canto it refers to the work as Ravanavadha.

Mallinatha (1500 A.D.) who commented on this Mahakavya also refers to the work as Bhattikavya, at the end of each canto as well as at the end of the book.

It is worth noting that the later commentators, who flourished after the 15th or 16th century, name the work as:

1 K.P. Trivedi (ed.), Bhattikavya, Critical Notice, p. 1: But the oldest MS. noticed by Prof. K.P. Trivedi written in Saka 1326 (1403 A.D.) names this Mahakavya Ravanavadha at the beginning as well as in the colophon.

2 Pandit Sivadatta (ed.), Bhattikavya.

Bhattikāvya, though they call the author Bhartrhari. Sometimes the commentators refer to it as Rāvanavadha. The latter title is obviously based on the main plot, while the former one rests on the name of the poet. It seems that this Mahākāvya got popularly known as Bhattikāvya, though its original name was Rāvanavadha.

The author of the work

Concerning the name of the author, the title Bhattikāvya impliedly contains the author's name, viz. Bhatti. Jayamangala in the colophon of the commentary on the concluding canto, specifically mentions the author's name, but he spells the name as Bhatti.

Bhojaprabandha (16th Century) refers to Bhatti in the following verse (p.82):

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Bhatti
Bhatti
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Bhatti is mentioned by name by Kṣemendra of the 11th Century and

1 Ibid, Introduction p. XV.
2 Cf, Siāupālavadha popularly known as Māghakāvya.
3 Jayamangala’s Comm. on XXII, 35:
4 L.H. Gray; (Tr.) 'The narrative of Bhoja', Introduction, p.1:
5 Kṣemendra, Suvrttatilaka, III,4:
Vallabhaideva of the 15th Century. In Vallabhadeva's *Subhāśītāvalli* verses are quoted from *Bhattikāvya* under three names, *Bhaṭṭi*, *Bhaṭṭasvāmin*, and *Bhartrṣvāmin*. Two verses which are assigned to *Bhaṭṭi* in *Subhāśītāvalli* are attributed to *Bhaṭṭasvāmin* and *Bhartrṣvāmin*, in *Sārāṅgadharapaddhati* of the 14th century.

The commentators who give *Bhartrhari* as the name of the author are as follows:—Nārāyaṇa vidyāvinoda names *Bhartrhari*, the son of *Sridharasvāmin* as the author. Vidyāvinoda also calls the author *Bhartrhari* in his commentary *Bhattīchandrika*.

2 K.P. Trivedi (ed.), *Bhattikāvya*, Introduction, p. XVII, fn. & C. (C.II, St. 19) attributed to *Subhāśītāvalli* is mentioned under the name of *Bhaṭṭasvāmin* in *Sārāṅgadharapaddhati*. The reading there is:—in place of *sūkṣma* (vide No. 591 in Dr. Peterson's edition of *Sārāṅga*).
3 *Nātya ramapaddhati* and C. (C.II, St. 19) is in *Sārāṅgadharapaddhati* attributed to *Bhartrṣvāmin* (vide No. 5904 in Dr. Peterson's edition of *Sārāṅga*).
4 *Ibid.*, Introduction, pp. XIV ff:—

4 *Ibid:* अर्थ काव्या स्निधरस्तुविद्यूतना भृदृष्टिरिणा सङ्गेश-धर:—
Kandarpachakravartin does the same. Bharatamallika also speaks of Bhartrhari as the author in his Mugdhabodhini.

The presentation of this name has given rise to the probability of the identification of the author with either of the two well-known Bhartrharris, namely, Bhartrhari, the author of the three Sataka poems and Bhartrhari, the author of certain grammatical works.

Some scholars regard these two as identical. Colebrooke identifies the author of Bhattikavya with the celebrated Bhartrhari, whom he regards the common author of the Sataka poems as well as the grammatical works.

But it may be noticed that the commentators simply name the author Bhartrhari, but suggest nothing about his identification with the author of any other work or works. As remarked by Mr. K.T. Telang, "there is no better or stronger ground than the identity of names, but even this ground is exceedingly weak."

It is difficult to ascertain whether the name Bhartrhari was based on an optional name-ending that was virtually in vogue in the poet's time, or whether the name arose out of confusion created by latter writers between Bhartrhari, the well-known grammarian and Bhartrhari the grammarian poet. The latter view seems more probable.

1 Ibid: अन्तः नामार्क्तः (हिंदी) श्री भर्त्तर्किकविना रामकाण्डविहिस्तिष्ठम्
2 Ibid: 'नव्याशाहिकम्ब्रजोद्गोद्ग महत्त्वकारम् |
भट्टिका उकुले भर्तरी मुग्धादिविनो ||
भट्टिकानिनाम कविः अद्वितीय कथाप्रमम महाकाश्य चकर |
4 Nitiśataka and Vairāgyasataka, Introduction, p. XX.
However, some traditional accounts associate Bhaṭṭi with Bhartṛhari differently. Bhau Daji remarks that Bhaṭṭi is probably believed to have been a son of Bhartṛhari. Prof. Ṣastri Seshagiri gives another tradition according to which Bhartṛhari was the son of a Brahmin named Chandragupta who had four wives. According to this tradition, Vararuci, Vikramärka, Bhaṭṭi and Bhartṛhari were brothers and when Vikramärka became the king, Bhaṭṭi served him in the capacity of Prime Minister.

The three Satakas ascribed to the poet Bhartṛhari, as well as Vākyapadīya and some other grammatical works have come down to us, but documentary information about the personal life of the author (if identical) or the authors (if distinct) is very meagre. But the traditional accounts about associating Bhartṛhari with Vikramāditya and/or Bhaṭṭi are more or less of a legendary character, and are not corroborated by other reliable sources. Like the tradition about the nine gems in the court of Vikramāditya, the tradition about Vararuci, Vikramärka, Bhaṭṭi and Bhartṛhari also seems to be confusing in regard to persons and times.

Poet Bhaṭṭi who composed his work at Valabha, during the reign of King Dharasena, can hardly be accepted as identical with Bhaṭṭi whom the tradition represents as the step-brother and Prime Minister of King Vikramärka.

Moreover, the name of the father of Bhaṭṭi mentioned in:

3 Chandragupta.
the tradition differs from that of the established name of the father of your Bhatti, the son of Srīsvāmin or Srīdharasvāmin. Thus the so called association of Bhatti with Bhartrihari rests on the frailest possible foundation of a legendary character.

However, other variants of the poet's name deserve consideration. In his big catalogue of MSS. Aufrecht¹ says, "Bhatti called also Bhartrisvāmin or Bhattasvāmin or Swāmibhāṭṭa, author of the Bhattachāvya". As Prof. K.P. Trivedi remarks in his Introduction², "Bhartrī must have been his name. Bhatti is the Prakrit form of the Sanskrit word Bhartrī and his father's name being Srīsvāmin or Srīdharasvāmin, he was called Bhartrisvāmin". Therefore Bhatti, Bhattasvāmin and Bhartrsvāmin are three variant forms of one and the same name. Bhatti, being the Prakrit form and probably the pet-name, became the most commonly known and the author came to be called by it.

About his father's name, the commentators hold different views. Jayamaṅgala and Kumudānanda call the poet, son of Srīsvāmin. Mallinātha does not mention his father's name, while Nārāyaṇavīnoda gives Srīdharasvāmin as the name of his father³. Thus the name of the poet's father seems to be Srīsvāmin or Srīdhara followed by Svāmin which seems to be the conventional name-ending of the family.

The Place of the Poet

Unlike other Sanskrit authors, Bhatti has not kept us in the dark about the place where he lived. In the last verse of

² K.P. Trivedi (ed.), Bhattachāvya, Intro. p. XVII.
³ Ibid., p. XVII, fn.
this Mahākāvyā, Bhaṭṭī states that he composed the poem at Valabhi ruled by King Dharasena. This makes it clear that the author stayed at Valabhi. Valabhi was a well-known city on the eastern coast of Saurashtra.

It flourished as the capital of the Maitraka dynasty and is now represented by Valabhipur in the Bhavnagar district of Gujarat State.

Bhattikāvyā gives no further information about the personal life of the poet, nor has any other work of the poet come to light so far.

The Date of the Poet.

From the last verse of Bhattikāvyā, the date of Bhaṭṭi can be settled within narrow limits. He has mentioned Dharasena as the then reigning King at Valabhi, but there were four Kings of the Maitraka dynasty at Valabhi, who bore the common name Dharasena. So it is worth attempting to see if we can arrive at exact identification of King Dharasena, contemporary of Bhaṭṭi, with anyone of the four Dharasenas of the Maitraka dynasty.

More than one hundred copper-plate grants of the Maitraka dynasty have been found. The pedigree relevant for showing the relationship of the four Dharasenas is as follows:

1  BK, XXII, 35: श्रीधरसुन्नरेन्द्रपालितायाम्

Here Jayamangala reads श्रीधरसूनःनरेन्द्रपालितायाम् but this reading is not accepted by most MSS, and commentators, nor is there any king named Narendra, son of Śrīdhara, among the Valabhi rulers.
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<th>No.</th>
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<th>Period (A.D.)</th>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Senapati Bhattarca</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Dharasena I</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Dharasena II</td>
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<td>Siladitya I</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Dharasena III</td>
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<td>11.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Dharasena IV</td>
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The exact period of the reign of Dharasena I cannot be ascertained as none of his grants has been discovered so far but roughly it has been estimated to have ranged from 485 A.D. to 500 A.D. ¹ Dharasena II is believed to have reigned between 570 A.D. and 595 A.D. ² The range of the reign of Dharasena III is between 620 A.D. and 628 A.D. ³, while the reign of Dharasena IV is roughly put between 643 A.D. and 650 A.D. ⁴ Thus, even if we take the period from Dharasena I to Dharasena IV, it comes to 485 to 650 A.D., that is not more than 165 years. It thus becomes certain that Bhatti lived not earlier than 485 A.D. nor later than 650 A.D.

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The Problem of the Identification of Bhatti

There are many other Bhattis mentioned in the copper-plate grants issued by the kings of Valabhi. One Bhatti is mentioned ⁵ in a grant of Dhruvasena I dated

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3 Ibid., p.75.
4 Ibid., p.98.
year 2100 (529 A.D.). The grant does not specify his father's name, but introduces him as a resident of Hastavapra.

The name of another Bhatti occurs among these forty-four Brahmin donees who received a grant from King Silāditya, the first in the year 286 (605)\(^1\). The grant makes no mention of his father's name or his place of residence, but simply records that the donee hailed from Sangapurī\(^1\).

The Bhatti mentioned in the grant issued by the same king in the year 287 (606 A.D.)\(^2\) was a resident of Valabhī, but his father's name is Bhattaguha. The vīrāṇi plates of King Kharagraha I dated year 297 (616 A.D.)\(^3\) contain a reference to a Bhatti in connection with his field that marked a boundary of the piece of land given in the grant. The name of his father is unknown, but his land was situated in the village Chinchānaka in Māndalī Drangā.

The implication of the poet's reference to King Dharasena may now be supplemented by a critical examination of poet Bhatti's identification with a Bhatti mentioned as a donee of the grant, issued by King Dhruvasena III in the year 334 (653 A.D.)\(^4\), the successor of Dharasena IV.

On examining the particulars given in the grant, it is however found that his father's name was Bappa and that he lived in Mahichchhaka, while the name of our poet's father was Śrīdhara and he was a resident of Valabhī.

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2 J.B.B.R.A.S., (NS), I (p.29).
5 Epigraphica Indica, Vol.IV, p.76.
In the plates of Silāditya III dated year 350 (669 A.D.)\(^1\), Bhaṭṭi is mentioned. His place of residence is not mentioned, but his father's name is given as Dhanapati.

Thus none of the Bhaṭṭis\(^2\) mentioned in the copper-plates of Valabhi seems identical with Bhaṭṭi, the author of Bhāttikāvya.

Shri B.C. Mazumdar\(^3\) has suggested to identify the poet Bhaṭṭi with Vatsabhāṭṭi, who composed the Prasasti given in the Mandasore stone inscription, recording the repairs of the Sun-temple in the Mālva-gana year 529 (423 A.D.)\(^4\). In support of this theory, it is remarked that there is a striking resemblance between stanzas 2-6 in the inscription and the stanzas giving the description of the autumn in the second Canto of Bhāttikāvya (1-19).

Accordingly, the King Dharasena, mentioned by Bhaṭṭi in the concluding verse of the Mahākāvya, is identified with King Dharasena I whom Shri Mazumdar represents as the Senāpati and feudatory of Kumāragupta I. But this suggestion seems untenable on the following grounds:

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2 One Bhaṭṭi is mentioned in a grant *(I.A., XIII, p.82 ff)* issued by King Dāḍa II of Nandīpurī, in the year 380 (629 A.D.) and reissued in the year 385 (634 A.D.). But the King donor as well as the donee belonged to south Gujarat. The same is the case with Bhaṭṭi mentioned in a forged grant ascribed to Vijayarāja and dated year 394 (643 A.D.) *(I.A., Vol.VII, p.248)*.


1. The name of the author of Bhāttikāvyā is nowhere mentioned as Vatsabhattī.

2. Dharasena I was the son and successor of Senāpati Bhatārka, who established his independent power at Valabhi, obviously after the death of Skandagupta (455-467 A.D.), son and successor of Kumārgupta I (414-455 A.D.) and the decline of the Gupta empire that followed it immediately.

3. Vatsabhattī who seems to be the court poet of King Bandhuvarīma of Malwa is not known to have shifted to Saurashtra and become the court poet of the King Dharasena I of Valabhi.

   It is, therefore, difficult to accept the suggestion to identify our poet Bhāṭṭi with Vatsabhattī. The resemblance between the two compositions mentioned above may be accidental.

   Thus in the present state of our knowledge we do not come across any reference to our poet Bhāṭṭi in any other dated record of his time.

   For fixing the date of Poet Bhāṭṭi, we should therefore try to see if King Dharasena, the patron of the poet, can be identified.

**Suggestions for the Identification of King Dharasena**

The attributes applied to Dharasena by Bhāṭṭi have been interpreted differently. On examining the royal attributes applied to Dharasena, it should be noted that Bhāṭṭi introduces the king as Narendrā, Nrpe, and Kaṭṭipa. Among the four Dharasenas of the Maitraka dynasty, Dharasena I, like his father, assumed no royal title, but continued the original designation Senāpati. Dharasena II was styled Maharāja, while Dharasena III held no royal titles in his grants, though virtually he was a
powerful king. Dharasena IV, however, assumed imperial titles.¹

According to Pandit Bhagwanlal Indraji and A.M.T. Jackson, Bhattikāvya seems to have been composed in the reign of Dharasena IV, as at the end of his work, the author says that it was written at Vālabhī protected by the King, the illustrious Dharasena. The author's application to Dharasena of the title Narendra, Lord of Men, is a further proof of his great power².

According to Dr. P.V. Kane, from the modest and colourless manner in which Bhaṭṭi speaks of his patron as Narendra, the poet refers to Dharasena I, who is described in the Vālabhī grants as Senāpati. He remarks that considering the fact that Dharasena IV claims to be an Emperor, it appears very unlikely that Bhaṭṭi refers to him merely as Narendra³.

Prof. K.P. Trivedi in his introduction to Bhattikāvya corroborates this remark about Dharasena IV and observes: "The application of the word Narendra hardly warrants the conclusion that the Supreme Lord, the Chakravartin, Dharasena i.e. Dharasena IV is alluded to by the poet. Thus it is difficult to decide at the present stage which particular Dharasena was the author's patron. But this much is certain that one of them was our author's patron and therefore our poet lived in the later half of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th century⁴.

Like Dr. Kane, Shri Mazumdar too holds that Dharasena I was the patron of the author⁵.

1 I.A., Vol.VII, p.73: परसपैस्मेट्र: परमेष्टाकम्भासाधिताणमेवक्षरचङ्गानीश्रीदिस्यन्।
3 Dr. P.V. Kane, The History of Sanskrit Poetics, p.73.
4 Prof. K.P. Trivedi (ed.), Bhattikāvya, Introduction, p.XXII.
Prof. S.K. De: "It appears that no less than four Sri Dharasenas ruled at Vallabhi roughly between 500 A.D. and 650 A.D., of whom the last flourished in 651 A.D. as his latest grant shows, Bhatiği therefore at the latest lived in the first half of the 7th century."1

According to Dr. H.G. Shastri, the word Narendra denotes an ordinary king and is supported by the words Srupa and Kṣitipa used in the next lines. This title cannot be applied to Dharasena I who had no royal title. At the same time, it cannot refer to the sovereign King Dharasena IV. Therefore, the term refers to either Dharasena II or Dharasena III. He concludes that the poem must have accordingly been composed between 570 A.D. and 625 A.D.2

Prof. R.C. Parikh considers the adjective premakara (v.1. Kṣemakara) significant and thinks that the author here refers to Dharasena I, whose eulogy contains similar adjectives3.

As remarked above, Dharasena I held no royal titles, but he was a defecto king, and hence the poet could have applied the royal attributes to him. On comparing the other attribute "prajānām premakarāh" with similar phraseology in the eulogy of Dharasena I4, Prof. Parikh identified the

1 S.K. De, History of Sanskrit Poetics, pp. 51 f.
3 Prof. R.C. Parikh, Presidential address to the classical sanskrit section, All-India Oriental Conference, session XXI, pp. 17 f. (J.O.I., Vol.XI, No.2)
4 I.A., Vol. IV, pp. 104-107:
king with Dharasena I. But on comparing the phrase in Bhattikāvyas
with the phraseology in the eulogies of the other Dharasenas, it
is found that a similar phraseology can be traced to the
eulogies of the other three Dharasenas as well[^1]. Of these three,
Dharasena IV alone has assumed imperial titles denoting supreme

sovereignty, while the attributes applied to Dharasena by Bhaṭṭī contain no implication to that effect. If the poet in fact intended to refer to Dharasena IV, the Chakravartin, he would have used a word like Nṛpendra in place of Narendra. The use of ordinary attributes therefore precludes the possibility of Dharasena IV. Of the first three Dharasenas, Dharasena I continued to represent himself as a Senāpati and did not claim to be a dejure king. The four attributes ascribed by Bhaṭṭī to King Dharasena, therefore hardly seem applicable to Senāpati Dharasena I. The probability of identification therefore may be confined to kings: Dharasena II and Dharasena III. In the eulogies of these two kings, it is specially mentioned that both of them were patrons of learned men and benevolent rulers, but it is difficult to ascertain which of these two is meant by Bhaṭṭī.

One point presented by Dr. P.V. Kane¹ may be noticed here. "One of the introductory verses of Kāṣikā, commentary on Pāṇini's sūtras by Jayāditya and Vāmana is:

\[ \text{वृत्ती भाष्ये नय़ा धातुनामपाराध्यवादिदिः} \\
\text{विप्रकृष्टप्रयः नकनात क्रियाये सारसंग्रहः} \]

The Kāṣikāvivaraṇapaññikā alias Nyāsa of Jinendrabuddhi commenting on the verse says that Chulli, Bhaṭṭī and Nallura composed explanations of Pāṇini's sūtras before Kāṣikā. According to I-tsing who wrote his work in 691 A.D. Jayāditya died about 661 A.D. It is possible that Bhaṭṭī who wrote a mahākāvyya for illustrating Pāṇini's aphorisms also composed a

¹ Dr. P.V. Kane, The History of Sanskrit Poetics, p. 74.
commentary thereon. If this turns out to be correct, then Bhaṭṭi must have flourished some years before Kasika, i.e. about 600 A.D. at the latest.

If Bhaṭṭi wrote the Vṛtti before 600 A.D. and presumably even Bhaṭṭikāvyā before that period, his patron may better be identified with Dharasena II and Bhaṭṭikāvyā may be assigned to the last quarter of the 6th century A.D. However these are all assumptions, which require adequate evidence for their validity and preciseness.

The preclusion of Dharasena I and Dharasena IV thus reduces the period 485 A.D. - 650 A.D. to 575 A.D. - 629 A.D. The Dharasena mentioned by Bhaṭṭi should, therefore, be identified with either Dharasena II or Dharasena III.

The Religious Sect professed by Bhaṭṭi

Bhaṭṭi has not commenced his composition with a Maṅgala dedicated to any particular deity. From the nature of the subject-matter and its hero, it may be tempting to infer that Viṣṇu was the poet's favourite deity and that the poet was a follower of Vaishnavism, but this may not be taken as a definite criterion for inferring the religious sect of the poet. In this context, it must be noted that the poets not infrequently chose other deities as the heroes of their composition and that they did not always commence their composition with a verse or verses dedicated to their favourite deity, when the deity figuring as the hero or heroine

of their work was a different one\(^1\). Thus it is but natural that Rāma who figures as hero of this work is often eulogised as the incarnation of Viṣṇu, but the modifications made by the poet in the treatment of the subject-matter drawn from the Great Epic clearly indicate his personal leaning towards Saivism.

These modifications are as follows:

i. Bhaṭṭī represents Dasaratha as the exclusive devotee of Śiva\(^2\). It is significant that there is no such reference in Vālmiṅki’s Ṛamāyana.

ii. In Vālmiṅki-Ramāyana, the lores received by Rāma from Viṣvāmitra are named ‘Balā’ and ‘Atibalā’, while they are designated ‘Jaya’ and ‘Vijaya’ in Bhaṭṭikāvyā\(^3\).

As the latter names are especially associated with Śiva\(^4\), the reference in Bhaṭṭikāvyā seems to have been from some Saiva source.

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1 Someswara (13th century) wrote Rāmasatāka and Ullāgharāghava on the eulogy and life of Rāma, Surathotsava on the eulogy of Durgā and Kṛtikaumudī on the eulogy of Vastupāla.

Similarly, Vastupāla who was an ordent Jain composed Narānārāyanānanda on the life of Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa.

2 BK., I,3: न ज्योतिषाच्युपमसिद्धांसों यशोः स्वरूपं मृतं विकृतस्त।

3 BK., II,21: किंचिमचैनेव विजयं न रत्नं रत्नं निपृततः सितम्।


      iii Matsyapurāṇa, 260, V.19.
iii. Valmiki represents Brahma as reminding Rama at Sītā's ordeal of fire, that he is Nārāyaṇa. Bhaṭṭi ascribes the reminder to Saṅkara¹.

iv. He compares his poem to the weapon of Iśwara (Siva)².

These references probably imply the influence of Saivism on the poet even in the narration of the life of Rama.

Bhaṭṭi gives no information about his religious leaning even at the end of his composition. But he seems to refer to King Dharasena of Valabhi as his patron. It is well-known that the Maitraka kings of Valabhi were Parama-Māheśvara (i.e. great devotees of Maheswara i.e. Siva). All the four Dharasenas were Parama-Māheśvaras³.

The ruins of old Valabhi, the capital of the Maitraka kings, have yielded several big sculptures of Siva-linga and Nandi.

In view of these facts, it is very probable that the poet Bhaṭṭi who flourished at Valabhi during the reign of King Dharasena, was a devotee of Siva.

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¹ BK., XXI, 16:

प्रणामन्तः तन्मो रामसुक्षमाभिनिगुर्जरः |
किमे भारतप्रमादस्नान तां पौर्ण्यमुल्लभासनम् ||

² BK., XXII, 32:

अन्यथान विज्ञम सदा नामानुभि सुधि सुसमाहितमेवर्थं यथास्मात ||