CHAPTER - I

BĀṆABHAṬṬA - HIS DATE, LIFE AND WORKS

Bāṇabhaṭṭa, the greatest poet of Sanskrit Prose literature, flourished in the seventh century A.D. It is evident from his autobiographic account given in the beginning of the Harsacarita that he was patronised by king Harṣavardhana (606 A.D. - 648 A.D.). Although Bāṇabhaṭṭa, directly or indirectly, has not mentioned as to when every event of King’s life described in the Harsacarita took place, yet other reliable information regarding Harṣa’s reign can be found. The principal among them is the work of the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang, who visited India during the period 629 A.D.- 645 A.D. He wrote in detail about king Harṣavardhana of Kanauj, who was the Emperor of northern India. A comparative study of both the accounts given by Hiuen Tsang and by Bāṇabhaṭṭa has proved that king Harṣavardhana of the Chinese traveller’s description is identical with king Harṣa, the patron of Bāṇabhaṭṭa. After utilizing different sources of information, historians have concluded that king Harṣa reigned from 606 A.D. - 648 A.D. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, therefore, must have flourished towards the closing part of the sixth and the first half of the seventh century A.D.

Ruyyaka (1150 A.D.), the noted rhetorician has mentioned the Harsacarita and has cited an abstract from the Kādambarī or the Alamkārasarvasva. Kṣemendra, another rhetorician flourished in...

---

1. svalapaireva cāhobhiḥ paramapriṃtena prasādajānmano mānasya premāva vīśramnāvā rāvaṇaśayam
   draviṇasya naraṁantarā prabhāvasya ca parām koṭīmaniyata narendreṇīti
   HC., II, p.37

2. EHL., p.348

3. (a) yastapovamanitī munibhiḥ......ityādi harsacarite sīrkaṇṭhākyajanaśpādayantā
   AL KŚ., p.47
   (b) citrakarmasu varṇasainkāro yatiṣu dandaṃgraṇāṇī.............
   Ibid., p.154
last part of the eleventh century A.D. has named Bāṇabhaṭṭa several times in his work *Aucityavicāracaṇa*. Namisādhu (1069 A.D.) has named the *Harsacarita* and the *Kādambarī* as the example of ākhyāyika-kathā respectively in his commentary on Rudrāta’s *Kāvyālaṃkāra*. Bhāsa (1025 A.D.) has said in his *Sarasvarīkaṇṭhābharana* that Bāṇabhaṭṭa was not an expert at poetry as he is at prose. Dhanañjaya (1000 A.D.) in his *Daśarūpaka* has mentioned Bāṇabhaṭṭa as Bhāṭṭa-bhaṭṭa. Ānandavardhana (850 A.D.) has mentioned the *Harsacarita* and the *Kādambarī* of Bāṇabhaṭṭa in his *Dhvanyāloka*. These references to Bāṇabhaṭṭa by the authors ranging from the twelfth century to the eighth century A.D., establish the fact that Bāṇabhaṭṭa was well-known poet in the first half of the seventh century A.D.

**LIFE OF BĀṇABHAṬṬA:**

The personal history of the Sanskrit poets is generally kept in the dark and, therefore, it is very meagre. In case of many Sanskrit poets nothing can be known beyond their names. There are a few poets who have left a tolerably full account of themselves in their works. Bāṇabhaṭṭa stands at the head of such Sanskrit poets. Unlike the majority of Sanskrit poets, Bāṇabhaṭṭa has revealed a part of his life in his works. In the introductory verses to the *Kādambarī*, he has given a short

---

4. *AVC*, p. 17
5. *KL*, pp. 170-71
6. *yādṛggadayavidhou bāṇah padyabandhe na tādṛṣṭah* / *SKB*, p. 52
8. (a) *yathā harṣacarite samavāya iva virodhinām padārthānām* .... *DL*, p. 101
   (c) *yathā kādambariṁ kādambariḍarśanāvasare*.... *Ibid.*, p. 87
account of his family; but in the first three *ucchvāsas* of the *Hārṣāvana* he has given an autobiographic account of his life.

The family seat of Bāṇabhaṭṭa was Pritikūṭa, on the western bank of the river Hirāṇyabāhū, otherwise called Sōṇa, in Kanyākubja region. The village Pritikūṭa was a resort of learned Brāhmaṇas, as if it is called *brāhmaṇādhivāsa* by the poet. Bāṇabhaṭṭa was born in an illustrious family of Brāhmaṇas, highly esteemed for learning. Vatsa, the progenitor of Bāṇabhaṭṭa’s family was the cousin of Sārasvata, the son of the Goddess Sarasvatī and the sage Dadhi. The great lineage that emanated from Vatsa was known as the Vatsavā race. Kubera was a profound Vedic scholar, well-versed in the rituals, honored by many Gupta kings. Pāśupata was one of his sons. Pāśupata’s son was Arthapati. Arthapati is also said to be the son of Kubera in the *Kādambarī* which seems to go against the *Hārṣāvana* where it is said that Arthapati was the grandson of Kubera. Arthapati had many sons; amongst them was Citrabhāṇu whose son was Bāṇabhaṭṭa. His mother was Rājadevi whom he lost in his childhood. The knowledge of Bāṇabhaṭṭa’s family life is very meager.

---

9. "...janmabhuvāṁ brāhmaṇādhivāsasamamagat /

10. "...desāntarālokanakanautukāksiptahrdayah satsvapi pitṛpitamahopayeva brāhmaṇājanociteṣu vibhaveṣu sati cāvicchine vidyāprasānte gṛhāniragat /

11. "babhūva vātsyāyanavāṃsāsambhavo dvijo jagadgitagnōram satāṁ anekaguptārcitāpādāpānkajāḥ kuberanāmāṁśa i va svayambhuvah //

12. "dvijanmanāmarthapatiḥ patistataḥ //

13. "H.C., l. p.18

14. "sa citrabhānuṁ tanayāṁ mahātmanāṁ sutottamānāṁ śrutisāstrasālināṁ avāpa madhye spahāti-kopalāmālaṁ krameṇa kailāsamiva kṣamābhṛtām /

15. "Ibid., V. 19

16. "......rājadevyabhidhānāyāṁ brāhmaṇāyāṁ bāṇamātmajam /

H.C., l. p.19
the name of his wife is not known. The name of his son Bhūṣaṇabhaṭṭa alias Bhūṣaṇabāṇa, Pulinda or Pulina. Bāṇabhaṭṭa's teacher was Bharvu whom he has saluted in an introductory verse of Kadambarī where it is stated that he was also adored by the kings of Maukharin family. The commentator Bhānucandra annotates that Bāṇabhaṭṭa's teacher was known as Bhatṣu or Bhartṣu.

At the loss of his mother in his tender age, Bāṇabhaṭṭa was brought up by his father. Unfortunately, his father also passed away when he was only fourteen years old. Bāṇabhaṭṭa was grief-stricken by the untimely death of his father. In course of time, when he revived, he began to live an unsteady life and did many rash acts in keeping with his youth. Though he owned sufficient ancestral wealth and was constant attachment to learning, yet he set out from home to seek out lands. A large number of friends and associates of his own age accompanied him. They included Candrasena and Māṭreṇa, the sons of uncles, born of a Śūdra woman; Īśāna, a vernacular poet; Rudra, Nārāyaṇa, his bosom friends; Vārabāṇa and Vāsabāṇa, two literary men; Veṇībhārata, a Loka-Kavi writing for the masses; Vāyuviśāra, a born courtier, specialist in prākṛtis; Anāṅgabāṇa and Śucībāṇa, two bards; Cakravākikā, an elderly widow dressed in red garments.

References:
18. namāmi bharvoscaraṇāmbujadvayaṁ saśekharaimoukharibhiḥ kṛtārcanam /
Ibid., V. 4
19. bharvoryatena bhatsoritam bhānucandraḥ pāthati 'bhartoḥ' ityapi /
Ibid., p.3
20. kṛtopanayanādikriyākalāpasya samāvyttasya caturdasāvarchaśeśīvasya prākṛtvam śrutismrthiḥitam kṛtvā dvijanocitam nikhilam pṛṇyajatam kālenādaśīm evaṁstam /
HC., I., p. 19
21. gate ca viralatāṁ śoke.............cāpalāṇyācaraṇiṁ varo babhūva /
Ibid.
22. ...........desāntarālokakautukāśiṇahṛdayaḥ...............grhāṇniragat /
Ibid.
23. abhavaṁśeśasya vayaśāḥ samānāḥ suhṛdāḥ sahāyāśe /
Ibid.
Mayūraka, a snake-doctor or dealer in antidotes; Cāṅḍaka, a personal attendant in charge of betel-rolls; Mandāraka, a young physiologist; Sudrṣṭi, a reader; Cāmikara, a goldsmith; Sīndhuṣeṇa, a supervisor of goldsmiths; Govindaka, a scribe; Vīravarman, a painter; Kumāradas, a manufacturer of dolls; Jīmūta, a man versed in playing on a drum; Somila and Grahāditya, the two singers; Kuraṅgikā, a maid efficient in various arts; Madhukara and Pārāvata, the two flute-players; Dardura, a music-master; Keralikā, a shampooer; Taṅḍavika, a young dancer; Ākhaṅḍala, a dice-player; Bhīmaka, a gambler; Śīkhaṅḍaka, a young actor; Hariṇikā, a female dancer; Sumati, an ascetic; Vīradeva, a magician; Lohitakṣa, a treasure-seeker; Vihaṅgama, an alchemist; Dāmodara, a potter; Cakorakṣa, a juggler and Tāmracūḍa, an ascetic. Thus, it is found that Bāṇabhaṭṭa's retinue included forty-four members, each one with a special attainment in the arts and crafts of his time. They were the representatives of the various strata of the society of his time. With them he visited many royal courts, attended several educational institutions and the meetings of the meritorious that were full of valuable discussion. He gained much experience and acquired a rich fund of knowledge during his tour and he has displayed...

24. bhrātarau pāraśāvanau candrasenaṁatṛṣena, bhasakavi-risānah parain man pranayinoj rudranārayanau, vidvānsau vārāṇāsabānau, varnakavi-viśuddhaṁ prākṛtaṁkukaputro vāyuvikāraḥ, bandināvanagabāṇasucīḥāṇu, kātyājaṁcakravākikā, jāngulikok mayūrakah, tāmbūladāyakasāṇḍakah, bhīṣakputro mandanau pustakavāsakah sudrṣṭih, kalādasāṁānkarah, hairikah sindhusenah, lekhako govinda citrakṛdvīravarmā, pustakṛtkumāradattaḥ, mārdangiko jīmūtah, gāvāsāmilāgraḥādityau, sairandhī kuraṅgikā, vāṁśikau madhukarapārīva, gāndharvopādhāyo dardarakah, saṁvāhiṁ kuralikā, lāsakayuvā tāṅḍikalakah śīkhaṅḍalah, kitavo bhīmakah, saṅghiyuva śīkhaṅḍakah, nartakā hārimalakah, prasumatiḥ, kṣapānako vīradevah, kathako jayasesah, saṅvo vākraṇgonah, mantrasaṅkalakaraṅgho, asurāvivaraavyasāni lohitākṣah, dhātuvādavidvihaṅgamah, dāmodarāḥ, aindrajālikaśakorākṣah, maskarī tāmracūḍah.

25. bhranti rajakulāni vīkṣamānah, niravadya vidyāvidyotitāni ca guru vikulāni sevarah, mahārhalāpamabhiragunavadgosṭhimopatiśthamānah...
first-hand knowledge in his works, later on. At long last, he returned to his residence at Pritikūta.

Banabhaṭṭa’s visit to different places reached king Hṛṣṇa’s ears and the king had formed a wrong notion about him on the basis of the information of those wicked persons. Banabhaṭṭa was summoned to the court through Kraṇa, a brother of the king. 26 As neither Banabhaṭṭa nor his family had ever been in contact with the royal court, he, first, hesitated, but at last decided to go to the royal court. When he reached the royal court, the king treated him with scant respect and called him ‘a wanton’. 27 Banabhaṭṭa in a spirited reply told the king that it was unfair to judge him like that. He was a Brāhmaṇa, born in a well known family of those who had performed the Soma sacrifices and had studied the Vedas with their auxiliary branches and various Sāstras. He was a married man and there could be no question of his being wanton. 28 King Hṛṣṇa became satisfied with Banabhaṭṭa’s reply and soon changed his mind in his favour. 29 Within a few days of his stay at the court, king Hṛṣṇa was so much impressed by Banabhaṭṭa’s genius that Banabhaṭṭa became his trusted friend. After basking in the sunshine of royal favour, Banabhaṭṭa returned to his native place, Pritikūta. 30 He was greeted with cordial welcome by his friends and relatives. 31

---

26. .....mahārajadjhirajaparamesvaraśrīharṣadevasva bhṛatrā kṛṣṇarāmānādī

27. mahānayam bhujāṃgāḥ

28. nārhasi māmānyathā sambhāvayiturvarṇamīśśṭamiva / brāhmaṇo’smi jātaḥ somapūrṇam / varṇāḥ vātsyāyanāṁ / yathākālamupanayanādayāh kṛtāh sārīśkārāḥ / samyakpratyayāt / sārīgno vedaḥ / śrutāni yathāśākti sāstraṇi / dāraparigrāhāyadhyāgārīkośān / bhujāṅgatā /

29. bhūpatirapi ‘evamasmābhīhi śrutam’ ityabhidhāya tūṣṇimevābhāvi / kevalamamṛtavrṣṭibhiḥ snapayannīva snehagarbhaḥ draṣṭipatamāṃstāntaḥ prītimakathayat /

30. rājāḥ samīpādāṇo bandhūndraṣṭuṁ punarapi tāṁ brāhmaṇādhiḥvāsamāgata

31. Ibid., pp. 38-39
requested by Śyāmala, one of the four sons of his paternal uncle, to narrate an account of the life of King Harṣa. Banabhaṭṭa agreed to deal with a part of it and then related the *Harṣacarita*.

**WORKS OF BĀṆABHAṬṬA:**

Banabhaṭṭa is one of the brightest stars in the galaxy of Sanskrit poets. The *Harṣacarita* and the *Kādambarī* are the two celebrated prose works of Banabhaṭṭa. The *Harṣacarita* is a historical romance. Banabhaṭṭa himself has clearly stated that the *Harṣacarita* is an akhyāyikā.

He has also clearly mentioned his authorship in this work. He has referred to some peculiarities that distinguish the akhyāyikā from other classes of compositions, such as the division into *ucchvāsas* and the occurrence of *vaktra* metre in it. The *Harṣacarita* is divided into eight *ucchvāsas* which furnishes some account of the life of king Harṣa at Sthāṇvisvāra of modern Thaneswar. The work begins with an autobiography where he has given an account of his early life and his sojourn at the royal court of Harṣa. Then he has narrated the chief incidents in the life of king Harṣa. In the city of Sthāṇvisvāra in Śrīkaṇṭha, the

---

32. *...gaṇapatiradhipatistārpatiḥ śyāmala iti pitṛvyaputra bhṛatarah...*  

Ibid., p.39

33. *atha teṣāṁ śyāmalo nāma rājarśī tūṣṇimabhūḥ*  

Ibid., pp.40-41

34. *kah khalu puṣāyuṣaśaṭenaśi śaknuyādavikalamasya caritam varṇayitum ekadese yadi kutūhalaṁ vah, sajja vayam/*  

Ibid., p.41

35. *tathāpi nṛpaterbhaktiḥto nirvahanakulaḥ karomyākhyāyikāṁbhodhou jīhvaṁplavanacāpalam*  

Ibid., I. v. 19

36. *asāvapi pūrvodghātena viditābhiprayastesāṁ puro harṣacaritam kathayitumāreḥ*  

Ibid., III. p.42

37. *ucchvāsante' pyakhinnāste yesāṁ vakte sarasvatī kathamākhyāyikākāra na te vandyāḥ kaviśvarāḥ*  

Ibid., I. v 10
was a king Puṣpabhūti. In his line was born Prabhākaravardhana, a mighty prowess. Rājyavardhana and Harṣavardhana were his two sons, and Rājyaśri was his daughter. The Maukharī Prince Grahavarna married Rājyaśri. On the death of Prabhākaravardhana, Rājyavardhana came to the throne. In the mean time, Grahavarman was killed by the king of Mālava. Rājyavardhana set out an expedition against him but routed him. Unfortunately, Rājyavardhana was also treacherously murdered by the king of Gauḍa. After the murder of his elder brother Harṣavardhana ascended the throne. Then, he started his brilliant career of conquest and within a few years he became the ruler of the whole of Northern India. The Harṣacarīta contains a few references to these conquests of king Harṣavardhana. The Harṣacarīta is of great importance to the study of ancient Indian history as it contains a wealth of information on the state of ancient Indian society, social and religious observances, military organisation and so on.

'The Kādambarī is reckoned as the masterpiece of Bānabhaṭṭa. In the last introductory verse to the Kādambarī, Bānabhaṭṭa himself has clearly stated that his Kādambarī is a kathā and it is unsurpassed in excellence, i.e. without a parallel. The work seems to be a later composition than the Harṣacarīta. From the literary point of view the Kādambarī turns out to be superior to the Harṣacarīta. Its refined treatment of the subject, extraordinary construction and its polished style prove it to be a product of Bānabhaṭṭa's mature genius. The Kādambarī has for its theme a long tale narrated by a parrot called Vaisāmpāyana to king Śudraka of Vidiśā. It describes the love-story of Candrāpīḍa of Ujjayini and Kādambarī, a Gandharva princess and love-episode of Kādambarī's friend Mahāśvetā and Puṇḍarīka.

38. dvijena tenakṣatakanṭhakaunthayā mahāmanomohamalīmasāndhayā
alabdhavaidagdhvabīlāsamugdhayā dhiyā nibaddheyamatidvayā kathā
Kād... intro. V
interwoven in it. Unfortunately, Bāṇabhaṭṭa died before he could finish the work and his worthy son Bhusanabhaṭṭa completed it. The part of the Kādambari written by Bāṇabhaṭṭa is known as purvabhiīga and the later part composed by his son is called uttarārdha.

Bāṇabhaṭṭa also composed a devotional poem called Candīsātaka which consists of one hundred and two stanzas in praise of goddess Caṇḍi, a form of Durṣā. He has graphically depicted the terrible act of Caṇḍikā in his Kādambari and has often referred to her with great reverence. It is, therefore, quite probable that he composed a hundred verses in honour of Caṇḍi. Traditional anecdotes also ascribe to Bāṇabhaṭṭa the composition of Candīsātaka. It is said that the poet Mayūra, the author of Suryasātaka was a contemporary and brother-in-law of Bāṇabhaṭṭa. Mayūra is said to have cured himself of leprosy by composing Suryasātaka, a hundred verses in praise of the Sun. It is said that one day Mayūra had a sudden brainwave very early in the morning and composed some beautiful verses. In order to show his work to Bāṇabhaṭṭa, he immediately went to meet him. Mayūra, however, unfortunately found himself to be an unwilling listener to a bitter draw out wrangling between Bāṇabhaṭṭa and his wife. Then Mayūra interrupted and was, therefore, cursed by Bāṇabhaṭṭa’s wife to be a leper. Mayūra, then, composed the Suryasātaka, the hundred-versed in praise of Sun god and became free from his disease and thus acquired great fame. Then, Bāṇabhaṭṭa, full of envy, lopped his own hands and feet.

\[39. \text{yāte divaṁ pitari tadvacasaiva sārdham vicchedamāpa bhuvi yastu kathāprabha-viśuddham}
\text{duḥkham saṁsāram āptikṣtam vilokya prārabdhā eva sa mayā na kavitvādāya.}
\text{Ibid., Uttarārdha.}
\]

\[40. \text{Ibid., pp. 334-40}\]

\[41. \text{(a) mahīśāsurarudhirakṣe karunāśrutiḥ mīvā kātyāyānīm} \text{Ibid., p.23;}
\text{(b) prabalabha kṣāyādhirāditāya mātipraṇaraḥ kātyāyānīv trisūleinevām kṣamāte.} \text{Ibid., p.51.}\]
and composed the *Candisataka*, in praise of the goddess Candi restored to him his normal form.

Bāṇabhaṭṭa also composed a few more works. A drama in five acts describing the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī called *Pārvatīparināya* is also ascribed to Bāṇabhaṭṭa. In the prelude to this drama, it is stated that the drama was written by Bāṇa, a descendant of *vatsa* race. But it is justifiable that Bāṇabhaṭṭa, who was born in the illustrious family of *vatsa*, had also written the drama *Pārvatīparināya*. But this notion was completely refuted by R.V. Krishnamachariar who attributed the drama to Vāmanabhaṭṭa Bāṇa, a protege of King Vemana Vīrānārāyaṇa, who lived in the latter half of the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth Century A.D.\(^4^2\)

Another drama dealing with the context of Bhīma and Duryodhana viz., *Mukutatāditakam* is also ascribed to Bāṇabhaṭṭa. Chandapāla and Gunavinayagani, the commentators of the *Nalacan* of Trivikramabhaṭṭa mention that Bāṇabhaṭṭa wrote this drama.\(^4^3\) Nothing is known about this drama from other sources.

Kṣemendra, in his work *Aucityavicāracarca*, quotes a verse of Bāṇabhaṭṭa in which the sad plight of Kādambarī due to separation from her lover is described.\(^4^4\) It seems, therefore, that Bāṇabhaṭṭa wrote, according to Kṣemendra, the story of Kādambarī in verse also. There is probable that Bāṇabhaṭṭa wrote a *Padyakādambarī* also. Bhoja —

---

42. Parvati-parinaya, intro.
43. yadhāh mukutatāditanānātaka bānāḥ “āsāh proṣītadiggajā iha guhāḥ pradhvastuḥ iha droupayāh kṛttamahādṛumā iha bhuvaḥ proṭkhaṭaśaila iha / bibhair kṣayakālarikasakalatraîlokoyakṣajāṁ āsāṁ jātāṁ kṣīnāmahārathāḥ kurupaterdvara sūnyāḥ saṁbhāḥ” // as quoted by P.V. Kane, H.C., intro., p. XV.
44. yathā va bhaṭtabāpasya..............
   yāhāḥ jalādravasānaṁ nalinīdālāṁ prāleyaśīkaramucastuhiṁśuḥbhāsah
   yasyendhanāṁ sarasāni ca candanāni nirvānemiesi kathāṁ sa manohavāgmayā
   atra vipralambhaharabhagadhaśairīyāyāḥ
   kādambarīḥ virahavatāvarṇanāṁ mādhuryasaumkumārīyādīgupayogena
   pūrṇenduvadaneva priyāṁvadatvena ṣrīdāyaṇandāyinīṁ dayitatamatiṇiśauro

AVC. p.5
that Banabhatta was not so excellent in versification as he is in prose. Hence it can be inferred that Bāṇabhaṭṭa’s *Padyakādambarī* was not so good as his *Gadyakādambarī*. As the *Kādambarī*, written in prose was much appreciated by the critics, it acquired an external fame. The *Padyakādambarī* might be an earlier composition of Bāṇabhaṭṭa as it is known that the author of the *Kādambarī* died leaving his work incomplete. At the same time, it cannot be concluded that Bāṇabhaṭṭa, a lover of new ideas and theme, would have written two works on the same theme, one in verse and the other in prose. It might be possible that *Padyakādambarī* was a composition of some other poet. In course of time the *Padyakādambarī* might have been associated with the famous prose-writer Bāṇabhaṭṭa. However, all these statements are hypothetical and nothing can be concluded unless some other evidence, which may throw light on the subject, is obtained.

M. Krishnamachariar ascribes two other works viz. *Sivastuti* and *Śāradacandrikā* to Bāṇabhaṭṭa. The *Śivastuti* is a devotional poem which contains the verses in praise of Lord Śiva. The subject-matter of the drama *Śāradacandrikā* is associated with the story of Candrapīḍa. It is said in the Śāradātanayā’s *Bhāvaprapāsā* and Dhananjaya’s *Daśārūpakā* that *Śāradacandrikā* was written by Bāṇabhaṭṭa. Nothing, however, can be concluded on such meagre information unless the works themselves are recovered or some other evidence comes to light.

**BĀṆABHAṬṬA’S SCHOLARSHIP:**

Bāṇabhaṭṭa who was born in a family of erudite Brāhmaṇs.

---

45. *yāḍṛggadyavidhou bāṇah padyabandhe na tāḍṛṣṭaḥ* / HCSL., pp. 451-52

46. *KŚ. p. 52

47. (a) *kalpitāṁ bhaṭṭabāṇena yathā śāradacandrikā / divyena matyārsya vadhāḥ kāvyasyāvasyābhāvataḥ* // Bhāvaprapāsā

(b) *candrāpiḍasya maranaṁ yatpṛatyujjivānantimam/ kalpitāṁ bhaṭṭabāṇena yathā śāradacandrikā // Daśārūpakā* as quoted by M. Krishnamachariar. HCSL.
was a highly learned poet. He also inherited a scholarly aptitude and an instinct of learning. Bāṇabhaṭṭa got his early education under the guidance of his father Citrabhaṇu. After the death of his father, he decided to set forth a journey. But Bāṇabhaṭṭa himself has said that there was no need for him to go abroad for learning. As he had a curiosity to go to other places, he decided to travel. During that period, he attended various institutions of learning and had discourses with learned persons and thus acquired that scholarly attitude of mind which was appropriate to his family. Bāṇabhaṭṭa travelled far and wide and thus, he came in contact with different types of people and observed various aspects of life. He closely noticed human nature and gathered a rich stock of practical knowledge. As a result, he was able to depict the real and vivid pictures of human life and nature in his works that he had observed and experienced.

Bāṇabhaṭṭa had studied all the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas and various Śāstras. He has referred to his high birth and erudition at the royal court of King Hārṣa. He was well-versed in the Mahābhārata, Rāmāyana, as well as in the Purāṇas. He has displayed a

---

48. kṛtopanayāṇādikriyākalāpasya samāvṛttasya caturdāśavārṣadeśīyasya pitāpi śrutismṛtvihitaṃ kṛtvā dvijajanocitaṃ nikhilam punyajatam

HC, I. p.19

49. ..........................cavicchinne vidyāprasaṃge gṛhānirāgat /

Ibid.

50. desāntārālokanakautukākṣiptahdayah

Ibid.

51. ..........................nirvadyavidyāvidyōtītāni ca gurukulāni sevamānāh, mahābhālāpamahābhāla- hiraṇyavavigoṣṭhiṣcopatiṣṭhamānāh, svabhāvagambhiradhiḥdhanāni vidyāved maṇḍalāni ca gāhamānāh, punarapi tāmeva vaipaścitīmatmavāmśocītām prīrtimabhajat /

Ibid., I. pp 19-20

52. kecidṛcāh stucatūrāh śmudacārāyan / kecidapacībhānī yajūṃsyapāthah / kecitprasāṁsāmānī jaguh / apare vivṛtakratukriyātāntarānmantranvyācayakṣplah /

Ibid., I. p.2
acquaintance with all these texts in his works. Banabhatta was proficient in the science of politics, the Arthasastra etc. as it is evident from Shukanasa's advice to Candrapida in the Kadambari. He also studied the science of Medicine, the Sakunasastra, i.e. the science of omens etc. This is evident from the elaborate description of the lying-in-chamber queen Vilasavati. Banabhatta also had a considerable acquaintance with the different system of philosophy which he has mentioned in the Kadambari. Banabhatta was a master of the art of composition. He was also familiar with the various styles of writing, used in different parts of the country of his time. He had also a vast knowledge of the science of rhetoric. He has often referred to various classes of compositions.

53. (a) tatra mahabhara t vacyamane śrutamaputraṇāṁ kila na santi lokāḥ śubhāḥ / punnamno narakkrayāsitī putra iti / Kād., p.104
(b) bhāratasamaramiva kṛtvarmāsīlimukhacakrasāmbhārabhiṣaṇam / Ibid., p.151
(c) śrūyate hi puṣā caṇḍakausūkaprabhāvānmaṇadheṣu bhṛdra-tho nāma rāja- / Janārdanaśya jetāramatulabhujabalāmprāhiratham jārāsandhaṁ nāma tanayāṁ / Ibid.
(d) daśarathasca rāja parinata vā vībhāndakamahāmuniṣutasyarṣyaśringasya / prasādāñaḥ rājanabhiṣaṇaḥvānvidhātānudhānivākṣobhyānāvāpa caturāḥ / Ibid., p.105
(e) pavāmānaproktam purāṇāṁ papaṭha / HC., III. p.39
(f) nāraḥyaṁvāvarṇyamānarājadharmā........... Kād., p.150

54. Ibid., pp. 166-70
55. Ibid., pp. 118-21
56. (a) saṁkhyaṁiva kapilādhiśhitam......................... Ibid., p. 72
(b) saṁkhyaṁgaṇeṣu pradhānapuruṣopetena........... Ibid., p. 88
(c) mīmāṁsāyaevānkehaḥbhāvanānuvidhayā śītyā devaṁ virūpākṣamupavānayantīm............................ Ibid., p. 213
(d) bauddhena sarvastivādusūraṇa...................... Ibid., p.88
(e) jinadharmena jīvānukampinā......................... Ibid.

57. ślesaprayāmudācyesu pratīcyesvarthamātrakam / utpreksā dāksinātyesu gaudēśvaksāradambaraḥ // HC., 15A.
in his work. The various figures of speech viz. ślesa, upama, diptajāti also called svabhāvokti, vakrokti are found mentioned in his work.

The literary puzzles viz. akṣaracyutaka, mātracyutaka, bindumgūḍhacaturthapāda, prahelikā etc. are also known to Banabhatta. He was well-conversant with the literature available in his time. In the introductory verses to the Harṣacarita, he has admired the poetry of some of his predecessors and some preceding works. The poets and works praised by Banabhatta are Vyāsa61, Bhattāra Haricandra62, Sātavāhana, Pravarasena64, Bhāsa65, Kālidāsa66, Vāsavadattā67, Brhatkathā68 etc.

It is indisputable that a study of Banabhatta makes the reader somewhat awed by the profound and accurate knowledge of man...
nature, displayed in his works. His artistic treatment of the subject, his great wisdom and his eagerness to produce something unique, the portrayal of his character, his knowledge of the human heart and the grandeur of his style, all have contributed in making his works specially, the Kadambaśī, a great piece of literature, which has no parallel in the history of Sanskrit literature. Hence, Banaḥbhaṭṭa is acclaimed as the master-poet in the field of Sanskrit literature. That Banaḥbhaṭṭa was highly regarded by later Sanskrit poets is evident from the numerous references to his poetical excellence found in their works. Dharmadeva Sūri, in his Vidaḍhamukhamaṇḍana praised and compared the works of Banaḥbhaṭṭa with a sweet damsel which possesses sweet sound, a complexion or letters, feet and being full of feelings and gestures, attracts the mind of the whole world.

Govardhana in his Āryaśaptasāti admired Banaḥbhaṭṭa’s superior excellence by stating that as of old sīkhaṇḍini became sīkhaṇḍini vāṇī, i.e. the art of poetry became Bana for further proficiency.

Jayadeva in his Prasannarāghava, while describing the most famous poets of Sanskrit literature advocates that Bana is the god of love living in the heart of the poetry who is in the form of a loving woman.

Thus, Banaḥbhaṭṭa was highly acclaimed by later Sanskrit poets which is evident from the various references to his poetical merit found in their works.

**********

69. rucirasvaravarnaṇapadā rasabhāvavatī jaganmano harati / tatkim taruṇī, nahi nahi, vāṇī bānasya ma`dhuraśilasya //
    Vida., 4, 28

70. jāta sīkhaṇḍini prāgyathā sīkhaṇḍi tathā`vagacchāmi / prāglbhyanadhikamāptum vāṇī bāno babhūveti //
    Ārya., 37

71. yasyāścorācikuranikarah karṇapūro mayūro bhāso hāsah kavikulaguruḥ kālāśa vīt vīt vīt / harso harso hṛdayavasatiḥ pari cabānastu bānāh kesāṁ naiśa kathaya kavitākāminī /
    kautukāya //
    Prasanna., 1, 24