CHAPTER–I

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In the first chapter we discuss Bhavabhūti’s life, date and works. Besides these, the first chapter deals with purpose of the proposed study and study conducted on Mālatīmādhava.

Life

Bhavabhūti is one of the great dramatists in Sanskrit literature. He lived in a town named Padmapura, in the country of Vidarbha, now called the Berars. There is a controversy about the real name of the poet. In both of his plays Bhavabhūti is described as Śrīkaṇṭha-pada-laṁchhana1. From this point of view some commentators says that Śrīkaṇṭha to be the real name of the poet on the analogy of Nīlakaṇṭha, the name of his father. They mention that the poet became known by the name of Bhavabhūti after he composed a beautiful verse in which he gives beautiful description about Śiva and Parvati2.

1. pavitra-kīrtar-nīlakaṇṭhasyaśītmasambhavaḥ śrīkaṇṭha-pada-laṁchanaḥ
   Mac. Act I.
2. kāṁ tapasvī gatoavasthāmiti smerāviva stana vande gaurīghanāślesābhavabhūtisitānanau
   Sadkar. l. 12
But several commentators shows that Bhavabhūti is the poet’s real name, Śrīkantha being a title conferred on him on account of the presence of Śrī (the Goddess of Speech) in his throat. The word lāńchhan in Sanskrit is used to denote a title. In the present work, we mention the name of the poet as Bhavabhūti. Bhavabhūti’s father name is Nīlakaṇṭha and his mother Jātukarṇī. Bhaṭṭa Gopāla is grandfather of Bhavabhūti, and his family name is Udumbara. Bhavabhūti’s ancestors were Brāhmaṇas of the Taittirīya sākha of the Black-Yajurveda. They belonged to the Kāśyapa-gotra. They are described as Charaṇa-guravaḥ, which perhaps indicates that they conducted a school for the teaching of the sacred texts of their sākha. They were very pious Brāhmaṇas who observed Vratas, performed Vedic sacrifices like the Vajapeya, and maintained the five sacred fires. They were so venerated for their Vedic learning and piety that they came to be regarded as Paṅkti-pāvana. Bhavabhūti’s fifth ancestor was named Mahākavi. This Mahākavi performed the Vājapeya sacrifice.

3. nīlakaṇṭhasya putraḥ bhavabhutirnāma jātukarṇiputraḥ
   MM. Act I.
4. bhaṭṭagopālasya pautraḥ
   Ibid. Act I.
5. tatra brāhmaṇaḥ kecittairīraḥ kāśyapaḥ caraṇaguravaḥ
   pañcāgnayaḥ paṅtirpāvanāḥ dhrṛtavrataḥ somāpīthina
   udumbaranāmano brahmavādināḥ prativasanti
   Ibid. Act I.
Bhavabhūti spend his early life at the Padmapura. He completed his formal education in Padmapura and he started to write drama on the life of Rāma. By the performance of his drama his fame seems to have spread far and wide. It reached the ears of the mighty king Yaśovarman of Kanauj. He invited Bhavabhūti with great respect and made him poet laureate at his court, and after that Bhavabhūti stays in Kanauj.

Bhavabhūti is a man of great learning. He had mastered the four Vedas. Bhavabhūti had studied the Atharvaveda. He has referred, in two places in the Mahāvira-charita, to the use of its mantras for abhichara. Bhavabhūti had studied the Rgveda also. In the second Act of the Uttara-rāma-charita, we find that Rāma gives blessing to the celestial person who rose from the dead body of the Sudra ascetic Sambuka as — “May those blessed regions of light called Vairaja, where there is all bliss and joy and also pious prosperity, be yours for ever”. This is a clear echo of the Rgvedic hemistich and it indicates Bhavabhūti's knowledge of Rgveda.

6. agyāḥ sarveṣu vedeṣu
MM. Act I.
7. URC. Act II,
8. RV. IX, 113, 11
Bhavabhūti had studied the Upanishads. In the Mahāvīra-charita he has referred to the philosophical knowledge that the sage Yajnavalkya had imparted to king Janaka as described in the Brihadāranyakopanishad. Besides this, in the fourth Act of the Uttararāma-charita, Janaka says that though he is overwhelmed with grief by the abandonment of his daughter Sīta, he cannot think of ending his life by suicide for the sages say that the sunless regions enveloped in pitchy darkness are assigned to those persons who commit suicide. These words are copied almost verbatim from the Īśavāsyopanishad and it proved that Bhavabhūti studied the Upanishads also.

Like the Vedas and the Upanishads, Bhavabhūti had good knowledge about several philosophical systems also.

9. yadvedādhyayanaṁ tathopanisaḍāṁ
MM. Intro.
10. andhatāmisrā hyasyūryā nāma te lokāstebhyah pratividhiyante ya ātmadhātina ityevamṛṣayate manyante
URC. Act IV.
11. asuryā nāma te lokā andhena tamasāvīrtah tamste pretyābhigacchnti ye ke cātmahano janāḥ
Isava.
Bhavabhūti himself has stated explicitly that he had mastered the Sāṁkhya and Yoga systems of philosophy\textsuperscript{12}. In the third Act of the Mahāvīracharita\textsuperscript{13}, in his advice to Jamadagnya, Vasishtha refers to several technical terms of Yoga like the four attitudes such as friendship, the lustrous mental vision free from sorrow and the truth bearing intellect which is derived from the Yoga-sūtra of Patañjali\textsuperscript{14}. Besides these, we find some references to Yogic concepts in the Mālatīmādhava\textsuperscript{15}. Bhavabhūti had familiarity with the Brāhmaṇas. In the fifth Act of the Uttara-rāma-charita\textsuperscript{16}, we find that Lava describes the demoniacal speech (Rakshasivak) as – “The sages declare the speech of arrogant and vain people demoniacal. All enmity springs from it, it is the cause of the people’s degradation”. The wording of the first hemistich of this verse is plainly borrowed from the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa\textsuperscript{17}.

\textsuperscript{12} MM. Act I.
\textsuperscript{13} Mac, Act III.
\textsuperscript{14} maitirkaruṇāmuditāpekṣānāṁ sukhaduhkhapuṇyavisayānāṁ bhāvanācitraprasādanam / YS. I. 13
\textsuperscript{15} MM. Act VII,
\textsuperscript{16} URC. Act V. S. 36
\textsuperscript{17} AB. VI, 1, 7
Beside this, in the second Act of the Mahāvīracharita, we find that Viśvāmitra praise Satananda as “Never shall this kingdom of Janaka suffer misery, decrease or decay so long as a learned Brāhmaṇa like you is his priest to protect it”\textsuperscript{18}. It is a clear echo of the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa\textsuperscript{19}. In the fourth Act of the Uttara-rāma-charita\textsuperscript{20}, we find that Lava mentions the number of the soldiers guarding the Āśvamedha horse and it is in accordance with the dictates of the Satapatha Brāhmaṇa\textsuperscript{21}.

Bhavabhūti had good knowledge of the Arthaśāstra. The various measures proposed by Malyavan and Śūrpaṇakha for the destruction of Rāma as detailed in the second and fourth Acts of the Mahāvīra-charita bespeak Bhavabhūti's knowledge of the Arthaśāstra. Bhavabhūti has used several technical terms of the Arthaśāstra\textsuperscript{22} such as prabhu-sakti, utsāha-sakti, dharma-vijayin, prakriti-kopa, ābhigāmika-guṇa, saṅgha-vritti, tīkṣṇa, prakāśādaṇḍa etc. in the Mahāvīracharita\textsuperscript{23}.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} Mac. Act II. S. 15
\item \textsuperscript{19} AB. VIII. 25
\item \textsuperscript{20} URC. Act IV
\item \textsuperscript{21} SB. XIII. 4,2,5
\item \textsuperscript{22} AS. VIII. 5
\item \textsuperscript{23} Mac. Act IV.
\end{itemize}
Bhavabhūti had made a deep study of the Kāmasūtra. In the second Act of the Mālatīmādhava, Bhavabhūti has cited a passage from the Kāmasūtra of Angiras.

From the above discussion it is found that Bhavabhūti was a man of great learning and piety, serious by nature and upright in conduct. He was fully conscious of his learning, poetic talent and critical judgment.

**Date**

In Sanskrit literature, the authors do not generally give any information about themselves or the age in which they live. Though some writers rarely make any direct statements about themselves, which would enable us to fix the periods during which they flourished; their dates are as a rule to be arrived at by indirect evidence collected from a mass of inscripional and literary records, and as these are often conflicting, the result cannot always be declared as satisfactory and convincing. The poet Bhavabhūti is no exception to this general rule.

24. MM. Act II
25. gītāścāyamarthoangirasā yasyaṁ
    manāścakṣuṣonirbarndhastasyāṃridhi
    KS.
Unlike several other Sanskrit authors, he has indeed given us considerable information about his ancestors, original home and learning, but has maintained sphinx-like silence on his patron and his date. Therefore, we try to know the date of Bhavabhuti in the light of other evidence. Now, here we mention some evidence which indicate the date of Bhavabhūti.

Dr. Bhandarkar assigns that Bhavabhūti was flourished towards 725 A.D. or the first quarter of the 8th century A.D.26 Kalahaṇa’s Rājatarāṅgini27 mention king Yaśovarman as the patron of Bhavabhūti along with whom is mentioned Vākpatirāja, the author of the Prakrit poem Gauḍavaho. The Gauḍavaho describes the victory of Yaśavarmana over a Gauda king. The author of Gauḍavaho28 speaks of Bhavabhūti in eulogistic terms in his work. From Chinese sources, we know that a king I-chá-fán-mó, who is identified with Yaśovarman, had sent an ambassador to China in 731 A.D.

26. MM. Intro
27. kavivākpatirājasribhavabhūtyadisevitah /
    jito yayau yaśovarman tadgunastutibanditam //
    Rata. IV. 144
28. bhavabhūtijaladhinirgatakāvyaṃritarasakana ivā sphuranti /
    yasya vīsesa adyapi vikatesu kathanivesesu //
    Gada.
According to Kalhaṇa, this Yaśovarman was defeated by Lalitāditya or Muktāpiṇḍa who reigned about 700 A.D. to 735 A.D., so that the defeat of Yaśovarmanā must have taken place about 735 A.D. Yaśovarman’s successor Āmarāja is said to have been converted by one Bappabhatta. according to the Jaina Rājaśekhara, between 751 A.D. and 755 A.D.

Yaśovarman must have died therefore about 750 A.D. Moreover in the introduction of the Harṣacarita, Bāṇa who lived about 625 A.D. does not mention Bhavabhūti along with his predecessors such as Kālidāsa. So, it becomes clear that Bhavabhūti was a successor of Bāṇa and Kālidāsa. The date of Bhavabhūti thus would be about 725 A.D. or the first quarter of the 8th century. Vāmana in his Kāvyalaṅkārasūtrakṛtṛti has cited some illustrations from Bhavabhūti’s works. For instance, after defining the Gaudi style in Kāvyalaṅkārasūtrakṛtṛti, Vāmana has quoted a verse from the Mahāvīra-charita. Again, after defining the figure Rūpaka, Vāmana has cited a verse from the

29. HC. Intro.
30. KLSV. I. 2.12
32. KLSV. IV. 3.6
Uttara-rāma-charita. Vāmana, the author of the Kāvyālaṅkārasūtravṛtti flourished in circa A.D. 800. Bhavabhūti must have become famous before that date.

Rājaśekhara, who lived in the period A.D. 850-950 has put a verse in the mouth of the Sūtradhāra of the Bālarāma�aṇa34, in this verse Rājaśekhara calls himself an incarnation of Bhavabhūti. Later, in the opening scene of the fourth Act of the Bālarāma�aṇa Rājaśekhara has introduced a Brāhmaṇa boy named Bhavabhūti studying under an Upadhyaya. Thus, we come to know that Bhavabhūti had flourished long before 850-950 A.D. and had attained great renown.

Dhanika who flourished A.D. 974–1000, the author of the Daśarūpavāloka35 and Bhoja flourished A.D. 1010–1055 of the

33. iyarp gehe lakṣmīryamamṛitavartirnayanayo
   rasāsvasyāḥ sparśo vapuṣi bahalaścandanarasah /
   ayam kaṁthe bāhuḥ sīrīmasṛīno mauktikasaraḥ
   kimasyā na preyo yadi paramasahyaustu virahaḥ //
   URC. Act I.
34. babhūva valmīkabhavaḥ kaviḥ pura
   tataḥ prapede bhuvī bhatirmeṇṭhatām /
   sthītaḥ punaryo bhavabhūtiḥrekhaḥ
   sa vartate samprati rājaśekharaḥ //
   Balar. I. 16
35. Darupa. P. 38
Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa have cited illustrations from Bhavabhūti’s plays in their works. Soddhala the author of the Udayasundarīkathā, which is composed in A.D. 1050 has eulogized Bhavabhūti as — “Venerable in this world is the noble Bhavabhūti, the leader of the caravan on the highway of literature. Being guided by his work as by the flag of a caravan-leader, the people follow poets”37. From this point we come to know that Bhavabhūti had flourished long before 1050 A.D.

Kuṭṭaka, the author of the Vakroktijīvita, who had flourished A.D. 1000, cited illustrations from all the three plays of Bhavabhūti38. It also indicates that Bhavabhūti had flourished long before the date of Kuṭṭaka.

Besides these, several verses of Bhavabhūti are collected in Sanskrit anthologies. The Subhashitaratnakosha, the earliest known Sanskrit anthology of Vidyakara which is composed in eleventh century A.D. cites 31 verses with Bhavabhūti’s name and 13 anonymously. The Saduktikarnamrita of Sridharadasa, which is compiled in A.D. 1205, cites 11 verses with Bhavabhūti’s name, most of which are of the Muktaka type.

36. SKB. Pp. 519-20
38. VJ. P. 71
40. Sadkar. P. 83
From the above discussion we come to know that the date of Bhavabhūti thus would be about 725 A.D. or the first quarter of the 8th century.

**Works**

Bhavabhūti is remembered as the author of three Sanskrit dramas viz. Mahāvīracharita, Mālatīmādhava and Uttara-rāmaccharita. The first and the last are nāṭakas, while the second one is the prakarana in ten acts. V.V. Mirashi in his work 'Bhavabhūti' says- “All the plays immortalized the name of Bhavabhūti"41. Vakpatiraja, author of Gaudavaho narrated the excellences of Bhavabhūti's works as shining like particles of liquid nectar of poetry42. Wilson remarks the more deeply a man feels, the more prone he is to look at facts and the less able to humour or jest43.

There is a controversy regarding the chronological order of the composition of the three plays of Bhavabhuti.

1. According to Anundoram Borooah, Mahāvīracharita is the first work of Bhavabhūti and Mālatīmādhava is the last.

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41. V.V. Mirashi, *Bhavabhuti*. P. 40
42. Gada. P. 799
43. Gadadhardeva Sarma, *Srestha Rupakatraya*, P. 150
In the Mahāvīrcharita Bhavabhūti gives information about himself, but does not make any allusion to any of his works. In the Mālatīmādhava through a verse he shown his displeasure with regard to the popularity of his former works, which shows that it succeeded them. The Uttara-rāma-charita is the extension of the life of Rāma. The word 'Uttara' shows that it followed the Mahāvīrcharita.

2. Dr. A.B. Kieth is of opinion, that the first work of the poet is Mālatīmādhava, next comes Mahāvīrcharita and then Uttara-rāma-charita. He says that every first attempt shows some merits as well as defects and Mālatīmādhava is no exception. In its prelude Bhavabhūti talks too much about himself and his education and vehemently tries to project himself and in the later dramas the tendency is comparatively less. Śṛṅgāra is the leading sentiment in Sanskrit. The other Rasas are Śṛṅgāra, Vīra and Karuṇa. Dr. Kieth argues that a beginner will not produce a play with Vīra as the dominant sentiment.

44. Anundoram Borooah, Bhavabhuti and His Place in Sanskrit Literature, P. 26
45. A.B. Keith, A History of Sanskrit Literature, P. 102
He further point out that the verse "Vasyavacah" in Mahāvīracharita clearly shows that it is the second among the dramas of Bhavabhūti. Besides these, Kālidāsa must have inspired Bhavabhūti to write an erotic play.

3. According to Dr. Mukunda Madhav Sarma46, Mahāvīracharita is the poet’s first composition, Uttara-rāma-charita second and the last is Mālatīmādhava.

4. According to Dr. Bhandarkar47 the chronological order is Māhāvīracharita, Mālatīmādhava and Uttara-rāma-charita. The Mahāvīracharita was not well accepted by the audience and his critics were severe on him Bhavabhūti lashed at them in the prologue to Mālatīmādhava.

Ye namakecidih nah prathayantyavgyam
Janantitekimapitanapratinaisayatnah
Utpasyte tu mama koapisamanathama
Kalohyayam niravadhipulaca prithvi (Act 1-8)

Those, who indeed speak ill of us in this matter, know something that is inexpressible this attempt is not for them.

46. Mukunda Madhava Sarmah, Upama Kalidasasya, P.37
47. R.G. Bhandarkar, MM. Intro.
There will be born or there is someone of similar taste with me, for
time is unlimited and the earth is wide. Bhavabhūti was aware of the
qualities of his poetry and he left it to the future generation to decide.
Dr. Bhandarkar points out that the Mālatīmādhava and Uttara-rāma-
charita replete with beautiful imagination and insight into the human
heart which are absent in the Mahāvīracarita. So, Mahāvīracarita
may be his first work, the second and third being Mālatīmādhava and
Uttara-rāma-charita respectively. Moreover Mahāvīracarita does
not refer to any prior work.

The words “apuvatvataprabandhsyain” the first Act of
Mahāvīracarita clearly shows that it is the first work of Bhavabhūti.
Bhavabhūti remarks that his play Uttara-rāma-charita is wonderful
creation of his master intellect in a verse at the end of Uttara-rāma-
charita. The same idea about his merit is expressed in the prologue of
Uttara-rāma-charita as –

“Ymbrahamanamiyamdevi Vagvasyevanuvratate
Utaramramacaritamtatpranitam prayoksyate”

Whom, a Brāhmaṇa, this goddess of speech follows like an
obedient wife, Uttara-rāma-charita composed by him, will be
presented. The learned audience judge that
“Utreramacaritebhavabhutivisisyate”. All these support the view of Dr. Bhandarkar.

5. V.V. Mirashi\(^{48}\) states that Mahāvīracharita is the oldest composition which is written in Vidarbha, native place of Bhavabhūti and the Mālatīmādhava which is written in Padmavati is his second work and Uttara-rāma-charita is the last work in which he speaks little about himself.

6. G.K. Bhat\(^{49}\) also remarks that Mahāvīracharita is the first work of Bhavabhūti. Mālatīmādhava is second and Uttara-rāma-charita is the third. He is of the opinion that though the plays Mahāvīracharita and Uttara-rāma-charita deal with the early life and later life of Rāma, it is not necessary that the two plays are written one after another. According to him Bhavabhūti's first play is not liked by the people and so in his second play Malatimadhava he upraids his critics. In the first two plays he gives brief account of himself while in the Uttara-rama-charita it is too short. The Mālatīmādhava deals with the story of young love; in Uttara-rāma-charita it is the mature love of an elderly couple that receives superb treatment.

\(^{48}\) V.V. Mirashi, Bhavabhuti, P. 65  
\(^{49}\) G.K. Bhat, Bhavabhuti, Pp. 7-8
7. Dixit\textsuperscript{50}, the author of “Bhavabhūti: His life and literature” after a detailed study remarks that the chronological order is Mahāvīracharita–Mālatīmādhava–Uttara-rāma-charita. The verse “ye namakecididh” suggests that Mālatīmādhava was preceded by one or more dramas of the author and it failed to attract the audience and it may be Mahāvīracharita. Owing to the intrinsic merit of the play, Uttara-rāma-charita can be considered as the last. If it is accepted that Uttara-rāma-charita is the second, then it must be accepted that Uttara-rāma-charita was also a failure. Actually it is not so.

In this way scholars are not consensus regarding the chronological order of the plays of Bhavabhūti. However, majority of them look upon Mahāvīracharita as the poet’s first work, Mālatīmādhava second and the Uttara-rāma-charita as the last. Now, it is try to discuss the three plays of Bhavabhūti briefly.

**Mahaviracharita**

The Mahāvīracharita or “The fortunes of the Great Hero” is a play in seven Acts. The plot of this play is taken from the great epic Rāmāyana with slight variations.

\textsuperscript{50} S. V. Dixit, *Bhavabhuti: His Life and Literature*, P. 28
The play depicts the Rāma’s life from his childhood to his return to Ayodhya after his victory over Rāvaṇa. Indian tradition says that Bhavabhūti has written up to fifth Act, Verse No. 46 of the Mahāvīracharita. The rest of the drama is composed by others. There exist two different recensions of the play North Indian and South Indian. The North Indian recension is written by a poet called Vinayaka and the South Indian recension is written by a poet Subrahmanya by name. There is a third version also, but the name of the writer is not known to us. The Northern recension is taken to be more authentic than the others. Bhavabhūti is supposed to be the author of the couple drama as assigned by the North Indian recension.

The prelude of the drama informs us that Visvāmitra has returned from Ayodhya with Rāma and Lakṣmana. For the protection of the sacrifice Visvāmitra brings them to the hermitage. Visvāmitra invites Janaka; the king of Videha, in lieu of him comes Kuśadhvaja brother of king Janaka along with Sīta and Urmilā.

The first Act opens with their arrival in the hermitage of Visvāmitra. Visvāmitra introduces Rāma and Lakṣmana with Sīta and Urmila. Kuśadhvaja thinks that Rāma will be fit for Sīta. Then a messenger named Sarvamaya comes from Rāvaṇa demanding the
hands of Sīta in marriage. Rāma kills Tadaka in the hermitage. Being pleased with Rāma Visvāmitra offers him the Jrimbhakastra. Rāma breaks the bow of Śiva and gains Sīta as his wife. Urmila is also given to Lakṣmana.

The sage also settles the marriage of Bharata and Satrughna with Mandavi and Srutakirti. All these happen in front of Sarvamaya, he threatens Sīta’s confinement at Rāvaṇa’s palace. Meanwhile the two demons Maricha and Subahu come and Rāma kills them. Sarvamaya leaves the place to report Rāvaṇa about the failure of his mission. This closes the first Act named ‘Kaumara’.

The second Acts starts with the entrance of Malyavan, Rāvaṇa’s minister and Surpanakha into Lanka. Surpanakha sister of Rāvaṇa, informs Malyavan about the wedding of Rāma and his brothers Malyavan becomes agitated hearing the news of Tadaka’s death and the two demons. Rāma’s acquisition of Jrimbhakastra also teases him. Instigated by Malyavan, Jamadagnya comes to take revenge against Rāma for breaking his Guru’s bow. He challenges Rāma to fight. Rāma accepts his challenge. Here ends the second Act of the drama named ‘Parasuramasambada’.

In the third Act we find that sages Vaśistha and Viśvāmitra try to pacify Jamadagnya, but in vain. Then follows a spirited
conversation between Jamadagnya and Satananda later on Janaka, Visvāmitra and Dasaratha also join them. After a long dispute, Rāma enters and announces his decision to fight with Jamadagnya. Here ends the third Act named ‘Samsristo’.

The fourth Act discloses that Jamadagnya is defeated by Rāma. Malyavan plans another strategy. Surpanakha is instructed to enter in the body of Manthara, a maid of Kaikeyi. Jamadagnya returns to the forest Dandaka and gives his bow to Rāma. Surpanakha in the guise of Manthara asks the two previous promised boons to Dasaratha and according to the condition of the boons, Rāma goes to the forest accompanied by Sīta and Lakṣmana. Here ends the fourth Act named ‘Caritram’.

In the fifth Act the conversation of Jatayu and Sampati, the aged vultures inform Rāma’s entrance to Panchavati and destruction of demons. In Panchavati Jatayu notices Rāvaṇa taking away Sīta in a chariot and he challenges Rāvaṇa to fight. In the main scene Rāma and Lakṣmana are lamenting for the abduction of Sīta. In Dandakaranya they rescue a female ascetic. She gives a letter to Rāma through which Vibhisana’s union with Rāma is announced and informs that in Rishyamuka mountain Sīta has dropped her upper garment. Vāli, the king of Vanara is instigated by Malyavan to oppose
Rāma. Rāma kills Vāli and makes friendship with Vibhisana and Vāli’s brother Sugriva. This is the fifth Act named “Aranyakam”.

In the sixth Act Malyavan becomes sad for the failure of his plans. Trijata informs Malyavan that Hanumat burns the town of Lānkā. Malyavan also gets information about the infatuation of Rāvaṇa for Sīta. Mandodari informs Rāvaṇa about Rāma’s approach to Lānkā and the bridge built by the Vanaras over the ocean. Angada has been sent to Rāvaṇa with the proposal to give back Sīta. But Rāvaṇa does not accept the proposal of Angada and goes to the battle field. Finally Rāvaṇa is killed by Rāma and Lakṣmana kills Indrajit. The gods are pleased and flowers are showered on them from the heaven.

In the last Act, Sita is rescued. Sīta’s chastity is proved by fire ordeal. The coronation of Vibhisana is held as the King of Lānkā. After that Rāma, Lakṣmana, Sīta, Sugriva and Vibhisana return to Ayodhya climbing in the aerial chariot. They pass the places which remind them of their past days. In Ayodhya all of them are welcomed and Rama is coroneted as the King. The play ends with a benediction.

Although the plot of Mahāvīracharita is based on Rāmāyana, the play writer has made certain changes in order to suit the dramatic purpose. The public meeting of Sīta and Rāma at the
hermitage of Visvāmitra in order to kindle the flame of love in their hearts, the introduction of a demon messenger from Rāvana, the breakings of Śiva's bow at the hermitage of Visvāmitra itself, his attempt to incite Parasurama against Rāma are all innovations made by the dramatist.

Literally, the play has considerable merits. It is a treasure house of idioms of Sanskrit language. The geographical and historical accounts that reflected in the play deserve special attention. In the Mahāvīracharita predominant sentiment is heroic or vīra. Vibhatsa, Raudra and Adbhuta sentiments are subordinate. Bhavabhūti is unparalleled in describing the Vibhatsa rasa. In the description of demons Tadaka and Kabandha he delineates Vibhatsa rasa. Raudra rasa is seen in the utterances of Satananda and Jamadagnya. In the description of Jrimbhastra and the battle between Rāma and Rāvana, Adbhuta rasa is visible. His long compounds sometimes make the description monotonous but Bhavabhūti is successful for unity of action. Bhavabhūti's selection of word is happy, though he applies some unknown and rarely used words. In the play he uses Gaudi riti. His use of the Alaṅkāras such as Upamā, Rūpaka, Ślesa, Anuprasa etc. enriches his language.
In characterization Bhavabhūti has great skill. Rāma, the hero of the play is an ideal man. He is depicted as the personification of goodness. He is magnanimous and valiant. Bhavabhūti has shown fault skill in depicting Sita as a modest, virtuous and loving woman other female characters are not given importance. A cursory glance on the play suggests that the dramatist has achieved fair success in characterization.

Mālatīmādhava

Mālatīmādhava, probably the second work of Bhavabhūti, is a Prakaraṇa type of Rūpaka in ten Acts.Gunadhya's Brihatkatha is the source of the Mālatīmādhava.

Mālatīmādhava is a work of Bhavabhūti's fertile imagination. It is a love story of two young hearts. The hero of Mālatīmādhava is Mādhava and the heroine is Mālatī. The poet also describes another love story between Makaranda and Madayantikā.

The story of the Mālatīmādhava is as Devarata, minister to the Vidarbha king and Bhūrivasu, minister of the king of Padmavati, was schoolmates. They were so attached to each other that they had vowed, in their young days, that if they had a son and a daughter they would get them married. It so happened that Devarāta's son Mādhava came to Padmavati with his companion Makaranda to study
philosophy. And during his evening strolls through the city he happened to be noticed by Mālatī, the daughter of Bhūrivasu. Youth and comely appearance strengthened mutual attraction. A meeting in the city park at the festival of Kamadeva, an exchange of gifts of a Bakula garland from Mādhava and of his portrait from Mālatī, left no doubt that both were earnestly in love with each other.

Kāmandakī who was now living in Padmavati as a Buddhist nun had studied with Devarāta and Bhūrivasu and was fully aware of their intentions. Determined to help, she had encouraged Mālatī, through her nurse’s daughter and companion Lavaṅgīka, in her love for Mādhava. Kāmandakī’s pupil Buddharakṣīta had contacted Madayantikā, Mālatī’s friend from childhood, for Makaranda. Unfortunately, Nandana, the king’s close companion and brother of Madayantikā, converted Mālatī. Bhūrivasu had meekly to accept the king’s wishes. Kāmandakī personally talked to Mālatī, impressed on her mind the supreme importance of love as the basis of marriage, and persuaded her to act boldly like Sakuntala, Urvashi and Vasavadatta, the heroine of old tales. But traditions of noble lineage and respect and devotion to parents outweighed the love that Mālatī felt for Mādhava. Kāmandakī arranged for the two pairs of lovers to meet in a Shiva temple. But the meeting is somehow spoiled by a
tiger attacking Madayantikā. Makaranda rushes for her rescue, slays the tiger but is wounded and faints. Mādhava sees the condition of his companion and is unnerved. The incident brought Makaranda and Madayantikā closer tighter in love. They also came to know for the first time now that Mālatī was to be married to Nanadana. Madayantikā was happy Nandana was her brother. Mādhava, on the contrary, was terribly unhappy in spite of the assurance of personal help given by Kāmandakī. Mādhava had left with Makaranda to have a bath at the confluence of the rivers Sindhu and Para. Actually he had planned enter the cemetery grounds beyond the rivers and offer human flesh to goblins in order to secure some miraculous power or help from them. Now the Kapalika Aghoraghanta had instructed his pupil Kāpalakunḍalā to find a young whom he could offer in a sacrifice and complete thereby his attainment of special tantric powers. After the tiger episode Mālatī had repaired home and was asleep at night on the terrace. She was carried away from there by Kāpalakunḍalā and brought to her Guru. By a lucky coincidence Mādhava arrived at a crucial moment to save Mālatī's life. The news of Mālatī's disappearance had also brought a search party of soldiers sent by her father and led by Kāmandakī, and the temple of Karala on
the cemetery grounds was laid under siege. In the personal fight Madhava killed Aghoraghaṇṭā.

Kāmandakī had an ingenious scheme to thwart Mālatī's marriage to Nandana. She had persuaded the king and Mālatī's parents that the bridal procession should start from the temple of the local deity worshipped by all citizens. Mālatī would put on the special bridal dress presented by the king in the temple. Kāmandakī had arranged that Mādhava and Makaranda would previously hide themselves in the inner shrine. When Mālatī entered the temple with only her companion Lavaṅgikā, she would escape by the backdoor with Mādhava through a thicket of trees towards a monastery and a garden at the back of it, where they would be married. Makaranda would then wear Mālatī's bridal dress and go in the procession to be married to Nandana. Makaranda played his part to perfection. After the ceremony he entered the bedchamber of Nandana, maintained his disguise and acted the part of a shy bride. Nandana's efforts to meet his 'wife' failed. He left in anger and frustration swearing that he would never see his bride's face. Madayantikā came to the bedchamber to chide "Mālatī" and advice her about conjugal behaviour. Makaranda, in Mālatī's disguise, presented to be asleep. Lavaṅgikā and Buddharakṣita, who were present in the bed-chamber
as the bride’s companions, explained to Madayantikā that Nandana’s impatient and rough behaviour had shocked the newly married girl. They then turned the conversation to Madayantikā’s own love for Makaranda. In the privacy of the bed-chamber Madayantikā was frank. The result was that Makaranda threw away his disguise and eloped with Madayantikā after midnight. The news of the deception and flight of the young lovers leaked and immediately armed guards were dispatched in pursuit of them. Makaranda managed to send the women to safety at the temporary residence of Mādhava behind the monastery where Mādhava and Mālatī were waiting to know if Buddharaḵṣita had succeeded in uniting Makaranda and Madayantikā. Now Buddharaḵṣita, Lavaṅgikā and Madayantikā appear on the scene with Kalahaṁsaka, disclosing the news of Makaranda’s encounter with the city guards. Mādhava is confident of his friend’s heroic ability but rushes to help him with Kalahaṁsaka. Mālatī sends Buddharaḵṣita and Avalokitā to Kāmandakī to apprise her of the development, and Lavaṅgikā to Mādhava to request him to be careful in fighting.

Mālatī is thus left alone Kapālakunḍalā, who was binding her time and opportunity to avenge her preceptor’s death, seizes the moment and abducts Mālatī.
Mādhava and Makaranda had given a brave fight to the guards and to the army that was pouring from all sides. The king himself was pleased with the young heroes and congratulated the parents for getting such sons in law. But the jubilation over heroic performance was short lived. The mysterious disappearance of Mālatī came as a sudden shock to the parents; the king and the entire populace of Padmavati and plunged them in misery and sorrow. Mādhava himself was pleased with the young heroes and congratulated the parents for getting such son-in-law. But the jubilation over heroic performance was short lived. The mysterious disappearance of Mālatī came as a sudden shock to the parents, the king and the entire populace of Padmavati and plunged them in misery and sorrow. Mādhava lost his balance of mind and wandered over hills and dales searching for Mālatī. Makaranda seeing no hope for his friend thought of jumping to death from a precipice. Mālatī’s father decided to end his life. The king and Kāmandakī lamented and wept helplessly. Kāmandakī was ready to commit suicide. In this utter disaster Kāmandakī’s one time pupil Saudāmini, who had acquired powers of Yoga, had spotted Kapālakunḍalā passing along the sky with Mālatī. She rescued Mālatī and saved Mādhava’s and Makaranda’s life. Mālatī’s marriage to
Mādhava was approved by the king. Makaranda was married to Madayantikā. Thus, the play comes to a happy end.

In the Mālatīmādhava, the principal sentiment is Śṛṅgāra. Vīra, Karuṇa, Raudra, Vibhatsa, etc. are subordinate sentiments. Bhavabhūti uses Vaidarvi Riti in the Prakaraṇa Mālatīmādhava. Bhavabhūti is also expert in using Metres. He has shown his skill in choosing the appropriate Metres to express particular feelings. In the play he uses exceptional Metre "dandaka". The language throughout is highly elegant, vigorous and bold where necessary. Alankaras such as Upamā, Atisayokti, and Arthantarnyasa etc. are used.

**Uttara-rāma-charita**

The Uttara-rāma-charita or “The Later Fortunes of Rāma” is a drama in seven Acts; it is based upon the Rāmāyana of Valmiki. The Uttara-rāma-charita is a continuation of the Mahāvīracharita and the use of word “Uttara” unmistakably shows that it followed the Mahāvīracharita. The Uttara-rāma-charita is by common consent supposed to be the masterpiece of Bhavabhūti. It was this drama which at once placed Bhavabhūti in the very first rank of Sanskrit poets. In this play Bhavabhūti has done his best to depict the sentiment of Karuṇa or Pathos with a success scarcely achieved by
any other poet of classic India that preceded or succeeded him. Now, here discuss the story of Uttara-rāma-charita in Act wise.

The prelude of the first Act informs that after the coronation of Rāma, Janaka and all other guests have returned to their respective homes. Rāma pacifies Sīta as she is sad for her father’s departure. The first Act begins with conversation of Rama and Sīta. Then a messenger named Astavakra comes from the hermitage of Rishyasringa and gives message that queen mothers and Arundhati ask Rāma to fulfill the pregnancy longing of Sīta. Vasistha also sends message to Rāma to please the subjects. Then Lakṣamana brings the picture scroll. The sight of picture gallery has aroused Sīta’s longing to visit Panchavati once again. Meanwhile a messenger called Durmukha comes and reports Rāma about the scandal of Sīta for her stay at Rāvaṇa’s residence. To please the subjects Rāma decides to abandon Sīta and asks Lakṣamana to take her to the forest. Here ends the first Act called “Citradarsano”.

The second Act depicts the events after twelve years later from the first Act. An interlude informs that after the abandonment, Sīta gives birth to twin sons Lava and Kusa who are brought up by Valmiki in his hermitage. Rāma wants to perform Asvamedha sacrifice by placing the golden image of Sīta by his side. The sacrificial
horse moves round the world and is guarded by Lakṣmana’s son Chandraketu. Rāma departs in search of Sudra Sambuka whose penance has caused the death of a Brāhmin boy. Here ends the interlude. After that Rāma kills Sambuka in the Panchavati. Rāma overwhelmes at the sight of Janasthana. Then along with Sambuka Rāma departs to the hermitage of Agastya to salute him. Here ends the second Act called “Panchavatiprabeso”.

In the third Act the conversation of two river goddess called Tamasa and Murala informs that Sīta is coming to the forest to worship the Sun-god. In Panchavati, Rāma faints at the sight of Panchavati remembering his old days. He comes into consciousness with the touch of invisible Sīta. At last on the advice of his friend Rāma returns to Ayodhya to perform Asvamedha sacrifice.

In the fourth Act a conversation between two disciples of Valmiki informs about the preparation to welcome guests such as Vasistha, Arundhati and the queens of Dasaratha. In the hermitage all of them are surprised at the sight of Lava and Kusa who look like Rama. During their conversation the friends of Lava informs him about the arrival of sacrificial horse. They bring the horse to the hermitage. A soldier tries to stop Lava, but Lava challenges him and draws his bow.
The fifth Act shows that Chandraketu son of Lakṣmana comes to fight with Lava. Lava used Jrimbhakastra upon the soldiers and makes them paralyzed. Both the boys Chandraketu and Lava admire each other and come to entertain friendly feeling. But during their conversation Lava makes some deprecating remarks about Rama which irritates Chandraketu and as a result they come to the battle field to fight.

In the sixth Act Vidyadharas inform that a ferocious battle is going on between Lava and Chandraketu. At that time Rāma enters and hinders the battle. Rāma embraces Lava and Kusa and feels parental affection for them. He also notices in them the features of Sīta and himself. Rāma wants to ask about their birth but before it he views from distance Vasistha, Arundhati, the queens of Dasaratha are coming. This is the sixth Act called “Kumarapratyabhijñana”.

The seventh Act informs that Valmiki arranges to stage the Rāmāyana infornt of the audience of the three worlds. The play informs all the incidents after Sīta’s banishment. Rāma becomes unconscious. Then real Sīta comes and makes him conscious. Valmiki brings Lava and Kusa in front of the audience. A most happy union takes place. Here ends the seventh Act called “Sanmelanam”.
The predominant sentiment in the Uttara-rāma-charita is Karuna. Śṛṅgāra, Vīra, Adbhuta etc. are subordinate sentiments in the play. In the third Act Rāma leaving his beloved wife for a long time became very much pathetic. Besides this, in the first Act where Rāma describes the pleasure he enjoyed in the company of Śīta, there is Sambhoga Śṛṅgāra and Vipralambha Śṛṅgāra when his grief caused by separation due to her abduction, is depicted. There is a Hasya Rasa in the dialogue of Sandhataki, Vīra Rasa in the description of the battle of Lava and Candraketu, Adbhuta Rasa in the description of Jāmbhaka missiles.

Through the plot of the Uttara-rāma-charita is derived from the epic Rāmāyana but Bhavabhūti made certain changes in it. In the play Bhavabhūti deviates from Rāmāyana in portraying the characters of Rāma and Śīta completely as human being. In the first Act Bhavabhūti innovation is picture gallery scene and chaya Śīta Act where Rāma’s meeting with Śīta who is in her invisible form. In the drama it is shown that Śīta is banished by Rāma in her advance stage of pregnancy and she throws herself in the river Ganga where she gives birth to twin sons. But in the Rāmāyana Śīta gives birth to Lava and Kusa in the hermitage of Valmiki. Another innovation is seen in the fourth Act, where Bhavabhūti describes the meeting of Janaka,
Kausalya, Vasistha and Arundhati in the hermitage of Valmiki. There they meet Lava and Kusa who are expected to be offspring of Rama. The fight between Lava and Chandraketu for the sacrificial horse is also introduced by Bhavabhūti. In the last Act Bhavabhūti introduces a play, garbha-nataka, which is organized by Valmiki and this is poet's another momentous innovation. The most interesting and important innovation of Bhavabhūti is the reunion of Rama and Sītā at the end of the drama which is not seen in the original Rāmāyana, which ends in tragedy. Thus Bhavabhūti’s Uttara-rāma-charita holds a high place in the theatrical literature of the world. It excels all other works of its kind in the depiction of Karuṇa and the description of wild scenery. Owing to lack of action, however, it is rather a dramatic poem than a drama.

Besides these three works of Bhavabhūti, we find two slokas quoted in Sargadhara’s Paddhati and two in Gadadharabhatta’s Rasikajivana, from Bhavabhūti’s works. This shows that Bhavabhūti might have written some other work or works but now lost to us or not discovered yet.

**Study conducted on Mālatīmādhava**

In the present work, it is not possible to refer to all the scholars and researchers who have discussed about the Mālatīmādhava in
their studies. Of them, V.V. Mirashi is a notable figure who has to his credit the famous work called "Bhavabhūti". In this work Mirashi devote a chapter (Ch-VI) to the Mālatīmādhava. Here, he describes only the main story of the Mālatīmādhava very briefly. "Observation on the life and works of Bhavabhūti" is a magnificent work of Ramakrishna Ganesa Harshe. In this famous work Harshe describes the substance of the Mālatīmādhava.

Anandaram Barooah, who is a great Sanskrit poet, also discusses about the Mālatīmādhava in his famous work named "Bhavabhūti and His place in Sanskrit Literature". In this work Barooah very systematically depicted the summary of the Acts of the Mālatīmādhava.

A. Berriedal Keith devotes a Chapter (Ch-VIII) to Bhavabhūti in his work named "The Sanskrit Drama". Here the author mainly discusses the languages and the metres of the Mālatīmādhava.

M. Krishnamachariar also dedicates a Chapter (Ch-XXII) to Drsyakavya in his work named "History of Classical Sanskrit Literature". In this work Krishnamachariar describes Bhavabhūti’s life and his plays viz. Mālatīmādhava very briefly.
Maurice Winternitz dedicates a Chapter (Ch-IV) to ornate poetry in his work named "History of Indian Literature" Vol. III. Here, the author discusses the summary of the Mālatīmādhava.

Govinda Keshab Bhat, a famous Sanskrit scholar discusses the source and plots of Mālatīmādhava in his work named "Bhavabhūti".

Vimala Gera also discusses the literary beauty of Mālatīmādhava in his work named "Mind and Art of Bhavabhūti".

P. M. Pande also discusses the Bhavabhūti's plays viz. Mālatīmādhava, Mahāvīra-charita and Uttara-rāma-charita with a little interest in his work named "Perspectives in Bhavabhūti".

Dr. Bhagirathi Biswas discusses about Mālatīmādhava in her valuable work named "Sociology of Sanskrit Drama". In this work Dr. Biswas presents the social condition which is reflected in the Mālatīmādhava.

Besides these, S.V. Dixit also presents a brief discussion of Mālatīmādhava in his famous work named "Bhavabhūti His Life and Literature".

From the above discussion, it is cleared that above mentions scholars of Sanskrit literature side by side study the Prakaraṇa Mālatīmādhava. But none of the researches of the dramaturgy has critically analyzed the Mālatīmādhava. So, we make a humble attempt
to make a close study of this work and attempt to highlight the genius
and skill of Bhavabhūti in the composition of this Prakaraṇa.

**Purpose of the Proposed Study**

The most significant work of Bhavabhūti is the Mālatīmādhava. Mālatīmādhava is a sringararasapradhana, Prakaraṇa in which love is extolled with ardour and pathos, which is not frequently found in other dramatic work. In this Prakaraṇa Bhavabhūti has understood more deeply and more seriously the problems of erotics than has been done by most of the Indian poets. The Act VI of this Prakaraṇa falsifies the often leveled criticism that the people of India were ignorant of what the people of the west call true love. Beside these, Bhavabhūti is able to draw a beautiful picture of the society during the 8th century in all its diverse aspects in Mālatīmādhava. But very few works have been carried out with regard to critically examine Mālatīmādhava as a Prakaraṇa and also its dramatic technicality and style and also its socio-cultural condition as depicted by Bhavabhūti. Thus, the above issues pursuaded the researcher to take up the study entitle “Bhavabhūti’s Mālatīmādhava: A Critical Study” with a view to determine the place of Mālatīmādhava in Sanskrit dramatic literature along with its socio-cultural condition engaging myself to examine the features of Mālatīmādhava as a Prakaraṇa and to.