

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

BĀNA AND DHANAPĀLA :
A STUDY IN CONTRAST

(1) DISCOVERY OF DHANAPĀLA'S IMITATION OF BĀNA :-

The credit for discovering an imitator of Bāna in Dhanapāla must be given to Dr. A.B.Keith,¹ whose words were later on paraphrased by Dr. M. Krishnamachariar and Dr. S.K.De. Dr. Krishnamachariar remarked that the TM "is a regular image of Kādambarī and every occasion of note in Kādambarī finds a parallel here", and that "Dhanapāla was a successful follower of Bāna".² Dr. De ~~asserted~~ went further ~~and~~ and asserted that Bāna found an imitator in Dhanapāla who could copy most of his hyperbolic mannerisms, but, however, could not reproduce much of his poetic excellences.³ The problem has been further discussed in a very shallow⁴ manner by Dr. Harindrabhushan Jain⁵ and somewhat seriously and sincerely by Dr. Jagga Jagannath Pathak,⁶ and Prof. Amanath Pandey.⁷

Taking their clue obviously from the above remarks of of Dr. Keith, Dr. Krishnamachariar and Dr. De, both Dr. Harindrabhushan Jain and Dr. Jagannath Pathak have sought to

1. HSL(K), p.331. / 2. HCSL, p.475. / 3. HSL(DD), p.430.

4. The learned scholar's shallow treatment is revealed in
(P.T.O.)

pick up a few parallelisms from Bāna's Kādambarī and Dhanapāla's TM and have confirmed the conclusion of the veterans, adding further that Dhanapāla imitates Bāna not only in the matter of the plot of the narrative, but also in the scheme of characters, in characterization, in style, in disposition of the figures of speech and in delineation of poetic relish (rasa) too.⁸ Prof. Amaranath Pandey, on the other hand, has somewhat come near the fringe of the bull's-eye, when he endeavours to equate various incidents and motifs both from the Kad. and the HC with those in the TM, and quotes a number of passages in which Bāna's influence on Dhanapāla is apparent.

The problem needs to be mooted again in view of the study of Dhanapāla's TM in the foregoing chapters.

(2) DHANAPĀLA'S REMARKS ABOUT BĀNA AND HIS WORKS :

In the introductory verses of the TM, Dhanapāla has paid tributes to Bāna, ^{as} a worthy predecessor and poet, and has specifically mentioned ~~the~~ his ~~works~~ prose-romances, viz., "Kādambarī" and "Harṣākhyāyikā" by a name. While he has devoted only one verse each for most of the poets, he has allotted two for Bana, whose dazzling poetic genius, he says, served to shear other poets clear of their pride of being poets.⁹ There is an intelligent suggestion in it of

6. cf. Mag. Vol. I, No.2, pp.81-90, V.Sam.2026 (1970 A.D.).

7. BAP, pp.63-71. / 8. Sag.Vol.III, NO.4, pp.337-340; Samvid, vol.IV, Nos.1-4, pp.125-128; Mag.Vol.I, No.2, p.83.

9. TM(N), Intro.vs.26: केवलौऽपि स्फुरन्बाणः करोति विप्रदानकवीन् ।

the sense of jealousy and frustration he aroused in the heart of his contemporaries as well as posteriors. In the next verse Dhanapāla suggestively compares Bāna's Kādambarī to wine and the Harṣacaritam to divine nector, both which earned him fame unbounded like an ocean and endeared him to the elite of his days.¹⁰

(3) MISINTERPRETATION BY SCHOLARS :-

Now, scholars like Dr. Keith, Dr. Krishnamachariar, Dr. De, Dr. Jagannath Pathak, Dr. Harindrabhushan Jain and Prof. Amaranath Pandey have read in these verses a tacit admission by Dhanapāla of his indebtedness to Bāna when they contend that our poet imitated, successfully according to some and unsuccessfully according to others, the illustrious predecessor. All of them seem to have rather shot far below the bull's-eye. What Dhanapāla seems to have emphasized in these verses is, not his indebtedness, but rather the extraordinaryⁱ powerful genius of Bāna, the unrivalled place of his Sanskrit prose-romances in the hearts of the learned, and ~~in~~ his own covetousness for a matching fame on the strength^{en} of his single prose-romance. Dr. Jagannath Pathak is, of course, quite right when he reads in these verses a deep sense

10. TM(N), Intro. vs.27: कादम्बरीसहोदर्यी सुधया वैकुण्ठे हृदि ।
हृदयव्यापिकया ख्यातिं वाणोऽब्धिरिव लब्धवान् ॥

(i) The Story and the Theme :-

Bāna's Kad. is apparently a transexistentially enduring love and ultimate union of Candāpīḍa and Kādambarī on the one hand, and that of Puṇḍarīka and Māhaśvatā on the other hand. From the point of view of the subtle ontogenetically mystical significance, it is, as has been revealed by Dr. Vasudev Sharan Aggrawal,¹⁶ a tale of the eternal natural attraction of human mind towards carnal gratifications, on the one hand, and that of its sublimation, through penance and union with higher wisdom cohabitant with the mystic thousand-petalled cerebral lotus, on the other hand. His other prose-romance, the HC, however, is a romantic biography partly of Bāna, and mainly of the line of Emperor Harṣavardhana of Sthānviṣvara.

Dhanapāla's TM is apparently a tale of love and union of Harivāhana and Tilakamañjarī on the one hand, and that of Samaraketu and Malayasundarī on the other hand. From the subtle allegorical point of view indirectly revealed by Dhanapāla himself, it is a tale of the fall of a celestial soul into the interminable ocean of transmigratory human existence and its ascent to Final Emancipation through the attainment of superhuman powers with the help of True Faith and piety.

Thus, though both are similar apparently as tales of

16. KESA, Appendix 1, pp.333-363.

love and union of their respective pairs of ~~heroes~~ heroes and heroines,¹⁷ they are poles apart so far as their real inner significances are concerned; while Bāna's significance is microscopically implicit, Dhanapāla's allegory is telescopically explicit.

Bāna preferred to pick up the skeleton for his narrative of the Kad. from the story of Sumanas as told by Guṇādhyā in his Br̥hatkathā. Both Prof. S.V.Dixit¹⁸ and Dr. Neeta Sharma¹⁹ have observed that as far as the main outline of the plot is concerned, Bāna has followed the original story from the Br̥hatkathā very faithfully, except on some occasions especially at the end, and that he has changed the names of the characters and places; the original story of two births is transformed by Bāna into a story of three births. Bāna's real poetic power consists in breathing the very life in the skeleton by adding many new situations, new details, new incidents and elaborate descriptions. As has been rightly pointed out by Dr. Neeta Sharma,²⁰ originality does not ~~consist~~ lie in pure inventiveness but often it lies in the way a poet handles even an old subject, giving it entirely new shape, and that Bana's originality lies in his style or presentation of the theme.

17. cf. Mag. Vol. I, No. 2, p. 83: पूर्वजन्मानुगता प्रीतिरेव समानरूपेण काणधन-
पालयोः पश्यन्ति के लक्ष्यतया प्रतिपाद्या ।

18. BHL, p. 88.

/ 19. BLS, p. 87.

20. BHL, p. 103.

Dhanapāla seems to have disliked the idea of borrowing, like Bāna, a plot almost in extenso from Guṇādhyā's Brhatkathā. His main objection to such a practice was that a story borrowed from a widely popular work like Brhatkathā badly compared with the original and looked like a patch-work²¹ lacking in unity of the plot-structure. A conscious artist as he was, Dhanapāla could not put up with this shortcoming and preferred to collect the elements of his story from a source which was not widely known to the non-Jains, and extracted a bare outline of the story which, in the original, ran through numerous intervening sub-stories. He, thus, tried to preserve the quality of newness in the basic story of the main plot. With this he fused another story, that of the by-plot which, for the most part, he invented on the basis of various motifs drawn from contemporary history, literary master-pieces of his predecessors like Bāna, Haribhadrasūri and Udyotanasūri. While Bāna's story in the Kad. is strangely fantastic and rather unrealistic in view of the lack of parallel births of the heroines corresponding to those of the heroes, Dhanapāla has taken special care to make the story of the TM well-knit and rationalistic. His use of the supernatural, the trans-existential survival of love, the reunion in next birth, the curse, the grace and the accident

21. TM(N), Intro. vs. 21: सत्यं बृहत्कथाभेदे बिन्दुमादाय संस्कृताः । तेनेतर-
कक्षः कश्चिः प्रतिभान्ति तदज्ञतः ॥

never tax the credibility of the audience, as does the story of Bāṇa's Kad.. And Dhanapāla's story is no less "replete with tenderness of human love, beneficence of divine consolation, the pathos and the sorrow of death and abiding hope of reunion after death as a result of unswerving fidelity to love"²² than is Bāṇa's Kad..

(ii) Motifs :-

According to Dr. Jagannath Pathak, the principal motifs utilized by Bāṇa in his Kad. are: the lack of a son, a dream signifying imminent conception, union of lovers, kidnapping of the heroine, a parrot, a curse, love-letter, aerial flight. To add to these, some of those in the HC are: the propitiation of mystic lores, apparition of a giant, conferring of a boon by a goddess, military expedition.

Though the principal motifs of Dhanapāla's TM seem to be apparently similar to the above-mentioned ones of both the prose-romances of Bāṇa, they differ vastly in their true nature, their narrative significance, their structural disposition and their rational basis. Thus, though both Meghavāhana and Tārāpīḍa are worried about the lack of a son, the ways in which they obtain one are quite different; while the former undergoes a session of penance and faces the tough test by the terrific Vetāla much in the same manner as Śrī-Harṣavardhana's forefather Puṣpabhūti did for the

22.cf. HSL(K), p.324.

sake of Bhairavācārya in the HC, Tārāpīḍa in the Kad. does not have to undergo any such trials and tribulations. The motif of dream in the TM has a parallel in the Kad.. Even so are there the parallel motifs of a birth of a son, the manner and reason for his nomenclature and education. While Puṇḍarīka and Mahāśvetā in the Kad. fall in love at first sight the blossom of celestial Pārijāta tree, Samaraketu and Malayasundarī in the TM fall in love at first sight on seeing each other through the agency of divine music. In the Kad. Candrāpīḍa reaches the Acchoda lake while pursuing the Kinnara couple, Harivāhana in the TM is kidnapped by a flying elephant whom the prince pacified by the power of his musical skill. Though the parrots are found in both the works, the one in the Kad., viz., Vaiśampāyana, is cursed for his undue advances towards Mahāśvetā due to his infatuation for sensual pleasure, while Gandharvaka in the TM is cursed for his unintentional fault of trying to cross over the Jain temple in a bid to save Malayasundarī from the effect of poison, much in the same manner as does Kapiñjala incur the curse of being transformed into a horse when he tries to overtake a Vaimānika god. The love-letter in the Kad, serves to simply convey Puṇḍarīka's love-lorn condition to Mahāśvetā and nothing more; the numerous letters in the TM are by no means love-letters all, some of them being friendly messages too, and

all of them serve a definite poetic purpose of enhancing the suspense of the story. In the Kad., Keyūṛaka and Kapinjala are depicted as flying for the time being but there is no rational basis for their doing so, since their superhuman nature is not at all emphasized by Bāna; in the TM, however, the Vidyadhara Muni flies on the strength of his mystic Vidyā, Gandharvaka does so in a celestial aeroplane or in the form of a parrot, and Citramāya assuming the form of an elephant flies due to his inherent superhuman powers as a Vidyādhara; so do the Vidyādharas accompanying their Emperor Vicitravīrya as semi-divine beings. Moreover, many of the motifs of Bāna's HC, too, are found to be skillfully ~~integrated~~ interwoven in totally different contexts in the TM. And, lastly, there are a number of motifs in the TM that have no parallel in the Kad., nor in the HC, as has been shown in detail in the ninth chapter.

(iii) Plot-structure :-

As has been discussed in the ninth chapter, the plot of Dhanapāla's TM seems to resemble that of Bāna's Kad. at first sight, excepting of course the Kathāmukha portion of the latter. But there is a vital contrast between the two in that the tales of Mahāsvetā, Jābāli and the parrot/^{each} fully box the preceding ones, the scheme in the TM is quite different. The tale of Samaraketu is not boxed in any other's, but

on the contrary it boxes the one of Tāraka. Again, the tale of Samaraketu at Kāncī is boxed in that of Malayasundarī and that of Malayasundarī in that of Harivāhana. Thus, the process of boxing the tales is partial in the TM, while it is complete in the Kad.. And there is no ~~parallel~~ parallel in the Kad. for the change of a narrative view-point with regard to the complementary aspects of the same incident, e.g., the love at first sight of Samaraketu and Malayasundarī and the consequences they face. Similarly, there is no parallel in the Kad. to the dramatic element of a tightly interwoven texture of the plot-structure of the TM; the plot of the Kad. is rather loose and held together by the simple device of boxing of the ~~maxx~~ narratives. Nor do we find the ~~sub-narratives~~ sub-narratives in the Kad., like those of Tāraka, Gandharvaka and Anāgarati in the TM which are boxed in their turn.

It is not a shortcoming that Dhanapāla has preferred to drop in the TM

∟a parallel to the Kathāmukha portion of the Kad. ~~in the Kad.~~ It is his realistic outlook that has inspired him to dispense with it in the process of shading the unnecessary addition of one more birth of the heroes.

(iv) Suspense :-

Bāṇa has relied upon long descriptions and the device of boxing the narratives in order to sustain the suspense, and has not resorted to the technique of dramatic

irony or well-knit plot for the purpose as has been done by Dhanapāla in his TM. Thus, there is a world of difference in the very technique, and Dhanapāla far surpasses Bāṇa whose technique looks but primary and raw as compared to that of the former. And, the similarity in delineation of the poetic sentiments, ~~may~~ can be found even in totally heterogenous works too, though Dhanapāla differs from Bāṇa in it.

(v) Characters :-

Much has been made of the parallelisms between the characters of Bāṇa's Kad. and those of Dhanapāla's TM, as also of some of the incidents connected with them in both. They are equated in the following manner²³ both by Dr. Jagannath Pathak and Dr. Harindrabhushan Jain.

<u>In the Kad.</u>	<u>In the TM</u>
Tārāpīḍa	Meghavāhana
Vilāsavati	Madirāvati
Candrāpīḍa	Harivāhana
Vaisampāyana	Samaraketu
Keyūraka	Gandharvaka
Kādambarī	Tilakamañjarī
Malayasundarī	Mag Mahāsvetā

Thus, King Tārāpīḍa of Ujjayinī and Queen Madirāvati are the parents of the hero in the Kad.; ^{similarly} ~~and~~ King Meghavāhana of Ayodhyā and Queen Madirāvati are the parents of the hero in

23. Mag., Vol. I, No. 2, p. 86; Sag., Vol. III, No. 4, p. 338; Samvid, Vol. IV, Nos. 1-4, p. 126.

the TM, and in both they get a son after considerable piety or penance. Again, just as Candrapīḍa is a human hero and Kādambarī is a Vidyādhara heroine of the main plot in the Kad., so is Harivāhana a human hero and Tilakamañjarī is a Vidyādhara heroine in the TM. But here the similarity ends.

Now, while Harivāhana in the TM is deliberately kidnapped by Citramāya to the Vidyādhara region, Candrapīḍa in the Kad. reaches there by mere accident. Harivāhana is a man of dignity and would not give in unless properly responded to; and Tilakamañjarī is a girl having an inborn aversion for males ~~due~~ due to her latent subconscious impressions of past birth. There is no such aspect attached to the hero and the heroine of the Kad.. ~~Agatāpānāsā~~

Again, Vaisampāyana is said to be paralleled by Samaraketu. But Samaraketu is not the son of a minister as is Vaisampāyana in the Kad., where both the heroes are friends right from their infancy. In the TM the heroes meet each other by accident ^{as a result of a night-attack} and make friends by official appointment in a royal court by the father of the hero of the main plot. No such thing happens in the Kad.. Nor does Vaisampāyana fall in love with his beloved in her corresponding next birth, as does Samaraketu with Malayasundarī. The strange thing in the Kad. is that the heroines are never reborn and they endure in their same birth while the heroes go on migrating

through a couple of births, viz., Candrāpīḍa - Śūdraka and Puṇḍarīka - Vaiśampāyana - parrot, during the very life time of the heroines ! There is no such overtaxing of imagination in the TM.

Moreover, the ~~heroiness~~ heroines of the Kad., ~~are~~ are ~~these~~ not so concrete as are those of the TM, inspite of the apparent parallelisms. The heaped up epithets in the descriptions of Kādambarī and Mahāśvetā do not add to the concretization of their characters in the Kad., as do various incidents in the TM, viz., the aversion for males, the coquatish gestures at the temple, the search operation for Harivāhana, her commanding nature, the letter of despair to Harivāhana, and the attempt at suicide on the ~~part~~ part of Tilakamañjari, and the strange device of throwing the garland, the attempts at suicide by hanging or eating poisonous fruit or drowning, and her life of consecutively befalling miseries in the case of Malayasundarī.

The lack of a parallel picture in the TM to the one of an ugly old temple-priest (jarad-dravida-dhārmika) ~~is~~ by Dr. Jagannath Pathak in the Kad. has been cited/as a proof sufficient to prove the limitations of Dhanapāla in imitating Bāna, concluding therefrom that Dhanapāla imitates Bāna only in those fields in which he is sufficiently equipped in point of poetic capability ! ²⁴ But ~~these~~ then Bāna would not be able to stand

24. Mag., Vol.I, No.2, p.86: तत्रैव धनपालो बाणमनुकर्तुं प्रयतते यत्रात्मानमनुकरणसप्रथं मनुते ।

comparision to Dhanapāla in the description of a Vetāla or a double-meaning invocation to a boat !!

On the other hand, Dr.Pathak is nearer the truth when he admits that the points of similarity are in fact the traditional poetic conventions,²⁵ that Danapāla is no mere imitator of Bāṇa,²⁶ that Bāṇa was the particular ideal for Dhanapāla,²⁷

(vi) Style and Diction :-

The ornate style of Sanskrit prose-romance had developed through centuries from the times of Patanjali. It was further perfected by Daṇḍin ~~and~~ and Subandhu. But it was Bāṇa who added to it the degree of richness, poetic sentiments, devices, figures of speech and elaboration of minute descriptions with heaped up epithets comprising too long compounds. But, it is an unquestionable fact that he was attracted by Subandhu's artificial ornamental style of representation and wonderful use of puns; and, being a genius, he could carefully keep clear of the pitfalls of Subandhu while using all his literary devices, ~~He was so much influenced by Subandhu that he incorporated in his works numerous sentences verbatim from the latter's VK.; and many of the descriptions of the Kad. are~~

25. Mag., Vol. I, No. 2, p. 85: कतिचन कादम्बरीकथागता रूढ्यस्तिलक-
मञ्जरी सदृशतया समप्रतीयन्ते ।

26. ibid., p. 87: परं धनपालो वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् वाणानुकरणमात्रमिति नैवास्माकं पक्षः ।

27. ibid., p. 89: -- महाकविर्बाण एव विशिष्य धनपालस्यादशभूत आसीद्... ।

28. VK(S), Introduction, pp. 40-48.

fashioned on those of Subandhu's VK, and there are numerous parallels in thought, arrangement and general treatment between the Kad. and the VK.²⁹ In spite of all these, none of the veterans have called Bāna an imitator of Subandhu !

As has been aptly put by Dr. J.M.Shukla, it was a regular practice of Indian poets to lift an idea or an expression from an earlier writer, dress it in a different garb and try to demonstrate his superiority in skill.³⁰ If, then, Dhanapāla utilizes all these devices for his purpose in appropriate places and proper occasions in the scheme of his quite independently well-knit plot-structure, how can one possibly brand him as an "imitator", and get away with it without being unreasonable or irrationally careless ?

From the forty-four parallel passages cited by Prof. Amaranath Pandey,³¹ it may be proved that Dhanapāla had kept before his mind's eye the style of Bāna, with a view to improve upon, and try to surpass, it while sailing safe of his worthy predecessor's flaws of too much fondness for incessant prose, too long descriptions comprising too long compounds, and too much proneness to pun. ~~When~~ When such a sensitive Sanskrit veteran rhetorician like Anandavardhana would not brand such a tendency as "imitation",³² what locus standi do the modern critics of Dhanapāla have to rush in to denigrate such a first-class Sanskrit poet and a versatile

29.VK(S), Introduction, p.45./30. ibid., p.46./31.BAP, pp.63-71.

32.DHL, IV, 16: यदपि तदपि शब्दं यत्र लोकस्य किञ्चित्, सुदुस्ति सुदुरितप्रिद-
मितीयं बुद्धिरभ्युत्थिते । अनुगतमपि पूर्व-धायया वस्तु क्वचिद् तादृक्, सुकवि-
रुपनिबन्धननिश्चयतां नोपयाति ॥

~~कविवर्य~~ Sanskrit novelist of Medieval India and consign him to a remote corner of the so-called "decadant" period of the history of Sanskrit literature and bewail that "the decline was serious"³³?

Although there was a latent competitive spirit in Dhanapāla vis-a-vis Bāna, he had great respect for the latter, whose wonderful poetic genius and wide-spread fame had been a powerful source for inspiration for him. His real intention, as has been discussed above in chapter nine, was to compose such a Sanskrit novel as would be based on a story that would conform to the tenets of Jainism, and at the same time, to offer a new model of Sanskrit 'Kathā' which, while utilizing all the excellences and popular motifs of famous master-pieces like the Kad., the HC, the Samarā., and the KUIM, and weaving them in appropriate, though quite different, contexts, would also mark a definite advance in the genre.

Due to his overfondness for puns and recondite allusions, Bāna is never satisfied unless he uses, practically at every step, double-meaning words and expressions; When he begins to give long chains of Śliṣṭopamas, where there is no resemblance between the Upamāna and the Upameya except the Śliṣṭa expression, one almost gets exasperated with him.³⁴

33. NHSL, p.396.

/ 34. BHLL, p.102.

Dhanapāla's puns and allusions are never too long-drawn, nor exasperating, inspite of the fact that he has proved himself capable of composing more elaborate and longer descriptions consisting of longer single sentences, as compared to corresponding ones of Bāṇa in similar situations; as for instance, the description of Ayodhyā as compared to that of Ujjayinī.

When Bāṇa gives a wealth of mythological, historical, geographical, philosophic, Sāstric or literary allusions, one is bewildered by their brilliance, plenty and variety; he uses all the paths of Vakrokti of sound and sense in the flow of his descriptions.³⁵

Dhanapala is too conscious a literary artist to be left behind, or proved inferior to, Bāṇa in all thses respects. And he has an additional advantage of utilizing Jain mythology over and above the Brahmanical one. He has got a matching resorcefulness in brilliantly marshalling his knowledge of the prevalent historical, philosophic, artistic and scientific lores in bringing out various facets of the picture of his character, and in depicting various details of the place sought to be described. But in the artistic exhibition of his brilliance and wealth of allusions and imageries he is never led astray from the meticulously maintained underlying order in ~~the~~ description.

35. BHLL, p.102.

Bāṇa's flair for long compounds at times extending over more than one line, coupled with his propensity for puns, makes his works too ~~much~~ ornate for the general audience even of the tenth century. Of course it is true that Bāṇa's age was one of profound all-round scholarship; even then one cannot deny that "Bāṇa uses his known gifts of imagination and word-painting like a prodigal spendthrift, using them at places without much propriety or proportion, only to display their riotous plenty."³⁶

Dhanapāla too is fond of displaying his craftsmanship in fresh imageries and exquisite word-pictures, but his sense of a novelist, of a skillful narrator, always mindful of sustaining the suspense in the story and interest in the audience, never allows himself to commit such excesses. When occasions demand, he too ~~is~~ successfully brings into play his mastery of Sanskrit language and his power of aptly ~~a~~ arraying incessantly long-winded compounds, as for instance, in the description of equally thickly-grown and hazardous forest of Vindhya, or in that of the boundless expanse of roaring waves of an unfathomable ocean. Dhanapāla never loses his sense of proportion or propriety. He generally prefers to use words of common occurrence in their most familiar grammatical forms, so much so that one rarely comes across

36. BHLL, p.103.

forms in aorist or perfect or conditional. Unlike Bāṇa, he does not seem to have been "inspired with an ambition of having a separate dictionary composed for him".³⁷ And, if we find a few of the rare Sanskrit or Prakrit words in the TM, they were certainly not rare in the days of Dhanapāla, who, on the contrary, preferred them to more sophisticated Sanskrit ones with the sole intention of making himself easily intelligible so that the interest and joy in the story and narrative art was not impeded by distraction in the form of an out-of-the-way word.

"Bāṇa's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling, moves from heaven to earth and it appears as if there is nothing under the Sun that he will not imagine".³⁸ Dhanapāla too has been guilty of this same weakness, though in a lesser degree. His imageries are more bound to earth when he deals with earthly subjects. But, when the subject rises from the surface of the earth, his imagination too grows finer and ethereal. His description of Malayasundarī as a beautiful Vidyadhara maiden as seen by youthfully passionate Samaraketu in contrast to that of her as ~~an ascetic girl~~ an ascetic girl as seen by placidly cultivated Harivāhana amply testifies to this quality of Dhanapāla. His description of Nature is markedly ⁱⁿ sympathetic harmony with the prevalent situation or mood in the context.

38. ~~BHLL~~ BHLL, p.104.

If Bāṇa is marvellous in his descriptive power and in masterly monologues like Śukanāsa's advice to Candrāpīḍa or the latter's consolation of Mahāśvetā, Dhanapāla is uniquely fascinating in highly picturesque depiction of village life, experiences of a dying girl hanging from a ~~h~~ noose, ^{and a} ~~a~~ bewildered loving friend frantically striving to ~~a~~ save her from the very noose. If Bāṇa's humour finds vent in his description of old ugly priest, Dhanapāla's sense of humour finds still better expression in most appropriately designed ~~dialogue~~ dialogue of King Meghavāhana with the Vetāla and with the Goddess Śrī.

Dhanapāla, unlike Bāṇa, does not prefer lawless splendour to decent insipidity, and he is free from Bāṇa's relish in the extended and over-ostentatious^u method which is a hindrance not only to the vigorous narrative, but also to the reality of sentiment and character. Dhanapāla's personages are not shadowy; the world he depicts is removed in time and character, but not in appreciation and sympathy, from our own. Unlike Bāṇa's heroes etc., Dhanapāla's heroes, kings and heroines are compact characters; they are not far removed from human beings.

At the same time, it must be admitted that Dhanapāla did not possess that wonderful insight into the currents of youthful passion and virgin modesty, in their varying impulses of joy and grief, hope and ~~and~~ despair, which Bāṇa did.

It was in this respect that Dhanapāla could not excel Bāṇa. The chief value of Bāṇa's unique romances lies in their sentiment and poetry, while that of Dhanapāla lies in its narrative, its characterization, its presentation, its devotional fervour and its subtle undercurrent of the moral theme. Both have tried the extravagance of luxuriant diction as a vehicle of their extravagantly romantic tales of love and despair.

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