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**Life, Date & Personality of
Poet Kākabhuṣuṇḍi
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It is clear from the title that the wellknown Kākabhuṣuṇḍī or Bhuṣuṇḍī is the author of the Kākabhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa alias Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa (=BhR), the present available edition titles Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa and hence that is accepted as the name of the work. The author Bhuṣuṇḍī is not referred in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa (VR), though the childish sports of Śrī Rāma are described.¹ Bhuṣuṇḍī's personal account is narrated in the Yogavāsiṣṭham (YV), the earliest text on the life history of Śrī Rāma and then the later on in the Rāmacarita mānasa (RCM) of Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsa (16 century AD)², yet the references of other texts such as Satyopākhyāna, Rāmāyaṇamhāmālā, etc. are discussed in this chapter.

Bhuṣuṇḍī's Account in the Yogavāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇam:

Yogavāsiṣṭham³ differs from the BhR in presenting the birth account of Bhuṣuṇḍī. It narrates the personal account of Bhuṣuṇḍī under the topic of the life style of the souls liberated while living (जीवनमुक्त)⁴ from chs. 14-27(= 14) of the 6th book called Nirvāṇa (purvārdha) and hence his personality comes out as a yogi.

The story runs follows:

Bhuṣuṇḍī is a son of a crow named "Caṇḍa", the vehicle of goddess Alambusā. Once the female swans yoked with the chariot of goddess Brahmī whom Caṇḍa happens to see in some occasion. There they drink the wine and get intoxicated. The female swans

¹ Cf. VR Bālakāṇḍa 18/26-36½.

² See RCM Uttarakāṇḍa 55-130/03 discussed in this chapter below.

³ Part-2 (Nirvāṇaprakaraṇa) Sastu Sahitya Vardhaka Karyalaya, Ahmedabad, 1951.

⁴ Rāmacaritamānasa (=RCM) also presents Bhuṣuṇḍī as Jivanamukta:

ईन्ह सहस्र महँ सब सुख खानी, दुर्लभ ब्रह्मलीन कियानी॥

धर्मसील बिरक्त अरु ग्यानी, जीवनमुक्त ब्रह्मपर प्रानी॥ (उ.का. ७७/५-६)

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start playing various amorous sports with the crow Caṇḍa and get conceived. They beget twenty one crows, Bhuṣuṇḍa is one of them. By the order of the father the crows go to stay on mt. Meru⁵ where Bhuṣuṇḍa's all brothers die, but only he survives unaffected and immortal.

Yogi Bhuṣuṇḍa is one of the chirañjivis amongst the yogins.⁶ He is Trikaḷajñāni and the master in the science of Prāṇāyāma. He can sit in Samādhi for any length of time. He is desireless and had obtained Supreme Power there he is enjoying the bliss of his own Self and he being a chirañjivi still there. He has the full knowledge of five types of Dhāraṇās. He has rendered himself proof against the 05 elements by practising the 05 methods of contemplation. It is said that when all the 12 Adityas scorch the world with their burning rays, he would through his Āpas Dhāraṇā, reach up the Ākāśa. When fierce gales arise splintering up the rocks to pieces, he would be in the Ākāśa through Agni Dhāraṇā. When the world together with the Mahāmeru would be under water, he would float on them through Vāyu Dhāraṇā.⁷

Account of Bhuṣuṇḍi in Rāmāyaṇa Mahāmālā:

Chaturvedi Satyadev notes in his Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsa Aur Rāmākathā (Hindi)⁸, "The Rāmāyaṇa Mahāmālā is composed in 10th Treta Era of the Tāmas Manu-period. It contains 56,000 verses. It is in the dialogue form between Lord Śiva and Pārvatī. It also comprises of 07 steps (similar to the kāṇḍa). The subject matter runs like this:

⁵ In RCM (Uttarakāṇḍa, Doha-168) Bhuṣuṇḍi approaches sage Lomaśa on mt. Meru:
मेरु शिखर बट छायाँ, मुनि लोमस आसीन॥

देखि चरन सिर नायऊँ, बचन कहऊँ अति दीन॥

⁶ RCM refers Bhuṣuṇḍi as chirañjivi:

सदा राम प्रिया होहु तुम्ह, सुम गुन भवन अमान।

कामरूप इच्छा मरन, ग्यान बिराग निधान ।।उ.का. १७५॥

⁷ Yoga. Age. Com. Ch.4.

⁸ Hindi Sahitya Srujana Parisad chawh, Jaunapura-Uttarpradesh-1957. p.58.

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(01) Lord Śiva assuming the form of a swan⁹ and stays on the Nilgirī mountain. (02) The reason of assuming the swan form. (03) Listening to story though one has attained realization from Lord Śiva. (04) Reasons of becoming free from infatuation at the place of Kāka-Bhuṣuṇḍī etc. (05) It contains Sugrīva and Vibhīṣaṇa taking shelter in Śrī Rāma. (06) Showing universal form Kauśalyā. (07) Reason and type of vision of universal form to Satī. (08) Śrī Rāma taking support of the Rāmeśvara (Jyotirlinga) and its purpose.

Dr. Bhāratī Āsha notes in her book Rāma kāvya Paramparā, Āvirbhāva Aur vikāsa¹⁰ that Rāmāyaṇa Mahāmālā refers to the episode of Bhuṣuṇḍī removing the doubt of Garuḍa in the dialogue between Lord Śiva and Pārvatī.

Account of Bhuṣuṇḍī in Satyopākhyāna:

Dr. Kāmil Bulke writes in his Rāmakthā ūtpatti Aur Vikāsa,¹¹ “The dialogue between Vālmīki and Mārkaṇḍeya is narrated in Satyapokākhyāna (Venkateshvara press). Through the content we can conclude that this is composed after Adhyātmarāmāyaṇa when there is an influence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s sport on Śrī Rāma saga or Rāma devotion. The contents in brief are: (01) Lord Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and other brothers are incarnation of Viṣṇu-Śeṣa-Sudarśana and Saṁkha.¹² (02) Dialogue between Mantharā and Kaikeyī narrating the story of Daśaratha and Kaikeyī.¹³ (03) The description of story of Mantharā’s previous birth according to that she is the daughter of demon virocana. She is killed by Indra’s thunderbolt commanded by Lord Viṣṇu.¹⁴ (05) In the rest of the chapter¹⁵ the divine sports of Śrī Rāma is described fully. The main episodes are: Kākabhuṣuṇḍī steals

⁹ It is also narrated in RcM,

तब कछु काल मराल तनु, धरितहँ कीन्ह निवास।

सादर सुनि रघुपति गुन, पुनि आयऊँ कैलास॥ उ.का. ८०॥

¹⁰ Śāradā Prakāśn, New Delhi, 1984, p.59.

¹¹ Hindi Parisad, Prayāga, 1950, p.173-174.

¹² Ch. 01-02.

¹³ Ch. 03-09.

¹⁴ Ch. 10/15.

¹⁵ Ch. 16-49.

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the capāti (large round cake) (शुक्कलि)¹⁶ from Rāma, he apologizes Rāma, wishes for devotion to Rāma and Bhuṣuṇḍī preaching Garuḍa about the element Rāma.¹⁷

Account of Bhuṣuṇḍī in Citrakūṭamāhātmya:

Dr. V. Rāghavan remarks in the introduction of Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa,¹⁸ “There is a text called Citrakūṭamāhātmya comprising of 16 chapters where Kākabhūṣuṇḍī appears, it deals with the places in and around mt. Citrakūṭa sanctified by Rāma’s association, actually a few sacred places in Decan and South India are also included here. From the analysis, descriptions and colophons of its Mss., we find that it is in three dialogue frames (i) Atri-Bharata, (ii) Pārvaṭī-Śiva and (iii) Bhuṣuṇḍī-Śaṇḍilya.”

Bhuṣuṇḍī figures as the speaker and although the name Ādi-Rāmāyaṇa occurs among the title of the text, would appear to be a text not forming part of our present Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa spoken by Brhamā to Bhuṣuṇḍī.

Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsa narrates Bhuṣuṇḍī’s personal account in his Rāmacaritamānasa¹⁹ (55-130k/03) in the form of dialogue between Lord Śiva and Pārvaṭī as under:

¹⁶ The edible item शुक्कलि means a large round cake made up of ground rice, sugar and sesamum and cooked in oil. (Monier Williams p. 1060) It is similar to the cake-like sweet *puri* called *Sumivālī* in Gujarata.

¹⁷ Ch. 26.

¹⁸ Ed. B.P. Sinh, Viśvavidyalaya prakasan, Varanasi-1989, p.01.

¹⁹ The reference numbers are given from the addition of Rāmacaritamānasa translated by F.S. Growse, edi. R.C. Prasada.

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Far away, to the North of mt. Sumeru,²⁰ there is a purple mountain where the bird Kākabhuṣuṇḍī dwells. He is immortal. The crow passes his life on the Niligirī worships hari. He practices meditation beneath the Pākara and the mental worship to the Lord in the shade of the mango tree. He recites episodes from the story of Śrī Rāma for (हरि) which many birds flocked to hear. In different ways he sings Śrī Rāma's exploits. During the war between Śrī Rāma and Rāvaṇa Śrī Rāma (रधुनाथ) is fighting with Meghanāda. He allows Himself to be bound. Sage Nārada sends Garuḍa, the snake-eater who cuts the bounds and departs. But he is possessed by dejection and recalls how the Supreme Person (ब्रह्म) has been bound and freed by himself, the snake-eater. The Supreme Person whose name when repeated, men are set free from the bound of birth and death. Such Śrī Rāma is bound by Meghanāda in serpent coils (नागपाश). The light of understanding does not dawn on him. Garuḍa being infatuated with grief and full of mental questionings, falls a prey to delusion.

In His perplexity he goes to the divine sage Nārada and tells him the doubt. Sage Nārada is deeply moved with compassion and speaks to Garuḍa about Śrī Rāma's Delusive Power (माया) that robs away the wise of their wits and brings them under Its sway. This delusive power has laid hold on Garuḍa. It can not be removed by any words. Sage Nārada asks Garuḍa to go to Brahmā, the Creator. Garuḍa goes to the creator and tells him his doubts. Brahmā recalls Śrī Rāma's majesty and refers to Lord Śiva (महेश) who is well aware of the majesty of Rāma. Garuḍa goes then to Lord Śiva (महादेव) who at that time is on the way to Kubera's palace. Garuḍa bows down to Lord Śiva and speaks of his doubt. He sends Garuḍa to a place where Śrī

²⁰ (i) Sumeru-parvata is the Rudra Himalaya in Garwal, where the river Ganges has got its source, it is near Badrikā-āśrama. It is called pañca parvata from its five peaks, Rudra Himalaya, Viṣṇupurī, Brhmapurī, Udgārikṇṭha and Svargārohini). Four of the five Pāṇḍavas died at the last mountain. The Matsya purāṇa says that Sumeru parvata is bounded on the north by Uttara-kuru, on the south by Bhāratavarṣa on the west by Ketumālā and on the east by Bhadrāśvavarṣa. According to Mr. Sherring all local traditions fix mount Meru as lying direct to the north of the Almora district (ii) A mountain in Sākadvīpa, called also Meru (Mbh., Bhīṣma, ch. 11), The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India, Nundo Lal Dey, pp. 196-197.

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Rāma's (हरि) story is told without ceasing where his devotional affection for Śrī Rāma's feet would be intensified. The practices of the mind-control yoga, austere penance, the spiritual wisdom or dispassion Śrī Rāma can never be cultivated unless there is devotion in Śrī Rāma. In the North there is the purple mountain called Nīlgiri, the dwelling place of Kākabhuṣuṇḍī who is Supremely conversant with the path of devotion to Śrī Rāma, enlightened, full of good qualities and who is very aged. He unceasingly recites the story of Śrī Rāma and all sorts of noble birds reverently listen.

Garuḍa goes on the purple mountain. At the sight of the mountain his heart rejoices and is rid of all Māyā and infatuation. Kākabhuṣuṇḍī is just about to begin his narration with Garuḍa arrives. Kākabhuṣuṇḍī offers him a seat. Garuḍa requests him to narrate the most sanctifying story of Śrī Rāma. It is ever delightful and a remedy for every sorrow. Bhuṣuṇḍī begins to recount the story of Śrī Rāma's virtues. He narrates the events of Śrī Rāma's life in the following manner: (1) Nārada's delusion, (2) Rāvaṇa's birth, (3) Śrī Rāma's birth, (4) His childish sport in full detail, (5) Arrival of sage (Viśvāmitra), (6) Śrī Rāma's marriage, (7) Śrī Rāma's coronation in detail, (8) Śrī Rāma's exile due to the promise of king Daśaratha, (9) Sorrow of the citizens, (10) dialogue between Śrī Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, (11) going to the forest, (12) meeting a boatman (केवट), (13) crossing the river Gaṅgā and reach prayāga, (14) meeting with sage Vālmīki, (15) dwelling near mt. Citrakūṭa, (16) the minister's return, (17) death of king (Daśaratha), (18) Bharata's return (to Ayodhyā), (19) cremation of king (Daśaratha), (20) Bharata's journey (to Śrī Rāma), (21) Śrī Rāma counseling Bharata, (22) Bharata's return with Śrī Rāma's wooden shoes, (23) Bharata's stay at Nandigrāma, (24) wicked deed of Indra's son Jayanta, (25) Śrī Rāma meeting sage Atri, (26) killing of Virādha (demon), (27) Śarabhaṅga leaving his mortal body, (28) meeting with Sūtīkṣṇa, (29) meeting with sage Agastya, (30) passing through the Daṇḍaka forest, (31) meeting with king Daśaratha's friend (vulture), (32) Śrī Rāma's dwelling in Pañcavaṭī forest, (33) removing the troubles of forest-ascetics, (34) (Śrī Rāma) preaching to Lakṣmaṇa, (35) deforming Śūrpaṇakhā, (36) killing Khara and Dūṣaṇa, reporting to

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Rāvaṇa, (37) reporting to Rāvaṇa, (38) Rāvaṇa directing Mārīca, (39) Mārīca's trickery (माया), (40) Sītā's abduction, (41) Śrī Rāma's separation, (42) cremation of the vulture Jaṭāyu, (43) killing of Kabandha (demon), (44) liberation to Śabarī, (45) Śrī Rāma's separation, (46) reaching the Pampā Lake, (47) dialogue between Śrī Rāma and sage Nārada, (48) meeting with Hanūmāna, (49) friendship with Sugrīva, (50) killing of Vālī, (51) coronation of the monkey (king Sugrīva), (52) stay at the mt. Pravarṣṇa, (53) description of rainy season and the Autumn, (54) Śrī Rāma's anger, (55) Sugrīva's fright, (56) Sugrīva sending the monkey's, (57) commencing the search of Sītā, (58) entering into the cave, (59) monkeys meeting with vulture Saṁpātī (Jaṭāyu's brother), (60) Hanūmāna entering into Laṅkā, (62) reassuring Sītā, (63) destroying Rāvaṇa's garden, (64) warning Rāvaṇa, (65) burning the city of Laṅkā, (66) quenching the tail in the ocean, (67) Hanūmāna returning to Śrī Rāma, (68) reporting Sītā's safe living, (69) reaching with army to the ocean, (70) Vibhīṣṇa joining Śrī Rāma, (71) controlling the ocean, (72) constructing a bridge, (73) crossing the ocean, (74) Aṅgada as a messenger, (75) battle between demons and the monkeys, (76) killing of Kumbhakarna and Meghanāda, (77) destructions of the demons, (78) battle of Śrī Rāma and Rāvaṇa, (79) killing of Rāvaṇa, (80) Mandodari's lamentation, (81) coronation of Vibhīṣṇa, (82) union of Śrī Rāma and Sītā, (83) eulogy by the gods, (84) returning Ayodhyā, (85) coronation of Śrī Rāma, (86) description of the city and politics.

Kākabhuṣuṇḍī speaks whenever Śrī Rāma appears in human form and plays the sports (लीला) for His devotees, he flies to Ayodhyā and is delighted to watch His childish pranks (बालचरित). He visits to witness His birthday rejoices and gets fascinated by the charm of His childish sports. He stays there for 5 years. He gazes his lord and is satisfied. Assuming the form of a little crow, he keeps close to Śrī Rāma (हरि) and witnesses His manifold childish sports (बालचरित). When he roams in His boyish play (सैसवचरित), the bird flutters around Śrī Rāma and picks up and eats whatever crumbs of food fallen in the courtyard. Śrī Rāma dances in the courtyard at the sight

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of His own shadow and plays with Kākabhuṣuṇḍī in diverser ways. When He runs to catch the crow with a merry laugh, he flies away. Śrī Rāma then shows him a piece of sweet fried cake (पूप). When he goes to near, Śrī Rāma laughs and when he flies away again, He cries. When the crow approaches to touch His feet, He rushes back, turning round again and again to look at the bird.

Seeing Śrī Rāma playing like an ordinary child (प्राकृतशिशु), he is overcome by bewilderment and wonders what these sports of the Lord means. While the crow is thus perplexed, the illusion, sent forth by Śrī Rāma (रघुनाथ) takes possession of him. When Śrī Rāma sees him bewildered by confusion He laughs. Śrī Rāma crawling His rosy hands to fight. Śrī Rāma stretches out His hand to seize as he flies high into sky, he still sees Śrī Rāma's hand close beside him. The crow flies off to the abode of Brahmā. He looks back and sees two figures distance between him and Śrī Rāma's hand. The bird crosses the seven veils of the earth, mounts to the utmost height, but he sees Śrī Rāma's hand even there. He gets perplexed. He closes his eyes and when he opens them again, he finds himself in Ayodhyā.

Śrī Rāma looks at the crow with smile and as He laughs, he is straight away driven into His mouth. In Śrī Rāma's belly he beholds the universe (ब्रह्माण्ड), with millions of Brahmā's and Śiva's, countless stars and suns and moons and manifold other varites of creation.²¹ In each universe he stays hundred years and beholds many a globes. In every universe the bird sees his own self. Each universe has its own Ayodhyā, Sarayū, men and women. He has witnessed the incarnations (अवतारा) of Śrī Rāma with all his infinite variety of childish sports. Everything he sees, but in his round of the countless worlds he does not see Lord Śrī Rāma in any other guise. He sees in each world, the same child-like ways (सिसुपन), the same beauty of gracious Śrī Rāma (रघुबीर). He wanders on until he comes to his hermitage. Whenever in past Ages (कल्पशत) he hears about Śrī

²¹ Rāmacaritamānasa (80क/02-04 to 8/क/01-04) describes almost all the types and kinds of creations like mountains, rivers, etc. and sages, men, etc.

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Rāma's birth at Ayodhyā, he starts up, runs in ecstasy of love and witnesses the festive birthday scene. Then once more he beholds divine Śrī Rāma, the gracious and all-wise Lord of Illusory Power (मायापति). After sometime Śrī Rāma laughs and the bird comes out from His mouth. Again Śrī Rāma begins to play the same childish pranks (लरिकार्ई लड़कपन) with him. Seeing this childish play (चरित) and recalling that majestic scene, he loses his consciousness in perplexion. When Śrī Rāma looks lovingly at him who is perplexed, He places His lotus-like-hand on his head and delivers him of all his sorrow. The bird then prays Śrī Rāma with streaming eyes and folded hands.

Ramā's Lord (रमापति) asks Kākabhuṣuṇḍi to have a boon of 08 Perfections, the fabulous wealty or the final liberation and so on. The bird thinks himself that Śrī Rāma has not uttered about the gift of faith in Himslef. Without faith all virtues and blessings are tasteless like the food without salt.²² The bird asks for the uninterrupted (अबिरल) and unalloyed (बिसुद्ध) devotion that the Vedas and Purāṇas. Śrī Rāma okays and says that all good and propitious qualities would reside in his heart. He would reside in his heart. He would realize and inculcate faith, knowledge, spiritual wisdom, dispassion, yoga, the exploits (चरित्र) with their secrets (रहस्य) and the other distinctions of devotion, knowledge, etc. The devotees are dearer to Him. The crow must worship Him. The world with all its varieties of life is His Illusory Power. The servant devotees who seek refuge in Śrī Rāma and dearer to Him. The humblest creature possessed of devotion, is dearer to Śrī Rāma. This principle of devotion is in the Vedas and in the Purāṇas. The entire universe is His creation and He is equally compassionate (दाया= दया) to all. He who worships in thought, words and deeds, who may be man or a woma, animate or inanimate with all his heart and soul is dearest of all to Him. Time would have no power over the crow, yet he should meditate on Śrī Rāma and worships Him without ceasing.

²²

भगतिहीन गुन सब सुख अैसे। लवन बिना बहु ब्यंजन जैसे॥

भजनहीन सुख कवने काजा। अस विचारि बोलेउँ खगराजा॥ (८४क/३)

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The crow never listened before Śrī Rāma's nectar-like-discourse (वचनामृत), so his body quiveres all over and the soul gets enraptured. The occasion is shared by his mind and ears, the tongue has no power to tell it, the eyes has only the blissful experience of beholding the beauty of Śrī Rāma. After these instructions and comfort he sports like a child. Śrī Rāma then glances towards His mother Kauśalyā as He was very hungry. The mother starts up in a hurry runs and embraces Him. She takes Him on her lap and suckles (पयपान), singing His charming sports. The men and women of the city of Ayodhyā remain ever absorbed in such bliss. Even Tripurārī assumes the invisible grab to behold His childish sports. Afterwords the bird stays for some time at Ayodhyā and watches Śrī Rāma's delightful boyish amusements. The bird returns to his abode. No delosuiion affects him.

The Vedas and the Purāṇas declare that the spiritual illumination is impossible without the Holy Master (गुरु), wisdom without detachment and Happiness is impossible without Śrī Rāma (हरि). Without trust there can be no devotion and without devotion, Śrī Rāma's heart does not melt. Garuḍa should be of resolute mind and abandon all caviling, skepticism, worships all-beatuiful Śrī Rāma, who is the fountain of mercy and the delight of all. The crow has sung the greatness of Śrī Rāma's glory (प्रताप महिमा). Śrī Rāma's greatness, His perfections are beyond the reach of the Vedas, the Śeṣa serpent and the blessed Śiva. The crow then describes the super human qualities of Śrī Rāma.²³ Garuḍa is overjoyed and recalls his earlier delusion. He bows down to the crow. By Kākabhuṣuṇḍī's favour Garuḍa's delusion has ceased and he has learnt the mystery of Śrī Rāma. Garuḍa asks further the form of a crow, excellent history of Śrī Rāma's deeds and immortality. The crow rejoices to hear Garuḍa's questions and speaks about the whole of His story. Śrī Rāma's devotion confers austere penance, sacrifice, subjugation of the mind and the senses, undertaking sacred vows, charity, dispassion, discernment, austerity and mystic intuition. The Vedas

²³ RcM 91क/04 to 92ख/01-04.

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declare that love should be shown even to the meanest (नीचहु) doing great good. So long the crow did not resist Śrī Rāma, he had no peace.

He starts to tell the story of his very first birth in the former Kali Era the people act contrary to vedic doctrine. He is born in the city of Ayodhyā in the house of a Śūdra. He is a staunch devotee of Lord Śiva and a reviler of all other gods. Intoxicated with pride of wealthy, he becomes savage of purpose and swollen with arrogance. He lives in Śrī Rāma's capital, unaware of Śrī Rāma's glory. One knows the virtue of Ayodhyā when in one's heart Śrī Rāma with the bow in hand takes up his abode. In the Kali Era (described) he lives at Ayodhyā, till famine occurred. He has to move to Ujjain. He begins to practise devotion to Śiva. There is a Brahmin who constantly worshippes Śiva, Viṣṇu without disrespect. The brahmin instructs him (Kākabhuṣuṇḍī as Śūdra) as his own son. The teacher imparts him a secret spell sacred to Śiva. The Śūdra goes to a temple of Śiva and repeats the spell there. He looks with rage at Brahmins and the devotees of Hari. The teacher being distressed to see his behaviour, the teacher always admonishes him but he only burns with rage. One day the teacher instructs him the principles of right conduct and adds that "The reward of worshipping Śiva is a steadfast devotion to the feet of Śrī Rāma". When he hears the words of the teacher, becomes angry. Yet the teacher does not refrain from giving his counsel.

One day the Śūdra repeats Śiva's name in a temple, the teacher comes in, but he does not rise and do obeisance. But Lord Śiva does not tolerate the heinous sin of disrespect to a teacher. A heavenly voice (नभबानी) sounds within the temple and curses the Śūdra that "Śūdra shall become a snake". When the teacher hears Śiva's terrible curse, he raises a piteous wail and seeing him distressed. The teacher devotedly prostrates himself before Lord Śiva and with folded hands eulogises him. When Lord Śiva hears the prayer, the heavenly voice sounds to ask a boon. The teacher asks the devotion in Lord Śiva's feet and to release his student from the curse. The heavenly voice declares, "So it be". The voice adds that the Śūdra must be born for a

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thousand times. Then the Śūdra is born in Śrī Rāma's city but devoted to Lord Śiva and hence forth faith in Śrī Rāma springs up in his heart. The service to the Brahmins is the surest means of propitiating Śrī Rāma. The Śūdra goes to Vindhya mountains and reborns as a serpent. In this manner he assumes various forms but the understanding (ज्ञान) does not leave him. He retains the practice of worshipping Śrī Rāma.

Finally the Śūdra is born in the form of a brahmin and in that incarnation he joins play with other children he enacts all Śrī Rāma's boyish sports. As he grows up all worldly cravings leave his souls for he is devoted to Śrī Rāma. Whenever he finds any sages living in the woods, he visits them and bows down. He urges them to tell the stories of Śrī Rāma's excellences and listens to them with delight. All the sages whom he questioned tell him "the Lord abides in all beings" but the doctrine that God is impersonal does not satisfy him. Once he meets a sage who inquires about him and his purpose. The brahmin asks the sage about how to worship the attributive Brahman (सगुणब्रह्म). The sage narrates Śrī Rāma's virtues and then begins the nature of Absolute (अद्वैत) (i.e. Non-attributive Brahman). The sage adds further that the Brahmins are It (i.e. Brahman) and It is you (i.e. Brahman). But the Non-attributive does not captivate his mind. He asks the sage, how to worship the Personal (the embodied Brahman). Again the sage recites the incomparable story of Hari and demolishes the doctrine of the personal expounded the impersonal. But he rejects the view of the sage that God is Nirguṇa and establishes the doctrine of His concrete manifestation (i.e. Personal Absolute). He urges, never bothering to listen to the sages teaching.

At last the sage utters a curse, "he does not respect the sublime teaching and looks on everything like a crow with distrust so he should immediately assumes the form of a crow. The brahmin immediately transforms into a crow. When the sage perceives him as a devotee of Śrī Rāma, teaches the sacred spell of Śrī Rāma and the meditation on Śrī Rāma as a child. The sage keeps the crow in his hermitage reciting Śrī Rāma's acts. The sage blesses the crow to be the favourite with Śrī Rāma and storehouse of all blessed virtues and

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choosing his own time to die. He adds that the crow can comprehend all the virtues mysteries of Śrī Rāma that are recorded in the chronicles and Purāṇas either plainly or in parables. On hearing the sage's benediction the heavenly voice sounds, "the blessings of the sage must be true". The crow rejoices to hear heavenly voice (नभगिरा) and become free from the doubts. He then takes leave and arrives at his hermitage. By Śrī Rāma's grace he has obtained the boon. Here he has been living for the past twenty-seven cycles of creation (कल्प सात अरु बीसा). He is engaged in singing the glory of Śrī Rāma (रघुपति). Each time Śrī Rāma (रघुवीर) takes a human form in the city of Ayodhyā to bless His votaries. The crow goes, stays in Śrī Rāma's city and enjoys the sights of His childish games (सिसुलीला). Again installing Śrī Rāma's image in heart he returns to his hermitage.

As summarized above the account of Kākabhuṣuṇḍī, the author of the original Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa, it is clear that the account narrated in the Rāmacaritamānasa (55-130k/03) is first of all narrated by Yājñavalkya to Bharadvāja followed by Lord Śiva narrating the account to Pārvatī (उमा). This proves that Bhuṣuṇḍī has put stress on the childish sports (बालचरित) of Śrī Rāma, though the rest of the account from the arrival of sage Viśvāmitra up to Śrī Rāma's coronation are narrated cursorily (63k/68k).

Shri Baldev Misra in his Manasa Madhurī²⁴ points out the historicity of BhR with the help of the word 'History' (इतिहास) employed by Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsa in his RCM²⁵. He explains Bhuṣuṇḍī's historicity by furnishing its three types: (i) physical or wordly (like that of mortals) (अध्यात्म), (ii) Heavenly or divine (अधिदैव) and (iii) Supernatural (अधिभूतम्). Bhuṣuṇḍī and Garuḍa fall in the category of Adhidavika.

Thus Kākabhuṣuṇḍī is most proficient in the path of Rāma-Bhakti- 'Rāma-Bhakti path parama Praviṇā' (Book - 6) and who

²⁴ Sahitya ratna Bhandara, Agra 1958, p. 164.

²⁵ सुनहु परम पुनीत इतिहासा, जो सुनि सकल लोक भ्रम नासा॥ उ.का. ७८॥

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eternally engaged in reciting the story of Rāma²⁶. Tulsīdāsa says that Bhuśuṇḍī is well established 'Rāma-Bhakta' and refers to Rāma a "Bhuśuṇḍī mana mānasa Hamsa" (Book - I).

Account of Bhuśuṇḍī in Bhuśuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa:

The present available text²⁷ of Bhuśuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa contains Bhuśuṇḍī's story narrated by Brahmā which begins from chapter 04 of Bhuśuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa. Bhuśuṇḍī is born as a son of Sūrya and Kālakaṇṭakā, the terrifying sister of Kāla. Bhuśuṇḍī takes the form of a ferocious crow with his beak of iron, wings like the thunderbolt, body like the lightening, voice like a cloud and with the eyes like the fire of the doom's day (प्रलय + अन्त). He is black in complexion and brave. He grows conquering the three worlds, digging out and throwing away the mountains with strokes of his beak, digging the ocean with his nails tearing off the universe (ब्रह्माण्ड) with the sound of his wings. The sound of his flying agitates the birds (खेचर). His wings make the planes fall and the stars cling in the hair of his wings, shakes the sun and shatters the moon. He agitates the ocean and even nether-lands. He is difficult to be faced (दुरासद) due to the boon of the creator. Else he would destroy the universe, as nobody can complete him. He once had vanquishes Garuḍa, the vehicle of Lord Viṣṇu. Thus he became a menace to the gods who request Brahmā to go to Bhuśuṇḍī's abode situated on a mountain on the island on the honey sea (मधुद्विप).

Brahmā goes to Bhuśuṇḍī who welcomes Him. Brahmā advises Bhuśuṇḍī that it is unworthy of him to indulge like that in violence. Brahmā speaks to him about the greatness of Śrī Rāma and His devotion. During course of the instruction, Brahmā mentions what Garuḍa was taught on the same subject by Hanūmāna and exhorts Bhuśuṇḍī to cultivate devotion in Śrī Rāma. In this regard Bhuśuṇḍī asks Brahmā to narrate the birth and exploits of Śrī Rāma as he has himself witnessed Śrī Rāma wielding the bow, constructing a bridge

²⁶ Introduction, BhR, V. Raghvan, P. 2.

²⁷ Ed. Bhagavatī Prasāda Sinh, Vishvavidyalaya Prakashana, Varanasi, 1975.

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on the ocean and after killing the king of demons (Rāvaṇa) along with the demon families enthroned His devotee Vibhīṣṇa on Lankā.²⁸ Then on the request of the bird Brahmā proceeds to narrate the story of Śrī Rāma. The (present edition) BhR is also known as Brahmā-Bhuṣuṇḍa Samvāda and hence the cultured orientation is developed in him by Śrī Rāma which makes him piece and qualified for listening Śrī Rāma's exploits. The story of BhR commences like this: During the extensive sacrificial session (सत्रे) the gods eulogise Brahmā and ask questions to him, who is the great grand-father of the world (विश्वपितामहम्).

They ask that what should be known (वेद्यम्) in the world and which injunction (विधि) is praiseworthy (शस्य) in the world? Who is the first Performer? (विनियोक्ता), Which is its type (स्वभाव)? What is the nature? How is the form (आकार)? How is Brahma? How is his body (संस्थानम्)? How is his highest abode? In which form should one meditate upon (ध्येय) and sing his glory? (01/02).

Brahmā welcomes their questions beneficial to the world (लोक) and to the exalted (परमहंस) devotees. Then he narrates the greatness of the Lord Śrī Rāma as the source of all beings, Highest-Brahman of the form of Existence, knowledge and Bliss (सत्+चित्+आनन्द). He said that one should meditate upon Śrī Rāma's complete form which is with and without attributes. He says that formerly (पुरा) he listened Śrī Rāma's original story (मूलचरित्रम्) from the sages and narrated to Bhuṣuṇḍa (a crow) (01/03).

The gods wishes to hear about Bhuṣuṇḍa and Brahmā narrates his life story that when Brahmā goes to Bhuṣuṇḍa's abode he asks him about the one important forms of Brahman like Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa, etc. Brahmā sings the glory of Śrī Rāma which form should be meditated and should be realized. He reports about the same curiosity of

²⁸ यः पश्यतो मे धृतचापहस्तो भूभङ्गमात्रे जलधिं निबध्य।

चकार लङ्कां निजदासनाथां निहत्य वेगेन च राक्षसेन्द्रम्॥ भु.रा. ०१/०९/०९॥

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Garuḍa to Hanūmāna. On hearing Śrī Rāma's name, Bhuṣuṇḍa with curiosity requests Brahmā to narrate Śrī Rāma's birth and exploits (01/04). Thus Brahmā narrates the whole Rāmāyaṇa through the dialogue between Himself and Bhuṣuṇḍī to the Gods. At many place Bhuṣuṇḍa's questions reveals his curiosity regarding Śrī Rāma's life which are given as under:

(01) Bhuṣuṇḍa requests Brahmā to narrate the birth and exploits (कर्म) of Śrī Rāma that would satiate his heart. Brahmā commences with the purpose of Śrī Rāma's Incarnation and His exploits in the next chapters. (01/08/01)

(02) Bhuṣuṇḍa wishes to know about Śrī Rāma's cattle-rearing (पशुपालकृत्यम्). (01/21/68)

(03) Brahmā narrating Śrī Rāma saga to Bhuṣuṇḍa and asks him to cultivate eligibility for Śrī Rāma's sports through the practice of penance. (01/25/01-47) Then Brahmā gets assured about Bhuṣuṇḍī's eligibility due to the aerial speech and narrates Śrī Rāma's amorous sport in the next 34 chs. (01/26-59)

(04) "Enthronment of Śrī Rāma as a crown prince" Bhuṣuṇḍa requests Brahmā to narrate the detail account of Śrī Rāma's 06 powers. (01/92/04-05) Brahmā describes the 06 powers of Śrī Rāma according to the Vedas in the following 05 chs. (01/92-97).

(05) Bhuṣuṇḍa eagers to know about Śrī Rāma's Supremacy in the conversation of sage Durvāsā and Vedavyāsa (01/137/79).

(06) Bhuṣuṇḍa questions about Viśālākṣī that how she married with Śrī Rāma? (01/138/01-02)

(07) When Brahmā describes Śrī Rāma's sport with the creepers, Bhuṣuṇḍa wishes to know about the past life of the creepers (01/80/09-11).

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(08) Brahmā describes that a bird named Sampāti reports about Sītā's whereabouts that she is guarded by demonesses leaves in the Aśoka garden of Rāvaṇa. Hence Hanūmāna goes to Laṅkā (BhR 01/199/14-18cd). In this regard Bhuśuṇḍa questions Brahmā that (i) How Hanūmāna crossed the ocean and (ii) How he burnt Laṅkā (01/199/19-20).

(09) In the beginning of Dakṣiṇa khaṇḍa (02/02/01-06) Bhuśuṇḍa sings Śrī Rāma's glory and puts following questions to Brahmā: (01) How Śrī Rāma giving up the coronation, (02) going to the forest, (03) obeying Kaikeyī, (04) How Rāvaṇa kidnepping (05) How Sītā enduring Rāvaṇa's misdeed, (06) How Śrī Rāma releases His devotees and (07) How Śrī Rāma enduring king Daśaratha's separation after death (02/02/07-28).

(10) After hearing the episode of a crow harassing Sītā, Bhuśuṇḍa questions (01/19/01-06) about (i) Bharata's returning from his maternal uncle's home, (ii) His reaction towards Kaikeyī, Sumantra's returning without Śrī Rāma, (iv) Bharata's rule and (v) Daśaratha's condition after hearing the message. Then Brahmā narrate the further story of Śrī Rāma till Sītā's going to the earth.

Thus the questions of Bhuśuṇḍa prove the text in the dialogue form named Brahmā-Bhuśuṇḍa samivāda though it is for the Gods.

(11) Bhuśuṇḍa questions Brahmā: (i) Why Lakṣmaṇa goes to Kiṣkindhā and (ii) How Sugrīva and others welcome him (02/195/13).

Bhuśuṇḍi is also declared as the speaker of Śrī Rāma Saga in the BhR (01/09/29-31) that Śrī Rāma's life history is narrated (प्रोक्तम्) by Hayagrīva, Vālmīki (वल्मीकजेन), Vasiṣṭha, himself (i.e. Brahmā) and by Bhuśuṇḍi²⁹.

²⁹ May be the author points out the Kbhr (Kākabhūśuṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa) narrated by Garuḍa because in the present Rāmāyaṇa Bhuśuṇḍi becomes hearer but not speaker.

Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa and Its Date:

Dr. Sinh Bhagavati Prasada writes in the preface of his Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa that “As per the available Mss. This Rāmāyaṇa has three names: (i) Ādi Rāmāyaṇa, (ii) Brahma Rāmāyaṇa and (iii) Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa.

(i) It is called Ādi Rāmāyaṇa³⁰ because Brahmā has visualized Śrī Rāma’s exploits in the state of meditation in Brāhma Age (कल्प).

(ii) It is called Brahma Rāmāyaṇa because it contains the story of Incarnation of Lord Śrī Rāma (ब्रह्म = परब्रह्म) and His exploits.

(iii) It is called Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa because it is composed by Brahmā on the curious request of Bhuṣuṇḍī who questions about Śrī Rāma’s multifarious exploits and hence it is also called Brahmā-Bhuṣuṇḍa saṁvāda.³¹

(iv) It is also known as Mahārāmāyaṇa (may be due to the size of chapters and verses), or Bṛhad Rāmāyaṇa and Mūla Rāmāyaṇa indicates that it is original BhR which is enlarged by interpolating many of the event of Bhāgavata.

The present treatise the BhR contains 391 chapters³² having 21594 verses in 02 parts viz. (1) pūrvakhaṇḍa (2) Dakṣiṇakhaṇḍa.

Pūrvakhaṇḍa contains 146 chapters and 11,189 verses describing from Śrī Rāma’s birth till his enthronement as a crown prince and Daśaratha visit to the pilgrimages.

³⁰ The name Ādi Rāmāyaṇa indicates that it is the first Rāmāyaṇa among the three Rāmāyaṇas (Bhuṣuṇḍī, Vasiṣaṭha and Vālmīki) choronological composition depending on the life period of Śrī Rāma and they are (1) childhood sports (बालचरित of Bhuṣuṇḍī) (2) youth exploits (by Vasiṣaṭha) and (3) later account in Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa (= VR) of Vālmīki.

³¹ The similar incident is also found in the VR 01/02/33-34½.

³² Sinh Bhagavati Prasāda furnishes the chapter number with their subject matter and counts 516 from which 125 chs. i.e. 72 of paścimkhaṇḍa and 53 of Uttarakhaṇḍa are not available (possibly this part is unpublished).

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Dakṣiṇakhaṇḍa contains 245 chapters and 10,405 verses describing Śrī Rāma's exile till Sītā's entering into the earth.

Śrī Rāma saga³³ in the BhR is in the form of a dialogue between Brahmā and Bhuṣuṇḍī who after words narrate the same to the gods. This Śrī Rāma saga (in its major portion) from Pūrvakhaṇḍa 06 – 136 (= total 129 chs.) means total 48 chs. are similar to the Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rāvaṇa sends the demons to kill Śrī Rāma in his childhood, but they are slain the demons to kill the Vaiṣṇava devotees. They harras the three worlds by their power, for this reason king Daśaratha sends the four brothers in a secret place (i.e. the pasture land on the other bank of river Sarayū)³⁴ under the protection of sukhita and Māṅgalyā. Before marriage Śrī Rāma plays the Rāsa-dance in the Pramodavana with His consort (पराशक्ति) Sītā, the cowherdresses (incarnations of the gods). On reaching Mithilā He sends a bird with His picture to Sītā who becomes eager to marry Śrī Rāma. After the Horse-sacrifice performed by king Daśaratha³⁵ Śrī Rāma marries with the thousands princesses of the subjugated kings.³⁶

This reference seems to comply with the 16000 princesses, the widows of Narakāśura of BhP³⁷. Once again in the citrakūṭa the Rāsa-sport of Śrī Rāma and the cowherdresses takes place. There are ample description of the erotic sports in the (present editon of) BhR.

Moreover there is a special event unlike other Rāmāyaṇa's depicting the erotic sports that another consort Sahajā is mentioned in the Rāsa-soprt and in the event of their Rāsa-sport in the Citrakūṭa, Sītā is a devoted consort of knowledge (ज्ञानपरक) and Sahajā is a devoted consort of pure Love (प्रेमाभक्ति).

³³ Rāma Bhakti me Rasik sampradaya, Sinh Bhagavatī Prasāda, pp. 97-98.

³⁴ The author imagining the pasture land on the other bank of river Sarayū near Ayodhyā and the four brothers live and pass their childhood there till their marriage.

³⁵ BhR. 01/90/08-32.

³⁶ इति तैर्गदितो रामो बहुमानपुरःसरम्।

प्रत्यग्रहीच्च सानन्दं सर्वा गन्धर्वकन्यकाः ॥ BhR. 01/90/16-27.

³⁷ 10/59.

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Dr. Gupta Aruna writes in his *Ānanda Rāmāyaṇa – A cultural Study*³⁸ that Śrī Rāma is depicted as “Erotic” (रसिक) in the BhR. This statement is further corroborated by Sinh Bhagavatī Prasāda (Preface p. 03) by referring to the name Jānakīvaraśaraṇa of kulū(Kashmira) who was known as a devotee of erotic Śrī Rāma. Bhuvaneśvara Nath Mishra writes in his *Rāmabhakti sāhitya me Madhura Upāsana*,³⁹ “Bhuśuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa is the treatise of sect of Erotic Śrī Rāma (रसिकसम्प्रदाय).

Dr. Rajabali Pandeya writes in his *Hindu Dharma Kośa (Hindi)*,⁴⁰ “In it (i.e. BhR) there is a large bucked (पुट) of fellings of sweet love”. It reveals the Devotional Love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa influencing the Devotional Love of Śrī Rāma.⁴¹ He further notes that, “(1) It is said that Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa and Ādi Rāmāyaṇa is composed by Lord Śaṅkara which is a very voluminous treatise (not available now). This Rāmāyaṇa is known as Mahārāmāyaṇa. It is said that Lord Śiva narrated this Rāmāyaṇa to Pārvatī before the Svāyambhuva Manvantara of Satyuga. (2) The other Ādi Rāmāyaṇa available is a later one. The Ādi Rāmāyaṇa or BhR (available in the monastery of Ayodhyā) is influenced by the Mādhurya Bhakti of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Thus text of the BhR is a extensive work prepared on the line of the Bhāgavata cult of Vaiṣṇavavism. The author or rather the compiler of the present edition has beautifully blended Śrī Rāma’s life story with Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s life story. Hence one finds the present text containg Śrī Rāma’s story comprised of the sports and exploits of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as described in the BhP. The outline of the present text of BhR will make it clear how the beautiful fusion of the life episodes of both the Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are furnished. The extant of the BhR can also be justified after evaluating the outline of the text of BhR.

³⁸ Eastern book linkers, Delhi-1984, p.5.

³⁹ Bihara Rastrabhavana Parishad, Patana, p.166.

⁴⁰ Uttarapradesh Hindi Sansthana, Lucknow, p.48.

⁴¹ इसके भीतर माधुर्य का गहरा पुट है जो रामभक्ति पर कृष्णभक्ति का प्रभाव प्रकट करता है।

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Internal Evidence:

The date of the BhR is uncertain because of its interpolations and the unavailability of the sources. Here below the references made to arrive at tentative time period of the composition of the present text of the BhR from the lower limit as the 16th Cent. AD and the upper limit as 10,000 BC.

Different references are given regarding the date of present text of BhR. The attempt is made on the basis of its similarity with the other texts or the authors:

The BhR reads as follows:

अनन्तं चरितं तस्य वक्तुं नो पारये द्विज।
समाधौ तु सकृद्दृष्ट्वा वाल्मीकिः कथयिष्यति॥०१/०९/१२॥

This means “Vālmīki will behold it in the contemplation or Transe and will narrate it” which shows the posteriority of the present edition of BhR after Vālmīki flourished in 10,000 BC.⁴²

The BhR contains the reference of Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana which is as under:

न्यायामासोप्तरानामपरमुनिगिरामन्तरे संदिहानः
कृष्णद्वैपायनोक्तया परिचितविषयैरन्यथासिद्धिशून्यैः।
षड्भिस्तात्पर्यलिङ्गै रथमुपनिषदामन्वयं ब्रह्ममात्रं
शुश्रूषुः सानुकम्पं गुरुमनुसरति श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम्॥०१/१४/५१॥

The reference of Vedavyāsa (कृष्णद्वैपायन) and his Brahma Sūtras also proves that the present text is a posterior one.⁴³ Under 01/43⁴⁴ the cowherdesses engaged in constant remembering of Śrī Rāma.

⁴² Sanskrit Sukavi Samikṣā, Baldev Upadhyay, p. 22-23. Dr. Kamil Bulke dates it in 300 BC. in his Rāmākathā Utpatti aur vikāsa.

⁴³ Ācārya Baldev Upadhyay writes in his book, Sanskrit Sukavi Samikṣā, p.643, ‘द्वापर के वेदव्यास कृष्णद्वैपायन व्यास है। इन्होंने हि महाभारतका तथा पुराणों का प्रणयन किया है।’

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The childhood sports of Śrī Rāma described in the present available edition are similar to the sports of Śrī Kṛṣṇa depicted in the BhP. The episodes are mentioned here: killing of Pūtanā (BhR 01/17), killing of Viṣaṇa, Tṛṇāvarta (BhR 01/19), killing of Vāta, Baka, Aghāsura, breaking Brahmā's illusion (BhR 01/21-22), etc.⁴⁵ This helps us in fixing the date of Bhagavatisa BhR after BhP i.e. 2000 BC.⁴⁶

Lord Śiva comes there but does not get any reply from them and becomes angry. He curses them to get separated from Śrī Rāma.

This episode is similar to that of the Abhijñānaśākuntalam of Kālidāsa of 1st Cent. AD.⁴⁷ It reads thus:

विचिन्तयन्ती यमनन्यमानसा तपोधनं वेत्सि न मामुपस्थितम्।
स्मरिष्यति त्वां न स बोधितोऽपि सन् कथां प्रमत्तः प्रथमां कृतमिव ॥०४/०१॥

The person, thinking of whom, with a mind regardless of anything else, you, notice not me, a treasure of penance, come here he will not remember you though reminded (by you), just as an intoxicated man does not (remember) the talk made before (i.e. while drunk).

While describing Daśaratha's visit to the holy place (तीर्थयात्रा) (under 01/135/30-86) Sukhita talks about Śrī Rāma's valour of killing demon Sughōra and the place is known as Sughōra Śamanam Tritrham. This episode is much similar to the episode of Kārtikeya

⁴⁴ तत्राजगाम भगवान् रुद्रः पशुपतिः प्रभुः।
कृत्वा वन्दनमेताभ्यः क्व राम इति सोऽब्रवीत्॥
नोचुस्ताः संप्रगायन्त्यो रामचारित्रमद्भुतम्।
पुलकैः समुपेताङ्ग्यः कलिताश्रुविलोचना॥ (भु.रा. ०१/४३/३६-३७)

⁴⁵ Vide ch. 04 where Bhagavatisation is discussed separately.

⁴⁶ Bhāgavata Sampradāya Baldev Upadhyay, p.154.

(i) P. V. Kane and Rajabali Pandey date all the Purāṇa's between 400-600 AD.

⁴⁷ Sanskrit Sukavi Samikṣā, Baldev Upadhyay, p.70.

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killing Sughora in the Padma Purāṇa (Sr̥ṣṭikhaṇḍa 75)⁴⁸. It is obvious from this account that the present text (with Bhagavatisation) is not only posterior to Padma Purāṇa but also too Kārtikeya, the son of Lord Śiva and Pārvatī. Moreover it is historical fact that Lord Śiva's first wife Satī Dākṣāyaṇī tasted Śrī Rāma being the Supreme Person and hence had to suffer separation from Lord Śiva by way of her self-immolation in the sacrifice of her father Dakṣa. Pārvatī was born after many years. The probable date of Padma Purāṇa is 4th Cent. AD.⁴⁹

The description of Mithilā city is described in BhR (01/76/11-13) in prose which is influenced by the bombastic style of the poet Baṇa who describes the nice description of the city Ujjaini⁵⁰ of king Tārāpīḍa in his kādambarī which shows the posteriority of present edition of BhR after 7th Cent. AD.

The BhR 01/97 describes the types of dispassion followed by Śrī Rāma's dispassion (वैराग्य) described in Vālmīkirāmāyaṇa (= VR) and other Rāmāyaṇas though the narrative of Sītā's abandonment (सीतात्याग). Śrī Rāma utters the refrain, "while abandoning Sītā I am not perturbed" (तां मुच्यन् नैव बाधितः।). This refrain is so much similar to Śrī Rāma's statement in the Uttararāmācaritam of Bhavabhūti:

स्नेहं दयां च सौख्यं च यदि वा जानकीमपि।
आराधनाय लोकस्य मुञ्चतो नास्ति मे व्यथा॥०१/०४॥

It shows the posteriority of present text after Bhavabhūti who is flourished in 7th Cent. AD or 8th Cent. AD.⁵¹

The BhR points out Śrī Rāma as a Supreme Person thus:

⁴⁸ cf. Prācīnakathākośa (Hindi), Siddheshwara chitrav shastri, p. 1051.

⁴⁹ The Padmapurāṇa, Ancient Indian Tradition & Mythology (part I-X); Dr. N. A. Deshpade, Dr. G. P. Bhatt; Motilal Banarsidass; Delhi, 1989.

Hazra R. C. dates it in 9th – 14th Cent. AD.

⁵⁰ Kādambari, Ujjaini Varāṇam.

⁵¹ Dr. A. D. Shastri, Sanskrit Sahitya Paricaya p. 71.

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यो वासुदेवः सत्त्वमूर्जस्वलं यत् संकर्षणो यो भगवान् कालमूर्तिः।

यः प्रद्युम्नो वेदवेदाङ्गरूपः स त्वं साक्षादनिरुद्धोऽसि धर्मः॥०१/५६/४०॥

In BhR cowherdesses salute Śrī Rāma having the four forms (चतुर्व्यूह) like Vāsudeva and others:

भवांश्चतुर्व्यूहतनुः पुराणः श्रीमान् परः पूरुषः एव कश्चित्।

चत्वार एतेऽवयवाः स्फुरन्ति श्री वासुदेवाय एव यस्य॥०१/६०/२४॥

This proves that the author of present edition is totally follows the view of Śaṅkarācārya in the context of Pāñcarātra⁵² and hence the present edition is posterior to the Ādi Śaṅkarācārya i.e. after 7th or 8th Cent. AD.

From the philosophical aspect the date of present edition can be decided from the following verses of BhR.

क्रियन्तां भूरि कर्माणि नित्येजयन्तां कदाचन।

भक्तियुक्तः कर्मयोगः कर्मसंन्यासयोर्वरः॥

इति ज्ञात्वा कर्मयोगी नित्यो वेदगणैः स्तुतः।

पालनीयः शुभाचारैः भगवन्मतवेदिभिः॥०१/८६/२२-२३॥

The above verse seems to represent the philosophy of Rāmānujācārya who establishes the theory of Specified monism (विशिष्टाद्वैत) in which the Yoga of Action (कर्मयोग) blended with devotion (obviously to Lord Viṣṇu) is called better than the Yoga of renouncing actions. Śrī Rāmānujācārya flourished in 1037-1137 AD.⁵³

⁵² चतुर्व्यूह सिद्धांत (शांकरभाष्य(=शां.भा.) २/२/४२-४२) अनुसार वासुदेव से उत्पत्ति होती है संकर्षण (जीव) की, संकर्षण से प्रद्युम्न (मन) की तथा उससे उत्पत्ति होती है अनिरुद्ध (अहंकार) की। आचार्य इसी को पांचरात्र का विशिष्ट सिद्धांत मानते हैं (भागवत संप्रदाय, बलदेव उपाध्याय पृ. १२४)।

⁵³ Bhartiya Darshana-sanskrit śāstro ka Itihas, Baldev Upadhyay.

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The BhR again runs thus:

नहि तत्र भवान् विजनेऽस्ति परं स्वयमेव नरेन्द्रकुमारमाणे।

न खलु क्षणमप्यसि केलिकला रहितोऽखिल कोककलैकपटुः॥०१/३३/२५॥

He (i.e. Śrī Rāma is never alone in solitude, as He is expert in the work of koka pandit (कोककलैकपटुः). The skill of love sports in the work of koka pandit who flourished in 11th Cent. AD⁵⁴ gives a hint for fixing the posterior date of this present BhR.

The BhR refers possibly to the doctrine of differential-Non-differencialism (भेदाभेदवादः) which runs like this:

अनन्ता मूर्तयस्तस्य भिन्नाभिन्नस्वरूपिणः।

एकोऽहं बहु भवेयेतीच्छा तस्याभवत् कदा॥०१/४४/१८॥

The doctrine of differential-non-defferentialism is of Nimbārka who flourished in 12th Cent. AD.⁵⁵ So we can put the present edition after 12th Cent. AD.

The BhR (01/05/23)⁵⁶ has the influence of Gītagovindam. When Garuḍa sees Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana in yellow attire (पीतदुकूल) and who sprinkles His nectar-like-smile towards cowherdresses. This is quite similar to the Gītagovindam (Dhruva-1):

चन्दनचर्चितनीलकलेवर पीतवसनवनमाली।

⁵⁴ Paul Thomas, Google chrome, p. 151.

⁵⁵ Ācārya Baldev Upadhyay remarks in his Bhāgavat Sampradāya (Hindi pp. 315-316) that Nimbārka may be accepted to be a contemporary of Vedavyāsa but it is not so. On the other hand most of the scholars believe him to have flourished in the 12th Cent. or later. Bhāndarkar R. G. also accepts Nimbārka in the 1162 Cent. AD in his book Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism (p. 87).

⁵⁶ वृन्दावनस्थं स्मितपीयूषवर्षैः सिञ्चन्तमङ्गानि मृगीदृशां च।

राधान्वितं पीतदुकूलयुग्मं दृष्ट्वा स तुष्टाव हृदि प्रसन्नः॥

अनन्ता मूर्तयस्तस्य भिन्नाभिन्नस्वरूपिणः।

एकोऽहं बहु भवेयेतीच्छा तस्याभवत् कदा॥

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केलिचलन्मणि कुण्डलमण्डितगण्डयुगस्मितशाली॥
हरिरिह मुग्धवधूनिकरे विलासिनि विलसति केलिपरे॥

The BhR (01/09/15-17ab) run as under:

मत्स्योऽस्य हृदयं विष्णुर्योगरूपी जनार्दनः ।
कूर्मोऽस्य धारणाशक्तिर्वराहो भुजयोर्बलम् ॥
नारसिंहो महान् रोषो वामनः कटिमेखला ।
भार्गवोऽस्य परो धर्मो बलरामश्च संमदः ॥
बुद्धस्तु करुणा साक्षात् कल्की चैतस्य संस्मृतिः ।
कृष्णोऽंशांशो ह एवास्य वृन्दावनविभूषणः ॥

These express the close connection of the Daśāvatāra stotram (1/5) of Gītagovindam. The verse is runs like this: Lord Viṣṇu's incarnation are His parts: Fish is the heart, Janārdana is the yoga, Tortoise is His retentive Power (धारणा शक्ति), Boar is the strength of His arms, Man-lion is His wrath, Dwarf is His girdle (कटिमेखला), Balrāma is His Ecstasy joy (संमदः), Buddha is His compassion, Kalki is His remembrance and Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the ornament of Vrindāvana is the part of His Part (अंशांशः).

Then the description of the union of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā in the Gītagovindam (Cantos 01-03, 05 & 12) is presented elaborately in BhR in 06 chapters in total 197 verses. While narrating the episode eulogizes Śrī Rāma and Sahajā. As the reward of their eulogy at the end of which Śrī Rāma confers the boon that would take birth as cowherdesses, Himself as Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Sahajā as Rādhā:

इयं च सहजाशक्तिः सच्चिदानन्दलक्षणा ।
तत्रैवांशेन भविता राधानाम्नी मम प्रिया ॥ भु.रा. १/३६/२६ ॥

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It is a fact that the name Rādhā is not mentioned in the BhP,⁵⁷ but Javdeva in his Gītagovindam mentions Rādhā as the consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as under:

मेघैर्मेदुरमम्बरं वनभुवः श्यामासत्मालद्रुमै-
नक्तंभीरुरयं त्वमेव तदिमम् राधे गृहं प्रापय।
इत्थं नन्दनिदेशतश्चलितयोः प्रत्यध्वकुञ्जद्रुमं
राधामाधवयोर्जयन्ति यमुनाकूल रहःकेलयः॥०१/०१॥

The other example of the BhR runs as under:

क्वचिन्नृत्येत् क्वचिद्गायेत् क्वचिद्धावेत मत्तवत्।
क्वचिद्धसेत् क्वचिज्जल्पेत् क्वचित्क्रीडेत् क्वचिद्वदेत्॥
मत्तप्रेममदिरामत्तस्तृणवन्मन्यत जगत्॥०१/४६/२१-२२अब॥

It means after drinking His nectar-like love a devotee sometimes dances or sings or runs here and there. It can be compared with Gītagovindam.⁵⁸ poet Jaydeva flourished in 12th Century AD which proves the postiriority of BhR to Gītagovindam.

The climax of Bhagavatisation is observed in the section of Daśaratha visiting holy places (01/101-144) were the origin of river Yamunā is narrated by incorporating the dialogue of Brahmā and Balarāma who is posterior to Śrī Rāma. It is a fact that Balarāma digs up and brought up river Yamunā to Mathurā⁵⁹ which is beautifully presented by Jayadeva:

⁵⁷ वैष्णवों के तीन प्रसिद्ध पुराण हरिवंश, विष्णु पुराण और भागवत है। लेकिन, इनमें से किसी में भी राधा नामका उल्लेख नहीं है। भागवत में कथा आयी है कि कृष्ण ने सभी गोपियों को छोड़कर एक गोपी से अलग मुलाकात की। बस भक्तगण इसे ले उड़े और उसी गोपी को राधा मानने लगे। पंडितों का यह भी विचार है कि कृष्ण-चरित के साथ बाल-लीला की कथा पहले शुरू हुई, राधा तथा अन्य गोपियों के साथ उनकी प्रेम-लीला की कहानियां बहुत बाद में आई हैं (संस्कृति के चार अध्याय रामधारी सिंह दिनकर (pp. 67-68)।

⁵⁸ सा रोमाञ्चति सीत्करोति विलपत्युत्कम्पते ताम्यति ध्यायत्यद्भति प्रमीलति पतत्युद्याति मूर्च्छत्यापि।
एतावत्यतनुज्वरे वरतनुर्जीवेन्न किं ते रसात्स्वर्वैद्यप्रतिम प्रसीदसि यदि त्यक्तोन्यथा हस्तकः॥ (४/१)

⁵⁹ जम्बूद्वीपे शुभान् लोकान् प्लावयन्ती निजैर्जलैः।

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वहसि वपुषि विशदे वसनं जलदाभम्।
हलहतिभीतिमीलितयमुनाभम्।
केशव धृतहलधररूप जय जगदीश हरे ॥०१/०८॥

There is a striking similarity between BhR and Rāmarakṣāstotram. The verse of BhR is like this:

दक्षे लक्ष्मणसंयुक्तं वामे जनकजायुतम्।
अग्रे हनुमते भक्तिर्निबद्धाञ्जलिना युतम् ॥०१/५१/१६॥

The verse of Rāmarakṣāstotram runs thus:

दक्षिणे लक्ष्मणो यस्य वामे च जनकात्मजा।
पुरतो मारुतिर्यस्य तं वन्दे रघुनन्दनम् ॥३२॥

Both the verses describe the form of the Rāma surrounded by Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa and Hanūmāna.

The BhR contains another verse like Rāmarakṣāstotram:

सारमेकं रामनाम वश्वे यस्य महात्मनः।
रामस्य देववन्द्यस्य त्रयीतत्त्वार्थरूपिणम् ॥०१/८१/०२॥

The Rāmarakṣā runs like thus:

रामरामेति रामेति रमे रामे मनोरमे।
सहस्रनाम तत्तुल्यं रामनाम वरानने ॥३५॥

So, the ideology of both the verse is similar in सारमेकं रामनाम and सहस्रनाम तत्तुल्यं that Śrī Rāma's name is the sole refuge for all the beings.

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The seer of the Rāmarakṣāstotram is Budhakaśika. Lokanāth Dwivedi Silākāri remarks in his Viṣṇudās kavikrut Rāmāyaṇa kathā⁶⁰ that the Rāmrakṣāstotram is ascribed to Rāmānanda (the author of many such works of Śrī Rāma) who flourished in 1353 VS = 1296 AD and hence the present edition of the BhR can be put after 13th Cent. AD.

In the BhR 01/25/01 the editor points out in FN 01 (on page 99) that:

“वाल्मीक्यादिनिरूपिता (°पणा-बडो) दप्यत्यद्भुतं
क्वचिद्विरुद्धं भूरिफलदलं च श्रुत्वा चकितचमत्कृतमनाः
श्रीभुशुण्डो वैष्णवाग्रणीः पुनर्भूयश्चरितश्रवणाय
प्रश्नयतीति चित्सुखाचार्यः” टी. मथु. बडो.।

Hence Citsukhācārya desires to hear Bhuṣuṇḍa's life history who is the foremost among the Vaiṣṇavas which proves that the present BhR must have been written posterior to Citsukhācārya 13th Cent. AD as well as written after sage Vālmīki (10,000 BC).

The exposition of the philosophical tanets with its advanced exposition and some times, the amplification becomes extremely helpful in fixing the date of the text.

The BhR (02/77) discusses the types of souls (जीवाः). One of them is श्रिताचार्याः (bounds sole surrendered to the preceptor of religious heads).⁶¹ The H.H. Vallabhacārya's son H.H. Viṭṭhaleśaji (1515 AD) as it is said has promulgated the unavoidable grace of the Holy Master also called preceptor. He has made followers to adopt the devotional method of Total Surrender (अनन्याश्रय) to Ācārya who is none but the Lord himself, otherwise there may arise the fault of resorting to other one than the Lord (अन्याश्रयदोष). This tends one to conclude that the present text of BhR must have been the day after

⁶⁰ Sahitya bhavan private limited, Alahabad.

⁶¹ Vide Table of Divisions of ch. 02/77/23b-25 below.

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Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsa (flourished in the 15th Cent. AD) who has on were noted or given a cursory remark even regarding this type of bound souls surrendered to the Ācāryas (rather Vaiṣṇava Ācārya's of Śrī Kṛṣṇa sect). It is probable that the Bhāgavatisation of the BhR is influenced by the Vaiṣṇava sect of Vallabhācārya with which the author of the present edition was well acquainted. Therefore there is no doubt that the present text of the BhR must have come down to us after the 16th Cent. AD of Gosvāmī Tulasīdāsa.

External Evidence:

The present edition 1975 AD is an outcome of the epochmaking strenuous efforts of Sinh Bhagavatī Prasāda who collected the mss. and edited them with the introduction in Hindi and Dr. V. Raghavan's introduction in English, out of 04 mss. Collected by the editor: one from Mathurā belongs to VS 1779 (1722 AD), the second one from Reevā belongs to VS 1899 (1842 AD), the third one from Lakṣmaṇa Kilā (Ayodhyā) is dated VS 1921 (1864 AD) and the fourth Ms from the Oriental Institute (MSU) Baroda gives the date 1922-1923 AD having 1168 folio and 9000 *granthas*.⁶² The editor (Sinh Bhagavatī Prasāda) mentions in the preface (दो शब्द) that the earliest Ms of this BhR was received from Lakṣmaṇa Kilā (Ayodhyā) dated VS 1921 (1864 AD).

Ramadhari simh 'Dinkara' specifically notes in his book *Sanskriti ke Cāra Adhyāya*⁶³ that the name Ayodhyā was shifted as Sāketa⁶⁴ (kośala state of Rāmāyaṇa) after Gautama Buddha (500 BC) in the Buddhist literature. Moreover the famous large state of Viśālā

⁶² There are also another 04 mss. bearing the name otherwise known as भुसुण्डरामाय No.13104 of 1924 AD, No.13068 as well as No.13069 both of 1922 AD, while the forth one is a stray Ms which is undated.

⁶³ cf. Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsa Aur Rāmākathā, Satydev caturvedi p. 28.

⁶⁴ Sāketa is supposed to be identical with Ayojjhā, but as both cities are mentioned in the Buddha's time, they are probably distinct. Rhys Davids thinks (see. Buddhist India p. 39 sāketa sutta, sāketa jātakā) that possibly they enjoined each other "like London and west minister" The site of Sāketa has been identified with the ruins of Sujānkot, on the sai river, in the Uno district of the modern province of Oudh. The river riffered to is probably Sarayū, which flows into the Ghargharā, a tributary of the Ganges. Reference is taken from the site Google crome.

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got minimized to the city called Vaiśālī (frequently referred to) in the Buddhist literature. Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa frequently uses the name Sāketa (BhR purvakhaṇḍa 06/39 & 41, 09/06, 39/49, 49/33, 56/20, 71/06-10, 76/42, 80/28, 87/01-31, 102/40) for the city of Ayodhyā. Hence the posteriority of the present edition (BhR) must be written after 5th Cent. BC. (i.e. after Gautam Buddha).

The vv. 01/34/65-66 describing that Lord Śiva admits that he becomes purchased in exchange of austerities,

प्रेम्णामलेनान्तरात्मप्रसादात् प्रीतः क्रीतो भवतीभिः सदाहम्।

This is similar to the Kumārasambhavam of Kālidāsa who flourished in the 1st Cent. AD.

अद्यप्रभृत्यवनताङ्गि तवास्मिदासः क्रीतस्तपोभिरिति।०५/८६अ॥

Dr. Rajbali Pandeya writes in his Hindu Dharma Kośa (Hindi)⁶⁵, “The Adbhūtarāmāyaṇam (14th Cent. AD)⁶⁶ is a treatise of the sect of Rāma Bhakti which is composed before Adhyātmārāmāyaṇam because the author of Adhyātmārāmāyaṇam seems to be familiar of the Adhbūtarāmāyaṇam, Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇam, Yogavāśiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa. It contains the eulogy of the mother goddess Sītā, as the consort of Śrī Rāma. This proves the posteriority of the present text of BhR than the Adhyātmārāmāyaṇam (=AdhR). There is also another example which points out the influence of AdhR on BhR that, unless and until Śrī Rāma removes the darkness of delusion (मोहरूपम्) a devoted soul can never see Him which is similar to the AdhR:

अग्रे यास्याम्यहं पश्चात्त्वमन्वेहि धनुर्धरः।

आवयोर्मध्यगा सीता मायेवात्मपरात्मनोः॥ अ.रा.अर.का. ०३/०१/१३॥

⁶⁵ Uttarapradesh Hindi Sansthan Hindi Samiti Prabhaga-Lakhnaw, 1978, p. 23.

⁶⁶ Crome website puts Adbhūtarāmāyaṇam in 14th Cent. AD.

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It means Sītā (i.e. Māyā) walking between Śrī Rāma (i.e. Brahman) and Lakṣmaṇa (i.e. Jiva) means – Jiva (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa) cannot see Brahman (i.e. Śrī Rāma) because of the Ignorance or Māyā (i.e. Sītā).

Dr. Rajbali Pandey writes in his Hindu Dharma Kośa (Hindi),⁶⁷ “In the sects of Śrī Rāma’s worship Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa is one of them. Some scholars believe that this Rāmāyaṇa is composed after AdhR, some put it in the 1300 AD, but it is not sure.

Vedanta Deśika’s poem Haṁsadūtam (falling in the line Kālidāsā’s Meghadūtam) narrates the episode of Śrī Rāma’s life. A swan meets Śrī Rāma and being overjoyed gets ready to take His message of love to Sītā at Mithilā. This episode is found narrated with small changes in the present text of BhR (01/65) which proves the posteriority of BhR from Haṁsadūtam of Vedant Deśika flourished in the 13th Cent. AD.⁶⁸

The BhR describes the sports of Śrī Rāma with the cowherdresses as under:

गोपीं गोपीमन्तरा रामचन्द्रो रामं रामं चान्तरा गोपनार्यः १०१/३४/३५।

This is similar to the Kṛṣṇakarnāmṛta अङ्गनाम अङ्गनाम अन्तरे माधवः। of Līlāśuka flourished in 1300 AD (i.e. 13th Cent. AD).⁶⁹

Dr. V. Raghvan dates the present text of the BhR after Jayadeva and Līlāśuka as well as before Tulasīdāsa i.e. in the 14th Cent. AD.⁷⁰

Sinh Bhagavatī Prasāda states in the Preface of his book BhR (Hindi) (P 45), “The episode like Śrī Rāma assuming Śrī Kṛṣṇa ‘s

⁶⁷ Uttara Pradesh Hindi Sansthan, Lakhnaw-1987, p. 480.

⁶⁸ Vide Father Kamil Bulke, Rāma kathā Utpatti Aur Vikasa, Hindi Parisad Viswa-vidyalaya, Prayaga, p. 200.

⁶⁹ cf. Introduction, Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa, V. Raghvan, p.21.

⁷⁰ Preface Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa, p.21. Dr. Rājavansa Sahāya Hīrā also dates BhR around 14th Cent. AD.

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form, his amorous sports, Śrī Rāma sahasranā, etc. are reflected in the Ānanda Rāmāyaṇa.” Thus the Ānanda Rāmāyaṇa flourished in the 14th Cent. AD is influenced by the BhR and hence the present text of the BhR can be placed before 14th Cent. AD.

The whole of the episode of creating the lady assistance by Sītā from her body at the time of hospitality and the Rāsa-sport in Citrakūṭa⁷¹ seems borrowed from of may be influenced by the Hanumatsamhitā⁷². Thus it helps to prove that the present edition of the BhR is later than the Hanūmatsamhitā composed probably 1458 AD.⁷³

The author of the present edition of the BhR (esp. Bhagavatised) follows the tenets of the Madhurā Bhakti (Doctrine of Sweet Devotion) propounded by Rūpa Gosvamin who flourished in 1491 AD (i.e. 15th Cent. AD). Tulasīdāsa composes his RCM in 1576 AD

Thus the present text of the BhR must not have come to existence between 1491 AD to 1576 AD, because the summary of the Kāka Bhuṣuṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa is given by Tulasīdāsa in the Uttarakāṇḍa of RCM (Viśrāma 29). It has not a single cursory reference of Śrī Rāma's childhood sports like that of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This impels one to assume that the present text of the BhR must have been composed after 16th Cent. AD by some follower of Rūpa Gosvamin who may not have been aware of the Kāka Bhuṣuṇḍi Rāmāyaṇa. He then tried to make a separate path (संप्रदाय) of Pure Devotional Love towards Śrī Rāma.

Looking to the reference Vasistha (of Yoga Vāsistha Rāmāyaṇa) putting questions to Bhuṣuṇḍa who gives exposition of spiritual life and Sādhana⁷⁴ helps strongly to prove not only the ancient period, as

⁷¹ 02/67/18 जानकी च महाभागा सस्मार स्वसखीस्तदा।

अविरासुः समस्तास्ताः स्मरणानुग्रहक्षणे॥

⁷² In 360 verses noted by Satyadev Chatruvedi, p. 82.

⁷³ Rāmakthā Utpatti Aur Vikas, Kamil Bulke, p. 174.

⁷⁴ Nirvāṇa Prakaraṇa, Purvardha ch 23-25.

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the childhood time of Śrī Rāma is prior to the Yogavāsīṣṭham composed in the youth period of Śrī Rāma before marriage but also very late fusion of Śrī Rāma saga with the story of Bhagavatisation. The blended Bhagavatisation must be later than Rāmacaritamānasa of Gosvāmī Tulsīdāsa 16th Cent. AD).

The episode of Śabarī offering tasted berries and Śrī Rāma eating them can also be a landmark in fixing the date of the present text of BhR. The VR Aranyakāṇḍa 74 and even Tulsī's RCM do not refer to this event.

Here it would be appropriate to quote the Puranic Kathākośa in Gujarati,⁷⁵ "According to the anecdote (लोकोक्ति) she (i.e. Śabarī) collected the delicious fruits, tasted them and offered to Śrī Rāma. Thus Śrī Rāma being subdued to her devotion ate the tasted fruits." This episode has been depicted by many Gujarati and Hindi poets such as, "Śabarī ke bor, Sudāmā ke Tandula ruchi ruchi Bhog lagayo" and "Enthā Phala Śabarī nā khādhā".

This means the present text of the BhR gets its enlarged version after Tulasīdāsa's world famous and the epoch-making work Śrīrāmacaritamānasa contains a short version of the Bhuṣuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa in the Uttarakhaṇḍa in which Kākabhuṣuṇḍī speaks whenever Śrī Rāma appears in Hanūmāna form and plays the sports (लीला) for His devotees, He flies to Ayodhyā and is delighted to watch His childish pranks (बालचरित)⁷⁶, Games (सिसुलीला)⁷⁷ and boyish Amusements (बालविनोद).⁷⁸ He visits to witness His birthday, rejoices and gets fascinated by the charm of His childish sports. He stays there for 05 years. Child Śrī Rāma is his patro diety (इष्टदेव). Gazes his Lord and gets satisfied. Assuming the form of a little crow, he keeps close to Śrī Rāma (हरि) and witnesses His manifold

⁷⁵ Derasari Dahyabhai p. p.551.

⁷⁶ रा. च. मा. उ. का. दो. ८८क/०३, ६४/०५, बालविनोद ८१क/०७

⁷⁷ रा. च. मा. उ. का. दो. ११४क/०७

⁷⁸ रा. च. मा. उ. का. दो. ८९क/०१, ७५क

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childish sports (बालचरित).⁷⁹ Bhuśuṇḍī asserts about the two versions of the RcM⁸⁰ an enlarged version (ब्यास= व्यास i.e. विस्तृत) which has been narrated in abridgement or in a shorter version (समास) (narrated by Tulsīdāsa).

Śrīrāmacaritamānasa refers to the समास i.e. the summary of Kāka Bhuśuṇḍī Rāmāyaṇa (= KBR) given in the Uttarakāṇḍa of RcM and BhR (which is to the ब्यास i.e. the original BhR (which is now influenced by Bhāgavata). Tulsīdāsa must have been read the enlarged version and gives the summary of that Rāmāyaṇa in his RcM. But there is not a single cursory reference of Bhagavatisation in Śrī Rāma Saga⁸¹ (summarized in Uttarakāṇḍa of RcM by Tulasīdāsa) which proves that the original text of the BhR is the ancient one, as its title आदिरामायणम् bespeaks, is mixed in the period later than Gosvāmī Tulasīdāsa.

The Bhagavatisation of the BhR must have been come into the existence before atleast (1924 AD) the tremendous popularity of the devotion as well as the literature of Śrī Rāma mean have created and earnest desire in the heart of the poet of BhR in Sanskrit.

Thus the probable date of the present BhR in Sanskrit can be fixed in 1600 AD.

⁷⁹ तब तब अवधपुरी मैं जाऊँ। बालचरित बोलोकि हरषाऊँ॥

जन्म महोत्सव देखौ जाई। बरस पाँच तहँ रहऊँ लोभाई॥

इष्टदेव मम बालक रामा। सोभा वपुष कोटि सत कामा॥

निजप्रभु बदन निहारि। लोचन सफल करौं उरगारी॥

लघु बायस बपु धरि हरि संग। देखौ बालचरित बहुरंगा॥ (रा. च. मा. उ. का. ७५क/००२-०४)

⁸⁰ Viśrāma 30, 194/01-02.

कहेउँ नाथ हरि चरित अनूपा

ब्यास समास स्वमति अनुरूपा॥

श्रुति सिद्धांतत ईहई उरगारी

वम भजिअ सब काज बिसारी॥

⁸¹ Vide. Ch. 02/02 above.

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The date of Tulasīdāsa's death is certain in VS 1680 (1623 AD). He lives for 126 years which means that Tulsīdāsa was born in (1623 AD-126) = 1497 AD. He composed RcM at the advanced age, may be at the age of 80.

Regarding the historicity of sage Bhuṣuṇḍa and then sage Vālmīki is clearly pointed out by H. H. Morāri Bapu,⁸² "As per the history and Pauranic records Kākabhūṣuṇḍī is prior to sage Vālmīki. When Vālmīki flourished I do not accept that opinion but the present Sanskrit scholars put it 10,000 years old. I don't follow this side. Vālmīki is so prior but Bhuṣuṇḍī is older than Vālmīki".

Thus the original BhR must have been sustained in a considerable shorter version till 15th-16th Cent. AD. It was enlarged and compiled by some author who incorporated the path of Devotional Love (मधुराभक्ति) in it.

Thus the date of the BhR is 14th Cent. AD as fixed by some scholars must be taken in the sense of the compilation of the present text (of the BhR) and not its composition.

Geographical data of the BhR:

The *purvakhaṇḍa* of the BhR under the narration of Daśaratha's *Tīrthayātrā* in 46 chapters (i.e. 101-146) records obviously and apparently that this narration is an outcome of the Bhagavatisation. For the description is not found in any Rāmāyaṇa or Bhāgavata etc. The episode runs like this:

When Śrī Rāma and His brothers attains youth, king Daśaratha assures that Śrī Rāma is able to delight the subjects. He wishes to entrust the kingdom to Śrī Rāma and visit the holy places of the 07

⁸² अब तथ्यों के आधार पर, ऐतिहासिक आधार पर, पौराणिक प्रमाणों पर काकभुसुण्डिजी वाल्मीकिजी से कई गुना आदि है। वाल्मीकि कब हुए भाई! मैं इस अभिप्राय को मानता नहीं लेकिन आजके संस्कृत विद्वान् लोग तो दस हजार साल से ज्यादा नहीं बताते। मैं इस पक्ष में नहीं हूँ। वाल्मीकि बहुत आदि है लेकिन भुसुण्डिजी उनसे भी आदि है। (भु.रा., सीताराम सेवा ट्रस्ट, पृ. ३६२)

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islands.⁸³ He calls sage Vaśiṣṭha who informs king about the holy places along with its greatness. In the chapters 101-110 (upto 72) sage Vaśiṣṭha narrates the different pilgrimages to the king Daśaratha.

Daśaratha becomes happy, entrusts the kingdom to Śrī Rāma and accompanied by Kaikeyī and the army starts for journey to the holy places. He starts from :

(1) Ayodhyā followed by Brahmakuṇḍa, Sūryakuṇḍa, etc.⁸⁴ (BhR 01/110/73-91).

(2) They go to the Vraja⁸⁵ where Sukhita and Māṅgalyā (the foster mother of Śrī Rāma) show him the grooves and gardens⁸⁶ of Śrī

⁸³ The names of 07 islands are: Jambu, Plakṣa, Sālmali, Kuśa, kraunchs, Śāka and Puṣkara (Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, sastu sahitya, p.6).

⁸⁴ Oudh, the kingdom of Śrī Rāma at the time of the Rāmāyaṇa, the southern boundry of Kośala was the river Syandika or Sai between the Gomati and the Ganges, During the Buddhist period, Ayodhyā was delivered into Uttara (Northern) Kośala and Dakṣiṇa (Southern) Kośala. The river Sarayū divided in the two provinces. The capital of the former was sarasvatī on the Rapti and that of the latter was Ayodhyā on the Sarayū. At the time of Buddha, the kingdom of Kośala under prasenjit's father Mahakośala extended from the Himālayas to the Ganges and from the Rāma Gaṅgā to the Gaṇḍakī. The ancient capital of the kingdom was also called Ayodhyā, the birth place of Śrī Rāmacandea. At a place in the town called Janamsthāna. He was born, at cirodaka, called also chirasāgara, Daśaratha performed the sacrifice for obtaining a son with the pelp of horse-sacrifice by setting up the council (मुक्तिकोपनिषद् ch. 01), at swargadwaram in fyzabad, his body was burned at Lakṣmaṇa kuṇḍa disappeared in the river Sarayū: Daśaratha accidentally killed Śravaṇa, the blind Rishi's son at Majhaurā in the district of fyzabad (The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient And Medieval India, Nundo Lal Dey, p.14).

⁸⁵ Purāṇa Gokul or Mahāvana, a village in the neighbourhood of Mathura across the Jamuna, where Kṛṣṇa was reared by Nanda during his infancy (BhP 10/03). The name of Braja was extended to Bṛndāvana and the neighbouring villages, the scene of Kṛṣṇa's early love.....Gokul or new Gokul was found by Ballabhācārya in imitation of Mahāvana or Purāṇa (old) Gokul and contains also the same famous sports that are shown in Mahāvana. The shrine of Śyām Lalā at new Gokul is believed to mark the spot where Yaśodā, the wife of Nanda, gave birth to Māyā, substituted by Vasudeva for the infant Kṛṣṇa. Nanda's palace at Gokul (New Gokul) was converted into a mosque at the time of Aurangzeb. Outside the town is putanān-khar where Kṛṣṇa is said to have killed Pūtānā. Growse identifies Mahāvana with klisoboras of the Greeks and supposes that the modern Braja was the ancient Anūpa-deśa (Growse's mathurā); Aṣṭīgrāma was the birth-place of Rādhikā (Adi p., ch. 12) (Abid p. 40-41).

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Rāma's divine sports on the bank of river Sarayū⁸⁷ (BhR 01/110/107-287), Mt. Govardhana⁸⁸ Saugandhik forest and Sahajā kuṇḍa. Then on the Daśaratha's request Śrī Rāma's friend sukaṇṭha describes His childhood sports with Nandana's daughter Sahajā (from chs. 01/120-131). Sukhita and Māṅgalyā offers food to the king and his retinue and tell the other stories of Śrī Rāma heard from His best friend Sukhaṇṭha. Thus king Daśaratha feels delight on seeing the people of Vraja immersing in Śrī Rāma's sports and hence he stays many days there.

(3) Tamasā⁸⁹, (BhR 01/137/15).

(4) Gomatī River⁹⁰ (BhR 01/137/15).

(5) Naimiśāraṇya⁹¹ (BhR 01/137/17-22ab).

(6) Vārāṇasī⁹² (BhR 01/137/22cd-24ab).

⁸⁶ The Vraja-maṇḍala comprises an area of 84 kos containing many villages and towns and sacred spots associated with the adventures of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā. The 12 vanas and 24 upavanas are specially visited by pilgrims in their perambulation commencing from Mathurā in the month of Bhādra (Ibid. p. 41).

⁸⁷ The town of Ayodhyā is situated on this river. It is evidently the sarabeu of the milinda-pañha. The river rises in the mountains of mumaun and after its junction with the Kālī-nadī it is called the Sarayū, the Ghagraha or the Dewā (Ibid. p. 182).

⁸⁸ Mount Govardhana, 18 miles from Brindavana in the district of Mathurā. In the village called paitho, Kṛṣṇa is said to have taken up the mount on his little finger and held it as umbrella over the heads of his cattle and his townsmen to protect them from the deluge of rain poured upon them by Indra (Mahābhārata (= Mbh) Udyog. Ch. 129) (Ibid. p. 72).

⁸⁹ The river Tonse, a branch of the Sarayū in oudh, which flowing through Azamgrh falls into the Ganges near Bhulia. It flows 12 miles to the west of the Sarayū, (Ibid. p.202).

⁹⁰ The river Gomati in oudh (Rāmāyaṇa, Ayodhyā, ch.49). Lucknow stands on this river. The river Godāvārī near its source where the temple of Trymvaka is situated (śivap., Bk. 01, ch.54). It is also called Gomatī, from Ṛishi Gautama who had his hermitage at this place (BhR 01/137/15).

⁹¹ Nimkhāravana or Nimsar, at a short distance form the Nimsar station of the oudh (Ayodhyā) and Rohilkuhand Railway, and 20 miles from Sītāpur and 45 miles to north west of Lucknow. It was the abode of 60,000 Ṛishi's.....It is situated on the left bank of the Gomati (Rāmāyaṇa, uttarak., ch. 91). In the Naimisha forest, there was a town called Nāgapura on the bank of Gomatī (Ibid. p.135).

⁹² Benares situated at the junction of the rivers Barṇā and Asi, from which the name was formerly situated at the confluence of the Ganges and the Gomatī (Mbh, Anuśāsana, ch. 30). It was the capital of Kāśī (Rāmāyaṇa uttara. Ch. 48) (Ibid. p.23).

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(7) Gayā⁹³ (BhR 01/137/24cd-25ab).

(8) Gaṅgāsāgara⁹⁴ (BhR 01/137/25cd-29).

(9) Mt. Mahendra⁹⁵ (BhR 01/137/30-31).

(10) River Sapta Godavari (BhR 01/137/32). (11) river venu (BhR 01/137/32-34ab), (12) Śrī Parvata (BhR 01/137/34cd), (13) Pilgrimages of Dravid country (BhR 01/137/35-39).

(14) Mathurā⁹⁶ (BhR 01/137/40-51).

(15) Kanyāmumārī (BhR 01/137/52-54).

(16) Gokarṇa⁹⁷ (BhR 01/137/55-61ab).

(17) Daṇḍkārṇya⁹⁸ (BhR 01/137/55-61cd-70).

(18) Prabhāsa⁹⁹ (BhR 01/137/71-75).

⁹³ It is situated between the Rāmaśīlā hill on the North and the Brahmayoni hill in the South, on the bank of river Phalgu (Ibid. p.64).

⁹⁴ A celebrated place of pilgrimage still called by that name or Gaṅgāsāgara near the mouth of Ganges, said to have been the hermitage of Rishi Kapila (Ibid. p.171).

⁹⁵ The whole range of hills extending from orissa to the district of Madura was known by the name of Mahendra-Parvata. It included the Eastern ghats and the range extending from the Northern circars to Gondwana, part of which near Ganjam is still called Mahendra Malei or the hills of Mahendra (Raghuvamśa, 4/39-40). It is joins the Malaya mountain (Harśacarita, ch. 7) (Ibid. p.119).

⁹⁶ Mathura, the capital of Sūrasena; hence the Jains call Mathurā by the name of sauripurā or sauryapura. It was the birth place of Kṛṣṇa. At a place called Janmabhūmi or kārāgāra near the potara-kunḍa he was born (Ibid. p.127).

⁹⁷ Gendia, a town in the province of Nort-kanara, karwar district, 30 miles from Goa between karwar mumata. It is celebrated place of pilgrimage. It contains the temple of Mahādev Mahābaleśvara established by Rāvaṇa (Ibid. p.70).

⁹⁸ Same as Maharashtra including Nagpur Rāmacandra lived here for a long time. According to the Rāmāyaṇa, it was situated between the Vindhya and Sailala mountains: a part of it was called Janasthāna. According to pargiter, Daṇḍakārṇya comprised all the forests from Bundelkhand to the river kṛṣṇā (Geography of Rāma's exile in JRAS, 1894, p.242) (Ibid. p.52).

⁹⁹ Somnath in the Junagadh state, Kathiawad. It is also called Devapattana and Berawal. Somnath is properly name of the temple and the city is called Devapattana "The neighbourhood of pattana" "is esteemed specially sacred by the Hindoos as the scene of Kṛṣṇa's death and apotheosis (Ibid. p.157).

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- (19) Dwārakā¹⁰⁰ (BhR 01/137/119-122).
- (20) Kurukṣetra¹⁰¹ (BhR 01/137/123-126).
- (21) Badarikāsthāna¹⁰² (BhR 01/137/127).
- (22) Kedāra¹⁰³ (BhR 01/137/127).
- (23) Mt. Gandhamādana¹⁰⁴ (BhR 01/137/149-158).
- (24) Kauśikī¹⁰⁵ (BhR 01/141/10ab).
- (25) Moraṅga mountain (BhR 01/141/10cd-11ab).
- (26) Kāmākṣī temple (BhR 01/141/11cd-15).
- (27) Mithilā¹⁰⁶ (BhR 01/141/16-149 & 01/142).

¹⁰⁰ Dwaraka in Gujarat. Same as Dvārāvātī. It is said to have been destroyed by the ocean just after the ascent of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to heaven. It contains the temple of Mahādeva (Ibid. p.59).

¹⁰¹ Thaneswara. The district formerly included sonapat, Amit, Karnal and Panipat, and was situated between the Sarasvatī on the north and the Dṛishadvatī on the south, but see pratap candra Roy's edition of the Mahābhārata. The war between the Kurus and the pāṇḍavas took place not only at Thaneswara but also in the country around it. (Ibid. p.110).

¹⁰² Badrināth in Garwal, United provinces, It is a peak of the main Himalayan range, about a month's journey to the north of Hardwar and 55 miles north-east of Śrīnagara. The temple of Nara-Nārāyaṇa is built on the west bank near the source of the Bishengāṅgā (Alakānanda) equidistant from two mountains called Nara and Nārāyaṇa (Ibid. p.15).

¹⁰³ Kedāranāth, situated on the Southern side of the junction of the Mandākinī and Dundhgaṅgā. The temple of the Kedāranātha, one of the 12 great Liṅgas of Bahādeva, is built on a ridge jutting out of right angle from the snowy range of the Rudra Himālaya below the peak of the Mahāpantha in the district of Garawal united province (Ibid. p.97).

¹⁰⁴ A part of Rudra Himālaya and according to Hindu geographers, the southern side of the kailāśa mountain. Badrikashram is situated on this mountain (Ibid. p.60).

¹⁰⁵ The river kusi. According to tradition, the kusi in remote ages passed south-east by the place where Tajpur is now situated, and thence toward the east until it joined the Brahmaputra, having no communication with the Ganges. When kusi joined the Ganges, the united mass of water opened the passage now called the Padmā, and the old channel of the Bhāgirathī from songli (suti) to Nadia was then left comparatively dry (Ibid. p.97).

Chapter 02

(28) On the return Daśaratha visiting holy places like Mathurā (BhR 01/143/11-24).

(29) From there he goes to Madhuvana¹⁰⁷ of Vraja where he meets sage Śukadeva who speaks about Śrī Rāma's glory and shows the Pramodavana (BhR 01/143), Tālavana¹⁰⁸ (144/15-19), kaumudavana (144/20-55).

(30) Govardhana as well as its holy places (BhR 01/144/56-86), Kāmyavana¹⁰⁹ (BhR 01/145/01-18), Khādira-vana (BhR 01/145/19-23ab), Vrindāvana¹¹⁰ (BhR 01/145/23cd-44), Bhadravana (145/45-50), Bhāndīravana¹¹¹ (BhR 01/145/51-55), and Mahāvana (BhR 145/56-72). There He listens Śrī Rāma's account. The king gives charity to the Brahmins and then goes to the Daṇḍaka kṣetra and meets Bhārgava (i.e. Paraśurāma) who speaks about Śrī Rāma's greatness (BhR 01/145/73-187). Thus the king realize about Śrī Rāma's supremacy and returns Ayodhyā where Śrī Rāma and other welcome him warmly. King Daśaratha asks Śrī Rāma invite the sages from different countries and cities as well as make them reside in Ayodhyā. Śrī Rāma calls the sages and king Daśaratha introduces sages to Śrī Rāma who allocates individual residence to them. The sages pass their time in the discussion of the Supreme Reality and reside their happily.

¹⁰⁶ Janakapur, the kingdom of Rājā Janaka. Mithilā was the name of both videha and its capital. Videha was bounded on the east by the river Kauśiki (kusi), on the west by the river Gaṇḍaka, on the north by the Himālaya, and on the south by the Ganges (Ibid. p.37).

¹⁰⁷ At the village of the Daitya named Madhu (Ibid. p.41).

¹⁰⁸ At Tarsi is Tālavana where Balarāma defeated the demon Dhenuka (Ibid. p. 41).

¹⁰⁹ At Māmbana, the demon Aghāsura was killed by Kṛṣṇa (Ibid. p.41).

¹¹⁰ In the district of Mathurā, where Kṛṣṇa showed to the world examples of transcendental love through the Gopies (Ibid. p.41).

¹¹¹ At Bhāndīravana, Balrāma Vanquished the demon Pralamba (Ibid, p.41).