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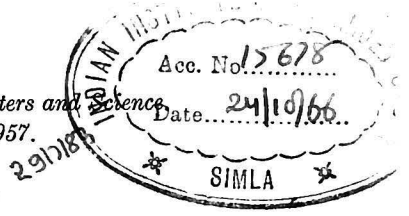
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THE MEDAPĀṬAS AS KNOWN FROM THE BHATTAHARACARITA

By ASOKE CHATTERJEE

The Bhaṭṭaharacarita,¹ of which a manuscript No. G. 8165 has been preserved in the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, should be considered to be a work of immense importance. The varied information contained in this unique work is really valuable, and it may encourage some interested scholars to carry on further investigation on the lines suggested by it. The source and accuracy of its information may be questioned, but considering the thing as it is, it remains open to scholars to accept or reject it or to reshuffle it and put it in a proper way so that it may help them to develop or modify their own views. As none has revealed the new materials of this work or discussed their importance as yet, an attempt has been made in the following pages to put them before the scholarly world for proper estimation.

It is to be noted that this work claims to be a part of the Pātāla-khaṇḍa of the Padma-purāṇa. At the end of the last chapter it has the following colophons—

iti śrīpadma-purāṇe pātāla-khaṇḍe
bhaṭṭaharacarite caturvidha-puruṣārtha prasaṅgato
nirūpane pañcaviṃśati (ta) mo'dhyāyaḥ²

Such readings as 'iti śrī-padma-purāṇe pātāla-khaṇḍe bhaṭṭaharacarite etc.' are found to occur in many of its chapter-colophons, and nowhere does it claim to be a part of any other work or say anything about its independent character. But how far its claim to be a part of the Pātāla-khaṇḍa can be called legitimate, is a matter of serious consideration, because the printed editions of the Padma-purāṇa³ do not incorporate the Bhaṭṭaharacarita or a part thereof anywhere in their texts. Moreover, in chapter 92 of the Nārāḍīya-purāṇa, which gives an analysis of the Padma-purāṇa including an outline of the topics dealt with in the Pātāla-khaṇḍa, there is no indication that the author of the said chapter of the Nārāḍīya-purāṇa saw or utilized the Bhaṭṭaharacarita. So, it seems that the Bhaṭṭaharacarita did not originally belong to the Padma-purāṇa and this possibility is supported by the comparatively late date of the Bhaṭṭaharacarita itself.

If by relying on the claim of the Bhaṭṭaharacarita, we take this work to be a genuine part of the Pātāla-khaṇḍa, then we are to assume that it was excluded from the text of the Pātāla-khaṇḍa long before the period of composition of the said chapter of the Nārāḍīya-purāṇa and also before the time when the oldest existing manuscripts of the Pātāla-khaṇḍa was copied. It is needless to say that this assumption would require to presume that

¹ Our analysis of this work is based on the said manuscript of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, for a description of which see Haraprasad Shastri, Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection under the care of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 5, p. 212. (Here the name has been entered as Bhaṭṭaharacaritam.)

² See Bhaṭṭaharacarita, fol. 206.

³ Published by the Ānandāśrama Press, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press and Vaṅgavāsī Press and by Kedarnath Bhaktivinoda.

the Bhaṭṭaharacarita is an old work coming from a time prior to that of the rise of the present text of the Padma-purāṇa.

That the Bhaṭṭaharacarita never belonged to the Pātāla-khaṇḍa is also indirectly proved by Gopālabhaṭṭa's Haribhaktivilāsa which quotes a large number of verses from the Pātāla-khaṇḍa of the Padma-purāṇa but not a single line from the Bhaṭṭaharacarita.

Though a spurious and comparatively late work the Bhaṭṭaharacarita has very judiciously tried to take the shape of a Purāṇa. We know that the first topic to be dealt with in a Purāṇa is creation (sarga).⁴ Likewise this work also, after a few benedictory verses, goes on describing, although very briefly, the creations and gradual development of the world—from the origin of Brahmā to that of the Gandharvas and Kinnaras. Thus it leaves no stone unturned to prove its own self to be a genuine or at least a part of it.

Although the chief object of the writer of this work is to give a picture of the Medapāṭas of Ajmir (Rajputana), he was clever enough to introduce some stories from the Mahābhārata in order to give this work the character of a part of a Purāṇa. He was aware of the fact that none would pay attention to his work if it dealt only with the Medapāṭas in whom the people at large were hardly interested. So, on fols. 124ff. he introduced a Mahābhārata story, viz. that of Parikṣit and Janamejaya, which tells us that once Parikṣit tied a dead snake round the neck of a sage and for this act he was cursed by the son of the latter. In consequence of that curse, the king was killed by the formidable serpent Takṣaka. Being furious, Janamejaya, son of Parikṣit, made arrangements for the destruction of the whole race of the snakes by performing a sacrifice. The race of the snakes was going out of existence but at last it was saved by Āstika.

It is obvious that the famous story of the Mahābhārata has got no bearing on the first half of the work which exclusively deals with the Medapāṭas. The Mahābhārata story has been very cleverly introduced with numerous references to the worship of Kṛṣṇa,⁵ although in other part, which also deals with the Medapāṭas, such references to Kṛṣṇa are hardly observable.

The author while narrating the story of Parikṣit and Janamejaya, did not forget his chief object, viz. the delineation of the Medapāṭas, and

⁴ Cf. Five-fold characteristics of a Purāṇa.

⁵ 'Bhaṭṭaharacarita', fol. 124b: 'avito viṣṇunā sāksāt pradakṣiṇyena cakriṇi'
fol. 124b: 'kuru-pāṇḍu-nṛpeśānām viṣṇurāto'bhimanyujah'.
fol. *Ibid.*: 'kṛṣṇam dṛṣṭvā prasannātmā babhūva vidhivṛttimān'
fol. 129b: 'sa eva kṛṣṇo bhagavān brahmanityā niranjana(m)'
fol. *Ibid.*: 'kṛṣṇārthata.tvavṛtti śrī kṛṣṇa kila nirūpyate'.
fol. 130a: 'govardham prabhuḥ'.
fol. 130b: 'kṛṣṇakamalapatrākṣaḥ svayaṃ brahmasamanvayaḥ'.
fol. 131b: 'avi(vi)dyāvamecitāḥ prāṇi kṛṣṇānugrahamantarā |
samsāra sāgaram tartum na bhavecchaktimān kacit ||
fol. 134b: 'kṛṣṇa-kīrtana kartāro yatra saṃti mahāśayāḥ'.
fol. 135a: 'kṛṣṇa-kīrtana-samyogam sarvadāpyevamīkṣayet'.
fol. 136a: 'prajāḥ śāsati bhūpāle kṛṣṇadevena rakṣite'.
fol. 136b: 'sarveśāmapareśāṃ tu viṣṇudharmādhivāsanāt'.
fol. 156b: 'saphalā viṣṇurātākyā śrīkṛṣṇena vinirmalā'.
fol. 158b: 'kṛṣṇa kirttimahatphalam'.
fol. 165b: 'mama viśvaśaraṇasya kṛṣṇasya karuṇekṣaṇāt'.
fol. 167a: 'tathā kṛṣṇena kṛṣṇena svena svasya parikṣitāḥ'.
fol. 169a: 'samprāpta kṛṣṇa kāruṇyāḥ sahasā jñātānīcayāḥ'.
fol. 171a: 'Viṣṇurāto viṣṇurāto'.
fol. 178b: 'kṛṣṇasya vacanāt kṛṣṇasamsmṛti'.
fol. 190b: 'kṛṣṇakīrttana khedās-cacāra janamejayah'.
fol. 191a: 'mahīṣmati(tī)ṃ nagarīm kṛṣṇakīrttana lālasā', etc. etc.

hence, after bringing the Mahābhārata story to a close, he again gave us information about the Medapāṭas in fols. 191ff. till the end of the work.

Thus we see that the author of the Bhaṭṭaharacarita has left no stone unturned to give his work the air of a genuine Purāṇa so that it might be accepted as a part of the Pātāla-khaṇḍa of the Padma-purāṇa; yet the conclusion seems to be irresistible that it does not at all form a part of the Padma-purāṇa, although it claims to be so.

That this Bhaṭṭaharacarita is a work of immense importance can be little doubted. It has two-fold importance. Primarily as we have stated above, it throws a flood of light on the hitherto unknown or slightly known Bhaṭas (also called Bhaṭtas) and Medapāṭas, and secondarily it gives the contents of the Bhūmi-khaṇḍa of the Padma-purāṇa in its earlier form. As we have discussed the latter in our study of the Bhūmi-khaṇḍa of the Padma-purāṇa, we are concerned here chiefly with the Bhaṭas and the Medapāṭas.

There are epigraphic and other references to prove that 'Medapāṭa' is the name of modern Mewar.⁶ Our manuscript contains two passages which seem to suggest the location of Medapāṭa. They are as follows:

'asti bhārate khaṇḍesmin pavitraḥ paramottama(h) |
medapāṭa iti khyāto deśarājaḥ suśobhanaḥ ||
aneka-tīrtha-nikaraiḥ puṣprāthaiḥ (i.e. puṣkarādyaiḥ ?)samanvitaḥ |
citrakūṭa-trikūṭādi-giribhiḥ parirakṣitaḥ ||
sarit-saro-nadākīrṇaṃ kāmāpūraṃ ripānvayaḥ(?) |
khanoparāmavāpibhir devakhātaiḥ suvistrtaḥ ||
puṣkarādyaiḥ pavitrāṃśaḥ sarvatati(? to'ti or trāti) manoharaḥ |
grāma(? mo) yatra na samvāso gopagokulasundaraḥ ||⁷

and

'rājannāste trikūṭādrirekalimṅgasya sevayā |
girirājanyatām dhatta nijānandagunodayaiḥ ||
tathā ca puṣkaraṃ yasmāt nātīdūre pravartata |
viṣaye medapāṭākhye citrakūṭādimāṇḍite ||⁸

These clearly point out that Medapāṭa was protected on all sides by the mountains Citrakūṭa and Trikūṭa; Puṣkara was not very far from there and that there were other sacred places near by. Puṣkara, as we all know, is the modern sacred place of the same name, situated in Ajmir. It is not very difficult to identify the Citrakūṭa mountain. It is certainly the modern Citorgaḍh in the Udayapur state of Rajputana.⁹ There are inscriptional records which connect the Citrakūṭa mountain with Medapāṭa. The following lines may be quoted from the Citorgaḍh prasasti:

⁶ See Nundo Lal De, 'Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India', second edition, 1927, p. 129.

⁷ Bhaṭṭaharacarita, fol. 14a and b.

⁸ *Ibid.*, fol. 177b.

⁹ Cf. 'śobhābandhyaḥ sa vindhyaḥ suraguru * *

noccakūṭas-trikūṭaḥ
kailāśācāvilāso himagiriramaḥān vāmanābhāḥ sunābhāḥ |
mainākaḥ pākārupaḥ sakala-vasumati-datta-netra-prasāde
prasāde dyotamāne ravi-ratha-turaga-prāpta-viśrāntikesmin ||
J.B.Br.R.A.S., Vol. XXII, 1908, p. 59.

'yo dhatte kṣiravārāṃ nidhimupari parai rājahamsairagamya- |
staddūrgaṃ citrakūṭo jayati vasumati-maṇḍanaṃ bhuribhumiḥ ||
Ep. Ind., Vol. II, p. 408.

In these two inscriptions citrakūṭa has been identified with Citorgaḍh.

'astyadbhūtaḥ kṣitidharaḥ kila citrakūṭa-stenāvani maghavatā parī-
pālyamānaḥ |
śrī medapāṭa-dharaṇī-taruṇī-lalāṭa paṭṭe sphuṭaṃ mukuṭatāmupaṭi-
kate yaḥ ||¹⁰

According to kālidāsa's Raghuvamśa, Trikūṭa is situated in the western countries of India.¹¹ Sometimes it has been identified with Junnar in Kathiawad.¹² Moreover the distance from Citor to Puṣkar may be about 150 miles.¹³ Thus we see that taking all the evidences into consideration it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Medapāṭa of the manuscript is the present-day Mewar in Rajputana.

We will presently show how the manuscript abounds in references to the worship of Śiva. This proves that the inhabitants of Medapāṭa were generally the devoted worshippers of Śiva. The inscriptional evidences also corroborate this. The object of the Citorgaḍh inscription¹⁴ is to record the erection of a temple of God Śiva at Citrakūṭa. The object of the Citorgaḍh inscription of the Caulukya Kumārapāla¹⁵ also is to record a visit of the Caulukya king Kumārapāla to Mount Citrakūṭa, the modern Citorgaḍh, and some donations which on that occasion were made by the king in favour of a temple of the god Samiddheśvara (Śiva) on the summit of the mountain. Thus the conclusion is now almost irresistible that Medapāṭa of the manuscript is Medapāṭa of the inscriptions, there being no difference between the two. Thus Medapāṭa (मेदपाट > मेदवाड > मेवाड)¹⁶ of the manuscript is the present-day Mewar in Rajputana.

At the very outset, the title of the work recorded in our manuscript appears confusing. Although its name is Bhaṭṭaharacarita, yet, it does not deal with the Bhaṭṭaharas but with the Medapāṭas. The questions naturally arise, 'Why is this anomaly? Who are these Medapāṭas? Are they different from the Bhaṭṭaharas?' We shall have to take the help of the manuscript itself to find the answers. It distinctly says that the Bhaṭṭaharas are the Medapāṭas.¹⁷ So the author has done nothing wrong in describing the Medapāṭas while the name of the manuscript is Bhaṭṭaharacarita.

From the evidence furnished by the manuscript itself it appears that the Bhaṭṭas or Bhaṭas (as has been mentioned in some places in the manuscript), though included in the Medapāṭa race, formed the higher section of people.¹⁸ The reason for their superiority is not known; but one thing

¹⁰ See 'Citorgaḍhpraśasti', ed. by D. R. Bhandarkar, vs. 21. *J.B.Br.R.A.S.*, Vol. XXII, 1908, p. 51.

¹¹ Cf. Raghuvamśa IV. 58-59—
avakāśaṃ kilodanvān rāmāyābhyarthito dadau |
aparānta mahipāla vyājena raghave karam ||
mattevaradanōtkīrṇa vyakta vikrama-lakṣaṇan |
trikūṭameva tatroccair jayastambham cakāra saḥ ||

¹² N. L. De, 'Geographical Dictionary', p. 205.

¹³ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. 21, p. 154.

¹⁴ *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. II, p. 409.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 422. In this inscription, the poet, after the benedictory verses, glorifies the pious and famous family of Prince Guhila. In that family, Arisimha, the lord of Medapāṭa, was born.

¹⁶ sanniveśya si(śi)viraṃ pṛthu tatra trāsītāśahanabhūpatīcakram |
citrakūṭāgiriṣkaśasobhām draṣṭumāra nṛpatiḥ kutukena ||
Ep. Ind., Vol. II, p. 423.

¹⁷ 'Bhaṭṭaharacarita', fol. 17b.

'bhaṭṭaharas te bhāṭamedapāṭa prasiddhataḥ.'

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 'medapāṭottarā bhāṭāḥ', fol. 72b.

'medapatottarā etc', fol. 192a.

'medapāṭottaro bhāṭto', fol. 192, etc. etc.

has definitely been asserted. It is that the Bhaṭṭas were regarded as Brāhmanas. There are numerous references to prove their Brahmanhood.¹⁹ But it has also been said in this work that there was prevalence of the Śūdra caste also among them.²⁰ Those who did not observe the social and religious customs prevailing among them²¹ were regarded as outcastes and Śūdras, and it has been ordained that the Śūdras could attain the respectable position of Bhaṭṭas by serving the feet of the Brāhmanas like servants, and that by means of service to the Brāhmanas, they could become pure in heart. The following lines of the manuscript are quoted in support of our statement—

‘dvijapāda-sevāvān laghvātmagunagauravaḥ ||
 śūdro’pi bhaṭṭajāṭīyaḥ kiṃ punaścet sa vāḍavām |
 dāsavat paricaryāvān śūdro bhavitumarhati ||
 parivāra prayukto’pi dvijanmakṛtasevayā |
 vyavahāravīsuddhātmā śūdraḥ sambhavadisvataḥ ||
 mukhyavṛttiriyam khyāto śūdrāmātmavidāmtayā |
 paricaryāparādhīnyam dvijāgrāṇam niraṃtaram’ ||²²

But the most interesting point to note is that the Medapāṭas (including the Bhaṭṭas) claim themselves to be Nāgara Brāhmanas. It has been specially mentioned that they are called by the people as ‘Nāgara’.²³ While going to give an explanation of their name ‘Nāgara’, the manuscript says that those Bhaṭṭaharas (i.e. Medapāṭas) should be named Nāgaras as they were protected by the Nāgas.²⁴ In another place, the explanation of their name has been given in the following way, ‘These, superior to Medapāṭas (i.e. Bhaṭṭas), were known as the Nāgaras as they were devoted to Śiva’.²⁵ But how far their evidence of the racial affinity with the Nāgara Brāhmanas would be tolerable is really not known. Only from a few references from one manuscript, it would be hardly justified to connect the Medapāṭas with the Nāgara Brāhmanas. D. R. Bhandarkar has tried to give the reason of the name Nāgara and suggested that it may be derived from the place name ‘Nagar or Nagarkot, the old name of Kangda, situated in the

19 ‘Bhaṭṭaharacarita’,

‘medapāṭadvijānvaya’, fol. 18a.

‘bhaṭṭānvayabhavānetan medapāṭān dvijanmānaḥ’, fol. 20a.

‘syāddvijo bhaṭṭasajñītaḥ’, fol. 52a.

‘medapāṭa-kulothita-bhaṭṭānāma dvijottamā’, fol. 52a.

‘bhaṭṭānām dvijarānām’, fol. 70b.

‘bhaṭṭā brāhmanasattamāḥ’, fol. 70b.

‘bhaṭṭaharākhyānām dvijānām’, fol. 71b.

‘medapāṭottarā bhaṭṭāḥ dvijanmāno maṇiṣiṇaḥ’, fol. 72b.

‘caturviṃśati bhaṭṭādi medapāṭa dvijāśiṣaḥ’, fol. 191b.

‘śri bhaṭamedapāṭānām brāhmanānām niyāmakaḥ’, fol. 205b.

‘prayojanamidam teṣām bhaṭṭānām dvijajanmanām’, fol. 205b.

20 *Ibid.*, ‘śūdro’pi bhaṭṭajāṭīyaḥ’, fol. 103b.

‘ime syur-bhaṭānāmānaḥ śūdrā api mahādhiyaḥ’, fol. 71b.

‘śūdrānām sevinām bhaṭṭaje kule’, fol. 71a.

‘śūdrasya vanijaḥ śilpaḡuṇino bhaṭṭasamsthitaḥ’, fol. 124a.

21 *Ibid.*, ‘Vedavāhyāścācāri’, fol. 100a.

22 *Ibid.*, fol. 103. The verses have been quoted as they are found in the manuscript. No correction has been made. The word ‘dvija’ here most probably refers to the Brāhmanas.

23 ‘Bhaṭṭaharacarita’, ‘vadiṣyanti janāḥ samyak nāgarānīti nirṇitaḥ’, fol. 17a.

‘nāgarānīti tasmāttu vadanti kavayas-timān’, fol. 17a.

24 *Ibid.*, ‘syur bhaṭāharanāmāno nāgarā nāgarakṣanāt’, fol. 17b.

‘nāgendraganaraksāto nāgarā manvate’, fol. 39a.

‘bhaṭā nāgarakāryyeṇa nāga nāgarakṣpāt’, fol. 192b.

25 *Ibid.*, ‘medapāṭottarā ete nāgarām(nāgarā) harasamśrayāt’, fol. 192a.

Swalakh hills in the Punjab'.²⁶ Thus we see that the explanation of the name Nāgara differs. Not only this, but none of the available inscriptions also which throw light on the Medapāṭas even hints at the point that they were regarded at least to some extent as Nāgara Brāhmaṇas. It is a settled fact that the Nāgara Brāhmaṇas belonged to Vaijvapa gotra²⁷ but throughout the manuscript not even a single reference to this gotra is found. The name of the tutelary deity of the Nāgaras is the Liṅga called Hāṭakeśvara.²⁸ But no such reference to Hāṭakeśvara Śiva is found in the manuscript. Moreover the surnames²⁹ of the Nāgara Brāhmaṇas, which are the most important signs to recognize them, have not been given in the manuscript. Thus taking all these points into consideration, it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that no great weight should be given on the Medapāṭas' claim to be the Nāgara Brāhmaṇas as found in the manuscript.

From a scrutinizing analysis of the manuscript much can be said about the religious inclinations of the Medapāṭas. They were, as we have noticed earlier, staunch supporters of Śaivism. Quite a good number of times Śiva has been described as the Lord of the Medapāṭas.³⁰ They are said to have been prospering under the protection of Śiva.³¹ He was a constant well-doer of them.³² They offered Him worship with flowers and sandal-pastes.³³ It has also been held that Lord Śiva or Ekaliṅga was worshipped even by the ancestors of the Medapāṭas and the Bhaṭas.³⁴

But however strong the supporters of Śaivism the Medapāṭas may be, it will be a height of folly if we presume that they were satisfied with this particular sectarian motive of them. The manuscript abounds in references to the worship of Kātyāyanī, Ambikā, Vindhyavāsini, Annapūrnā,

²⁶ D. R. Bhandarkar, 'The Nāgar Brāhmaṇas and the Bengali Kāyasthas', *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. LXI, 1932, p. 46.

²⁷ See *J.A.S.B.*, 1909, p. 167, also M. L. Mathur, 'Origin of the Guhilots: were they Nāgar Brāhmaṇas?', *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XXVI, 1950, p. 265.

²⁸ *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. LXI, 1932, p. 45.

²⁹ 'datta-guptau nanda-ghoṣau śarma-dāsau ca varma ca |
nāga-datta strata-bhūtau mitra-devau bhavastathā' ||

See D. R. Bhandarkar, 'Foreign Elements in the Hindu Population', *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XL, 1911, p. 32.

³⁰ 'Bhaṭṭaharacarita', 'etat sarvajagat praśasti śivasya kincit samārādhito |
danuryaḥ sva nisargataḥ sa bhagavān devādiva prabhu' || fol. 26.
'ekaliṅga śivādīnāḥ', fol. 26a.
'piṅākāpānīnā proktam dharmo'yaṃ bhavatā mataḥ', fol. 41b.
'jayati śrībhāṭaharayukatīrītrī(?) sakalamedapāṭānām', fol. 16.
'bhaṭādi medapākā(ṭā) śaivaḥ', fol. 124a.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 'śrīmantāḥ śivasannidhau', fol. 22a.

³² *Ibid.*, 'bhaṭānām medapāṭānām viśeṣena hitaṅkaraḥ |

.....
ata ārabhyate mantraiḥ śaivaḥ śreyo vidhāyakah' || fol. 65a

³³ *Ibid.*, '..... devasya bhairavasya mahātmanah

pūjayā candanaiḥ puṣpaiḥ' || fol. 49.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 'ekaliṅga giriṅgātam sarvadā tīrtha nāyakaṃ |
bhaṭānām medapāṭānām pūrvajaiḥ parisevitam' || fol. 197a.

In one place there is mention of the procedures of the worship of Ekaliṅga and it has also been stated that once Pulastya and Kaśyapa worshipped Ekaliṅga.

Cf. 'atra pūrvam kṛtā yātrā kaśyapena pulastīnā |
paulastena viśeṣena sāmrajyabhārasiddhaye ||
saṃsmaretrevamevāyamekaliṅga samarcanam' || fol. 106b.

There are innumerable references which will show their connection with and religious inclinations to the devoted Liṅga-worshippers. It is, we hope, not necessary to pile them up by means of quotations more and more.

Maheśvarī³⁵ etc. which seem to point to the element of Śakti as connected with Śiva. Thus, although the Śaiva element predominates, the Śakti was nevertheless not so insignificant. It was the custom among them to worship the golden image of Umā maheśvarī, the omnipotent and omniscient female entity of Śiva.³⁶ The image of Kātyāyanī with her four arms carrying the bow and arrows, the sword, the scimitar, and the thunder-bolt respectively, was very much respected by them³⁷ and they regarded Her as the Saviour of the Bhaṭa race and they used to worship her always.³⁸ It has been said that one, coming to Bhaṭṭaharapura—the city of the Bhaṭṭaharas, should first pay his respect to Kātyāyanī—the mother of the earth.³⁹ She would often appear before a devoted disciple and would grant him boon.⁴⁰ The Vindhya-vāsini aspect of that primeval Śakti was worshipped for good fortune, happiness, prosperity and welfare of the Medapāṭas. She could remove the distress and misfortune of many people.⁴¹ Much happiness or welfare was due to Her.⁴² She has been regarded as the 'kalyāṇa-koṭi janani',⁴³ i.e. the mother of crores of auspicious deeds.

The Medapāṭas were conversant with many Vratas.⁴⁴ It has been said that as Śiva is the sole creator of the Bhaṭa race, He should be worshipped by the people with the observance of the Śivarātri vrata. He should be given a special worship on each Sunday at noon when the sun shines very brightly.⁴⁵ Dhunḍhikṣetrapati should be worshipped in pañcamī. In the month of Māgha and Caitra also He should be worshipped.⁴⁶ In autumn one should adhere to Bhava.⁴⁷ In the Caturthī of the month of Agraḥāyana, the Mahāpūjā of Kātyāyanī and Śiva (vara-deśituh) should be celebrated. Especially at the time of moon-rise, this Vrata from its start to finish should be observed by the Medapāṭas, engaged in japa and homa. A detailed description of the Nāgapañcamī Vrata as observed by the Bhaṭas is given. It has been remarked, 'Those who are great in the Bhaṭṭahara clan, should observe naga-pañcamī as this was their family-rite. In Naga-pañcamī, men and women should worship the Nāgas in a manner of great celebration. Images of Śeṣa and other nine

³⁵ 'Bhaṭṭaharacarita',

'teṣāmādhāradatri syāt devī kātyāyanī sadā', fol. 60b.

'ārādhanīyā satatam viśvāsya sthītihetave' |

kātyāyanī viśeṣeṇa pārāyana pārāyanaih' || fol. 72b.

'kātyāyanī bhagavati tadānugrahadayini' | fol. 16b.

ambikāpūjanam cāpi samyak sāpi samātrikah | fol. 44b.

dhunḍhinām jñāpitās-caiṣām sākṣiṇi vindhyavāsini, fol. 54a.

annapūrṇā vidhyavāsā devī kātyāyanis-tathā, fol. 111b.

tataśca jagadānandakāriṇi (nīm) vi (vi) śvamātaram |

annapūrṇam parānandadāyiniṃ || fol. 108b.

annapūrṇa samāyāt pūjadaivata samyutā, fol. 116b.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 'umā māheśvarī mūrti svarnajā paripūjyate', fol. 118b.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 'yatrāste sakalārthasādhanavidhau kātyāyanī devata |
bāṇam khaḍgamasiṃ tathā ca kulīṣam hastaiścaturbhīh kramāt || fol. 3a.
dhunḍhī kṣetrapatiśca karmukadharā kātyāyanī tiṣṭhati', fol. 22a.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 'kātyāyanī bhagavati nandajā vidhyavāsini |
bhaṭavamaśa paritrātri sarvadaiva samarcyate || fol. 92b.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 'śrīmadbhaṭṭaharasthāne prathamam viśvamātaram |
kātyāyanīm bhagavatīm nasru(kṛty)opasarpati || fol. 108a.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 'iti samstuvatām prādur-babhūva jagadīśvarī |
kātyāyanī gaṇeśaśca varadānāya satvaram' || fol. 94b-95a.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 'anekajanasantāpanāśini vindhyavāsini' | fol. 106b.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 'bibhra.i bhaṭa medapāṭa sulkhadā sa vindhyasamvāsini', fol. 3a.

'śubho vāyu bhagavati devī śrī vindhyavāsini', fol. 69b.

⁴³ See *Ibid.*, fol. 1b.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 'vrataṃ medapūṭtarabhaṭṭh', fol. 123b.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 'bhīmarkas-cūrkavāreṣu nityameva sa pūjyate', fol. 73b.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 'tathā caitre ca māghe ca sampūjyetaḍbadeva saḥ', fol. 74a.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 'viśeṣeṇa śaratkāle bhavapārāyanaotsavaḥ', fol. 74a.

Nāgas should be built; and sandal-paste, incense, flowers and others should be offered (to them). Life should be infused into those great lords of the Nāgas... In the great festival of the worship of Nāga by the merchants, craftsmen and twice-born, the Brāhmanas should be fed and handsome charity should be made (to them)... In pañcamī the Bhaṭṭas should churn cow's milk and give those as offerings and later on should take themselves those things.⁴⁸

Sometimes they offered worship to two great gods, viz. Kuvera and Viśvakarman, also. It has been said that they should worship these two gods considering them to be their family-deities.⁴⁹ Having built a golden image of Kuvera and having the same consecrated by the Brāhmanas, the merchants, who formed a section of the Medapāṭa people, should worship that image in company with the whole of their family, by offering much wealth to the deity.⁵⁰ Viśvakarman also should be worshipped with sandal-paste, fragrant incense and similar other things.⁵¹ The worshippers must be pure in heart while offering worship to Viśvakarman. Naivedya, fruits and betel leaves should be given to the god.⁵² These two gods in return bestow favour on their worshippers and grant them much wealth.⁵³

From a close study of the manuscript much can be said regarding the profession and social customs of the Medapāṭas.

It seems that the majority of them were skilled labourers in the art of construction of houses. That they were conversant with that science is proved by numerous references in the manuscript itself⁵⁴ and it is quite reasonable to hold that they earned their livelihood by means of that. From some other passages, it is evident that some among them had to protect the earth, and it is highly probable that they were enrolled in the local

⁴⁸ 'Bhaṭṭaharacarita',

'śrīmadbhāṭa haravaṃṣe ye bhavimti (bhavanti) mañṣiṇaḥ |
teṣāṃ tu jñātidharmatvāt so(m) sevyā nāgapañcamī ||
striyaś-cāpi pumāṃśaś-ca samupāsiyureva tāt |
nāgāṃstu nāgapañcamyām mahotsava vidhānataḥ ||
teṣāṃ tu pratimā kāryyā navaśeṣādi bhoginām |
candanaiś-cāpi dhūpaiśca puspai * * nivedanaiḥ ||
krta prāṇi(a) praṣṭhānām nāgendrāṇām manasvinām |

vanik śa(śi) lpi dvijātīnām nāgapūjā mahotsave |
brāhmanān bhojayeyuste dadhyuścāpi sudakṣ(ksi) nā ||

pañcamyām bhaṭṭa jātiyaiḥgore(na) sasya na(ca) manthanam |
vidheyam nāganaivedyamaśitavyam niranṭaram' || fol. 73.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 'tasmādebhirime (mau) sevyau matvā saṃ(śva) kuladaivatam (te)', fol. 99a.

'pūjayeyuratipriyā svatmanakuladaivatam', fol. 99b.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 'sauvarṇam pratimām kṛtvā pratiṣṭhāpya dvijātīnābhiḥ |

kṛtvā tāmarasaṃ divyaṃ śōbhitaṃ vasubhiḥ . . . ||
. . . -dhnadaṃ dhanasampadaḥ |
vañijāḥ pūjayeyuḥ sma (śva) parivārasamanvitaḥ' || fol. 99b.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 'viśvakarmāṇaṃ . . . pūjayeyuḥ . . . |

. . . samyak puspaprakaravastubhiḥ ||
candanāguru', etc. fol. 99b.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 'naivedyāḥ phalātāmbūlasat phalaiḥ', fol. 99b.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 'dātūraṃ pūrnasampadāṃ', fol. 99b.

'pūjayitvā labheyusma nikhilā api sampadaḥ', fol. 100a.

N.B.—Here there is only reference to the worship of Nārāyaṇa ('sa bhaved bhāgya-nidhimān nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ', fol. 100a). The reason of its occurrence here is not known.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 'vāsru (stu) vivi (there is an additional vi) jñānameteṣāṃ nirmitaṃ viśvakarmaṇā |

ādīṣṭena giriśena svāminā hitakāmyayā ||
maheśena mahanvāya vañijām śa (i) lpināmapi', fol. 99a.

troops or in the pioneer force as home-guards.⁵⁵ It is also noteworthy that some of them tried their best to be conversant with the art of trade⁵⁶ and navigation.

There were some kuladharma of the Bhaṭas which had to be observed by them. They whole-heartedly followed the śāstras and ācāras stated by the latter. They did not even think of changing their Dharma and would not mix with the people of other religions. They were satisfied with their own wives; so, no question of adultery arose. They had to avoid idleness in times of work. They had to worship their preceptors, celebrate the five yajñas including the Devayajña, respect the feet of their parents and perform their āhnikā with flowers and blades of Kuśa (darbha).⁵⁷ Much stress has been laid on 'atithi-satkārah'. If a near and dear one of ordinary status arrive (priye sāmānyabhāve'pi samprāpte nijadhāmani', see fol. 40a), he should be treated like a respectable guest. The host should closely embrace him, make him seated and himself wash his feet. He should place on the head the water touched by the greatest of the Dvijas with his feet.⁵⁸ He should decorate his guest with the sandal-paste, fried rice, and with similar other things. He should even rub the feet of his guest.⁵⁹ In short, he should look after the guest's snāna, paridhāna and bhोजना.⁶⁰ If a Medapāṭa arrives, all those things mentioned above should be observed by the Bhaṭas, for, this is their compulsory custom.⁶¹

There was a system among them that they took money from the bridegroom by giving away their daughter in marriage.⁶² But to give away a daughter to a foreigner belonging to a different clan presumably for earning money thereby was forbidden.⁶³

A detailed description of the marriage ceremony of the Medapāṭas has been given in the manuscript. An interesting feature of it is that the people who will follow the bridegroom when the latter starts for the bride's place should consist of men only and no lady should be allowed to take part in this procession.⁶⁴ It expressly says 'The procession with no female member is an act productive of auspiciousness'.⁶⁵ The ceremonies which

⁵⁵ 'Bhaṭṭaharacarita',

'vāstu vijñānino vāpi sthītirakṣā vidhāyinaḥ', fol. 70a.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 'teṣāṃ vañijāṃ śilpināmapi', fol. 72b.

'bhajeyuh santati yāvat vañijaśilpinas-tathā', fol. 72b.

'vañije bhaṭṭasamyukte medapāṭā punastvami

'śilpino'pi ca te bhaṭṭa medapāṭa gunānvitā', fol. 19b.

'bhaṭṭesu medapāṭeṣu . . . vañijaḥ . . . śilpinoścāpi', fol. 73a.

'vañijaḥ sambhaviṣyanti medapāṭābhaṭādayaḥ', fol. 97a.

'vañijaḥ śilpinaścāpi nirmītāste kapardīnā', fol. 99a.

'bhaṭādimedapāṭeṣu vañigbhiḥ śilpibhistathā', fol. 100a.

'uktah svadharmo bhaṭṭānām vañijāṃ śilpinā sutah', fol. 100a.

'bhaṭādi medapāṭāste brahman śa(i)lpivanikbhavāḥ', fol. 105a.

'śūdrasya vañijaḥ śilpaguṇino bhaṭṭa samsthitau', fol. 124a.

There are a good deal of references to this respect, which are quite unnecessary, for those contain the same ideas and expressions as contained in the verses quoted above.

⁵⁷ See, e.g. *ibid.*, fols. 39a-40b.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 'dvijarājapādasthānāt āpo mūrḍhni niveśayet', fol. 40a.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 'pāda samvāhanādibhi(h) cihnāni sādhayet', fol. 40a.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 'snānādi paridhānādi kalpayet . . . |

bhojanādi prakalpādi bhojaye(t) sauhṛdih(dā) saha' || fol. 40a.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 'pūrvavat paricetavyam medapāṭe samāgate |

eṣa āvaśyako dharmo bhaṭṭānām jñātisambhavaḥ' || fol. 40b.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 'anya(nye)ca kanyāvarayoh karisyanti hi vikrayam', fol. 56b.

grhītvā vittam kanyāyāḥ pradī(dū)syanti varasya tu', fol. 56b.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 'nāparam kanyakodvāhaṃ parajātipravṛttibhiḥ', fol. 32b.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 'varayātrā . . . kevalam puruṣās-tatra samākāryaḥ suhṛtamāḥ', fol. 41b.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 'purandhrivarjīta yātrā kalyānaprasavashali', fol. 41b.

have been dealt with at length are almost like those of the present day.⁶⁶ A major difference is that it lays down a special 'vidhi' that after the 'nāndimukha' ceremony, the newly-married couple should come near the 'maṇḍapavedi' which is befitting with the images of 'navagraha' and worship Varadeśvara (Pārvatī and Śiva), Brahmā and other deities and the Brāhmanas, and the ācāryas, with excellent ornaments and with scents, nuts and betel leaves, etc.⁶⁷ Another characteristic point is that it has been said that the time of the feeding of the assembled guests in connection with a marriage ceremony is mid-day.⁶⁸ It is really very difficult to ascertain why such a particular time has been fixed for that purpose.

It is interesting to note that kaulinya guṇa was known to the Bhaṭṭas as some of them were regarded as 'kulina'.⁶⁹ That there were divisions of Gotra and Pravara among the Bhaṭṭas and Medapāṭas is proved by the following lines of the manuscript.

śrī bhaṭṭamedapātānām caturviṃśati gotrinām |
gotreṣu pratigotrasthāḥ pravaraḥ vyaktito hi te || fol. 202a.
'syurbhaṭa medapātānām caturviṃśati gotrinām', fol. 203a.
'caturviṃśati bhaṭṭādi medapāṭadvijān śeṣaḥ', fol. 191b.

It throws a flood of light on the 24 main gotras⁷⁰ (cf. 'Caturaśīti-gotrebhyaś caturviṃśati gotrinām', fol. 34a), the number of which at one period exceeds at least 2,300.⁷¹ Among the twenty-four gotras which have been specifically mentioned by the writer, the following 18 are well known to all and require no further introduction. These are as follows: (1) Ātreya, (2) Parāśara, (3) Kātyāyana, (4) Garga, (5) Śāṇḍilya, (6) Kauśika, (7) Vatsa, (8) Vātsya, (9) Bharadvāja, (10) Gārgya, (11) Gautama, (12) Kāśyapa, (13) Māṇḍavya, (14) Kaundinya, (15) Atri, (16) Gālava, (17) Bhārgava, (18) Upamanyu. The following six names appear to be wrong. They are according to the text (1) Kuśaka, (2) Muhila, (3) Viṣṇuvardhana, (4) Maunasa, (5) Rādhau and (6) Candrātreya. But as the manuscript is full of gross mistakes, we should do justice if we take for these the following six respectively which are mentioned in the book named 'Principles of Pravara and Gotra'.⁷² They are (1) Kuśika,⁷³ (2) Mudgala,⁷⁴ (3) Viṣṇuvṛddhi,⁷⁵ or Viṣṇuvṛddha,⁷⁶ (4) Mautsya,⁷⁷ (5) Rādhavi.⁷⁸ It is a pity that an authoritative work like 'Principles of Pravara and Gotra' does not contain the last gotra, viz.

⁶⁶ As an instance, we may mention the kindling of a sacred fire, before which the ceremony is to be performed.

⁶⁷ 'Bhaṭṭaharacarita',

tato maṇḍapa vede(dī) śu navagrahasamarcaakah |
gitavāditra nirghoṣa kṛta maṅgalavistarah ||
yathāgrhoktavidhinā pūjayed varadeśvaram |
lalāma vālamkāraḥ pūgatāmbulagandhabhiḥ ||
brahmādikān brāhmanāscamācāryyam . . . | fol. 44b.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 'madhyāhne bhojayed viprān' fol. 47a.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 'medapātottarābhaṭāḥ brāhmanyavidhivedhasah |
sampradāyanusāriṇa kulīni sthitayo bhavat' || fol. 34b.

⁷⁰ See *Ibid.*, fols. 34a-37b.

⁷¹ For the number of gotras see P. Chentsalrao, 'Principles of Pravara and Gotra' (Government Oriental Library Series, No. 25, Mysore, 1900, 2nd edition), the index of gotrarāsi.

⁷² See f.n. 74.

⁷³ See 'Principles of Pravara and Gotra', pp. 86, 89, 139, 170.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 63, 81, 166, 168.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 63, 166.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

Candrātreyā. It can be safely concluded that there was a gotra of this name, as we know that the Cāndelas of historic fame belonged to this Candrātreyā Gotra.⁷⁹

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE BHATTAHARACARITA

The first chapter mainly deals with high glorifications of Śiva by His devoted attendant Nandī after giving information about the contents of the Bhūmi-khaṇḍa of the Padma-purāṇa.

The second chapter also deals with the glorifications of Ekalinga by Vāsuki and Nārada. Śiva granted boon to Vāsuki as He was pleased by his austere penance.

The third chapter contains some information about the Medapāṭa tribe and it is also concerned with their Smṛti rites to some extent. The Medapāṭas' connection with the influence of Śiva has repeatedly been mentioned.

In the very beginning of the fourth chapter the sage Śaunaka asks Sūta to tell him all about the gotras, and Sūta replies accordingly. The names of twenty-four gotras of the Bhaṭas and the Medapāṭas have been given. It has also been observed that attention to these glorifications of gotras makes one get the benefit of the result obtained by bath in the Ganges or such other pious acts. The 'Kaulīnya Guṇa' is ascribed to the Medapāṭas. Vedādhyayana, Sadācāra and other such qualifications make one highly elevated.

The fifth chapter goes on describing the detailed celebrations of the marriage ceremony of the Medapāṭas.

The name of the sixth chapter is Sādharmaṇa kuladharmanirūpaṇa. This chapter is mainly concerned with the genealogical list of the different gotras. The eighth chapter is concerned with Rudra māhātmya and confirms the connection of the Medapāṭas with the blessing of Śiva.

The ninth chapter deals with many important things. It ascribes an elevated place to the goddess Vindhyaśāsinī who exists in Dhunḍhikṣetra. Some place has been given to the goddess Kātyāyanī. The names and ceremonial functions of some festivals and Vratas (i.e. Nāgapañcamī, Śivarātri, etc.) to be observed by the Bhaṭas and Medapāṭas have been given.

The tenth chapter primarily deals with the characteristics of the highest family, i.e. śreṣṭhakulalakṣaṇa.

The eleventh chapter lays down thirteen saṃskāras of the Hindus and remarks that one who does not perform in accordance with the prescriptions of Śāstras becomes a vrātya, i.e. outcaste.

The subject-matter of the twelfth chapter will be understood from the colophon which is as follows: 'iti śrī padmapurāṇe pātāla-khaṇḍe bhattaharacaritre śūdra-vaṇik śilpa nirūpaṇe dvādaśo'dhyāyah', i.e. in connection with the determination of the craftsmanship of merchants and śudras, here ends the twelfth chapter of the Bhattaharacarita belonging to the 'pātāla-khaṇḍa of the Padma-purāṇa'.

⁷⁹ cf. 'jayatyāhlādayanviśvaṃ viśveśvarasirodhrtaḥ |

candrātreyanarendrāṇāṃ vaṃśacandra ivcjjvalah' ||

Semra Plates of Paramardideva', *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. IV, p. 157.

'Candrātreyagotrādvi. Jāhulaputrādvi. Manorathasya padārdham.'

Ep. Ind., Vol. IV, p. 160.

'Candrātreyagotrādvi. Somadevaputrāpaṇ. Mālhukasya padamekam.'

Ep. Ind., IV, p. 162, etc. etc.

The thirteenth chapter eulogizes Ekalīṅga by mentioning that even Kaśyapa worshipped Ekalīṅga. Even the ancestors of the Bhaṭas and the Medapāṭas were devoted worshippers of Ekalīṅga.

The fourteenth chapter is more or less a mātmya of Bhaṭṭa pura, the abode of the Medapāṭas who were always protected by Śiva. These glorifications have been spoken of even by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara.

The fifteenth chapter gives a list of the most sacred places and refers to a good number of deities (i.e. Viṣṇu, Brahmā, Sūrya, Gaṇeśa, Dhunḍipati, Kātyāyanī, Vindhyaśinī besides (Śiva) to be respected by the Medapāṭas. We come to know from this chapter that the Medapāṭas were conversant with Vratas.

In the sixteenth chapter the story of the five pāṇḍavas has been introduced all on a sudden and the names of Rāma, Rāvaṇa and Devakinandana have frequently been mentioned.

The subject-matter of the seventeenth chapter may be broadly divided into two parts. The first part deals with the glorification of Devakinandana, and the second part, to some extent, with the duties of kings.

The detailed description of the duties of the kings is contained in the eighteenth chapter also where for the first time influence of yoga (i.e. kumbhaka, recaka, f. 152a) can be traced.

The nineteenth chapter contains the well-known story of the serpent-sacrifice of Janamejaya on account of his wrath created by the death of his father Parikṣit caused by Takṣaka. This story includes the narrative of the test of power between Takṣaka and Dhanvantari, the healer.

The twentieth chapter contains the latter part of the story. It narrates how Parikṣit faced his end caused by Takṣaka who himself had entered a fruit which was presented to the king.

The story of the battle of supremacy between Takṣaka and Dhanvantari has twice been repeated in the twenty-first chapter which brings this Mahābhārata story to an apparent end.

The twenty-second chapter mainly deals with the identification of Medapāṭas, i.e. the city of the Medapāṭa. The names of its surrounding hills have been mentioned. But the so-called main theme, i.e. the Mahābhārata story, has not been forgotten. Its colophon is as follows: iti Śrī padma-purāṇe pātāla-khaṇḍe mātṛvākyaṃ nāma dvāviṃśo'dhyāyah'.

The twenty-third chapter primarily deals with the revival of nāgakula by Āstika. A grand glorification of Āstika has also been made.

In the twenty-fourth chapter, Sūta being asked by the sage Śaunaka narrated at length the details about Jñāti and Jāti, particularly gotras and pravaras.

The twenty-fifth chapter, i.e. the last chapter, also contains a list of the gotras which have been already stated elsewhere. Its information is centred round the twenty-four gotras—their identification with modern gotras and their implications. The last colophon may be quoted here 'iti śrī pādma purāṇe pātāla-khaṇḍe bhaṭṭaharacarite caṇḍivīra purāṣārthe prasāṅgatanirūpaṇe pañcaviṃśatitamo'dhyāyah'.

