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Varāhamihira and Bhaḍrabāhu

Varāhamihira is justly reckoned as a doyen of astronomers and astrologers of ancient India. He surpassed all other fellow workers in the field by composing standard works, both copious and abridged, on all the three branches of Jyotisa, viz., (i) tantra (mathematical astronomy), (ii) hora (horoscopy), and (iii) sakha or samhita (natural astrology). Several of his writings have come down to us. Unfortunately we possess very meagre information regarding his life and time. From what he himself tells us we know that he was the son as well as a pupil of one Ādityadāsa and a resident of Avanti and obtained a boon from the Sun god at a place called Kāpitthaka. His Panca-siddha utika (i.8) specifies the Śaka year 427 (=505 A. D.) which evidently has a reference to the date of the composition of the work. We also have some evidence to indicate that he was a Sun-worshipping Maga Brāhmaṇa. His son Pṛthuyaśas was also an astrologer and his work, Satpancasika, is still extent.

Some late Jaina writers, however, narrate stories which seek to establish some relationship between Varāhamihira and Bhaḍrabāhu. Thus, the Prabandha-cintāmanī tells us that in the city of Pātaliputra there lived a Brāhmaṇa boy named Varāha who was, ever since his birth, devoted to the study of astrology. But because of poverty he had to subsist by tending cattle. Once he drew a horoscope (lagna) on the surface of a rock but forgot to efface it before returning home in the evening. On remembering it he went back to the spot in the night, where he found a lion sitting over it; but he effaced the drawing fearlessly by putting his hand under the lion’s belly. The lion gave up his animal mask and appeared as the Sun god and told him to ask a boon. Varāha requested him to show him the entire circle of stars and planets whereupon the god had him seated in his transport and enabled him to examine closely the movements of all the heavenly bodies. When he returned after a year he be-
Varāhamihira and Bhadrabāhu came famous as Varāhamihira in allusion to the favour of the Sun god (Mihira), was patronised by King Nanda and composed a treatise on astrology named \textit{Vārāhi Samhita}. Once when a son was born to him, he closely examined the moment and from his intimate personal knowledge of the planets professed a hundred year life for the newborn babe. All but his coutterine younger brother, the Jaina teacher Bhadrabāhu, came to him with presents and participated in the festivities marking the occasion. Varāha complained to the Jaina minister Śakaṭāla about it. On being told about it, Bhadrabāhu said that he had not attended the function as according to his calculation the child would meet death from a cat on the 20th day. And notwithstanding all the efforts to prevent the calamity the prediction came out true and the child expired in the night as an iron chain bearing an engraved figure of a cat fell on his head. Varāhamihira was utterly despaired and was about to consign all the books to fire when Bhadrabāhu came to console him and prevented him from doing so. But being envious of Bhadrabāhu, Varāhamihira took recourse to black magic and troubled some and caused the death of some others of his (Bhadrabāhu’s) lay followers whereupon Bhadrabāhu composed a new hymn (\textit{stotra}) called \textit{Uvasagga-hara Pāsa} with the object of averting these disturbances.

The same episode, with some minor differences and elaboration of details, is related by Rājaśekharasūri in his \textit{Prabandha-kosa}, also known as \textit{Caturvīṃśāti-Prabandha}. It may be summarised as follows:

Two, poor but intelligent Brāhmaṇa boys named Bhadrabāhu and Varāha lived at Pratiśhānapura in Dakṣināpatha. Once the Jaina patriarch Yaśobhadra, who knew the fourteen Pūrvās, came over there. Bhadrabāhu and Varāha heard his sermon and became Jaina monks. Bhadrabāhu acquired the knowledge of the fourteen Pūrvās and possessed thirty-six qualities. He attained great fame as the composer of the niryuktis (commentaries) on the ten canonical works, to wit.

\textit{Daśavikālikā-sūtra}, \textit{Uitarādhyayana-sūtra}, \textit{Daśāruttaskandha}, \textit{Kalpa-sūtra}, \textit{Vyavahāra-sūtra}, \textit{Āvaśyaka-sūtra}, \textit{Sūryaprajñāpti}, \textit{Sutrakṛtāṅga}, \textit{Ācārāṅga-sūtra} and \textit{Ṛṣi-bhāṣīṭā}, and also composed a work called \textit{Bhādrabāhavi Samhita}. After the passing away of Yaśobhadrasūri, both Bhadrabāhu and Sambhūtivijaya, who also possessed knowledge of the fourteen Pūrvās, lived affectionately and wandered independently. Varāha, who too was a scholar, wanted his brother Bhadrabāhu to confer on him the status of sūri. Bhadrabāhu declined the request as Varāha, though learned, was puffed up with pride. Thereupon Varāha gave up the vow and again lived the life of a Brāhmaṇa. On the basis of his study of the sciences when he was a Jaina monk he composed a number of new works including the \textit{Vārāha-samhita} and circulated the rumour of his acquisition of the knowledge of astrology by the favour of the Sun god as nar-
rated in the above story from the Prabandha-cintâmanî and thereby attained great celebrity. Pleased with his learning, Śatrujit, king of Pratiśṭhānepura, appointed him his priest. Varāha hurled abuses on the Śvetāmbaras who were upset and sent for Bhadrabāhu. In the meantime Varāhamihira was blessed with a son for whom he predicted a full 100 years’ life, and the occasion was fittingly celebrated. Varāhamihira complained that Bhadrabāhu, albeit his couterine brother, did not participate in the festivities. On hearing it, Bhadrabāhu explained away his action by predicting the child’s death from a cat on the seventh day. The incident took place and Bhadrabāhu consoled his brother exactly as narrated in the Prabandha-cintâmanî. But a Jain layman, reminded of the earlier insult of his faith by Varāhamihira, condemned the letter in the harshest possible words. On knowing the whole episode and being introduced to Bhadrabāhu, the king, who had come to console Varāhamihira, embraced Jainism. Thereupon Varāhamihira began to hate Jainism and caused a lot of trouble to the Jaina laity. To avert this calamity Bhadrabāhu compiled a prayer entitled Uvasagghara Pāsa comprising five stanzas. The story ends with the statement that Bhadrabāhu’s successor, Sthūlabhadra, who also had the knowledge of the fourteen Pūrvâs, destroyed other faiths.5

This story with minor changes is narrated in some other works also. Thus, in the Sukha-bodhini commentary on the Kalpa-sūtra the same anecdote as found in the Prabandha-cintâmanî is related with the only difference that here the episode centres round the son of Varāhamihira’s royal patron, and not round Varāhamihira’s own son.6

A comparative analysis will reveal that there are some minor differences between the versions of the story as found in the Prabandha-cintâmanî and the Prabandha-kośa. In the former the venue of the episode is located at Pāṭaliputra, while the letter places it at Pratiśṭhāna. While the former makes out the episode as occurring during the reign of king Nanda, the latter gives the name of the king as Śatrujit. Merutuṅga does not mention, like Rājaśekharasūri, the anecdote of Varāhamihira’s first becoming a Jaina ascetic and then reverting to the life of a Brāhmaṇa out of jealousy of his brother Bhadrabāhu and leaves the impression that while Bhadrabāhu became a Jaina monk Varāhamihira throughout led the life of a Brāhmaṇa astrologer. Again, whereas the Prabandha-kośa speaks of Bhadrabāhu as a pupil of Yaśobhadra, a contemporary of Sambhūtivijaya and as the teacher of Sthūlabhadra, no such statement is found in the Prabandha-cintâmanî. Likewise, while the Prabandha-kośa describes Yaśobhadra, Bhadrabāhu, Sambhūtivijaya and Sthūlabhadra as possessing the knowledge of the fourteen Pūrvas (caturdaśa-pūrvin), the Prabandha-cintâmanî does not make any such explicit statement. And lastly, the death of Varāhamihira’s son according to Bhadrabāhu’s prediction took place on the
20th day according to the *Prabandha-cintāmani*, while this event is placed on the 7th day by the other work which further adds that as a result of this incident Varāhamihira's royal patron got himself converted to Jainism. Obviously, the *Prabandha-kośa* version, although composed only forty-four years after the *Prabandha-cintāmani*, marks a great elaboration of the original story and overplays the rivalry between Varāhamihira and Bhadrabāhu in particular and between Jainism and Brahmanical Hinduism in general. But fundamentally there is no difference between these versions. By placing the incident during the reign of king Nanda, Merutuṅga also identifies Bhadrabāhu, the central figure of his story, with the homonymous *caturdaśapūrvin* Jaina patriarch.

If any historical value were to be attached to the above story, Varāhamihira will have to be regarded as a contemporary, nay even brother, of the famous Jaina patriarch Bhadrabāhu who, according to the Jaina tradition, was the last of the *śruti-kevalins* and flourished a few centuries before Christ.

There is no unanimity among the Jainas about the date of *śruti-kevalin* Bhadrabāhu. The Digambara tradition as incorporated in the *Tiloya-paṇṇati*, *Dhavalā, Jayadhavalā* and other works unanimously gives 162 years as the total period of the pontificate of the three *kevalins* and five *śruti-kevalins* after Mahāvīra's *nirvāṇa*. A According to the Śvetāmbara tradition recorded in Hemacandra's *Pariśīta-parvan* and other works, on the other hand, Bhadrabāhu passed away when 170 years had elapsed since Mahāvīra's *nirvāṇa*. Although some Jaina works place the end of the rule of the Nanda dynasty which coincided with the close of the pontificate of Sthūlabhadra 215 years after the *nirvāṇa* of Mahāvīra and thereby make Bhadrabāhu flourish in the Nanda period which is said to have lasted for 155 years, the tradition recorded by Hemacandra which places Candragupta Maurya's accession 155 years after Mahāvīra's death and the evidence of some Jaina writers and inscriptions from Mysore which make out a case for the contemporaneity of Bhadrabāhu and Candragupta Maurya appears more trustworthy. And what is most pertinent in the present context, while the Digambara and Śvetāmbara traditions considerably differ between themselves as regards the order and names of the spiritual successors of Mahāvīra and the exact length of the period covered by their pontificate, the date they assign to the *śruti-kevalin* Bhadrabāhu falls in the fourth century B. C. Thus, he lived over eight centuries before Varāhamihira who, as we have seen above, can be definitely assigned to the sixth century A. D. on the basis of the internal evidence of his own writings.

In view of the above discussion of the relative chronological position of the *caturdaśa-pūrvin* Bhadrabāhu and Varāhamihira, the tradition recorded by Merutuṅga and Rājaśekharasūri which represents them as contemporaries
must be set aside unceremoniously. It must be pointed out in this connection that while there may be a substratum of truth in some of the near contempo-
rary episodes related by these two Jain writers of the fourteenth century A.D., they evo
ince an utter lack of historical sense as regards the earlier period. Not to speak of very ancient times, even the stories narrated by Merutūṅga about Bhoja, the Paramāra king of Malwa, who flourished in the eleventh century A. D., are an amalgum of incredible legends and brook no anachronism. To cite only a few examples, he would have us believe that the celebrated poets Bāna and Mayūra, who are known to have lived in the first half of the seventh century A. D. and enjoyed the patronage of the Puṣyabhūti king Harṣavardhana, actually adorned the court of Bhoja, the Parmāra king of Malwa. Likewise, he relates an amusing story about the friendship of poet Māgha, who is known on independent grounds to have flourished in the latter half of the same century, and king Bhoja. Then again he speaks of a place called Kalyānakatakā as the capital town (rājadhāni-nagara) of the country of Kāya-
kubja which is said to have comprised thirty-six lacs villagers. This state-
ment is very curious in as much as Kāyaṇakubja itself enjoyed the status of the imperial capital first of the Maukharis and Harṣavardhan and then of the Āyudhas and the Imperial Pratihāras and no town named Kalyānakatakā is known from any other source to have existed in the proximity of Kannauj. Similar is the case with the Prabandha-kośa. It refers to king Sātavāhana as the founder of an era (samvatsara), evidently the so-called Śālīvāhana-Śaka which actually owes its origin to the Śakas after whom it was known for a long time. Then again it attributes the Sārasvata-vyākaraṇa to the same king whereas a more popular tradition assigns it to Śarvavarman. Likewise, it mentions Meghachandra as the son and successor of Jayantacandra (i.e., Jayan-
candra) who himself is represented as the son and successor of Govindacandra, king of Vāraṇasi, evidently the famous Gāhādeva ruler of the name. This is an illustration of the most flagrant distortion of near contemporary history, for we learn from numerous Gāhādeva inscriptions that after Govindacandra came his son Vijayacandra and after the latter his son Jaya-
candra who was followed by his son Hariścandra. These examples picked at random would suffice to show that even as regards the near contemporary events no great historical value attaches to the statements of these two authors not to speak of episodes said to have taken place several centuries before their own time. It would, therefore, not be surprising if the story concerning Bhadrabāhu and Varāhamihira is totally unhistorical and baseless.
It is, however, pertinent to note in this connection that the available evidence indicates the existence of more than one Jaina teachers named Bhadrabāhu who were separated from one another by a few centuries. The śruti-
akevalin Bhadrabāhu who, as shown above, flourished in the second century
after the passing away of the last Jaina Tīrthaṅkara may be conveniently referred to as Bhadrabāhu I. As he lived prior to the division of the Jaina church between the Śvetāmbara and Digambara sects, he was honoured by the followers of both the sects and is consequently mentioned in the literary traditions of both of them. As the later teachers of this name belonged only to one or the other of the two main sects, they are referred to in the literary works emanating only from the followers of the concerned sect. Thus, the Digambara Paṭṭāvalis belonging to the Nandi-saṅgha and the Sarasvatī-gaccha mention two Bhadrabāhus, first of whom was the last śrūta-kevalin and is said to have been the disciple of the fourth śrūta-kevalin, Govardhana, and expired 162 years after Mahāvīra’s nirvāṇa. The second Bhadrabāhu is spoken of as having flourished 492 years after the death of Mahāvīra, that is, in V. S. 22 or 35 B.C., and is described as the pupil of Yaśobhadra. His pontificate is said to have covered twenty-three years, i.e., 35-12 B.C. The pattavali of the Nandi Āmnāya of the Sarasvati-gaccha begins with him. It must be pointed out in this connection that the famous Digambara author Kundakunda describes himself in his Chappahuda (Sat-prabhṛta) as a pupil of Bhadrabāhu, who is generally identified with the second teacher of this name known to the Digambara tradition. There is, however, a serious difficulty in accepting this identification. This Bhadrabāhu is spoken of as well-versed in the twelve Aṅgas and fourteen Pūrvas, a description applicable only to the first Bhadrabāhu. It is also noteworthy that Kundakunda refers to Bhadrabāhu as gamayaguru (gamaka-guru) or traditional teacher, and not as ordinary teacher. Kundakunda had, thus, nothing to do with Bhadrabāhu II.

As shown above, a late Śvetāmbara tradition recorded by authors of fourteenth and subsequent centuries of the Christian era mentions a certain Bhadrabāhu who is spoken of as a brother and rival of astronomer-astrologer Varāhamihira. Although he is represented as caturdasa-purvin, his alleged contemporaneity with Varāhamihira, whose flourishing period is known from his own works, seems to point to the existence of yet another Bhadrabāhu who lived in the sixth century A.D. We may call him Bhadrabāhu III. This Bhadrabāhu is credited with the authorship of a number of works including niryuktis on ten works of the Jaina canon, an astrological treatise entitled Bhadrabahavi Samhita and a stotra consisting of five verses called Uvasagga-hara Pasa. It is pertinent to note here that a much earlier unanimous Śvetāmbara tradition recorded in the niryuktis, bhāsya and the curriculum of the Jaina canon attributes the authorship of the Cheda-sūtras to the caturdasa-purva-dhara Bhadrabāhu.

A critical analysis of the above data would reveal that from fairly early times some confusion prevailed about the personages bearing the name Bhadrabāhu and the activities of one Bhadrabāhu were often attributed to another bearer of this name. Thus, while both the Digambara and Śvetāmbara tradi-
tions are unanimous in representing Bhadrabāhu of the fourth century B.C. as the possessor of the knowledge of the twelve Aṅgas and fourteen Pūrvas, the Digambara Paṭṭāvaliś alone clearly distinguish him from Bhadrabāhu II who was separated from the former by an interval of about three centuries. Again, the Digambaras do not give either of these Bhadrabāhus the credit of composing either the niryuktis or the Bhadrabahavi Samhita. On the other hand, the Śvetāmbaras clearly mention only one Bhadrabāhu, the sruta-kevalin one, who is said to have passed away 170 years after Mahāvīra’s nirvana. But while the earlier tradition speaks of him as the author of the Cheda-sūtras only, some later writers credit him with the authorship of the niryuktis, the Bhadrabahavi Samita and the Uvasagga-hara Pasa also. The earliest writer to represent him as the author of the niryuktis is Śīlānka who lived in the eighth century A.D. and speaks of him both as niryukti-kara and caturdasa-purva-dhara in one and the same breath.

The same belief is re-iterated by some later writers like Sāntisūri, Dronācārya, Maladharī Hemacandra, Malayagiri and Kṣemakīrti. But they do not utter a single word about Bhadrabāhu’s mastery over astrology. It was left to some late authors of the fourteenth and following centuries to lay stress on this aspect. Nay, we may even say that an excessive emphasis on this aspect relegates all other religious and literary activities to background. Thus was brought into being the fully developed personality of Bhadrabāhu which is an article of faith with the generality of the Śvetāmbaras today. But this belief involves serious anachronism. The overwhelming internal evidence of the niryuktis themselves leaves no room for doubt that they were composed much later than the fourth century B.C. and the sruta-kevalin Bhadrabāhu is reputed to have flourished. To cite only a few illustrations. The Avāsyaka-niryukti refers to later Jaina acaryas like Bhragupta, Ārya Sīnhagiri, Vajrasvāmin, Tosaliputra, Āryarakṣita, Phalagukṣita, Ārya Suhastin, etc. by name and alludes to events connected with them. The Uttaradhayayana-sutra-niryukti not only mentions Stūlabhadra with respect (he is styled bhagavat) but also narrates the story of Kālakācārya who is well known in connection with the legends centring round Vikramaditya and thus assignable to the first century B.C. The Pinda-niryukti names Pādālipiā and Vajrasvāmin’s maternal uncle Samita and relates the ordination of the Tāpasas of Brahmadvīpa and the origin of the Brahmadvipika sakha.

And lastly, the Ogha-niryukti represents its author as paying obeisance not only to saints possessing the knowledge of the fourteen Pūrvas but also to those versed in ten Pūrvas and eleven Aṅgas, which can refer only to post-sruta-kevalin period and would be anachronistic if the niryuktis were to be regarded as composed by caturdasa-purva Bhadrabāhu. Not that the commentators of the niryuktis were not aware of these anachronisms, but the pressure of tradition weighed so heavily that they attempted to explain away these
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anachronistic trends by resorting to some ingenious devices. Thus, Śāntisūry in his gloss on the Uttaradhyayana-sūtra observes that the presence in the niruyktis of illustrations alluding to later events should not lead one to suppose that they were composed by some other person, for that illustrious sruta-kevalin possessing the knowledge of fourteen Pūrvas was capable of perceiving anything relating all the three times, viz., past, present and future. Likewise, referring to the obeisance of the author of the niruyktis to those knowing ten Pūrvas, etc. Droṇācārya in his commentary on the Ogha-niryuktī states that there is no harm in Bhadrabāhu saluting them, for though inferior to him in point of knowledge, they possessed more virtues. But such explanations can hardly succeed to bring a modern reader round the traditional view that the niruyktis emanate from sruta-kevalin Bhadrabāhu. And than the niruykti on the Dasa-sruta-skandha commences with a salutation to Bhadrabāhu himself, described as the author of the Dasa, Kalpa and Vyāvahara, which should more than suffice to dismiss the belief as a fiction of imagination. The only solution which can satisfactorily explain all the relevant facts is that the niruyktis were composed by a later Bhadrabāhu who was, as pointed out by Muni Puṇyavijaya,55 confused with his sruta-kevalin predecessor bearing the same name because of the identity of name.

When did this Bhadrabāhu flourish? We have stated above that the Digambaras know of a second Bhadrabāhu who is assigned to the latter half of the first century B.C. The Śvetāmbara tradition, which appears to have no knowledge of a Bhadrabāhu in the first century B.C., mentions another Bhadrabāhu who from his alleged contemporaneity with Varāhamihira seems to have flourished in the sixth century A.D. It should be noted, however, that there is considerable similarity between the details of personal life narrated in connection with these personages. Thus, both are described as pupils of Yaśobhadra and their knowledge of astrology is also emphasised. These similarities are two great to be set aside as incidental. We also know that the late Śvetāmbara tradition, which speaks of Bhadrabāhu and Varāhamihira as contemporaries, does not distinguish the former from the sruta-kevalin Bhadrabāhu and is full of many other anachronisms. Thus, in spite of the alleged association with Varāhamihira we would not be quite unjustified if we conclude that the niruykti-kara and astrologer Bhadrabāhu of the Śvetāmbara authors is probably no other than Bhadrabāhu II of the Digambara tradition. But if any value is to be attached to the reported association of Bhadrabāhu with Varāhamihira described by late Śvetāmbaras writers, he will have to be regarded as Bhadrabāhu II. Some scholars accord the credit of composing the niruyktis to Bhadrabāhu II and others to Bhadrabāhu III. Both these suggestions are equally probable. And accordingly
as we accept one or the other of these views, the composition of the niryukti will have to be placed in the first century B.C. or sixth century A.D.

Muni Purvavijayaji goes a step further and suggests that the same Bhadrabāhu who composed the niryukti about the sixth century A.D. was also responsible for the composition of the astrological treatise known as Bhadrabahu Samhita after his own name and the Upasarga-hara-stotra. As regards the latter work we have nothing to say. But it is difficult to accept his suggestion about the authorship of the former work some manuscripts whereof have come down to us and form the basis of the published editions.⁴⁹ A cursory examination of the relevant evidence would not be out of context.

In the colophons of its various chapters the work in variously called Bhadrabahu Nimitta, Bhadrabahu-nimitasastra, Bhadrabahu Naimitta, Bhadrabahu-viracita-nimitasastra, Bhadrabahu-viracita-Mahani (or nai) mittasastra and Bhadrabahu-Samhita. Taken at their face value, these names will lead one to the conclusion that it emanates from Bhadrabahu which is quite in conformity with the late Jaina tradition. But this claim is belied by an examination of the internal evidence of the work itself. It begins in the Pauranic fashion and we are told that once upon a time when Bhadrabahu, the possessor of the knowledge of the twelve Aṅgas, was seated on the Pāṇḍugiri hill near Rājagṛha in Magadha during the reign of king Senajit, he was requested by his pupils to impart in brief the knowledge of astrological phenomena for the benefit of kings, lay followers and particularly ascetics. Bhadrabahu thereupon agreed to explain them everything both in brief and detail.⁵⁰ This statement is vitiated by some grave anachronisms. It is well-known that during the time of Bhadrabahu, well-versed in the twelve Aṅgas, Candragupta Maurya was practically the ruler of the whole of India including Magadha whereas no ruler of Magadha named Senajit is known from any other source.⁵¹ Then again, Pātaliputra, not Rājagṛha, was the capital of Magadha during the reign of Bhadrabahu’s royal patron Candragupta Maurya. Rājagṛha had long ceased to occupy this position. Evidently in his eagerness to give a halo of antiquity to the work its compiler lost sight of all historical facts. This introductory portion, wherein Bhadrabahu is styled mahatman and bhagavat, clearly indicates that the work could not have emanated from any Bhadrabahu, neither the srutakevalin one nor any of his later namesakes. This conclusion is also supported by some other considerations. Thus, at one place we are told that an intelligent person should decide the prospects of rainfall after hearing the words of Bhadrabahu (xi. 52). At another place it is stated that Bhadrabahu had described the prospects of fluctuation of prices after observing the auspicious and inauspicious yogas of the planets and stars (xxv. 50). Then again, the expression “these are the words of Bhadrabahu” (Bhadrabahu-vaco vatha)
is met with repeatedly throughout the work. Secondly, the Cheda-sūtras attributable to Bhadrabāhu I and the niryuktis and the Uvasagga-hara-Pasa of a later Bhadrabāhu are all in Prakrit, and it is reasonable to assume that even if any of these Bhadrabāhus really composed a Samhitā it should also have been in the same language whereas the extant Bhadrabahu-samhitā is in Sanskrit.

Thirdly, Merutunga and Rājaśekharasūri represent Bhadrabāhu as a superior rival of Varāhamihira, and we shall not be unjustified in expecting Bhadrabāhu’s Samhitā, intended to complete with his rival Varāhamihira’s Brhat-samhitā, to excel the latter work in point of contents and presentation. The case is, however, just the opposite. The Bhadrabahu-samhitā lacks unity of authorship. A majority of chapters begin with a verse stating that the author would delineate such and such a subject. No such statement is, however, found at the commencement of some chapters. In the introductory portion the author promises to deal with every topic in brief (samasatāḥ) as well as in detail (vyasatāḥ), but he keeps this promise only in a few cases. Then, at the beginning of the Svapnādhyāya (Ch. xxvi) there is a fresh mangala-acakara which shows that originally it did not form part of the work and was added to it in later times, probably because the topic is mentioned in the list of contents given in the opening chapter (i. 17). The same is the case with ch. xxx called pariśīṣṭādhyāya. The chapters are not arranged in a scientific manner. To give only a few instances, No intelligible system is adopted in the delineation of planetary movements (graha-cara) which form the subject-matter of chapters xv-xxiii. The movements of Venus, which receive the most elaborate treatment, claim the first place (ch. xv) and are followed by those of Saturn (ch. xvi). One would naturally expect it to be followed by the treatment of the remaining planets from Sun to Jupiter in their fixed serial order. But such is not the case, and an arbitrary order is adopted. After Saturn comes Jupiter (ch. xvii) to be followed by Mercury, Mars, Rahu, Ketu, the Sun and the Moon (chs. xviii-xxiii). The case is not very different regarding the arrangement of other chapters. In some cases, part of one topic is dealt with in one chapter while another part of the same subject is reserved for treatment in a stanza of a subsequent chapter intervened by a large number of verses. To cite only one example, the quantum of the effects of two of the five kinds of ulka, viz., Tārā and Dhiṣṇya, is described in verse 9 of chapter 2, while that of the three remaining kinds, viz., Āsani, Vidyut and Ulkā, is specified in verse 12 of the following chapter. Then, there are numerous repetitions not only of ideas but even of words, sometimes in one and the same chapter. Verse 7 of chapter 13 is, for instance, repeated once again after an interval of just sixteen verses (xiii. 23). Although minor defects of language, metres and grammar are not uncommon in texts dealing
with technical subjects like astrology-astronomy, medicine and philosophy, the Bhadrabahu-samhita is vitiated by these defects in an unprecedentedly serious proportion which many a time hamper a proper understanding of the text. As against this, the Brhat-samhita is distinguished by well-knit chapters arranged scientifically, succinct but self-sufficient delineation of relevant topics, variety of metres which are skilfully used, clarity of expression, general correctness of language which varies according to the requirements of the topics dealt with, originality and poetical talent, qualities conspicuous by their absence in the work allegedly composed by Bhadrabahu. The Bhadrabahu-samhita cannot thus stand comparison with Varahamihira's work, not to speak of surpassing it which was the avowed purpose of composing it. But this is not all. Many statements of Varahamihira are repeated in the Bhadrabahu-samhita, sometimes with the only difference that while the former employs only a few words the latter says the same thing in so many words. To mention only a few examples, ch. xxxiii of the Brhat-samhita and chs. ii-iii of the Bhadrabahu-samhita deal with ulka. Varahamihira defines ulka and names its five varieties in xxxiii. i which is reiterated in so many words in Bhadrabahu-samhita, ii.5-6. The quantum of the effects of the five kinds of ulka is described in a single stanza by Varahamihira (xxxiii. 3) and the same is repeated by Bhadrabahu in two verses (ii. 9; iii 12) in somewhat similar words. There is a surprising degree of similarity of words and ideas between the two works in many other places. also, Bhadrabahu-samhita, xxvii. i is adapted from Brhat-samhita, ix.38, and xxvii. 2-3 of the former are literally the same as ix. 3) and v. 97 of the latter Then again, verses 183-185 of the Parisistadhyaya the Bhadrabahu-samhita are borrowed ad verbatim from Brhat-samhita, lxx. 1-7, 9-13, 8. We shall, therefore, not be unjustified in concluding that not only is the Bhadrabahu-samhita inferior to the Varahi Samhita but is also indebted to it for many ideas and verses and consequently later than it.

Although the extent Bhadrabahu-samhita is thus later than the Brhat-samhita of Varahamihira, it is not possible to ascertain its date precisely in the present state of insufficient information. In the absence of definite evidence on the point, scholars have naturally offered diverse suggestions. The oldest manuscript of the text was copied on Tuesday, the 5th of the white half of Caitra in (Vikrama) Samvat 1504 or in c. 1447 A. D. But Muni Jinavijaya opines that the work is probably a Sanskritised version of Bhadrabahu's work which was composed in Prakrit and that even the Sanskrit version is at least as old as the 11th of 12th century of the Vikrama era. At one place A. S. Gopani says that the above-mentioned dated manuscript shows that the work cannot be later than the 16th century of Vikrama while later he avers that it was composed after the 15th century of vikrama. It is difficult to accept either or these views. While we need not deny that Bhadrabahu did
really compose a work on astrology, the internal evidence of the extent work, discussed above, clearly proves that it is neither based on nor is a Sanskrit version of Bhadrabāhu’s work. So also the 11th-12th century date suggested by Jinavijayaji can at best be regarded as a pure surmise. The dated manuscript indicates that the work must have been in existence or some time prior to the date of its copying, V. S. 1504. This rules out Gopani’s suggestion that it came into existence after the 15th century of Vikrama. It is impossible that the episode of Bhadrabahu and Varāhamihira found in the Prabandha-cintamani and the Prabanda-khosa may have an important bearing on the present question. Although the former work is fully aware of Bhadrabahu’s mastery over astrology, it does not contain any allusion to the Bhadrabahu-Samhita which is first mentioned in the latter work. There is, of course, no reason to doubt that the Bhadrabahu-Samhita known to Rājasekharasuri was the same as the extent Bhadrabahu-Samhita. Can we, on this basis, conclude that the available Bhadrabahu-Samhita, came into existence some time during the gap between the dates of these two works, i.e., between V. S. 1361 and 1405?

It will be clear from the foregoing discussion that the work now known as Bhadrabahu-Samhita has nothing to do with any of the Bhadrabahu and is quite a recent compilation, and an unintelligent one at that, dating from about the middle of the present millennium. Its compiler, who was a man of ordinary calibre, ascribed it to Bhadrabahu, evidently with the object of giving it sanctity, popularity and authoritativeness. His knowledge of Bhadrabahu’s traditional mastery of astrology67 must have emboldened him to do so. This was not uncommon in ancient India as a number of comparatively late texts ascribed to traditionally reputed astrologers and astronomers are known to exist even now.68 The extent Bhadrabahu-Samhita is thus a very late compilation forged in the name of the renowned Jaina patriarch Bhadrabahu.69

The text of the Bhadrabahu-Smhitā as it has come down to us bears the appearance of a Jaina work of the Digambara school. It begins with a salutation to Jina Vira, i.e., Mahāvīra,70 and, as we have seen above, is represented to have been composed by Bhadrabahu in response to the request of his pupils. The object of its composition, among other things, was to enable the Jaina monks to know in advance the places to be visited by calamities and to take refuge in other prosperous countries (i. 11). Bhadrabahu is styled Nirgrantha (i. 6) and described as sky-clad (Digevasas, ii. 1). The work is said to have been based on the words of Sarvajña (i. 11. 14) or Jina (is 2), and a statement found in it is represented to be from the Nirgrantha-sasana or the sayings of the Nirgrantha (iv. 28).71 In the colophons of individual chapters the title of the work, i.e., Bhadrabahu-Nimitta or Bhadrabahu-nimitta-sastra, is generally qualified by the adjective Nirgrantha, i.e., belonging to the Nirgranthas.72 Then again at the end of some of the chapters the monks are advised to leave one country
and seek shelter in another if the former was to be afflicted by certain disasters (xii. 38; xiv. 181; xv. 230; xxv. 49). But a close examination of the contents reveals a number of Brahmanical elements which tells us quite a different tale. Thus, speaking of the importance of the nimittas while undertaking a military expedition it is said that even the gods had taken the nimittas into account (xiii. 23). We are further told in the same vein that neither the Vedas nor the Aṅgas (i.e., Vedāṅgas) nor the sciences (Vidyas), taken individually, can meet those requirements which are met with by a well-told nimitta. One would normally expect a Jaina text to enumerate the various branches of learning beginning with the Jaina cannon and not with the Vedas which were an object of reverence only for the followers of Brahmanical Hinduism. It cannot be argued that the word anga may have reference to the Jaina cannon comprising twelve Aṅgas, for, as the word is preceded by reference to the Vedas, it can denote only the Vedāṅgas. Considerable space is devoted to the description of portents taken from fire while performing homa (offerings to fire) on the eve of a military march xiii. 52-60).

The Brahmanical practice of regarding the nakṣatras as presided over by various gods and referring to them by the names of respective divinities is also followed (iii. 38-39; xiii. 96-97). As a means of warding off certain evil portents the author recommends the worship of gods, Brāhmaṇas initiated for the performance of Vedic sacrifices (diksita), elderly people and Brahmacārins, for the sins of the kings are extinguished by their penances (xiii. 116). Referring to the duties of a king after the conquest of a new territory, the work recommends that he should worship the gods, elderly people, Brāhmaṇa ascetics or Brahmacārins (lingastha), Brāhmaṇas and teachers and make revenue-free land grants (xiii, 181). No mention is made in this connection of Jaina monks which would be reasonably expected of a Jaina author. Again, while dealing with the utpataś relating to divine images, the author first names Brāhmaṇa-gods and goddesses like Vaiśravaṇa, Candra, Varuṇa, Rudra, Indra, Baladeva, Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Sūrya, Śrī, Viśvakarman, Bhadrakāli, Indraṇi, Dhanvantari, Jāmadagnya, Rāma (Parāśurāma) and Sulasā (xiv. 62-81) and it is only while summarising the whole thing again that mention is made of the images of the Arhats (xiv. 82). One would be justified in expecting a Jaina author to accord Tirthaṅkaras images place of honour and others a secondary place. The case is, however, just the opposite. And lastly, the author is not only familiar with but gives great importance to the Brahmanical system of the four Varnas. Thus, while describing the effects of astrological phenomena on worldly life he generally begins with the mention of the four castes in the prescribed order. He also appears to believe in the traditional association, colours and castes, and frequently refers to white, red, yellow and black phenomena as particularly affecting the Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas,
Vaiśyas and Śūdras respectively. These few instances picked up at random appear to reveal that the extent Bhadrabahu-Samhita probably originated out of a Brahmanical text which was later converted to Jainism by introducing a few changes and additions such as the introductory portion associating the work with Bhadrabahu, concluding stanzas at the end of some chapters referring to the utility of the predictions for the Jaina monks and occasional references to the worship of Jina images and such other kindred elements. But the garb is transparent enough to reveal its original character which is quite eloquent.

Did then Bhadrabahu not compose any work on astrology? As we have noted above, he was traditionally reputed to have been well-versed in astrology (nimitta), and it is quite possible that he may have composed some work on the subject. But, if he really did so, unfortunately we know neither its title nor the exact nature and extent of its contents. But it was probably not known as Bhadrabahu-Samhita, for this name is not met with in the extensive Jaina literature prior to about the middle of the fourteenth century A.D. This title was obviously imitated from Varahamihira's Samhita which, in addition to Brhat-Samhita, was also popularly known as Varahi Samhita after his own name, with the motive of highlighting the alleged competition of Varahamihira and Bhadrabahu which was a creation of wild imagination on the part of some late Jaina authors.

And just as the statement of the author of the Prabandha-kosa about Bhadrabahu writing a Samhita alleged to have been christened after his own name is untrustworthy, so also must be his alleged contemporaneity and relationship with Varahamihira. Thus, the Varahamihira-Bhadrabahu episode narrated by Merutunga and Rājasekharasūri does not appear to possess any historical value and as such need not be taken into account in any historical study. It is noteworthy in this connection that this anecdote is not found mentioned in any work datable before the fourteenth century A.D.

To sum up,

(i) The contemporaneity of Sruta-kevalin Bhadrabahu and Varahamihira contemplated by Merutunga and Rājasekharasūri must be rejected as it goes squarely against the internal evidence of Varahamihira's own works.

(ii) It is possible, however, that the episode may have reference to a later Bhadrabahu who composed the nirvuktis and was confounded with his earlier namesake because of the sameness of thier names.

(iii) An examination of the available Bhadrabahu-Samhita proves that it has nothing to do with any of the personages bearing the name Bhadrabahu and that it is inferior to and later than Varahamihira's Brhat-Samhita to which it is indebted for many an idea and stanza. In fact, it is an unintelligent
compilation of about the middle of the present millennium attributed to Bhadrabāhu with the object of according it a respectable position.

(iv) The text of the Bhadrabahu-Samhita as it has come down to us appears to belong to the Digambbara sect of Jainism. But a critical appraisal of its contents reveals that in all probability the text was originally a Brāhma-
nical one and was later given a Jaina appearance by adding a few Jainistic elements here and there.

(v) Although Bhadrabāhu may have composed a work on astrology, it was probably not known as Bhadrabahu-Samhita, which name is met with for the first time in the fourteenth century A. D.

(vi) As shown by a critical examination of the contents of the Prabandha-
cintamani and the Prabandha-kosa, also called Caturvimsati-prabandha, their authots, Merutunga and Rājaśekharasūrī, had no historical sense, and the Varāhaminira-Bhadrabāhu episode recorded by them must be dismissed as of no historical value whatsoever.

References

1 These include the Brhat-samhītā, Brhaj-jātaka. Laghu-jātaka, Yogayātrā, Tikānikayutrā, Brhadyātrā, Pañcasiddhantikā and Vivāha-paṭala. Of these, the Vivāha-paṭala still remains unpublished. For a collection of the avail-

2 Brhaj-jātaka, xxviii, pp. 9.

3 For a full discussion of Varāhamihira’s life, date and works see Ch. 1 of my India as seen in the Brhat-samhītā of Varāhamihira, Delhi, 1969.


7 On the basis of the Jaina evidence Shah avers that the Vārāhasaṃhītā was composed 156 years after Mahāvīra’s nirvāṇa (Ibid., p. 339).

8 For a full discussion, see Kailash Chandra Shastri, Jaina Sāhityakā Itiḥāsa: Pūrvapīṭhkā, Varanasi, Vira Nirvāṇa year 2489, pp. 337-339.


10 Cf. Hariśeṇa’s : Brhat-kathā-kośa (Singhi Jain Series, Bombay, 1943).
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14 For a detailed discussion of Varāhamihira’s date see my *India as seen in the Bṛhatatsamhitā of Varāhamihira*, pp. 4-18.
15 The stories appertaining the Caulukyas come under this category.
16 *Prabandha-cintāmanī*, Prakāśa 2, pp. 44-45.
18 *Ibid.*, Prakāśa 1, p. 11.
19 Prabandha 15, p. 68.
21 *Prabandha-kośa*, Prabandha 15, p. 72.
24 This reminds one of the Buddhist councils only first two of which are known to the undivided Buddhist church whereas subsequent ones, being of sectarian nature, are mentioned only in the works of the respective sects.
25 As stated above, the Śvetāmbaras place his death 170 years after Mahāvīra’s passing away.
26 H. Jacobi, *The Kalpasutra of Bhadrabahu*, introduction, pp. 10ff. ; *IA*, vol. ii, p. 245 ; vol. xxi, pp. 57ff. This Bhadrabahu is mentioned only in the Paṭṭāvalis, other texts remaining reticent about him. According to some scholars, the episode of the migration of the Jaina community to South India recorded in literature and some late inscriptions from Mysore was connected with Bhadrabahu II (vide J. F. Fleet in *IA*, vol. xii, pp. 158ff.; Kailash Chandra Shastri, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-351). This suggestion is, however, not well-based.
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31 The *niruktī* on the *Dasasrutaskandha-sutra* mentions Bhadrabāhu as the author of the *Dasasrutaskandha, kalpa* and *Vyavahara*. For the text of the verse, see *Bṛhat-Kalpa-sutra* with the *niruktī*, a *bhāsa* by Sanghad-sagani Kṣamāśramaṇa and a commentary by Malayagiri and Kṣemakīrti, edited by Muni Catuvijaya and Muni Pūnyavijaya, Vol. VI (Bhavnagar, 1942), Gujarati Introduction, p. 1.

32 The author of the *Pancakalpa-mahabhāsya* also refers to Bhadrabāhu as the composer of the *Dasa, Kalpa* and *Vyavahara* and repeatedly styles him *suttakara*. For original text, *vide Ibid.*, p. 2.

33 The *churni* on the *Pancakalpa-bhāsya* gives Bhadrabāhu and the credit of composing the *Acaraparakalpa* or *Nisitha-sutra*, *Dasa, Kalpa*, and *Vyavahara*. For the text, see *Ibid.*, p. 3.

34 The *Dasa-sruta-skandha*, *Kalpa*, *Vyavahara*, *Nisitha*, *Mahanisitha* and *Pancakalpa* are known as Cheda-sūtras.


38 For original text, see *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.


41 For some other anachronisms, see *Ibid.*, pp. 5-14.


46 It must be remembered in this connection that a late tradition met with in the *Jyotirvid-abharana* makes Varāhamihira one of the nine gems of the court of Vikramāditya who is credited with the institution of the Vikrama era of 57 B.C. In case it is held that Merutunga and Rājaśekharasūrī followed this tradition which was quite popular in their time, the identification of the two Bhadrabāhus will have to be regarded as a certainty.
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48(a) *Ibid*, pp. 15-17. In support of his proficiency in astrology Punyavijaya invites attention to some statements with astrological implications found in the *niryuktis* and to the fact that the *Surva-prajnapati* was one of the texts chosen by Bhadrabahu for writing his *niryuktis*.

49 A Gujarati translation by Pandit Hiralal Hamsaraj was published from Bombay in V. S. 1959 and the text was published a few years later by the same Pandit from Jamnagar. The text critically edited from four manuscripts and with an enlightening introduction by Dr. Amritlal S. Gopani and a foreword by Muni Jinavijaya was published in the Singhi Jain Series No. 26, Bombay, 1949. Later, Dr. Nemichandra Shastri edited it from two manuscripts with an introduction and Hindi translation (Varanasi, 1959). Gopani's edition contains twenty-six chapters and that of Shastri twenty-seven chapters and an additional chapter called Parisist-adhyaya. Unless otherwise stated, references in the present paper pertain to Gopani's edition.

50 *Bhadrabahu-samhita*, i. 1-20; ii. 1-2.

51 Unless, of course, he is identified with Seniya Bimbisāra. Prasenajit of Kosala is out of question.

52 *Ibid*, iii. 31, 64; vi. 17; vii. 19; ix. 26, 62; x, 16, 44; xi. 26, 30; xiii. 37; xiii. 74, 100, 178; xiv. 54, 136; xv. 36, 72, 145, 166, 178: xviii. 24; xx. 14; xxiii. 28; xxiv. 23; xxvi. 42.

53 Called *Varahi Samhita* in the *Prabandha-cintamani* and *Prabandha-kosa*.

54 In some cases the concluding verse of a chapter mentions the subject dealt with in the following chapter.

55 Cf. chs. iii, xix, xxii, xxiii, xxv, xxvii.

56 *Bhadrabahu-samhita*, ii. 2.

57 Thus, *ulka* is described in brief in ch. ii and in detail in ch. iii. This practice is not followed in respect of other topics.


58a Śrimad = Vira-jinam natva Bharatīn = ca Pulindinim

Smṛtya nimitān vaksye sv-atmanah karya-siddhaye pariśīṣṭādhyāya, verse 2.

59 Clouds, rainfall and connected matters are dealt with in four chapters (vi, viii, x, xii) which are separated from one another by chapters dealing with other topics like twilight (vii), winds (ix) and *gandharva-nagara* (xi).

60 This has reference to Nemichandra Shastri's edition.
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For some such defects, see Gopani, op. cit., introduction, pp. 19-20.

Cf. Brahmat-samhita, xxxiii. 4, 8 and Bhadrabahu-samhita, ii. 8-9; Brahmat- samhita, xxxiii. 9-10, 12, 15-16, 18-19 and Bhadrabahu-samhita, iii. 5, 9, 16, 18-19. For a detailed comparison between the two works, see Gopani (editor), Bhadrabahu-samhita, introduction, pp. 6-19, 22-32.

As pointed out above, ch. xxvii is found only in Nemichandra Shastri's edition.

Nemichandra Shastri's view that the first twenty-five, particularly fifteen, chapters, were probably composed earlier than Varahamihira (introduction, pp. 55-56) is contradicted by his own statement that the work may have been compiled in the 8th-9th century A.D. (Ibid., p. 55). As pointed out by him, the mention of Durga's work on the ristas in Bhadrabahu-samhita, Pariśistādhāyaya, verse 10, clearly shows that at least this chapter is later than 1032 A. D. (Ibid., p. 54).

See the puspika on p. 70 of Gopani's edition.

Ibid., Jinavijaya's foreword, pp. 3-4.

Ibid., author's introduction, p. 6.

Ibid., p. 20.

Nemittio (naimittika) is known to have been employed as one of the synonyms used for Bhadrabāhu. See Punyavijaya, op. cit., p. 15, fn. 3.

Such are, for example, the works attributed to Brahmap, Vasistha, Sūrya, Maya, Garga, Kasyapa, etc. Similar works exist in the field of Dharmasāstra, Ayurveda and Śilpaśāstra also.

As an analogy may be mentioned the fact that as works supposed to have been composed by the ganadharas were regarded as more authoritative than those composed by others, in later times the tendency to attribute even late works to them came into existence. Thus, some of the Chedasūtras and even some Purāṇas came to be ascribed to the ganadharas. Vide Dalsukh Malwania, ganadhara vada ki Prastavana, pp. 8-12; Nisihatha Eka Adhāyayana. pp. 18-20.

This verse is found only in Shastri's edition. The opening verse of ch. xxvi also pays obeisance to Mahāvīra.

According to xx. 1, the movement of Rāhu dealt with in ch. xx is also basad on teachings of the Nirgranthas well-versed in the twelve Āṅgas. Likewise, xiii. 428 (Shastri's edition) proclaims that the nimittas dealt with in the chapter are actually those spoken by the Jina (Jina-bhasita).

Occasionally we find the use of the word Nirgrantha which is evidently an error for Nairgrantha.

Also Cf. xiv. 182; xxi. 58; xxiii. 58; xxiv. 43.

Na Vedar n-āpi c-angani na vidyāś =ca prthak 'prthak Prasadhyanti tan= arthaś nimittaṁ yat subhāsītaṁ xiii. 38.
74a Cf. xxii. 54 which recommends the worship, among others, of persons initiated for the performance of Vedic sacrifices manes and Brāhmaṇas for warding off the effects of the appearance of evil comets.

75 The reading in the relevant verse is balandeve (xiv. 68) and there is also a variant, bale kasein, which give no sense. The correct reading, particularly as Vasudeva is mentioned in the following stanza, must be Baladeva, which has been corrupted into Balandeve in the interest of the correctness of the metre.

76 The mention of Vasudeva after Baladeva points to the earlier period when Vira-worship was popular. The verse in question (xiv. 69), as well as the preceding one, therefore, appears to have been taken from some early text.

77 Copani’s edition gives the reading bhadrastali (xiv. 75), which is obviously a mistake for Bhadrapali which is given by Shastri.

78 E. g., xiv. 22-23; 31, 58; 99-101; xx. 2, 57; also cf. xiv. 57 (association of certain trees and castes); xxiv. 18-21 (association of certain tithis and castes).

79 Cf. xiii. 76; Parisistadhyaya, verses 30, 143, 158, etc.