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डॉ. रामकरण शर्मा

भूतपूर्व कुलपति, सम्पूर्णानन्द संस्कृतविश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी; नयी दिल्ली

डॉ. रामचन्द्र नारायण दाण्डेकर

भण्डारकर प्राच्यशोधसंस्थान, पुणे

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पुराणम्—PURĀṆA

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[28 July, 1999

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व्यासाष्टकम्

श्रीशं वन्दे । पुरुषार्थप्रबोधः प्रथमोऽध्यायः ।

व्यास उवाच ।

यस्यास्ति शक्तिः स तु मां वदेत्तु प्रोर्ध्वं करोत्वङ्गुलिकां पुरो मे ।

कः पूजितः स्याच्छशिशेखरेण नाराधितो भूतपतिः सुरैः कैः ? ॥ १ ॥

किम्वा न दृष्टं हि पितामहेन सुरासुरैर्वा मधुसूदनेन ।

क्षीरोदमन्थोद्भवकालकूटं कण्ठे धृतं केन हरं विहाय ॥ २ ॥

एकेन दग्धं त्रिपुरं शरेण कामो ललाटाक्षिहुताशनेन ।

भिन्नोऽथ कः शूलवरेण येन कस्तेन सार्धं कुरुते विरोधम् ॥ ३ ॥

जलौघकल्लोलतरङ्गतुङ्गा गङ्गा धृता येन जटाग्रभागे ।

पादाम्बुजाङ्गुष्ठनिपीडनेन पपात लङ्काधिपतिर्विसृजः ॥ ४ ॥

सुरासुराणामपि यत्समक्षं प्रध्वंसितो दक्षमखः क्षणेन ।

प्रणम्य दक्षोऽक्षमतां मखस्य लेभे वरं शंकरतोऽपि चाग्र्यम् ॥ ५ ॥

सर्वस्य पूजार्हमिहोत्तमाङ्गं सम्पूज्यते लिङ्गपरं हरस्य ।

अनेन पर्यायमतीवमूढा प्रभुर्यथैवेच्छति तत्करोति ॥ ६ ॥

ब्रह्माऽत्र लिङ्गे हरिरत्र जातः सुरासुराश्चेदमिहार्चयन्ति ।

तथापि मूढा न विचारयन्ति को वाऽधिकोऽप्यस्ति समो हरस्य ॥ ७ ॥

न वज्रचक्रान्तसरोरुहाङ्गं लिङ्गाङ्कितं पश्य जगद्भगाङ्गम् ।

हस्तप्रबन्धे सति कङ्कणे तु पश्यन्ति मूढाः खलु दर्पणेन ॥ ८ ॥

अनिलादः— "इदं पवित्रं स्तवनं प्रणीतं व्यासेन भक्त्या परमेश्वरस्य ।

विमोक्षणायात्मभुजद्वयस्य

निश्चेष्टकाष्ठोपलसन्निभस्य ॥ ९ ॥

व्यासाष्टकमिदं पुण्यं यः पठेच्छिवसन्निधौ ।
सन्त्यज्य विष्णुलोकादीन् शिवलोकमवाप्नुयात् ॥ १०

एवं संस्तुवतस्तस्य सहर्षं भावितात्मनः ।
अचिरेणैव कालेन स्मरारिर्वरदोऽभवत् ॥ ११

ब्रह्मणा विष्णुना देव्या स्कन्दार्केन्दुमरुद्गणैः ।
नन्दिचण्डमहाकालवीरभद्रादिभिर्वृतः ॥ १२

(सरस्वती भवन पुस्तकालय, सं. सं. वि. वि. पाण्डुलिपि संख्या 76939, लिपि शारदा)

संग्राहकः

आचार्य रमापद चक्रवर्ती

GODS IN HIDING :
THE MAHĀBHĀRATA'S VIRĀṬA PARVAN AND
THE DIVINITY OF
THE INDIAN EPIC HERO

BY

ROBERT P. GOLDMAN

[अस्मिन् निबन्धे विदुषा लेखकेन महाभारतस्य विराटपर्वणः प्रामाणिकत्वं तत्र निर्दिष्टपात्राणां देवत्वविषये च प्रमाणबाहुल्येन विचारितम् । केषां चिद्विदुषां मतेन विराटपर्वणः प्रामाणिकत्वं सदिग्धं वर्तते किन्त्वत्र लेखकेन सप्रमाणं प्रतिपादितं यद् इदं पर्व प्रामाणिकं वर्तते तथा महाभारतस्य मूलप्रतिपाद्यविषयानुरूपमेवास्यापि विषयाणां, सन्निवेशो वर्तते । पाण्डवानां देवत्वविषये तेषामज्ञातवासविषयेऽपि पुष्कलप्रमाणैः विचारितम् ।]

The problematization of the divinity of the central figures of the ancient Indian epic poems, the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, has, virtually from the beginning, been a characteristic of modern western text-historical studies of these works. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to state that this problematization lies at the very center of the western scholarly project as it has dealt with the epics; for the dominant if not universally accepted model proposed in these studies has been that the poems grew over a period of centuries or even millennia from genealogical ballads composed and sung by courtly bards, ballads constituting simple and restricted narrative "cores," into the vast, complex, and sometimes seemingly digressive monumental poems we have today.¹ An important corollary of this generally accepted theorem is that Rāma and Kṛṣṇa, the two major epic protagonists who are known everywhere to the Hindu tradition as avatāras of the supreme divinity Viṣṇu, were not, at the level of the original "core" so regarded; but only came to be so identified in the course of time as the result of a progressive Vaiṣṇava sectarian

1. For examples of this type of scholarship, see Hopking 1901 and Jacobi 1893. The hegemonic power of this received wisdom is compelling, and I myself, although Sceptical about specific formulations was like most western-trained Indologists originally inclined to accept it as axiomatic.

appropriation of the epics.¹ Often these two ideas have been closely joined in asserting that it is specifically those portions of the epic texts in which the divinity of these figures is most explicit that do not belong to the nuclei of the poems but are later additions or "interpolations." Thus every western student of traditional India is taught that the *Bhagavad Gītā* of the *Mahābhārata* and the *Bāla*—and *Uttarakāṇḍas* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* are late appendices to these texts despite the fact that, even after the completion of critical editions of both poems, absolutely on convincing text-historical evidence for the extraneous character of these sections can be adduced.²

These notions of the epics' lack of textual integrity and their heroes' original humanity—ideas sharply at variance with India's traditional scholarly understanding of these matters—have been vigorously contexted by western and western-trained scholars on a number of grounds. As early as 1895 Joseph Dahlmann argued for a reading of the *Mahābhārata* as a text integrally composed and encompassing from its inception the qualities of both an epic and a *dharmaśāstra*.³ V. S. Sukthankar, the great German trained textual scholar who organized and undertook the long dreamt of project of scientific knowledge as to what does and does not belong to the oldest achievable form of the epic, passionately rejected, in lectures delivered just before his death, the arguments of western scholars who saw the epic as lacking organic integrity and who sought to deny the

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1. Muir 1873, van Daalen 1980 :139, Sukthankar 1957, esp. Chapters 1 and 4.
 2. Now to be sure, a variety of textual and historical evidence has been cited in support of these hypotheses. There is, for example, the often noticed reference in the *Āśvalāyana Gṛhya Sūtra* (3.4.4.) which speaks of a Bhārata epic of some 24,000 verses. Also, it might be noted, the epic stories and heroes are common cultural property in South (not to mention Southeast) Asia so that numerous non-Hindu versions of the tales appear in Buddhist and Jaina texts as well as in other sources where the notion of avatāra-hood may be downplayed, ignored, or even ridiculed. Nonetheless, no manuscript of either epic is known to omit these sections while passages dealing centrally with the divinity of the heroes often demonstrate unusually consistent manuscript support. In many cases, widely accepted arguments alleging inconsistencies and even contradictions between these supposed interpolations and the "epic cores" prove, on close examination, to be ill founded. For example, on Jacobi's assertions concerning the lateness of the *Bālakāṇḍa*, see Goldman 1984:60-67. For a discussion of the use of detailed metrical analysis as a potential tool for isolating various text-historical strata of the epic see Ingalls and Ingalls 1985 and Smith 1972.
 3. Dahlmann 1895. Dahlmann's rather radical approach to the epic has, with the exception of Sukthankar (1957) received little support in western style scholarship. Nonetheless, despite the fact that his formulation may not stand up to technical analysis, his notion of how to "read" a cultural document and an example of an "extreme" view, the opposite "extreme" being represented by Hopkins who regarded three quarters of the received text as a late "pseudo-epic". He positions himself, characteristically, "between these two extremes."

epic's uniform understanding of Kṛṣṇa as an *avatāra*.¹ A.K. Ramanujan has eloquently discussed the epic in terms of an indigenous structural model of context sensitivity.² Most recently Sheldon Pollock has argued quite persuasively that the *avatāra*-hood of Rāma in the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* is a narrative presupposition of the entire text as we have it and that the fact that the epic appears sometimes to ambiguate and sometimes to disambiguate the protagonist's nature as *both* a human hero and God is an artifact of its encoding a pervasive purāṇic paradigm of the Vaiṣṇava *avatāra*.³

I neither need nor intend to reopen these specific arguments here. Rather I should like to use them as a background against which to reflect broadly on the complex and important questions of the purpose and structure of the Sanskrit epics, the indigenous perception of the mortality and divinity of the epic hero in India, and the ways in which western paradigms of literary form and genre and western norms of ordering and separating the religious and secular realms have skewed our understanding of these texts and the culture of which they are such important instruments. In order to do so I shall begin with a discussion of the various meanings of the term *avatāra* in its theological and other contexts. Following that I shall attempt to use the concept of *avatāra* to shed some additional light on a provocative but puzzling narrative element in the great Sanskrit epic, the *Mahābhārata*, the year long disguise and concealment of the five Pāṇḍava brothers and their common wife, Draupadī, as recounted in the fourth book of poem, the *Virāṭa Parvan*.

One fundamental problem in regard to western philologists' construction of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* involves the question of literary genre. In terms of style, scope, and content, these poems more closely resembled the Homeric and Latin epics than other works of the Classical canon that had been created and privileged by the educated elites of western Europe beginning with the Italian Renaissance. Now it is

1. Sukthankar 1957.

2. Ramanujan 1989:48-49. "Scholars have often discussed Indian texts (like the *Mahābhārata*) as if they were loose-leaf files, rag-bag encyclopedias. Taking the Indian word for text, *grantha* (derived from the knot that holds the palm leaves together), literally, scholars often posit only an accidental and physical unity. We need to attend to the context-sensitive designs that embed a seeming variety of modes (tale, discourse, poem, etc.) and materials. This manner of constructing the text in consonance with other designs in the culture. Not unity (in the Aristotelian sense) but coherence, seems to be the end."

3. Pollock 1991:15-54.

quite probable that these scholars of the Enlightenment and, in the case of the Sanskrit poems, most particularly of the nineteenth century were unable to adequately grasp the true role, significance, and function of the Greek epics in their original context, the context of a long extinct largely pre-literate culture of which they could have known relatively little. Nevertheless, in their creation of a literary canon which, it was argued, somehow lay at the roots of western civilization despite the millennium and a half hiatus following the Christianization of the West during which no European savant could even read Homeric Greek,¹ western philologists established the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as virtual archetypes for what true epic poetry was and should be.

Given this background, and the continental Enlightenment's fascination with the linguistic and cultural affinities of the early Indo-European peoples,² it is not surprising that, in the first instance, European scholars should view the Sanskrit poems as "epics" in the Homeric sense nor that, in the second, they should see them as having suffered from a process of almost malignant hypertrophy that all but obscured their Homeric "cores." Indeed the Indian and Greek poems do treat similar themes of honor, the abduction, sexual defilement, and recovery of the hero's wife, exile, prolonged and bitter combat between irreconcilable foes, etc. Both are also clearly products of a tradition of oral-formulaic composition and were designed for aural consumption in musical performance by a non or pre-literate audience. Yet there can be no doubt that the Indian poems, especially the *Mahābhārata*, are much larger than their Greek counterparts, more diffuse in their narrative streams, and to a far greater degree the repositories of types of knowledge that seem peripheral to their central narratives. Most particularly the Indian poems contain considerable material that European scholars would regard as "religious" as opposed to "heroic."

The western critique of the Indian poems, especially its expression of philological exasperation at the textual difficulties they present and the negative characterization of what is often represented as uncontrolled vegetative growth³ is in fact consonant with the larger European Orientalist critique of Indian culture and civilization in the nineteenth century. A normative model for the cultural history of India put forth by British scholar administrators with their utilitarian project and myth of an

1. Hutton 1968:vi-vii.

2. For a history of this phenomenon, see Schwab 1984.

3. Oldenberg and Winternitz as quoted by Mehta (1976:3).

Anglo Saxon past of simplicity, the German philologists with their obsession with the primitive purity of the *Vedas* and "primitive" Buddhism,¹ and even by writers and activists on the "Hindu Renaissance"² and the Indian nationalist movement such as Dayananda Sarasvati, Ram-mohan Roy, and Jawaharlal Nehru,³ held that the most ancient civilization of India, from the Vedic village to the "Golden Age" of the Guptas was pure, simple, and noble but that it had been corrupted and degenerated over the centuries. This, it was argued, was evident in all aspects of Indian life, the regressive system of social hierarchy, the dominance of "superstition," the lack of political, economic, and scientific progress, and the poor quality of all but the earliest aesthetic production in the country.⁴

Given this as an ideological frame and the unwieldy quality of the Indian epic poems when compared to the "classical" simplicity of Homer,⁵ it is little wonder that most European literary scholars, when confronted by these texts felt an almost instinctive need to wield the surgical tools of biblical and classical philology to cut away the accretions and interpolations that had distorted, in their view, the pristine outlines of the Indo-European martial epic.⁶

The major problem with the mainstream western critique of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* is, of course, its implicit and unquestioned reliance on a series of European literary, aesthetic, and cultural norms that fail to make allowance for other canons of taste, belief, and practice. For one thing, there is an uncontested assumption that the poems of Vālmīki and Vyāsa both belong to the same literary genre and that that genre is the same one virtually defined for literary scholarship by the Homeric and Virgilian epic. But this is not, in fact, so clear. Traditional Indian literary scholarship, as it is codified and preserved in the copious Sanskrit literature of the *alaṅkāraśāstra* has an ancient and highly sophisticated nosology of genre; yet it essentially lacks a category that corresponds to the genre of epic poetry. Indeed the Indian tradition is not even unanimous in assigning the two Sanskrit "epics" to the same literary genre. The two relevant categories are *itihāsa* (sometimes linked with the similar genre of *purāṇa*) or history, texts that record important events in

1. Halbfass 1988 and Schwab 1984.

2. Kopf 1969.

3. Nehru 1946.

4. For a comprehensive critique of British constructions of Indian history and culture, see Chakravarty 1989.

5. According to Arnold, Homer is "rapid, plain, and direct in both his language and thought, and noble" (Arnold 1905:41ff).

6. For additional discussion of this, see Goldman 1984:60-69.

the affairs of gods and men and *kāvya* or true "poetry," texts whose informational and didactic content is conveyed through a form crafted to delight the aesthetic sensibilities. The *Mahābhārata* is generally regarded as the prototypical example of an *itihāsa*, while the *Rāmāyana* of Vālmīki is all but universally revered as the archetypal and indeed original piece of true poetry, the *ādikāvya*.¹

A consequence of the imposition of a somewhat alien notion of genre on the Indian texts is the creation of a set of norms. To the degree that these texts diverge from these norms, they are regarded to be deficient² or as having undergone some degenerative set of processes chiefly in the form of accretion and interpolation when in fact they are simply repositories of different kinds of knowledge from that preserved in the epics of Mediterranean antiquity.³

Much of the material preserved in the Sanskrit epic poems is a type not found in the Homeric epics. Of this, aside from the incursion of lengthy parallel narratives, the bulk consists of material that can be classified as *arthaśāstra* and *dharmaśāstra*, didactic material on matters critical to the traditional culture, matters of government, statecraft, and the conduct of kings, and the larger realm of social and religious law. Indeed it is precisely the integration of this material into the epic narrative that led Dahlmann to conceive of the *Mahābhārata* as a text that was somehow both an epic and a law book.

But Dahlmann, although his understanding of the inherited *Mahābhārata* as an integral document is on the right track, did not go far enough. He merely adds the category of law book to the unproblemized concept of "epic". The real source of western scholarship's struggle with this text and with the *Rāmāyana* is that collectively they constitute not just

1. The distinction between these genres may be blurred with respect to these two texts but it is not to be erased. The *Mahābhārata* tradition itself is apt to regard the text as a piece of poetry as in Vyāsa's remark, *kṛtaṃ mayedaṃ bhagavan kāvyaṃ parama-pūjitam*. "This venerable poem that I have composed Lord." *Mbh.* I. App. I, 884-885. Then, too, Ānandavardhana and his successor and commentator Abhinavagupta, the great exponents of the Dhvani school of poetic analysis, treat the *Mahābhārata* as a unified *kāvya* (Ingalls 1990:690-93) and yet the latter, when quoting the *Vālmīki Rāmāyana* on the origins of poetry, refers to the poem regularly as "*itihāsa*," presumably to stress its validity (Masson 1969:79-81). *The Harivaṃśa*, on the other hand, which shows many of the features of a *mahākāvya* (Ingalls 1967), is routinely referred to as a *purāṇa*. For a discussion of the *Mbh.* as *kāvya* see Sharma (1964-1-6.)

2. Sweeney 1992.

3. For an incisive discussion of the role of oral performative texts as primary means of ordering, preserving, and transmitting knowledge in societies whose noetic apparatus is not based on print literacy, see Sweeney 1987.

two "books" but an entire literature preserving and purveying virtually all of the knowledge India's traditional elites regarded as necessary for the entire culture to know. Thus these texts contain not merely the kinds of knowledge associated with the three or so levels postulated by Sukthankar¹—although these are among the most important—but many others, including natural history, folklore, cosmology, geography, political science, poetics, social behaviour, and psychology.² Or to use a metaphor drawn from the realm contemporary communication, the Indian "epics" through all of their literary and performative representations in virtually all of the languages of India, constituted the mass media of Indian culture. They were the means, analogous to modern print-based as well as cinematic and broadcast media, for the communication and dissemination to all regions, social classes, and age cohorts, of the social, political, and religious ideologies elsewhere formulated in texts limited to particular elites.³

An important point here is not only that these two "books" were oral performative works originally⁴ but that they are radically oral-aural in nature and have functioned at the interface of orality and literacy regardless of whether their audiences in any given context could read.⁵ Thus many of the features of the works that nineteenth century western

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1. The three levels, according to Sukthankar (1957), are the mundane, ethical, and metaphysical.
 2. On natural history see *Mbh* 1.59-60 and *Rām* 3.13.17-28,4.27.21-22; on folklore see Goldman 1984:41-42,54; on cosmology see *Mbh* 1.59-60 and *Rām* 1.45,14-24; on geography see *Rām* 4.39-42 and *Mbh* 2.23.1-2.29.19, 3.79-93; on political science see *Mbh* 4.4.6-44 and *Rām* 2.94; on poetics see *Rām* 1.2-3; on the vital social and psychological knowledge whose transmission is one of the major functions of the poems, see Goldman 1978, 1982, 1985; Masson 1975; and Sutherland 1989.
 3. In other words, information recorded in the traditional *śāstras* which generally appear to have remained the all but exclusive domain of the priestly and aristocratic literate elites was conveyed both through simplified recitation and particularly through engaging dramatization. For a discussion of the parallel use of performative, although not popular, media to represent philosophical ideologies, see Goldman 1986.
 4. The poems as they have been handed down do not leave this important point to mere inference. Both of them, like most narrative literature in traditional India, are provided with elaborate frames that deal extensively with the composition, oral-aural transmission, and performance of the works. In the *Rāmāyaṇa* the emphasis on the technical aspects of the performance is particularly noteworthy and is no doubt connected with the distinction of genre that divides the two works as discussed above. Cf. *Mbh* 1.1-20 and *Rām* 1.2-4,7. For a discussion of the oral formulaic character of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, see Sen 1966.
 5. For a penetrating discussion of orality and literacy in a traditionally oral-aural culture and an analysis of the role of orality in the determination of the way even a society characterized by postprint literacy manages knowledge, see Sweeney's study of Malaysia (1987).

scholars regarded as unnecessary hypertrophy of the "epic cores," features such as prolixity, iteration, and "digression," are nothing but the natural characteristics of orally consumed texts that store and transmit a wide variety of kinds of knowledge for a traditional society.¹ The fact that the Indian poems exhibit these features to a greater degree than the Greek or Latin epics does not, moreover, necessarily indicate that the culture of ancient India was more inclined towards repetitiveness or verbosity than those of classical antiquity nor that the relative spareness of Homer's style when compared, say, to Vyāsa's suggestive of a more refined aesthetic sensibility in Mediterranean world.

If the Hindu epics have expanded by a process of organic growth over the first two millennia of their existence, and if they have continued to serve the intellectual, cultural, social and aesthetic needs of Indian civilization they were created to serve, then their growth must be in large measure due to a corresponding growth in the body of knowledge they were designed to contain. Their destiny, then, has been completely different from that of the epics of ancient Greece and Rome not because they are essentially different in design or function but simply because they are essentially different in design or function but simply because the culture and civilization they served continued to live whereas those served by Indianists, that Indian culture is a fixed and unchanging thing. Quite the contrary it is because the culture changed and grew in response to numerous internal and external stimuli, like any living thing, that its prime noetic and acculturative instruments too underwent the kinds of growth and change that account for the immense, diverse, and various textual and recensional apparatus through which these poems confront scholarship. The relative textual homogeneity of the Homeric epics as well as their relatively small size and narrative of its supplantation by the cultures of Christian Europe. It is for this reason that the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* continued and continue to be vital and intimately known elements of the cultural *donnée* of virtually all Indians while the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are generally read only at the college level in the West.²

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1. Sweeney 1987 and 1992:101.
 2. Consider, for example, the extraordinary popularity of the recent television serializations of the Indian works, where unprecedentedly large mass audiences gathered in worshipful silence practically emptying the normally chaotically crowded streets of towns and cities (Lutgendorff 1990). It is difficult to imagine a parallel serialization of Homer being shown in the United States on anything other than viewer-supported television to anything larger than a minute percentage of the viewing public.

Nowhere, perhaps, in a consideration of the differences between the two epic traditions is there a more central or more contested point of contrast than that of the religious component of the Indian poems, The old Sanskrit *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata* in the only forms in which we know them are profoundly animated by a pervasive and fully developed Vaiṣṇava religious theme and indeed they are universally recognized in South Asia at least as religious texts. By contrast, the Homeric epics—despite the fact that the events they narrate and their principal characters are manipulated and governed by gods and goddesses of the Olympian pantheon—are generally read as heroic epic poetry that uses these mythological figures as elements in a context in which the deeds of heroic men are set.¹ The generally accepted wisdom of western scholarship in this area has been, as noted above, that the major religious elements in the Indian epics, particularly the unequivocal identifi- cal of the epic heroes Rāma and Kṛṣṇa as *avatāras* of the supreme Lord Viṣṇu, are later additions and are not found in the "central cores" of these texts. This particular notion was often argued by scholars in the absence of adequate textual evidence to support it or even in spite of textual evidence to the contrary. Here again it seems scholars have been under the pressure of a paradigm that is both inapposite because it is European and perhaps wrongly constructed in the first place.

If western scholars regarded as spurious the "religious" content of the Hindu epics because their epic paradigm was "heroic," it is also more than possible that they had a somewhat skewed view of the religiosity of the Greek poems. For the Homeric epics are, at least to certain extent, religious in nature. Like their Indian counterparts they deal with the actions of legendary heroes who are often children of gods, who interact on a daily basis with divinities, whose actions are largely determined by gods, and whose organized ritual and religious life revolves around the ancient sacrificial cults of these same deities.

That western scholars tend not to think of the Greek epics as religious documents is doubtless to be ascribed to a number of factors, religious devotionalism, which has come to be a characteristic of the "Great World Religions" of modern times, is not a central features of these texts, but then

1. Burkert 1985:119-89. Burkert notes that although the most powerful of the Homeric heroes are children or at least grandchildren of gods and gods themselves are quick to intervene in the epic action if they consider their interests affected, they are essentially "burlesque" figures in the Homeric poems. In this connection, he cites P.Mazon's *Introduction a l'Illiade* to the effect that the *Illiad* is the "most irreligious of all poems" (Burkert 1985 : 121-22).

again, with a few exceptions, neither is it a dominant element in Vālmīki or Vyāsa.¹ Moreover, here again the critical issue is the very different destinies of ancient Indian as opposed to ancient Greek and Roman culture. For while the religious traditions of ancient India, Vedic and non-Vedic have continued to grow, develop, and change right down to present day, the religions of ancient Greece and Rome were completely supplanted, by the beginning of the early Middle Ages, by a Christianity that brooked no survivals of "paganism." Thus Homer and Virgil sing of cultures that are no more and whose religious life in particular was subject to the most vigorous and thorough suppression. By the time their poems were resurrected by the humanism of the Renaissance as part of the project of removing from the Roman Church its centuries long dominance of the cultural and intellectual as well as religious life of Western Europe, the gods, goddesses, and divine mysteries of which they sang had no acolytes for more than one thousand years. Then too, the Orientalists whose notions of the Hindu epics we were trained to regard as law, were themselves children of the Enlightenment and thus heirs of the Renaissance. They had been trained to use the gods, goddesses, nymphs, sprites, spirits, and heroes of Classical antiquity as a secularized and romanticized cast of characters with which to people poems, plays, paintings, and sculpture gardens; as characters that could represent love, passion, heroism, valor, and virtue but who could not be viewed with religious awe. It is thus not surprising that they did not read the Iliad and the Odyssey as "religious" texts and that they found the very real presence of non-Christian divinities, still central to millions of worshippers, disturbing elements in their construction of the Indian "epics".

As Pollock has demonstrated in the case of the Rāmāvatāra in Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa*² and Sukthankar argued so passionately in the case of³ the *Mahābhārata*'s Kṛṣṇāvatāra, the western notion that these texts recognize these heroes as incarnations of God only in their late strata is without textual support and is, moreover, based upon a misunderstanding of the conception, treatment and representation of divinity of Hinduism. Their argument need not be repeated here.

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1. At issue here is what one may call styles of religious representation and worship. Thus although, for example, Vālmīki's *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Harivaṃśa* are more lightly colored by the pervasive devotionality of Tulsī's *Rāmcaritmānas* and the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, this is not to say that both are not infused with what must be called religious content. Vālmīki, after all, like Vyāsa, was a poet of the late vedic age while the authors of the *Bhāgavata* and Tulsī are children of the efflorescence of bhakti.
 2. Pollock 1991:15-54.
 3. Sukthankar 1957.

On the other hand, it may be instructive to examine one particular aspect of the representation of divinity as it appears in Vaiṣṇava text and traditions that undoubtedly has significant bearing on the way western scholarship has traditionally understood the Sanskrit epics. To a great extent scholars have failed to recognize the fact that an epic hero was understood to be more than human because it is a central feature of the representation of the most important manifestations of divinity in what is understood to be human history that their godhood is at least sporadically hidden, sometimes even from themselves. Crucial to the vital notion of *līlā* or play that provides the *raison d'être* for the *avatāra* in the Sanskrit epics is the idea that God on the earth should not be universally or consistently recognized as such.

The idea that the omnipotent, omniscient, eternal, and non-contingent Godhead or absolute takes on—even if ambiguously—birth as a vulnerable mortal with limited self-knowledge and a specific, contingent life-history so as to both reveal and conceal his or her true nature while acting out the divine plan is an ancient one and one not restricted to Hinduism. It is, for example, central to the theology of Christianity and other Judeo-Christian messianic cults as well as the other ancient Mediterranean cults. Of martyred and resurrected gods of which they are survivals. This theme serves a number of theological, sectarian, pastoral, and psychological purposes.

For one thing, on a metaphysical level it provides a mythological parallel to the Advaita Vedānta concept of *līlā* without which it is difficult to explain the rationale for a contingent order of creation (*vyavahārika satya*).¹ As theology, the epics provide clear illustration of the immanence of God and his or her direct concern with the maintenance of moral order and the protection of his or her devotees. Thus, as sectarian texts, they illustrate the benefits accruing to those who recognize and worship God as opposed to those who revile him or treat her with scorn. Perhaps most important in terms of formal considerations, the epics function on a narrative, aesthetic, and psychological level as poems by using the awesome events and intense relationships that mark the career of the god on earth to create an engrossing story to whose situations and emotional contexts even an unlearned audience can relate powerfully.

The potent irony created by the recurrent scenario in which the supreme divinity of the universe suffers the fears, passions, and other emotions of fragile mortals is a central element in the success these texts

1. Deutsch 1969 and Goldman 1986.

have had in effectively communicating their "messages." A favorite exploitation of this irony is to be found in the poets' repeated use of situations in which the divinity, confronted with an emotional or other crisis must be "reminded" that he is, in fact God.¹ The disparity between appearance and reality is perhaps most poignantly illustrated by the Vaiṣṇava poets' particular fondness for the representation of Viṣṇu, especially as Kṛṣṇa, in the guise of that most disarming and vulnerable form of humanity, the infant.²

What is most noteworthy about the narrative representation of this irony is the necessity that most of the characters in the epic drama be wholly or generally unaware of the avatāra's true nature. The epic antagonists, the Kauravas and their allies in the Mahābhārata and the rākṣasas in the Rāmāyaṇa are, with few and partial exception, utterly unaware of the divinity of the incarnations and indeed often speak contemptuously of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma respectively.³ The supporters, friends, and kinsmen of these gods on earth are at best only occasionally aware of their true divinity, frequently forgetting about it immediately after a revelation or demonstration.⁴ Only certain virtually omniscient figures such as gods, departed spirits, and ṛṣis seem to have an unclouded

1. *Rām* 6, Appendix 1, No. 25, lines 88-94 where Vāyu reminds Rāma, lamenting over the injured Lakṣmaṇa, of his true nature; *Harivaṃśa* 56.26-28 where Balarāma urges Kṛṣṇa to subdue the serpent Kāliya and 58.30 ff. where Kṛṣṇa reminds Balarāma that he has the power to kill the demon Pralambha; and Pollock 1991:32. See also notes below.
2. *Harivaṃśa* 50-51 and *Bhāg P* 10.6-10. Cf. the use of the infant Jesus as a favorite iconographic theme in Christian art and the centrality of the Christmas and its attendant emphasis of the God-as-child motif.
3. Cf., for example. *Mbh* 2.34 where Cedi monarch Śiśupāla reviles Kṛṣṇa as a lowly cowherd unworthy of respect and *Rām* 3.34.10-11 where Rāvaṇa expresses similar sentiments about Rāma.
4. Thus the village folk of Vṛṇḍāvana are depicted in the *Harivaṃśa* (sargas 50-64) as continually astonished by the superhuman feat of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma as children and youths without seeming to treat them with any special veneration between such episodes. Similarly, characters in the Rāmāyaṇa are only occasionally shown to be clearly aware of Rāma's divine nature even when he performs extraordinary feats. Even his own father Daśaratha generally exhibits only intense paternal affection for his son despite the supernatural circumstances leading to his birth (*Rām* 1.17.13; 1.19). It is only after the old king's death that he returns as a spirit to give testimony to his son's true status as a lord of the universe (*Rām* 6.107.10-31). Even in a case where another protagonist is clearly understood to be a co-incarnation as in the cases of Arjuna and Lakṣmaṇa, full recognition of divinity is sporadic at best. Thus, in the famous passage in the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, Arjuna, who is understood to incarnate Nara to Kṛṣṇa's Nārāyaṇa, must be given a special divya cakṣu to perceive the true cosmic form of the God (11.8) after which he apologizes for his earlier familiarity (11.41-42). But even here the "divine eye" is removed and the relationship of the two figures is restored to its old form (11.50-51).

and uninterrupted perception of the godhood of god.¹ This irony of recognition reaches its most dramatic pitch in those cases in which the *avatāra* himself is represented as unaware of his own the nature and in need of someone to jog his memory from time to time. Given the pervasive nature of this irony of recognition in the epics, it is natural that western scholars imperfectly familiar with the ethos of these Vaiṣṇava documents should have had difficulty in recognizing the divinity of epic heroes who frequently seem unaware of it themselves.

The pastoral implications of the theme of the sporadic recognition of the disguised or hidden god are considerable. For if God in his or her most intimate association with humans is difficult to recognize, it follows that such recognition, by its being granted or withheld, can be a powerful signifier of godliness in those with whom the divinity enjoys his or her "play." Those who recognize an *avatāra* are generally those to whom the divinity extends his or her grace although the cause and effect relationship between these two events may vary.² The male or female divinity, great serpent or demon who recognizes God is, in most cases, a true *bhakta* or devotee and this kind of recognition leading to intense devotion is the essence of the developing *bhakti* movement first evidenced in the Sanskrit epics.³ In this emerging model which will be fully formed in the *purāṇas*, the paradigmatic *bhakta* is Prahlāda, the one member of all the *asura* clan to recognize and worship Viṣṇu.⁴

But the *bhakti* model in its fully developed schemata tends often to undercut the irony of recognition so central to the poems of Vyāsa and Vālmiki. The authors of other, more devotionally oriented versions of these tales assume, after all, the divinity and Vaiṣṇava identity of the central epic heroes Rāma and Kṛṣṇa and so do most of their characters. In works such as *Rāmcaritmānas*, the *Ādhyātma Rāmāyaṇa*, and *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*⁵ all the characters including the epic antagonist are often fully aware of the divinity and salvific power of their foe. Tulsī Dās' *rākṣasa* warriors are shown as eager to be slain in the battle by Rām for they know he is God and that such a death will take them straight to His

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1. E.g., the seer Nārada who comes to the earth in order to inform people of future events (*Dakṣiṇī Rām* as quoted in Smith 1988: 109-110), or Yama (Kāla) in *Rām* 7.93. See also note above and Smith 1988:111-12.
 2. Mumme 1991.
 3. *Bhāg* GChapter 12.
 4. For a discussion of the legend of Prahlāda and its role in the development of *avatāra* theory, see Hacker 1959 and 1960. See also Pollock 1991:37-38 on Narasiṃha.
 5. For further references and a discussion of the influences of *bhakti* on the *Rāmāyaṇa*, see Smith 1988:100-104.

heaven. Even the great antiheroes like Rāvaṇa and Kaṁsa are frequently depicted as the greatest devotees since their unremitting hatred is the purest form of mental and emotional concentration upon the godhead.¹ The central *avatāras* themselves, far from being generally unaware of their true nature, are often shown as knowing the entire epic plot in advance, submitting to its vagaries only for the sake of the play.² Such texts have clearly sacrificed a certain narrative tension for a heightened experience of the powerful emotive transport, the consuming *bhāva*, of *bhakti*; but it does not follow from this that the authors or audiences of even the oldest versions of the epics were unaware of the divinity of the epic heroes and the demonic quality of their foes. On the contrary, the ancient poems as they have survived both centrally situate the incarnations of the gods as heroes in their narrative contexts and both clearly intend their stories to have cosmic as well as purely historical significance.³

The idea that a god may be in hiding or disguise and may walk earth unrecognized by some is by no means an unfamiliar one to students of world religions. After all, to use the example of Christianity once more, the Christ presented in the Gospels is exactly such a divinity. For he is recognized and accepted only by His disciples but is despised, rejected, and condemned by the civil and religious authorities as well as by the multitude.⁴

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1. For an examination of the theme of *dveṣabhakti*, see Smith 1988:113-121.
 2. Cf *Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa's* and Tulsī's handling of Sītā's abduction. Rāma informs Sītā in advance of the event and instructs her, as the Goddess, to withdraw into hiding and leave a simulacrum in her place (Smith 1988:92-93), or the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa's* discussion of the *gopīs'* full knowledge of the divinity of Kṛṣṇa (*Bhāg P* 10.22.14; 10.29.31). In some instances, however, the *gopīs* see Kṛṣṇa as only a mortal (10.29.12).
 3. Thus the *Mahābhārata's* tale entirely revolves around the notion of *avatāra*. As detailed in its early sections all of the poem's characters, on both sides of the conflict, are the earthly incarnations of divine or demonic forces who carry the eternal struggle between the *devas* and the *asuras* into a historical place on behalf of the overburdened earth. On this, see Hildebeitel 1984. This point is even clearer in the *Rāmāyaṇa*, for although its heroes, like those of the *Mahābhārata* are *avatāras*, its villains are not. Instead they are unmodified *īkṣasas* whose titanic leader, cast in the mold of the great purāṇic *asuras*, cannot be successfully confronted by a mere human. On this, see Pollock 1991:29-43.
 4. The issue of the non recognition of Jesus as Messiah is addressed directly in his well-known plea from the cross, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:24). The writers of the Gospels may even allude to an *avatāra*-like lapse of self-knowledge on the part of Jesus in his despairing cry, "Eli eli, lama sabachthani?" (Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34, quoting Psalms 22:1). Moreover the binary opposition between the knowers and devotees of the *avatāra* and those who do not recognize him and oppose him is the subtext that has fueled Christian anti-Semitism for centuries.

In India the idea that God or a god may conceal or disguise himself or herself is ancient and widely diffused in the religious literature and culture. The motives for such concealment may vary. In many vedic passages a divinity may hide or disguise himself in fear and may have to be sought out and cajoled by other divinities into returning and resuming his or her rightful place and, more importantly, cosmic and ritual functions.¹ Often a major divinity is driven into hiding in fear of retribution for some action or in terror of some powerful demon enemy. Thus from the earliest surviving Indic texts we see Indra, the chief of the Vedic pantheon, fleeing after his celebrated feat of slaying the demon Vṛtra or hiding from the consequences of that act which is construed as an instance of *brahmahatyā*.² In the later sources, the epics and *purāṇas* etc., the standard scenario of the *avatāra* legends represents the gods as being driven into concealment and the forced suppression of their normal functions by their fear of a powerful demon who has literally driven them from heaven.³ In some cases, also in the early literature, a divinity will hide and thus deprive the world of his needed services in a fit of pique resulting from the perception of having been shortchanged or otherwise unfairly treated in the allocation of ritual oblations, honor, etc.⁴ In the epics it is not uncommon for a divinity to assume a deceptive guise in order to achieve one of a number of objectives ranging from sexual conquest⁵ and the humiliation of an enemy⁶ to the victory of the gods over their eternal demonic foes in both the heavenly and terrestrial spheres.⁷

None of these disguises or attempts to hide are regarded, strictly speaking, as *avatāras*. Nonetheless, several of them display a number of the important elements in the construction of the *avatāra*, notably disguise, deception of the enemies of the gods, and the effort to advance the cause of the righteous through guile as well as sheer force. What they lack, when compared to the regular *avatāras*, are a more than transient disguise or transformation—a sense of "becoming" rather than merely "seeming"—and the sense of a degradation in ontological status that is not entirely a matter of a choice.

1. E.g., RV 10.51 where Agni hides in the waters.

2. RV 1.32 and *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* 2.5.1.

3. A typical example is that at *Rām* 1.14-15.

4. See note below ?

5. Indra and Ahalyā (*Rām* 1.47.17-20) and Indra and Ruci *Mbh* 13.40.14-13.43.27.

6. Indra and Bhaṅgāśvna *Mbh* 13.12.

7. Viṣṇu as Mohinī (*Mbh* 1.17) and Indra in the guise of a brahman begging Karṇa for his earrings and armor (*Mbh* 1.104.18-21).

The adoption of a specific guise or change in form by itself is of little theological significance in the world of Indian mythological literature. It is commonplace of these texts and the culture of which they are a part that virtually all superhuman beings—gods, demons, the great serpents, monkeys, etc., as well as highly spiritually adept humans—are represented as *kāmarūpins* or beings capable of changing their forms at will. This power not correlated with moral capacity or fitness as an object of devotion and thus has little bearing on the concept of *avatāra*.

Moreover when a god or other superhuman being undertakes an *avatāra*, it is almost invariably done at the behest of or under the compulsion of another and the transformation, which normally must be undertaken for a fixed term, must involve some sort of "demotion" or degradation in the hierarchical order of creation. For the word *avatāra*, although it is most commonly rendered in English as "incarnation," has etymologically nothing of Latinate English's resonance of the spirit made flesh. In the Indian conception, the gods may not have same kind of gross bodies as humans but they are by no means discarnate as witnessed by the fact that—immortal or not—they are constantly being wounded, maimed, and even killed in Hindu myths and are, if anything, depicted as having even greater fleshy desires than humans.¹ Rather, the term appears to derive its technical theological sense through a spatial metaphor based on the verbal root *ṭ* with the *upasarga* *ava* in the sense of "to descend" as one would a stir or a mountain or "to get down" as from a chariot.²

The sense in which a divinity "descends" to earth seems however to be only partly spatial. Sanskrit, like English and many other languages, metaphorically exploits the spatial terms for rising and falling as a source for discourse on states of grace, ritual status, and ontological hierarchy. Thus words with the sense of "fal" derived from common roots such as *pat*

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1. On the physical vulnerability and even mortality of the gods, cf. the legend of Gautama's castration of Indra at *Rām* 1.47-48, Vipula's threat to kill Indra (*Mbh* 13.41.20-23), and repeated references to the gods being slain in their battles with the *asuras* (e.g. *Mbh* 1.71 and *Matsya Purāṇa* 47). The fact that Hindu divinities are conceived of as already incarnate is perhaps best suggested by the legend of Śiva's incineration of the body of Kāmadeva who earns, thereby the unique epithet *Anaṅga*, the Bodiless (*Kumārasambhava* 3.71-72).
 2. *Raghuvamśa* 1.54 (*causative and simplex*) and 6.85; and *Meghadūta* 52. Another common sense of this particular combination of root and *upasarga*, "to appear, make oneself manifest in the world" (cf. *Raghuvamśa* 3.36, *Kādambarī* 289, *Uttarāmacaritam* after 2.5 and 5.34; and *Kathāsaritsāgara* 7.18) would appear to be secondary applications of the technical sense. For examples of the verb used in its spatial sense, see *RV* 1.54 and 6.85.

and *bhraṃś* are frequently used to signify moral lapse, decay, decline, sin and depravity.

The *avatṛ* carries with it connotations of degradation and the lowering of ritual status is strongly suggested by the fact that in most, if not all, instances in which a figure other than Viṣṇu undergoes the process of becoming and *avatāra*, he or she does so unwillingly as the result of a curse uttered in retribution for some sin, crime, or transgression. Indeed in some *purāṇic* sources this schema is explicitly extended to include the incarnation of Viṣṇu.¹

For although Vaiṣṇavism provides by far the most definitive, elaborate, and important instantiation of the concept of the *avatāra* in Hinduism, the phenomenon is fairly widespread in traditional texts and is most commonly experienced by figures of far less mythological and theological complexity than Viṣṇu. In most cases it is the lesser gods or other even more minor divinities such as *yakṣas* or Śiva's *gaṇas* who are compelled to take on the often despised form of a lowly mortal or a degraded demon. In many cases this is the result of a curse on the part of some more powerful being issued in anger at some affront or dereliction of duty.² Often it is made clear that the subjects of this downward mobility are horrified by the curse and their degraded status and beg, sometimes successfully, for an early remission.

Two paradigmatic examples involving groups of lesser divinities are to be found in the Kathāsaritsāgara and the Mahābhārata respectively. The first involves the gaṇa Puṣpadanta who, out of curiosity, abuses his yogic powers to intrude undetected when Śiva is telling Pārvatī the "Great Story." When the goddess discovers his transgression, she curses him to become a mortal and similarly curses the gaṇa Mālyavān who tries to intercede for him. The two prostrate themselves together with

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1. Cf. *Matsya Purāṇa*. 47.104-106 (also *Padma Purāṇa* 5.13.202 ff. for a parallel story) where the *Vaiṣṇava avatāras* are represented as the consequences of the curse of the powerful sage Uśanas Kāvya, the *purohita* of the *asuras*, who dooms the god to undergo seven degraded births among men for the sin of killing a woman, the sage's mother.
 2. The theme of curse and degradation as punishment for transgression against powerful patriarchal figures is recurrent, central, and influential in the traditional culture of India. Heavenly beings are cursed to become grotesque ogres (Kabandha at *Rām* 3.67 and Virāḍha at *Rām* 3.3; see Pollock 1991:73, note 132 and 350, note 1). Kings are cursed to become cannibals, untouchables, or snakes (Kalmāṣapāda at *Mbh* 1.166, Triśaṅku at *Rām* 1.56-59, and Nahuṣa at *Mbh* 3.177). Unruly sons are cursed to become outcastes (the sons of Yayāti at *Mbh* 1.70.30-45). For a discussion of this crucial theme, see Goldman 1978 and 1985. Against this background it would appear that the concept of *avatāra* is a special case of a much larger cultural category.

Puṣpadanta's wife at the Goddess' feet to beg her to set some term to this degradation; and she responds by telling them of a Yakṣa named Supratīka who has been cursed by his master Kubera to undergo a similar degraded birth in the form of the Piśāca Kāṇabhūti. When, the Goddess tells them, Puṣpadanta in the form of the human sage Vararuci shall narrate the "Great Story" to this demon, he shall be released. When Mālyavān, who will be born as Guṇāḍhya, the legendary author of the *Bṛhatkathā*, has heard the tale from Kāṇabhūti, the latter will be released while Mālyavān will obtain release and restoration to his "natural" state, only after having told the story to the world.¹ Puṣpadanta is subsequently described as *śāpāvātīrṇa*, or having undergone *avatāra* as the result of a curse, a term that is clearly synonymous with the phrase *śāpāt prāptāya martyatām*, "having become a mortal as the result of a curse," that is used in the same sentence of Mālyavān.²

The second example concerns the birth of the Vasus, a class of divinities headed by the ancient Vedic sky god, Dyaus, as the sons of the Bharata dynast Śantanu and the river goddess Gaṅgā. This particular incarnation, which is, of course, included under the general manifestation through the process of partial incarnation that brings all the divinities into the epic as human characters³ is, nonetheless, set somewhat apart from the others in that it is constructed as involuntary and the result of a curse issued as a punishment for an offense against a powerful figure. This story, like the tale of Puṣpadanta, is complex and involves a number of parallel themes. There was a great king of the Ikṣvāku lineage named Mahābhīṣa who, in keeping with the epic topos attained heaven through the performance of a great many sacrifices. One day, when the gods and seers had gathered to attend upon Brahmā a gust of wind blows aside the light garment of the river goddess Gaṅgā. The assembled gods modestly lower their gaze but the king boldly stares. Brahmā is disgusted at this behavior and tells him that he must be born among humans before he can regain his place in heaven. The king, having considered all the kings noted for their austerity, chooses Pratīpa to be his father for his mortal birth. He will thus be born as Śantanu. But the river goddess has to some extent been drawn into an erotized relationship with Mahābhīṣa, and as she broods about him, she encounters the Vasus who appear to be in great distress.

1. *Kathāsaritsāgara* 1.1.50-61.

2. *Kathāsaritsāgara* 1.2.21

3. This is detailed in the *Ādivaṃśāvataranaparvan* of "section concerning the *avatāras* of the first lineages" of the *Mahābhārata* at 1.58-61. The specific notice of the incarnation of the Vasus, including Bhīṣma, is given in this listing at 1.61.68-70. In the passages in which the process of incarnation is discussed; the terms employed are derived principally from the verb *ava tṛ* (1.59.1.3.51).

When Gaṅgā inquires as to their trouble, the Vasus tell her that for some "minor offense" (*alpe 'parādhe*), which is represented as their having foolishly passed by the powerful seer Vasiṣṭha (without obeisance) when he was seated, hidden, in the twilight. Because of this dereliction on their part, the seer has cursed them to be "born from a womb" (*yonau sambhavata*). They realize that they cannot escape the sage's curse and since they declare themselves incapable of entering the "impure" womb of a woman (*na mānuṣiṅām jaṭharam praviśemāsubhaṃ vayam*) they beg the goddess to take on human form and bear them as her sons. Gaṅgā asks them whose sons they would like to be. They choose Śantanu, Pratīpa's son. The goddess consents readily and the Vasus instruct her that, in order to minimize the period of their expiation, she is to drown at birth the sons she will bear. Gaṅgā agrees to this also but begs that they arrange for the king to have one surviving son so that his intercourse with her will not be utterly in vain. The Vasus consent, promising that each of the eight of them will provide her with one eighth of his semen so as to produce the son she desires. But they warn her that this son will father no sons or other progeny among humans.¹ The last son will, of course, be Bhīṣma the account of whose birth, or *avatāra*, is the main narrative point of the episode.

This story of violation, curse, and *avatāra* is repeated by Gaṅgā two chapters further on in the epic in response to a question by Śantanu as to the precise nature of the Vasus' offense and that of Bhīṣma that has forced them to suffer the indignity of human birth. In reply the goddess recounts the events leading to Vasiṣṭha's curse quite differently from the way they are narrated above. In this version it is stated that once while the gods, heavenly seers and their wives were enjoying themselves in the woods near Vasiṣṭha's hermitage, the wife of one of the Vasus became fascinated by the wonderful wish fulfilling cow that belonged to the sage. Upon learning that the cow's milk has the power to confer eternal youth on any mortal who drinks it, the goddess begs her husband to steal it for a human princess who is a friend of hers. Accordingly Dyaus steals the cow with the help of his brothers, the Vasus. The sage, at length, by means of his clairvoyance discovers the theft and curses the Vasus to be born among men. The Vasus attempt to mollify Vasiṣṭha and finally he amends his curse so that seven of the Vasus can escape its consequences after only one year. Dyaus, however, who was the instigator of the crime is condemned to live as a man for a long time.²

1. *Mbh* 1.91.

2. *Mbh* 1.93.1-38. Note the interesting equilibrium posited in this version of the story. As the offense involves an attempt to, in effect, reverse the process of *avatāra* by

From these and similar stories, we see that gods and other divine beings can take on human or other lower births, as opposed to mere forms, for a variety of reasons which may include a desire to save the world from the forces of evil, the request of a supplicant, the orders of a superior divinity, or the curse of an angry and powerful being. In some accounts of such *avatāras*, or some versions of given accord two or more of these reasons may be offered. In a number of instances the *avatāra* is clearly depicted as an unwelcome punishment for some transgression, an unwelcome period of relative impurity during which the crime is expiated prior to a return to an original state.

The entire story of the *Mahābhārata*, and indeed that of the *Rāmāyaṇa* as well,¹ centers on the notion of *avatāra*. For virtually all of the principal characters in the struggle between the sons of Pāṇḍu and Dhṛtarāṣṭra are superhuman beings, gods and *dānavas*, projected "downwards" onto the earth as human beings to there carry onwards their immemorial battle. The epic poets and redactors make an effort to obscure or conceal this fact. On the contrary they make every effort to highlight it and the section of the first book of the *Mahābhārata* that deal with the origins of the adversaries is called the *ādivaṃśāvatāraparvan*. The main heroes and their principal adversaries are shown to be the earthly manifestations of specific, named divinities and demons while the prime mover of the plot, Kṛṣṇa, is one of the major *avatāras* of the supreme Godhead, Viṣṇu. This fact is clearly foregrounded throughout the narrative and is made particularly manifest at the end of the poem when the divine incarnations, Kṛṣṇs, Śeṣa, and the Pāṇḍavas, are shown regaining their proper condition and their appropriate worlds.²

Yet, in order for these divine *avatāras* to function fully in the human sphere, they must, to a large extent, partake of the human condition. This includes, sometimes paradoxically, the limits of human consciousness. This means that while the audience of the epics is encouraged to keep in mind the divine nature of the heroes, those heroes themselves are often represented as unaware of their true nature and in need of occasional reminders.³ For if the gods are to be "degraded" to the condition of mere

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1. The situation in the two epics in this regard differs only slightly. In the *Mahābhārata* both the protagonists and their antagonists must meet in human form to carry on their age old struggle while in the *Rāmāyaṇa* it is only the gods, led by Viṣṇu who take on the degraded forms of humans and monkeys. Their adversaries, the *raikṣasas*, retain their original nature throughout the story.
 2. See particularly the *Musala* and *Svargārohaṇa Parvans*.
 3. Pollock 1991:15-54 and Sukthankar 1957.

mortals, then to some extent that degradation must be experienced as real. Thus on the physical level, the divinities and other supernatural beings must undergo the defilement of passage through a human womb while on the mental plane they are at least partially denied the transcendence and solace of the knowledge that they are not "really" humans after all.

One of the clearest and most interesting meditations on the nature of the *deus absconditus* is afforded by a study of the *Virāṭa Parvan*, the fourth book of the *Mahābhārata*. For it is there that the theme of the epic hero as a god in disguise receives its most playful treatment through the narrative device of making the Pāṇḍavas, already gods in the degraded guise of human princes, undergo a secondary transformation that is both more transient and more degrading than the first, in short, a kind of *avatāra* of the *avatāra*.¹

The situation confronting the five Pāṇḍava brothers and Draupadī at the beginning of this *parvan* must, if it is to be fully understood, be viewed in the rather complex context of the nature of the *avatāra* outlined above. For, in effect, what one sees in the disguises adopted by these characters are *avatāras* of *avatāras*, socially degraded personae adopted under compulsion by heroes who are already ontologically degraded divinities. In carrying out the terms of the wager made in the *Sabhā Parvan*, the Pāṇḍavas and their wife provide a kind of dramatic gloss on the text of the *avatāra* theory itself. A close examination of this gloss can, I believe, serve to elucidate the traditional conception of the divinity become (willingly or otherwise) man or woman. It can also shed light on the "problem" of the *Virāṭa Parvan* which has tantalized a number of *Mahābhārata* scholars.

The *Virāṭa Parvan*, whose central theme is the peculiar reversal of fortune of the epic's heroes and the strange, demeaning guises these proud warriors are forced to adopt, has often presented itself to scholars as a puzzle or a problem that stands in need of solution. Several scholars have regarded the book as a late and dubious intrusion in the poem and its subject matter somehow out of keeping with the general tenor of the epic as a whole. Thus Hopkins, who was a profound student of the *Mahābhārata*, regarded the *Virāṭa Parvan* as an "intrusion" in the body of the epic whose entire theme, the thirteenth year of the Pāṇḍavas' exile, he saw as

1. On this notion, compare Biardeau's observation that the disguises of Draupadī and the Pāṇḍavas constitute a form of "*māyā* redoublee" that reveal as much as they conceal (Biardeau 1978:187).

"not recognized in the early epic."¹ Similarly Dumezil felt that from the point of view of the epic action the entire Book, indeed the entire thirteenth year of the Pāṇḍavas' exile was completely useless, serving largely as a sort of comic interlude whose main purpose was to afford the epic poets a moment of recreation, a relaxing intermission in their heavy labors.²

Van Buitenen, in the introduction to his translation of the *Virāṭa Parvan*, is unable to bring himself either to accept Hopkins's judgement as to the alleged lateness of this book or to accept the book as integral part of the original epic, preferring, as he often does, to take what he terms a "middle position" between the two.³ Nonetheless, although, he rejects Hopkins's classification of the book as an intrusion, he finds it likely that "an earlier form of the *Bhārata* did without it."⁴ Van Buitenen, moreover, finds that book, "unmistakably injects a frivolous elements into the *Mahābhārata*, at least into its early parts,"⁵ suggesting, one would imagine, that this element is in some way intrusive in the body of a text that can hardly be regarded as given to frivolity.⁶

Dumezil treats the *Virāṭa Parvan* as an important element in what he sees as the epic poets' exposition of the three functions that form the basis of his analysis of myth and society in Indo-European cultures, observing that the different disguises taken by the heroes present an opportunity for the poets to differentiate somewhat the warrior function of the Pāṇḍavas.⁷

Biardeau, too, has been fascinated by the strange interlude during which the Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī must, by the terms agreed upon in the *Anudyūtaparvan*, give up their aristocratic status and serve unrecognized in various relatively demeaning capacities as retainers of a lesser prince. In her reading of the book, the disguises adopted by the Pāṇḍavas are

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1. Hopkins 1901:82-83.
 2. Dumezil 1968:89. He is, however, forced to qualify this absolute statement noting that the episode does provide the rationale for the marriage of Abhimanyu and Uttarā which is necessary for the birth of Kaurava dynast Parikṣit. He also finds a non-narrative purpose in the Book as well. See below and note 3 on next page.
 3. Van Buitenen 1978:20. His argument here is somewhat unclear. He states his "middle position" as follows, "It is only *after* we have learned to discern what disparate parts have gone into the making of the *Mahābhārata* that we are allowed to question *why* these parts were felt to be compatible so that the text as a whole made sense."
 4. Van Buitenen 1978:21.
 5. Van Buitenen 1978:20.
 6. Van Buitenen attempts to explain what he regards as a "frivolous element" as a part of his larger—and to my mind circumstantial and unconvincing—effort to explain the *parvan* as a frivolous "masquerade" expressive of the "hilarity" associated with the festival of Holi (van Buitenen 1978:14–10;20-21).
 7. Dumezil 1968:88-94.

selected to reveal the true nature of the heroes even as they are intended to conceal their identities.¹

Biardeau's observation is a good one, and indeed the quality of both revealing and concealing is in most significant cases, one of the characteristic marks of the major Vaiṣṇava *avatāras*. Certainly figures such as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa are almost never represented as either perfectly disguised (i.e., indistinguishable from ordinary men) or totally undisguised (i.e., indistinguishable from the gods). For their repeated superhuman feats of strength and illusion set them clearly apart from the former while their displays of human foibles and their lack of the characteristic marks of the gods (e.g., unblinking eyes, unwilting garlands, hovering above the ground etc.) distinguish them clearly from even those gods who are trying to impersonate humans.²

Another careful student of the epic, Hildebeitel, has similarly had occasion to make frequent reference to the *Virāṭa Parvan* and the curious disguises of Draupadī and Pāṇḍavas, seeing in them important clues to our understanding of the theological significance of the poem and its principal characters.³

Whatever may be the specific significance of the disguises adopted by Draupadī and her husbands for the duration of their year in the Matsya kingdom,⁴ it is clear that they are in no way capable of truly concealing their identities. This is demonstrated by the fact that at many critical junctures in the book characters are represented as easily penetrating these disguises. This point is an important one, and it is stressed at the very outset of the book when the heroes and their wife present themselves, one after the other, before King Virāṭa seeking employment. The king expresses disbelief at their stories and indicates that he recognizes both their royalty and divinity.

1. Biardeau 1978:187-200.

2. On the ambiguity of the status of the *avatāra*, see Pollock 1991:29-43. On the signs that betray the true nature of gods pretending to be men-see *Mbh* 3.54.20-25. Even in instances where gods succeed in accomplishing their ends through such impersonation, it is sometimes suggested that their disguise has not really fooled anyone. Compare, for example, the *Rāmāyaṇa's* rendition of the popular story of Indra's seduction of Ahalyā where the woman goes along with the god's imposture even though she immediately see through it (*Rām* 1.47). Similarly, at *Mbh* 3.123.19 Sukanyā is able to distinguish her husband, Cyavana, from the Aśvin when, through the magical power of the latter, all three have taken on identical forms.

3. Hildebeitel 1980, 1984, 1985.

4. See Hildebeitel 1980, van Buitenen 1978:5-10, and Biardeau 1978:187-200.

The moment he sees Yudhiṣṭhira approaching him in the guise of a brahman, Virāṭa remarks to his court, "it strikes me that this is no brahman instead he must be some great king, some lord of the earth. For, although he lacks servants, chariots, and earrings, he is as radiant as Indra himself. From the telltale signs on his body I can tell that he is one whose head has been anointed for sovereignty."¹ When the exiled monarch tells Virāṭa that he is a brahman gambler seeking employment, the latter responds by virtually abdicating in his favor. He replies, "I grant your request. Now rule the Matsyas, for I am your servant... . You are like a god and deserve the kingdom... . Let all my people be assembled to hear the proclamation that this Kaṅka [Yudhiṣṭhira's assumed name] shall be regarded as lord of the kingdom just as I am."²

When Bhīma approaches the king and represents himself as a professional chef, Virāṭa tells him, "Proud man, I do not believe that you are a chef for in majesty, beauty, and power you are like the very image of Thousand-eyed Indra, my son. Indeed you seem to be the foremost of men in this world."³

When, next, Draupadī arrives in the garb of a serving maid seeking employment the townsfolk, observing her beauty, do not believe her story⁴ while the queen, Sudeṣṇā, who will ultimately engage her, is similarly incredulous expressing a belief that she is really a goddess in disguise who, through her matchless beauty, will infatuate the king and so usurp her own place as chief queen.⁵

Virāṭa reception of the remaining Pāṇḍavas is similar. He scoffs at Sahadeva's tale that he is a *vaiśya* cowherd remarking that he looks like a brahman or a *kṣatriya* and resembles a lord of the sea-girt earth.⁶ He pays little heed to Arjuna's elaborate efforts to disguise himself with the trappings of a *hijra* and offers to give him equal status with his heirs even proposing that he himself immediately abdicate in favor of the bizarrely attired newcommer, "I am old and I wish to step down. You must immediately take over the rulership of all the Matsyas. It seems to me that men like you cannot be *hijras*."⁷ Finally, seeing Nakula approach him in

1. *Mbh* 4.6.4-5.

2. *Mbh* 4.6.11-13.

3. *Mbh* 4.7.6.

4. *Mbh* 4.8.4-5.

5. *Mbh* 4.8.9-14; 20-26.

6. *Mbh* 4.9.6.

7. *Mbh* 4.10.6-7.

the guise of a groom, the king remarks several times that he appears to be a god¹ or a king.²

This partial penetrability of the Pāṇḍavas' disguises is foregrounded once again near the *denouement* of the book when first Arjuna and then the rest of the heroes reveal themselves at the expiration of the thirteenth year of their exile. There, in a scene that will be discussed further below, the Kaurava heroes who have come to the Matsya kingdom to steal Virāṭa's cattle see the comic sight of the king's son Uttara running in terror from the battlefield pursued by Bṛhannalā, Arjuna in his *hijra* costume, his red garments and long braid flapping in the breeze. Some of the Kuru warriors, not recognizing the ludicrous figure as Arjuna, burst into laughter. But then, seeing his great speed, they are perplexed and one by one begin to wonder, "Who is that ? Concealed by that costume he resembles a fire hidden by smoke. In some ways he resembles a man and in others a woman, for he has the physique of Arjuna but the outward appearance of a *hijra*. Those are surely his head and neck, his club-like arms, and his characteristic gait. This can be none other than Dhanañjaya. Dhanañjaya stands among men as does the lord of the gods among the immortals. Who, other than Dhanañjaya, would dare confront us alone ? ... it must be that Uttara, having made Arjuna Pārtha, who is running there in disguise, his charioteer, has come forth from his citadel. But, it seems to me that having seen our battle flags he is fleeing in terror. It must be that Dhanañjaya is trying to catch him as he flees.' Such were the surmises of the various Kurus; but, seeing the Pāṇḍava in his disguise, Bhārata, they could not be absolutely certain."³ A little further on the great guru of the warriors, Droṇa, warns them, "There can be no doubt that this warrior, this great bowman, foremost among those who bear arms, is Pārtha who has come in the guise of *hijra*. Surely this is the mighty ambidextrous archer Pārtha, the scorcher of his foes."⁴

Moreover the notion that the Pāṇḍavas are not really concealing their true identities was an important one for at least one highly influential audience of the *Mahābhārata*. For the various Sanskrit commentators on the *Virāṭa Parvan*—most notably Nīlkaṇṭha—exercise their considerable ingenuity as well as their great erudition to demonstrate that the names and other characteristics with which the heroes and their wife

1. *Mbh* 4.11.2-3.

2. *Mbh* 4.11.10.

3. *Mbh* 4.36.27-36.

4. *Mbh* 4.37.9-10.

(mis)represent themselves in the opening chapters of the book are actually oblique revelations of their true identities and histories.¹

In the light of the tremendous emphasis both the epic poets and the poem's commentators place on the transparency of the Pāṇḍavas' imposture we may be fairly confident that this was, for them, the authors of the work and an unusually influential segment of its audience, an element central to the characterization of the epic heroes. Thus it appears unlikely that the revealing disguises of these figures was intended as an expression of some kind of "hilarity" or frivolous masquerade that Dumezil and van Buitenen imagine as laying at the heart of the book.

When viewed against the background of the normative conceptualization of the avatāra in the epic and purāṇic literature as discussed above, the ambiguity of the Pāṇḍavas' disguises is in no way truly unusual. For it is precisely the nature of the avatāra to be both recognizable and unrecognizable as a divinity, his true identity sometimes clear and sometimes not to those—including himself—who observe his career.

In a few noteworthy instances in the literature the question of the perception of the true nature of the avatāra is especially foregrounded through a more or less elaborate revelation or epiphany of the godhead in the apparent mortal. Many of the more striking of these occur as episodes in the life of Kṛṣṇa.² Of these perhaps the best known, most elaborate, and most germane to a reading of the *Virāṭa Parvan* is the dramatic epiphany of Kṛṣṇa later on in the Mahābhārata in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā.

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1. The best source for these commentators is the edition of the book edited by Pt. Mahadeva Gangadhar Bhatta Bakre and published by Gujrati Printing Press, Bombay, 1915. It contains the commentaries of Nīlakaṇṭha, Arjunamiśra, Caturbhujamiśra, and Sarvajñanārāyaṇa as well as those entitled *Durghaṭaparakāśinī*, *Viroddhārthabhañjini*, *Viśamapadavivarāṇa*, and *Lakṣābharāṇa*. See these commentaries on *adhyāyas* 1-3 and 7-12. For some brief discussions of the commentators' technique of reading the "hidden meanings" in the Pāṇḍavas' misrepresentations of themselves, see Goldman 1992:93-106.
 2. In many if not most the episodes in the bālakṛṣṇacarita, the accounts of the miraculous life of Kṛṣṇa as a child, involve the sudden realization on the part of the inhabitants of Vraja that the enchanting boy is no ordinary mortal. Some, such as the well-known episode in which Yaśodā, peering into the mouth of her foster child to see if he has been eating earth, is granted a momentary glimpse of the entire universe contained within him (Bhāg P 10.8) and his holding Mt. Govardhana on one finger (Bhāg p 10.25), constitute the principal "moments" in the history of avatāra and as such are the scenes that most capture the imagination of poets, painters, dancers, theologians, popular preachers, and others whose business it is to transmit these stories to a mass audience.

The case is indeed a special one but for that very reason it enables us to focus our attention on the issue of the ability to perceive the *avatāra* in his "true form." In the tenth chapter of the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa has told Arjuna that he is in fact the great lord of the universe.¹ The latter then expresses a desire to actually see his divine form (*rūpam aiśvaryam*).² Kṛṣṇa agrees but noting that Arjuna's normal vision is incapable of apprehending his true divinity, provides him with a corresponding faculty of supranormal sight (*caṅṣuḥ aiśvaryam*).³

Once Arjuna has beheld the divinity in all his unimaginable and awesome splendor and realized that his comrade in arms and charioteer is in truth the supreme lord of the universe, he is abashed at having, in his earlier ignorance, treated him familiarly. He tells him, "Please forgive me, eternal one, if in my ignorance of your true magnificence I carelessly or affectionately addressed you as, 'Kṛṣṇa,' 'Yādava,' or 'Friend' rashly thinking that you were merely my companion; or if, when we were alone or with others, I treated you disrespectfully for a joke while we were relaxing, lying down, sitting, or eating,"⁴ In other words Arjuna, who is the closest companion of Kṛṣṇa and is in fact his co-*avatāra*⁵ is confessing that he has been unaware of the divinity of his friend and needs a special gift of revelation to perceive it.⁶

1. Interesting in the context of Kṛṣṇa's "vibhūti," his representation of himself as the foremost example of all classes, is his identification of himself with Arjuna among the Pāṇḍavas. Cf. Bhāḡ G 10.37.

2. *BhāḡG* 11.3

3. *Na tu mām śakṣyase draṣṭum anenaiva svacaṅṣuṣāl divyaṃ dadāmi te caṅṣuḥ paśya me yogam aiśvaram//*

4. *BhāḡG* 11.41-42.

sakheti matvā prasabhaṃ yad uktaṃ he Kṛṣṇa he yādava he sakheti I ajānatā mahimānaṃ tavedaṃ mayā pramādāt praṇayena vāpi II yac cāvahāsārtham asatkṛto si vihāraśayyāsanabhojaneṣu I eko thāvāpy acyuta tatsamaṅṣaṃ tat kṣāmāye tvām aham apremeyamII

5. Arjuna's *avatāra*-hood is in fact overdetermined. Not only is he biologically the earthly incarnation of Indra; he is also, and in some ways more importantly, the incarnation of the divine seer Nara who is represented as being the inseparable companion and alter-ego of Nārāyaṇa. Thus, in a significant sense Kṛṣṇa an Arjuna are manifestations of the same personality. For a discussion of this, Hiltelbeitel 1984:15. Hiltelbeitel has carried the association of Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa still further. He sees behind it the epic's awareness of the notion that Viṣṇu and Śiva are also in the final analysis identical. He is thus able to argue on the basis of a number of similarities between the two—most notably with reference to Arjuna's disguised form as Bṛhannalā in the Virāṭa Parvan that Arjuna is powerfully homologized with Śiva. See Hiltelbeitel 1980:151-168 and 1984:15-26.

6. In the context of the forgetfulness experienced by characters who have witnessed one or more epiphanies of the *avatāra* it is interesting to note that several of the epic heroes are represented at various times as being fully aware of Kṛṣṇa's divinity.

Moreover, even after he has been granted this unique revelation Arjuna must abandon his gift in order for him to function normally with Kṛṣṇa as before as is necessary if purpose of the avatāra is not to be thwarted. For his vision of Kṛṣṇa's true nature has filled him with an awe and terror from which he can be freed only through the avatāra's compassionate resumption of his former disguise as a mere mortal.¹ Arjuna's response to the return of his occluded perception of the godhead is one of relief. "Upon seeing this, your agreeable human form Janārdana, I am once more restored to my senses, to my natural state."²

Now although Kṛṣṇa's revelation of his aiśvarya rūpa, so difficult for even the gods to attain,³ is the best known and perhaps the most elaborate example of such an epiphany, the sudden shattering of a humble guise to reveal a being of awesome power and majesty, it is by no means unique in the literature. In fact one of the closest and most interesting parallels in the epic occurs near the end of the Virāṭa parvan and involves Arjuna again, only this time not in the role of the observer but in that of the hero whose demeaning disguise as a hijra is suddenly cast aside to reveal him as he really is.⁴

The two scenes bear a strikingly close morphological similarity, so close indeed as to make it appear unlikely that there is not some powerful thematic connection between them as well. In the well-known Gītā episode, Kṛṣṇa, who is serving as Arjuna's charioteer drives, on the latter's instructions, their chariot out before the assembled hosts of Kaurava warriors. When Arjuna actually sees who is arrayed for battle before him, his gurus and his venerated kinsmen, he suffers a failure of nerve at the thought of fighting them.⁵ The great hero is filled with dread. He begins to tremble and his body hairs bristles in dread.⁶

Indeed he reveals it in a number of contexts prior to the battle of Kurukṣetra. For a discussion of Kṛṣṇa's epiphany in Duryodhana's assembly in the Udyoga Parvan and some speculation as to the theological significance of Duryodhana's refusal to recognize it. See Gitomer 1992.

1. BhāgG 11.49-50

2. BhāgG 11.51

Dṛṣtvadam mānuṣaṃ rūpaṃ tava saumyaṃ janārdana |

idānīm asmi samvṛttaḥ sacetāḥ prakṛtiṃ gataḥ ||

3. BhāgG 11.52-53.

4. Dumezil was, as far as I can determine, the first to note the remarkable similarity between the two passages observing the parallels between the *theophanic* of Kṛṣṇa revealed as god and the *heroophanic* of the "eunuch" revealing his true identity (Dumezil 1968:93-94). It would appear, however, that the logic of the epic and the ideology of the avatāra, suggest that there is no fundamental difference between the case of the hero and god or—on the most profound level—between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna.

5. BhāgG 1.20-2.8.

6. BhāgG 1.29 vepathuṣ ca śarīre me romahaṛṣaṣ ca jāyate.

In order to bring him around and restore him to a sense of his duty, his charioteer exhorts him, berating him for his faintheartedness, reminding him of the *kṣatriya code*, warning him of the disgrace of a warrior's fleeing the battlefield, and urging upon him the superiority of death to dishonour.¹ This exhortation then gives way to the spiritual and philosophical discourse the very substance of the *Gītā* that culminates in the dramatic revelation of the charioteer as the Lord of the universe in chapters ten and eleven.

With this widely known story as a background let us consider what passes between Arjuna in the guise of the *hijra* Bṛhannaḍā and the Matsya prince Uttara in the *Virāṭa Parvan*. The scene strike one as both a precursor and, in a way, a parody of the parallel incident in the *Gītā*.² In his father's absence, the young prince decides to sally forth to oppose the Kurus who have assembled outside his city in the course of their cattle raid. He boasts that if only he had a skillful charioteer he would inspire terror in the hearts of Bhīṣma, Duryodhana, and the other Kuru warriors who would think that it was Arjuna himself who was attacking them.³ Draupadī, disguised as servant, overhears Uttara's vain boasting and informs him that the *hijra* Bṛhannaḍā is an expert driver, who had previously worked for Arjuna.⁴ Uttara orders the driver to drive him out before the Kuru host. He does so but when the prince sees the Kaurava army under the leadership of the fearsome warriors such as Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Duryodhana, Kṛpa, and the rest, he suffers a complete loss of nerve.⁵ This failure of courage, unlike that which afflicts Arjuna in the *Gītā*, is not produced by and Oedipal dread of confronting his gurus but simple fear for his own life. Nonetheless the symptoms are nearly identical in both cases. Like Arjuna Uttara begins to tremble violently at the sight of the opposing army.⁶ Like him he experiences the bristling of his body hair in terror.⁷ Like him he declares himself unable to fight.⁸

For his part the charioteer Arjuna here must play the role of the charioteer Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*, telling Uttara how the fighters will mock him

1. *kBhāgG* 2.2-3; 31-37

2. Dumczil (1968:193) regards the passage as a *replique comique* of the *Gītā*'s narrative frame. Van Buitenen, who refers to the whole episode as a "burlesque," is uncertain as to whether to accept Dumczil's characterization or to regard the scene as "further building by the *Gītā* on this episode" (van Buitenen 1978: 15-16).

3. *Mbh* 4.34.1-9.

4. *kMbh* 4.34. 10-15.

5. *Mbh* 4.36.1-16.

6. *Mbh* 4.36.10 *dṛṣṭvaiva hi parān ājāv āunā pravyathatīva me*.

7. *Mbh* 4.36.8 *hṛṣṭaromā bhayodvignaḥ Mbh* 4.36.13 *hṛṣṭāni ca romāṇi kaśmalaṃ cāgataṃ mama*.

8. *Mbh* 4.36.16 *pratiyoddhum na śakṣyāmi nivartasva bṛhannaḍe*.

for his unmanliness, chiding him for his contemptible violation of the warrior code, and urging upon him the superiority of death to dishonour.¹

But despite the exhortations of Bṛhannaḍā, Uttara is by no means the warrior that Arjuna is. Instead of gathering his nerve for battle, he jumps down from the chariot and runs for his life with his transvestite driver in hot pursuit presenting the Kuru warriors the spectacle—first amusing and then unsettling—mentioned above. The cowardly prince is not to escape the battle entirely however. Bṛhannaḍā persuades him to change roles with him, taking the reins of the chariot while he himself does the fighting. Uttara is persuaded to trust his life to the transvestite dance master not through the sort of practical, moral, and metaphysical argumentation we find in the *Gītā* but by the dramatic revelation of Arjuna's true nature and awesome power, a revelation that is similar in type if not intensity to that of Kṛṣṇa in the *Gītā*.

The revelation of Arjuna's identity is preceded by the dramatic removal of the disguise of his and the other Pāṇḍavas' weapons which, since the beginning of the book have been lodged in a tree disguised as corpses, a guise whose verisimilitude is increased by the stench of a real corpse hung near them to deter people from investigating too closely.² Realizing that the paltry weapons Uttara has brought with him will be useless to a warrior of his own power, Arjuna instructs the prince to retrieve the weapons that he and his brother had hidden. When Uttara removes the shrouds from the divine weapons, they emit a heavenly radiance and he is once more afflicted with hair-raising fear.³ He asks about each of the wonderful weapons in turn and Bṛhannaḍā responds telling him which ones belong to which of the Pāṇḍavas⁴. The dull-witted prince, however, still doesn't catch on and asks where Arjuna and the other Pāṇḍavas can possibly be.⁵

At last Arjuna proclaims his true identity and those of the other disguised Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī.⁶ Still, however, the slowwitted Uttara will not believe him until he has—by way of proof—recited his, Arjuna's, ten names.⁷ Arjuna does so and then, in response to Uttara's

1. *Mbh* 4.36.17-23,26.

2. *Mbh* 4.5.12-29.

3. *Mbh* 4.38.17-18.

4. *Mbh* 4.38.19-58.

5. *kMbh* 4.39.1-4.

6. *Mbh* 4.39.5.6.

7. *Mbh* 4.39.7.

question as to the significance of each of the names and epithets, explains how he has acquired each of them.¹ The passage is reminiscent of the revelation of a divinity who, in keeping with devotional Hinduism's emphasis on the recitation of the multiple names of God, is celebrated and whose many feats and attributes are recalled through the formalized recitation of these names as in the *sahasranāmastotras* and the practice of *nāmasaṃkīrtana*. In fact the revelation is strongly reminiscent—albeit on a smaller scale—of Kṛṣṇa's self-revelation in the *Gītā* and the episode makes a central point of calling to our attention the close association and near identity between the two figures.²

This resemblance is powerfully enhanced by several features of the passage. In the first place, Arjuna's brief account of the attributes and accomplishments that have given rise to his ten names concludes with a strong allusion to *kṛṣṇabhakti*. The tenth name given is, in fact, Kṛṣṇa and it is explained here as owing to Arjuna's father's (Pāṇḍu's) love for the dark and shining boy-god.³ Then, too, Uttara's response to the revelation of his charioteer's true identity is cast in almost the same terms as that of Arjuna himself in the *Gītā* upon his being granted a vision of Kṛṣṇa's divine form. Like Kṛṣṇa he begs forgiveness, "Please forgive what I said to you in my ignorance, red eyed one, great armed lord whose arms resemble the trunk of the king of the elephants"⁴

Like Kṛṣṇa in *Gītā*, Arjuna exhorts his dejected companion and inspires him with the courage to face the Kaurava foe. Moreover, in deriving confidence from Arjuna's fame and prowess, Uttara explicitly likens him once more to the great gods, Indra and Kṛṣṇa, "I do not fear them now, for I know that you are as unshakeable in battle as Keśava and Indra himself."⁵ Finally, when he tells Arjuna of his skill as a charioteer, and of the mettle of his steeds, Uttara adverts once again to comparison with the charioteers and horses of Kṛṣṇa and Indra.⁶

The cumulative effect of all of this is to strengthen the association—already present in the theological background to the epic story

1. *Mbh* 4.39.8-20.

2. For a discussion of the homology linking Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna with the other two similarly named central figures in the *Mahābhārata*, Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, and Kṛṣṇā (Draupadī), see Hildebeitel 1985a.

3. *Mbh* 4.39.20.

kṛṣṇa ity eva daśamaṃ nāma cakre pitā mama /

"It was my father who gave me tenth name, Kṛṣṇa, out of his love for that dark and shining boy."

4. *Mbh* 4.39.22.

5. *Mbh* 4.40.8.

6. *Mbh* 4.40.16-21.

itself¹—of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, the earthly *avatāras* of Nara and Nārāyaṇa and finally, their identity. The passage that follows, a description of Arjuna's triumph over the foremost of the Kaurava champions,² leaves us in no doubt that this whole section of the book is crafted to foreshadow the events of the great Bhārata war that will occupy the central section of the epic itself. Indeed, as has been suggested by others³ the whole of the *Virāṭa Parvan* can be read as a sort of a disguised summary of the narrative of the larger epic. If this is the case then we may look for parallels between the microepic and the macroepic that are not merely at the surface level of the morphology of the incidents that make up the narrative structure; but at the deeper structural levels that lend the work its gravity and its mystery. Among the deepest and most important strata of the poem's significance is the theological level on which the historical events the bard purports to relate are in fact merely the terrestrial and temporally bound projection of the eternal cosmic struggle between the *devas* and the *asuras*, the forces of *dharma* and *adharma* respectively. Deeper still is the level upon which Kṛṣṇa, the great *avatāra* of Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa and enigmatic *eminence grise* behind all the actions of the poem's characters guides the destinies of the epic heroes and heroines and determines the outcome of the epic conflict through the agency of his companion and alter ego, Arjuna, only occasionally revealing, again chiefly to Arjuna, his true nature and the true significance of the war.

If we explore this level of the text in context of the *Virāṭa Parvan*, it is clear that the Pāṇḍava brothers and their wife in both concealing and at the same time revealing their true identities are exemplars of the concept of the *avatāra* that underlies the work and the devotional Vaiṣṇavism that infuses it. Further it is apparent that Arjuna in his strange guise of the *hijra* Bṛhannaḍā here as in the poem as a whole is both a hidden and manifest incarnation of the two divinities with which he is most closely associated, Indra, his biological father, and Kṛṣṇa his alter ego.⁴

With all of this in mind it is possible to refine somewhat our understanding of this curious portion of the *Mahābhārata*. For one thing it seems clear that this book does not constitute some frivolous masquerade parodying the characters and events of the larger narrative. The degrading disguises assumed by the Pāṇḍavas—are not intended for amusement but rather, through the further process of degradation that lies at the very core of the process of *avatāra*, of ontological 'demotion,' to highlight this

1. Cf. Sukthankar 1957:91-124 and Biardeau 1978:89-93.

2. *Mbh* 4.42-62.

3. Van Buitenen 1978:20-21 and Dumezil 1968:89-94.

4. As noted above, Hildebeitel makes a convincing case for a Śaivite association as well.

process at work in the transformation of gods to human princes in the first place.

If this is so then it seems, further, that there is no demonstrable basis for the claim—made by several scholars—that the *Virāṭa Parvan* is a late interpolation into the body of the poem. It is merely one among many examples of the way in which this radically oral text repeats itself in support of its fundamental purpose of preserving, reinforcing, and transmitting the various domains of knowledge and ideology which the intellectual elites of the traditional culture most valued. Chief among these are, on the social level, the complex continuum of beliefs and practices associated with the term *varṇāśramadharmā* and on the theological level, the concept of *avatāra* and the ideology of (Vaiṣṇava) *bhakti*.

Because of the complicated intertextuality between the various portions of the great epic that has arisen as a result of its oral nature, its multiple redactions, and its constant growth and modification over the long centuries during which it has exercised such a powerful hold on the imagination of the people of South and Southeast Asia, it is difficult to determine a precise chronological relationship between the *Virāṭa Parvan* and other, parallel portions of the text such as the *Bhagavad Gītā*.

Nonetheless, when looked at in the context of the epic as a whole and of the larger cultural and ideological universe of which the epic forms an important part, the *Virāṭa Parvan* provides a valuable and entertaining source for the elucidation of the concept of the *avatāra*, of the god in hiding, without which a clear understanding of devotional Hinduism and its most influential texts would not be possible.

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A TALE OF TWO TALES:
THE EPISODE OF HANUMĀN'S CHILDHOOD IN THE
CRITICAL EDITION

By

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[वाल्मीकिरामायणे हनुमतो जन्मनस्तस्य बालचरितस्य च वर्णनं किष्किन्धाकाण्डे उत्तरकाण्डे च विस्तृतरूपेण वर्तते । अन्यत्रापि तस्य वर्णनं प्रसङ्गतः वर्णितम् । अत्र विदुषा लेखकेन हस्तलेखानां पुष्कलपाठप्रमाणेन प्रतिपादितं यदत्र वर्णितं हनुमच्चरितं रामायणस्य मौलिकपाठेषु वर्तते; नेदं चरितं रामायणे परिवर्तिनि काले प्रसिक्तम् । अत्रो-पलब्धचरिते केसरी हनुमतः पिता अञ्जना च माता । वायुदेवोऽपि हनुमतः पिता । अस्मिन् प्रसङ्गे लेखकेन कामिलबुल्केमहाभागेन प्रतिपादितः सिद्धान्तो यत् हनुमतः पितृरूपेण केसरिणः रामायणे समावेशः पश्चाद्द्वितीं वर्तते निरस्तः ।]

The famous monkey hero Hanumān, the symbol for devotion to god for the Hindu Rāma cult, has, in fact, a rather perplexing career and history in the *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa* textual tradition¹. Until the opening *sarga* of the fourth book of the epic, the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*, Hanumān is virtually unknown to Vālmīki's epic.² This is a bit surprising, for in *sarga* sixteen of the first book, the gods are told to father monkeys as well as other animals on *apsarases* and other celestial creatures to aid Rāma in his adventures³. The names of Sugrīva and Vālin are expressly mentioned in

1. For a discussion see Goldman, R. P. and Sally J. Sutherland Goldman 1996, pp. 39-57 and Robert. P. Goldman and Sally J. Sutherland Goldman 1994.
2. All references are to the critical edition of the *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa* unless otherwise indicated. Prior to the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*, the only references to Hanumān are found in the *Bālakāṇḍa*. And there, Hanumān is only mentioned five times: three times in *sarga* 1 (1.1.47, 48, 57—verses 58-63, however, make reference to him and his actions in the *Sundarakāṇḍa* but do not use his name) and twice in *sarga* 3(1.3.14, 23—while verses 19-22,24 make reference to his adventures in the *Sundarakāṇḍa*). Both *sargas* provide 'retellings' of the epic story. The first is called the *Samkṣipta Rāmāyaṇa*, and the second is really an index of the events of the epic. In both places Hanumān's role is rather minimal. For a discussion of these two sagas, see Goldman 1984 pp. 60-81.
3. 1.16.

this passage⁴, but the name of Hanumān—a figure who eventually becomes far more popular than either of the monkey kings—is not.

We are first introduced to Hanumān in a rather unusual manner; and, for a figure who is to play such an crucial role in the epic story, his introduction is almost, it would seem, an afterthought. Sugrīva, having seen Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, is frightened and thinks that the two heroes are messengers of Vālin, who have come to kill him⁵. Hanumān is sent to discover who they are and what their purpose is.⁶ Here, Hanumān is only described as *vidyākovidah*, as befits a messenger and counsellor of a king.⁷ It is not until the end of the second *sarga* of the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*⁸ that the text refers to Hanumān as *mārutātmaja*, "the son of Māruta the wind god," his most famous epithet. And it is not until the end of the this book that we are told anything of Hanumān's history or background.⁹ Hanumān himself appears to be totally unaware of his own background or abilities until Jāmbavān exhorts him to jump, reminding Hanumān of his powers. Later the epic text rationalizes this delay—Hanumān has been cursed to forget his true nature and power until such a time as it can be effectively and properly used¹⁰—but here the reason for Hanumān's seeming amnesia is not addressed.

At the opening of *sarga* 65 of the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*, the monkeys who have discovered that Sītā was being held by Rāvaṇa¹¹ come to the ocean's edge and fall into despondency at its sight¹². Trying to decide how they might cross the mighty ocean to find and rescue her, they take counsel¹³. They discuss which of the monkeys might be able to jump the ocean. The monkeys brag about their individual prowess,¹⁴ all but Hanumān who silently sits off to the side¹⁵. Finally the monkeys realize

4. 1.16.19. These, by the way are the only two names of monkeys provided in the passage.

5. 4.2.5-6.

6. 4.2.13-27.

7. 4.2.13.

8. tatas taṃ bhayasamtrastaṃ vālikibiṣaṣaṅkitam/
uvāca hanumān vākyam sugrīvaṃ vākyakovidah//
4.2.27 :

ity evaṃ kapiṛajena saṃdiṣṭo mārutātmajaḥ/
cakāra gamane buddhiṃ yatra tau rāmalakṣmaṇau//

9. 4.65.

10. 7.35.16.

11. 4.58.20-23; 4.62.15.

12. 4.63.8.

13. 4.63.12.

14. 4.63.16; 4.64.1-27.

15. 4.63.35.

that despite their boasting, none of them, at least at present¹⁶, possesses the strength to cross the ocean. Jāmbavān, the old advisor and mentor of the monkeys¹⁷, calls upon Hanumān and reminds him of his prowess, which he compares to Garuḍa's, and other outstanding qualities:

[bahuśo hi mayā dṛṣṭaḥ sāgare sa mahābalaḥ/
 bhujagān uddharan pakṣī mahāvego mahāyaśāḥ//
 pakṣayor yad balaṃ tasya tāvad bhujabalaṃ tava/
 vikramaś cāpi vegaś ca na te tenāpahīyate//
 balaṃ buddhiś ca tejaś ca sattvaṃ ca harisattama/
 viśiṣṭaṃ sarvabhūteṣu kim ātmānaṃ na budhyase// ¹⁸

Jāmbavān momentarily digresses and relates to Hanumān the story of Hanumān's birth and childhood.¹⁹ At this juncture in the narrative, Hanumān realizes that he alone is capable of leaping the ocean and discovering Sītā. Assuming a colossal form, Hanumān prepares to leap, and the *kāṇḍa* comes to an end. Hanumān's subsequent adventures in the *Sundara* and *Yuddha kāṇḍas*, where he discovers and aids in the rescue of the hapless princess Sītā, are well known and serve as the basis for much of his popularity in the later *Rāmāyaṇa* devotional tradition of South and Southeast Asia²⁰

The seventh book of Vālmiki's epic, the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, is more like the *Bālakāṇḍa* in structure and tone.²¹ The book, as reconstituted by the critical editors, has one hundred *sargas* and opens with Rāma, now king of Ayodhyā, asking the sage Agastya to tell him of Rāvaṇa's family and prowess. This embedded episode takes up the first thirty-four chapters of the *kāṇḍa*. The narrative of Rāma picks up again at *sarga* 37. In between, as if by accident, are two chapters, *sargas* 35 and 36, which provide a second detailed account of the birth and childhood of Hanumān. The retelling of the story in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* is important as it represents one of the few times in the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* that a story is actually repeated (not just alluded to) and, to the best of my knowledge, the only time that an episode from the five middle books is retold in the *Uttarakāṇḍa*. In addition to the episode at the end of the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* referred to above

16. Cf., for example, Jāmbavān's comments.

17. See Goldman 1989.

18. 4.65.5-7.

19. 4.65.8-25.

20. See Goldman and Sutherland Goldman Forthcoming, and Goldman Forthcoming.

21. See Bulcke 1960, p. 41.

and the Uttarakāṇḍa's episode, Hanumān's birth and parentage is mentioned in at least four other places in the *Kiṣkindhā*, *Sundara*, and *Yuddha kāṇḍas*.²² In no case, however, is the reference more than a couple of verses long. But, as we shall see, these references will prove to be significant in terms of the textual history of the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*.

It is only with the completion of the critical edition of the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* that we have had put before us the evidence with which to re-evaluate much of the earlier scholarship on the *Rāmāyaṇa*. In the context of this paper, I would like to look more closely at the stories of the birth and childhood of Hanumān as we know them from Vālmiki's epic, with an eye towards further understanding their relationship and textual history. In light of evidence available to us in the critical edition of the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*, I will examine some of the accepted scholarly opinions about and *conclusions* on the nature, style, and purpose of the story of Hanumān's birth and childhood in hopes of shedding some new light on the textual history of the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*, particularly the role of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, as well as furthering our understanding of the monkey-god Hanumān as a major devotional figure of the Hindu religious tradition.

Scholarly attention has already focused on the textual validity of the story of Hanumān's birth and childhood in the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*. The great *Rāmāyaṇa* scholar The Rev. C. Bulcke, in a short article on the evolution of the character of Hanumān,²³ has analyzed the passages that contain the story of Hanumān's birth and childhood in an attempt to prove, among other things, that the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmiki did not originally consider Hanumān to be the son of Añjanā and Kesarī and that the version of the story known to the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* is clearly a later addition, not known to the earliest "layer"²⁴ of the epic. He bases his argumentation on two presuppositions: that the proper nouns Añjanā and Kesarī were 'rare' in the 'vulgate' itself and that the bards of the *Rāmāyaṇa* knew Hanumān as Vāyuputra before they knew "the birth-story that makes him the son of Añjanā, wife of Kesarī."²⁵ Bulcke, of course, did not have available to him the critical edition of the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*. In light of the critical edition of the text, it would be

22. 4.38.17, 4.66.27, 5.33.73f-75, and 6.19.11cd. See discussion below.

23. Bulcke 1959.

24. The notion that the epic was composed in stages has been a long-standing supposition of western scholars and many Indian scholars trained in western methodologies. See Brockington 1984, 1998.

25. Bulcke 1959, p.393.

appropriate to re-evaluate the arguments that he made using textual evidence from the vulgate.²⁶

Both versions of the birth story of Hanumān, the one at *Kiṣkindhā* 65 and the one at *Uttara* 35-36, are admitted by the critical edition and show strong textual support. In both versions the text clearly identifies Añjanā as the mother of Hanumān (4.65.8-18; 7.35.20), Kesarī as her husband (4.65.8; 7.35.19— here she is identified as his wife), and Vāyu as the divine father of Hanumān (4.65.10-18; 7.35.20). All of these proper names have solid, virtually uniform, manuscript support.

Let us first turn to the issue of references to the proper names Añjanā and Kesarī in the text of the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa other than those found above. According to Bulcke "outside of the birth-story of Hanumān there is only ONE passage [5.33.73-75] present in all three recensions, where Kesarī is mentioned as the father of Hanumān, and this passage is clearly an interpolation."²⁷ In fact, aside from the *Sundara* passage, there are at least three verses that identify Hanumān as the son of Kesarī.

The *Sundara* passage that Bulcke dismisses so offhandedly as an interpolation is admitted by critical edition, and its inclusion is supported by strong textual evidence. The passage is found at 5.33.73-75 and runs seven lines:

kaurajo nāma vaidehi giriṇām uttamo giriḥ /
tato gacchati gokarṇaṃ parvataṃ kesarī hariḥ //73
sa ca devarṣibhir drṣṭaḥ pitā mama mahākapiḥ /
tīrthe nadīpateḥ puṇye śambasādanam uddharat //74
tasyāhaṃ hariṇaḥ kṣetre jāto vātena maithili /
hanūmān iti vikhyāto loka svenaiva karmaṇā /
viśvāsārthaṃ tu vaidehi bhartur uktā mayā guṇāḥ //75

In the critical apparatus to verse 73 there appear no variants for the name Kesarī in any text consulted. Such conformity is somewhat unusual in the textual tradition, especially conformity of names, which give rise to the greatest intertextual variation. In this same verse, by way of example, the name Kaurajas is marked as doubtful, with five variants given.²⁸ The textual conformity in verse 74 is also striking. There are no variants given for *pāda* c. Moderate textual variation is seen in the remaining three *pādas*

26. I say this realizing that the textual evidence of the critical edition must also be looked at carefully. See Pollock, 1984a; Sutherland 1992.

27. Bulcke 1959, p. 393.

28. *kuṃjaro* (Ś1, N1, D1-4.0.11) *mālyavān* (D5.7-9, G1, M3 and the texts of the commentators), *Kailāso* (T2), *Kaunañjo* (G3), and *Gokarṇo* (M1).

of the verse. Verse 75 has some textual variation, but this tends to strengthen, rather than weaken, the association. Thus for *pāda* a, the northern recension²⁹ commonly reads *kesariṇaḥ* for the critical's *harinaḥ*, while D11 reads *putro* for *kṣetre*; and Ś1, D1. 10 read *tasyāhaṃ kṣetrajaḥ putro*, while D3 reads *ahaṃ tasya hareḥ kṣetre*. Bulcke has mistakenly identified the passage as an interpolation. On the contrary, the textual evidence supporting Kesari as Hanumān's father is very strong, and, on text-historical grounds, the passage clearly belongs to the oldest manuscript tradition.

Bulcke continues his argument that the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* did not know the figure of Kesari. He says: "Apart from the birth-story of Hanumān and the interpolated passage just quoted [5.33.73-74], no reference whatever is made to Kesari either in the *Kiṣkindhā* or *Sundarakāṇḍa*."³⁰ Putting aside the *Sundara* passage, which we have just seen cannot be an interpolation, let us look at the remaining evidence called upon by Bulcke. Like the *Sundara*, the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* makes clear reference the monkey Kesari, and at 4.38.17 the text explicitly names him as Hanumān's father.

anīkair bahusāhasrair vānarāṇaṃ samanvitaḥ /
pitā hanumataḥ śrīmān Kesariḥ pratyadṛṣyata //

The textual evidence, here as above, is solid. Among the manuscripts used for the collation of the critical edition, only N2, B1-3, and D7³¹ read a variant, *pitāmahasutaḥ śrīmān*, "the illustrious son of Grandfather Pitāmaḥa," for *pāda* c. The remaining manuscripts, including some from the northeast recension, among which is N1—the oldest known manuscript of the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa*—read with the critical edition. Again, based on the textual evidence compiled by the critical editors, the passage is authentic, and the name is clearly known to the oldest manuscript tradition. Bulcke makes no mention of this passage. At *Kiṣkindhā* 66.27, we again see explicit reference made to Hanumān as the son of Kesari and the son of the wind god.

vīra Kesariṇaḥ putra vegavan mārutātmaja /
jñātīnaṃ vipulaḥ śokas tvayā tāta praṇāśitaḥ //

29. N2, V2, B B2.4.6.11.

30. Bulcke, 1959, p. 394.

31. N1 a Newari manuscript representing the northeast recension, dated 1675; B1-3, Bengali manuscripts representing the northeast recension, B1. 3, undated, B2 1833. D7 a *devanāgarī* manuscript representing the northeast recension, undated. B4 and N1 both read the passage.

Once more the textual evidence is strong. Virtually all manuscripts read both *kesariṇaḥ putra* and *mārutātmaja*, demonstrating clearly the identity of the son of Kesari and the son of Māruta the win god. As with the *Kiṣkindhā* passage, Bulcke seems unaware of it.

The *Yuddhakāṇḍa*, tōo, knows Hanumān as the (eldest) son of Kesari and as the son of Vāyu the god of wind. At 6.19.11 we find

 jyeṣṭhaḥ Kesariṇaḥ putro Vātātmaja iti śrutaḥ /
 Hanūmān iti vikhyāto laṅghito yena sāgaraḥ //

Again the evidence is well-attested; there are no meaningful variations for either *Kesariṇaḥ* or *Vātātmaja*. Again Bulcke seems unaware of the passage.

Outside the *Rāmāyaṇa* tradition some textual support is evidenced for an early association between Kesari and Hanumān. The *Mahābhārata* has a well-attested verse naming Hanumān's mother as the wife of Kesari, providing additional support to the idea that the use of the patronym was well established early on. In an amusing encounter between Hanumān and Bhīma, the two most famous sons of the god of wind, there is a verse—not noted by Bulcke—where Hanumān tells Bhīma of his parentage, mentioning Kesari explicitly.

 ahaṃ Kesariṇaḥ kṣetre Vāyunā jagadāyusā /
 jātaḥ kamalapatrākṣa Hanumān nāma vānaraḥ //

The passage is quite similar to the one from the *Sundarakāṇḍa* above³² [5.33.75] and reiterates the adulterous relationship: Vāyu fathered Hanumān on the wife of Kesari.

The verse, like the one above, makes clear reference to the divine father of Hanumān, Vāyu, as well as Hanumān's earthly father and mother. This

32. It is most probable that the *Mahābhārata's* passage is borrowed from the *Rāmāyaṇa*. The phenomena is not unknown. For example, a similiar borrowing seems to have occurred in the case of the *Nalopākhyāna*, where the text reads almost identical with those found in the northern recensions of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. See Jhala 1939. Sukthankar (1939) in his article "The Nala Episode and the *Rāmāyaṇa*," demonstrated that the soliloquy of Sudeva in the *Nalopākhyāna* (MBh 3.65) was a close imitation, and in some places a verbatim repetition, of Hanumān's at Rām 5.17 (see Jhala's article for exact correspondences) and that it was in all likelihood borrowed from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, supporting Jacobi's notion that the *Rāmāyaṇa* was used as a "source" by the compilers of the *Mahābhārata*. Jhala refines this re-evaluating Sukthankar's conclusion in light of the evidence of critical edition of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and marks the borrowing from the northern recension. Here, i might note, is a verse that supports Jhala opinion, as it is the northern rendering of the *Rāmāyaṇa* that explicitly names Kesari in the same manner that the *Mahābhārata* version does. Given various textual and contextual features, it is likely that the Bhīma Hanumān episode is interpolated.

verse raises serious doubts about one of Bulcke's underlying assumptions: that the bards of the *Rāmāyaṇa* knew Hanumān as the son of Vāyu before they knew the birth-story of Hanumān that makes him the son of Añjanā and Kesarī.³³

Clearly Bulcke was mistaken when he so lightly dismissed the *Sundara* passage. The three books of the epic wherein we are exposed to the monkeys world, the *Kiṣkindhā*, the *Sundara*, and the *Yuddha kāṇḍas*, all have well-attested passages that identify Kesarī as the monkey father of Hanumān and Vāyu as his divine father.

Another point that Bulcke raises to support his position is the use of the proper name Kesarī as a leader of the monkeys. This is strengthened, he suggests, because, more often than not, in the many long lists of monkeys, the name Kesarī is omitted.³⁴ The argument is based on an assumption that Kesarī, as Hanumān's father, would be one of the foremost of the monkeys and therefore included in all major lists. He apparently assumes that since the name Kesarī, regardless of its association with Hanumān, is not mentioned in the majority of the lists of monkey leaders known to the epic, the earliest layers of the epic could not have recognized him as an important figure. He cites the lists of monkeys in the *Bāla*, *Kiṣkindhā*, and *Sundara kāṇḍas*³⁵ where there is no mention of his name and then calls upon the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* for evidence. In this *kāṇḍa* a monkey Kesarī is mentioned four times³⁶ –and never in a paternal relationship with Hanumān.

The passage that Bulcke has used as evidence from the *Bālakāṇḍa* (GPP 17=CE 16) lists, according to him, the names of twelve monkey leaders. The passage, however, has been rejected by the critical editors as a southern interpolation and relegated to the apparatus (*Bālakāṇḍa* 491).³⁷

Bulck's evidence for the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* is also problematic. He cites three vulgate passages of the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* 4 [=CE 4.4], 50 [=CE 4.49], and 65 [=CE 4.64] where monkeys are named, but Kesarī is not among them. At 4.4 there is no list of monkey leaders. The *sarga* tells of Hanumān's encounter with Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. The two heroes relate

33. Bulcke 1959, p. 393.

34. Bulcke 1959, p. 394.

35. Bulcke (1959) mentions the name of Kesarī in the list of monkeys at 7.39.4-6. However, this line (769*) is relegated to the critical apparatus and has poor textual support.

36. 6.4.30; 18.34; 6.19.11; 6.60. 38.

37. See note 3 above.

their troubles to Hanumān, who in turn tells the two heroes of Sugrīva's enmity with Vālin.

Bulcke's next example is from Sarga 49, where the adventures of the southern search party, led by Aṅgada, are continued. At verses 5-7 there is a list of monkeys mentioned who belong to the southern search party. These names are, for the most part consistent with those members of the southern search party listed at 4.64.1-2. The names, moreover, are not in conflict with those monkeys assigned to the southern search party at 4.40.2-5.³⁸ Bulcke's third reference is the list of the members of the southern search party given at 4.64.

Apparently unknown to Bulcke is the passage discussed above at 4.38. Here, Sugrīva, now king of the monkeys, assembles monkeys from all quarters to participate in the search for Sītā. The third monkey named (following upon the names of Gavākṣa and Suṣeṇa, the father of Tārā) is Kesarī, who is clearly identified as Hanumān's father (4.38.17). After this, Sugrīva assigns four monkeys to lead the search parties: Vinata as the leader of the eastern search party (4.39.15ff.); Aṅgada as leader of the southern search party (4.40.1ff.); Suṣeṇa, father of Tārā as leader of the western search party (4.41.1ff); and Śatabali as leader of the northern search party (4.42.1ff). If Bulcke's logic is correct, we would expect to see the name of Kesarī at the passage where Sugrīva summons all the monkeys, and we do. That he is not named as a leader of one of the search parties or as a member of the southern search party tells us nothing relevant in the present context about the textual history of the figure. Of all the monkeys only four are chosen to be leaders of the search parties, and in least two cases, Aṅgada and Suṣeṇa, the assignments can be considered political. Kesarī is apparently not assigned to the southern search party. Why then would Bulcke expect his name necessarily to appear later in the lists of its members?

Bulcke once more mentions the list of monkeys at the third *sarga* of the *Sundarakāṇḍa*. Here he is referring to verses 15-16 where Hanumān, in his awe of the citadel of Laṅkā, remarks that only a few monkeys would even be able to reach it. He names Kumuda, Aṅgada, Suṣeṇa, Mainda, and Dvidida. He goes on to say that only the monkeys Sugrīva,

38. The only name that is somewhat problematic is that of Suṣeṇa, who is said to be a member of the southern search party and is given charge of the western search party at *sarga* 41. However, there appear to be two Suṣeṇas: one, the father of Tārā, is the monkey leader appointed to lead the western search party and the second a member of the southern search party.

Kuśāparvan, and Ketumāla, and Hanumān himself could enter it. Again, that the name Kesarī is omitted from the list should not be regarded as remarkable. The names of many of the great monkeys have been left out. The list is not inclusive and is not intended to be. The poem's failure to mention the name Kesarī here only tells us that the epic's composer—through the voice of Hanumān—did not consider the father of Hanumān, along with the majority of the monkey warriors, to be one of the elite few capable of entering the citadel. Omission of the name Kesarī in the case of the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* and *Sundarakāṇḍa* is mainly dependent on context, and, given the degree of flexibility in many of similar lists, the overlap of many of the names demonstrates a stability and consistency in the text that is remarkable.

The *Yuddhakāṇḍa* presents a slightly different picture, as all the monkeys have joined forces, and the references are no longer to the elite guard of the southern search party. The four references Bulcke gives to the name Kesarī are admitted into the critical edition. One additional reference to the proper noun Kesarī was found.

At 6.4.30 the name Kesarī occurs in a list of other monkeys.

koṭīśataparivārah Kesarī Panaso Gajaḥ /

Arkaś cātibalaḥ pārśvam ekaṃ tasyābhirakṣati //

The textual evidence is strong, but some minor variants are found in northern manuscripts [N̄2, V3, B, D9], which read *vānarottamaḥ* for *panaso gajaḥ* understanding "Kesarī, that best among monkeys."

At 6.18.34 (=GPP 6.27.38), the passage identifies Kesarī as a leader of the *vānaras* (*mukhyo vānaramukhyānām Kesarī nāma yūthapaḥ*). At 6.39.26 (=GPP 6.49.26) and at 6.30.38 (=GPP 6.73.59) the name Kesarī is found in lists of other monkeys. The last *Yuddhakāṇḍa* reference to the name Kesarī is found at 6.19.11 and was discussed above as it identifies the monkey as Hanumān's father. The most remarkable thing about all these references is their solid textual support. For these three references, as with the one at 6.4.30, there are virtually no textual variations of the name Kesarī. Given that—as Bulcke has noted³⁹ and demonstrated by the critical apparatus of the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* itself,—the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* is the *kāṇḍa* most subject to interpolation, the degree of conformity of manuscript evidence in support of the name Kesarī is remarkable and marks it as well known to the earliest manuscript traditions.

39. Bulcke 1959, p. 394.

Bulcke is correct when he mentions that there are many additional lists of monkeys that do not mention Kesarī. However, given its solid textual evidence, Kesarī as the name of Hanumān's monkey father is well-attested and, contrary to Bulcke's notion that it is an interpolation, clearly belongs to the earliest reconstructed textual tradition of the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa. Kesarī's primary fame is his paternal connection with Hanumān, his military prowess is, it seems, secondary. Moreover, this paternal connection is not uncommonly juxtaposed with reference to Hanumān's divine birth father, Vāyu. In this light, it is not surprising that the name Kesarī is commonly omitted from the lists of the premier monkey warriors.

Let us now turn to Hanumān's mother, Añjanā. As Bulcke points out, the name of Hanumān's mother is clearly less well known to the epic than that of Kesarī. The figure of Añjanā is known from the birth story in the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*, where she is explicitly named (4.65.8) in a passage that has solid textual support, and from the *Uttarakāṇḍa* story (7.35.20) also a well-attested passage. At *Yuddhakāṇḍa* 61.18, Jāmbavān, dying on the battlefield, wants to know the fate of his good friend Hanumān and asks Vibhīṣana:

añjanā suprajā yena mātariśvā ca nairṛta /
hanumān vānaraṣreṣṭhaḥ prāṇān dhārayate kvacit //⁴⁰

The passage has solid textual support and show no variation in the name. Although no mention is made of Hanumān's earthly monkey father, his mother Añjanā, apparently in the only references to her outside of the birth-stories, is clearly identified.

Moreover, based on the textual evidence of the critical edition, the birth and childhood story of Hanumān as known to all books of the epic must be assigned to the earliest levels of the epic textual recensional history. There are some textual issues in the editing of the critical edition of the *Kiṣkindhā* itself that lead one to question whether, in fact, the transition between the story of the birth and childhood might be suspicious. This passage, at 65.18-19—where the story moves from the conception of Hanumān to his childhood adventures—is narratively awkward. All manuscripts, southern and northern, show some additional transition between the two passages⁴¹ Close examination of the textual

40. 6.61.18.

41. After 18, Ś1, Ñ1, V1, B1.3, D1.12.13 read 27 c-28ab; while Ñ2, D5-10, S read 1353* and in full or part, follow with 1356* (8 lines); D2 inserts 1355* ; D3.4.11 insert after

materials demonstrates that "unskilled joining" of the passages is not inherent in the epic story, but was a result of editing⁴² and not a mark of interpolation.

Thanks to the textual evidence provided by the critical edition, we can determine that Bulcke was mistaken, in virtually all of his assumptions concerning the story of Hanumān's birth and childhood. The three books of the epic wherein we are exposed to the monkeys' world, the *Kiṣkindhā*, *Sundara*, and *Yuddha Kāṇḍas*, all have well-attested passages that identify Kesarī as the monkey father of Hanumān and Vāyu as his divine father. Based on the fact that the critical edition admits not only the birth story of Hanumān told at *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* 65 and at *Uttarakāṇḍa* 35-36, but, also refers to it in the *Kiṣkindhā*, *Sundara*, and *Yuddha kāṇḍas* in passages with solid textual support, and the fact that it makes textually well-attested references Ksarī and Añjanā as the earthly parents of Hanumān, it seems very likely that the text of the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* considered Kesarī and Añjanā as Hanumān's monkey parents at an early stage of the evolution of the epic. Moreover, given the strong nature of the textual evidence, it is quite clear that the connection between Vāyu as Hanumān's divine father and Kesarī as his earthly father is made clear in the earliest manuscript evidence. If we accept this, then the remaining argumentation of Bulcke—that the bards accepted Hanumān as Vāyuputra before they knew the story of Kesarī—can be dismissed.

Hanumān and The Uttarakāṇḍa

After establishing the birth-story of Hanumān as belonging to the earliest manuscript evidence of the epic, we can once again turn to the Uttarakāṇḍa version of the birth story of Hanumān with an eye toward comparing it with the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* version in an attempt to shed light on some of the textual issues that confront the Uttarakāṇḍa and its relationship to the larger epic as well as the history of the character of Hanumān. Hanumān's role in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* is confined primarily to his birth story and childhood adventures told at *sargas* 35 and 36. Outside of these episodes, he makes only a few brief appearances, such as at *sargas* 38-39, where the monkeys take leave of Rāma, and at the end of the epic where Rāma exhorts Hanumān to continue his life (7.98.24-25). But before looking specifically at the episode as witnessed in the

18 1356* and then read 2ad; and before 19, Ñ2, V3, D2.7 G2 read 27c-28b. This leaves only two manuscripts unaccounted for: V2 and B2, both of which end prior to this sarga. See Sutherland 1992.

42. Sutherland 1992.

Uttarakāṇḍa we need to briefly examine some of the more pertinent issues concerning the text-history of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*.

It is generally acknowledged that the *Uttarakāṇḍa* was the last book to be added to the epic⁴³. Closer investigation reveals that all books, including the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, have complicated and by no means uniform text-histories. The manuscript tradition clearly admits the *Uttarakāṇḍa* as integral to the *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* tradition. Thus the earliest reconstruction of the epic based on the manuscript evidence must admit the *Uttarakāṇḍa*.

Like the *Bālakāṇḍa*, the *Uttarakāṇḍa* makes certain references and provides a certain amount of internal evidence to help us reconstruct what was known of the outside world to the composer (s) of that book⁴⁴. A.K. Chatterjee in his article "A Note on the *Uttarakāṇḍa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*"⁴⁵ discusses some of the internal evidence that help establish the book's relationship to the remainder of the epic and to the culture of its day. A summary and re-evaluation of some of Chatterjee's important points will provide an important point of reference from which to carry out our discussion of the Hanumān story in the *Uttarakāṇḍa*. Initially Chatterjee remarks on the theistic content of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, most specifically its Vaiṣṇava content. But he also notes the presence Śaiva references in the text and considers some possible references to a mother goddess. Like Bulcke, Chatterjee did not have access to the critical edition of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, and this has distorted some, but not all, of his evidence.

43. See, for example, Kane 1966, p. 43: "It should be noted that the *Uttarakāṇḍa* shows no differences worth mentioning. Therefore, it may be assumed that that *kāṇḍa* is not only the work of later interpolators, but it must have been composed after the original poem was bifurcated into the Southern and Northern recension." Bulcke (1960 pp.40-41): "the style and composition of both the *Bālakāṇḍa* and the *Uttarakāṇḍa* stand in sharp contrast to the other books of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Both are sadly lacking in unity and development of plot ... [40] As regards the *Uttarakāṇḍa* ... the *phalaśruti* at the end of the sixth book, the *Yuddhakāṇḍa*, shows clearly that at the time of composition of the work, the *Rāmāyaṇa* was considered to end at this place" [pp. 40-41] . Agrawal (1975, p. 1) disagrees but cites evidence of this opinion. Similar presuppositions underlie J. Vekerdi (1964) claim that *Uttarakāṇḍa* "all passages in the original books 2-6 of the *Rm* which seem to be remainders of a primitive pre *Vālmāki* tradition ... are built on the late *Uttarakāṇḍa* legends and do not justify the supposition that the author of the *Rm* relegated the rude features of the tradition into the background." Vekerdi, too, did not have access to the critical edition, making his conclusions highly suspicious.

44. See Goldman 1984, pp. 60-81, 1986, Agrawal 1975. See too Goldman and Goldman 1994, 1973.

45. Chatterjee 1973.

He first comments on the Vaiṣṇava materials of the epic. Like many other scholars,⁴⁶ Chatterjee assumes a later date for the epic because of the prevalence of this material in the text. According to him, "The *Uttarakāṇḍa* poet is an inveterate Vaiṣṇava believing not only in the godhood of his hero but also accepting him as an aspect of Viṣṇu"⁴⁷ This opinion falls in line with the canonical wisdom that the central books of the epic did not know Rāma as an *avatāra* of Viṣṇu and that this Vaiṣṇava materials was a later addition to the epic and thus reflected most strongly in its first and last books, which, as they presented this material, were chronologically later than books 2-6.⁴⁸ This opinion has recently been challenged by Sheldon Pollock in his Introduction to the *Aranyakāṇḍa*. He hypothesizes:

On these grounds alone we might be justified in concluding that the divinity of the hero for the *Rāmāyaṇa* must have been a central feature of the poem from the beginning. The morphology of the boon motif also compels this conclusion (and at the same time accounts for the absence of any clear reference to Rāma's divine nature), since it invariably requires a transcendent fusion of existential categories. Indeed the extraordinary synthesis here of the numinous and the human—the divine man who is a king of men, the human god—is a venerable mythopoetic tradition, which renews the force of this myth by tapping into a vital reservoir of everyday representations and beliefs concerning kingship.⁴⁹

He Continues :

These factors have so fundamentally conditioned the transmission of the poem that it cannot be proved on textual grounds that the composer of the monumental *Rāmāyaṇa*, from which all versions and recensions of the work derive, was ignorant of or indifferent to the equation of Rāma and Viṣṇu⁵⁰

Based on his careful reading and translation into English of the critical edition of the *Ayodhyā and aranya Kāṇḍas*, Pollock understands the epic as a coherent narrative, and his conclusions in this light are convincing and elucidate many questions concerning the structure of epic story. If Pollock is correct in his theory, and I believe that he is, then the "Problem"

46. See Bulcke 1955, 1960; Kane 1966.

47. Chatterjee 1973, p. 304.

48. Agrawal (1975, p. 1) feels that this argument is not convincing.

49. Pollock 1991, pp. 51-52. See, too, Pollock 1984b and 1986, pp. 25-32, 64-73.

Contrast, however, Lefebvre's opinion (1994, pp. 10, 14, 17, 48) .

50. Pollock 1991, p. 52

of the Vaiṣṇava content of both the *Bāla* and *Uttara kāṇḍas* is largely resolved. For, it is normally at the beginning and the end, that is at the birth and death, of the avatāra, the divinity of the avatāra is explained and acknowledged.⁵¹

Concerning Chatterjee's textual evidence on the Book's Vaiṣṇava content, only a few comments are necessary. His Vaiṣṇava references are mostly found in the critically edited text and, given the Vaiṣṇava bias of the epic, should not be considered out of place in this Book. In conjunction with this Chatterjee hypothesizes that the poet of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* was "equally at home with the Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva cult."⁵² As evidence he mentions the use of terms connected with that cult such as *Pītavāsaḥ* (7.6.28), *pāñcājanya* (7.7.9), *śārṅga* (7.7.16,19), etc. In this line Chatterjee also mentions the occurrence of the term *rāmabhakti* in the text (7.38.15) and understands it as "profoundly significant,"⁵³ but offers no explanation of its signification.

Chatterjee draws our attention to the term *bhakti* at 7.39.15 [=GPP 7.40.16], a *śloka*, which he understands as influenced by the *Gītā*. His remarks concerning the influence that the *Gītā* may have had on the *Uttarakāṇḍa* are more problematic. The one convincing example that he has provided of a *Gītā* passage borrowed into the text, *Bhagavadgītā* 4.7, has been relegated to the critical apparatus (137*) and is known to only two manuscripts. His second piece of supporting evidence, GPP 7.30.44, like the passage above, was relegated to the critical apparatus (637*). In the absence of stronger textual support, his other example—that 7.39.15 was influenced by the eighteenth book of the *Bhagavadgītā*—is intriguing but not convincing. However the verse at 7.39.15 is important for our concerns since, as we will see below, it is connected to Hanumān.

One final note on Chatterjee's comments concerning the Vaiṣṇava influence on the *Uttarakāṇḍa*. His claim that the story of the beheading of the wife of Bhṛḡu is not found outside of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* is wrong. At least two versions of Bhṛḡupatni's beheading are found in the literature: at *Matsyapurāṇa* 47 and at *Padmapurāṇa* V. 13.202ff.⁵⁴

Chatterjee's comments on Śiva worship in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* are interesting and shed light on the culture from which the *Rāmāyaṇa* was derived. The connection between Rāvaṇa and the Śiva cult is important

51. Goldman, 1994, esp. lpp. 10, 13-16, Goldman and Goldman 1994, 1996, pp. 39-57.

52. Chatterjee 1973, p. 304.

53. Chatterjee 1973, p. 305.

54. See Goldman 1977 for a discussion of the Bhārgava myths. See, too, Goldman 1982.

and needs to be further investigated. Unnoted by Chatterjee, though, are the restricted loci in which such references occur. The references tend to be concentrated in *sargas* 6, 16, and 78,⁵⁵ not randomly scattered throughout the text.

Chatterjee goes on to discuss the date of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* asking, "Is it pre-Buddhist, pre-Christian or post Christian?"⁵⁶ He goes on to say, "The fact remains that the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, and as a matter of fact, the whole of the *Rāmāyaṇa* ... is completely free from Buddhist influence." He separates the *Uttarakāṇḍa* from the core of the *Rāmāyaṇa* by a few hundred years, and places the completion of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* "probably before the middle of the sixth century BC,"⁵⁷ a date that agrees with our own estimate.⁵⁸ Although still understanding a later date of composition for the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, Chatterjee places the date of the composition of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* much closer to the "core story" than many scholars.⁵⁹

The story of Hanumān's childhood as we know it in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* is most notable—other than the fact that it is repeated—because of its location in the epic itself. Scholars have not infrequently remarked on the nature of the first part of the last Book of the epic as a collection of histories of the epic characters, particularly Rāvaṇa and Hanumān.⁶⁰ On close examination, we find that of the first thirty-six *sargas* (at *sarga* 37 we return to the world of the human and the conditions of life in the Rāmārājya) only two *sargas* tell us anything in detail about Hanumān.⁶¹ The adventures of Hanumān—our famous hero and devotee of Rāma—seem almost to be an afterthought. The two *sargas* (35 and 36) are inserted at the conclusion of the story of the antagonism between Vālin and Rāvaṇa. The first half of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, in fact, concerns itself almost exclusively with the story of Rāma's main antagonist, Rāvaṇa. These *sargas* that tell the Rāvaṇa saga account for the vast majority of the Śaiva references in

55. For example, *bhūtapati* 7.16.46; *gopati* 7.16.24; 6.78.13; *kāmārī* 7.6.3; *kapardin* GPP, CE 7.6.9,31,34; GPP 7.87.17 = CE 7.78.17; *mahādeva* GPP 7.16.25=CE 7.16.318*, 7.16.27; *maheśvara* GPP 7.16.27 [=CE *mahādeva* 16.15,30], 7.87.18; *nilagrīva* CE 16.318* line 4; *nilalohita* GPP, CE 7.6.9; *sambhu* 7.16.46, *im passim*; *śaṅkara* GPP 7.16.10 = CE 7.16.318*; *śitikaṇṭha* GPP 7.87.17 = CE 7.78.17; *trilocana* 7.6.3; *tripurārī* 7.6.3; *umāpati* [CE 7.16.318* line 4]; GPP 87.17 = CE 7.78.16; *vṛśadhvaṇa* GPP 7.16.35=CE 7.16.318*.

56. Chatterjee 1973, p. 314; Goldman 1984, p. 22.

57. Chatterjee 1973, p. 315.

58. See Goldman 1984, p. 22.

59. Jacobi 1893, p. 64; Brockington 1984, pp. 309-10, 313-15; Kane 1966, p. 43; Bulcke 1960.

60. See Goldman 1984, p. 12; Bulcke 1960, p. 40.

61. For example, 7.38.12; 7.39.15; 7.98.24-25.

this Book.⁶² One of the most famous Śiva passages of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* is seen at *sarga* 16, where we are told the very popular story of how Rāvaṇa got his ten heads, as well as his great powers, by performing fierce austerities to Śiva. This Śaiva connection in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* is potentially significant once we recall that Hanumān in the later *Rāmāyaṇa* tradition is considered to be an *avatāra* of Śiva.⁶³

The *Uttarakāṇḍa* story of the birth and childhood of Hanumān is substantially longer than the one found at *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* 65 and, given the textual history of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, is in all likelihood borrowed from the *Kiṣkindhā* version. Rather than the birth and parentage of Hanumān occupying the interest of the poets, as it seems to in the earlier reference, it is his adventures as a young child that are focused upon and, in fact, greatly expanded. The *Uttarakāṇḍa* episode is narrated as an embedded story within the larger frame of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*: Rāma is curious to know why Hanumān, who has accomplished so many impossible feats, did not help Sugrīva in his fight with Vālin (7.35.2-11) and asks the venerable sage Agastya to tell him (7.35.13). Agastya is almost too embarrassed to tell the story—it is so silly—but is resigned to do so if Rāma insists (7.35.14-18).

Initially we find that the detailed episode of Hanumān's conception known at *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa* 65.8-18 is here given in only two verses:

(yatra rājyaṃ praśāsty asya Kesarī nāma vai pitā) 19cd

tasya bhāryā babhūveṣṭā hy añjaneti pariśrutā/
janayāmāsa tasyām vai vāyur ātmajam uttamam//20

śāliśūkasamābhāsam praśūtemaṃ tadāñjanā/
phalāny āhartukāmā vai niṣkrāntā gahanecarā//21

No mention is made of the *apsaras* Puñjikasthalā, who was cursed to live on earth (4.65.8-9), and although we are told that she was desired (*iṣṭā*), there is no detailed description of her beauty and Vāyu's enchantment with and seduction of her (10-15). No mention is made of her resistance of Vāyu's advances (16) or of his response (17-18). Verse 20 is more akin in style and nature to those verse found in the *Kiṣkindhā*, *Sundara*, and *Yuddha kāṇḍas* discussed above.

While the essential elements of the story of the birth and childhood of Hanumān as we know them from the *Uttarakāṇḍa* are likely based on the

62. The story of Ila and Budha at *sarga* 78 also has a large number of Śaiva references.

63. He is normally considered an *avatāra* of Rudra. Bahadur 1972, p. 401.

story that we know from the *Kiṣkindhākāṇḍa*, the *Uttarakāṇḍa* has greatly expanded on the childhood exploits of Hanumān. The *Kiṣkindhā* version narrates the story in ten verses (65.19-28), while the *Uttarakāṇḍa* version takes some ninety verses (35.22-65; 36.1-45). Rather than having the hungry child Hanumān jump up and grab the sun—thinking, of course, that it was a fruit (4.65.19, 7.35.14) and being struck down by Indra (4.65.21; 7.35.46), the *Uttarakāṇḍa* story is expanded to include Hanumān's divine father Vāyu sending a cool breeze to protect his son from the sun's heat (7.35.28-31), Hanumān's childish attempt to get Rāhu as well (35.31), Rāhu's appeal to Indra (35.33-35), etc. The story continues in *sarga* 36, where the gods confer boons upon the young Hanumān. The impetuous Hanumān then takes advantage of his prowess and invulnerability to harass the sages, who then curse him to forget his strength until such time that it can be put to good use.

The inclusion of the story in the epic a second time and the substantial expansion of the childhood episode in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* mark the story, and its subject, as important to the poet and his audience. The passage's emphasis on the childhood exploits serve in part to provide a more elaborate and complete history of Hanumān. Besides providing the rationale for the curse discussed above, the story reinforces Hanumān's childish exuberance and impetuosity that surfaces throughout the epic. However, if Chatterjee is correct, and the composer (s) of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* were familiar with the Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva cult, the expansion of the childhood adventures of Hanumān may be attributable to influence from this cult's enthusiasm over its own deity's childhood adventures. But such an influence would seemingly presuppose that the composer and his audience attributed to Hanumān a theistic import not directly evidenced.

In the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, Hanumān is not made the explicit paramount symbol of the devotee of Rāma as he is in the later *bhakti* tradition. The *kāṇḍa*'s inclusion of the childhood story is indicative of the monkey's popularity, which is perhaps a result of a theistic connection, but provides little direct evidence of his later role as the great *Rāmabhaktā*. However, following right upon this story, at *sarga* 39, Rāma, now installed in his court at Ayodhyā, distributes gifts to the monkeys and *rākṣasas*. At verses 13 and 14 the monkeys and *rākṣasas* pay tribute to Rāma, and then, at verse 15, Hanumān directly addresses Rāma :

sneho me paramo rājaṃs tvayi nityam pratiṣṭhitaḥ/
bhaktiś ca niyatā viro bhāvo nānyatra gacchati //⁶⁴

This verse is perhaps an early confirmation of the role that Hanumān is later so well known for.⁶⁵ However, we can see no connection of Hanumān in the episode or the remainder of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* with Śiva with whom he is later so closely associated—despite the strong Śaiva influence of the surrounding *sargas*.

The textual history of the *Rāmāyaṇa* of Vālmiki reveals Hanumān as a well-established character throughout the epic. The story of Hanumān's birth and childhood is clearly attested at the earliest level of the reconstructed epic, and the identification of Kesarī and Añjanā as Hanumān's monkey parents and the stories surrounding them cannot be considered later interpolations. The episode of Hanumān's birth and childhood must be understood as well integrated into the larger *Rāmāyaṇa* ethos from an early period and well known to the composer of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*. While the episode of Hanumān's childhood found in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* suggests an enthusiasm and association for Hanumān reminiscent of his later role, there is no textual evidence to support this. However other well-attested passages in *Uttarakāṇḍa* have acknowledged Hanumān's role as a *Rāmabhakta*, lending support to the notion that the expansion of the childhood episode was motivated by a theistic concern. If Chatterjee is correct in his dating of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, this would establish the tradition of Hanumān as a *bhakta* of Rāma at an early date.

64. It is this verse that Chatterjee (1973, pp. 304-05) understands as being influenced by chapter 18 of the *Gītā* (p. 304). At *sarga* 38, there is also a verse that reinforces this notion. At 7.38.12 the monkeys, apes, and *rākṣasas* are described as 'hanumatpramukhāḥ'. At verse 15, the assembly is said to spend one month in Rāma's company as "rāmabhaktas":

evaṃ teṣāṃ nivasatām`māśāḥ sāgro gatas tadā/
muhūrtam iva tat sarvaṃ rāmabhaktyā samarthayan//

65. See Wolcott 1978, Goldman and Goldman (1994, 1996).

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PURĀṆAS IN ORIYA LITERATURE

BY

MAMATA MISHRA

[पुराणवाङ्मयस्याध्ययनमध्यापनं प्रचारश्च समग्रे भारतवर्षे प्राचीनकालादेवासीदिति सुप्रथितमेव । भारतस्य तत्प्रदेशानां भाषासु पुराणानामनुवादः संक्षेपणं च जातम् । अत्र विदुष्या लेखिकया उत्कलभाषायां निवद्धस्य पौराणिकसाहित्यस्य विशेषतो महापुराणानां च विस्तरं सप्रमाणं च विवरणं प्रस्तुतम् ।]

There is no such direct evidence available to ascertain when the popular texts like Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata in Sanskrit were studied in orissa, but from the study of epigraphical records it is found that brahmanical culture revived in Orissa during the Gupta rule (from 1st quarter of 4th to the middle of 5th century A. D.). The patronage given by different royal personages for the cultural growth was quite encouraging in Orissa. From the epigraphical records it is noticed that Sanskrit in its all disciplines was very much popular in Orissa.

However the early mention of study of Purāṇa in orissa is found in the Pāralākhimedi plate of Śrīpṛithvī Mahārāj of the last part of sixth century A.D¹.

In the Dharmaliṅgeśvara Plates of Devendra Varman, it is mentioned that the donee Bhagavān Pattaṅga Śivācārya was proficient in Purāṇa²..

"वेदवेदांगेतिहासपुराण न्याय - - - धिगताय भगवतपतङ्गशिवाचार्याय - - -

In the Baud plate of Solāṇa Bhañja, it is mentioned that Gopāla, the donee of the grant was well-versed in Purāṇa³..

"मध्यदेशोद्भवो विप्रः श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणवित् ।

नाम्ना गोपाल इत्यासीच्छान्तः काश्यपगोत्रजः ॥"

The quotations clearly indicate that equal stress laid on the study of Purāṇas like that on Vedas and Vedāṅgas. Apart from the direct mention

1. वेदवेदांगपारगाय - - - पुराणरामायणधर्मशास्त्राद्य नेकविद्या - - -
2. As quoted by K.N.Mahapatra, Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Mss of Orissa (Vol. III), p. xvii
3. Ibid. p.

of word purāṇa, some interesting and impressive stories of the epics and purāṇas had become the sources of the inspiration for our ancient authors of Inscriptions. While exhibiting the Kings and their Kingdoms, very often they have referred to the legends from Purāṇas. Numerous legends like Gaṅgā descending from the head of Śiva, Śiva's enmity with cupid, Śeṣanāga bearing the earth over his head, Gaṅgā brought by Bhagiratha from the heaven, Churning of the ocean etc. have been cited in the inscriptions- The temple sculptures of Orissa also present the Purāṇic stories in a very lively manner. Purāṇic evidences either through inscriptions or other written records are meant for the educated people, but the Purāṇic stories depicted in temple sculptures are for one and all, and create enthusiasm to know more and more about the episode. Śiva's *Rāvaṇānugrahamūrti* is carved over the lintel of Śatrughneśvara temple, (6th cent. AD), one of the earliest temple of Orissa, Here Rāvana is found to be trying to uproot the Kailāśh mountain, the abode of Śiva. In the niche of Paraśurāmeśvara temple (7th cent A.D) Siva's *Ravaṇānugrahamūrti* and *Bhikṣāṭanamūrti* Maḥiṣāsura-mardini; four-armed Vināyaka; two-armed Kārttikeya; marriage of Śiva and Brahmā; are prominent. From The images of the Gods and goddesses found throughout Orissa, it is quite evident that before the Sixth century A.D. itself the tradition of Purāṇa was quite popular. In fact it can be said that one cannot imagine of a temple, without the evidence of Purāṇa. The same is in the case of literature also.

Though the whole of North India was occupied by the Muslim rulers, Orissa for more than three and half centuries due to her powerful militia maintained peace and offered patronage to scholars and reformers, who did a lot to upkeep the Hindu tradition and culture. The Epigraphical records of Anaṅgabhīmadeva III (1211-1238 A.D.) a powerful monarch of Gaṅga dynasty reveals that he could defeat the Muslim invader from Bengal and he had deep regard for the Smṛtis and Purāṇas. Even while making land grants he was strictly following the injunctions mentioned in several Purāṇas:⁴ Through the efforts of his able minister and general Viṣṇu achārya, who was also proficient in Nyāya, three Vedas, and *Daṇḍanīti* (state-craft), a new recension of the purāṇas was made in Orissa:

चकारतत्त्वप्रतिपत्ति सम्पदास्पदं पुराणानि पुनर्नवानि यः⁵.

4. दानसागरभूमिदानावर्ते महाभारतोक्तां वामनपुराणोक्तां वृहस्पत्युक्तां आदिपुराणोक्तदानसागरे विष्णुधर्मोक्तां - - -

Nāgari plates of Anaṅga Bhīma, Deva III, E.I. Vol. XXVIII pp 256-57

5. Chaṭeśvara temple Inscription, re-edited by Chhabra, E.I. Vol-XXIX pp 121-123

But the accurate information about the names of the Purāṇas is not found. However the popularity of Sanskrit Purāṇa in Orissa can be verywell imagined.

It is very difficult to say that when the Purāṇa in Oriya language was first composed. The earliest oriya liteature (Mahābhārata) that unfolded the History of human thought belongs to Sārālā-dāsa (15th cent A.D), Known as the *ādikavi* of the land of Utkala. He himself has admitted that all his knowledge about the epics and Purāṇas are due to the blessings of Goddess Sārālā, the village diety. But we do not have any written record of either Kāvya or Purāṇa in Oriya language before 15th century A.D. Towards the eighteen century, a complete sets of Oriya translation of eighteen major purāṇas, and eighteen *upapurāṇas* were ready for the common men of the soil.

Apart from the Oriya translations, the stories depicted in eighteen major purāṇas and some upapurāṇas attracted the attention of the Oriya scholars and poets. Numerous Māhātmyas related to particular months, places and days; the prose translation of Oriya purāṇas; the Kāvya depicting the purāṇic stories show lasting impression in the minds of orissan scholars. So much so, one can say that there is no such literature in Oriya which is not influenced by the Sanskrit Purāṇas.

However, in this paper a brief survey of the eighteen major purāṇas is sketched. Purāṇas in prose and lyrical forms Kavyas related to the purāṇic stories and Māhātmyas are not taken into consideration.

Oriya purāṇas mostly are composed in *Caturdaśākṣarī* metre (containing 14 syllables). Some purāṇas like Bhāgavata etc., are composed in 9 *navākṣarī* metre (where one line has 9 syllables). Most of the purāṇas have been started with the benediction of Lord Jagannatha.

1. Brahmapurāṇa :

1.1. It is translated by Vaiṣṇavacaraṇa Dāsa, a poet might be of the last part of 19th century. This purāṇa has been published in 1958 by Rādhāramaṇa Pustakālaya, Cuttack. Towards the end of this purāṇa the author admits of translating the Sanskrit text and deleting some unnecessary descriptions of Sanskrit. It is divided into two parts as *pūrva khaṇḍa* and *uttara khaṇḍa* having 52 and 80 chapters respectively. At the outset of the work, the poet tells about his intention of writing some other purāṇas also based on the original text of Sanskrit. The language of the purāṇa is not only very simple but also matured. To give the total number of the stanzas the poet has given an account of the verses found in Sanskrit text as well as in the translated form. For example at the end of

the 1st chapter he says that though the Sanskrit text has 190 verses it has been covered in only 90 stanzas in Oriya. At the end of the *Pūrvakhaṇḍa* it has been covered in only 90 stanzas in oriya. At the end of the *Pūrvakhaṇḍa* it is mentioned that though the Sanskrit text has been covered in 6420 verses, it has been adjusted in only 3360 stanzas in Oriya. Though at the end of *Uttarakhaṇḍa* the number of the verses are not mentioned like that of *Pūrvakhaṇḍa*, the total number of stanzas of the whole Brahma purāṇa is to be ten thousand. Even then the subject matter dealt in oriya Brahmapurāṇa differs from the Sanskrit text yet the seer Lomahaṛṣaṇa is the speaker and seers like Sanaka and others are the listeners.

The chapters like the descriptions of Puruṣottamakṣetra, Ekāmrakṣetra, Mārkaṇḍya's entering into the stomach of Bhagavān, the twelve festivals of Lord Viṣṇu etc., are not found in the Oriya version. In Oriya *Brahmapurāṇa* the subjects like glory of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme being, the glory of Saguṇa and Nirguṇa paramabrahman, the characters like Agnihotrī, Svaroci, Auttama, different mountains, the genealogy of Surya, different kings like Kīrticandra, Karandhama, Aviksita, birth of Maruts, scion of Yadu and Moon are dealt with.

Though the poet very well admits of translating the Sanskrit version, but the subject matter does not agree with the present Sanskrit text. Hence it seems he had some other *Brahmapurāṇa* before him which he took as his model.

1.2. Another *Brahmapurāṇa* translated by Kṣetramohana pradhāna a purāṇa writer of recent time, has been published by Dharma grantha store, Alisha Bazar, Cuttack (Dharmagrantha store never mentions the date of publication). From the study of the subject matters dealt in this purāṇa it seems that the present author has copied the version of Vaiṣṇava-caraṇa Dāsa with a little change here and there.

1.3. Another *Brahmapurāṇa* being composed by Balarāma Dāsa has been edited by Duhkhisayama Pattanaik in 1978 in Orissan Oriental Text Series (Oriya) No.23. In oriya literature the compositions in the name Balarāma Dāsa number about one hundred and fifty. The Present author might not be the same, the author of famous *Jagamahana Rāmāyaṇa*, a work of sixteen century A.D. It might be a latter composition i.e., end of the 17th century A.D.

This purāṇa is neither the translation of the Sanskrit one nor it follows the subject matter in any way. It has ten chapters in total. In this, Vyāsadeva is the orator and Jaimini is the listener. In the introductory part the author describes the position of universe after doom as he goes to

introduce the creation of earth. Then the creation of Vedas is described. The root of the Vedas and their different branches is described in a lucid manner. In the following chapters, the creation of wind, star, moon, *tithis*, yoga, moon as *supuruṣa*, his marriage with 27 stars, killing of Brahmā by Viṣṇu and rebirth of Brahmā, the theory of body (*Śarīratattva*) and the role of Brahman in a body, description of the body in detail, creation of four castes, characteristics of a human, role of Vedas for the creation are described in 1572 stanzas. In between some stories are found befitting to the context and keep up the link in description. Since its principal objective is to deal with Brahman, the soul, it is entitled as Brahmapurāṇa.

1.4. Another Brahmapurāṇa of 19th century A.D. is available in palm leaf manuscript form (Orissa state Museum (OSM) No. OL. 1538). It is composed by Śrīdhara, a brahmin by caste. The purāṇa in its 21 chapters deals with five-elements, 84 yantras, the theory of body (*Śarīratattva*), *liṅgacakra* (role of naval point in the body) the glory of mantra etc. The work is comparatively very small.

2. Viṣṇupurāṇa

2.1. One *Viṣṇupurāṇa* in Oriya of Śrīnivāsa Miśra is published by Tārāmani Devi, Rājābagichā, Cuttack in 1981. Both the Sanskrit and Oriya poetic translation are found. The translation is in toto but the translator never mentions his name in the text. The book is rich with a good introduction and towards the end a gist of all the chapters is found.

2.2. Another *Viṣṇupurāṇa* was published in 1968 by *Chandīmātā pustakabhaṇḍāra*. It is translated by Bhagavān Pāḍhi. The author at the outset of the work has admitted to have translated the Sanskrit text. This purāṇa is divided into three parts composed in 22, 16 and 14 chapters respectively.

The Purāṇa opens up with the benediction of Lord Viṣṇu. Translator Bhagavān, a brahmin by caste, is the son of Ghanaśyāma of Keonjhar district of Orissa. It is an abridged form of Sanskrit text. Though the author admits of translating the Sanskrit one, it seems by omitting some chapters from the Sanskrit he has rather edited the text.

2.3. The *Viṣṇupurāṇa* preserved in the ms. form (OSM-Qr. Ms-38), not yet published) is composed by Vallabha Nārāyana Mahāpātra, son of Rāmacandra Pātra whose father Payā Pātra was the minister of Śrīkrṣṇa Deva, the king of Nandapura, a small territory of Southern orissa.

2.3. Another *Viṣṇupurāṇa*, comparatively small was published in 1940 by Śyāmasundar Pāḍhi, Śārādā Press, Berhampur. The number of

pages is only 90. It is an independent composition, based on the life of Kṛṣṇa and his sports. It also deals with the precious life of Gopikās, *karma* and *akarma*, glory of *bhakti*, the description of life and death, marriage of Hari with Lakṣmi, creation of universe etc. It is a purāṇa to have impact on general life and hence it takes Kṛṣṇa's character as his example, is named as *Viṣṇupurāṇa*.

3. Padmapurāṇa

3.1. Out of five parts of Sanskrit *Padmapurāṇa*, *Bhūmikhaṇḍa* and *Svargakhaṇḍa* only are available in Oriya which are composed by Gopīnātha, a poet of 19th cent A.D. The description found in *Bhūmikhaṇḍa* agrees with the Sanskrit original. At the outset of *Bhūmikhaṇḍa* the author says that *Padmapurāṇa* had 52000 verses. Out of which only the *Bhūmikhaṇḍa* had 12000 stanzas in Sanskrit. It has 125 chapters. From the ending version of *Bhūmikhaṇḍa* it seems the translator had translated the *Sṛṣṭikhaṇḍa* first which is not available with us. Even there is every possibility of having other khaṇḍas translated too. In *Svargakhaṇḍa*, though author Gopīnātha admits of translating it-the text does not agree with the Sanskrit version. It deals with the glory of rivers Narmadā, Revā and Yamunā; sacred places like Puṣkara and Prayāga etc. It has 49 chapters. The two khandas have been published in 1998 by Dharmagrantha store, Cuttack, where the publisher admits of republishing them from an old printed book.

3.2. The *Brahmakhaṇḍa* of *Padmapurāṇa* is composed by Madhusūdana (Caudhury Madhusūdana Mahāpātra) who though at the outset of the work admits that *Padmapurāṇa*, composed by Vyāsadeva was going to be translated in Prākṛt i.e., Oriya form, but nowhere he mentions that he had a Sanskrit version with him as a model. It deals with the result of white-washing a viṣṇu temple, lighting lamps in the temple, Harijayantī, Rādhāṣṭamī, churning of sea, worship of Dāmodara, vows observed in the month of *Kārttika* in 26 chapters. The book has been published by Dharmagrantha store, Cuttack and the poet seems to be of the 1st part of 20th century A.D.

3.3. *Kriyāyogasāra* of *Padmapurāṇa* otherwise named as *Haribhaktiratnamālā* composed by Nīlāmbara Dāsa, a poet of Nīlagiri, place of Lord Jagannātha. He completed this work in 18th Aṅka year of Divyasīmha Deva, i.e., 1706 A.D. The work in its 24 chapters deals with the creation, identification of a Vaiṣṇva, glory of Gaṅgā, Prayāga, Gayā, vow observed in Ekādaśī, trees like aśvattha, Tulasi, Dhatri etc. The book

was published in 1956 by Mohan Charan Dāsa, Manmohan press, Cuttack .

3.4 One more purāṇa is available in Oriya entitled *Padmatolā purana*, (plucking of lotus) composed by Same Nilāmbara Dāsa. Scholars confuse as the two texts same. But this *Padmatolāpurana* is based on the 10th chapter of *Bhāgavata*. It describes Kṛṣṇa's birth, Akrūra's journey to gopa, *Kālīyadalana*, Śri Kṛṣṇa's entering to Gopa, his sports with Gopīs, Nāgabala and Kālindī, killing of Kaṁsa etc., in only 6 chapters. This book was published in 1930 by Vīrapāla from Śārada Press, Cuttack.

4. Bhāgavata :

4.1. *Bhāgavata* was translated into Oriya by Jagannātha Dāsa the pride of the land of Utkala. Jagannātha Dāsa (1492-1552 AD), the son of a Purāṇa reciter composed the *Bhāgavata* to fulfil the pious desire of his mother, who found it difficult to understand Sanskrit but was fascinated towards the themes and morals of *Bhāgavata*. Jagannātha Dāsa was influenced by Śrīdhara Svāmī. His *Bhāgavata* is far from literal translation of the original. The great author has manipulated to popularise the work by collecting the stories from *Viṣṇu*, *Padma* and *Brahmavaivarta* purāṇas. The work is composed in *Navākṣarī* metre (having 9 syllables in every line). As Jagannātha Dāsa composed this for his mother, the language is very simple and lucid and full of advisory statements. Thus it influenced the folk of Orissa quite immencely. In almost every village of Orissa we find a '*Bhāgavata-ṭuṅgi*' (house), where *Bhāgavata* was daily recited. The same practice is still vogue in Orissa. The *Bhāgavata* could not be completed by Jagannātha Dāsa. The 12th *skandha* was completed by Mahādeva Dāsa a poet of latter period but was dedicated to Jagannātha Dāsa.

4.2. There was another brahmin Jānakī-Vallabha by name hailed from northern part of Orissa who being instructed by the queen Guṇḍcā, a lady of local Zamindar family, corrected the *Bhāgavata* of Jagannātha Dasa. The text was believed to be corrupted by the people in due course and corrected part was restored by Jānaki-Vallabha of 17th cent A.D.

4.3. A brahmin named Dīnabandhu Miśra, of 18th century A.D honoured with the title 'Khaḍgarāya' was a court poet of Nārāyana Maṅgarāja a king of Khaḍaparā, a feudatary estate of Orissa. From its colophon it is understood that he translated the Sanskrit *Bhāgavata* into Oriya which is a true translation, To give proper justice to the text he added to his Orissan versions, the manuscripts collecting from Bengal and

Benares. The same *Navākṣarī* metre is adopted by Dīnabandhu to find the metre's great influence on the people of Orissa. It too has twelve chapters. It is otherwise known as *Khāḍaṅgā* (derived from *Khāḍgarāya Bhāgavata*).

4.4. We get one *Guptabhāgavata*, where the subject matter of *Bhāgavata* is dealt in precise way in only 24 chapters. It was composed, rather edited by Jagannātha Dasa, perhaps to fulfil the desire of reciting whole *Bhāgavata* in lesser time.

4.5. There is another *Bhāgavata* composed by Kṛṣṇacaraṇa, the famous poet who flourished in 18th century A. D. He has translated the Sanskrit *Bhāgavata*. It is composed in 14 syllable metre, the popular metre adopted in almost all purāṇas. But only 1st Skandha, which comprises of 19 chapters is available in OSM (No. or Ms-49) which was copied in 1919-20 from a manuscript preserved in the palace of the king of Dharākote, a feudatory kingdom of Southern Orissa.

4.6. *Tikāgopalīlā* was composed by a brahmin poet of Orissa named Śyāmasāhu (the poet gives his identification as brahmin in the text) on the basis of the first part of the 10th skandha. It has only 32 chapters where the glory of Viṣṇu in all the four yugas and glory of Rāma is dealt in a separate chapter. It is a composition of later period as it deals with the description of Rādhā and her illicit relationship with Kṛṣṇa. It is not yet published. (O.S.M. No. or. Ms. 55).

4.7. Based on the story of the first part of 10th Skandha one *Bhāgavata* entitled '*Upāsana-bhāgavata*' is composed by a brahmin named Puruṣottama Dāsa, who was honoured with the title '*Pāṭahāṭicaudhury*'. It was composed in 1888 A. D. In 43 chapters it covers the story of the birth of Śuka, his glory, the city Vraja, Nanda and Yaśodā, birth of Kṛṣṇa and his sportive exploits. Towards the end the Gāndharava style of marriage of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is also described. The text is preserved in a Ms form (OSM. No. or. Ms. 277).

4.8. A text called '*Jaimini-bhāgavata*' is composed by Madana Mohana Keśari, son of the king of Dharākote. It is also based on the story of Kṛṣṇa and his exploits as dealt in 10th Skandha. It has only 37 chapters. There can be further more chapters, as the Ms preserved in O.S.M. (No. Or. P. 79) is incomplete.

4.9. Another translation of '*Śrīmad-bhāgavata*' entitled '*Jñānapracārā-bhāgavata*', translated by Parīkṣita Dāsa was published in 1917 in the form of a monthly journal. The book was published by the

author himself with the request of Śrīnivāsa Rājamaṇi, Rājdeo, the king of Mañjuṣā, a territory of Orissa. The translation is highly intellectual and based on Advaita Philosophy. It has 18 chapters.

Devībhāgavata :

It has been translated by Bālāji Raṇā, a devotee of the goddess Tārātāreṇī whose temple is situated at the bank of the river Ṛṣikulyā flowing in Southern Orissa. From the colophon it is understood that Bālāja Raṇā, son of Ananta Raṇā started the translation work at the age of 78, with the instruction of goddess Tāreṇī. The author confesses about his ignorance of Sanskrit language but because of the blessings of the goddess, he could complete the translation work. He completed the work in 1929 and expired in 1930. The book was published by his son Yogīrāja Raṇā and it has been republished by Dharmagrantha store in 1990. Towards the end, number of all the stanzas, found in each chapter is given in the colophon.

5. Śīvapurāṇa

Śīvapurāṇa got wider popularity among the scholars of Orissa. We get as many as six translations of *Śīvapurāṇa*.

5.1. The exact translation of *Śīvapurāṇa* was done by Ratnākara Gargabaṭu, the famous Purāṇa translator of Orissa. This book being divided into four Khaṇḍas is published during 1973, by Rādhāramana Pustakālaya, Cuttack. But the translation was completed in 1935 as its colophon says. The translation is good with its simple and lucid language.

5.2. One Bhāgīrathi Sāmantarāya composed the *Uttarakhaṇḍa* of *Śīvapurāṇa* following the Sanskrit version. But nowhere he mentions of translating the Sanskrit text. This purāṇa has 43 chapters and written in four palm leaf manuscripts (O. S. M. No. Or. P/183-186) covering nearly 600 folios. The composition of the purāṇa was completed in 1896 A. D. Bhāgīrathi, son of Raghunātha Sāmantarāya, a brahmin by caste, composed this with the order of Vallabha Nārāyaṇa Mahāpātra, the elder brother of Jagannātha Sātoḍā, royal minister of King Rāmachandra Deva.

5.3. Mahādeva Dāsa, the author of several other purāṇas in Oriya, composed one *Śīvapurāṇa*. Mahādeva Dāsa, as he completed the *Bhāgavata* of Jagannātha Dāsa, can be accepted to have flourished in 17th cent A. D. He at the outset of the work, admits that taking full care of the meaning of the Sanskrit text he had composed the purāṇa, but only

2nd part i. e. *Uttarakhaṇḍa* is available in manuscript library (O.S.M. No. Or. P/1320). It is a continuous purāṇa, without division into chapters. It deals with geographical status of Bhārata, geneology of Mahādeva, birth of Gaṇeśa, marriage of Gaṇeśa, Nandī, Bhṛkuṭi, glory of Gaṇā, story related to Kārtavīrya, Jamadagni and Paraśurāma, some incarnation of Viṣṇu etc., The manuscript was first restored in 1929 by Somanātha Ṣaḍaṅgī. Mahādeva was *sūdra* by caste.

5.4. Another manuscript under the caption of *Śivapurāṇa* composed by Gopinātha, a brahmin by caste is preserved in O.S.M. (No. Or. P. 1319). The manuscript is quite voluminous comprising of 193 folios but number of chapters is not given. It deals with the description of the abode of Śiva as the funeral ground, its cause, description of *prakṛti*, *dharma*, creation, why *mālatī* is the favourite flower of Śiva, the thief Bhujabala, eighty four hells, way to Yama's world, cause behind the name Nīlakaṇṭha, story of Rāma and Rāvaṇa, Jaṭāyu, Hanumān, then sixtyeight places of Mahādeva, the demoness Dārukā, (Dārukā here is presented as a demoness instead of a forest). The manuscript was scribed by Somanātha. So at some place in the colophon part the scribe has written his name instead of Gopinātha.

5.5. A brahmin poet named Rāmacandra composed another *Śivapurāṇa*. It deals with the glory of Śiva, Jyotirlinga, Tripurāsura and his death, dance of Śiva in Dakṣa's place, birth of Pārvatī, her penance and birth of Gaṇeśa in 45 chapters. It also gives importance to the Ekāmra (present Bhuvaneswar), pond Vindu. This Purāṇa has been composed in Navākṣarī (having 9 syllables in a line) metre. It is still found in palm leaf manuscript form (O.S.M. No. Or. P. 2346).

5.6. Dvārakā Dāsa, a poet of 18th century composed one *Śivapurāṇa* which rather deals with the descriptions like cosmic egg, seven dreams, different islands, position of Brahmāṇḍa, four Vedas, creation of Śīśuveḍa (from Om), creation of sun and moon, different organs found in human body, mind and science of human body in 68 chapters. He entitles the purāṇa as '*Jñānakriyākhaṇḍa*' of *Śivapurāṇa*. Though it does not deal with the glory or sports of Śiva it is described in the form of the conversation between Śiva and Pārvatī and hence it is entitled as *Śivapurāṇa*. It is preserved in manuscript form (O.S.M. No. Or. p. 1166).

5.7. A translation of *Śivapurāṇa* by Kṣetramohana Pradhāna has been published by Dharmagrantha store in five parts in recent years. To translate this he had followed a Hindi translation of the text.

6. Nāradapurāṇa

6.1 It was translated by Chintāmaṇi Tripathy and published by himself. It was printed in 1927 by V. Kar at the Utkal Sahitya Press, Cuttack. It was a rich introduction by Ārttavallabha Monanty. It has 38 chapters in all. The author Chintāmaṇi was patronised by Pūraṇachandra Bhañja, king of Mayurbhañj of Northern Orissa. Towards the end of every chapter he tells about the number of verses of Sanskrit version. As for example he says 83 verses of 1st chapter was translated in 146 stanzas in Oriya and so on.

6.2. Another work under the caption of *Nāradapurāṇa* composed by Kṣetramohana Pradhān is published by Dharma grantha store, Cuttack. It is a summerised form of Sanskrit *Nāradapurāṇa*. The author seems to be influenced by Chintāmaṇi Tripathy. In 37 chapters it describes the creation of the universe, seer Mṛkaṇḍu glory of Gaṅgā, clan of Sagara, Vāmana, Bhagīratha and Gaṅgā and different *vratas* related to Lord Viṣṇu.

6.3. An incomplete manuscript under the caption of *Bṛhannāradīya purāṇa*, composed by Vāsudeva Sāmantasimhāra is preserved in O.S.M. (No. Cy. 1675). The text deals with glory of Kṛṣṇa, Gaṅgā, plant *tulasī*, rituals observed after the death of a person, result of bad and good deeds etc in 13 chapters. The 13th chapter is not completed.

7. Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa

7.1. This purāṇa was translated by a poet named Kapileśa Nanda of 19th century A. D. It has two parts having 49 and 51 chapters respectively. The poet at the outset of the purāṇa says that, he came across with an Oriya translation of *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa*, but that translation did not agree with the Sanskrit version. So being dissatisfied with that, he made up his mind to make an exact translation. For that he took the help of a Bengali translation. But he neither mentions the name of the Oriya author nor of the Bengali author. Kapileśa Nanda, son of Raghunātha Nanda, completed the work in 1888 A. D. It is preserved in O.S.M. in palm leaf form (O.S.M. Or. P. 963-64).

7.2. Bearing the same caption one more purāṇa is available in O.S.M. (No. Or. P. 159). The manuscript found in incomplete form deals with some advice to the household persons. He very much restricts a person to commit any sin and in that context he says that even gods have not escaped after committing any sin. Brahmā, loving his own daughter, has been cursed not to be worshipped, moon transgressing the wife of preceptor gets eclipsed and so on.

7.3. Mahādeva Dāsa, author of *Śivapurāṇa* (previously discussed) also composed one *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* which has 61 chapters. It is not a translation of Sanskrit. Based on the description and subject matters of Sanskrit text it has been composed. It deals with king Suratha, his meeting with seer Mārkaṇḍeya, birth of a cow, king Jayadratha, different islands, birth of Pārvatī and her marriage, birth of Sarasvatī, Dakṣa's sacrifice, etc. Mahādeva, a *śūdra* by caste, was the son of Lakṣmaṇa Dāsa and Mukutā Devi. According to him, since Śūdras took birth from the feet of God, they are more efficient in describing the glory of the feet of God. The book was published in 1960 by Dāśarthī pustakālaya, Cuttack.

7.4. Another translation of *Saptaśatī-caṇḍī* i.e., the translation of 81st chapter of 95th ch. of *Mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇa* is available in O.S.M. It was translated by Pitāmbara Dāsa. The Oriya version too has 15 chapters and it is an exact translation of the Sanskrit version. It is still preserved in palm leaf manuscript form (O.S.M. Or. P/94).

8. Agnipurāṇa

8.1. No translation of *Agnipurāṇa* is available in Oriya, nor there is any purāṇa, based on the theme of *Agnipurāṇa*. But bearing the same caption, one purāṇa is composed by Bālukā Dāsa, a poet of Circa 19th cent. A.D. is preserved in the O.S.M. (No. Or. P. 793). In five chapters it deals with five types of fire, Some stanzas related to virtues and sins for house-holders, different incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu and glory of Hanumān, the story of Rāma and Sītā. Towards the end, 108 names of Agni is given.

8.2. Another *Agnipurāṇa* composed in recent years, has been published by Dharmagrantha store, Cuttack. The composer Kṣetramohan prādhān describes types of Agni, the creation of Brahmāṇḍa, creation of four Vedas, story related to the burning of Khāṇḍava forest, duty of a brahmin, 108 names of Agni etc., in 49 chapters. It is a purāṇa for a family holder.

9. Bhaviṣyapurāṇa

Bhaviṣyapurāṇa, being authored by a brahmin named Gaṅgādhara Pāṇi was composed on the basis of the Sanskrit text. Though the author at the outset of the purāṇa very well mentions of starting the 9th one of 18 purāṇas but it is not the exact translation of the Sanskrit version. It is the summarized form of the Sanskrit one. In 20 chapters, the author deals with Puṣkaratīrtha, birth of Vyāsa, the character of a lady, birth of

monkeys, sportive play of Kṛṣṇa with Gopīs; Rādhā; Mecca, the *tīrtha* of Muslims; glory of God in Kaliyuga etc. Towards the end the author describes the King Gaṅgādhara, ruler of Kaliṅga, his marriage with Hīrāvātī, the daughter of King Sadānanda. The book, comparatively very small (38 pages) has been published by Dharmagrantha store, Cuttack.

10. Brahmavaivartapurāṇa

10.1. *Brahmavaivartapurāṇa* was translated by a brahmin named Cakradhara in 1908-09 A. D. The poet being ordered by Goddess Sarasvatī started the translation work. To finish the purāṇa smoothly he started the composition of *Gaṇeśa Khaṇḍa* first instead of *Brahmakhaṇḍa*. The author took one year and five months for completing the purāṇa. The purāṇa in six volumes covering nearly 1970 folios is found in O.S.M. library (Or. P. 3325-30). Cakradhara, son of Rāmabrahma, brahmin by caste, hails from Mārthāpur area, in the district of Dhenkānāl of Orissa. The purāṇa is written in 14 letters metre and in very lucid language. At the end of every chapter he mentions the number of Sanskrit verses, he had translated. The composition was started in 1908 and completed in 1909 A. D.

10.2. Ratnākara Gargabaṭu, a pandit of the first part of current century, translated a number of purāṇas into Oriya poetry. He has translated the *Brahmavaivartta* (all the *Khaṇḍas*) before 1934 A. D. After translating all seven *kaṇḍas* of *Rāmāyaṇa* he translated this. Then he took up the work of *Vāyupurāṇa* which he completed in 1934 A. D. and *Brahmavaivartta* would have been completed one or two years before. The author was a priest in Liṅgarāja temple and a teacher by profession. He has translated a number of purāṇas and Māhātmyas into Oriya. It is a true translation of the Sanskrit version.

10.3. In the same (1908-9) two poets named Dāmodara Dyāna Sāmanta and Sumanta Pattanāyaka have translated the *Kṛṣṇakhaṇḍa* of *Brahmavaivartta*. The 2nd part was completed on 1-11-1908 and the 3rd on 14-8-1909. Dāmodara was a Brahmin by caste where as Sumant was Kāyastha. But they were very close to each other and were spending their time in immersing themselves in the essence of Kāvya. But at the later age being instructed by a brahmin named Lokanātha Mahāpātra, they took up the work of translating purāṇas. The poets belong to the Banpur area of Ganjam district of Southern Orissa. The mss. are available in O.S.M. (Or. P. 2675-76).

10.4. Sudarśana Nanda, a poet of the 2nd half of 19th century translated this purāṇa. It was published in 1919. The language is quite rich and ornamental. Now it has been reprinted by Dharmagrantha store, Cuttack.

10.5. Viśvanātha Nṛpa, flourished in circa 19th century A. D. had composed one *Brahmavaivarttapurāṇa*. At the end the author says that taking the essence from *Brahmavaivartta* and *Gargasārṅhitā* he had composed the work. In 15 chapters it deals with the sotry related to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. It is preserved in O.S.M. in Palm leaf form (or. P. 2483). The poet belongs to Āṭhagarh area of Southern Orissa.

10.6. Kṣetramohan Pradhāna, a purāṇa composer of recent century has translated the purāṇa into Oriya. The book is published by Dharmagrantha Store, Cuttack. The four Khaṇḍas have 39, 69, 115 and 133 chapters respectively. At the end, the author gives an elaborate account of the number of stanzas found in other purāṇas. He at the end has praised Sāralā Dāsa, *ādikavi* of Orissa

10.7. Another *Brahmavaivarttapurāṇa* was composed by Mārkaṇḍ Dāsa, a poet of Circa 19th century A.D. It has not been divided into *khaṇḍas* but into eight chapters. The cosmos, seven hells, the earth, the definition of heroines, creation of different castes, advices to the society are delineated. He bows down to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in this Purāṇa. The purāṇa is preserved in O.S.M. (or. P. 795).

10.8. Bhāgīrathi Sāṭhiyā, a poet of 1st part of 20th century translated the *Brahmakhaṇḍa* of this purāṇa. The book is rich with a preface by the author himself where he tells that he has taken up the work just to popularise the purāṇa among Oriyas. The book was published in 1933 by Lakṣminārāyaṇa Press, Cuttack. Interestingly enough the book was printed by Saikh Nazir Mahammed. It has 30 chapters.

11. Lingapurāṇa

11.1 *Lingapurāṇa* in Oriya is composed by Vaiṣṇava Caraṇa Dāsa. At the outset of the purāṇa the author admits of composing the *Lingapurāṇa* in Oriya taking Sanskrit as his model which has eleven thousand verses but it is not the exact translation of the Sanskrit text. It has been divided into three *khaṇḍas*: *Kailāśakhaṇḍa*, *Kāśīkhaṇḍa* and *Ekāmrahandā* consisting of 30, 35 and 40 chapters respectively.

11.2 Another *Lingapurāṇa* composed by Kṣetrabāsī is published by Dharmagrantha store, Cuttack. This purāṇa seems to have been

composed on the basis of the previous purāṇa of Vaiṣṇava Caraṇa Dāsa. It too has three khaṇḍas having 27, 30 and 38 chapters respectively. Since both the purāṇas describe the Sivakṣetras, the glory of Śiva etc., they give more importance to the Ekāmraṁkṣetra, Lord Lingarāja, his festivals and the like.

11.3. *Liṅgapurāṇa* composed by Balarāma Dāsa, a brahmin by caste, was published by Narayana Ch. Dasa from Manmohana Press, Cuttack in 1924. The purāṇa in 11 chapters deals with some *yantras* for *siddhi*, Pārvati's suicide in Dakṣa's sacrifice, Pārvati's rebirth because of *Sarvakāraka yantra*, killing of a rhino by Arjuna, Arjuna's defeat and death by Nāgārjuna, then Nāgārjuna's battle with Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas both, in that context the war between Hari and Hara, Arjuna's rebirth etc. The book has 51 pages only. It does not have any similarity with the Sanskrit text except the caption.

12. Varāhapurāṇa :

12.1. The story delineated in Oriya version of *Varāhapurāṇa* is completely different from the Sanskrit one. Author Kāmapāla, brahmin by caste, describes in 20 chapters the topics like Diti and her desire for sons, penance of Nārāyaṇa, story of Urvasī, marriage of Rati and Kandarpa, birth of Vaśiṣṭha burning of Kāma and his rebirth, Hiraṇya and Hiraṇyākṣa, and their war with Indra and Nārāyaṇa. The book is published by Dharmagrantha Store, Cuttack.

13. Skandapurāṇa:

13.1. *Viṣṇukhaṇḍa* of *Skandapurāṇa* was translated by Ratākara Gargaḍa and it has been published by Rādhāramaṇa Pustakālaya, Cuttack. The author might have composed this after 1934 A.D.

13.2. The *Utkalakhaṇḍa* of *Skandapurāṇa* was translated by Harihara Miśra giving the history of Jagannātha temple, the car festival of Lord Jagannātha, and other festivals observed in the temple of Lord Jagannātha in 58 chapters. The poet belongs to the Gop area of Puri District of Orissa. The poet seems to have flourished in the first half of the current century.

13.3. A summarized form of *Skandapurāṇa* was composed by Kapileśvara Vidyābhūṣṇa, a person of 19th cent A.D. In only 27 chapters the poet describes five syllables found in the *mantra* meant for Śiva, worship of Śiva, glory of Monday (favourite day of Śiva), glory of *bhasma* etc.

13.4 Another *Skandapurāṇa* composed by some Balarāma Dāsa is found in O.S.M. (Or.P. 1003). This Balarāma Dāsa might be different from the famous Balarāma Dāsa composer of *Jagamohana Rāmāyaṇa*, but the same one who composed *Liṅgapurāṇa*. The lone manuscript available in O.S.M. is copied in 1941 A.D. It might be a composition of later period. The author (in 15 chapters,) deals with glory of Sun-god, vow related to Sūryanārāyaṇa, Cāndrāyaṇa vows, ten incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu, stotras related to Navagrahas etc.

14. Vāmanapurāṇa

Three purāṇas are available in Oriya bearing this name, but no purāṇa seems to be the translation of Sanskrit version.

14.1 *Vāmanapurāṇa* by Gopīnāth, though not an exact translation of Sanskrit text but is very near to the subject. Keeping Sanskrit version as his model he has composed it. The book is published by Dharmagrantha store. The period of the author can be the 1st half of the current century.

14.2 *Vāmanapurāṇa* by Vaiṣṇava caraṇa Dāsa completely agrees with the topic dealt in Sanskrit text, but we cannot call it as the translation of Sanskrit version Towards the end of the purāṇa there is some change in description. The book was published by Balarāma Dāsa from Nityānada Pustakālaya in 1940.

14.3 Balarāma Dāsa, the author of *Skandapurāṇa* and *Liṅga purāṇa* (previously discussed) had composed one *Vāmanapurāṇa*. The scribe Jayakṛṣṇa had written this *Vāmanapurāṇa*. At the outset he prays the Goddess Sārādā of Jhaṅkaḍa. The poet was brahmin by caste. Towards the end he introduces all the eighteen purāṇas and hints at the subject matter very precisely. This purāṇa has 17 chapters and it is found in PL form in O.S.M. (Or. P. 1105)

15. Kūrmapurāṇa

15.1 *Kūrmapurāṇa* found in Oriya though agrees with the topic dealt in Sanskrit text, it cannot be taken as the translated one. It has three parts. Though in the preface of the book it is written that it has been translated by Gopīnātha Karaśarman from the Sanskrit but the topic does not fully agree with Sanskrit version now available in print. He might have had another version with him. The first part deals with the topics like Indradyumna, Varāha incarnation of Viṣṇu, Surya scion, stories related to Vasumāna, Jayadhvaja, Paraśurāma, Surasena, the creation of Liṅga, story of Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa, Mahiṣāsura and his killing by Devī etc. The second part introduces the Kūrma incarnation., churning of the ocean and all the things coming out of sea.

In the Third Part it introduces Sāvitrī, Raṅga, Yudhiṣṭhira, Pradyumna, war between Yādavas with Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas, Śīva with Bhīṣma, Bhīma and Balarāma, Karṇa with Pradyumna, Abhimanyu with Śāmba, Droṇa with Indra, Arjuna with Kṛṣṇa and others etc.

Towards the end, the poet mentions the 18 main purāṇas and 18 Upapurāṇas.

The book was published by Aruṇodaya Press, Cuttack.

16. Matsyapurāṇa

16.1 A short *Matsyapurāṇa* is available in Oriya. It is composed by Kāmapala and was published by Dharmagrantha Store, Cuttack. It has only 11 chapters. It deals with the story of Iddradyumna, Satyavrata, creation of Brahmā, Śamkhāsura and his hiding of Vedas, Matsya incarnation of Viṣṇu, creation of the universe etc. It is in no way related to the Sanskrit *Matsyapurāṇa*. The book has 48 pages only.

17. Garuḍapurāṇa

Four *Garuḍapurāṇas* are found in Oriya which more or less deal with the *rituals* observed after the death of a person. These texts confine to the subject matter of the *uttarkhaṇḍa* of the Sanskrit text.

17.1 Author Ghanaśyāma Pattanāyaka deals with (in 16 chapters) types sorrows, way to Yamālaya, symbols of sin, observances after death of Babruvāhana, Śālagrāma stone, ten incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu, suicide of Satī, result after death of good people, type of hells. It has thus confined to the material of the *uttarakāṇḍa* of the Sanskrit text.

At the end the author says the Sanskrit text of *Garuḍa purāṇa* has 1287 verses. In this Oriya version there are around 1000 stanzas. The book is still in manuscript form (Or. P. 252)

17.2 Another printed versions is available, which agrees with previous one. Ārtatrāṇa, the author deals with these topics in 19 chapters. It has been published by Dharmagrantha Store, Cuttack.

17.3 Viśvanātha Mahāpātra has also composed this in 19 chapters. But he at the outset of the work says that the Sanskrit text has 16 chapters in total. This also deals with mainly the rituals after the death of a person. This was published by Balarāma Dāsa in 1950.

17.4 Dāśarathi Dāsa has composed another *Garuḍapurāṇa* in 18 chapters. The subject matter is more or less same as the previous ones. At the end author Dāśarathi mentions about that, the *garuḍapurāṇa* had three hundred verses in total, out of which one hundred verses preach about the Brahman. This is published by Dāśarathi Pustakālaya in 1934. The poet can be of the same period.

18. Brahmanḍapurāṇa

18.1 One *Brahmanḍapurāṇa* composed by Yogesvarapāṇi, completed in 14 chapters is preserved in O.S.M. (Or. P. 1443). This purāṇa deals with the emancipation of Virūpākṣa by hearing Brahmanḍa purāṇa, Sumanta, the forest Ekāmra, some sacred places of Orissa. Though the author at the outset of the work mentions about translating the sanskrit text it is not so. It has no relation with the Sanskrit text.

18.2 Another *Brahmanḍapurāṇa* composed by Viṣṇu Dāsa is also preserved in pl form in O.S.M. (Or. P. 2001). It deals with *nīti-aniti*, virtue and sin. It does not have a systematic description. It is composed on the basis of some folk stories (Kimvadanti). The manuscript has 188 folios. The manuscript is copied/written in 1849 A.D. The text seems to be of that period. i.e., beginning of 19th cent A.D.

18.3 Another *Brahmanḍapurāṇa* composed in recent times, by Kṣetramohan has been published by Dharmagrantha store, Cuttack. The book in 21 chapters deals with the creation, seven heavens, Śiva and Ādimātā's marriage, birth of Gaṇesa, churning of the ocean, Viṣṇu in a female disguise, the cause behind the mouse as the vehicle of Vināyaka and its elephant head, the power of a *Tulasī* plant, some good deeds etc.

From the above puranic studies, it appears that no *Brahmanḍapurāṇa* is a translation of the Sanskrit one.

It may be noted that there are more than two hundred purāṇas in Oriya, but an attempt is made here first to describe the major 18 purāṇas. It will not be out of place here to mention, that most of the purāṇas in Oriya resemble with Sanskrit purāṇas only in names but not in contents.

THE ŚĪSUNĀGAS OF MAGADHA

BY

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[पुराणेषु मगधसाम्राज्ये प्रद्योतवंशीयानां शासनानन्तरं शिशुनागवंशीयानां राज्ञां शासनस्य वर्णनं प्राप्यते । एतद्वंशीयानां राज्ञां शासनकालस्वभावादिविषये च ऐतिह्यविदां मतवैभिन्न्यं प्राप्यते । एतद्वंशीयानां पुराणेषु तिब्बतपरम्परायां, श्रीलंकापरम्परायां चोपलभ्यते समुल्लेखः । अत्र विदुषा लेखकेन सप्रमाणं प्रतिपादितं यत् पौराणिकपरम्परा-प्राप्त वर्णनमेव समीचीनम् ।]

The Pradyotas of Magadha were followed by the Śīsūnāga dynasty which ruled from 999 B. C. to 375 B.C. The Buddhist works tend to suggest that ŚĪSUNĀGA, the founder of the dynasty rebelled against the then ruler of Magadha and deposed him. The Purāṇas, however, do not indicate any confrontation or bloodshed in the transition. All we find there is the statement that Śīsūnāga will become a king by destroying the fame of the Pradyotas¹. It means that Śīsūnāga became a king as the last ruler of the preceding dynasty, Nandi-Vardhana died without leaving a heir and the new-comer surpassed all the kings of the preceding dynasty in popularity. It appears he was a ruler of Vārāṇasī under the preceding dynasty which he left under the care of his son when he came to Magadha and made Girivraja his capital.² The present article seeks to discuss some controversial points about the dynasty he founded.

COMPONENTS :

The Purāṇas name ten kings only of the Śīsūnāga dynasty. Pargiter does not dispute the number. DR. R.M. Smith follows suit with the explanation that out of the three names found in the Buddhist works, Munḍa and Aniruddha are but the aliases of Nandivardhan while Nāgadasaka is the other name of MAHĀNANDI³. DR. D.S. Trivedi

1. F. E. PARGITER, THE PURANA TEXT OF THE DYNASTIES OF THE KALI AGE, LONDON, 1913 (D.K.A.), P. 21
2. Do, P. 21
3. R.M. SMITH, DATE AND DYNASTIES IN EARLIEST INDIA, DELHI, 1973 (D.D.E.I.), PP. 349-355

accommodates Muṇḍa and Aniruddha by raising the number of the kings to twelve and proposing a revised reading of the Purāṇa text. But it seems better to stick to the extant text⁴, of the Purāṇas despite the evidence of the Buddhist chronicles.

The Purāṇas mention two successors of AJĀTAŚATRU, namely, DARŚAKA and UDAYI only. The Buddhist tradition names four. The names in the Ceylon tradition are : UDĀYIBHADDA, MUṆḌA, ANIRUDDHA and NAGADASAKA and those in the Tibetan tradition are SUBĀHU, SUDHANU, MAHENDRA and CHAMASA. Modern historians are mistaken in holding that the Buddhist works written in Ceylon and Tibet knew better. Removed from the scene in respect of both time and place, they are obviously less reliable. The Ceylon tradition betrays its ignorance and confusion by making the grandson of AJĀTAŚATRU his successor. We cannot reconcile the Buddhist tradition by identifying the four rulers with the last rulers of the dynasty either, because it becomes difficult to identify KĀLĀŚOKA and his ten sons.

What seems probable is that there were at least two usurpers between UDAYI and NANDIVARDHAN and the chroniclers of Magadha ignored them as they were concerned with lawful sovereigns only. It appears a son of UDAYI rebelled during his last days and declared himself a king. Later the son of the rebel too behaved similarly. They served as tools of the enemies of Magadha and occupied part of the kingdom and presented rest of it to the enemies. The Buddhists had a different point of view besides being confused and so they had no problem in recognising the usurpers.

ORDER OF THE COMPONENTS :

Pargiter adheres to the order given in the Purāṇas and so does DR. Triveda. But as Triveda raises the number to 12, he places ANIRUDDHA and MUNḌA between UDAYI and NANDIVARDHANA. He contends that Aniruddha is the same as MAHENDRA mentioned by TĀRĀNĀTH and the figure for UDAYI'S reign includes the period of their reign. He fails to, or does not care to, explain the reason. R.M. S,ith does not place Śīsunāga at the beginning of the dynasty. Due to misplacement of the leaves of the manuscripts the order in the Purāṇas has got changed and the real order according to him should be as follows :—

1. KṢĀTRAUJĀ
2. BIMBISĀRA
3. AJĀTAŚATRU
4. DARŚAKA
5. UDAYI
6. NANDIVARDHAN
7. MAHĀNANDI
8. ŚĪSUNĀGA
9. KĀKAVARṆĪ
10. KṢEMADHARMĀ

4. देवसहाय त्रिवेद, प्राङ् मौर्य विहार, पटना, १९५४, पृ. १००

He contends that हत्वा तेषां यशः कृत्स्नम् was originally related to the BĀRHADRATHAS. The Jaina literature refers to the siege of UJJAYINI which resulted in the death of the king and occupation of UJJAYINI by KĀKAVARNĪ. The king who died during the siege is called AJAKA. That makes no sense to Smith who asks : what was the use of the siege again when it was already occupied by his father ?⁵.

Similar are the views of Hemchandra Raychowdhury and Radha Kumud Mukherjee. Śīśunāga, according to them followed Bimbisāra and his dynasty, which is called Haryaṅka dynasty by them. The Purāṇas are supposed to be mistaken by them on two grounds. First, Śīśunāga is said to have installed himself in GIRIVARAJA after destroying the PRADYOTAS of AVANTI and second, he is stated to have made his son a governor of VĀRĀṆASI. They argue that the hostility between the kingdoms of Magadha and Avanti was unknown and originated during the days of AJĀTAŚATRU and therefore Śīśunāga could not have preceded AJĀTAŚATRU. VĀRĀṆASI was conquered and added to the kingdom of Magadha by AJĀTAŚATRU and therefore Śīśunāga must be placed later than AJĀTAŚATRU. ŚĪSUNĀGA'S association with RĀJAGRĀHA, the earlier capital of Magadha does not deter these historians. They argue that Śīśunāga placed his son at VĀRĀṆASI to defend the Western borders of his kingdom and shifted their base to RAJAGRĀHA to defend that part of Magadha from the threat of attack from Avanti. They contend that the rulers of Magadha had their headquarters alternatively at RAJAGRĀHA and PĀTALIPUTRA to defend themselves from AVANTI and the LICCHAVIS.⁶

Such arguments are illogical and untenable as they proceed from a wrong assumption. The five Pradyotas were not the rulers of AVANTI and destroying their fame does not mean killing them and seizing their kingdom. The Purāṇas do not say that ŚĪSUNĀGA or his son has anything to do with PRADYOTA or his successors in Avanti. KĀKAVARNĪ'S siege of Ujjayinī does not seem senseless if we give up the bias that his father had seized power in Avanti. The Purāṇas had sense enough, which unfortunately our modernist historians have lost, to realize that nobody needed to occupy Avanti to instal himself in GIRIVARAJA. As for VĀRĀṆASI ŚĪSUNĀGA was formerly the ruler of it during the reign of the Pradyotas in Magadha but when he got the throne of Magadha, he

5. R.M. SMITH, D.D.E.I., 349 - 350

6. राधाकुमुद मुकर्जी, हिन्दू सभ्यता, दिल्ली, १९८३, पृ. २७६

left the governorship of VĀRĀṄASI for his son. More than a century passed since then to the days of KṢATRAUJĀ. Is it quite inconceivable that some king of the neighbouring KOSALA was able to occupy it during the time ? There is hardly any geographical or strategic justification for the assumption that the kings of Magadha had to shift their headquarters from PĀṬALIPUTRA to RAJGRHA as a defensive measure against AVANTI and the modernists have failed to spell out their reasons clearly.

There is another problem with the contention of the modernists like R.M. Smith. Seven rulers from Kṣatraujā to Mahānandi are branded as the kings of the HARYAṆKA dynasty. That leaves only three as the rulers of the ŚĪSUNĀGA DYNASTY, namely, Śīsunāga, KĀkavarṇa and KṢEMADHARMĀ. Now the style of the Purāṇas mark the end with the word "iti", the name of the dynasty, the number of its rulers and the total reign of the dynasty. Some would expect two statements like इत्येते सप्त हर्यङ्काः (thus ends the HARYANKA dynasty of seven rulers) and इत्येते त्रयः शिशुनागाः (thus ends the ŚĪSUNĀGA dynasty of three rulers) and two separate figures of total reign for the two dynasties even if the leaves of the manuscript were misplaced. That is not the case. We find one figure for the total reign, only, namely, 362 and a single statement about the ten kings calling all of them the ŚĪSUNĀGAS ----- इत्येते भवितारो वै शैशुनागनृपा दश.⁷ Obviously, we are discussing one dynasty only and its very name shows us clearly that it began with ŚĪSUNĀGA.

DURATION :

There are two variants about the duration. Most of the Purāṇas read शतानि त्रीणि वर्षाणि षष्टिवर्षाधिकानि तु but Vāyu reads द्विषष्ट्यभ्यधिकानि तु and Viṣṇu agrees with it.⁸ The first reading gives the duration as 360, while the second gives 362 years. Pargiter prefers the first one and takes it to mean 163 years only as 360 is a big figure and impossible⁹ in his opinion. His arguments are obviously untenable as his own edition of the text leads to a total of not less than 346 years if we add the figures of individual reign. R. M. Smith comes to his rescue with the suggestion that the figures do not stand for the reign of the kings, they are the figures for their life.¹⁰ He applies his suggestion not only to this dynasty but to all the dynasties of Magadha.

7. PARGITER, D.K.A., P. 22

8. Do, P. P. 22

9. Do, P. 20

10. SMITH, D.D.E.I., P. 51

Unfortunately, we cannot follow such brave persons. It is not entirely impossible to hold that some kings ruled for 64 or 58 years. But even if we concede that they are life figures, we cannot apply that to the cases like that of 28, 25, 23 or even 5. If we agree with R.M. Smith that some of the kings of the BĀRHADRATHA DYNASTY lived not more than 28, 25, 23 years, their sons and successors could not be more than 10. Why should then we deem it incredible that their reign lasted 40 to 50 years as stated in the Purāṇas? Most remarkable is the case of DHARMANETRA. The Purāṇa text declares : पञ्च वर्षाणि पूर्णानि धर्मनेत्रो भविष्यति¹¹. If we hold that he died at the age of 5, he could not have married and begotten a son. That shows the absurdity of Smith's contention. Similarly absurd is the view that the Purāṇas would declare राज्यमकारयत् (he will rule for so many years) and give life figures. Nor can we admit that the Purāṇas were inconsistent enough to give life figures in some cases and reign figures in other. Moreover, Smith is compelled to admit that in the case of the Pradyota dynasty, the figures given are not life figures, but reign figures.

So, we stick to the figure 362 for the duration of the ŚĪSUNĀGA Dynasty. DR. Triveda argues that even the average of 20 years conceded by Pargiter yields 200 for 10 rulers which is more than 163 accepted by him, but if the average is raised to 30 years it yields 360 years for 12 rulers and the figure 362 is not therefore too much.¹² But the argument about the average is after all conjectural. Fortunately, we have got two factors that leave little room for controversy. First, the second great conference of the Buddhists took place during the reign of KĀLĀŚOKA (rightly identified with NANDIVARDHANA by DR. Triveda) and 110 years since the death of Buddha had passed by that time.¹³ Second, the interval between the birth of PARIKṢITA and the coronation of MAHĀPADMA was not less than 1500 years according to the Purāṇas. If the duration of the Śīsunaṅga dynasty is reduced to 163 years, the interval will not be more than 1301 years, which is not supported by any of the extant texts.¹⁴

Thus having ascertained the duration, we proceed to examine figures of individual reign also which are no less disputed. For sake of convenience, given below are the names of the kings and column A gives

11. PARGITER, D.K.A., P. 16

12. त्रिवेद, प्राङ्मौर्य बिहार, पृ. १०१-१०२

13. लामा तारानाथ, भारत में बौद्ध धर्म का इतिहास, पटना, १९७१, पृ. १०१

14. PARGITER, D.K.A., P. 58

the figures of reign assigned to them by Pargiter and colum B the figures acceptable to me.

NAMES	A	B
1. ŚĪSUNĀGA ----	40	40
2. KĀKAVARṆA ----	36	20
3. KṢEMADHARMĀ ----	36	36
4. KṢATRAUJĀ ----	40	40
5. VIMBISĀRA ----	28	38
6. AJĀTAŚATRU ----	25	25
7. DARŚAKA ----	25	35
8. UDAYĪ ----	33	33
9. NANDIVARDHANA ----	40	40
10. MAHĀNANDI ----	43	43

Now, I have to justify my differences with Pargiter. All discussions about the Purāṇa chronology become futile when the scholars tend to stand at the extremes. A section of them following the Western orientalist chooses the minimum possible numbers, while the other has a fascination for the maximum ones. The rational approach takes into consideration the two factors given above and reckons with other materials available to us before accepting or rejecting any figures.

The figures about the reign of the first, eighth and tenth kings of the dynasty are beyond dispute so far as the Purāṇa texts are concerned. There is a dispute about the second and third kings. The dispute is, however, more apparent than real as the total of the two reign figures is invariably the same in the Purāṇas, namely, 56. The Mastya Purāṇa assigns 20 years to KĀKAVARṆA and 36 to his son, KṢEMADHARMĀ, while the VĀYU and BRAHMĀṆDA reverse the figures. That shows they knew that the two reigned for 56 years in all but they were confused about the individual reign. Under the circumstances, Pargiter was mistaken in assigning 36 years to both. We have the testimony of Bāṇa to the effect that an assassin's knife cut short the life of KĀKAVARṆA, the son of ŚĪSUNĀGA.¹⁵ So the shorter figure must be given to him. The Matsya Purāṇa gives 24 years only to Kṣatraujā but there is no evidence to substantiate it. So we have to explain it simply as a mistake in hearing and copying. The words, "chaturviṃsat" and "Chatvāriṃsat" are so similar that such mistakes are not entirely impossible. The reign of VIMBISĀRA cannot be as short as 28 years when the Buddhist Pali literature gives him

15. BĀṆA, HARŚACHARITAM, VI (JIVĀNANDA VIDYĀSĀGARA END. CALCUTTA).

a life of 67 years and a reign of 52 years. Despite the commissions and omissions in the Pali works of Ceylon, we cannot disregard the unanimous evidence of the Buddhist tradition that Buddha preached for 45 years after attaining the enlightenment and only the last seven years of them were spent during the reign of AJĀTAŚĀTRU. That leaves 38 years for his missionary activities under VIMBISĀRA. So the reign of VIMBISĀRA cannot be less than 38 years and that is the figure we find in the BRAHMĀNḌA PURĀṆA. The MAHĀVAMSA confuses his initial role as a Yuvarāja for 14 years and makes him coronated at the age of 15. The Purāṇas are the witnesses closer in time and place to the events and their evidence must prevail in this respect.

Regarding AJĀTAŚĀTRU, some copies of the Matsya assign 27 or 28 years to his reign and the figure generally given is 25. We have epigraphical evidence to accept it as the number closest to the truth. K.P. JAYASWAL read 24 years 8 months and 10 days inscribed on the statue of AJĀTAŚĀTRU.¹⁶ That becomes 25 in round figures. Trivedi assumes that the years were calculated from the death of Buddha and assigns 32 years to AJĀTAŚĀTRU. As the assumption is not wellfounded, we find it untenable.¹⁷ Equally untenable is his assumption that UDAYI's 33 years include the 9 years of ANIRUDDHA and 8 years of MUṆḌA.¹⁸ That leaves NANDIVARDHANA alone who is supposed to have reigned for 42 years in the VĀYUPURĀṆA. Besides disagreement with the readings in other Purāṇas, its evidence is not admissible also because its reading violates the metre with an extra syllable "dvā", which is missing in some of the copies of the VĀYU as well.¹⁹

There is another problem about the figures. While the entire duration of the dynasty is 362 years, the total of individual reigns falls short of it. The figures accepted by Pargiter and given above in column A yield a total of 346 years, 16 years less than the stated duration. Figures accepted by me and given above in column B add to 350 which is 12 years less than the duration. Quite related to this is the problem about the date of the second Buddhist conference which took place in the tenth year of KĀLĀŚOKA (i.e. NANDIVARDHANA). An interval of 110 years is stated to have passed since the death of Buddha to the time of that conference. In other words, the coronation of Nandivardhana after a century since Buddha's death has to be admitted. Now as Buddha died in

16. K.P. JAYASWAL, THE STATUE OF AJATASATRU, JBORS, VOL. V, P. 173

17. त्रिवेद, प्राङ्मौर्य विहार, पृ. ११२

18. Do, p. 112

19. PARGITER, D.K.A., P. 22, Footnote 35

the eighth year of Ajatasatru's reign, we can count 18 years only of his reign. Adding 35 and 33 years of his son's and grandson's reign, we get 86 years only. But as AJĀTAŚATRU did not succeed his father in the normal course, there might have been some delay in his coronation which explains the figures 27 or 28 assigned to him in some of the copies of the Matsya. The Purāṇas generally discard the time that passes between the assumption of power and the coronation while stating the individual reign but include it in recording the duration of a dynasty. By adding these extra years to the total of 86, we arrive at 88 or 89 which is 11 or 12 years less than the expected figure of 100.

We witness the same phenomenon in case of the Ceylonese and Tibetan traditions too as evident from the following table :

CEYLONESE	TIBETAN
1. AJĀTAŚATRU ——— 18 years	1. AJĀTAŚATRU ——— 18 years
2. UDAYIBHADDA — 16 years	2. SUBĀHU ——— 17 years
3. ANIRUDDHA	3. SUDHANU ——— 23 years
& ——— 8 Years	
MUṆḌA	
4. NĀGADASAKA ——— 28 YEARS	4. MAHENDRA ——— 9 years
5. SUSUNĀGA ——— 18 YEARS	5. CHAMASA ——— 22 years
—————	—————
88 years	89 years

This discrepancy can be satisfactorily removed with the assumption that Magadha suffered anarchy, civil war, aggression, disintegration and even subjection during the period of 11 to 12 years that passed between the demise of UDAYI and the coronation of Nandivardhana. Nandivardhana is referred to variously as AŚOKA, KĀMĀŚOKA, KĀLĀŚOKA, CAṆḌĀŚOKA and DHARMĀŚOKA, by the Tibetans. He is alleged to be the seventh son of the king of CHAMPĀRANYA called NEMITA who belonged to the solar race. He was ill-treated by his elder brothers. So when his father was pleased with him on suppressing the rebellion of Nepalese and Khasia people, he asked for and got the territory of PĀṬALIPUTRA. Evidently, Magadha had become weak enough after the death of UDAYI to lose even its capital.²⁰

This is what the Tibetan tradition says in this respect : "Then, CHAMASA, the king of MAGADHA died. He had twelve sons, Some (of them) were placed on the throne, but proved unworthy. Then a minister called GAMBHIRAKULA, carried on for a few years. Then began hostilities between him and the king NEMITA and they fought for a long

20. तारनाथ, भारत में बौद्धधर्म का इतिहास, पृ. १८

time on the bank of the GANGĀ. Six elder sons of the king took part in the war. Meanwhile, NEMITA PASSED AWAY. His death was kept secret and two ministers managed the affairs themselves. People of the city came to know it after a week. (The ministers) summoned AŚOKA and placed him on the throne. the very day the six sons of NEMITA vanquished the people of MAGADHA and captured six cities, they learned about the enthronement of AŚOKA and proceeded with 500 ministers each to the north of the GANGĀ and each of them established himself in six cities like RAJAGRĤHA, ANGA etc Then AŚOKA fought with his brothers for several years. At last, he got his six brothers killed with 500 ministers.:²¹

The Tibetan tradition is partially supported by the Jain tradition which asserts that anarchy had prevailed following the death of UDAYI and the priests and ministers had placed MAHĀPADMA on throne to ensure order. The Jainas are mistaken in stating that the anarchy that followed the death of UDAYI was ended by the coronation of MAHĀPADMA. They should have mentioned Nandivardhana instead of MAHĀPADMA.

The only objection against the Tibetan tradition is that it calls AŚOKA (NANDIVARDHANA) the son of NEMITA, the king of CHAMPĀRĀ-NYA. Obviously, the tradition is confused in this respect and the confusion has resulted from the coincidence that both CHAMASA and NEMITA and six elder, adult sons, Had he belonged to a different dynasty the ministers and priests of Magadha could not have welcomed him, nor the Purāṇas would have placed him in the ŚÍSUNĀGA dynasty.

MURDERS & PARRICIDES :

The Ceylonese tradition says that all the kings of the dynasty from AJĀTAŚATRU to NĀGADASAKA were parricides and people placed ŚÍSUNĀGA on the throne to get rid of them. there is nothing of the kind in the Jaina tradition. Generally, that is explained away as a softness for the kings who were patrons of Jainism. But we cannot apply that explanation to the case of the Tibetan tradition. Nobody is called a parricide there too.

R. M. Smith offers a strange explanation of the parricide for generations. He mentions the custom found in certain countries that declared a king unworthy when he lost potency due to old age or some other reason. Such a king was killed according to the custom. R. M.

Smith suggests that such a custom prevailed in Magadha too with the result that the murders began with VIMBISĀRA and continued until MAHĀPADMA.²²

As a matter of fact, such a custom was unknown to India and we cannot accept Smith's explanation. The Buddhist and Jain traditions differ only in degree so far as the misconduct of AJĀTAŚATRU is concerned. They do not differ in holding that he ill-treated and deposed his father and quickened his death. Nothing of the kind is known about DARŚAKA but minor differences are not unlikely. Exaggeration might have turned it into a murder. As for UDAYI, the Jain tradition asserts that he was governing CHAMPĀ as advised by his father when his father died and the death caused a rude shock to him. UDAYI, called UDĀYI BHADDA by the Jains, had a sudden death according to the ĀVAŚYAKA SUTRA. He had made a CHAITYAGRHA in the heart of his capital and fasted on the eighth and fourteenth day of the lunar month. A Jain teacher came to deliver sermon to the king on such an occasion one day. He had a new disciple with him who proved an assassin. The king was stabbed to death by the disciple. This murder is generally believed to be the culmination of a conspiracy hatched by the king of Avanti.²³ But it seems more reasonable to hold that the conspiracy involved the king of CHAMPĀ, who benefitted from the anarchy that followed the death of UDAYI.

Now if one of the sons of UDAYI had rebelled during the last days of his life or there were any disagreements between them, fertile brains must have suspected that son of Parricide. It is quite possible that the latter too died after a few years and his son was suspected in the same way. The rumours based on such suspicions have found their expression in the Ceylonese chronicles. The authors of those chronicles were not historians as such, but Buddhist monks. Preachers of every creed tend to exaggerate in order to create an impression which makes them rather indifferent to truth. The Ceylonese chronicles move to the extent of claiming AŚOKA killed his 99 brothers which is obviously a distortion of the Purāṇa tale about the murder of 99 Vṛtras by Indra. Some of the kings of the dynasty were rebellious and insubordinate to their fathers. That is why the dynasty might have been branded as "pitṛghāti". As the readers of the Mahābhārata know, misbehaviour and insubordination to the elders was counted as heinous as murder. The inability of the Ceylonese to

22. SMITH, D.D.E.I., P. 354

23. मुकजी, हिन्दू सभ्यता, पृ. २७६

comprehend the subtleties of the Sanskrit idiom might have led them to accuse the later kings of the dynasty of Parricides.

THE END :

MAHĀNANDI was last ruler of the dynasty according to the Purāṇas. he was followed by MAHĀPADMA who founded a new dynasty. There is nothing to indicate that MAHĀPADMA had to kill a ruler of the ŚĪSUNĀGA dynasty to gain power. The Jaina tradition goes to the extent of declaring that the throne was lying vacant and he was placed on it by the ministers and priests. Even the Ceylonse tradition does not accuse MAHĀPADMA of conspiracy and murder. There is no reason to believe that all of them were partisans of MAHĀPADMA and wanted to hide his misdeeds if any.

That is not, however, deemed enough by our historians. They have given currency to the tale circulated by Roy Chaudhuri, Mukherjee etc. The tale identifies KĀKAVARṆA of the Purāṇas with KĀLĀŚOKA and KĀKAVARṆIN (of AŚOKĀVADĀNA) and contends that MAHĀPADMA founded his dynasty after killing him and his sons. R.M. Smith contends that MAHĀPADMA killed KĀKAVARNIN first and then his minor sons. Then he married the widow of KĀKAVARNIN . For reasons best known to Smith, however, KṢEMADHARMĀ, the son of KĀKAVARṆA was permitted to live up to the age 20 or survive his father for 20 years.²⁴

Such tales are invented to make the last king of the Nanda dynasty and the first one of the Mauryas contemporaries of Alexander and Seleucus. As I have shown the futility of such attempts in a series of articles, it is not necessary to discuss it here. The only reference to the murder of KĀKAVARṆA occurs in the HARṢACHARITAM of BĀṆA where it is stated that somebody cut his throat with a knife: काकवर्णः शैशुनागिरुच नगरुपकण्ठे निचकृते निस्त्रिंशेन कण्ठे Bāṇa who is outspoken in commenting on the murders committed by the founders of the Śunga and Kāṇva dynasties had no reason to hide the crime committed by Mahāpadma (if any). So we have to conclude that the murder took place long ago and it had nothing to do with the end of the dynasty.

Triveda rightly places KĀKAVARṆA as the second king of the dynasty but errs in holding that the YAVANAS subdued by him in a plane

24. SMITH, D.D.E.I., P. 354

to NAGARA (i.e. JALALABAD in Afghanistan) and killed him there.²⁵ He refers to the HARṢACHARITAM and its commentary by Śankarā. I have not seen the commentary but the original text edited by JIVĪĀNANDA VIDYĀ SĀGARA and published from Calcutta links the events with some other king called CANDĪPATI: आश्चर्यकुतूहली च चण्डीपतिः दण्डोपनतयवननिर्मितेन नभस्तलयायिना यन्त्रयानेनानीयत क्वापि (CANDĪPATI, interested in wonderful objects was taken to some unknown destination by plane made by the Yavanas subdued by him).

25. त्रिवेद, प्राज्ञमीर्य विहार, पृ. 90२

स्कन्दपुराणे वर्णितं सोमनाथस्य प्रभासपत्तनस्य च खागोलिकं भौगोलिकञ्च माहात्म्यम्*

वसन्तकुमारभट्टः

[In the Skanda Purāṇa the description and praise of Tīrthas Somañātha and Prabhāsapattana is available in details. Here the learned authar has tried to explain that these purānic descriptions have astronomical and geographical importance.]

पुराणेषु वर्ण्यमानानां सर्गादिविषयाणां वैविध्यं पञ्चविधं वर्तत इति परम्परया मन्यते, तथापि तत्रान्येषामपि विषयाणां प्रवेशो निर्बाध एव । भारतवर्षे यानि व्रतोपासनादीनि तीर्थस्थानानि वा विद्यन्ते तेषामपि माहात्म्यवर्णनं पुराणेषु प्राशस्त्यं भजते । अत एव वैयासिकीं प्रतिभामनुसरद्भिरनेकैः पौराणिकैस्तीर्थस्थानवर्णनान्युपनिबद्धानि । पुराणग्रन्थेषु तादृशी वर्णनशैली बहुशो दृश्यते यत् कस्यचिद् देवस्य देव्या सह संवादः प्रथमं प्रस्तूयते । तदेव मत्स्यपुराणे स्कन्दपुराणे वा शिवपार्वत्योर्मध्ये प्रश्नोत्तररूपं शङ्कासमाधानपरकं वा संभाषणमेव दरीदृश्यते । किन्तु तत्र सूत्रमणिन्यायेन यत्तीर्थादिवर्णनं संग्रथितं वर्तते तदस्माकं कृतेऽतीव ध्यानास्पदम् । अतीते काले भारतीयैरार्षेण चक्षुषा ब्रह्माण्डभाण्डोदरे विलसद् रहस्यजातं साक्षात्कृतमासीत् तत्सर्वं तीर्थमाहात्म्यमिषेण ग्रन्थारूढं वर्तते । तीर्थस्य यत्तीर्थत्वं (तीर्थतेऽनेनेति व्युत्पत्त्या यत्स्फुटीभवति) तत्तीर्थत्वं तदैवात्मसात् क्रियते यदा तादृशे तीर्थमाहात्म्ये गुम्फितं खागोलिकं वा भौगोलिकं वा यत् किमपि रहस्यजातमस्माभिर्ज्ञायेत । पुराणग्रन्थानाम् अध्ययनकालेऽध्येतृभिरिदम् अवश्यमेव ध्येयं यद्दहिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् । (ईशावास्योपनिषत् - १) वार्तारसेणाप्लावितम् आख्यानोपारख्यानादिकं स्याद् यद्वा तीर्थमाहात्म्यं स्यात्, किन्तु तत्र सूक्ष्मेक्षिकयाऽऽलोच्यमातं तार्किकं वैज्ञानिकं वा किमपि सत्यजातमस्माकं चक्षुरुन्मीलनायालम् । अतः प्रस्तुते शोधपत्रे स्कन्दपुराणमनुसृत्य ज्योतिर्लिङ्गात्मको भगवान् सोमनाथो यत्र वर्तते, तस्य प्रभासपत्तनस्य यद्भौगोलिकं महत्त्वमास्ते, यच्च सोमनाथस्य खागोलिकं स्थानवैशिष्ट्यं विलसति तन्निरूपणाय प्रक्रम्यते ।

* वाराणस्यां सम्पूर्णानन्दसंस्कृतविश्वविद्यालयेन "पद्मभूषण आचार्य बलदेव उपाध्याय जन्मशताब्दी समारोहेति" प्रसङ्गमधिकृत्यायोजितायाम् आन्ताराष्ट्रियायां पुराणेतिहासविद्वत्संगोष्ठ्यां (9-11 Feb. 1999) प्रस्तुतमिदं शोधपत्रम् ॥

1

जगद्गुरुरामानुजाचार्यपीठाधिपतिः श्रीराघवाचार्यः स्कन्दपुराणमधिकृत्य लिखति यद्अस्मिन् पुराणे प्रतिखण्डं शिवस्य प्रतिष्ठा पौनःपुन्येन दृश्यते । यतो ह्यत्र षडाननेन स्कन्देन माहेश्वरः शैवधर्मः प्रतिपाद्यते । स्कन्दपुराणं द्विविधं प्रतिभाति :- 9. षट्सु संहितासु विभक्तं स्कन्दपुराणम्, अन्यच्च २. सप्तेषु खण्डेषु विभक्तं स्कन्दपुराणम् । तद्यथा - (१) माहेश्वरखण्डः, (२) वैष्णवखण्डः, (३) ब्राह्मखण्डः, (४) काशीखण्डः, (५) अवन्तीखण्डः, (६) नागरखण्डः, (७) प्रभासखण्डश्च । मतान्तरेणावन्तीखण्डस्य नागरखण्डस्य च स्थाने रेवाखण्डः तापीखण्डश्चेति द्वौ खण्डौ स्तः । सप्तखण्डात्मकस्य स्कन्दपुराणस्यैव महापुराणरूपेण प्रख्यापना श्रूयते । तथाप्युभयविधस्य स्कन्दपुराणस्यैकाशीतिसहस्रसङ्ख्यात्मकाः श्लोकाः समानमेव ।¹ श्रीमता मोरेत्युपाह्वधारिणा मनःसुखरायेण संपादितस्य स्कन्दपुराणस्य पञ्चमे भागेऽवन्तीखण्डान्तर्गतं रेवाखण्डं पश्यामः । यत्र पञ्चाशीतितमेऽष्टनवतितमे चाध्याये क्रमशः सोमनाथतीर्थस्य, प्रभासतीर्थस्य च माहात्म्यवर्णनं वर्तते । अध्यायद्वयमिदं लक्ष्यीकृत्य कथातत्त्वेनापिहितं यद्रहस्यजातं संगोपितं दृश्यते, तद् इदानीं प्रकटीक्रियते ॥

2

ऋषिर्मार्कण्डेयो युधिष्ठिराय कथयति यद् भोराजेन्द्र ! नर्मदातोऽपि यत्पुरातनं, वाराणस्या च समं पुण्यजनकं सोमतीर्थं त्वं गच्छेः । तच्च तीर्थं ब्रह्महत्यायाः पापादपि प्रमोचयति । राज्यापहरणेन दुःखसागरे निमग्नो युधिष्ठिरो यदा सोमतीर्थस्य माहात्म्यं सम्यगवबोद्धुं जिज्ञासां प्रदर्शयति, तदर्षिणा मार्कण्डेयेन वर्णितम् -

दक्षस्यापि तथा जाताः पञ्चाशद् दुहिताः किल ॥ ७

ददौ स दश माय कश्यपाय त्रयोदश ।

तथैव स महाभागः सप्तविंशतिमिन्दवे ॥ ८

रोहिणी नाम या तासामभीष्टा साऽभवद्विधोः ।

शेषासु करुणां कृत्वा शप्तो दक्षेण चन्द्रमाः ॥ ९

क्षयरोग्यभवच्चन्द्रो दक्षस्यायं प्रजापतेः ।

स च शापप्रभावेण निस्तेजाः शर्वरीपतिः ॥ (१-१० ॥

ततः शापाद् वेपमानः कलाहीनश्च भूत्वा शर्वरीपतिः कमलयोनेः ब्रह्मणः शरणं प्रपन्नः । ब्रह्मणा च संदिष्टश्चन्द्रमाः शङ्करं तोषयितुं वर्षशतं तपस्तेपे ॥

काष्ठावस्थः स्थितः सोमो दध्यौ त्रिपुरवैरिणम् ।

यावद्वर्षशतं पूर्णं तावत् तुष्टो महेश्वरः ॥ (१-१६)

अत्र शापस्योपशमं कुर्वन्नीश्वरो भणति-

तव भक्तिगृहीतोऽहमुमया सह तोषितः ।

निष्पापः सोमनाथस्त्वं सञ्जातस्तीर्थसेवनात् ॥ (१-२४)

1. स्कन्दपुराणम् । (गुरुमण्डल ग्रन्थमाला, ग्रन्थाङ्क-२०); संपादकः श्री मनसुखराय मोरः, कलकता, विक्रम संवत् - २०१७ इत्यत्र भूमिका ॥

तदनन्तरं पुराणकारो लिखति यद् -

इत्यूचे देवदेवेशः, क्षणं ध्यात्वेन्दुना ततः ।

स्थापितं परमं लिङ्गं कामदं प्राणिनां भुवि ॥ २५

उक्तेषु श्लोकेषु या कथा संनिबद्धा दृश्यते, ततः प्रतीयते यद् १. दक्षस्य शापाच्चन्द्रमाः क्षीणतां गतः । एवञ्च २. ततः शिवप्रसादाच्छापाद् विमुक्तेन चन्द्रमसा पृथिव्यां शिवलिङ्गं कुत्रचित् स्थापितम् ॥ एतत्तु विदितचरमेव यत् कृष्णपक्षे चन्द्रमसः कलाया एकैकशः क्षयो भवति । एवञ्चान्ततो गत्वाऽमावास्यायां तिथौ चन्द्रबिम्बं सर्वथा विलुप्तं भवति । कृष्णपक्षस्यैतानि दिनानि चन्द्रमसः शापितावस्थां प्रख्यापयन्ति । तदनन्तरं शुक्लपक्षे चन्द्रमसः कलाः प्रतिदिनं क्रमशः वृद्धिं गच्छन्ति । शिवप्रसादाच्छापाद् विनिर्मुक्ते सति, शुक्लपक्षस्य द्वितीयायां तिथौ दक्षिणस्याः पश्चिमायाश्च दिशोर्मध्ये नित्यमेवोदीयमानं चन्द्रमसमवलोकयितुं पारयामः । नान्यत्र ॥ एतत् खागोलिकम् अपरिवर्त्यमानं दर्शनमनादिकालाद् अनुभूयते सर्वैर्मानवैः । अत एव भारतवर्षस्य दक्षिणपश्चिमदिशयोर्मध्ये गुजरातराज्यस्य यत्र सौराष्ट्रप्रान्तो वर्तते, तत्र भगवतः सोमनाथस्य ज्योतिर्लिङ्गं वरीवर्तमानं दृश्यते । सोमस्य चन्द्रमसो नाथः स्वामीश्वरो भगवान् शङ्करोऽत्र प्राचीनकालादारभ्य विराजते । यस्य च कृपया क्षीणसत्त्वश्चन्द्रमाः पुनरपि शुक्लपक्षे द्वितीयायां तिथावुदेति नित्यम् ॥ अस्य खागोलिकस्य सत्यस्योन्मीलनायैवाऽऽर्य-प्रजया भारतवर्षस्य दक्षिणपश्चिमसमुद्रतटे शिवलिङ्गस्य स्थापना कृता, तस्य च सोम-नाथेति नामाभिधानं विहितम् । स्कन्दपुराणकारेण सोमनाथतीर्थमाहात्म्यं वर्णयित्वा वस्तुतस्तु स्थानस्यास्य खागोलिको महिमैव पुरस्कृतः ॥

3

स्कन्दपुराणस्य पञ्चमे भागेऽष्टनवतितमेऽध्याये प्रभासतीर्थमाहात्म्यवर्णनं वर्तते । तत्र चर्षिर्मर्कण्डेयो दुःखसतप्तं युधिष्ठिरं प्रभासतीर्थयात्रार्थं प्रचोदयति १ तद्यथा-

ततो गच्छेत्तु राजेन्द्र प्रभासेश्वरमुत्तमम् ।

विख्यातं त्रिषु लोकेषु स्वर्गसोपानमुत्तमम् ॥ 98.1

युधिष्ठिरोऽपि ज्ञातुमिदमभिलषति यत् प्रभासं नाम तीर्थं कथमेतादृशं महाफलदायि सञ्जातम् । तदर्षिर्मर्कण्डेयो निवेदयति-

दुर्भगा रविपत्नी च प्रभा नामेति विश्रुता ।

तया चाऽऽराधितः शम्भुरग्रेण तपसा पुरा ॥

वायुभक्षा स्थिता वर्षं, वर्षं ध्यानपरायणा ।

ततस्तुष्ट्यो महादेवः प्रभायाः पाण्डुनन्दन ॥ 98.4 ।

सन्तुष्टः सन्नीश्वरो भणति-

कस्मात्संक्लिश्यसे बाले, कथ्यतां यद्विवक्षितम् ।

अहं हि भास्करोऽप्येको नानात्वं नैव विद्यते ॥ 98.5

अत्र प्रभा स्वकीयदुःखकारणमित्थं प्रकाशयति-

नान्यो देवः स्त्रियः शम्भो, विना भर्त्रा क्वचित्प्रभो ।

सगुणो निर्गुणो वापि धनाद्द्वयो वाऽप्यकिञ्चन ॥ 98.6

प्रियो वा यदि वा द्वेष्यः स्त्रीणां भर्तैव दैवतम् ।

दुर्भगत्वेन दग्धाहं सखीमध्ये सुरेश्वर ॥ 98.7 ॥

भर्तैर्यल्लब्धसौख्याऽस्मि तेन क्लिश्याम्यहं भृशम् ।

— इदानीमीश्वरः प्रसन्नो भूत्वा तस्यै प्रददात्याशिषम् "वल्लभा भास्करस्यैव मत्प्रसादान्द्रविष्यसि" (98.8) इति । महादेवेनाहूतो भानुर्नर्मदोत्तररोधसि समागतः । स चेश्वरेणादिष्टो यद् — "प्रभां पालय भो भानो! सन्तोषेण परेण हि" (98.12) ॥ अन्यच्चोमयाऽपि भानुर्विज्ञापितो यत् —

प्रभाया मन्दिरे नित्यं स्थीयतां हिमनाशन

अग्रपत्नी समस्तानां भार्याणां क्रियतां रवे ॥ 98.13 ॥

भगवता सूर्येणापि तयोराज्ञाद्वयं शिरसि निधाय, प्रभा परिपाल्यते । महेश्वरोऽपि प्रभया विज्ञापितो यत् —

स्वांशेन स्थीयतां देव मन्मथारे उमापते ।

एकांशः स्थाप्यतामत्र तीर्थस्योन्मीलनाय च ॥ 98.15

प्रभायास्तादृशीं विज्ञापितं श्रुत्वा शङ्करेण सर्वदेवात्मकं स्वकीयं ज्योतिर्मयं लिङ्गं तत्र प्रतिष्ठापितम् । प्रभासेशेति नाम्ना च तत्स्थानं प्रसिद्धिमगमत् । युधिष्ठिराय निवेदयति मार्कण्डेयो यद् अन्यानि तीर्थानि तु कालान्तरे फलदायीनि भवन्ति; परन्त्वदं प्रभासेशमिति नाम तीर्थं तु सद्य एव फलप्रदानाय प्रभवति ॥

स्कन्दपुराणस्यैतादृशीं प्रभासतीर्थमाहात्म्यपरिपूर्णां कथां ज्ञात्वाऽऽधुनिकेन भूगोल-शास्त्रीयेण तर्केण विचार्यते-भगवतः सोमनाथस्य शङ्करस्य ज्योतिर्लिङ्गमद्य यत्र वरीवर्तते, तन्नगरस्य नाम प्रभासपत्तनमिति विश्रुतम् । भारतवर्षस्य दक्षिणपश्चिमसमुद्रवेलाया उपरि प्रतिष्ठितात् तस्मात् प्रभासपत्तनाद् आरभ्य दक्षिणध्रुवपर्यन्तं समुद्रो विलसतितमाम् । दक्षिणध्रुवश्च हिमाच्छादित एवास्ते । तत्र सूर्यस्य हिमनाशकस्य रश्मयः कदाचिन् मनागेव स्पृशन्ति । इत्थं सूर्यस्य प्रभा नाम्नी पत्नी भर्तृसौख्याद् वञ्चिताऽऽस्त इति वक्तुं पार्यते । अतः पुराणकारेणोद्भाविता पतिसुखविधुरायाः प्रभायाः कथा भौगोलिकदृष्ट्या तु सत्यमेव प्रतिभाति । पूर्वस्यां दिशि कोणार्कनगरे यदेकं सूर्यमन्दिरं, तच्च पूर्वसमुद्रतटे तिष्ठति । तस्माद् उदग्च्छन् सूर्यः, सायंकाले प्रभासेशनगरतः पश्चिमसमुद्रेऽस्तं गच्छति । अर्थात् प्रभासपत्तने सूर्यस्य रश्मिर्भारतवर्षस्यान्तिमं भूभागं स्पृष्ट्वा विलयमेति । इत्थं पृथिव्याः सप्ततितमे रेखांशे वर्तमानं सोमनाथेति ज्योतिर्लिङ्गं प्रभासपत्तनञ्च भारतवर्षस्य दक्षिणपश्चिमसमुद्रतटस्थैतादृशे स्थानविशेषे स्तः, यतः प्रसृत्य सूर्यरश्मयो दक्षिणध्रुवपर्यन्तं क्वापि भूभागं स्पृष्टुं न पारयन्ति । यतो ह्यासोमनाथाद् आप्रभासपत्तनाद् अकूपारः समुद्र एवास्ते । सूर्यस्यान्तिमा प्रभा प्रभासपत्तन एवं प्रकाशति । अतः प्रभासपत्तने प्रभया सह सूर्य एकांशेन निवसतीति यद् भणति स्कन्दपुराणकारस्तनु भौगोलिकं सत्यमेव । एतत्सूक्ष्मेक्षिकया ज्ञात्वैव, भारतीयार्यजनैर्भगवन्तं शङ्करं सूर्यञ्चाभिन्नमेव मत्वा यस्मिन् स्थाने तयोः प्रतिष्ठा कृता, तस्य च नामाभिधानं प्रभासेशेति प्रभासपत्तनेति वा यत् कृतं तदन्वर्थमेव ॥ इत्थं तीर्थमाहात्म्यवर्णनमिषेण पुराणकारः कदाचित् खागोलिकं भौगोलिकं वा यद्रहस्यजातं स्यात्, तद् हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण संगोपायति संरक्षति च ॥

ACTIVITIES OF THE ALL-INDIA KASHIRAJ TRUST.

(January 1999-June 1999)

PURĀṆA WORK.

GARUDA PURĀṆA.

The printing of the Critical text with Critical Apparatus of the Garuda Purāṇa is continuing. The checking and revision of the critical Apparatus with collation sheet is also being done

WORK ON UNPUBLISHED TEXT OF THE PURĀṆAS.

The Introduction of the printed text of Vāsiṣṭha Linga Purāṇa is prepared and is ready for print.

VISITORS TO THE PURĀṆA DEPARTMENT.

During the period following scholars visited the Purāṇa Department.

1. Smt. Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, Director Indira Gandhi Art Centre New Delhi and a Trustee of the All-India Kashiraj Trust 12.3.99.
She writes: Always great pleasure to be here. Also this is most impressive project and should continue for years.
2. Dr. R.C. Sharma, Director, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares Hindu University. 12.3.99
3. Priti Tiwari-Research Scholar, Deptt of Ancient Indian History and culture. B.H.U.
4. Nitu Singh, Research Scholar, B.H.U.
5. Prof. P.K. Bhattacharya, Deptt. of Agricultural Economies, University of Delhi, 12.5.99.
6. Dr. Balabir Singh, Delhi University 12.5.99.

VEDA PĀRĀYANA.

During the bright half (Śukla Pakṣa) of month Māgha (January 18-31,1999). The whole Śākhā of the Ṛgveda was recited by memory in the Vyāsa temple of Ramnagar Fort. Whole Samhitā, Aitareya Brāhmaṇa and Aitareya Āraṇyaka and Upaniṣad was recited by memory by Svānanda Sivaram Dhayagude of Poona. Sri Ganpati Shastri Aital was Śrotā. On Successful conclusion Dakṣiṇā and travelling expences were paid.

Activities of the Sister Trusts

1. Maharaja Benares Vidya mandir Trust.

1. Dhrupad Melā.

The 25th Annual Dhrupad Mela organised by the Maharaja Benares Vidyamandir Trust was held on 12-15 February 1999 on Tulasighat, Varanasi. This was the Silver Jubilee year of the Mela so it was Organised on grand scale. The melā was inaugurated by His Highness Maharaja Dr. Vibhuti Narain Singh. Besides the performances of Dhrupad this year an exhibition and Lecture Program was also arranged. Special awards to all the artists who have regularly attended the mela for 25 years were given.

2. Mangalotsava.

This year Mangalotsava was celebrated on 10th March 1999 in the Fort. Misra Brothers (Sri Ravi Shankar Misra and Mata Prasad Misra) performed the dance. Vocral song was performed by Smt. Subhadra Chatterjee of Sangeet Mahavidyalaya B.H.U. District Collector and his family and other officials, important citizens and Rais of Varanasi were present in the celebration. Dinner was arranged after the program.

3. Maharaj Udit Narain Singh Mānasa Prachār Nidhi.

This Trust organises every year Navahna Pārāyaṇa (Nine days recitation) and Pravacana (discourses) of Rāmacaritamānasa at Kali temple of Chakia. This year it was organised in Vaiśākha śukla pakṣa from dvitīyā day up to Daśamī. (17 April to 25 April, 1999) Eminent Vyāsas from Varanasi and outside gave discourses on Rāmacarita mānasa. On concluding day Bhaṇḍārā was arranged. His Highness Maharaja Dr. Vidhuti Narain Singh was present in discourses daily.

सर्वभारतीयकाशिराजन्यासस्य कार्यविवरणम्

(जनवरी-जून १९९९)

पुराणसंबन्धीनि कार्याणि

गरुडपुराणकार्यम्

पाठसमीक्षितोपकरणसंवलितगरुडपुराणस्याचारकाण्डस्य मुद्रणं क्रियमाणं वर्तते । पाठसमीक्षितोपकरणस्य परीक्षणं संशोधनमपि क्रियमाणं वर्तते ।

अप्रकाशितपुराणसंबन्धिकार्यम्

अप्रकाशितवासिष्ठलिङ्गपुराणस्य मूलपाठः मुद्रितो जातः । ग्रन्थस्य प्रस्तावनाऽपि प्रस्तुता वर्तते प्रकाशनार्थम् ।

पुराणविभागे समागता विद्वांसः

अस्मिन् अवधौ अधोनिर्दिष्टा विद्वांसः पुराणविभागे समागताः -

१. श्रीमती डा. कपिला वात्स्यायनमहोदया-इन्दिराकलाकेन्द्रस्य निदेशिका सर्वभारतीयकाशिराजन्यासस्य न्यासधारिणीसदस्या च - १२.३.९९ दिनाङ्के तत्र भवती लिखति- अत्रागमने सदैव प्रसन्नतामनुभवामि । अतीव प्रभावोत्पादिनी एषा कार्ययोजना बहूनि वर्षाणि यावत् प्रचलितुमर्हति ।
२. डा. आर. सी. शर्मा- निदेशकः भारतकलाभवनस्य
३. कु. प्रीति तिवारी- शोधछाया १२.३.९९ दिनाङ्के
४. कु. नीतूसिंहमहोदया - शोध छात्रा
५. प्रो पी. के . भट्टाचार्यः- दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालयस्थः १२.५.९९ दिनांके
६. प्रो. बलवीरसिंह : दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालयस्थः १२.५.९९ दिनांके

वेदचारायणम्

माघमासस्य शुक्ले पक्षे (जनवरी १८-३१, १९९९) ऋग्वेदस्य संपूर्णायाः शाखायाः स्मृत्याधारेण पारायणं रामनगरदुर्गस्थिते व्यासमन्दिरे संपन्नम् । स्वानन्दशिवरामधायगुडे महोदयेन ऋग्वेदस्य संपूर्णायाः संहितायाः, ऐतरेयब्राह्मणस्य, ऐतरेयारण्यकस्य उपनिषदश्च पारायणं कृतम् । श्रीगणपति शास्त्री ऐतालमहोदयः श्रोता आसीत् । पारायणसमाप्तौ पारायणकारिणे श्रोतुमहोदयाय च दक्षिणा मार्गव्ययादिकं प्रदत्तम् ।

सहयोगिन्यासानां कार्यविवरणम्

१. महाराज बनारस विद्या मन्दिर न्यासः

ध्रुपदमेला

अस्मिन् वर्षे अनेन न्यासेन तुलसीघट्टे पञ्चविंशतितमस्य ध्रुपदमेलापकस्य आयोजनं १२-१५ फरवरी १९९९ दिनाङ्केषु कृतम् । अयं मेलापकः अस्मिन् वर्षे रजतजयन्ती-वर्षरूपेण संपादितः । मेलापकस्योद्घाटनं तत्र भवद्भिः काशिनरेशैः डा. विभूतिनारायण-सिंहशर्मदेवैः कृतम् । रजतजयन्तीवर्षे अस्मिन् वर्षे ध्रुपद संबन्धिप्रदर्शना अपि आयोजनं जातम् । सामान्यवार्षिकपुरस्कारातिरिक्तमस्मिन् वर्षे सर्वेभ्यो विशिष्टकलाकारेभ्यः ये प्रारम्भवर्षतः सततमस्मिन् मेलापके आगच्छन्ति विशिष्टाः पुरस्कारा प्रदत्ताः ।

मङ्गलोत्सवः

अस्मिन् वर्षे १० मार्च १९९९ दिनाङ्के रामनगरदुर्गे मङ्गलोत्सवः संपन्नः । मिश्रवन्धुभिः (श्री रविशंकरमिश्र-माताप्रसादमिश्रमहोदयाभ्यां) नृत्यकार्यक्रममः प्रस्तुतः । श्रीमती सुभद्राचटर्जी महोदयया ठुमरी-चैती-गायनं प्रस्तुतम् । सपविवारः जिलाधीशः, अन्ये अधिकारिणः विशिष्टा नागरिकाः सभ्याश्च अस्मिन् मङ्गलोत्सवे उपस्थिता आसन् । कार्यक्रमसमाप्तौ सर्वेभ्यः उपस्थितजनेभ्यो भोजनं प्रदत्तम् ।

२. महाराज उदितनारायण सिंह मानस प्रचारिनिधिः

रामचरितमानसनवाद पारायणम्

वैशाखमासस्य शुक्लेपक्षे दितीयातिथिमात्स्य दशमीतिथिपर्यन्तं (१७ अप्रैल - २५ अप्रैल १९९९ दिनाङ्केषु) चकियानगरिस्थिते कालीमन्दिरे रामचरितमानसस्य नवाह्वपारायणं प्रवचनं च संपन्नम् । प्रवचनं वाराणसेयैः वाह्वैश्च व्यासैः कृतम् । समाप्तौ भोजनप्रसाद-स्यापि आयोजनं जातम् । महाराजाः काशिनरेशा डा. विभूतिनारायणसिंहशर्मदेवाः प्रवचनेषूपरिस्थिता आसन् ।

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I, Yogendra Narain Thakur, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge.

Yogendra Narain Thakur
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