

Vol. L, Nos. 1 & 2 ]

[ July 2008

पुराणम्  
PURĀṆA

(Half-yearly Bulletin of the Purāṇa-Department)

*Published with the financial assistance from the Rastriya Sanskrit Sansthan,  
New Delhi*



**ALL-INDIA KASHIRAJ TRUST  
FORT, RAMNAGAR, VARANASI (INDIA)**

**Annual Sub.-Inland Rs. 200/-**

**Foreign \$ 30**

## सम्पादक-मण्डल

डॉ. रामकरण शर्मा

भूतपूर्व कुलपति, सम्पूर्णानन्द संस्कृतिविश्वविद्यालय, वाराणसी, नयी दिल्ली

प्रो. आर. पी. गोल्डमैन

कैलिफोर्निया विश्वविद्यालय, यू.एस.ए.

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Traditional Sanskrit scholars are requested to send us articles in Sanskrit (i) dealing with the religious & Philosophical matters in the Purāṇas and (ii) explaining the obscure & difficult passages in the Purāṇas.

## पुराणम् - PURĀṆA

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# सोमाष्टकं स्तोत्रम्

( कूर्मपुराण २.३१.५१-५८ )

[लब्ध्वा माहेश्वरीं दिव्यां संस्मृतिं भगवानजः।

तोषयामास वरदं सोमं सोमविभूषणम् ॥ ५० ॥]

## ब्रह्मोवाच

नमो देवाय महते महादेव्यै नमो नमः ।

नमः शिवाय शान्ताय शिवायै शान्तये नमः ॥ ५१ ॥

ओं नमो ब्रह्मणे तुभ्यं विद्यायै ते नमो नमः ।

नमो मूलप्रकृतये महेशाय नमो नमः ॥ ५२ ॥

नमो विज्ञानदेहाय चिन्तायै ते नमो नमः ।

नमस्ते कालकालाय ईश्वरायै नमो नमः ॥ ५३ ॥

नमो नमोऽस्तु रुद्राय रुद्राण्यै ते नमो नमः ।

नमो नमस्ते कामाय मायायै च नमो नमः ॥ ५४ ॥

नियन्त्रे सर्वकार्याणां क्षोभिकायै नमो नमः ।

नमोऽस्तु ते प्रकृतये नमो नारायणाय च ॥ ५५ ॥

योगदायै नमस्तुभ्यं योगिनां गुरवे नमः ।

नमः संसारनाशाय संसारोत्पत्तये नमः ॥ ५६ ॥

नित्यानन्दाय विभवे नमोऽस्त्वानन्दमूर्त्तये ।

नमः कार्यविहीनाय विश्वप्रकृतये नमः ॥ ५७ ॥

ओंकारमूर्त्तये तुभ्यं तदन्तःसंस्थिताय च ।

नमस्ते व्योमसंस्थाय व्योमशक्त्यै नमो नमः ॥ ५८ ॥

[इति सोमाष्टकेनेशं प्रणनाम पितामहः।

पपात दण्डवद् भूमौ गृणन् वै शतरुद्रियम् ॥ ५९ ॥]

## Translation

Having received the divine memory of Maheśvara the unborn (Brahmā) propitiated boon bestower Soma, having moon as ornament (50). **Brahmā said** : Salutation to the great god, salutation again and again to the great goddess. Salutation to the passionless Brahman, salutation to Śivā (Umā) the calm one (51). Salutation to thee, the Brahman (i.e. universal soul), salutation again and again to thee wisdom.

Salutation to the original cause, salutation again and again to Maheśa (52). Salutation to thee whose body is intelligence, salutation to thee, the goddess of thought. Salutation to the Kāla of Kāla (the destroyer of Kāla), salutation again and again to Íśvarā (53). Salutation again and again to Rudra, salutation again and again to Rudrāṇi. Salutation again and again to desire (Kārma), salutation again and again to Māyā (power) (54). Salutation to the controller of all actions and to (Umā) who giveth impulse to everything. Salutation to you the Prakṛti, salutation to Nārāyaṇa (55). Salutation to thee, the goddess who is the bestower of Yōga, salutation to you, the preceptor of ascetics. Salutation to the destroyer of the world, salutation to the creator of the world (56). Salutation to constant joy, power and the joy-formed one. Salutation to one who is free from action, salutation to the cause of universe (57). Salutation to you the form of Omkāra and to you existing in it. Salutation to one existing in the sky and salutation again and again to the power of sky. (58)

### Note

In this eulogy comprising of eight verses Lord Śiva and goddess Śivā (Pārvati) are jointly praised and hence this praise is called Somāṣṭaka (उभया सह = सोमः Prvatī and Śiva). It is the praise of Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva. Here Lord Śiva and Śivā are said as cause of creation, preservation and annihilation of the world. In short they are said all powerful and blissful.

—Ganga Sagar Rai

## व्यासप्रशस्तिः

१

स नमस्यः कथं न स्यात् सतां सत्यवतीसुतः ।  
सुपर्वोपचितं चक्रे यः स्वर्गमिव भारतम् ॥

—सोमेश्वरस्य (कीर्तिकौमुद्याम् १।११)

२

दन्तोलूखलिभिः शिलोज्झिभिरिदं कन्दाशनैः फेनपैः ।  
पर्णप्राशनिभिर्मिताम्बुकवलैः काले च पक्वाशिभिः ।  
नीवारप्रसृतिपचैश्च मुनिभिर्यद् वा त्रयीध्यायिभिः ।  
सेव्यं भव्यमनोभिरर्थपतिभिस्तद् वै महाभारतम् ॥

—राजशेखर (बालभारत १।१९)

३

वैयासिक्ये गिरां गुम्फे पुण्ड्रेक्षाविव लभ्यते ।  
सद्यः सहृदयाह्लादी सारः पर्वणि पर्वणि ॥

४

ब्रह्मसूत्रकृते तस्मै वेदव्यासाय वेधसे ।  
ज्ञानशक्त्यवताराय नमो भगवते हरेः ॥

—भारती (मंगलश्लोक)

५

यन्न्याससूत्रग्रथितात्मबोध-

सौरभ्यगर्भश्रुतिपद्ममाला ।

प्रसाधयत्यद्वयमात्मतत्त्वं

तं व्यासमाद्यं गुरुमानतोऽस्मि ॥

—वेदान्तकल्पतरु (मंगलश्लोक)

# TO WAKE A SLEEPING GIANT: VĀLMĪKI'S ACCOUNT(S) OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF KUMBHAKARṆA

BY

ROBERT P. GOLDMAN

[वाल्मीकीये रामायणे सुदीर्घकायस्य कुम्भकर्णस्य दीर्घकालिकनिद्राया विषये विस्तृतं वर्णनं प्राप्यते । अस्मिन् निबन्धे प्रारम्भे तस्यासाधारणदीर्घशरीरस्याहारस्य च विवरणं दत्त्वा तस्य स्वापकालविषये विस्तृतं विवरणं प्रस्तुतम् । यदि ब्रह्मणो वरदानेन शापेन वा तस्य षण्मासिकी निद्रा ततः कथं दीर्घप्रयासेन असमये स प्रबुद्धः । निद्राकालविषयेऽपि रामायणस्य विविधस्थलेषु प्राप्यते वैषम्यम् । एतद्विषये रामायणस्य व्याख्याकारैरपि वैषम्यसमाधानस्य प्रयासो विहितः । अत्र विदुषा लेखकेन सर्वेषां मतानां विवरणं दत्त्वा विस्तृतं विवेचनं प्रदत्तम् ।]

Anyone familiar with the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa* in any detail through any of its innumerable versions will immediately recognize the name and character of Kumbhakarṇa, surely the largest and most grotesque of the epic's many larger than life characters. For the gargantuan *rākṣasa* prince, as described by Vālmīki at least, is surely one of the First Poet's, and indeed the entire literature's most extraordinary and colorful characters. Indeed, in the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* of the *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa* Kumbhakarṇa is characterized through the poet's grand indulgence in *atiśayokti* as a caricature, even a parody of the already hyperbolic monsters that people his masterpiece.

In Kumbhakarṇa we find a warrior so enormous that he towers over the lofty ramparts of the citadel of *Laṅkā*.<sup>1</sup> His deep, somnolent breathing is so forceful that it literally blows other powerful *rākṣasas* out of his cave.<sup>2</sup> The fleshly appetites of this monster are so vast that he breakfasts on piles of deer, buffalo and boar washing this Brobdignagian repast down with a thousand jars of strong drink.<sup>3</sup> And, when he is finally slain by Rāma, his enormous head smashes the gates of the buildings on *Laṅkā*'s main thoroughfares and knocks down its tower-

1. Ram 6.49.1-6. (All references, unless otherwise specified, are to the critical edition of the text produced and published by the Rāmāyaṇa Department of the Oriental Institute of Baroda, 1960-75)
2. Ram 6.48.18-19, 34.
3. Ram 6.48.26-26, 82.



ing walls while his headless trunk falls into the sea crushing crocodiles, shoals of huge fish, and serpents before entering the earth.<sup>1</sup>

But this fearsome giant, so voracious that there is a real danger that he will devour every living thing in the universe,<sup>2</sup> is not just a monolithic monster. Surprisingly, it turns out that for all his mindless violence and gluttony, he is an accomplished student of *dharma* and *nītiśāstra*, capable of lecturing his older brother Rāvaṇa at length on the finer points of law and statecraft.<sup>3</sup> Indeed he is the only one among all of the demon-king's counselors who is capable of eliciting from him an acknowledgement of the catastrophic nature of his decision to abduct Sītā.<sup>4</sup>

But despite the rhetorical exuberance with which the gargantuan *rākṣasa* is portrayed, the interesting complexity of his character and the evident fascination he had for a poet who devotes some nine complete sargas comprising some 450 *ślokas* to his history and actions in the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* alone, Kumbhakarna has received surprisingly little attention on the part of epic scholars. Indeed, with the exception of Dr. von Simson's interesting attempt to trace the names (and to some degree the characters) of the important *Mahābhārata* figures of Droṇa and Kaṁa to the dissolution of the name Kumbhakarna,<sup>5</sup> there appears to be relatively little critical scholarship devoted centrally to this striking and entertaining figure.

This lack I believe unfortunate. For one thing the character of Kumbhakarna is intrinsically interesting in terms of his role in the epic narrative and as an object of comparative study in folklore and epic studies. Even more interestingly, however as I hope to suggest, the varying accounts of his history that the epics present and the ways in which premodern commentators and modern Indologists respectively attempt to rationalize and explain this kind of variance may give us some additional information on the receptive and genetic histories of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Rāmopākhyāna* of the Mbh.

Of all the extraordinary things the *Rāmāyaṇa* tells us about Kumbhakarna, by far the most striking and the most widely recognized is the prodigious nature- both in terms of duration and of profundity-of his sleep. The depth of his slumber is, like everything else about

1. Rām 6.55.124-5.

2. Ram 6.49.19-20.

3. Ram 6.51.1-20.

4. Ram 6.51.25-26

5. Von Simson 1968.

this interesting figure, prodigious. The heroic efforts required of the *rākṣasas* to wake him-the blaring of trumpets, the beating of drums, the assault with fists, feet and various weapons and the trampling with herds of elephants etc. - are elaborately and amusingly described at length by Vālmīki.<sup>1</sup> However, it is the epic's varying accounts of the etiology and duration of Kumbhakarna's sleep that will concern me in the present paper.

The first mention of Kumbhakarna in the critically edited text of the *Yuddhakāṇḍa*,<sup>2</sup> at least in connection with his sleep, occurs day on which the battle starts, but claims that this is not consistent with the text, since it appears to contradict Rāvaṇa's statement at 6.50.12 that Kumbhakarna has been asleep "for a very long time" (*sumahān kālah*). For, since according to the commentators we are now at the sixth day of battle, this would mean that Kumbhakarna would have been sleeping for only some fifteen days, hardly a very long time by his standards. Moreover, such a reading raises the problem of how, indeed, Kumbhakarna, who through the power of Brahmā's curse appears to be forced to sleep for a minimum of six months, could be awakened after such a brief span of time. Nāgeśa proposes, as an alternative, that we understand the word *ahan*, "day", by *lakṣaṇā*, or secondary meaning, to stand for *māsa*, "month". Thus, according to this interpretation, Kumbhakarna would have been asleep for nine months and so could be awakened. Nāgeśa concludes by stating that this will all be made

1. Ram 6.48.28-48.

2. The southern recension includes Kumbhakarna among the *rākṣasas* who counsel Rāvaṇa near the beginning of the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* (Critical Edition, Appendix I, No. 3 (= Vulgate 6.12.28 ff.) There, as in *sarga* 51 of the critical edition, Kumbhakarna rebukes his brother for his violation of *dharma* and *niti*. The passage is contextually awkward, however, precisely because it does not explain how Kumbhakarna could be awake at that moment. Following 6.48.12ab, D5-7, 10-11, T, Gi, 2, and M insert a passage of one line (1029\*) in an apparent attempt to explain this seeming contradiction. "For, having given his counsel, he fell asleep on the ninth day from now."

This half verse is ambiguous and somewhat controversial in that it raises once again the complex issue of how long Kumbhakarna sleeps at a stretch, discussed in the preceding note. Commentators and translators differ considerably over such issues as the point from which to count the nine days, whether one should count back or forward in time, or whether, indeed the term, day (*ahani*), here, refers by metonymy (*lakṣaṇa*) to months. Nāgeśa quotes the opinion, elsewhere stated by Govindarāja, that Kumbhakarna, falls asleep on the ninth day before the *Sundarakāṇḍa* concerning the amount of Sitā's year of captivity that remains before she must either submit to him or be killed.

clear later on. Among the translators consulted, only M. N. Dutt (1892: 1288) follows this interpretation, translating, "he hath slept for nine months". This interpretation is, however, difficult to accept, since the counsel to which Rāvaṇa alludes must be the frank advice given to Rāvaṇa in the assembly described in lines 195-229 of Appendix 1, No. 3 (= Vulgate 6.12.28-40), which follows *sarga* nine in the critical edition. (See note to 6.9.22.) This assembly, according to Govindarāja would have taken place eleven days before the start of the battle, or seventeen days before the present moment.

Śivasahāya takes a completely different approach, claiming that we should understand that, having given his counsel, Kumbhakarna fell asleep, but will awaken on the ninth day and that he will have reached the limit for the time set for his sleeping on this very day (*jāgariteti śeṣah*).

Satyatīrtha quotes Śivasahāya in full on this point, but disagrees with him, finding his argument to be contradicted by the text and claiming that his recourse to *lakṣaṇa* is pointless. As an alternative, Satyatīrtha proposes that, in stating later on that Kumbhakarna has slept for a very long time (6.50.12), Rāvaṇa is merely giving an example of the way in which people who are in misery consider a short period of time as very long (*duḥkhasamayatvenālasyaṅpi bāhulyoktiḥ*). As another example of this he cites *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 1.14.7, where Yudhiṣṭhira in his anxiety over Arjuna's failure to return, claims that he has been gone for seven months.

Satyatīrtha, Maheśvaratīrtha, and to a very elaborate extent, Govindarāja take this line as the starting point for a day chronology of the campaign in Laṅkā. Starting from the day of Kumbhakarna's counsel to Rāvaṇa and Vibhīṣaṇa's defection they attempt to fit the various events and battles into the frame-work of nine days posited by Rāvaṇa. They justify this chronology by quoting specific verses from the earlier portions of the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* which give indications of the passage of time. Govindarāja takes this task particularly seriously dating the epic's events by the lunar calendar retrospectively from the abduction of Sītā and prospectively until the death of Rāvaṇa. Govindarāja is also concerned with reconciling his chronology (in which the events from Hanumā's meeting with Sītā in Laṅkā to the death of Rāvaṇa span only a little more than a fortnight) with Sītā's statement to Hanumān and Rāvaṇa's to Sītā, in the forty-eighth *sarga* of the book. There Rāvaṇa, having been humiliatingly defeated and then dismissed from the battlefield by Rāma, tells his attendants that Kumbhakarna-whom he describes as being overcome by Brahmā's curse (*brahmaśāp-*

*ābhībhātaḥ*)<sup>1</sup>. must be awakened as he is the only warrior seemingly capable of defeating the demon-king's enemies. He remarks that Kumbhakarṇa sleeps for "six, seven, eight or even nine months at a time" (*nava ṣaṭ sapta cāṣṭau ca māsān svapīti rākṣasaḥ*).<sup>2</sup> He goes on to add that, addicted to this vulgar pleasure (i.e. sleep) his brother lies in a stupor all the time. (*kumbhakaraṇaḥ sadā śadā śete muḍho grāmya sukhe rataḥ*)<sup>3</sup>

Rāvaṇa's comments, in which he mentions but does not describe in any detail, a curse on the part of Brahmā thus appear upon a first reading to indicate that the periods of Kumbhakarṇa's sleep are not fixed but are in fact, variable.

Rāvaṇa's indeterminacy in this matter, however, seems to be at odds with the account of the history and terms of the curse as they are related to Rāma by Kumbhakarṇa's other brother Vibhīṣaṇa in the very next chapter (*sarga* 49).

There we learn that when Indra, having been defeated by Kumbhakarṇa, appealed to Brahmā for help, the latter, fearing that the monster represented a threat of universal destruction, cursed him to suffer immediate perpetual sleep so that he would be as good as dead (*tasmāt tvam adya prabhṛti mṛtakalpaḥ śayīsyasi*).<sup>4</sup> But at this point, so Vibhīṣaṇa's tale goes, Rāvaṇa intervened arguing that it would be wrong of Brahmā to - in effect- put his own grandson to death. Acknowledging that the word of Brahmā can never prove false and that the curse of somnolence is inevitable for his brother, the *rākṣasa* lord nevertheless urged the Creator to set some specific time limits on Kumbhakarṇa's sleeping and waking (*kālas tu kriyatām asya śayane jāgare tathā*).<sup>5</sup> Moved by Rāvaṇa's appeal, Brahmā modifies his curse, ordaining that the voracious Kumbhakarṇa shall sleep for periods of precisely six months waking only for a single day between these periods to indulge his ferocious appetite by consuming all the worlds like a raging fire (*śayitā hy eṣa ṣaṇmāsān ekāhaṃ jāgariṣyati I ekenānā tv asau viraś caran bhumiṃ bubhukitaḥ I vyādītāsyo bhakṣayel lokān saṃkrudha iva pāvakaḥ*).<sup>6</sup>

These two slight but puzzling differences in the calculation of the duration of Kumbhakarṇa's periods of dormancy, however, do not

1. Ram 6.48.9.

2. Ram 6.48.12.

3. Ram 6.48.14.

4. Ram 6.49.23.

5. Ram 6.49.25.

6. Ram 6.49.26-27.

exhaust the *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa's* varying formulations of the story. For in the *Uttarakāṇḍa* we find yet two more accounts of this seemingly simple tale according to which the *rākṣasa's* epic slumbers are to be reckoned not in months but in years or even millennia.

One of these additional explanations of Kumbhakarṇa's sleep, narrated at 7.10.31-41, is of particular interest. For it is here that we find what is perhaps the best known account of how Kumbhakarṇa came to sleep for so long. For here his prolonged slumber is not the result of a curse, but instead of what is supposed to be a boon. In this passage, the sage Agastya tells Rāma the following story. The gods fear that, if Brahmā were to grant Kumbhakarṇa the same kind of boon in compensation for his heroic austerities as his brothers Rāvaṇa and Vibhīṣaṇa have earned through theirs, he will become a still greater terror than before. They beg the god to delude the *rākṣasa* under the pretext of granting him a boon. In this way, they argue, the Creator can bring the monster down and so save the worlds from his ravages (*varavyājena moho 'smai dīyatām amitaprabha I lokānām svasti caiva syāt bhaved asya ca saṃmatih*).<sup>1</sup> Brahmā agrees and summons Sarasvatī, the goddess of speech, instructing her to enter Kumbhakarṇa and, in effect, speak through him to choose his "boon" for him. Thus, when Brahmā asks Kumbhakarṇa to select his reward the latter replies, "O god of gods, what I desire is to sleep for many years" (*svaptum varsāṇy anekāni devadeva mamepsitam*).<sup>2</sup> The deluded demon is then left wondering what sort of strange request has come out of his mouth.<sup>3</sup>

The final reference to the duration of Kumbhakarṇa's sleep in the *Rāmāyaṇa* occurs three sargas after this last one as a sequel to Agastya's account of the history of the principal *rākṣasas*. Here, unlike in the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* version of Vibhīṣaṇa, where Kumbhakarṇa collapses in a stupor the moment Brahmā utters his curse, some time elapses between the deception perpetrated by Brahmā and Sarasvatī and Kumbhakarṇa's succumbing to his drowsiness. At *Uttarakāṇḍa* 13.1-7, the irresistible urge to sleep only gradually comes upon the giant. He informs Rāvaṇa of this and the *rākṣasa*-lord has time to have his artisans construct a grand and ornate sleeping chamber for his brother. Only when the building is complete does Kumbhakarṇa succumb to his somnolence and fall into a profound slumber that—in this variant—continues without his waking for "many thousands of years" (*bahuny abdasahasrāi śaṇyāno nāvabudhyate*).<sup>4</sup>

1. Ram 7.10.34. Cf. the Vulgate's *saṃmatih*, honor, satisfaction.

2. Ram 7.10.39.

3. Ram 7.10.41.

4. Ram 7.13.7.

As the preceding discussion has demonstrated, it appears that there are basically two separate and ultimately irreconcilable accounts of how Kumbhakarṇa came to sleep for so long: the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* version in which he is cursed as a result of his rapacity and the *Uttarakāṇḍa* version in which he is "rewarded" for his austerities with a fraudulent "boon" that has the same purpose and much the same effect as the curse. Each version has two subvariants, narrated in close textual proximity to each other, each with a slightly different account of the duration of Kumbhakarṇa's period of dormancy. As a result, it appears that in regard to this fairly minor and seemingly simple point of fact, as it were, the text of the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa, as it has come down to us has four different calculations of the duration of Kumbhakarṇa's slumber.

Now what, if anything, are we to make of all this? Has the poet nodded? Is this a genuine text-historical issue that can shed light on the genetic history of the epic?

One thing is certain. From the point of view of the poem's receptive history it is clear that the principal custodians, editors and interpreters of the work-by which I mean in a word, its Sanskrit commentators-have always found the apparent discrepancies just noted-at least those concerning the duration of Kumbhakarṇa's sleep-significant, troubling and fully worthy of their learned attempts at reconciliation.

As an example of this let us revisit for a moment Rāvaṇa's statement that his brother sleeps "for six, seven, eight, even nine months at a time" (*nava ṣaṭ sapta cāṣṭau ca māśān*). This reading of the critical edition which can also be understood to mean "for nine, six, seven, and eight months" that is to say for thirty months, appears to be shared and discussed by only one commentator, Govindarāja.<sup>1</sup>

Govindarāja understands the passage, as do I, to indicate that Kumbhakarṇa may, on different occasions, sleep for nine months, seven months, etc. He sees this as in keeping with the non-specific boon request of Kumbhakarṇa (at *Uttarakāṇḍa* 10.30) to sleep for many years (*varsāṇy anekāni*). He then refers to the other two interpretations, suggesting that the curse of sleeping for precisely six months at 6.49.26 either refers by synecdoche (*upalakṣana*) to the *rākṣasa's* other, longer periods of sleep or represents only the *minimum* time during which Kumbhakarṇa must remain asleep (*anyānābhīprāyaṃ vā*). Finally,

1. The verse upon which Govindarāja is commenting (Critical Edition 6.48.12) is found in the so-called Vulgate at 6.60.17. For the text of Govindarāja's remarks see *Śrīmadvālmīkirāmāyaṇam* (1935). See this texts also for the commentaries of Nāgeśa Bhatta and Śivasahāya.

Govindarāja provides a lengthy quotation from the *Taittirīyasamhitā* (7.5.6.1), where in the context of the *gavāmayana* rite, it is stated that the ritual officiants reckon as a month (*māsa*) a period of six days (*ṣadaḥaḥ*). If, Govindarāja argues, we then add up the number of such "months" indicated in the verse, we get a total of thirty months (i.e.,  $6+8+9=30$ ) of six days each, or 180 days. This calculation then agrees with the passage at 6.49.26, at which the *rākṣasa* sleeps for six (lunar) months reckoned at 30 days each.

A variety of manuscripts collated for the critical edition as well as the widely published "Vulgate" text of the southern commentators Nāgojī Bhaṭṭa, Mādhavayogin and Śivasahāya as well as the printed northern texts of Lahore and Gorresio do not read with the critical edition and Govindarāja. They read instead that Kumbhakarṇa sleeps "for, nine, seven, ten, and eight months, (*nava sapta daśāṣṭau ca māsān*), i.e. for thirty-four months. This reading is mentioned as a variant and commented upon by Govindarāja as well. Nāgojī attempts to reconcile the three different passages by arguing that the verse does not specify a precise period of time for Kumbhakarṇa to sleep, but simply indicates that the duration of his dormancy has no upper limit. He further states that the reference at 6.49.26 indicates only that six months is the *minimum* period that he must sleep, but that after any period of sleep, regardless of its length, his waking is restricted to a single day. In other words, Nāgojī argues that "the boon" of Brahmā specifies only how long Kumbhakarṇa can be awake, not how long he sleeps. This, he argues, is confirmed by the other two passages mentioned above where Kumbhakarṇa is said to sleep for many years or for thousands of years. The commentator Śivasahāya extends this argument by claiming that although Brahmā's boon compels Kumbhakarṇa to sleep for at least six months, "there is nothing to prevent him from sleeping naturally beyond that term" (*adutaraṃ svabhāvikanidrayā ca*). Nāgojī then quotes yet another line of interpretation, which he attributes to unnamed "others". According to this interpretation, the word *aṣṭau* is not to be understood in the sense of the number eight, but as the locative of a noun *aṣṭī*, (pervasion, eating) whose range of meaning he extends to include the sense of "to leave aside" (*tyāge*). According to this interpretation the compound *daśāṣṭau*, has the sense of "leaving out ten". If then, as Nāgojī suggests, we add up the nine and seven months mentioned in the verse, we get a period of sixteen months, which, with ten months subtracted, leaves the six months of sleep referred to in 6.49.26. Although Nāgojī does not specify his sources, this ingenious interpreta-

tion is offered by several other commentators, who differ only in their derivation and lexical identification of *aṣṭau*. Thus, Govindarāja, who notes this variant, the word from the root *aś*, in the sense of "eat" (*aśanam*), whose meaning he extends to "loss or destruction" (*nāśah*). Similarly Śivasahāya glosses "swallowing" (*nigarāṇa*) in the sense of "casting out" (*niḥsārāṇe*) and takes the word in the sense of "eating" (*bhakṣaṇārthakāśadhātuprakṛtikatinantaḥ*). Lokanātha, quoted by Gorresio (*Rāmāyaṇa* 1856, IX, p. 377), perhaps deriving the word from the root *as*, "throw, toss", glosses "casting out ten" (*daśapraḥṣepe sati*).

Interestingly, Śivasahāya, who accepts Nāgojī's ingenious suggestion that we must cast out ten to achieve the total number of months, balks at his idea that the passage indicates merely a minimum period during which the giant must sleep. In his comments on Vulgate 7.10.45 (= critical edition 7.10.39) He quotes Nāgojī but indicates that the latter's point here is doubtful (*cintyā*) since, according to him, there are two separate "boons" at issue: the one referred to in the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* and the one in the *Uttara*. Śivasahāya adds a new dimension to the problem of the duration here by interpreting the boon Kumbhakarṇa solicits against his will while under the influence of Sarasvafī as specifying a period of slumber of three years. (*anekāny ekabhinnāi kapiñjalādhikaraṇanyāyena trīṇītyartha varāni*). He claims that the Uttarakāṇḍa account makes no allusion to any such condition. So far as I have been able to discover Śivasahāya is the only commentator to directly address the issue of there being two separate and complementary explanations for Kumbhakarṇa's sleep quite apart from the question of the different lengths of time during which he is supposed to sleep. Other commentators concern themselves exclusively with reconciling the numbers.<sup>1</sup>

The only additional light that the epic literature seems to shed on this perhaps yawn-inducing question is to be found in the terse narration of Kumbhakarṇa's curse found in the *Rāmopākhyāna* of the Mbh. There (3.259.28)<sup>2</sup> when the *rākṣasa* is told by Brahmā to select a boon

1. See for example the elaborate commentary of Satyafirtha who expends considerable effort on the problem. See *Śrīmadvālmīkirāmāyaṇam* (1911-13). Keep in mind that it is a commonplace of the epic texts to provide two or more complementary explanations for a single event or phenomenon. Well-known examples would be the three explanations for Draupadi's polyandrous marriage and the two causes of Kalmāṣapāda's becoming a *rākṣasa*.

2. *Mahābhārata. Critical Edition* (1933-70).



as a reward for his austerities the text simply says, "He chose long sleep, his mind being seized by darkness" (*sa vavre mahatīm nidrām tamasā grastacetanaḥ*). On this, the influential 17th century commentator Nīlakaṇṭha explains, "The expression 'by darkness' means that it was out of delusion that he chose sleep, which he did not desire" (*tamasye anīṣṭām api nidrām mohād vṛtavān ity arthaḥ*).<sup>1</sup>

Now what, if anything, can this odd textual and commentarial data tell us about the genetic and receptive histories of Vālmiki's poem?

First, briefly, the genetic history. The learned and prolific student of the Rāmāyaṇa, John Brockington has argued, that on the basis of the relative ornateness of its poetry, the length of some of its relevant *sargas* and its use of certain verbal forms much of the *Yuddhakāṇḍa's* account of the history, awakening, exploits and death of Kumbhakarna shows signs of relative lateness within his schematization that assigns this book to "stage 2" of the epic's growth (dated roughly from the 3rd century BCE to the 1st century CE).<sup>2</sup> If Brockington's model and his dating are correct, then we must understand that the Kumbhakarna episode, or at least the portion with which we are dealing, probably derives from the end of this period. According to the same formulation, the entire *Uttarakāṇḍa* belongs to the next stage, stage 3 (1st to 3rd centuries CE). Thus the two accounts of how Kumbhakarna came to sleep for so long and the length of his slumbers would appear to originate from adjacent if not identical periods in the poem's development. Thus it does not seem that a compelling argument for the discrepancy between the two books can be made on the grounds that many centuries during which the tale mutated intervened between their composition. Rather, it seems likely that, as appears to be the case with many variant versions of stories in the epic, the details of a given version are governed more by the immediate rhetorical and contextual needs of the author(s) than by any "lapse" on the part of the composers of one or the other version.<sup>3</sup>

This kind of argument can also work to help us to understand certain differences between the two great epics. Thus, for example, instead of arguing that the *Rāmopākhyāna's* lack of any reference to Rāma's abandonment of Sītā is testimony to that text's having condensed the *Rāmāyaṇa* before the composition of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, we

1. Vulgate 3.275.28 (Mahābhārata [1929]).

2. Brockington 1984: 329.

3. Goldman 1973; 1984: 37.

might well stand back and ask how such an episode would fit in with Mārkaṇḍeya's efforts to reassure Yudhiṣṭhira after the loss of his kingdom and the outrages perpetrated upon Draupadī. For surely, the ostensible purpose of the *upākhyāna*, is the consolation of Yudhiṣṭhira and his dependents. A discussion of Rāma's rejection of Sītā would be highly inapposite from the point of view of narrative parallelism and, needless to say, far from comforting to the exiled Pāṇḍavas and their long-suffering wife.

It thus seems likely that the authors of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* versions of the legend of Kumbhakarṇa too were operating under the influence of their local context. In the present case this was the narrative of the fearsome austerities practiced by the three principal *rākṣasa* descendants of Pulastya and the boons that they extract from Brahmā in compensation for them. The critical factors for the authors would most probably have been Rāvaṇa's boon of invulnerability to all superhuman beings (as opposed to mere men) and Vibhīṣana's gift of eternal righteousness, both critically important to the story of the Rāmāyaṇa. The details of how Kumbhakarṇa came to suffer from his peculiar condition of permanent narcolepsy could, I believe, in this larger context easily become subordinated to the common epic-purāṇic technique of attributing a single effect to multiple causes that are not mutually exclusive and may even be complementary.

In other words, it is not that the *Uttarakāṇḍa* authors were either unaware of the version in the *Yuddha* or careless in recalling its details; it is just that they may well have tailored the circumstances leading to Kumbhakarṇa's sleep to suit their different context.

What then of the *Rāmopākhyāna* brief account of the curse of Kumbhakarṇa? It is true that, as Brockington<sup>1</sup> and other scholars have noted, the *Rāmopākhyāna* devotes a disproportionate amount of its text to what corresponds to the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* of Vālmīki and has, in effect, no epilogic *Uttarakāṇḍa*. Nonetheless, its account of the false boon of Kumbhakarṇa (along with the boons of his brothers Rāvaṇa and Vibhīṣana) - placed here at the beginning of the *upākhyāna* - is clearly akin to and in fact evidently derived from the *Uttarakāṇḍa*'s account.

Indeed it is difficult to think of any source other than the *Uttarakāṇḍa*<sup>2</sup> for the Mbh's version because it not only follows the *Uttarakāṇḍa* version's logic but it is yet another of those narrative ele-

1. Brockington 1998: 476.

2. Other than some purely hypothetical common source such as proposed by van Buitenen (1975:213-214).

ments of the Rāmopākhyāna, such as those noted by Raghavan and myself among<sup>1</sup> among others, that are in fact largely unintelligible without knowledge of Vālmīki.

Consider the Rāmopākhyāna's laconic phrase that in choosing his reward for his austerities, Kumbhakarna was *tamasā grastacetanaḥ*. The Mbh text gives us no explanation at all for the rākṣasa's sudden mental confusion and we are at a loss to understand what has happened unless we have in mind the *Uttarakāṇḍa* version in which Brahmā, through the instrumentality of Sarasvatī carries out the gods' plea *varavyājena moho 'smai dīyatām*.

On this basis it would seem reasonable to suppose that the author of the *Rāmopākhyāna*, which most scholars after Jacobi have taken to be a *nachdichtung* and condensation of Vālmīki, had clearly in mind the account of the delusion and false boon of Kumbhakarna recorded in the 10th *sarga* of the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, and not the story as it appears in the *Yuddha*.

Then too what are we to make of the heroic struggles of the *Rāmāyaṇa* commentators to rationalize the two accounts of the cruel boon of Kumbhakarna and of modern scholar's efforts to explain the kind of variation we have seen at work here?<sup>2</sup>

If the authors of the *Uttarakāṇḍa* version- which we will have to assume is at the very least somewhat posterior to that of the *Yuddhakāṇḍa* - were as cavalier as all epic bards and poets about the consistency of multiple versions of a given story, the same is clearly not the case with later students of the poems, including the epic commentators and modern Indologists.

The former are in effect part of a large and complex cultural, literary, and theological project to interpret and represent the epic as history. Thus for them, differences in the details of a narrative-especially if they involve significant characters and events - are potentially critical problems requiring the investment of considerable ingenuity, learning, and intellectual capital by way of rationalization and remediation.

1. Raghavan 1973; Goldman 1984: 37-39.

2. Perhaps the epic poets had something of the attitude expressed to V. Narayana Rao by brahman women in Andhra regarding *Rāmāyaṇa* variations across versions. "Like most of the participants in the tradition, these women believe the *Rāmāyaṇa* to be fact and not fiction, and its many different versions are precisely in keeping with this belief. Contrary to the usual opinion, it is fiction that has only one version: a factual event will inevitably have various versions, depending on the attitude, point of view, intent, and social position of the teller." (Narayana Rao 1919: 115.)

How else are we to understand, for example, the detailed concern and deep division of opinion expressed by several *Rāmāyaṇa* comentators at 6.62.4 (= Vulgate 6.75.4) over the actual airspeed of Hanumān during his two round trip flights between Lankā and the Himālayas to fetch and replace the mountain of healing herbs or their continual obsession with and disagreements over the actual calendar dates of the various events, battles etc. described in the poem?

Thus a primary concern of the commentators who exert considerable influence on the textual and interpretive history of the poem from around the 12th century to the 17th is to validate the work as a basically unitary and internally consistent narrative of real events that, even if they took place in the most remote antiquity (the *tretāyuga*), nonetheless played out in real and calculable time in real geographic locations. This is not to say that they accepted everything in their received manuscripts as belonging to the authentic composition of the First Poet or, in consequence, as correct history. On the contrary they argue among themselves about many matters both philological and hermeneutic, declaring one passage or another to be either authentic (*pāñkta*) or interpolated (*praksipta*) and engaging in interpretive disputation- often violent or mocking- with their predecessors. Although they may thus disagree- even sharply, on occasion-<sup>1</sup> with each other in these matters, the common goal of each is to edit, and explain the *Rāmāyaṇa* as a clear, unitary and internally consistent narrative of an exemplary and theologically significant history.

Like their traditionalist counterparts, western and westerntrained Indologists have been alert to and interested in variants and especially apparent contradictions in the epic narratives. However, unlike the *Rāmāyaṇa* commentators whose project leads them to rationalize and erase such differences, modern scholarship has tended to stress their importance even to the point of occasionally overstating it. This is because the philological goal has been to use these narrative differences as evidence for the position that instead of being the unitary and internally consistent historical narratives of single authors, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mbh* are instead complex, digressive and often carelessly compiled products of many bards, redactors and scribes living and working in different times and places.

1. Compare for example Mādhava Yogin's mocking critique of "*Yadvābhṭa*" (apparently Govindarāja) and Satyatīrtha's constant and cutting refutation of the opinions of Mahevaratīrtha and Nāgeśa Bhṭa. For the commentary of Mādhava Yogin see the *Śrīmadvālmīkirāmāyaṇam* with *Amṛtakataka* of Mādhavayogi (1960)

Thus, for western scholars, apparent contradictions such as the one concerning the reason for Kumbhakarna's sleep can be read as the result of the complex and even chaotic textual history of these works with multiple variants being added in the absence of any single author or even any consistent and alert editorial agency that could prevent, eliminate or rationalize them. In keeping with this understanding, western students of the epic have often proposed the excision of passages on the grounds that their narratives conflicted with similar ones that were or appeared to be earlier or more authentic. This sort of variation, in Jacobi's terminology, could be used to demonstrate the *unechtheit* of a passage. In this way, for example Jacobi attempted to reject as ungenue much of the central portion of the *Sundarakāṇḍa*.<sup>1</sup> In many cases, however, these excisions were subsequently shown to have no demonstrable basis in the critical editions of the poems produced by the scholars at the Oriental Institute in Vadodara and the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in Pune respectively.

Both of these approaches to textual variance in the epics have yielded interesting results. The first has left us with a fascinating and useful corpus of textual exegesis that shows us how deeply imbedded the epics were in the complex cultural and intellectual universe of pre-modern Sanskrit scholarship. It demonstrates the extraordinary intellectual and linguistic resources traditional scholars had at their disposal in pursuit of their hermeneutic project and it shows us with tremendous clarity how deeply important the understanding of what some might think of as extravagantly mythological tales as in fact consistent, genuine and verifiable history was and to a great extent still is, to Indian audiences.

By the same token, modern text-critical studies of the epics, many dealing with the kind of variation discussed above, has, despite its occasional excesses, of course contributed enormously to our scientific knowledge of both the genetic and receptive history of these endlessly fascinating texts.

But what the case of Kumbhakarna may well suggest to us is that both of these approaches may be reading too much into this type of variation. We should perhaps be neither overly concerned, as are the Sanskrit commentators, to rationalize such difference though ingenious *explication de texte* nor too quick, like some western students of the epic, to see them as the result of authorial carelessness, editorial inattention or disparate and isolated moments of production.

1. For a discussion of this see Goldman 1998-99.

Instead, we may see them as contained within the rhetorical and performative parameters of epic composition and performance in which stories are repeated and revised in keeping with the specific local textual contexts in which they are embedded. Thus, although they may, in the end, tell us less than we would like about the textual history of the poems, they may encourage us to read them more carefully with our eyes now- like Kumbhakarṇa's - more fully awakened to the narrative and rhetorical strategies of their authours.

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# A STUDY OF VRATAS AS DEPICTED IN THE BṚHANNĀRADĪYA-PURĀṆA

BY

S. JENA

[अस्मिन् निबन्धे विदुषा लेखकेन बृहन्नारदीये पुराणे निर्दिष्टानां व्रतानां विवेचनं प्रस्तुतम् । प्रारम्भे बृहन्नारदीयपुराणस्य स्वरूपकालादिविषयकं निर्देशं विधाय व्रतानां विवेचनं कृतम् । प्रायेण अत्र निर्दिष्टानि व्रतानि विष्णुव्रतानि एव सन्ति ।]

The *Bṛhannāradya purāṇa* is an Upa-purāṇa consisting of 38 chapters and nearly 3600 verses. It is datable to 750-900 A.D.<sup>1</sup> on the other hand, the *Nārādīya-purāṇa* divided in to two parts-*purva* and *uttara* having 125 and 82 chapters respectively, is regarded as one of the eighteen major purāṇas. A critical study of the *Nārādīya purāṇa* shows that it is not a unified work; rather it is a compilation and hence all the chapters of this purāṇa cannot be assigned to one and the same date.<sup>2</sup> Coming to the *Bṛhannārādīya* we observe that its 38 chapters are incorporated in the *Nārādīya-purāṇa* part I. Chs 1-41, of course admitting a number of variants and thus it is not an independent work. The real themes of a purāṇa i.e. the *pañcalaksana* characteristics are absent in it, the main themes are descriptions of Vaiṣṇava festivals and ceremonies. As the words *bṛhat vṛddha* etc. are generally prefixed to the titles of late texts, the *Bṛhannārādīya* is actually a later sectarian work on Viṣṇuism lacking all the characteristics of a major purāṇa.<sup>3</sup>

In the *Bṛhannārādīya-purāṇa* only six chapters are devoted for describing the *vratas* (chs 16-21). The *vratas* depicted are :- *Śukla-dvādaśī vrata*, *paurṇamāsī-vrata*, *Dhvajāropaṇa-vrata*, *Hari-pañcaka-vrata*, Out of these six devotional *vratas* ch. 16 of the *Bṛhannārādīya*, deals with *Śukla-dvādaśī-vrata*. It alludes to twelve *dvādaśī-vratas* for the twelve months of the year and the worship of specific image of Viṣṇu on each

1. For details Vide Hazra, R. C. - *Studies in the Upa-purāṇas* vol. I pp. 335-344.

2. See Rocher, Ludo - *The Purāṇas* p. 203.

3. Vide Hazra, R. C. - *Op. Cit.* pp. 335-336.

See also Nambiar, K. Damodaran - *Nārada Purāṇa: A Critical Study* p. 241.



*Śukla-dvādaśī* day. Starting with Mārgaśīrṣa-Śukla-dvādaśī they are as follows:

Name of dvādaśī	Image of Viṣṇu to be worshipped
Mārgaśīrṣa-śukla-dvādaśī	Keśava
Pauṣa	Nārāyaṇa
Māgha	Mādhava
Phālguna	Govinda
Caitra	Viṣṇu
Vaiśākha	Madhusudana
Jyeṣṭha	Trivikrama
Āśāḍha	Vāmana
Śrāvaṇa	Śrīdhara
Bhādrapada	Hṛṣīkeśa
Āśvina	Padmanābha
Kārttika	Dāmodara

Fast (*upavāsa*), worship of Viṣṇu with all the *upacāras* like flowers, incense etc., performance of *homa*, keeping awake at night (*jāgarāṇa*) and dance and music form some of the primary requisites of this *vrata*. on completion of a year the person concerned worships Lakṣmī-nārāyaṇa image of Viṣṇu on the 15th day of the bright fortnight of Mārgaśīrṣa; at that time in *sarvatobhadra maṇḍala* by installing twelve pots filled with water which represent the twelve forms of Visnu mentioned above, offering them all the *upacāras* including *pañcāmṛta* etc. and uttering their names starting with Keśava, and ending with Damodara to brings the *Śukla-dvādaśī-vrata* observed for the whole year to a conclusion.

*Purnamāsī-vrata* is observed on the full moon day of every month. One is to start this *vrata* on the full moon day of Mārgaśīrṣa and conclude it on the full moon day of Kārttika. Without taking food on the full moon day one offers worship to the moon as well as Lakṣmī-nārāyaṇa with all the necessary *upacāras*. On completion of a year, like the *Śukla-dvādaśī-vrata* on the full moon day of Kārttika the person concerned places a pitcher filled with water in *sarvatobhadra-maṇḍala* and then installing Lakṣmī-nārāyaṇa on it, worships the Lord with flower incense, *pañcāmṛta* etc. and thus brings to completion the *purnamāsī-vrata* observed for a year.

Ch. 18 of the *Bṛhannārādīya-purāṇa* depicts the procedures of *dhvajāropana-vrata*. It is about raising a banner atop on a Viṣṇu-temple or on the premises of the Viṣṇu temple. Generally on the *Śukla-dvādaśī*

day of Kārttika a flag is required to be hoisted and at that time worship should be offered to the sun, moon and Garuḍa as well. Observance of *dhvajāropana-vrata* is as good as worshipping a Śiva-liṅga or a holy basil plant (*tulasī*) or taking a dip in the river Ganges. In its culogy this upa-purāna narrates an interesting story as mentioned below.

In the *Kṛta* age in the lunar race there was a righteous king named Sumati. He was very much devoted to Viṣṇu and was exemplary. His queen too fully co-operated in all his acts and took pleasure in dancing before the lord. Once it so happened that the sage Vibhāṇḍaka in the company of his disciples reached the royal palace to pay a visit to the royal couple. The king offered due hospitality to the sage and the sage pleased with the king asked the latter as to why he, out of so many Viṣṇu-*Vratas* was giving much emphasis on the observance of *dhvajāropana-vrata*.

In reply the king said to the sage that in his previous birth he was a Śudra Mātali by name. Given to all sorts of evil deeds, he was completely leading very sinful life. Deserted by his friends and relatives, in course of wandering through a forest he chanced to see a dilapidated Viṣṇu temple, in the vicinity of which there was a great pond abounding with ducks and swans. Having constructed a hut, he took up his residence there and led the life of a hunter. And his queen Satyamati happened to be the daughter of a niṣāda in her former birth. A resident of Vindhya mountain she bore the name kokilinī. Used to dirty habits and practices she was also disliked and deserted by her family members. Kokilinī revealed all the secrets of her life before Mātali and in course of time both of them began to live together as husband and wife in the compound of that Viṣṇu temple. One night they took enough meat and wine and in course of their revelry unknowingly tying a piece of cloth on the top of a staff that worked like a flag, danced on the temple premises in a state of ecstatic frenzy and fell dead. When the messengers of Yama reached there to take both the sinners to the hell, they were prevented from doing so by the messengers of Viṣṇu. The messengers of Viṣṇu told the messengers of the god of death that as Mātali and Kokilinī had, before their death, unknowingly hoisted a flag and danced in the compound of Viṣṇu temple, they had been cleansed of all their past sins. He who resides in a Viṣṇu temple or cleans its campus and offers water or candle in honour of the lord, with all his sins getting automatically absolved, attains the merit of going to the Viṣṇu-loka.

The messengers of Viṣṇu guided Mātali and Kokilinī to the world

of Viṣṇu where both of them resided for many thousand years. And it is due to the grace of Viṣṇu that they not only enjoyed a blessed life in the heaven, but also they were born as king Sumati and queen Satyamati in this present birth. Lastly Sumati told the sage Vibhāṇḍaka that as putting a flag inadvertently at the Viṣṇu temple earned him such high religious merits, this was the reason as to how he had turned into a great devotee of Viṣṇu giving much emphasis on the observance of dhvajāropana-vrata.

Next we come to *Hari-pañcaka-vrata*. This *Vrata* is observed for five days from 11th to the 15th day of the bright fortnight of every month. A performer starts this *Vrata* in the month of Mārgaśīrṣa and observing it for a year completes it in the next Mārgaśīrṣa. Fast for five days, restraint of senses, keeping awake at night, worship of Viṣṇu with all the necessary ingredients including *pañcāmṛta* and bath of the Lord with milk on the full moon day form some of the most essential parts of this *Vrata*. It is only on the sixth day that the adherent of this *vrata* partakes of food in the company of his family members and relatives after duly feeding the Brahmins to their hearts content.

*Māsopavāsa-vrata* is the vow of observing fast for a month. Referring to the efficacy of observing this *Vrata* the *Brĥannāradīya-purāṇa* ch. 20 says that if somebody observes it only for once, he reaps the fruit of performing a Vājapcyā sacrifice, doing it twice, he gets the results of conducting a Pauṇḍarīka sacrifice and observing it thrice one enjoys the merits of a Soma sacrifice and so on.

In describing the general procedures of Ekādaśī-vrata, the most important of all the Viṣṇu-vratas, the *Brĥannāradīya-purāṇa* ch. 21 maintains that this *Vrata* is to be observed on the eleventh day of both the fortnights of a month and as such there are 24 Ekādaśīs in a lunar year. Food is strictly prohibited on the day of Ekādaśī. And the performer misses four meals in three days i.e. he takes his food only once on the 10th in the noon, observes fast both day and night on the 11th and on the 12th he misses one meal. If Ekādaśī is mixed up with 10th, then *saṅkalpa* about fast is to be made at night; if *daśamī* extends beyond midnight and the Ekādaśī becomes mixed up with it, *saṅkalpa* is to be made the next day after noon. On the 10th the performer rises in the morning, cleaning his teeth and taking a bath he duly adores the image of Viṣṇu. Then on the 11th after getting up he cleanses his body and worships the Viṣṇu image with incense and flower and offers several *upacāras*. He fasts that day. He recites hymns of praise in honour of Viṣṇu and falls prostrate on the ground in front of the Lord.

He keeps awake at night. On the 12th he takes a bath in the morning, offers worship to Viṣṇu, dedicates his fast to the God and thus brings this *vrata* to an end by feeding the Brahmins and by performing the *pāraṇā*. It is also desired that on the day of observing this *vrata* one should avoid speaking with atheists, heretical persons, people of abominable conduct, those that are guilty of grave sins and the like.

Then highly extolling the fast on the *Ekādaśī* day the *Upapurāṇakāra* alludes to an ancient story of sage Gālava and his son Bhadraśīla which runs as follows.

On the banks of the river Narmadā there lived a sober and self-restrained Brahmin Gālava by name. He had a son called Bhadrasīla who was devoted to Lord Viṣṇu from his early childhood. At the time of playing with other children Bhadrasīla always made an image of Viṣṇu and offered him worship with devotion. He preached the greatness of Viṣṇu and also laid emphasis on the observance of *Ekādaśī-Vrata*. Surprised by this glorious conduct of his son at such a tender age, once Gālava asked him about it and Bhadrasīla submitted thus :

In his previous birth he was a king born in the lunar dynasty-Dharmakīrtti by name. He ruled over his kingdom righteously for many thousand years, but due to the evil company he swerved from the right path and committed many sins. Once while hunting he reached the banks of river Revā and killed many animals in the forest in the company of his soldiers. Tormented by scorching rays of the Sun and fatigued with hunger and thirst he took his bath in the river. At that time with no retinue in sight, he came across some pilgrims who were engaged in observing *Ekādaśī-vrata* on the banks of the river. At the approach the night, seeing no other way Dharmakīrtti, through utter starvation, joined the pilgrims in the observance of *Ekādaśī-vrata*, kept awake the whole night and fell dead the next morning.

The servants of Yama took the king to the god of death, but it was Citragupta who pointed out that though a great sinner, Dharmakīrtti had been absolved of all his sins owing to keeping awake at night and observing *Ekādaśī-vrata* without food on the banks of river Revā.

Lastly Bhadrasīla apprised his father that the observance of *Ekādaśī-vrata* is highly rewarding. By observing this *vrata* unwillingly not only all his sins have been washed away, but also he is able to recollect all events of his previous life (*jātismara*). Because of this he has spent many thousand years in Viṣṇu-loka and now he has his birth in a righteous Brahmin family. And as such, the remembrance of the past events of his life impels him, in the present stage, to stick to the adoration of

Viṣṇu along with the observance of *Ekādaśī-vrata* from such an early age.

Now on a critical analysis of these *vratas* as depicted in the *Br̥hannārādīya-purāṇa* it may be said that though the redactor of this *Upa-purāṇa* has presented the most glorified account of *dhvajāropana-vrata* and the *Ekādaśī-vrata* by referring to the story of king Sumati and that of Bhadrāsīla, it is true that observance of any *vrata* imposes upon the performer certain restrictions which require to be strictly adhered to. Anybody or everybody is not competent to undertake a *vrata*. Before taking up a *vrata* one must be ready both physically and mentally. Not only should he maintain bodily cleanliness, but also mental purity is an absolute necessity for observing the *vrata*. Thus the *Purāṇa*-texts lay emphasis on acquisition of some human virtues such as kindness, forbearance, truthfulness, charity, sanctity, restraint of senses, contentment, and freedom from envy or malice etc. which form preliminary requisites for taking up a vow in life.

Thus a *vrata* or vow puts restrictions on our life. It restricts our food, it restricts our habits. Visiting temples and company of saintly people arouse in us pious thoughts and noble feelings. Study of religious scriptures inculcate also high moral values in our hearts. In this way by persuading us to maintain purity and sanctity and to stick to morality while observing a *vrata*, it transforms us into a pious human beings in the society. It changes our life pattern and makes us friendly and sympathetic to the society. No doubt there is a lot of exaggeration in the aforesaid two stories which cannot be gainsaid, but it is true that coming in contact with the adherents of *vratas* just as Dharmakīrtti come in contact with the *Ekādaśī-vratins*, there come great changes in the lives of thieves, robbers, burglars, hunters and criminals transforming them into persons of unblemished conduct and noble personalities in the later phase of their life. The performance of *vratas* in this way has a social relevance in changing the face of our modern contaminated society infested with cruelty, atrocity, murder, blasts, genocide and above all, terrorist activities.

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KAMBOJAS  
THE VEDIC PEOPLE WHO MOVED ALLOVER WORLD

BY

T. P. VERMA

[पुराणम् पत्रिकायाः पञ्चमवर्षस्य द्वितीयाङ्के (जुलाई १९६३) डॉ. डी. सी. सरकारमहोदयेन 'The Land of the Kambojas' शीर्षको निबन्धः प्रकाशितः । तस्मिन्नेवाङ्के डॉ. वासुदेवशरण अग्रवालमहोदयेन तद्विषये स्वमतं प्रकाशितम् । तदुत्तराङ्के के. डी. सेठनाममहाभागेनापि तद्विषये लिखितम् । अस्मिन् निबन्धे लेखकेन कम्बोजानां मूलस्थानं विनिर्दिश्य तेषां भारतीयमूलकत्वं तेषां जगतो विविधस्थानेषु प्रसरणमपि प्रमाणपुरस्सरं प्रतिपादितम् ।]

**History beyond National Boundaries :**

The history of the region about which we propose to deal in this short study belongs to a period (time) when present day national boundaries did not exist. The most illusive myth of modern history writing is the nation-state notion promulgated by European colonialists that has made people crazy about their identity in fantastic way. It is this idea that prompted scholars to write a history of five thousand years of Pakistan. The Indo-Europeanists have perceived movements of ancient people mostly in terms of invasions. They meticulously collect and analyse data pretending a judge but present as advocate directing towards Indo-European bias. They are usually intolerant and impatiently reject all others who dare to diverge. The present article is an attempt to trace the history of the Kambojas as related in the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas. Their genealogy is recorded in fairly good detail. Most interesting thing is that variations in genealogical tables are negligible and therefore reliable. It is astounding that the Indo-Europeanists had rejected it as trash. Our investigations reveal that it was Central Asia where Manu and his eldest son Ila (later Ilā) flourished. This was the region which was the scene of most of the Vedic hymns and the field of the operation of Indra and many other deities. Several generations later the Kambojas emerged from the Puru or Kuru family in the Pamir-Badakshan region and had made their impact from Trans-Caucasian regions to Iran and in many other countries in Asia including Sri Lanka and Cambodia. Then there were no national boundaries and people moved freely.

In this thesis of ours there is a risk of displeasure of our people who since about two centuries have believed the British India as Bhārata the home of Vedic or Hindu culture and civilization, and, to a certain degree delight of the Indo-Europeanists who repeatedly are asserting invasions (of tribes including Aryans) from Central Asia. But both are not right.

### The Early Kambojas :

The Kambojas are called descendents of Puru or Kuru of the Lunar family in the Mahābhārata living in the Pamir-Badakshan region of Central Asia. Their history is traceable in the Vedic and post-Vedic literature of India. Their earliest ancestor was Aila Purūravas, the son of Ilā and Budha. According to Matsyapurāṇa Manu was the king of the Meru (Pamir) region.<sup>1</sup> He abducted the throne and installed his eldest son Ila, also called Sudyumna, in his place. When the latter had gone on a hunt in Śaravaṇa, (identified with Zeravshn in middle Sogdiana) where Śiva and Umā were amusing, due to a curse he suddenly found himself transformed into a woman, now called Ilā.<sup>2</sup> In this form she married Budha, the son of Candra and bore a son named Purūravas. The rulers who descended him are called Ailas after Ilā. In due course of time the ensuing families became famous as Purus and Kurus after two other famous kings of this royal family. Some time later many royal families like the Kambojas, the Bāhlikas sprung called Kurus and/or Purus in the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas. Still later many more families (or tribes such as the Śakas, Yavanas, Pahlavas, Parsas, Parthas etc. branched off to scatter all over Central Asia. A group of these people are called Pañca-Janāḥ or 'pañcagaṇāḥ'.<sup>3</sup>

The history of the king of Kambojas, Bāhlikas and many others is recorded in Indian literature by names, often naming their father and grandfather. This gives Indian literature the status of written history. In contrast there are only traces of place names in the records of other ancient civilizations on the basis of which their movements are conjectured. Piecing together such fragmentary historical facts and analyzing in the light of Indo-European bias they have derived faulty conclusions. One among these is the Iranian affiliation of the Kambojas. We will have occasion to discuss this.

1. Matsyapurāṇa, Chapters II and 12.

2. Such incidents cannot be rejected as myth because a transgender (male) has given birth to a child on June 29, 2008 in USA.

3. Ibid., 88. 128 and Harivamśa, 14.4.



### Archaeology and Literature supplement Each Other :

Here is our approach to the history of mankind, with its locale in Meru or Pamir region in Central Asia. We get support from archaeological investigations besides Vedic and Purāṇic literature. It is needless to say that according to Purāṇic accounts large part of Soviet Central Asia, Eastern Iran including north-eastern China was intimately connected with a single culture that was Vedic.<sup>4</sup> In later times several tribes practicing Vedic traits in different degrees originated and spread all over Asia. It is no wonder if some Soviet scholars have discerned the elements of the Vedic culture in archaeological sites of Kurgan culture, the Andronovo culture in widely spread areas of Euroasia, as well as the BMAC culture of the north Afghanistan and beyond in the valley of Oxus that is backed by that of the Indus Valley. These archaeological discoveries combined with the history recorded in the Purāṇas and supported by some R̥gvedic hymns, complete the picture. The only obstacle may be felt in chronology or dating but that can be left to the excavators and interpreters to reach at some agreeable point in consideration with the Purāṇic and Vedic accounts.

Late Dr. S.P. Gupta tracing prehistoric connection between India and Soviet Central Asia had remarked "...Ranov called the Borykazghan assemblages as the 'Soan culture of Central Asia.' It really seems quite probable that the Soan culture originating in the Beas-Sutlej basin moved westward in the Soan region, crossed the Himalayas and reached the Pamirs at a very early stage of human civilization, sometime towards the end of the Middle Pleistocene period."<sup>5</sup>

### The Kambojas :

Kambojas were great Vedic scholars, i.e. Brahmanas as well as great fighters, i.e. Kṣatriyas. On the basis of the Ceylon inscriptions we may also call them traders i.e. Vaiśyas. But we do not favour such colonial classification of the people of India.<sup>6</sup> Now we investigate Indian literature about the Kambojas.

4. Vide my paper in Sākṣī : Itihāsa evaṃ Sanskriti Viśeshāṅka, 2009, pp. 17-41

5. India's Contribution to World Thought and Culture, 1970, ed. by Lokesh Chandra et. al., p. 241.

6. There are some modern myths that eclipse India's history created during the colonial rule. One among these is that the geography of India is limited to only those parts which the British could conquer and rule. Accepting that during ancient times Afghanistan was within the limits of the cultural geography of India, all connections with this region are subdued while writing a history of India. The other myth is related with Indo-European> Indo-Iranian> Indo-Aryan concept of history which reminds at every step that India was conquered by all who entered Afghanistan. The colonial historians are apt to perceive peoples movements in terms of invasions and conquests only.

### Pāṇini on Kamboja :

In 6th century BCE Kāmobja was one of the sixteen Mahājanapadas of India and Pāṇini locates it in the Pamir-Badakshan region of Central Asia. Prof. V. S. Agrawala notes about Pāṇini :

"It is here that the grammarian can be credited with having created his material in a very real sense by undertaking an original survey of the place-names in the vast area of the country stretching from Kamboja (Pamir region) and Kāpiśī (Begram in Afghanistan) to Kalinga (Orissa) and Sūrmasa Sūrmā Valley in Assam)."<sup>7</sup>

He further notes "Gandhāra, Kapiśā, Bāhlīka and Kāmboja are the four mahājanapadas the relative positions of which should be clearly understood on the map of Central Asia and Afghanistan. As we will see to the north-east of Hindukush was Kāmboja, north-west was Bāhlīka, south-east was Gandhāra and Kamboja. Contiguous to this region was 'Darwaza' which has been identified with Dvārakā by Motichandra. Dr. Rhys Davids has called it the capital of Kamboja for which there is no evidence. The Hindukush mountain ranges spreading east-west to the south of Kamboja separated it from India. Dr. Motichandra has identified Badakshan with 'Dvayaksha'. Pāṇini has quoted 'Dvāyākshāyaṇa and Trayākshāyaṇa together. Mahābhārata gives three names : 'Dvyaksha', Tryaksha and Lalāṭāksha. Out of these 'Dvāyākshāyaṇa is identified with Badkshan and Lalāṭāksha with Laddakh (north-eastern portion of Kashmir). Professor Lassen had correctly identified the Kamboja with the region south of Kashgar but that remained unheeded."<sup>8</sup> A Buddhist Vihara and a monk Buddharakshita from Badakshan is mentioned in two Brāhmi inscription of Kushana period from Mathura.<sup>9</sup>

### Language of Kambojas :

It has been argued that the Kambojas were Iranians because according to Yāska they spoke a different language. This is not true and is based on wrong conception. Yāska (2.1) is misquoted in this regard. It was perhaps Grierson who initiated this and his faulty reference to Yāska (2.2?) as well as conclusion is continued by all who followed him. There it is narrated that "Yāska, in his Nirukta, refers to the speech of the Kambojas as differing from that of the other Aryas."<sup>10</sup> But this

7. Agrawala, V.S., India as Known to Pāṇini, 1953, Varanasi, p. 35.

8. Agrawala, V.S., Pāṇini Kālīna Bhāratavarsha, 1996 (3rd Edition), Varanasi, p. 60.

9. Vide, Heinrich Luders Mathura Inscriptions, 1961, Göttingen, pp. 75-77 and note.

10. Vedic Index, volume I p. 138.

wrong notion (amounting to propaganda) is current since about a century. Actually opposite is the case where Yāska has quoted Kambojas as using Vedic word roots in their original sense and those in the Āryāvarta are used their derivatives. Now, the burden rests upon us to prove this by quoting from Yāska in original to remove the mist.

Yāska elaborates the Prakṛti, i.e. original, and the Vikṛti, i.e. derivative use of roots (*Athāpi prakṛtayā evaikesu bhāṣante vikṛtyā ekeṣu //3// Khaṅ Sū.*). Then he cites that the Kambojas who use the word 'śavatiḥ' of the root 'śava' in its original sense 'going' (Śavatirgatikarmā Kambojeṣveva bhāṣyate). And then after citing an example of the Vikāra of the root 'śavati' i.e. going, he mentions that here in the Ārya janapadas its derivative meaning is in use in the sense of a dead body from which the life has gone.<sup>11</sup> Yāska then explains the name Kamboja and gives three explanations for it. i) "Since their country is very cold they use blankets. (Kambojāḥ kambhalabhojāḥ te hi prāyeṇa kambalamupabhuñjante, himapradhānatvāttasya deśasya)." ii) "They use beautiful things, and the country is full of jewels. (Kamanīyabhojā vā "kamanīyāni prārthanīyāni dravyāni upabhuñjānte iti karmaṇyaṅ, pracura ratno hi sa deśaḥ." iii) "Blankets are beautiful and they face cold.

(Kambalaḥ kamanīyo bhavati// kamanīyaḥ prārthanīyo hi bhavati śītārtairiti śeṣaḥ)."

It is useless to speculate if this misconception was deliberate or a mistake. But certainly it is a matter of regret and anguish that a misinterpretation about the language of Kambojas is being repeated since about a century by great scholars of the Vedas and is used to prove them Iranians. It is interesting to note that during Pāṇini's time language of this region, which was no other than the Vedic was considered standard.<sup>12</sup> The Kauśītakī Brāhmaṇa is more specific on this point. It clearly states that "The language in the north is pronounced with intelligence; people go to north to learn language, and whosoever comes from there people assemble to hear him."<sup>13</sup> With such conclusive evidence how one can associate the Kambojian language with that of Iran? India is facing this type of Eurocentric orchestra at every step while dealing its history.

11. Niruktam of Yāska, Durgācārya, with comments by Mukundajhāsarman, (reprint 2002) Varanasi, p. 60-61.

12. Agrawala, India as Known to Pāṇini, p. 39.

13. Kauśītakī Br. 7. 6. तस्यामुदीच्याम्राज्ञतराःवागुच्यते उदं चा एव यंति वाचं शिक्षितुम्। यो वा तत आगच्छति तस्य वा शुश्रूषन्ते

### More about Language :

Galcha : The Pamir region, the country of ancient Kambojas, is known for speaking Galcha group of languages. At least seven Galcha dialects have been identified that are spoken in the region. These dialects are Valkhi, Shigali, Sirqoli, Jebaka, also called Sanglichī or Ishkashim, Munjani, Yidga and Yagnobi. In all these verb śavati is used in the sense 'to go'. The last mentioned dialect called Yagnobi is spoken around the headwaters of Zeravshan in the middle Sogdiana and here 'su' (derived from śava) is used in the sense 'to go'. Among these Valkhi (Bāhlikī) and Munjani (Mūnjavanti) are related with geographical names. Bahlika is well known and Mūnjavanta, famous for *Soma* is mentioned in Vedic literature.<sup>14</sup> Galcha seems to have derived from 'galda' (=speech).<sup>15</sup> In Sankrit 'gala' for throat and speech is in use in modern Punjabi. Galcha, Shigali and Sirqoli (both are two forms of Śrgali), as well as Yagnobi (derivable from Yajñña?) can be identified as Prākritis of Sanskrit. The Yagnobi group of languages is situated in the valley of Oxus in the Pamir, Badkshan and Tajikistan region. Most interesting is the name Zeravshan which can be identified with Śaravaṇa, mentioned as the garden of Śiva<sup>16</sup> where the king Ila (Sudyumna) entered and found himself transformed into a women.

Kam: Scholars have indulged in a variety of speculations about the words 'kam' and 'boja' or 'bhoja' in Kamboja. A very important information comes from Wikipedia<sup>17</sup> : "The element Kam is also reflected in the Kama valley lying between the Khyber Pass and Jalalabad; in place names like Kama-daka, Kamma-Shilman, Kama-bela of Kabol; the Kamdesh/Kamabrom, Kamich, Kama and Kamu of the Kunar and Bashgul valleys; as also the vast expanses of region called Kazal-Kam and Kara-Kam lying on either side of the Oxus, north of Afghanistan. The Ptolemian names Kamoi and Komdei also refer to these territories. It is also important to note that ancient Kamboja was located precisely in, and contiguous to these Kam localities."

The same source cites Bailey's opinion according to which 'Kambujiya or Kamboja would mean the "king ruling at will" or ultimately, "king at will".' This is typical European attitude indeed! It further cites that "According to another view, the name Kamboja is

14. Atharvaveda, V. 22. 5, 7, 8, 9, 14.

15. Monier Williams, Sanskrit English Dictionary, p. 351. col. I.

16. Matsyapurāna, 11, 44 and 45.

17. Etymology of Kamboja - Wikipedia, p. 2 of 11. (dated 1/17/2009).

derived from expression Kam + Bhuj, where Kam implies "region" and Bhuja or Bhoja (Iranian Boja) implies owner, lord or king. Thus the Kambojas are thought of as the Owners, Kings or Lords of a certain region or country called Kam."

These opinions appear speculative. In this regard Yāska's Nirukta and Indian tradition may be our best guide. According to Yāska 'kam' means beautiful or desirable (kamanīya). It will be meaningful if we replace the 'kam' or 'kama/kamma' with the adjective 'beautiful' in these words. The tradition shows that the Kāmbojas were the descendants of Druhyu, the son of Yayāti.<sup>18</sup>

This means that the whole 'kama-region' was beautiful and desirable. At present this area of the Pamir Mountains with 23000 ft. to 24000 ft. height with extremely cold climate; winters being too long and summers cool and short.

#### **Evidence from Airyanem Vaejah :**

This reminds us of Airyanem Vaejah, later Eranvej. mentioned in the Avesta. In this holy book it is said that Zoroaster lived in Airyanem Vaejah. This was one among the sixteen countries (recall the traditional sixteen mahājanapdas of India during Buddha period) to the north of all those. The Vendidad records that there used to be only two months of summer and ten months of winter. We find some more information about Airyanem Vaejah contained in the Avesta. According to it the first mountain on the earth was created here known as Hara Berezaiti; berezaiti means high meaning the High Hara (Śiva). It was believed that all mountains were connected by their roots to High Hara. This seems to be the Puranic Meru Mountain that emerged first, even before the Himalayas. There it is mentioned that all other mountains emerged around Meru afterwards. Avesta says that close to the mountain was a sea called Vourukash where the 'trees of all seeds' grew. From the mountain issued a large river called Raha. This has been equated with the river Araxes or Syr Darya. Raha may be easily equated with the Rgvedic river Rasā. Thus we have little doubt about the Airyanem Vaejah being identified with the Pamir region from where the Aila Dynasty ruled in remote antiquity called Ilāvṛtvaṣa. In the later period the region might have also known as the Ailavaṣa. The 'Airyanem Vaejah' is etymologically derivable from 'Ailānām varṣah'.

18. Vyāsaśishya, Kunvaralal, Bhāratīya Itihāsa Punarlekhan kyon, (Hindī) 1984, Delhi, p. 50. He combines parts of two śloka from Mahābhārata (I 84.20 and 22) to give the formation of the word Kāmboja. तस्मात् द्रुह्यो प्रियः कामो न ते सम्पत्स्यते क्वचित्॥२०॥ अराजा भोजशब्दं त्वं तत्र प्राप्स्यति सान्वयः॥२२॥

alternately 'Āryānām varṣah'. Āthravan Jarathustra (Priest Zoroaster) must have lived in some part of this region and for the Iranians of his time also this was a legendary holy place.

But the question of climate mentioned in the Avesta remains unanswered. For this we will have to go into the geological times. This is not comprehensible for modern historians and archaeologists who are trained to confine the history of humanity within ten thousand years. Even of these ten thousand years only three-fourth are used for civilizations and rest is reserved for nothing because no civilization appears to be dated before 7000 BP. It is regrettable that during last five decades the antiquity of emergence of man has gone up from one lakh years to more than four million years but historians and archaeologists are not ready to revise the dates of ancient civilizations that were fixed about two centuries ago. Thus the man who is endowed with faculties of thinking and talking is forced to remain in primitive stage for more than four million years!

The Avesta holds that "Trees of All Seeds" grew on the 'High Hara' mountain and this should not be taken lightly and rebuked as 'myth'. This notion is supported by the Purāṇas and the Vedas. We cannot escape the conclusion that there was a period in human history when Ilāvṛtavarṣa of Pamir region was not so inhospitable for human residence. Purāṇas speak about the people living here; they are called Devas, Gandharvas, & c. with exceptionally long life; and sometimes men also said to mingle with them. This was the region where most parts of the Vedas were composed. This was the region where Indra and other devas performed their divine feats which are so vividly described in the Ṛgveda. This was the time when Himalayas were still in the process of uplift. This was a beautiful land where precious jewels were found (pracura ratno hi sa deśah) and the whole region was beautiful (Kamanīya) also. The names of the countries to the north of the Ilāvṛtavaṣa (Pamir), given in the Purāṇas, are illustrative of very pleasant climatic conditions of the region. To the immediate north of Meru or Pamir was the country called Ramyakavarṣa, i.e. Beautiful Country; next to it was the country named Hiranyamayavarṣa, i.e. the Golden Country; to the extreme north was Uttarakuruvarṣa, i.e. the country of the Northern Kurus.<sup>19</sup> Beyond that was Uttara Samudra, the North Sea. This indicates a different geological set up. The combined testimony of the Avesta and the Purāṇas are sufficient to infer that nature was much more considerate for human settlements in this region than at

19. Viṣṇupurāṇa, 2.2.13.

present. To an investigating eye it is not impossible to discern different layers of time periods for changes in nature. For obvious reasons, it is not possible at present state of investigation to indicate these strata and the dates of some events but we must state that the geological features mentioned in the Avesta record very hoary antiquity. And the circumstances described in the Puranas go much more anterior in time.

Yāska in his Nirukta also has said the region was beautiful (*kamānīya*).

The linguistic explanation for the other part of the name 'boja' may be taken as a form of 'bhoja' as Yāska has explained it. There is some politico-historical background for this word also. Sircar notes "In the age of the Sātavāhanas, certain feudatories enjoyed the title Mahābhoja (from Bhoja or Bhojaka meaning 'a Jāgīradāra) and their wives were called Mahābhojī."<sup>20</sup> At another place he gives an example from South India. "At the end of the Hirahadgalli lates, it is stated that the writer of the document was the Rahasyādhikṛta (private secretary) and the Bhojaka of Kolivāla."<sup>21</sup> It is possible that Kambojas were officers (bhojaka) of some bigger power and became famous as Bhojakas, i.e. subordinate kings. Later on they spread all over the civilized world. The early Indian literature knows them to be scholarly Brāhmaṇas as well as Kshatriyas; but in Sri Lanka we find them engaged in trade, i.e. Vaiśya. It is also possible that one of their ancestors was named Kamboja as given in the origin of the 'Divine Sword' in Mahābhārata.

### **Kambojas vs Iranians : Missing Interpretation of History :**

The above discussion is sufficient to show that the Kambojas were historically related to the Vedic culture and we own a large amount of records in literature about them.

Undoubtedly the Iranians were Kambojas but the Kambojas were not Iranians. The ancient Iranian literature Avesta shows that they originated from Kamboja region, and, we also come to know that since the time of Zoroaster the Iranians started a culture that was based on opposing the Vedic Devas. That means that prior to Zoroaster deva-worship was widely practiced in ancient Iran. On the other hand there is a pool of notices in our literature to show that the region of Kamboja, the ancient Meru, was within the Vedic fold with many historical details. But on the other hand there is very little in Iranian and Greek literature except some notices of names on which speculative history is con-

20. Sircar, D.C. Indian Epigraphy, 1965, Delhi, p. 344.

21. Ibid, p. 357.

structed. We will have occasions to see that 'the Yavanas, Sakas, Tuṣāras, Dāruṇas, Pārasīkas, Hūṇas, Kirātas and the like' were not the non-Vedic people but the remnants of the old Vedic culture that started with its centre in Central Asia. Indian literature repeatedly asserts that they were the people who had foregone and/or forgotten the Vedic practices.

### A Point to Ponder :

Now we have reached a point where we have to think with cool mind about a question that should arise in every mind that is free from historical biases such as Indo-European. It is like this. The history records a constant flow of these Central Asian people and their only target appears to reach India and get absorbed in its culture and society. This cannot be narrated in terms of invasions as perceived by the colonial historians. All numismatic and epigraphical records of the Yavanas, the Śakas and Pahlvas, the Kuṣāṇas, thereafter the Hūṇas in India, go to show that they were eager to adopt culture and religion of the land and made every effort to surpass even the local kings in scriptural practices. The Yavanas of Bactria were the subjects of Asoka. Their history after the Mauryas is written as if some European people have conquered and ruled over the land of Hindustan. But it is not a truth. These Indian Greeks, as A.K. Narain calls them, have never looked back to Greece or their Seleucid brethren for inspiration but turned towards India for cultural ideas to become a part of India's history.<sup>22</sup> A tribe of Rishikas, the Yueh chih, starts from the Valley of the river Ili becomes Tusharas and gets established as the Kushanas in the valley of the Oxus which was once the seat of Vedic culture. But they did not stop there. They tried to reach Madhyadeśa. Now we know that Kanishka established a new Era after conquering (a digvijaya in Chakravarti fashion) up to Champa (Bhagalpur in Bihar)<sup>23</sup> but did not care to establish his rule here. The Kushanas confined themselves up to Mathura only. Interestingly all the Kushana kings claim to be Śaiva (Paramamāheśvara). And in a Mathura inscription Huvishka owed the Kushana kingdom to 'Chaṇḍavīra Sarva' i.e. Śiva.<sup>24</sup> A Kārdamaka king of Gujarat married his daughter to a Sātavāhana king and claims to rule as per scriptural injunctions. It is not strange that the Hindus also

22. Narain, A.K. The Indo-Greeks, 1980 (Indian edition) p. 10-11.

23. See B. N. Mukherjee, The Great Kushana Testament, 1998, Calcutta, in Indian Museum Bulletin, 1995.

24. Henerich Luders Mathura Inscriptions edited by Klaus L. Janert, 99, p. 138 ff.



absorbed them. On the other hand they refused any social or cultural relations with the Muslim and European invaders. Edward Sachau appears to share the experience of Alberuni who laments that Hindus call them mleccha and refuse to have any kind of relations with them.<sup>25</sup> A historian of India must keep in his mind this distinction by Hindus about these two sets of people.

### **Twisting of Literary Evidence :**

Coming back to Kambojas it is interesting to note how Mahābhārata evidence is twisted and concocted to support the colonial viewpoint. "The Bhīṣmaparva and Śāntiparva of the epic Mahābhārata sufficiently reveal that the Kambojas were living beyond the Uttara or the north (uttaraśāpare); and with other people of Uttarapātha, they are also addressed as Mlechchas (Barbarian people) or Asuras, lying outside the Indo-Aryan fold."<sup>26</sup> It seems the author of the main article has not seen the epic himself but is simply quoting others who also are quoting from earlier scholars.

### **Misuse of the Evidence of Divine Sword :**

Now we will see how the evidence of Divine Sword is interpreted by modern scholarship. They note that "The legend of Daivi Khadga or Divine Sword detailed in Śāntiparva of Mahābhārata again powerfully endorses the Kṣatriya-hood of the Kambojas. The sword as the "symbol of Kṣatriya-hood" was wrested by the warrior king Kamboja from the Kosala king Kuvalāśva alias Dhundhumāra, from whom it went to another warrior king called Mucukunda."<sup>27</sup> Here the tone of the statement is objectionable. The use of the word 'wrested' in stead of 'passed on' presents the squint colonial ideology of viewing Indian tradition. Actually Bhīṣma in Śāntiparva relates the history of the Divine 'Khadga' of Justice to Nakula, the Pāṇḍava which he used during the war. Nakula was proficient swordsman. There Bhīṣma relates several Aila and Aikshvāku warriors who wielded it to protect the subjects and punish the guilty. Starting from Manu he enumerates 30 great men, including Nakula, among whom the thirteenth was Dhundhumāra of Solar race and the 14th was Kāmboja.<sup>28</sup> There is no case of 'wresting' the sword from the Aikshvaku king but getting in succession.

25. Alberuni's India, by Edward C. Sachau, 1964, p. 19-20.

26. Kambojas - Wikipedia, p. 3 of 24, dated 1,17,2009.

27. Kambojas - Wikipedia, p. 13 of 24.

28. Mahābhārata, Śāntiparva, ch. 166, 73-81. (Gita Press edition)

Such distortions of facts are innumerable written by colonial historians. We have no doubt about this Kāmboja king was an Aila. Similarly his neighbour Bāhlīka king also was an Aila because in the Bhīṣmaparva he is said to be the great grandfather of Bhīmasena Pāṇḍava.<sup>29</sup> Thus the Kambojas and their neighbour Bāhlīkas were blood relations. The Kamboja king Sudakṣiṇa, who fought from the side of the Kauravas is clearly stated to be a Paurava. Thus the Kambojas, the Bāhlīkas and Kaurava-Pāṇḍava were blood relations, and it supports the story of Ilā and her territory in the Meru (Pamir) or the Kambojas area.

### Kambojas : The Vedic Scholars

#### Introductory :

We have seen above that the history recorded in Purāṇas unambiguously point out that Manu and his daughter Ilā started their rule from the Meru region identified with Pamir in Central Asia. The combined testimony of the Vedic and Puranic literature indicates that during that antiquity people of South Asia (i.e. India) had socio-religious, cultural, political, and economic and all other sorts of contacts with the people of Central Asia. Nay! Central Asia and South Asia formed a single cultural unit within the Vedic fold. Several Vedic hymns affirm that early Vedic people had their centre in Central Asia. The story of Vivasvāna and his wife Śaraṇyu in Ṛgveda shows that it was Uttarakuru where their twin sons, Aśvins were born.<sup>30</sup> This story also indicates that Central Asia was known for horse breeding since very early times. At the same time the story of Ilā points out that some sections in the region developed non-partriarchal societies. Some Western archaeologists have also perceived this in Andronovo culture.<sup>31</sup>

As per Indian tradition many people in Central Asia, Eastern Iran and Western China continued their interaction with the people in India where Vedic practices continued in some degree. There are many chronological layers of these interactions but no concerted work is available on the subject. However, we can point out some of these. For example, in the Rv. VII. 83.1, the Persians (Parśva) and the Parthians (Pṛithu) along with the Dāsas are said to have gone to east for plunder and Indra is requested to kill all of them whether Ārya or Dasyu. The

29. Māhābhārata, Bhīṣmaparva, ch. 104, 18.

30. Rīgveda X. 17.1-2.

31. See Kuzmina quoted by Edwin Bryant in 'The Quest for the Origins of Vedic Culture', 2001, p. 211-12.

Persians and Parthians lived in eastern Iran and their expedition in the east points to the western Afghanistan. Similarly the Dasyus lived to the north of Persians and Parthians. About Dasyus S.K. Chatterji notes "...we have in the south-cast of the Caspian where Dahae people noted by the Greeks, and Dāha is but the Iranian modification of Dāsa; and in Iranian the word dahyu (whence Modern Persian di) was in use, meaning "country" or "the countryside)..."<sup>32</sup> Similarly the other people mentioned in the Vedas are Paṇis, identified with Pernianas of the Greeks, also might have been their neighbour. A hymn of the Ṛgveda narrates that Saramā, the messenger of Indra crossed the river Rasā and reached the country of the Paṇis.<sup>33</sup> This has been identified with the Syr Darya. This is also supported by Bhāgavatapurāṇa where it is said the Paṇis live in Rasātala where Hiraṇyapura is situated.<sup>34</sup> This valley of the river Rasā was situated in the Hiraṇyamayavarsha, i.e. the Golden Country, referred to above. These were the Vedic people located in Central Asia. There were many other tribes who were the descendants of Aila family who are enumerated in the Manusmṛti as Kṣatriya people who attained Vṛṣalatva, i.e. they became degraded, because they abandoned Vedic rituals and, thus, the Vedic Brāhmaṇas became unavailable to them. These are the Pauṇḍrakas, Cauḍas, Draviḍas, Kāmbojas, Yavanas, Śakas, Pāraḍas, Pahlavas, Cīnas, Kirātas, Daradas, and Khaśas.<sup>35</sup> Here these people are expressly called Kṣatriyas but the colonial historians have propagated them as foreign invaders and/or non-Vedic people. Perhaps in the ancient legends of these tribes India was still a utopia where Vedic rituals were in practice.

We have noted that a series of archaeological sites all over the Central Asia and the Oxus Valley have been connected with the culture and civilization of the Vedas. Archaeological excavations in the Oxus Valley in southern Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Tak-Mak in Kirghizstan etc. give ample evidence of their relation with India or Vedic elements. Further north in Soviet Russia, several archaeological sites have been interpreted as having some or the other aspect of the Vedic culture. It is no wonder if R̥ṣika people of ancient literature have now acquired the name Russians. Their language also retains several elements of Vedic language. Besides this many place-names, river names and mountain names remind of Vedic affiliation.

32. The Vedic Age, p. 159.

33. Ṛgveda, X. 108.1.

34. Bhāgavatapurāṇa V. 24.30.

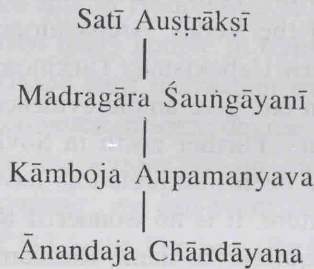
35. Manusmṛti, X. 43-44.

For example Kurgan remind of 'Kurujana', Andronovo reminds of 'Indra'. Altai Mountain and the river Ili remind of Ilā, the first ruler of the region. River Gaṅgā became so sacred that it attained a generic name for 'river'. Thus we find in Indo-China the river Me-khong (Mā Gaṅgā). In south China Yang-tsze-Kiang and about a dozen other rivers have derivatives gaṅgā (Kiang> Kang> Ghang).<sup>36</sup>

### Vaiśā Brāhmaṇa :

The Vaiśā Brāhmaṇa is a Brāhmaṇa of Sāmaveda about which Albert Webber writes "One fact deserves to be especially noticed here, namely, that several of the teachers mentioned in the Vaiśā Brāhmaṇa, by their very names, points us directly to the north-west of India, e.g. Kāmobja Aupamanyava, Madragāra Śauṅgāyana and Kauhala."<sup>37</sup> Here we would like to amend in this remark of Weber. It is not north-west of India but 'Udīchya' i.e. as Pāṇini and epics call it, which means 'north' or Afghanistan and Pamir region known for Vedic learning. This region must have been renowned for 'Soma' because Mūjavanta was situated here as is evidenced in the existence of a Galcha language Mujavanti in the area. The main content of richās from the 9th Maṇḍala of Rīgveda are in praise of Soma and therefore it is natural that one of its Brāhmaṇa<sup>38</sup> is attached with the region. It is likely that the Sāmaveda itself, and thereby many Ṛks of Ṛgveda also belonged to this area.

It mentions a long ācārya tradition of Vedic scholars. Kāmboja Aupamanyava was one such scholar who was either a son or a descendant of Upamanyu mentioned in the Ṛgveda.<sup>39</sup> We have noted above that according to Yāska and Kauṣītakī Brāhmaṇa these people were renowned for their distinct and pure Vedic language. A line of Vedic Ṛṣis recorded in the Vaiśā Brāhmaṇa is as follows :



36. See S.K. Chatterji in Vedic Age, p. 159 where he accepts Ganga an Austric word but its etymological roots can be found only in Sanskrit.

37. Quoted from, Kamboja Aupamanyava-Wikipedia, dated 1/18/2009, p. 4 of 11.

38. There are some other Brāhmaṇas of Sāmaveda such as Tāṇḍya (Pañcaviṃśa), Tavalakāra, Ārṣeya etc.

39. Rīgveda, I. 102.9

Two teachers of Satī Auṣtrākshī are said : one was the sage Auṣtrāksha and the other Suśravas Vārṣagaṇya.<sup>40</sup> It is possible that the sage Auṣtrāksha was the father as well as teacher of the Satī<sup>41</sup> and Suśravas Vārṣagaṇya her teacher. It is important to note that a female Ṛṣi is included in the list of Vedic teachers; especially significant because she was the guru of such a renowned teacher as Aupamanyava whom Yāska cites more than once in his Nirukta.<sup>42</sup> Authors of the Vedic Index note about 'an Aupamanyavī-putra occurring in the Baudhāyana Śrauta Sūtra as a teacher'.<sup>43</sup> 'It is interesting to note that among the entire lists of ancient Vedic teachers of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa Kāmboja Aupamanyava appears as the first Aupamanyava.' Thus the Upamanyu family of Kamboja maintained the tradition of Vedic learning for very long.

Kamboja Aupamanyava's guru was the Ṛṣi Madragāra Śauṅgāyani. It has been pointed out that he belonged to Madra country and community. Literature knows more than one Madra at different places that points out that they existed at different periods; may also be simultaneously. Pāṇini mentions a Madra in the Vāhīka region, i.e. old Punjab, now in Pakistan.<sup>44</sup> Still earlier in the Mahābhārata period also this janapada was located in the same region. Śalya was their king. They are mentioned with the Sauvīras, Kekayas, Gandhāras and Śākals. Their earlier branch is referred to as Uttara Madras in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa as living beyond Himālaya (?) (pareṇa Himavantam) in the neighbourhood of Uttara Kurus. Captive of their Indo-European bias, the authors of the Vedic Index quote Zimmer in locating Madras in the land of Kashmir, with a probability; but avoid saying anything from their side about the location of the Madras and the Kambojas, perhaps because in that case they would have to point out towards a region where the Vedic people of their imagination must not be located.<sup>45</sup> That the Kambojas, at any time belonged to Rajapura (Rajauri) in Kashmir is rejected by Agrawala.<sup>46</sup> This again was myth of modern times.

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40. These descriptions are based on the information contained in the article 'Kamboja Aupamanyava' - Wikipedia, 1/18/2009. p. 9 of 11. As I have not been able to consult the Vamśa Brāhmaṇa there may be some mistake in the spelling of these names.

41. See Rgveda, I. 164, 16 for the use of the word 'Satī' for women.

42. Nirukta, I. 1, II. 2, 6, and 11 & c.

43. Vedic Index I, p. 127.

44. Agrawala, V.S., Pāṇinikālīna Bhāratavarsha, p. 40, 66.

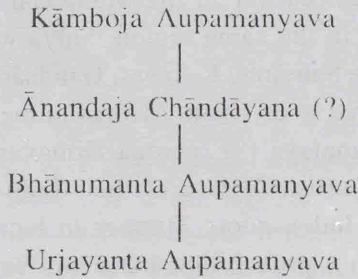
45. Vedic Index, II, p. 123.

46. Agrawala, V.S., Pāṇinikālīna Bhāratavarsha, p. 61, fn.

However, Pāṇini also mentions one Himavata which Agrawala equates with Hemodan Mountain<sup>47</sup> and Narain with the Hemodos.<sup>48</sup> Thus Himavantam of Aitareya Brāhmaṇa may not be equated with the Himalayas.

It is interesting to note that in ancient literature we find some people are prefixed 'uttara' meaning northerner. This indicates that it was an earlier settlement of that people. Thus the Kurus of Kurukṣetra of modern Haryana and Madras of the Punjab must be regarded as the late settlers in these regions. In ancient times they were settled in the north of Pamir. Similarly, 'Parama' prefix with the Kambojas and the Ṛṣkas may indicate either an ancient settlement or 'Farther' settlement. But one thing is certain and that these tribes were Vedic people since remote antiquity.

The Vamśa Brāhmaṇa further mentions the pupil of Kāmboja Aupamanyava. He was the guru of Ānandaja Chāndāyana who in turn was the guru of Bhānumanta Aupamanyava. Bhānumanta Aupamanyava was the guru of Urjayanta Aupamanyava. In table from it is as below :



It is suggested that 'Vedic teachers Bhānumanta Aupamanyava and Urjayanta Aupamanyava of the Vamśa Brāhmaṇa list were likely the son and grandson of Kamboja Aupamanyava.' But to me it is probable that it was the same family or school of Vedic Ṛṣi and Ānandaja Chāndāyana (i.e. singer of hymn) also belonged to the same family of Aupamanyavas.

The Chāndogya Upaniṣad mentions one Prācīnaśala Aupamanyava<sup>49</sup> which points out the antiquity of the family of Upamanyu of Kamboja region. The Ailas must have been earlier than the Kambojas.

47. Agrawala, India as Known to Pāṇini, p. 70.

48. Narain, A.K. From Alexander to Kanīṣka, 1979, Varanasi, p. 20.

49. Vedic Index, II, pp. 45-46.

### **Kāambojas and Aikṣvāku Kings :**

The Kāambojas get mention in the history of the Aikṣvāku family also. Here they are Kṣatriyas, not Brāhmaṇas. The Purāṇas relate that Aikṣvāku king Bāhu, the seventh descent from king Hariścandra was defeated and driven out of his kingdom by the Haihayas and the Tālajaṅghas who were assisted by the Śakas, Yavanas, Kāambojas, Pāradas and Pahlavas.<sup>50</sup> As history goes on king Sagara, the son of Bāhu defeated the Haihayas and the Tālajaṅghas and punished all other tribes who assisted them. It is said that all these Kṣatriya tribes were degraded and deprived of Vedic practices.<sup>51</sup> It is interesting to note Alberuni's version of this incident.<sup>52</sup>

### **Epic Mahābhārata :**

At the time of the Bhārata war we find Kāamboja and Bāhlika kings as belonging to the Puru family and fighting from the side of the Kauravas. All the ruling families from the valley of Oxus in Afganistan to Kuruṣetra were connected with each other by matrimonial and family relations. Mādri, the second wife of Pāṇḍu was the daughter of the king of Madra who was called 'Bāhlika Puṅgava' (Bāhlika great) that means he was scion of the Bāhlikas.<sup>53</sup> Their history is traceable from the Mahābhārata. Devāpi, Bāhlika and Śāntanu were the sons of Pratīpa. Śāntanu's sons were Bhīshma, Vicitravīrya and Citrāṅgada. All three were issueless. Dhṛtarāṣṭra (blind) and Pāṇḍu (pale or jaundice) were born of Vyāsa. Thus king Bāhlika was great grandfather of the Kaurava and Pāṇḍava princes. "Throughout the Mahābhārata Bāhlika is spoken of as an elder member of the Kuru family."<sup>54</sup> At the time of war Somadatta, the Mahārājā of Bāhlika is said to be old grandfather of the Bharatas.<sup>55</sup> King Bāhlika, the second son of Pratīpa is said to have gone to his maternal uncle and abandoned the throne in favour of his younger brother Śāntanu. It is nowhere stated where his maternal uncle lived. It is possible that the kingdom of Bāhlika was this place and hence he got this name. Dhṛtarāṣṭra calls him his grandfa-

50. Vāyupurāṇa, 88, 122. This history is narrated in the Harivamśapurāṇa (13.30-31) also. Certainly it shows that in those days of antiquity the field of their activity was very wide from northern Afghanistan to the whole of northern India.

51. Ibid., 88, 139-143.

52. Sachau, Edward C., Alberuni's India, p. 20.

53. Mahābhārata, I. 112. 3.

54. Mishra, Krishna Chandra, 'Bāhlika' in Bhārati, Central Asia Number, No. IX-X, 1966-68, p. 216.

55. Mahābhārata, II. 58. 1.

ther. And thus Somadatta and Bāhlīka, the son of Pratīpa were the same person. In the svayamvara of Draupadī king Somadatta and his three sons Bhūr, Bhūriśravā and Śala were present and they are called Kaurava. Similarly, Kāmboja Sudakṣiṇa also was present and is called Paurava.<sup>56</sup> Thus the Bāhlīkas and the Kāmbojas were descendents of Puru/Kuru. There is an interesting instance in Mahābhārata which explains the formation of the word Kāmboja. King Yayāti on refusal by his son Druhyu to exchange his youth with him, cursed him "O son! You will therefore rule such a country where your desire (kāma) will not be fulfilled. You and your family will rule as 'Bhoja' without the title of 'king' (arājā).<sup>57</sup> Here 'Kāma' and 'Bhoja' are beautifully indicated in two separate verses to explain the word Kāmboja. It is well known that king Yayāti asked all of his five sons to exchange his youth so that he could enjoy life for some more time, but all of them refused except the youngest one, Pūru. Thus it is said that the descendants of other four sons became progenitors of different tribes all over the world. It is a matter of history to trace descendants of his four sons all over the world; but here it is sufficient to say that the Kāmbojas were the descendents of Druhyu and were deprived of the use of the word 'Rājā'. There are a large number of notices to the Kāmbojas in the Mahābhārata, it does not seem necessary to note all these.

Thus the history recorded in the Mahābhārata conclusively shows that the Bāhlīkas of Bactria on the river Oxus, and the Kāmbojas located in the Badakshan-Pamir region were the scions of the same Puru/Kuru family to which the Kauravas ruling over Kurukṣetra on the river Sarasvatī belonged. A detailed and reliable family tree right from Purūravas, the son of Ilā to the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas at the time of the Great Bhārata War is traceable in the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas. Thus it is not possible to deny this history and call it a myth or concocted one. Therefore the modern colonial view to relate Kāmbojas with the Iranians should be rejected.

### Worldwide Migration of the Kāmbojas :

It seems that after the Great War they migrated to different regions of Asia and have left traces of their living there in archaeological remains as noted by several writers of antiquity. Ignorant about their

56. Mahābhārata, I. 185, 14-15. [कौरव्यः सोमदत्तश्च पुत्राश्चास्य महारथाः॥१४॥ समवेतास्त्रयः शूरा भूरि भूरिश्रवाः शलः। सुदक्षिणश्च काम्बोजो दृढधन्वा च पौरवः॥१५॥]

57. Ibid., I. 84. 20 & 22. तस्माद् द्रुह्यो प्रियः कामो न ते सम्पत्स्यते॥२०॥ अराजा भोज शब्दं त्वं तत्र प्राप्स्यसि सान्वयः॥२२॥



genealogical history recorded in the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas many speculations have been advanced by scholars. Europeanists emphasize Iranian affiliation of the Kambojas. Some renowned scholars have seen in them Indo-European tribes from Caucasus region swarming the Punjab region. It is discussed in following lines.

#### A. Question of Iranian Affiliation :

Even after accepting Aryan or Vedic affinities of the Kambojas almost all historians obstinately swing to their Iranian origin because according to Indo-European movement theory Indo-Iranians come first and the Indo-Aryans were last in the trail. Below we give a number of points that advocate the Iranian affiliation; many of these are due to ignorance while others amount to twisting of facts gathered from the Mahābhārata etc.<sup>58</sup> Readers may form their opinion in the light of history of the Kambojas outlined above.

- i) Ancient Kamboja was a centre of Iranian civilization.
- ii) Zoroastrian religious customs were practiced by them.
- iii) They spoke Avestan language.
- iv) Yāska (700 BC) in his Nirukta, contrasts the speech of Kambojas with that of the Aryans which fact offers a powerful clue to their being from the Persia Aryan stock.
- v) In the Mahābhārata and Pali literature, the Kambojas appear in the characteristic Iranian robes of splendid horsemen and breeders of notable horses.
- vi) The Bhīṣmaparva and Śāntiparva of the epic Mahābhārata sufficiently reveal that the Kambojas were living beyond the Uttara or the north (uttaraścapaṇe); and other people of the Uttarāpatha.
- vii) They are also addressed as Mlecchas (Barbarian people) or Asuras, lying outside the Indo-Aryans fold.
- viii) They are repeatedly bracketed with other north-western, non-Vedic people like the Yavanas, śakas, Tuṣaras, Daruṇas, Pāraskaras, Hūṇas, Kirātas and the like.
- ix) Majjhima Nikāya reveals that in the lands of Yavanas, Kambojas and some other frontier nations, there were only two classes of people.... Aryas and Dasas.... the masters and slaves. .... which social organization was completely alien to Indian where four class social structure was prevalent.
- x) In a passage in Buddhist Jātaka, it is remarked that, unlike the

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58. Adopted and cited from Kambojas- Wikipedia, op. cit. pp. 9-10 of 24.

Indo-Aryanas, the Kambojas held it a religious duty to kill insects, snakes, worms and frogs which fact alone proves that the Kambojas were Zoroastrians, acting in accord with the precepts in the Vendidad.

xi) Non-Indo-Aryan customs of the Kambojas are also hinted at in Śāntiparvan of the Mahābhārata.

xii) Buddhaghōṣa, a 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> century scholar has expressly described the Kambojas as being of Paraskara vanṇa (i.e. of Paras or Persian affinities).

xiii) Some scholars even believe that Zoroastrian religion originated in east Iran in the land of the Kambojas.

xv) According to one line of scholars "The Kambojas were probably the descendants of the Indo-Iranians (East Iranians) popularly known later on as the Sassanians and Parthians who occupied parts of north western India in first second centuries of the Christian era."

xvi) S. Langdon identifies the well known Aramaic people Gambaia with the ancient Kambojas who find mention in king Asoka's records. These people appear in the annals of Asarhaddan (681-668 BC) and are also spoken of by the Arabic geographers in the middle ages. They were the important people who once occupied regions east of the mouth of the Tigris along the Persian gulf towards Elam.

xvii) A host of eminent scholars have traced the tribal name Kamboja to the royal name Kambujiya of the Old Persian Inscriptions (known as Cambyses to the Greeks). Kambujiya or Kambaujiya was the name of several great Persian kings of the Achaemenid line. This name also appears written as C-n-b-n-z-y in Aramaic, Kambuzia in Assyrian, Kambuz, Kambatet/Kambythetr (rather Kambuzia) as well as Kambunza in Egyptian, Kam-bu-zi-ia in Akkadian, Kan-bu-zi-ia in Elamite, and Kanpuziya in Susian language. ... Cambyses III, Son of Cyrus the Great, is famous for his conquest of Egypt (525 BC), and for the havoc he wrought upon that country.

### **B. Indo-European Affiliation :**

Arnold J. Tynbee perceives even Indo-European route in the movements of the tribes like Kambojas who from Euroasian steppe poured into India. According to him the Kamboja and Kuru occur as place names in Transcaucasia (South Caucasus or South-Central Eurasia) as well as on the Hindukush and in the Indian sub-continent. Interestingly at all these three places, both Kuru and Kamboja were found to be places in immediate juxtaposition. He finds an echo of the usage of the Sanskrit term Balhikas in its counterpart of the Avestan term 'Paikrikas' which he uses to cover the swarm of Euroasian and Central

Asian nomads including the Bahlikas (Bactrians), Malavas, Kambojas, Kurus, Madras, Madrakas etc., which in the 'volker wandering' of the eighth and seventh centuries BC poured out of the Euroasian steppe into the Punjab and beyond. Thus for Toynbee the residents of Kamboja and Kuru (these are place names), as Euroasian nomads, took part in the 'volker wandering' of the eighth and seventh centuries BCE and then split into two wings. He also observes that these two peoples who stamped their national names on the local landscape must have been closely connected and both played some part in Achaemenian history that had been auspicious as well as important.<sup>59</sup>

### Critique :

The Indo-Europeanists are suffering from Indo-phobia since more than two centuries when they started probing into their own origins and attempted to establish as high antiquity as possible. After establishing their rule in India the British discovered large literary sources in Vedic and Puranic literature dealing with almost every walk of life. While Vedic literatures were studied and translated because they wanted to help the missionaries to convert Hindus, but the Puranic literature was thrown into dustbin as trash and mythical legends for in it they saw a challenge as well as a danger of exposing their fictitious chronology of world history. It is on this account the Purāṇas were allotted late date on baseless grounds of the mention of some races who according to their chronological scheme appeared late in history; and therefore whole matter was taken polluted, and therefore, must be rejected. The unscientific and arrogant Eurocentric attitude of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century European scholarship (so far as India was concerned), with intense desire to propagate Christianity, backed by the imperial power, was successful in reversing the course of the world history. Their approach was to start from the branch (i.e. Europe) and go to the root (i.e. Asia). Toynbee's idea of tribal movements from Caucasus to Hindukush and then to India; and other scholars arraying arguments, quoting irrelevant details from Sanskrit literature, based on ignorance to relate the Kambojas and others with Indo-Iranians, should be rejected.

Ancient Kamboja (in Central Asia) was a centre of Aila or Paurava family and the Iranian civilization originated from there. This was true for the Zoroastrian religious customs also because it originated in the reaction to the existing Vedic Deva-worshipping religion. The language

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59. Adopted and cited from Kambojas- Wikipedia, dated 1/17/2009, pp. 3-4 of 24.

of Avesta also was a derived form of Vedic language. Zoroaster, an Athraivan, composed a portion of Avesta in corrupt form of the Vedic language. Yāska(700 BCE) in his Nirukta has emphasised that the Kambojas were using Sanskrit words in their original sense of the root. But he is being misquoted since about a century only to give a firm foot to the rootless Indo-European language theory. Items numbers IV to VII, listed above are simply misinterpretations, and in the light of above discussion are not maintainable. Other arguments should also be rejected as we will see that that the Iranian religion and culture as well as the Achaemenian Empire were established by the Kamboja Kurus. Below we reproduce the argument No. xvii along with the Greek geographers as well as the eminent historian A. Toynbee about the existence of Kambojas in northern Iran and the Caspian region.

### **Greek Evidences:**

According to Toynbee, as already noted, the Kamboja and Kuru occur as place names in Transcaucasia (South Caucasus or South-Central Eurasia) as well as on the Hindukush and in the Indian sub-continent. In this context some Greek geographers also substantiate place names of Kuru and Kamboja. In ancient Armenia, to the west of Caspian region Strabo, in his geography, mentions one 'Kambysene' bordering on Caucasus Mountains. It is said that 'Kambysene is believed to have born this name since remote antiquity. The tribal people living around this region were also called by the same name. Strabo also attests two rivers viz. "Cyrus" (modern Kuru) and "Kambyses" (modern Jori or Jora), the latter being a tributary of the former.' Thus undoubtedly the region 'Kambysene' named after the Kambojas to the north of Iran in the Caucasus confirms that the Kuru people of Pamir region migrated there and established a territory named after them in the same way as they established the country of Cambodia or Kampuchea in Indo-china. They are still called by these names. The river Kuru in the area indicates that a section of the Kurus had lived here. May be it was within the 'Uttarakuruvarṣa' region of Puranic texts.

Toynbee also hints about the Kambojas and the Kurus, as Euroasian nomads in 8<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC and traces their movement from Caucasus region to Iran who formed the Achaemenian Empire. But it is noteworthy that several early emperors of the dynasty were named after Kuru (Cyrus) and Kamboja (Kambujiya or Kambaujia). Now if the Achaemenids were of Kamboja origin, as attested by many sources, they need not go to Transcaucasia (South Caucasus or South Central

Euraia) as imagined by Toynbee because Kamboja janapada<sup>60</sup> in Pamir region is nearer to Iran than Caucasus; and the history of Zoroaster confirms that the Iranians had closer relations with this region. Therefore the route of the migration of the Achaemenians from South Caucasus, as suggested by Toynbee be rejected as an attempt to prove Indo-European theory.

There are indications to show that Vedic culture was in vogue in Iran in all its aspects before Zoroaster preached his religion. He used a form of language that was Vedic in essence. Deva-worship was the religion of the people till he professed revision in the existing 'daeva-yasna'. But in 'gathas' he is cautious enough not to name any Vedic deity. In Vendidad also not a single Vedic 'deva' is mentioned by name. There 'daeva' simply means 'evil spirit'. Zoroaster was not very popular in all the sections of the Iranian society. In the "Gatha" it is said that by a servant of some feudal lord, who believed in 'daeva yasna' (deva-worship) Zoroaster was not allowed to enter the house and that he and his horse had to spent the cold night in open.<sup>61</sup> To propagate his religion he sought royal protection that he managed. But curiously enough after his assassination his religion gained momentum and the worship of Ahura Mazda became popular. But in many hymns of 'Yashts' 'daeva' are praised in Vedic fashion. That means the unsuccessful Zoroastrianism had failed in eradicating 'daeva yashn' in Iran and yielded to the wishes of people who continued deva-worship. The evidence recorded in the Vedas and the Purāṇas show the priority of the Vedic culture over the so-called Indo-Iranian culture. But this is not the issue to be discussed here.

### **A New Perception of Indo-Iranian:**

In the light of above discussion we can perceive the term Indo-Iranian in a changed sense. Airyanem Vaejah being synonymous with *Īāvṛtavarṣa*, the Iranians also were Vedic people. After living together for a long period both of them developed dissensions. Bhārgava Śukra or Kavi Uśanas was the priest of the Asuras while Āṅgiraṣa Bṛhaspati guided the Devas. Later, in the time of Zoroaster we find that the political chiefs were called Kavis which indicates that in Iran priests usurped the political power. Again we find that in Zoroasterian religion Anghra

60. See *The Age of Imperial Unity*, 1951, Bombay, p. 1 where Kamboja is said to be one of sixteen janapadas of India during sixth century BCE or in the period of the Buddha.

61. Yasht 51. 12. From *Gaya Charana Tripathi's Vaidika Devatā : Udbhava Aura Vikāsa*, Volume I, 1981, Delhi-Varanasi, p. 71.

Mainu was the arch-enemy of Ahura. Most probably this has some association with Angiras of Vedic culture. Zoroaster's disgust against the 'daeva yasna' shows that Iran was deva-worshipper. Dr. G. C. Tripathi<sup>62</sup> is right when he says that all the Aryan (Vedic) elements found in Iran were inherited from India therefore they can be called Indo-Iranians.

### The Kambojas in India and Sri Lanka:

The Kambojas seem to have regular relations with the Kuru/Puru people in India as attested in the Mahābhārata. It is not unlikely that some of them might have settled in some pockets in the Indus and Ganga-Yamuna valley. Some early scholars held the notion, obviously on wrong interpretation, that in the tenth century some Kamboja king defeated the Pāla king of Bengal and established his kingdom there. But now this view has been revised as in the said inscription of the Pāla king Rājyapāla who claims to be a Kamboja-vaṁśa-tilakaḥ, from mother side.<sup>63</sup>

The Kambojas also had their settlements in Sri Lanka since long and a village called Kamboja-gāma in the ancient Rohaṇa janapada in the south-eastern part of the island, to the south-west of Anurādhapura, is mentioned in Sīhalavatthu, a Pali text of about the fourth century. There are also some inscriptional evidences about the Kambojas living in Sri Lanka. S. Parnavitana gives a description of them referring to the inscription numbers as follows; "In No. 553, we read of Kabojhiya-maha-pugiyana, i.e. 'those who were members of the great corporation of the Kabojhiyas'. In No. 990, mention is made of a parumaka (Chief) of the Goṭa-Kabojikana, i.e. of the corporation (goṭa-Skt. goṣṭh) of the Kambojas." He further records "From the fact that they had organised themselves into Corporations, we may infer that they had a definite identity, and that they were probably engaged in trade. The original territory of the Kambojas is said to be the province neighbouring Rajauri to the south of Kashmir. They must have left their original home and migrated to the Indus Delta and thence to Gujerat, before some of them found their way to Ceylon."<sup>64</sup> It is perhaps D. R. Bhandarkar who maintained that "The Kambojas have to be located in the province neighbouring Rajori to the south of Kashmir."<sup>65</sup> From this many schol-

62. Tripathi, G.C., Vaidika Devata : Udbhava aura Vikāsa, 1981, Delhi & Varanasi, p. 79.

63. Majumdar, R.C., The History of Bengal, Vol. I, 1971, Patna, p. 190-91

64. S. Parnavitana, Inscriptions of Ceylon, Volume I, 1970, Ceylon, p. xc-xci, and also p. xcix.

65. Comprehensive History of India, Volume Two, 1957 (1987), New Delhi, p. 25.

ars have derived that Rajori (Rajapura), to the south of Kashmir was their original home. But now in the wake of Majumdar's researches, referred to above, this view must be revised.

### **Kambojas in Indonesia:**

In Indonesia there exists a country called Cambodia. All agree that undoubtedly this name is derived from Kamboja. It is not clear how and when they reached there and gave their name to the country but when Kauṇḍinya reached there in first century ACE and established his dynasty, perhaps the country had already acquired the name. It is also speculated that most probably they followed the route from Sri Lanka to Cambodia through Burma. But main difficulty in this is that all inscriptions relating to Kambojas belong to late date. In this short survey of the history of the Kambojas we find them as learned Brāhmaṇas engaged in Vedic scholarship, then as Kṣatriyas taking part in the Great War. And again in Sri Lanka engaged in trade and commerce as well as crossing the Bay of Bengal and giving their name to a country. We have also seen them that they belonged to the Puru/Kuru family. During those early days profession was not important than family, therefore everywhere they are referred to as Kambojas. In the north, Central Asia was their main field of activity. They spread all over and left traces in form of placenames where they lived. In historical period they formed an empire in Iran where they dominated till Alexander uprooted them and their religion in the fourth century BCE. It is said that this fanatic ruler Alexandu ordered to destroy all copies of Avesta. Islam also repeated the feat in the seventh century!

### **About Central Asian Thesis:**

This Central Asian thesis may appear a new idea for Indian scholars as well as to Europeanists. Since about two centuries our history is being written in terms of India that was conquered and ruled by the British. The northern region of Afghanistan and beyond was taboo for historians of the subcontinent. We started taking pride in calling ourselves Aryans and the Indus-Ganga plain was considered the Cradle of Hindu civilization. While working on the Purāṇas and the epics we realised that a number of evidences are pointing towards the Meru (Pamir) region for the history of Manu and Ilā. Several so-called ancient tribes, who played important role in the history of India and labeled as invaders, are mentioned in these sources as immerging from Aila family. On the other hand Indo-Europeanists are repeatedly emphasising a flow of Central Asian people into India. On the other

hand Soviet and European scholars, who excavated archaeological sites in Central Asia have discerned Vedic elements in them. They are not wrong. But their intention is to perceive the movement of these people from there towards India. Now this thesis, which is based on the written history from the Purāṇas and the epics, reverses the whole trend. The readers of Itihas Darpan are familiar with this view because of my articles: i) From Bogazkoi to Harappa and ii) They Claim Indians, Not Invaders in Volume XIII (1) and in Sākshī Itihāsa evam Sansritik Viśeshānka' (A Research Journal of Ayodhya Shobh Sansthan) 2009, 'Mānava Itihāsa kī Ādi-bhūmi Aśiyā men'.



## ON THE LIST OF TWENTY TEMPLES IN THE *MATSYA PURĀṆA*

BY

P.K. AGRAWALA

[अस्मिन् निबन्धो विदुषा लेखकेन मत्स्यपुराणवर्णितदेवमन्दिरप्रकाराणां विषये विवेचनं प्रस्तुतम् । विषयोऽयं बृहत्संहिताविश्वकर्मप्रकाशादिग्रन्थेष्वपि प्राप्यते । अत्र लेखकेन सर्वेषां समीक्षापुरस्सरमध्ययनं प्रस्तुतम् ।]

One of the most popular texts on ancient temple architecture is preserved in the chapter No. 268 of the *Matsya Purāṇa* (or Adhy. 269 in some of the editions known from various regional editorial traditions). There are several more preceding and following Adhyāyas in the above mentioned section of the Purāṇa that treat materials regarding image making, residential buildings, their diverse component parts, religious edifices, installation procedure, allied rituals and *dharmaśāstra* ordinances relevant to the Purāṇic contexts, etc.

As has been well remarked by previous authorities analysing the temple building principles detailed in the Purāṇa, the specific text more or less closely follows and at times reproduces the wordings or verses of the supposedly allied or preceding works of authorities on the subject. For example, the *Viśva-karmaparakāśa* in particular and the *Bṛhatsamhitā* ( वास्तुविद्या and प्रासादलक्षण adhyāyas) in partial summary or similar treatment worded in somewhat modified paraphrased (or simplified or improved) phraseology.

It is however, a great stroke of luck, that a versatile commentary was written by *Bhaṭṭotpala on the Bṛhatsamhitā* explaining each and every difficult passage as well as word in the *Varāhamihira's text* and with many a citation from many earlier or contemporary authorities parallel to the main work and its treatment in critical assessment as well as explanations understanding and eye-opening clarity.

Unfortunately, the *Matsyapurāṇa* sections summarising such material did have no भट्टोत्पल to have handed down such a commentarial compilations making a correct assessment of the textual version with explanatory details of specifically significant Vāstuśāstra vocabulary on which the entire description or descriptions were based through *sāstric* language.

It is certainly a fact of satisfying nature that a few later Dharmasāstra and Astrological texts incorporate verses as quotations from the *Matsya Purāṇa* authority by naming the source or even without mentioning that. Therefore in want of any critical edition of the *Matsya Purāṇa* being available as yet, we are fortunate sometimes to have some welcome light added to our guess of the original text. One of the medi-  
eval Digests, for example, is the one called कृत्यकल्पतरु of भट्टलक्ष्मीधर (styled प्रतिष्ठाकाण्ड). This has been published by the Oriental Institute Baroda, in 1979 us prepared in a Critical edition by the late K.V. Rangaswami Aiyangar and the team of his assisting Pandits. We would have occasional reference to the same while in search of a relevant reading for a lexicographical phrase befitting the Vāstuśāstra expression in the Purāṇic verse/passage, under criticism presently put here for the scrutiny by competent scholars.

The temple types given in the *Matsya Purāṇa* follow closely the text of the *Viśvakarmaprakāśa* (Ch. VI<sup>th</sup>) and these two available sources can be well attempted to be interpreted in the light of textual description available from the *Bṛhatasamhitā* together with its commentary by Bhaṭṭotpala who quotes extensively from the work of Kāśyapa in support of his glossary as well as definitions. Varāhamihira, however, gives the following list of the twenty types of the temple buildings :—

1. मेरु
2. मन्दर
3. कैलास
4. विमानच्छन्द
5. नन्दन
6. समुद्रा
7. पद्म
8. गरुड
9. नन्दिवर्धन (in v. 24, Bṛ. Sam. has 'Nandi'  
that is also the name in Kāśyapa's verse
10. कुंजर
11. गुहराज
12. वृष
13. हंस
14. सर्वतोभद्रक
15. घट
16. सिंह
17. वृत्त

18. चतुष्कोण
19. षोडशास्र
20. अष्टास्र

मेरुमंदरकैलासविमानच्छन्दनन्दनाः।

समुद्रगपद्मगरुडनन्दिवर्धनकुञ्जराः ॥17॥

गुहराजो वृषो हंसः सर्वतोभद्रको घटः।

सिंहो वृत्तश्चतुष्कोणः षोडशाष्टाश्रयस्तथा॥18॥

इत्येते विंशतिः प्रोक्ताः प्रासादाः संज्ञया मया॥19ab॥

Each of them is then described in detail as to its *lakṣhaṇas* and with relevant measurements defining their length and also height in certain cases.

In the concluding portion of this chapter Varāhamihira quotes the opinions both of Maya and Viśvakarmā, and we find the view of the latter exactly in conformity of the *Viśvakarmaparakāśa* as available and published in its several editions.

Presumably, the same material was handled in the *Matsya Purāna* though in somewhat modified poetic rendering or verse construction as was quite usual in such compilations meant for the popular versions of an older Śāstra incorporated in their specific style by versatile Purāṇic writers. Dr. P.K. Acharya has summarised the description of Twenty Temples in Ch. 269 of the *Matsya Purāna* in his *Encyclopaedia of Hindu Architecture*-pp 349-351. According to the available evidence the names of temples and their descriptions belong to the following list in this text :

1. मेरु
2. मन्दर
3. कैलास
4. विमानच्छन्द
5. नन्दिवर्धन
6. नन्दन
7. सर्वतोभद्र
8. वलभीच्छन्दक
9. वृष
10. सिंह
11. गज
12. कुम्भ
13. समुद्रक (read समुद्रगक)
14. पद्म
15. गरुड
16. हंस
17. वर्तुल

18. चतुस्र
19. अष्टास्र
20. षोडशास्र

To an extent this inventory of Twenty Temples follows the sequence of descriptions as given in the *Matsya Purāṇa* which text no doubt closely copies the verses from the *Viśvakarmaprakāśa*, but not the introductory proposition or initial list as found by way of लक्ष्यनिर्देश presently in the vulgate editions of both the works.

However, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, ch. 130, has preserved almost the same list in sequence and descriptions of the Twenty Temples, as treated in a clear-cut vocabulary in the *Bṛihat-Saṃhitā*, commented by Utpala. Many an improved lexical versions can be well noted in Varāhamihira's work.

Now, stanzas giving the temple list read in the *Mataya Purāṇa* or *VK Prakāśa* for its original run as follows :—

मेरुमन्दरकैलासकुम्भसिंहमृगास्तथा ।  
 विमानच्छन्दकस्तद्वचचतुरस्रस्तथैव च ॥२८॥  
 अष्टास्रः षोडशास्रश्च वर्तुलः सर्वभद्रकः।  
 सिंहास्यो नन्दनश्चैव नन्दिवर्धनकस्तथा ॥२९॥  
 हंसो वृषः सुवर्णेशः पद्मकोऽथ समुद्रकः।  
 प्रासादा नामतः प्रोक्ता विभागं शृणुत द्विजाः॥३०॥

More edn. Ch. 268= Gita Press ed., 269; (cp. the *Matsya Purāṇa* as reproduced by लक्ष्मीधर in कृत्यकल्पतरु, प्रतिष्ठाकाण्ड and in *Viśvakarma prakāśa* Ch. 6, verses 82-85 with variants).

We can amend the phrase सुवर्णेशः as सुपर्णेशः or सुपर्णश्च or सुपर्णोऽथ to arrive at the correct name of the सुपर्ण or गरुड (प्रासाद) which is mentioned in allied texts.

Samudraka is obviously a mistake for समुद्रग or समुद्रगक (such as Bṛihats., comm. उत्पल; भविष्यपु.)

The above list does not specify गज (कुंजर in बृ. सं. & in the descriptive (लक्षण) verses both of the विश्वकर्मप्रकाश as well as the मत्स्यपु.) The name सिंह in the versions of मत्स्य and विश्वकर्म is read at three places' (1) v. 28 (मत्स्य), (2), v. 29 (as सिंहास्य or सिंह in v.l.), and (3) in some editions in place of हंस (which seems to be the correct one in the last verse (as quoted above). Now, how to cope with such varied textual versions? There is obviously some confused reproduction of the verses under scrutiny in both of the texts of Matsya and Viśvakarmā, which occurred in most probably possible jumbled up construction of the

specific verses by the Purāṇa writer and also its model VK Prakāśha. The Bṛhatsaṁhitā reads one name as गुहराज (v.l. in later citations being गृहराज or even मृगराज which later might have led to the confused, one of the names, as सिंह).

What about कुंजर or गज ? One is tempted to interpret मृग (in v. 28 ab) for the chief variety of elephants named as मृग in the tradition. Does it solve the problem? Perhaps not.

We may have to suggest another course of emending the available list. In v. 28, let us read मृगा गजः (for मृगास्तथा). And then for सिंहास्यो in v. 29 it would have to be tentatively read as गुहेशो (=गुहराज) or गृहेशो (for गृहराज). The list would now appear to repeat almost the same list of प्रासाद names as we find in the best preserved version of the *Bṛhat Saṁhitā* (followed in the *Matsya Purāṇa*, *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* (ch. 130); *Bhārgava Tantra* (3.20-21, p. 14, edited by Rāghavaprasāda Chaudharī, G.N. Jha Kendriya Saṁskṛita Vidyāp Series No. 8, Allahabad 1981).

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1. There is no सिंहास्य mentioned in the following लक्षण verses as found in the two texts presently under scrutiny.

# PRAYERS IN ŚRĪMAD BHĀGAVATAM : THEIR PHILOSOPHICAL & RELIGIONS DISTINCTIVENESS

BY

GĀURI MAHULIKAR

[प्राचुर्येणोपलभ्यन्ते देवीदेवानां स्तोत्राणि पुराणेषु। श्रीमद्भागवतमहापुरास्य भक्तिप्राधान्यत्वात्तत्र भक्तिभावपूर्णानि विविधस्तोत्राणि वर्तन्ते। अस्मिन् निबन्धे विदुष्या लेखिकया अस्य पुराणस्य स्तोत्राणां दार्शनिकं धार्मिकं च महत्त्वं प्रतिपादितम् । ]

**Introduction :** Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (Bhā. P.) has exercised the most powerful influence in India and holds undisputably the most prominent position in Indian Purāṇic literature. It is an epic of growth. It has incorporated the best of the Vedic tradition. The metaphysical and spiritual legacy of the Vedas and Upaniṣads is ably synthesized with the āgamic tradition of *Pāñcarātras* in this holy text and it has embraced even the non-Aryan tribes in its fold.

From the Philosophical point of view, Bhā. P. exhorts us to meditate upon the Supreme Truth or Reality which is both immanent and transcendent, and from religious point of view, it gives various modes of worship and different vows of the corporeal form of the Lord. Both these aspects are revealed through various Prayers in Bhā.P. starting with one by Kuntī in the first *Skandha* till one by Akrūra in the tenth *Skandha*. A brief review of some of these prayers and their distinctiveness is brought about in the following pages.

**1.8 Kuntī-Stuti :** (26 verses) Lord is Praised as the saviour. In dire calamity, he alone protects. When Aśvatthāman targeted the foetus of Uttarā, Kṛṣṇa saved the child with his Sudarśana *cakra*. Kuntī, then expressed her genuine feeling of gratitude. She praised him as the primeval Puruṣa, the eternal, incomprehensible, whose greatness can not be measured or grasped even by the sages. With utter humility, Kuntī highlights the *Kārpanya* of a devotee. At the same time she expresses motherly attachment. She *remembers* his various child sports befitting a good actor,<sup>1</sup> especially one of Dāmodara. It is amazing, Kuntī re-

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1. Bhā P. 1.8.19

marks, that one who is free from bondages and releases others from mundane knots, gets bound by a cord. Kuntī is Kṛṣṇa's aunt, she has fondled him in his childhood; as such, *Vātsalyabhāva* is prominently seen in her praise. Normally devotees seek happiness and glory from the Lord; but Kuntī asks for sorrow.

विपदः सन्तु नः शश्वत्तत्र तत्र जगद् गुरो ।

भवतो दर्शनं यत्स्यादपुनर्भवदर्शनम् ॥

(I. 8. 25)

It is experiential truth that man remembers the Lord in calamitous situations. Kṛṣṇa had saved Pāṇḍavas from Duryodhana's attempt at poisoning Bhīma and throwing him in Gangā;<sup>1</sup> from great fire of Vāraṇāvata,<sup>2</sup> from demons like Hiḍimba and Baka.<sup>3</sup> in the episode of Draupadī's humiliation<sup>4</sup> and in the great battle. It is in disasters that Kuntī and Pāṇḍavas were blessed by the sight of the Lord which relieves people from the cycle of rebirths; therefore, Kuntī asks for sorrows. This prayer has a psychological perspective and appears very human and genuine.

**II.4 Śuka-Stuti :** (14 verses) Once king Parīkṣit asked sage Śuka to describe to him the Lord of mysterious and wonderful deeds and Śuka, well-versed in the Vedic lore and knowledge of Parabrahman, meditated on the Lord and began his short eulogy. Lord is the perfect man of infinite power, he creates, sustains and destroys this world. He removes the afflictions of gods and curbs the irreligious. His attributes are many and significant; but what matters here more is the mention of various tribes worshipping the Lord. This shows the attempts of proselytization on the part of the Vaiṣṇavas, and is therefore; sociologically important. Tribes mentioned here are *Kirātas* - an eastern Himalayan tribe, *Hūṇās*, invading tribe from Central Asia, *Āndhras*, a non Aryan tribe from Southern Āryāvarta, *Pulindas*, an aboriginal tribe inhabited in the Vindhya region, *Pulkasas*, an outcaste people, *Ābhiras*, foreign people who came to India at the time of Śaka invasion settled in north-west Deccan, *Kankas* are the Śakas, *Yavanas*, the Indo-Greeks ruling north-western India and the *Khasas*, living in Kashmir.<sup>5</sup> The sinners in these tribes took refuge in the Almighty and were purged of their sins.<sup>6</sup> This short prayer is quite rhythmic and has a refrain, "Salutation to him of auspicious fame" तस्मै सुभद्रश्रवसे नमो नमः । Reference to

1. *Mahābhārata* (Mbh) I. 127.45.54

2. *Ibid.* I. 147

3. *Ibid.* I. 153, 162 etc

4. *Ibid.* II. 67-68

5. There G.V. *The Bhāgavata-Purāna*, A-LT. M. MLBD Delhi, 1999) Vol. 7, p. 172-173

6. *Bhā-P.* II 4.18

7. Bagchi, P-C, *History of Bengal*, Vol. I 402-403, as quoted by Tagare, *Op-Cit*, Introduction P.Xliv

*Sātvatas* in this prayer is noticeable. "Viṣṇu of Vedic Brahmanism, Nārāyaṇa of Pāñcarātras, Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva of Sātvatas, Gopāla of a pastoral people (probably Ābhiras), all had been put in a melting pot from which originated the Bhāgavatism of the Gupta period," says Bagchi.<sup>7</sup> Along with this, Tantric method of worship of Lord is also prescribed in the *Bhā-P* but one who limits to idol-worship alone, is regarded as the lowest type of votary.

Not only men and sages, but gods also praised Viṣṇu. Gods and Brahmā glorified the lord on various occasions. One such prayer is in III.9 ब्रह्मस्तुति (25 verses): When Viṣṇu, delighted in the blissful stage of his own self, inactive and alone, lay on his serpent bed closing his eyes, the whole universe got immersed in water. At the time of creation, by the propelling force of Time, the self-born. Brahmā was born from Viṣṇu's navel lotus,<sup>1</sup> and praised the Lord, after self-realization. It took Brahmā a very long time while searching the source of lotus in the fathomless darkness, till he saw a Puruṣa lying on the white serpent bed, wearing yellow silk garment, a garland of forest flowers, adorned by gem Kaustubha etc. Brahmā said. "It is indeed the defect of beings conditioned by body that your real essential nature is not understood by them. Nothing other than you exists. Anything that may appear to be, is false, because it is you who appear to be many due to the intermixture of the *guṇas* of Māyā."<sup>2</sup>

This very first verse of Brahmā is highly philosophical and it is interesting to note that commentators of different philosophical schools have interpreted it to suit their tenets. Vīra Rāghava, in his *Bhāgavata Chandrikā*, says that the whole of this universe consisting of *Cit* and *acit* is the body of the God and there is nothing which is outside Brahman. The individual souls, conditioned by physical body do not know the real nature of the Lord. Though you are one O Lord, you shine as many, manifest in varied forms due to Prakṛti of three *guṇas*.<sup>3</sup> This is an explanation in the perspective of *Vīśiṣṭādvaita* doctrine.

Jīva Goswāmi of Bengal school of Vaiṣṇavīsm also explains it in a similar way.

Vijayadhvaṇa, a commentator of *Dvaita* School, interprets the same verse in the light of *bhakti* and says that the Lord, though invisible, is

1. *Bha-P.* III. 8.10, 14.15

2. *Ibid.* III. 9.1

3. Tagare. *Op-cit.*, p. 264, f. n. 668

4. *Loc. cit*



realized by devotion, *nānyas tvadasti* is explained by him as, 'not that there is non-existence of things other than the Lord but they do not exist independently, and that due to *guṇas* of *Prakṛti*, things other than the Lord are defective and impure.<sup>4</sup> Madhva's principles of *tadbhinnatva* and *tadadhīnatva* are reflected here.

For the school of *Advaitā* it is quite easy to explain because of the word *Māyā* in it. Thus Śrīdhara svāmī has no difficulty in explaining this. Thus it can be seen that commentators of different schools have interpreted a single verse variously. It also underlines the fact that these 'isms' regard *Bha. P* as an authoritative text despite it being theistic in nature.

Except for the beginning verse, this prayer by Brahmā is replete with *bhakti*. It is remarkable for its attempt at assimilating and integrating sectarian cults. Addressing Viṣṇu as the universe-Tree (*bhuvanadruma*), Brahmā says that this tree has differentiated itself by three attributes under the names of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Giriśa, who are the cause of creation, sustenance and destruction.<sup>1</sup> This effort of synthesis and establishing unity in trinity of gods is evident in *Bha. P.* at various places.

**VII-9. Prahlāda's Stuti (42 verses) & VIII, 3 Gajendrastuti (28 verses) :** These two prayers of Lord are important, as one is by a demon child and the other by an animal, an elephant. Both are illustrations of *prapatti* doctrine of Rāmānuja, throwing oneself at the will of the Lord, irrespective of caste, creed, sex and genre. Both emphasise Lord's attribute as *ārtihara* remover of miseries. Prahlāda and Gajendra are submissive supplicants & regard themselves as very insignificant and trivial creatures.<sup>2</sup> This is the highest stage of *Śaraṇāgati*, enjoyed both by Prahlāda and the elephant king. These two prayers are full of subjectivity as well. Prahlāda tried to pacify the terrible Nṛsimha with formidable mouth and tongue, sun-like dazzling eyes, fearful tusks, frightful knitted eyebrows, wearing the garland of the entrails of Hiranyakaśipu and his mane and ears soaked in blood.<sup>3</sup> But the little devout boy was not at all scared of that ferocious countenance, because his heart was immersed in the tranquillity and peacefulness embedded in devotion. He longed for final emancipation, deliverance from the transmigratory falsehood. Gajendra<sup>4</sup> too yearned to be res

1. Bha. P. III. 9.18

2. *Ibid.* VII.9.9.8., VIII. 3.6

3. *Ibid.* VII.9.15

4. *Ibid.* VIII. 3.19

cued from the clutches of *Samsāra* in the form of an alligator. Gajendrastuti has a good combination of almost all the Vedānta tenets. Concept of Avidyā is harmoniously blended with the *āvirbhāva-tirobhāva* of Śuddhādvaita (VIII.3.4) Principle of *bhedābheda* also comes here through the illustration of fire and its sparks and sun and its rays (*Ibid.* 23). The dense darkness of Nāsadiya Sukta and the concept Aja Brahman go hand in hand. Viṣṇu is praised in a typical paradoxical manner of Upaniṣads as Arūpa & *Vahurūpa* (*Ibid* 9), *ghora* and *sānta* (*Ibid.* 12) Gajendra is not *arthārthi* he simply surrenders. (माजरभक्ति)

Similar *prapatti* is seen in Bali's praise of the Lord.<sup>1</sup> He says, "even a mere obeisance is very effective to accomplish the blessings of the Lord." He wants to suggest, if mere bowing down is so efficacious, how much more fruitful must be the worship of the Lord! By *Kaimutikanyāya*, anyone can guess it. Another point Bali wanted to emphasize is that even the gods did not get this unique grace of the Lord which was conferred upon a wretched *asura* like Bali. *Vandana*, one of the nine-fold devotion is highlighted herein. This is the simplest mean to propitiate the Lord.

Bhaktiyoga is the most easy and accessible method to acquire divine bliss, and once the Lord chooses a devotee, he blesses and obliges him for ever. Rāmānuja quotes from *Muṇḍakopaniṣat* (III. 2.3) while elaborating on his favourite concept of Grace of God as *Priyatama eva hi varaṇīyo bhavati*<sup>2</sup> *Bhagavadgītā* too endorses this as, "to those who worship me with love consistently, I give such *buddhi*, by which they come to me"<sup>3</sup>

Mahabali's devotion is that of utter involvement, whereas Ambarīṣa's is dispassionate. Devotion unto Viṣṇu made Ambarīṣa dissociated from objects of pleasure. He thought the universe to be as insignificant as a clod of earth.<sup>4</sup> Pleased with his single minded devotion. Viṣṇu assigned

1. *Ibid.* VIII. 23.2

अहो प्रणामाय कृतः समुद्यमः  
प्रपन्नभक्तार्थविधौ समाहितः।  
यल्लोकपालैस्त्वदनुग्रहोऽमरै-  
रत्नब्धपूर्वोऽपसदेऽसुरेऽर्पितः॥

2. Śrībhāṣyam I. 1.1

3. Bh-G.X. 10

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।  
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥

4. Bha. P. IX 4.17

to him his disc. The story of Ambarīṣa's *ekādaśī-vrata*, Durvāsa's sudden visit, his wrath, creation of a fierce female spirit (*Kṛtyā*). Ambarīṣa's calmness, egolessness when Durvāsa's feeling of fright ultimately sought his shelter, this entire sequence of incidents throws light on a detached composure of Ambarīṣa. Though a *bhāgavatottama* he never boasted of his privileges. His humility and his absence of egoism are imitable qualities which make him an ideal devotee. He did not take pride in the fact that the Lord was dependent upon him and that he alone had the strength to avert the disc and save the sage.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary he was ashamed when Durvāsa fell at his feet. (*pādasparśavilajjitah*) He did not exercise his prowess but humbly appealed *Sudarśana* to spare the sage.<sup>2</sup>

Akrūra is one more devotee to praise the Lord in the form of Kṛṣṇa. At the request of Kāṁsa, Akṛūra was bringing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Mathurā. On the way, when he stopped to pay his daily ablutions, he saw the young boys in water. His bewilderment to see them seated in the chariot when he came out of the water and again reclining on Śeṣa in water, is nicely portrayed by Vyāsa. Contrary to the terrible countenance of Nṛsimha, Akṛūra saw a gentle and loveable form of the Lord, having enchanting smiles, well-shaped eyebrows, prominent nose, beautiful ears, reddish lips, long arms, high shoulders, broad chest, adorned with ornaments, equipped with weapons and so on and so forth.<sup>3</sup> Such detailed descriptions of the corporeal form of the lord; the *Vigraha* is a common feature of *Bhā-P*. Such नखशिखवर्णन-s enhance the element of devotion and induce men to be religious, especially *arcana* & *Pādasevana* get highlighted. Akṛūra was thrilled with joy and overwhelmed with intense devotion, his eyes moist with tears of love; he gathered courage and bowing down with folded hands; he praised the lord.<sup>4</sup> This is a picturesque description of all *sātvika bhāvas* emerging in a devotee's mind.

Thereafter follows an ardent prayer, prayer involving different philosophical systems. Sāṁkhya's evolution theory, Advaitin's view that the Lord is both the material as well as efficient cause of the World, Upaniṣadic view that Brahman is Aja and Avyaya, the Dvaita prin-

1. *Ibid.* IX 4.63 ff

2. *Ibid.* IX 5.11

3. *Ibid.* X 39. 46. ff

4. *Ibid.* 56.57

5. *Ibid.* X 40. 1-3

6. *Ibid.* 4-8

7. *Ibid.* 10

यथाद्रिप्रभवा नद्यः पर्जन्यापूरिताः प्रभो ।

विशान्ति सर्वतः सिन्धुं तद्वत् त्वां गतयोऽन्ततः॥

ceptle of five-fold differences, all are blended nicely in the prayer of Akrūra.<sup>5</sup> This eulogy gives different modes of worship as well, referring to Samādhi of Yoga, Karma-mārga by performing sacrifices, renunciation and meditation, worship of Vyūhas according to Pāñcarātra āgama procedures, and the techniques stated in the Śāiva āgamas as well.<sup>6</sup> The modes may differ, but ultimately all aim at the Highest Reality. As all rivers enter into the ocean, so do all paths lead to One.<sup>7</sup> After establishing 'Unity in Diversity' Akrūra described the Lord as cosmic creator on the lines of *Puruṣasūkta* and thereafter described the incarnations of the God. Interestingly, incarnations and immanent forms (*vyūhas*) of God go hand in hand here.<sup>1</sup> An eulogy of 30 verses by Akrūra is befitting answer to different sectarian worshippers who go on fighting amongst each other over the nature of the Lord. Akrūra, being a senior person from Yadu dynasty and best of the *Sāttvatas* has rightly combined diverse groups into one whole!

From the highest point of view, the Lord is originator but is himself unborn. However, he took birth as child Kṛṣṇa, descending in Devaki's womb. Though omnipresent, he assumed a limited body for showing his grace to the devotees, says Śrīdharaśvāmi, the commentator of Advaita school.<sup>2</sup> The gods along with Brahmā and Śiva and sages like Nārada, were all praise for this unique happening and lauded the Lord with significant attributes, such as one of true resolve (*Satyavrata*), one who exists in the past, present and future (*trisatya*) indweller (*antaryāmin*) etc. and gave a metaphor of the (eternal) tree (*ādītvṛkṣa*) to Him.

This metaphor is a play with numbers as well.<sup>3</sup> This primeval tree has *one* base which is Prakṛti, *two* fruits viz; pleasure and pain; *three* roots namely the *guṇas* (*sattva, rajas and tamas*) *four* kinds of secretions, viz, the four human goals, *dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa*, *five* attributes which could be the sense organs as Tagare says or five-fold actions as Vallabha writes in *Subodhinī*.<sup>4</sup> These five actions are tossing up, tossing down, expansion contraction and movement. It could also mean *five* sheaths described in the *Taittiriya Upaniṣad*. This tree has six states of birth, existence, growth, ripeness, decay and destruction, the *bhāvavikāras* given by Vārṣyāyaṇi, *Six* could be natural affections

1. *Ibid.* 17-21

2. Tagare, Op. cit. Vol. 19, p. 1264, f.n.2

3. *Bha. PX 2.27*

एकायनोऽसौ द्विफलस्त्रिमूलश्चतुरसः पञ्चविधः षडात्मा ।

सप्तत्वगष्टवितपो नवाक्षो दशच्छदी द्विखगो ह्यादिवृक्षः ॥

4. *Subodhinī, Satguru publications, Delhi, 2003, P. 259*

viz, hunger and thirst, grief and delusion, old age and death. This tree has *seven* kinds of barks; these are the constituents of body viz, skin, blood, flesh, albumen, bone, marrow and semen. There are *eight* branches viz, five gross elements and three internal organs (mind, reason and ego). There are *nine* hollows, gates (eyes), ten leaves viz, vital airs (*Prāṇa, apāna, byāna, samāna, Udāna, nāga, Kūrma, Kukala, devadatta and dhananjaya*). Two birds perch on this tree, the embodied soul and the Indweller.

At places, Vīra Rāghava differs from Śrīdharasvāmin, stating that *two* fruits are merit and sin, *three* roots are the Vedas or *Vyāhṛtis* and four secretions/results are heaven, hell, darkness and *mokṣa*.

This allegorical presentation is again a fine blending of different faiths and practices. This eulogy of gods is of 16 verses and that is justified by Vallabha in Subodhinī as, "Lord is extolled in *Praśnopaniṣat* as having 16 divine qualities; therefore a praise of 16 verses."<sup>1</sup>

**Conclusion** : It is said that *Bhā. P* is an epic of growth. The development is quite conspicuous. "Conception of the metaphysical Kṛṣṇa and identifying him as Bhagavān is the contribution of *Bhā. P* to the philosophy of religion, says Tagare.<sup>2</sup> This aspect is pure bliss and *rāsa-kṛīḍā* is the purposeless sport, a child-like mirth of Kṛṣṇa, the Suprema Man with his own shadows or his own powers' in the form of *gopīs*.<sup>3</sup>

Another contribution of *Bhā. P* is the advocacy of *Pāñcarātra* school. Followers of Vedic tradition did not approve *Vyuhavāda*. Śankara has refuted this system (II.2.42) But Pāñcarātrins patiently and tactfully infiltrated through Purānas, orthodox ways and assimilated many Vedantic concepts. Thus theory of incarnation was blended with that of immanence (*Vyuhavāda*). With Yāmuna and Rāmānuja's brilliant endorsement it acquired authenticity.

I would like to conclude with a quote by Panikkar,<sup>4</sup> "It is not only a magnificent epic singing the great deeds of Kṛṣṇa, but a scripture of the people to which the entire Hindu people from Himalayas to Vindhya and from Punjab to Bengal, turn for spiritual sustenance, a code of ethics constantly on the lips of all, from princes to peasants and a truly fine expression of poetic genius."

1. *Ibid.* P. 246

2. Tagare, *Op. cit.*, vol. 7, p. XLiv

3. *Bha. P X* 33.17 रेमे रमेशो ब्रजसुन्दरीभिर्यथाभक्तः स्वप्रतिबिम्बविघ्नमः॥

4. *A survey of Indian History*, P. 174, as quoted by Tagare, *Op. cit.*, Vol. 7, P. XXX viii

## Note

### TWO SPECIAL MUHŪRTAS MENTIONED IN THE RĀMĀYAṆA AND THE VĀMANA PURĀṆA

In the Agni, Garuḍa, and Nārada Purāṇas besides the popular Purāṇic subjects other subjects like astrology, Poetics, Ayurveda etc are narrated in details and these Purāṇas are of encyclopaedic nature. But in other Purāṇas and epics (Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata) also, such references are scattered here and there which refer to special muhurtas and yogas. Such two references, one from the Rāmāyaṇa and one from the Vāmana Purāṇa are noted here. Even the birds, animals and women were aware of such Muhūrtas. Even at present also birds, animals show special reaction before the coming changes in weather and atmospheric changes.

(1)

#### Rāmāyaṇa

After the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa, wailing Rāma with Lakṣmaṇa was wandering here and there and searching her. In the way he met Vulture Jaṭāyu who was heavily wounded in fight for rescue of Sītā. Jaṭāyu informed Rāma that Rāma will get back Sītā and Rāvaṇa will be killed. The time when he took Sītā was *Vinda Muhūrta* and in that Muhūrta thief is killed as a fish is killed after swallowing an iron pill and owner gets back the lost thing.

येन जातो मुहूर्तेन सीतामादाय रावणः।  
विप्रनष्टं धनं क्षिप्रं तत्त्वामी प्रतिपद्यते ।  
विन्दो नाम मुहूर्तोऽसौ स च काकुत्स्थ नाबुधत् ॥  
त्वत्प्रियां जानकीं हत्वा रावणो राक्षसेश्वरः।  
झषवद् वडिशं गृह्य क्षिप्रमेव विनश्यति॥  
न च त्वया व्यथा कार्या जनकस्य सुतां प्रति॥

Aranyakāṇḍa 68. 12-13 (Madras edn.)

(2)

#### Vāmana Purāṇa

A similar muhūrta or time is mentioned in the Vāmana Purāṇa Chapter 43 (Critical edition). In this Muhūrta Mātali, the charioteer of Indra was born. Indra defeated by the demons was falling on the earth.

At this moment the earth trembled. At that time the wife of sage Śamīka said to her husband that put the new baby out side because at this moment a thing put out side becomes double. The husband did accordingly and two similar babies were there. Then her husband said that let me put my cow also outside. Then her wife said that the time has elapsed. At this time thing put outside becomes half. The relevant text is as follows.

पतमानं सहस्राक्षं दृष्ट्वा भूः समकम्पत ॥ १३१

पृथिव्यां कम्पमानायां शमीकर्षेस्तपस्विनी । भार्याऽब्रवीत् प्रभो बालं बहिःकुरु यथासुखम् ॥ १३२  
 स तु शीलावचः श्रुत्वा किमर्थमिति चाब्रवीत् । सा चाह श्रूयतां नाथ दैवज्ञपरिभाषितम् ॥ १३३  
 यदेयं कम्पते भूमिस्तदा प्रक्षिप्यते बहिः । यद् बाह्यतो मुनिश्रेष्ठ तद् भवेद् द्विगुणं मुने ॥ १३४  
 एतद् वाक्यं तदा श्रुत्वा बालमादाय पुत्रकम् । निरातङ्को बहिः शीघ्रं प्राक्षिपद् क्षमातले द्विजः ॥ १३५  
 भूयो गोकुलार्थाय प्रविष्टो भार्यया द्विजः । निवारितो गता वेला अर्धहानिर्भविष्यति ॥ १३६  
 इत्येवमुक्ते देवर्षे बहिर्निर्गम्य वेगवान् । ददर्श बालद्वितयं समरूपमवस्थितम् ॥ १३७  
 तं दृष्ट्वा देवताः पूज्य भार्या चाद्भुतदर्शनाम् । प्राह तत्त्वं न विन्दामि यत् पृच्छामि वदस्व तत् ॥ १३८  
 बालस्यास्य द्वितीयस्य के भविष्यद् गुणा वद । भाग्यानि चास्य यच्चोक्तं कर्म तत् कथयाधुना ॥ १३९  
 साऽब्रवीन् नाद्य ते वक्ष्ये वदिष्यामि पुनः प्रभो । सोऽब्रवीद् वद मेऽद्यैव नोच्चेन्नाश्रामि भोजनम् ॥ १४०  
 सा प्राह श्रूयतां ब्रह्मन् वदिष्ये वचनं हितम् । कातरेणाद्य यत् पृष्टं भाव्यः कारुरयं किल ॥ १४१  
 इत्युक्तवति वाक्ये तु बाल एव त्वचेतनः । जगाम साह्यं शक्रस्य कर्तुं सौत्यविशारदः ॥ १४२  
 तं व्रजन्तं हि गन्धर्वाः विश्वावसुपुरोगमाः । ज्ञात्वैवेन्द्रस्य साहाय्ये तेजसा समवर्धयन् ॥ १४३  
 गन्धर्वतेजसा युक्तः शिशुः शक्रं समेत्य हि । प्रोवाचेह्येहि देवेश प्रियो यन्ता भवामि ते ॥ १४४  
 तच्छ्रुत्वास्य हरिः प्राह कस्य पुत्रोऽसि बालक । संयन्ताऽसि कथं चाश्वान् संशयः प्रतिभाति मे ॥ १४५  
 सोऽब्रवीद्विषितेजोत्थं क्षमाभवं विद्धि वासव । गन्धर्वतेजसा युक्तं वाजियानविशारदम् ॥ १४६  
 तच्छ्रुत्वा भगवाञ्छक्रः खं भेजे योगिनां वरः । स चापि विप्रतनयो मातलिर्नाम विश्रुतः ॥ १४७

Vāmana Purāṇa (crit.edn.) 43.131-147

—Ganga Sagar Rai

## Note

### READING OF A VERSE IN THE GARUḌA PURĀṆA

Chapter 194 of the Gaurḍa Purāṇa contains *Viṣṇu Kavaca* stotra. In this stotra from beginning there are 28 verses in Anuṣṭup metre and after that there is a long prose containing Tāntric formulas. At the end again there is verse numbered 29 in the vulgate text of Veṅkaṭeśvara Press.

The first verse in vulgate text is :

सर्वव्याधिहरं वक्ष्ये वैष्णवं कवचं शुभम् ।  
येन रक्षा कृता शम्भोर्देत्यान् क्षयतः पुरा ॥ 194 ।

The reading in Pandit edition is the same in the first three quarters but fourth quarter is नात्र कार्या विचारणा ॥

The reading in critical text is :

सर्वव्याधिहरं वक्ष्ये वैष्णवं कवचं शुभम् ।  
येन रक्षा कृता शम्भोः श्वेतं रक्षयता पुरा ॥ 194 ।

It is clear that first three quarters are the same in the all versions and only fourth part differs. In Critical text all the fifteen manuscripts collated give the same or similar reading and the name of श्वेतं is present in all of them. It appears that the reading in vulgate text is emended or the MS on which this text is given is itself emended. The meaning of the vulgate text is 'I will say (describe) the *Vaiṣṇava Kavaca* (the armour of sacred formulas empowered with names or prayers of Viṣṇu) by which lord Śaṅkara was protected, while killing the demons. The meaning of the critical text is 'Now I describe the *Viṣṇukavaca* by which Lord Śaṅkara was protected while protecting श्वेत.

When we look into epic and Purānic literature we find at many places the name of श्वेत. He is described as devotee of Śiva. The forest where he was worshipping Śiva was श्वेतारण्य. Here in this forest श्वेत was worshipping while काल (Death god) came to take him. At the same time Lord Śiva came to protect him. Kāla ignored Lord Śiva and tried to kill श्वेत. Lord Śiva became furious and burnt Kāla. Later, on the request of Brahmā Lord Śiva revived Kāla. The place where Kāla was burnt became famous as कालञ्जरीतीर्थ dedicated to Lord Śiva. This Tīrtha and



story is described in detail in the *Kūrma Purāṇa* (2.35.11-38). It is also mentioned in *Linga P.* 1.30.1 ff.), *Vāmama* (57.19-24) *Viṣṇudharma* (I.236.1-20) and *Skanda* (I.9.32.1-26)

A verse in the *Rāmāyaṇa* says :

स पपात खरो भूमौ दह्यमानः शराग्निना ।

रुद्रेणैव विनिर्दग्धः श्वेतारण्ये यथान्तकः ॥ (III. 30.27)

The editor of the Madras edition of *Rāmāyaṇa* notes on it as follows : श्वेतारण्यं नाम कावेरीतीरवर्ती स्थानविशेषः। तिरुवेण्काटु इति भाषायां प्रसिद्धः। श्वेतनाम्नो राजर्षेः तपोवनं वा।

—Ganga Sagar Rai

# भविष्यपुराणे पर्यावरणसंरक्षणस्योपायाः

मंजू कुमारी

[From Ancient time Indian seers, sages, poets and religions texts were very careful for atmospheric purity. They made specific rules to maintain the purity of rivers, earth, wells and forests. In this article the means and methods prescribed for protection of atmosphere are discussed according to the Bhaviṣya Purāna]

यदस्मान् परित आवृणोति वयं वा येनामावृताःपरितस्तदपर्यावरणमित्युच्यते। भूतलमिदं तदुपरिस्थिताः जलपर्वतनदीवनपशुपक्षिणो वायुमण्डलञ्च सर्वे एते सम्मिल्य पर्यावरणं रचयन्ति । पृथिव्यामस्यां सर्वे प्राणिनोऽशेषाश्च जीवाश्चराचरात्मका इदं भौतिकं पर्यावरणं समाश्रित्यैव जीवनं धारयन्ति। वायुजलखाद्यादिभिर्विना जीवनं कल्पयितुं नैव शक्यते। प्रायेण प्राणिनो भूमौ भ्रमन्ति विचरन्ति विहरन्ति च। ते नदीनिर्झरतडागादिष्ववगाहन्ते पुष्पफलान्औषधीश्च सेवन्ते। वायौ श्वासप्रश्वासक्रियां विधाय जीवनं लभन्ते। इदमेव च सर्वेषामुपरि प्रसृतं नभोमण्डलमधो विहरन्तस्सुखमनुभवन्ति। सर्वाण्येतानि तत्त्वानि पर्यावरणस्यापरिहार्याण्यङ्गानि प्रकृतेरुपायनरूपेण प्राणिनां कल्याणाय लब्धानि विद्यन्ते। प्राणिभिरनुक्षणं क्रियमाणाभिर्विविधाभिश्चेष्टाभिः क्रियाकलापैश्चानवरतं पर्यावरणमपि प्रभावितं भवति। प्राणिपर्यावरणयोश्चेतावान् गाढसम्बन्धो वर्तते यदेकस्मिन् कस्मिंश्चिदपि जातं परिवर्तनमपरस्मिन्नपि परिवर्तनं घटयति।

पर्यावरणस्य महत्त्वपूर्णघटकतत्त्वं भूमिर्वर्तते। अतः प्रथमं भूमेः प्रदूषणसंरक्षणोपायोऽत्र विचारणीयः। मानवो हि नाम श्रेष्ठः प्राणिनां यतो हि स विवेकयुक्तो भवति। मनुष्यैः निजसौविध्याय विधीयमानैः क्रियाकलापैः पर्यावरणमनेकधा प्रभावितं विधीयते। निर्बाधजनसंख्यावृद्ध्या समृद्धजनानामुपयोगाय विविधधातुपाषाणबालुकादिकृते खननक्रिया सततं भवतीदानीम् । वसतिभवनादिनिर्माणार्थमपेक्षितदारुकृते आन्वाहिकपाकाद्यपेक्षितेन्धनकृते च वृक्षाणां छेदनमनवरतं भवति। अनुक्षणवर्धमानजनसङ्ख्याकृतेऽधिकाधिककृषियोग्यभूमेर्लाभार्थं वनानां निःशेषीकरणं क्रियते। वसतिनिर्माणार्थं जलाशयानां पाटनमधिकमन्नमुत्पादयितुञ्चोर्वरकानामुपयोगः क्रियते। सर्वमेतद् धरायां विद्यमानां कृषियोग्यामुर्वरां मृत्तिकां प्रदूषयत्येव भूमिगतजलमपि दूषयति। धरेयं सर्वेषां प्राणिनां जीवनाश्रयभूता औषधीः शस्यानि वनस्पतींश्च पोषयति। दूषितायां भूमौ जायमानेष्वन्नादिष्वपि विकारो भवति भोक्ताश्च सर्वे तेषामन्नादिनां रुग्णा भवन्ति।

वनेषु छिन्नेषु वृक्षेषु च निपातितेषु भूमिः नग्नत्वमाप्नोति। धरायास्तलाद् मृद्वृष्टिजलैरपवाह्य नद्यादिषु जलाशयेषु पात्यते येन भूमेरुर्वरता प्रायेण न्यूनतरा भवति। शनैः शनैः सा भूमिः

मरुभूमित्वेन परिणमते। कृमिनाशकानां रसायनानां प्रयोगबाहुल्येनापि भूमिः प्रदूषिता भवति। केषुचिद् क्षेत्रेषु नदीनां जलप्रवाहेण कृषियोग्या भूमिः जलमग्ना क्रियते क्षीयते च। यन्त्राकर्षणेन भूमेरुर्वराशक्तिरपि क्षीणतरा भवति। पर्यावरणस्य महत्त्वपूर्णस्यास्य घटकतत्त्वस्य प्रदूषणमपाकर्तुं संरक्षणञ्च विधातुं भविष्यपुराणोक्ता उपायाः प्रासङ्गिकाः प्रतीयन्ते। अत्र गोप्रचारवैशिष्ट्यप्रतिपादनक्रमे कथितमस्ति—

“गोभ्य एषा मया भूमिः सम्प्रदत्ता शुभार्थिना ।  
 एवं निवेदयेद्यस्तु गोप्रचारं समाहितः॥  
 सः मुक्तः स्वपापेभ्यो विष्णुलोके महीयते ।  
 यावन्ति तृणगुल्मानि सन्ति भूमौ शुभानि च ॥  
 तावद्दुर्षसहस्राणि स्वर्गलोके महीयते ।  
 पूर्वे सीमा निबध्नीयात्कृत्वा वृक्षस्य रोपणम् ॥  
 सेतुं कृत्वा दक्षिणतः पश्चिमेऽङ्गाररोपणम् ।  
 उत्तरे खानयेत्कूपं तस्य सीमां न लङ्घयेत् ॥”

गोचरभूमिदानस्य महत्त्वं प्रतिपाद्यात्र वस्तुतः भूमिसंरक्षणोपाय एव चर्चितो वर्तते। यतो हि गोप्रचारसाह्येन वृद्धवृषभाणामदुग्धदोहानां गवां प्रजननाक्षमधेनूनाञ्च संरक्षणं कर्तुं शक्यते। गोवंशस्य गोमयगोमूत्रेणोर्वरककौटनाशकौषधस्य निर्माणं कृत्वा रासायनिकद्रव्याणामुर्वरकाणाञ्च व्ययं न्यूनीकृत्वा भूमिप्रदूषणमवरोद्धुं शक्यते। अतएव गोप्रचारभूमेर्दानस्य पुण्यं प्रतिपाद्य तस्याः स्वरूपरक्षार्थमपि विवेचनं कृतमस्ति। गोवंशस्य कृते गोप्रचारभूखण्डस्य सीमनः रक्षणाय दक्षिणे उच्चसेतुं विधाय पूर्वस्यां पश्चिमस्याञ्च दिशि सघनानां छायाप्रदातृणां वृक्षाणां रोपणमुत्तरस्यां कूपनिर्माणञ्चापेक्षितं येन भूमेरुल्लंघनं न स्यात् । भूमेरस्याः सीमानं निर्धारयनिदं पुराणं भणति यदस्यां शतानां गवामेकस्य वृषभस्य च विचरणार्थं भूमिः भवितव्या । गोप्रचारस्य संरक्षणार्थं पुराणेऽस्मिन् उक्तम् —

“गोप्रचारं खनेद्यस्तु वाहयेद्वा कथञ्चन ।  
 कुलानि पातयत्याशु ब्रह्महत्याश्च विन्दति ॥”

वस्तुतः गोप्रचारोऽद्यापि प्रासङ्गिको वर्तते। नगराणां राजमार्गेषु भ्रमतः पशून् धृत्वा गोप्रचारे रक्षणेन तेषां गव्यानां सदुपयोगो भविष्यति तथा च नगरेऽपि स्वच्छपर्यावरणं परिभ्रमणं च स्यात् येन पशूनां शृङ्गादिभिर्मनुष्याः क्षताङ्गा मृतावान् भवेयुः । भविष्यति पुराणेऽस्मिन् नद्यास्तटे छायायुक्तवृक्षाणां संरोपणार्थं कथनं लभ्यते<sup>3</sup> येन नदीप्रवाहकृतक्षरणमपाकर्तुं पार्यते।

पर्यावरणस्यापरं घटकं जलं वर्तते। पृथिव्याः ७१ प्रतिशतो भागः जलं मन्यते। प्रकृत्या प्रदत्तानि प्रभूतानि प्राकृतिकसाधनानि मानवेभ्यः सुलभानि सन्ति। किन्त्वदं बाहुल्येन प्रदूषितं विद्यते। मानववसतीनां सामूहिका अवकरा औद्योगिकसंस्थानानाविकृतविषाक्तद्रवाश्च मलमूत्रादिवाहिनीभिः प्रणालिकाभिः नद्यादीषु जलधारासु क्षिप्यन्ते पात्यन्ते वायेन स्वच्छधारा

1. भविष्यपुराणे मध्यमपर्वणि तृतीयभागे - २.१३ तः १६
2. तत्रैव मध्यमपर्वणि तृतीयेभागे - २.१३.१९
3. तत्रैव मध्यमपर्वणि पूर्वभागे - १०.३३ तः ३५

प्रदूषिता विषाक्ता च भवति। जलीयजीवानां जीवनं संकटापन्नं सञ्जातमस्ति। विषाक्तजलोपयोगेन मानवोऽपि रोगग्रस्तो भवति। पुनश्च जलाशयानां पाटनं कृत्वा तदुपरि भवनादीनां निर्माणं विधीयते। जीवनरूपेण कल्पितेन जलेन विना जलप्रदूषणेन चास्माकं जीवने महत्काठिन्यमनुभूयते। भविष्यपुराणस्य मध्यमपर्वणि पूर्तकर्मनिरूपणप्रसङ्गे नूतनवापीकूपतडागानां निर्माणं निर्दिष्टं विद्यते। पर्यावरणसंरक्षणदृशा वृष्टिलब्धजलराशेः संग्रहार्थमुपायोऽत्र लभ्यते। तादृशं निर्माणकार्यं महत्पुण्यप्रदमुद्घोषयित्वा जलसंरक्षणमेव विहितम् । यतो हि पुण्यलाभाय जनाः सत्कार्येऽस्मिन् प्रवृत्ताः भूत्वा अधिकाधिकजलसंरक्षणं करिष्यन्ति। पुराणेऽस्मिन् नूतनवापीकूपतडागानां निर्माणतोऽप्यधिकं पुण्यं जीर्णवापीकूपतडागानामुद्घारेणोद्घोषितम् -

“अथ वा देवमानेन कर्तव्यं भूतिमिच्छता ।  
यस्तडागं नवं कृत्वा जीर्णो वा नवतां नयेत् ॥  
सर्वं कुलं समुद्धृत्य स्वर्गलोके महीयते ।  
वापी कूपतडागाश्च उद्यानप्रवहास्तथा ॥  
पुनः पुनश्च संस्कार्या लभते मौक्तिकं फलम् ।  
गुणानां च प्रमाणेन प्रतिमानं विभागतः ॥”

अत्र जीर्णकूपादीनामुद्घारको न केवलं स्वोद्धारक अपि तु निजाशेषकुलतारक इति दृढत-  
योक्तम् । जलाशयनिर्माणस्थानं तत्रैव भवितव्यं यत्र संरक्षितजलस्योपयोगोऽपि स्यादिति विचार्यात्र  
कथितं विद्यते-

“विप्रादीनां देवतानां समाजे मेरुस्थाने यत्र तत्रैव कुर्यात् ।  
नद्यास्तीरे वर्जयेद् वा श्मशाने तडागाद्वै आश्रमादीञ्जनानाम् ॥”<sup>2</sup>

जलसंरक्षणार्थमुद्बोधयितुमत्रेदमप्युक्तमस्ति -

“प्रावृत्काले स्थितं तोयमग्निष्टोमफलं लभेत् ।  
शरत्कालस्थितं तोयं यज्ञतोयाद्विशिष्यते ॥  
निदाघकाले पानीयं यस्य तिष्ठति वापिनः ।  
स्वर्गं गच्छेत्स नरकं न कदाचिदवाप्नुयात् ॥”<sup>3</sup>

जलाशयानामुपरि वसतिनिर्माणमत्र सर्वथा निषिद्धम् । जलं संरक्षितुं जलप्रदूषञ्चापाकर्तुं  
पुराणस्यास्यैतादृशाः निर्देशाः प्रासङ्गिकाः प्रतीयन्ते।

पर्यावरणस्य तृतीयघटकं वायुमण्डलं विद्यते। वायुस्तु प्राणिनां प्राण एव किं वा चराचरात्मकानां  
सर्वेषां जीवानां जीवनमेव। वायुना विना जीवनं दुर्लभम् । साम्प्रतं मृतज्जलमिव वायुरपि मानवीयकृत्यैः  
प्रदूषितो क्रियमाणोऽस्ति। औद्योगिकसंस्थानेषु तापीयविद्युद्गृहेषु च धूमप्रणालिकाभ्यो निर्गच्छन्  
विविधवाहनेभ्यश्च निष्क्रमन् धूमो वायुमण्डलं प्रदूषितं करोति। प्रदूषितवायोर्ग्रहणे सति

1. तत्रैव मध्यमपर्वणि पूर्वभागे - ९.२३ तः २५
2. तत्रैव मध्यमपर्वणि पूर्वभागे - ९.३६
3. तत्रैव मध्यमपर्वणि पूर्वभागे - ९.५७ तः ५८

श्वासप्रश्वाससम्बन्धिभिः तथा च फुफ्फुससम्बन्धिभिरनेकैर्व्याधिर्जनाराक्रान्ताः भवन्ति। प्रकृतेरुपायनैः वृक्षैः पादपैर्वा वायुः शुद्धत्वमाप्नोति पर्यावरणप्रदूषणस्यापहारे वृक्षपादपादीनामद्भुतक्षमता भवति। ते वायुमण्डलतः मलिनं वायुं गृहीत्वा परिष्कृतं शुद्धं वा कृत्वा उच्छ्वासरूपेण पुनस्त्यजन्ति। इदमेव च वृक्षवनस्पत्यादीनां मूलेषु जलसञ्चयनस्य प्रभूता क्षमता भवति यया भूमेरार्द्रता संरक्षिता भवति। मरुद्भयो निवर्तते उर्वरत्वञ्च वर्धते। अतएवास्माकमृषिभिः पर्यावरणप्रधानभूतानां वृक्षाणां महत्त्वं प्रतिपादितम् । श्रीमद्भागवतपुराणे श्रीकृष्णभगवता स्वमुखेन वृक्षमहत्त्वमुक्तम् –

“पश्यैतान् महाभागान् परार्थैकान्तजीवितान् ।  
वातवर्षातपहिमान् सहन्तो वारयन्ति नः ॥  
पत्रपुष्पफलच्छायामूलवल्कलदारुभिः ।  
गन्धनिर्यासभस्मास्थितोक्मैः कामान् वितन्वते ॥”<sup>1</sup>

वृष्टिचक्रसन्तुलनेऽपि वृक्षाणां महत्त्वपूर्णा भूमिका भवति। समुचितकाले यदि वृष्टिर्भवति तार्हि वृष्ट्या कृषिकार्ये अत्रोत्पादनमधिकं भवति। वृक्षपादपादीनामेतां क्षमतां ज्ञात्वा भविष्यपुराणे वृक्षाणां रोपणसंवर्धनविषये विस्तृतं वर्णनं कृतं विद्यते। नैकेषां वृक्षाणां रोपणमुद्धाने कर्तुं महत्पुण्यं प्रतिपाद्य पर्यावरणस्य जलवनवायुतत्त्वानां संरक्षणं सर्वार्द्धनञ्च कर्तुं विविधोपायाः चर्चिताः सन्ति। उद्याननिर्माणार्थमपि प्रथमं भूमिपरीक्षणनियमोल्लेखस्तत्रास्ति। एतदर्थं पूर्वं दिनत्रयं पर्यन्तं कृष्णवृषेण भूम्याः कर्षणं कृत्वा सप्तधान्यानां वपनं कर्तव्यम् । यस्यां भूमौ शीघ्रमङ्कुरितानि दृश्यन्ते सा भूमिरुद्यानार्थमुत्तमा भवति। उद्याननिर्माणेऽपि विधिपूर्वकं वास्तुदेवतायाः पूजनं करणीयम् । कस्य वृक्षस्य कृते किं स्थानमुचितमित्यपि प्रतिपादनत्र नदीतटे देवालये राजमार्गे वा छायायुक्तवृक्षाणां संरोपणं पुण्यदायकमिति कथितम् –

“नदीतीरे श्मशाने वा स्वगृहस्य च दक्षिणे ।  
तुलसीरोपणं कृत्वा याति कर्ता यमालयम् ॥  
पत्रपुष्पफलानां च रजोरेणुसमागमाः ।  
पोषयन्ति च पितरं प्रत्यहं प्रतिकर्मणि ॥  
यस्तु वृक्षं प्रकुरुते छायापुण्यफलोपगम् ।  
पथिं देवालये चापि पापात्तारयते पितृन् ॥  
कीर्तिश्च मानुषे लोके प्रत्यभ्येति शुभं फलम् ।  
अतीतानागताश्चातः पितृन्स्व स्वर्गतो द्विजाः ॥  
तारयेद् वृक्षरोपी च तस्माद्वृक्षं प्ररोपयेत् ।  
अपुत्रस्य हि पुत्रत्वं पादपा इह कुर्वते ॥”<sup>2</sup>

इत्थमत्र वृक्षाः लौकिकपारलौकिककार्याणां साधका मताः । अश्वत्थवृक्षः निशायामपि शुद्धवायुमेव त्यजति येन पर्यावरणे ‘ऑक्सीजन’ इत्याख्यः श्वसनयोग्यः वायुः वर्धते। वृक्षकृतप्रभावे भणितं यदशोकः शोकनाशकः बिल्व आयुवर्धकः वकुलः रोगनाशकः तिनिशः बलबुद्धिदायकः शमी रोगनाशकश्च भवति।<sup>3</sup>

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3. तत्रैव मध्यमपर्वणि पूर्वभागे - १०.२९ तः ४९

वृक्षाणां सततं छेदनमपाकर्तुमत्र पारलौकिकं भयं समुपस्थापितम् -

“किञ्चिच्छेदं च यः कुर्यादश्वत्थस्य वटस्य च ।

श्रीवृक्षस्य च विप्रेन्द्राः स भवेद् ब्रह्मघातकः ॥”<sup>1</sup>

इदमेव न वृक्षच्छेदकः मूकशतव्याधिपीडितश्च भवति। अतः वृक्षच्छेदनं नैव कर्तव्यम् । विविधवृक्षाणां सम्यग्विवाकासार्थं विविधा यत्ना समुपवर्णिताः । कर्णभेदनादिसंस्कारैरपि वृक्षाणां संवर्द्धनं चर्चितम् । रीत्याऽनया संवर्द्धिताः वृक्षाः पर्यावरणसंरक्षणे महत्त्वपूर्णं कार्यं साधयितुं शक्नुवन्ति ।

संक्षेपेण वक्तुं शक्यते यद् पर्यावरणस्य मुख्यानि घटकानि भूमिवायुवृक्षजलादीनि यानि विद्यन्ते तेषां संरक्षणार्थं विविधोपायाः भविष्यपुराणे निर्दिष्टाः सन्ति । ऐहलौकिकं पारलौकिकञ्च सुखं साध्यमानाः सर्वे एते उपायाः साम्प्रतमपि प्रासङ्गिकाः सन्ति नास्त्यत्र संदेहलेशः।



1. तत्रैव मध्यमपर्वणि पूर्वभागे - १०.५९

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**Dr. Ganga Sagar Rai**

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Statement of ownership and other particulars about

पुराणम् - PURĀṆA

1. Place of Publication ...Fort Ramnagar, Varanasi
2. Periodicity of Publication ...Half-yearly
3. Printer's Name ...Vipul Shankar Pandya  
Nationality ...Indian  
Address ...Ratna Offsets Ltd.  
B. 21/42-A, Kamachha, Varanasi
4. Publisher's Name ...H.H. Maharaja Kashinaresh  
...Dr. Anant Narain Singh  
Chairman, All-India  
Kashiraj Trust  
Nationality ...Indian  
Address ...All-India Kashiraj Trust, Fort  
Ramnagar, Varanasi.
5. Editor's Name ...R.K. Sharma  
Nationality ...Indian  
Address ...63 Vigyan Vihar [New Delhi]
6. Name of the owner ...All-India Kashiraj Trust, Fort  
Ramnagar, Varanasi.

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

**Anant Narain Singh**  
Publisher.