

## CHAPTER IX

C O N C L U S I O N

"In these days when all Indologists are feeling the want of a true history of Indian life and thought of the past and our antiquarians are directing their attention and energy towards its reconstruction, it is a matter of great surprise and disappointment that very little is known and still less has yet been said about those valuable records of Indian life and thought which are known as Upapurānas (or secondary Purānas)" <sup>1</sup>

This study of Srimāla Purāna shows that the above remark of Dr.R.C.Hazra is correct.

The Śrīmāla Purāna as it is called by the author Śrīmāla Mahātmya narrates the records of the Śrīmāla city and Ksetra with its castes.

The area covered by the Purāna had Mountain Abu in the South-East, Saugandhika in the South and Mountain Savarangiri in the North. The geographical data of the above Ksetra of ancient and medieval period have been traced and compared to the present through this study. A map has been prepared and the actual Ksetra Śrīmāla as mentioned in the Śrīmāla Purāna is drawn.

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1 Dr.R.C.Hazra, Studies in the Upapurānas, Vol.I, p.1

1. Geography: Srīmāla Purāna is a tirtha Mahātmya also and in it are described many tirthas belonging to brāhmanical sect. They require identification on the basis of traditions and further studies in the archaeological field-work for better understanding. It was conducted through the help of the study of the Purāna and location of the Tirthas has been shown in the map of the Ksetra with the photographs of some tirthas and their idols.
2. Caste Structure: The caste of Srīmālī brāhmanas, their gotras and Kuldevīs; Vanikas, their gotras, Kuldevīs and avatankas and origin of other castes related to Srimalis have been traced with their original history. The tables of the gotras and avatankas of Srīmālī brāhmanas and Vanikas have been prepared to identify the avatankas easily.<sup>1</sup>
3. Social Customs: The social pattern of social groups of Srīmāla with their customs and ceremonial function of marriages and death are recorded through the study of Srīmāla Purāna. The social structure of the social tradition prevailing at the time of the writing of the Srīmāla Purāna are noted and recorded with their functions.
4. Religion: The religion prevailing at the time Srīmāla Purāna have been traced out and religious conflict with the causes and result given in Srīmāla Purāna is traced through this critical study.

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1 Srīmāla Purāna, II 4, 7, 22, LXIX, LXX, LXXI

5. Economy: The socio-economic basis of the society of Śrīmāla Purāna is traced and it is found that society was based on sound footings and castes were formed to maintain the socio-economic structures better so that the society ran its course smoothly.

The Agriculture, Pastures and Animal Husbandary and Forest resources have been known through the study and craftsmanship and other activities like painting and cloth weaving prevailing at the time of the Purāna composing are traced out.

The Śrīmāla Purāna is a religious work so a description of the political situation was not the aim of the author. An attempt is made to trace the political status of Śrīmāla through the study of the Purāna.

This study of Śrīmāla Purāna clarified the fact that religious conflict, the downfall of cities and empire can be traced out through the Purānic and Upapurānic studies. As it is seen that in Samvata 1203, Śrīmāla got downfall and Śrī came to Gujarāta. It is the historical fact of Mediaeval Gujarāta that the great Solankis extended their region upto Mārwar or present West Rajasthan. The fact is traced through Purānic history of Śrīmāla Purāna also.

To study the Śrīmāla Purāna which is an Sthala Mahātmya a special method and archaeological study was necessary.

The method adopted by Dr.R.N.Mehta to study Kamarikakhanda was found beneficial and it helped in the study of Śrīmāla

Purāna. The method is most effective for the study of Sthala Mahatmyas.

Much of the history and culture of ancient India have been traced by the eminent scholars like Pargiter, Wilson, Hara Prasad Sastri, Kane, Hazra, Dikshita, Awasthi, Dr.P.J. Shah, and Dr.S.G.Kantawala through the studies of Purānas and Upapurānas.

This study of the Srimāla Purāna discloses the fact that the work on Purānas and Upapurānas is not still over, but it requires further study to unearth the ancient Indian cultural data embedded in it. Dr.R.C.Hazra and H.H.Wilson rightly say that "the work done by scholars on Upapurānas is very meagre".<sup>1</sup>

It needs special encouragement to the scholar to work on the field to search the archaeological, social, economical and political base of Sthala Purāna and Caste Purānas, without it the work becomes more difficult and some times it is impossible too. It needs special conditions, sympathies and atmosphere to compile and work on such problems.

Purānas are the religious and cultural records of Brahmanical (Hindu) religion. Srimāla Purāna is also not an exception. It is found after the reading of Srimāla Purāna that Puranakāra has written it in a systematic way.

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1 H.H.Wilson, Visnu Purāna, Preface p.i XXXVI-Xc and R.C. Hazra, Studies in the Upapurāna, Vol.I p.1

The chapters I to V give the location of Srimāla Ksetra. The construction of Srimāla nagara is dealt in chapters VI to IX and the process of its habitation runs upto the chapter XIII of Srimāla purāna. The Tirtha Mahātmya starts from chapter XIV and ends in chapter LXIV narrating 50 tirthas. The Vratas, Kathas, religious and social customs and functions, the gotras, Kuladevatās, Pravaras and their avatankas are recorded in the chapters LXV to LXX of Srimāla purāna. The religious conflict and down-fall of Srimāla nagara is given in the last chapters LXXI to LXXV, indicating the change from Srimāla to Bhināmāla. One may conclude that while writing the whole Purāna, the author has kept in view the geographical, social and religious practices of this area. For this the Purānakāra has used the stories of folk-lore and has used two types of them to explain the importance of different tirthas.

Once when the Purāna was composed the practise of reading the Purāna became prevalent and this helped in spread of Paurānic notions in Srimāla Ksetra to such an extent that it is still read with the same dignity of sanctity.

This seems to be keys with number of Sthala-mahātmyas and Jnāti Purānas. They try to gave a semi-mythological history to the population of region as it is clear from the perusal of Dharmaranya, Nagarkhanda, Kaumārika Khanda and such other Purānas.