CHAPTER III

THE SOURCES OF 'SRIMALA PURANA'

The author had to narrate the origin of Srimala nagara[1] with its castes so he had two fold work. First he had to describe the Puranic history of the city and its Tirthas and secondly he had to record the origin of the Jnatis with their customs and ceremonies.

A close study of the Purana shows that chapters 1 to 9 give the Puranic account of the establishment of Srimala nagara. The origin of the castes of Srimali bramanas[2], Srimali sunars and Srimali vanikas[3] is given in chapters ten to thirteen.

The Tirtha Mahatmaya starts from chapter XIV and ends in chapter LXIV.

The ceremonies, vratas, customs and social pattern of the inhabitants of Srimala are recorded with their ways of functioning in chapters LXV to LXX. Finally the Gotras, with their avatankas Kuladevis and other deities are given in chapters LXVII to LXX. with special details:

The chapters LXXI to LXXIV show the religious conflicts of the brahmanas and the Jains/ and the down fall of Srimala. The last chapter narrates the story how Srimala became Bhinmala.

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1 Srimala Purana Adhdyaya IX 1-24, XII 1-26, LXXII 1- 5
2 Ibid X 1-42
3 Ibid XIII 1-15 and 17-27

The religious importance of the <u>tirthas</u> is shown throughout. The authors had used various sources for this purpose which are summed up here.

<u>Srimala Mahatmya</u> as a Part of <u>Skanda Purana</u>:

Most of the chapters of <u>Srimala Mahatmya</u> (that is <u>Purana</u>) end with a sloka which means that it is from the Third <u>Pariccheda</u> of <u>Brahma Vibhaga</u> of <u>Skanda Purana</u>.[1] <u>Srimala</u> is described as an abode of <u>Brahmanas</u> in the <u>Skanda Purana</u>.[2] It is situated in <u>Paschima Desa</u> as noted here. It further notes that it is a part of <u>Kumarika Khanda</u>.[3] The detailed account of the <u>Tirthas</u> of the <u>Ksetra</u> is the creation of the author with the help of other sources. Though the author claims this to be a part of <u>Skanda Purana</u>, it does not occur in its printed version.

As the welknown <u>Arbudachala</u> Mountain, the seat of <u>Risi Vasistha</u> is near <u>Srimala</u> to show the right geographical situation, the <u>Risi Vasistha</u> gives the detailed account of this area to the King <u>Mandhata</u>. <u>Risi Gautama</u> is supposed to be responsible for the /in this region. Association
activities

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1 ´<u>Srimala Purana</u>, Adh&yaya 1, जय श्री स्कन्दपुराणे स्कालीति सांहिताया संहितायां भाग्य विभागे तृतीयपरिच्छेदे निशिएराागमन नाम उध्यों Sध्याय॥ १ ॥
last lines

2 A.B.L.Awasthi, <u>Studies in Skanda Purana and Skanda Purana</u>,
I, II, 2, 87

3 Ibid. <u>Kumarika Khanda</u> list

of Vasistha and Gautama is narrated beautifully.   Risi

Vasistha had narrated many things which are not the sole contri-
bution of Srimala Purana but are inserted into it by the author/
to explain away the phenomenon found here
Thepe are traced to their main sources.

King Mandhata[1], Risi like Kasyapa[2], Gautama[3], Devala[4] are

all Puranic ones and are connected with the Tirthas and Srimala

Ksetra by the author.

The main Devatas are very few and they have their separate

Puranas against their names.

They are Visnu, Siva, Vinayaka, Sun and Devis like

Chamunda, Ksemankari and Laksami.   Srimala is called the place

of Goddess Sri[5].

Yaksas and Nagas are also represented with their sthalas

and Tirthas.

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1   Mahabharata, Vanaparva 127.35, Drona Parva 62.11, Ramayana,
    Uttarkanda 67.8.11, Vayu Purana 88.68 and Brahmanada Purana
    iii 86.87

2   Mahabharata, Adiparva 59, 17 to 20, Ramayana, Aranya Kanda 14-16
    Vayu Purana 69.59,60,68, Harivansa iii 25,36

3   Ramayana, Uttar kanda 30, Bala kanda 48.49, Skanda I.ii 52
    Mahabharata, Anusasana Parva 41, Visnu Purana iv.v.611

4   Deval Smriti

5   Srimala Purana, LXXIX 58 and LXXV 23.24.

As Siva, Visnu, Laksami, Gauri, Sapatamatrikas, Vinayaka
are worshipped with different names at different places accord-
ing to the Puranic mythology, the same have been repeated in
Srimala Purana with slight differences in the accounts in the
original sources, so as to suit the local phenomenon.

The chief sources seem to be the epics, Mahabharata and
Ramayana. From the Mahabharata/following incidents are used:
and Ramayana

1. Mahabharata -

King Pariksita was a Pandava King. He died of snake bite.
The story of Naga Taksaka and Pariksita is taken from Maha-
bharata[1] and Bhagvata Purana[2]. The Srimala Purana says that
the Srimali brahman named Kasyapa, who knew the vidya of Naga
Visa Harana, was bribed by Taksaka and he returned to Srimala.
The news of the King Pariksita's death grieved the brahmana.
Pariksita Citra was was produced by Kasyapa and propogated by
Srimali brahmanas as Pariksita Katha.[3]

2. Ramayana -

The story of Gautama's curse given to Ahalya and Indra is
not mentioned only in Ramayana but in Mahabharata, and Skanda
Purana[4] also. The Srimala Purana says that Indra first saw
Ahalya in Srimala in candisayatra[5] and was attracted by her

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1 Mahabharata, Adi Parva, 51-58, 222-34
2 Bhagavata Purana I 16-19
3 Srimala Purana LXVI
4 Ramayana, Bala Kanda 48-49, Uttara Kanda 30, Mahabharata
  Anusasana Parva 41, Skanda Purana ii 52
5 Srimala Purana XLVI 1-23

beauty. 'Srimāla was previously called Gautamāsrama[1]. A kunda named after Ahalyā was also dug[2] and Gautama loved her again.

The quarrel over Pusapaka Vimāns between Kubera and Rāvāna is mentioned in Rāmayana and Mahabhārata[3] also but Śrimāla Purāna recorded that Kubera came from Lanka and had his Tapas at Śrimāla's Yaksesthala and was assured before going to Alakāpuri that Rāvana would be killed by 'Rāma'.[4]

Sources taken from other Purānas:

Visnu Purana: Laksami the consort of Visnu was the daughter of Brigu. The marriage of Visnu and Laksami is mentioned in Visnu Purana.[5] The same marriage is narrated in two different ways in Śrimala Mahātmya. Laksami married Visnu as a daughter of Risi Brigu[6] and secondly she came out of the Sāgarmanthana and married Lord Visnu.[7] The same stories are taken from the purānas but after marriage Laksami came to Śrimāla Ksetra and constructed the city[8] Śrimāla and secondly changed its name to

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1 'Srimāla Purāna, XLVI I 40-44, III 21-25, IV 28-52 and
  VI 46-50

2 Ibid. XLVI, 48-59

3 Mahabhārata Vana Parva 275-276, Rāmayana 15

4 'Srimāla Purāna, XXII

5 Visnu Purāna, Adhāyāya VIII -X

6 'Srimāla Purāna, Adhāyāya VII

7 Ibid, XLV 24-31 10

8 Ibid. IX 41-50, IX 1-22

seem to have been invented by the author.
Puspamāla/[1]   These stories are given only in Srimāla Purāna.
She is named with her different names in different Tirthas as
Laksami,[2] Yogesvarī[3], Mahalaksami[4], Balgaurī[5], Kamalā[6] in
Srimāla Purāna.   Agni Purānā[9] and Linga Purānā[10] also mentions
that Laksamī came out of Sagarmanthana.

of the
The fight for supremacy among the two/Trinity Devatās
Brahmā and Visnu is narrated in Visnu Purana[7].   Lord Siva
decided that Visnu was supreme and worthy to be worshipped.
~~The same story is given in Linga Purāna also~~[11].   The curse of
Siva that Brahmā would not be worshipped was modified and made
less severe after the Tapas of Brahmā and Lord Siva assured
Brahmā that he would be worshipped by Brahmanas and in Brahma-
puri or the place where brāhmanas are rulers.   The linga of
Siva would have Brahma Sutra. Brahmasutralinga would be worship
-ped with great respect.   The above story is told in Shrimāla
Purāna with the addition that Brahma had his Tapas in Srimāla
on Brahma Sarovara[8] to please the Lord Mahādevₐ.

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1 Srimāla Purāna, XLX 32-64
2 Ibid. VI, 20-28 and VII 1-42
3 Ibid. VIII 12-25
4 Ibid. XLV 65-66
5 Ibid. LVII 1-4, 51-64
6 Ibid. LXII 1-7, 58, 64-66
7 Visnu Purāna
8 Srimāla Purāna, XVII. 60
9 Dr.Govinda Chandra Raya, Pracina Bhārata Me Laksamī Pratimā
10 Ibid.
11 ~~Ibid~~ and Lingpurāna

Bhāgavata Purāna: The story of the ~~fight~~ contest of Kadru the mother
of Nāgas and Vinatā the mother of Garudas is given in Bhāgavata[1]
and Visnu Purānas[2], about the colour of the tail of the horse
Ucaisrvā. If the colour of the tail was black Vinatā was to be
a slave of Kadru. It was done so by the Nagas. The Srimāla
Purāna says that Kadru was pleased by the act of her sons and is
worshipped in Srimāla as Naganimāta[3]. The fight of Garudas
is mentioned also in the Srimala Purana and it says that the
gold is the part of the feathers of Garuda Kapila[4]. Nagas are
related to Srimala in many Adhyāyas as helper of Srimalis.[5]
The daughter of Nāga Kankola was married to Kandapa a Srimāli
brāhmana.[6] Her father Kankola gave shelter to the daughters
Srimalis and kept them at his residence.[7]

The King Yayāti and his devotion for the lord Sun is
described in Mahābhārata[8] and Bhāgavata purāna[9]. Srimala Purāna
narrates that Yayāti performed his Tapas in ~~Naimisaranya~~ _Naimisāranya_ Vana
of Srimāla and here the Sun was worshipped as Jagatsvami.[10]

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1 Bhāgavata Purāna VI 6, Mahābhārata Ādi Parva 21-34

2 Visnu Purāna IV 2-11

3 Srimāla Purāna, XXVIII 1, 28-33

4 Ibid. XXVII 51-55

5 Ibid., XXVII 90-100, XXXVII 7, XXXIX 1 20-21, 32

6 Ibid. XXVII 51-55

7 Ibid. XXXVII 7, XXXIX 20-21, XXXVII 11-12

8 Mahābhārata Ādi Parva 75-93, 9. Bhāgavata Purāna IX 9-19, 19, 23

10 Srimāla Purāna XLIII 2-3, 72-97

The twelve Adityayas mentioned in Visnu, in Mahabharata and in other Puranas had their asrama in Srimala[1].

Skanda Purana: The story of Valmika Risi and his tapas is taken from Skanda Purana[2]. The Srimala Purana records that Srimala is the place of Valmiki's Tapas. Valmiki pleased Valmikesvara[3].

Vayu Purana: Kasyapa as grand son of Brahma and the originator of Vaivastara Manvantara had his Tapas in Srimala and got a Vardana[4]. The above story is given in Vayu Purana[6] and Mahabharata[5] but the place of Tapas is not given.

Matsya Purana: The story of Lord Siva killing that Daitya Tripura is taken from Matsyapurana[7]. The Srimalal Purana says that Lord Siva marched against Tripura from Srimala and returned after victory and was worshipped as Trimbakesvara with Devi Yogesvari[8].

Tryambakesvar

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1 Srimala Purana, LXII 8-15

2 Skanda Purana, V.i, 24, VII.i - 278

3 Ibid. XLVIII. 1, 52-58

5. Mahabharata Adi Parva LIX 17-20, Ramayana Aranya Kanda 14-16,
   Harivansa Purana iii, XXXV, XXXV. 6. Vayu Purana LXVII 59-60

4 Srimala Purana, XXIII, 1, 48-53

7 Matsya Purana Adhdyaya 130-39 and 145 and 261, 33.

8 Srimalal Purana, XIV 98-107

Varaha Purana: The Varāhāmātmya[1] is taken from Varāha, Visnu and Harivanśa Purānas[2] but it is added in Śrimāla Purāna that Varāha gave Darsana in Śrimāla and was worshipped as Naravarāha there.[3]

Harivanśa Purāna:[4] The story of the killing Madhu and Kaitabha by Lord Visnu is noted in Harivanśapurāna. It is told in Śrimāla Purāna as Lord Krisna killed them and came to Śrimāla. As the Lord had taken his bath in the Sarovara it was called Krisana Sarovara.[5]

Devi Bhāgvata Purāna: The story of Devi Chamundā is from Devi Bhāgvata Purāna.[6] The same is repeated in Śrimāla Purāna and Chamundā is worshipped as Bakasthali,[7] Canāda Mundariyā,[8] candi[9] and SidhaCamundā[10] there.

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1 Visnu Purāna, I. IV, Bhāgavata Purāna, III, XIII

2 Harivanśa Purāna, IXL

3 Śrimāla Purāna, XLVII 21-30

4 Harivanśa Purāna, III, XIII, XXVII

5 Śrimāla Purāna, XVI 1

6 Devi Bhāgavata, V 21-31

7 Śrimāla Purāna, XXIV, 1, 30-42

8 Ibid. XXXV, 1, 19-21

9 Ibid. XXXVI, 160

10 Ibid. LIX, 16-18

<u>Padama</u> <u>Purāna</u>:   The <u>Adhiyayas</u> of <u>Govatasalavinayaka</u>[1] and
                    seem to be   the stories noted in
<u>Siddhavinayaka</u>[2] are/composed with the help of <u>Padama</u> <u>Purāna</u>[3],
~~Siva Purāna, Vinayakapurana and Bhram Vaivarta Purāna.~~

<u>Rig</u> <u>Veda</u>:   <u>Varuna</u> is a <u>vedic</u> god and it is said that <u>Srimala</u>
<u>Ksetra</u> which was <u>Gautamāśrama</u> was known as <u>VarunaKanana</u> and
<u>Varūna</u> had his <u>Tapas</u> at <u>Srimala</u> <u>Ksetra</u> and became the master
of the West.[4]

    The details and descriptions of images, <u>Tirthas</u> and city
seem to be   by observation or
are/composed/~~with the help of~~ the study of <u>VisvaKarmā</u> <u>Sāstra</u>.[5]

Geography utilised as source:

    The four chapters are composed to locate the situation of
<u>Srimala</u> and geographical phenomena is used as source.   The
South-East is described by describing Mount Abu and Mount
Saugandhika, where <u>Risi</u> <u>Vasistha</u> went[6].   The North-West is
presented with the help of Mount <u>Suvarnagiri</u> as the <u>āsrama</u> of
<u>Jaival</u> <u>Risi</u>[7] where <u>Gautama</u> went first.   Flora and Fahuna of
<u>Srimala</u> helped to compose some chapters.[8]

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1 <u>Srimala</u> <u>Purāna</u>, LVIII, 24-27
2 <u>Ibid</u>. XXXIV 1, 42-46
3 <u>Padama</u> <u>Purāna</u> <u>Sristi</u> <u>Khanda</u> III,   <u>Mahābhārata</u> <u>Ādi</u> <u>Parva</u>-112
4 <u>Srimala</u> <u>Purāna</u>, LXIV 1-3, 18-19
5 <u>Ibid</u>. IX   31-33
6 <u>Ibid</u>. I   25-35
7 <u>Ibid</u>. II, 3-4
8 <u>Ibid</u>. III 5-9, IV, 1-4

Local events used as sources:

Miraculous Tales: There are in this Purāna a number of
stories of superhuman acts.   One such story is that of the
brahman Kundapa who married the Nāga Kanyā Isumati after
penetrating into the Nāgaloka with the help of the magical
power collyrium applied to his eyes[1].   There are super-
natural helpers like Nāga Kankola[2], Surbhīmalā[3], Sarvamangala[4],
and Badheo devi[5].   They all have helped to compose the
Purāna.

Religious stories like that of the bath in a holi river[6]
are the sources of certain chapters.   Novella (Romantic tales)
like Mukulhimātā[7], Jayasvara Mahadeva[8] Atmadhāra Surya[9] used as
sources made the Purāna interesting to common mass.

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1 Srimāla Purāna, XXVII 23-76
2 Ibid. XXXIX 30-38
3 Ibid. XXXVIII 6
4 Ibid. LIII 1, 27-32
5 Ibid. XXVII 97-100
6 Ibid. V 11-24
7 Ibid. XXIX 1, 88-92
8 Ibid. XXX 1, 35-37
9 Ibid. XLIV 39-44

Tales of stupid ogre. that of Uttamoja[1], Daitya Karala[2] and Khara Raksasa[3] are used as sources to compose many chapters.

Jokes and Ancadotes: That Certain events can change the entire history of society is shown through the last chapters where Gautama became Jain monk and Srimala was termed as Bhinmala. The event of replacement of Power from Bhinmala to Patana and the rise of Jainism helped the author to compose the last three chapters[4].

The Social customs and ceremonies as sources:

The Adhyaya of candisvara yatra[5] and rolling of Brahmana before Atmadhara ratha[6] as Kirata represents the social functions of Goripuja and Mandasathama. The celebration helped to compose these Adhyayas.

Many chapters only recorded the gotras, their avatankas with their originality[7], which exist even to-day.

Kathas: The Kathas like Mahalaksami Katha[8], Pariksita and Taksakanaga[9] are used as source.

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1 Srimala Purana, XXXI 41
2 Ibid. XXXIX 51-52
3 Ibid. XXXIII 49-52
4 Ibid. LXXIII 77-78, LXXIV 45-49, 50-60 and LXXV 25-32
5 Ibid. XLVI 1
6 Ibid. XLIV 30-51
7 Ibid. LXVII, LXVIII, LXIX, LXX
8 Ibid. LXV
9 Ibid. LXVI

Customs: To describe the castes and their customs that is Kulācara a few chapters are composed.[1]

The fame of the Ksetra is also represented through some Adhyāyas, showing the wide area of the Ksetra and the number of castes and their population.[2]   The magnificance of the city was also represented through some chapters.[3]   The above sources show that what Prof. Stith says is true: "Some motifs are practically universal and form the material out of which tales are constructed and some motifs are so specialised that they owe their very existence to the tale types of which they are part.[4]

Thus it appears that the author of the Purāna has used existing anoedotes, known from the epics, purānas and probably from folk-culture, as well as the observation of Geography, social customs, ceremonies etc.   He gave local colour to most of the stories used by him and for this he has changed parts of old well-known stories.

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1 Srimāla Purāna, LXXI, LXXII

2 Ibid. LXXII, I

3 Ibid. IX, XI, LXXII

4 Prof. Stith Tomson, Standard Dictionary of folk-lore, Mythology and legend, Vol.II edited by Leach Maria and Fried Jerome, published by Funk Wagnalls Company, New York, 1950.